

GOVERNMENT PLACES.

A Few Words About Applications and Recommendations.

Good "Backing" is Essential to Success—The Parts Played by the President and the Senate's Power.

During the past month you have read in the daily papers the lists of nominations sent to the senate by the president, and it may prove interesting to read something concerning the preparation of these nominations after they have been decided upon; the preliminary consideration given to the applications and recommendations of the various candidates, and the manner in which these nominations are delivered to the senate.

Of course you know that applications for office may be made by letter, with or without endorsements. If you want an office and write to the president or any member of the cabinet, making your application, your letter becomes a part of the case, is filed and briefed with the other papers, and remains on the files of the department for fifty years or more, until it becomes necessary to destroy papers in order to make room for others. If your application is not properly recommended you cannot get an office, but you have a right to apply, and a great many people do so.

There are plenty of applicants for every good office, but only those who are properly recommended are appointed.

If you want to be postmaster in a city which has a first, second or third class post office your application will ultimately reach the president; for all post offices of those classes are called "presidential," because they are filled by direct appointment of the president. The clerks in the post office department prepare such cases, brief all papers, and finally make a legal brief of the entire case; and the papers of all the candidates are laid before the president. If you apply for a foreign mission or consulate, the clerks in the department of state handle all of the papers. If you want to be collector of internal revenue, or collector of customs, your papers are prepared in the treasury department. If you want to be district attorney or marshal, your papers become a part of the records of the department of justice. Ultimately, the member of the cabinet at the head of the department calls upon the president and explains the case to him, and he orders the appointment.

The power of the president to make important appointments is limited by the constitution; for he must secure the consent of the senate before commissions can be issued, except when the senate is not in session. In such times, the president has absolute power to appoint; but when the senate again convenes the president's commissions are subject to the consent of the senate or the appointments become void. So the president has only power, after all, to nominate and not to appoint to the best positions. Consequently, you read in the daily papers the list of nominations sent to the senate by the president.

When the president has carefully considered each case he informs his cabinet minister that he wishes "a nomination paper" prepared for the man whose appointment he has decided upon. This order is carried to the department minister by the cabinet minister. The "appointment clerk" fills out a blank sheet of paper with the name of the lucky candidate, so that it reads: "I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ in place of \_\_\_\_\_, resigned," or removed, as the case may be. This paper, which is filled with the names pertaining to the case, the president attaches his signature and the paper is returned to the department. When the senate is in session again the nomination paper is



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT.

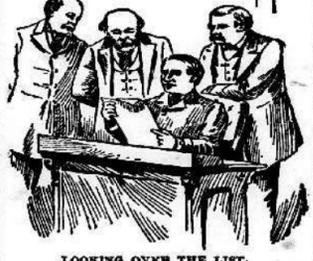
taken from the department in which it is filed to the white house, given to the executive clerk and transmitted to the senate. The executive clerk is O. L. Pruden. His full name is euphonious and alliterative; it is Octavius Leonidas Pruden. When he was a boy at school, one of his people called him "Tave." He was private secretary to President Hayes, and has been in the public service at the white house for many years. During the administration of President Arthur he was made executive clerk and was retained, however, and an appointment was made to the position of executive clerk under President Cleveland and Harrison. He will probably continue in the service for an indefinite period of time.

At the hour of noon, when the senate is in session, Mr. Pruden takes a large square leather portfolio, places all nominations in it, enters the white house, and carries with him a list of the nominations, duplicated upon half a dozen sheets of very thin yellow tissue paper. He enters the main door of the senate chamber, and immediately upon his appearance there, Capt. Bassett, who is the chief page, leaves his seat, which is near that of the vice president, walks around back of the seats of the senators, welcomes Mr. Pruden as the representative of the president by grasping his hand, and then, facing the vice president, bows low, and announces: "A message from the president of the United States."

Mr. Pruden then steps forward, and, bowing to the occupant of the chair, says: "Mr. President, I have the honor to submit for the consideration of the senate sundry messages in writing, from the president of the United States."

He then hands the nominations to Capt. Bassett, who walks down the main aisle to the desk of the secretary of the senate, which is in front of the raised platform upon which the vice president sits, and delivers the documents to that official.

With a very few minutes, during a special session of the senate, a member of the majority moves that the senate resolve itself into executive session.



LOOKING OVER THE LIST.

The motion prevails and the doors are closed. All of the occupants of the galleries depart, and the senate is alone in executive session. What is done there in detail no man outside of the senate is entitled to know.

In executive session, the vice president announces the various nominations, and they are referred to appropriate committees, where they are considered and ultimately reported to the senate in executive session. Nominations of postmasters are referred to the committee on post offices and post roads. Nominations for foreign missions and consulates are referred to the committee on foreign relations. Nominations for positions upon the supreme court or the circuit and district courts of the United States, or for United States attorneys or marshals, are referred to the committee on the judiciary. Nominations to positions in the treasury department are referred to the committee on finance. The members of the senate outside of those committees to which nominations are referred give no consideration whatever to the cases. One week after nominations are received from the white house and referred to appropriate committees the chairmen of those committees report to the senate in executive session that they have examined the papers in each case, and report the character and standing of the gentlemen nominated and that they report that the nominations, in the judgment of the committee, should be confirmed, or rejected. The senate usually acts without question in accordance with the reports of the committees. Of course, where committees report adversely, the senators who are interested in the persons nominated will make an effort to secure confirmations in spite of the adverse reports of committees; but they rarely succeed. The senate, as a body, usually sustains the reports of its committees.

The idea of writing concerning these matters was suggested to me while sitting in the press gallery to-day, by a singular little accident. One of the pages, as soon as with the nomination delivered by Mr. Pruden, took one of the yellow tissue paper lists and hastened, as usual, to the press gallery with it, while another handed a copy to Senator Gorman. Immediately thereafter, Senator Vest, of Missouri, Butler, of South Carolina, and Mansfield, of North Carolina, left their seats and went to Senator Gorman's desk to look over the list. Other democratic senators, by twos and threes, did the same thing, until an executive session was ordered. Heretofore, the pages have handed those lists to Senator Allison, and the republican senators crowded about his desk, to read and ascertain who were the lucky drawers of office. But the republicans are now in the minority, and are not interested in the nominations, as they formerly were. The senators whose party is in power are of the opinion that the matter of appointments is a general thing, as they are to see whether any of their individual favorites have drawn prizes. The republican senators have had a commanding influence in the matter of appointments for the past four years, and during the next four years their democratic brethren will have that influence and consequently are most interested.

The reason that the senate goes into executive session to consider presidential nominations, is this: The nominations are from the chief executive of the nation; his communications to the senate are confidential in their nature, and it would not do for the senate to consider those nominations in open session. Consequently, the senate closes its doors for the time being. You will therefore see that the senate is a dual body. It does legislative business with open doors, and everybody is entitled to know what is said and done; but the consideration of executive nominations is another matter, and takes place secretly.

SMITH D. FRY.

A Stroke of Luck. Tenant—The rats have gnawed a large hole through the ceiling of this room. Landlord—Ah, ha! Then of course you will not want any of those expensive ventilating devices you have been asking for.—Chicago News Record.

A Possible Reason. "I know why bees live in hives," said Mabel. "It's because people won't let 'em live in their houses."—Harper's Young People.

THE OLD DOLL TO THE NEW ONE.



So you're the latest victim—no, I beg to make you a distinction. You're Dot's new doll, of course, and so you have a beautiful complexion. It's very easy, miss, to prate those bushing checks, for one supposes you've not been placed before a mirror. That mixed your files with your roses. You've not been toasted for an hour. You've yet to learn that fire has power to leave one's features in confusion. Your form's as trim as trim can be; Your share of sawdust's not denied you. No one's supposed to see your face when you're not in the room. You've all your hair on light as tow. You've both your eyes, of blue most tender; You've not been scalped, and well I know You've not been dropped upon the fender. Your squeak's not broken, I'll be bound; You've not condemned your woe to mutter. When you are banged about, a sound Of protest you can shrilly utter. But wait a little while, my dear; You'll not escape the fate of others. Stoop! let me whisper in your ear— Do, you must kiss that small brother!

ABOUT CONCH PEARLS.

Something Concerning Their Value and the Men Who Hunt Them. Many people have the impression that the pearl is found only in the oysters gathered beneath the waters of tropical America, Persia, and India.

It is true that these bivalves frequently secrete the most valuable specimens of the opaque gem, but they cannot claim the exclusive production of these much-sought-for articles of commerce.



A GROUP OF CONCH SHELLS.

Oysters grown in any locality frequently contain a prize, while even the fresh-water clam, which has its home in the beds of the clear-running streams of New England, is eagerly hunted, in the hope of finding an occasional pearl.

Nearly every boy or girl has paused before some well-kept garden to admire the beautiful conical-shaped shells arranged along the sides of the walks, and wondered what creatures had used these houses for their habitations.

These are the conch shells. They are found in great profusion about the Bahamas and West India islands. This species of mollusk are pearl-producing, and, at least, the great majority of them do not rank in price with those taken from the oyster, they are considered by many to be much handsomer, as they are of a most delicate shade of pink, and as a rule are quite large, not infrequently being found the size of a pea.

A perfect specimen of this dimension may be purchased in the West Indies for forty or fifty dollars, according to the financial condition of the finder, but in the markets of Boston or New York it would bring a much larger sum.

Some few years since on Key Francis, a small island and some twelve miles off the northern coast of Cuba, I met a party of conch hunters who had come from the mainland.

All they had to do was to roll up their trousers, wade out upon the reefs, where the water was shallow, and gather the clumsy fellows as they crawled slowly along the bottom.

The oyster-divers spread their catch in the sun to allow the fleshy substance to decompose, then the shells are washed and the pearl sought for. But the conch-hunters pursue a different course, and one which seems very cruel.

They take a common fish-hook, to which is attached a piece of string perhaps two feet in length, insert the sharp point into the orifice of the heavy shell and bury the barb in the head of the helpless creature. The conchs are then hung in rows upon poles, whose ends rest on crocheted sticks driven into the ground.

Slowly the mollusk is drawn from its abode by the weight of its own habitations, but so cautious are they of life that they scarcely more than one out of a thousand conch shells contains a prize, and half a dozen men would not be able to gather and cleanse half that number in a day. The shells find a ready market at one dollar and a half or two dollars apiece, according to their beauty, and thus the native is enabled to earn a living even if not fortunate enough to obtain a pearl.—Marion Downing, in Wide Awake.

POWER OF ROOTS.

Their Will Lift Tons by the Swelling of Their Tender Trunks.

The tremendous power of pushing root is a subject for marvel. It will lift tons by the swelling of its slender trunk, or bend rocks with the power of dynamite, but silently and invisibly. The pertinacity and force of plants is occasionally shown in the great cities in this wise. Some old residences have vines many years old, climbing up their weather-beaten brown fronts. Their roots are deep in the small front garden plot, and their tendrils were at first trained up slender cords to the iron balconies on the first floor. These slender green things twined in and out of the iron railing of the balcony like little serpents, till they reached the vertical wall which, nothing daunted, they began to climb.

Little by little the tender green stems changed to hard woody tissues which were the earliest support, and made itself to the bars of the iron railing through which it had woven itself. But the accommodation was only formal, for, swelling steadily, the vine trunks appear to-day to have become as large as a man's arm, and the iron rails which were its earliest support, were broken in twain by their ungrateful dependents.

Another singular example of the pertinacity of the roots is the following: A drain-pipe seemed to be choked. Investigation showed that a threadlike shoot of a tree had penetrated one of the minute pores of the clay pipe; once inside the drain, the tendril found such luxurious nourishment that it grew and divided into branches, which would themselves in coil on coil, until finally passage in the drain was completely choked up.

It is said that bucketfuls of tangled filaments were taken out of this pipe, which measured only eight inches in diameter, while the stems originated in a single threadlike filament, back through which coursed the abundant nourishment to push on the growth of the maple tree above ground.

THE GRACEFUL FLAMINGO.

One of the Queer Birds Caught Fishing by a Tourist.

We had been upon the desert for thirteen days when we reached the river. Even the camels seemed to appreciate the change. Tall rushes, ten or fifteen feet high, grew thick upon the banks, and we could only gain a glimpse, here and there, of the water. Just before sunset, however, I found a dilapidated dinghy lying among the reeds. A dinghy is a boat used in the East Indies. It was hardly capable of holding me, but I balanced myself carefully, and got out upon the river. Beautiful birds were everywhere, and as I rounded a bend I suddenly came upon a nook among the great rushes where for the first time I saw the flamingo in its natural haunts. A tall male flamingo was quietly eating supper. He had a long neck, a long dinghy and I came quite close to him.



WHERE THE FLAMINGO LIVES.

He was standing on one long leg, in the water, moving the other foot slowly back and forth along the bottom and carefully watching it. Pretty soon he drew it up, with a lizard clinging to his toe. A moment later he had the lizard in his long hooked beak. He was actually fishing.

A little farther off two females were sitting on nests which they had built of sticks and mud, till they looked like the stumps of large trees rising out of water. On the very top they arranged some grass and leaves and there lay their eggs, resting with their long legs dangling on either side, and their long necks twisted so that their heads hang over their backs.—Warren H. Frych, in Our Little Men and Women.

The Better Part.

The dislike of being outdone by another is probably no stronger in childhood than in mature age, but the conventionalities which restrain a man from giving utterance to his thoughts place no check upon the child's tongue. Two little girls had been "playing dolls" on the floor, when one, becoming weary, threw aside the dress on which she had been sewing, climbed upon the piano stool and played a simple tune which she had been taught. She finished she turned and said in a boastful tone to the other, who still continued sewing: "Say, Flossie, my mamma says I've got a fine ear for music."

Flossie was sober for a moment; then she answered in an equally confident tone: "Well, p'raps I haven't got a fine ear for music; but I've got a fine ear for sewing, anyway!"

The Text She Liked. Small Madeline is something of a humorist, and has no very pronounced religious tendencies, but the other day she came home from church in a highly pleased frame of mind. "You just ought to have been to church to-day. The preacher had such a good text; just the kind I liked." "What was it, Madeline?" asked a cousin, who had staid at home with a cold. "Seriously answered small Madeline: 'It was: The Lord loveth a cheerful giver.'"—Emma Carleton, in Wide Awake.

THE OREGON SNOWBIRD.

He Lands Attractively to the Drizzly Winter Landscapes.

Most boy and girl readers no doubt are acquainted with the slate-colored Junco of the east, which is commonly known as "Snowbird." The Oregon Junco (*Junco hyemalis, var. Oregonus*) is a sub-species and is found throughout the Pacific coast region from California to Sitka, not being confined to Oregon. The dark plumage makes it conspicuous when the ground is covered with snow, and it is therefore more noticed at such times.



THE OREGON JUNCO.

The sooty black head, flesh-colored bill and white breast contrast in color. Pinkish colored feathers are on the sides; the back is rufous brown and the two outer tail feathers pure white, showing when the bird flies. In western Oregon it is a winter visitant, arriving with the first cool days of autumn. As winter approaches these snowbirds become more plentiful, hopping about in the small bushes searching for food. Great pleasure may be found in studying their habits, especially when the ground is covered with snow. By throwing bread crumbs on the snow the little fellows flock around and are easily tamed. Their only note in winter is a sort of chirp, sometimes uttered several times in succession when alarmed. With the warm days of spring they begin their song, sometimes many singing at once, and soon the majority disappear to a higher altitude to breed.

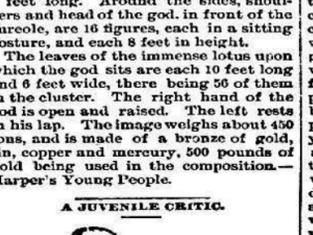
This bird nests in hollows in the ground under low bushes, the nest being built flush with the surface and holes among the roots of bushes and trees and under wood piles. The nest is made of dry grasses rather loosely put together with a lining of cow hair, and contains four and sometimes five handsome greenish-white eggs, spotted and streaked with purple.—American Agriculturist.

THE LARGEST IDOL.

It is Said to Stand Twenty Miles from Yokohama.

The worship of idols is, of course, to a great degree, a relic of the past. The worshiper has in mind the spirit or force which the wooden or stone image is supposed to represent. The most ignorant idolaters, however, worship the image itself. Idols still figure in the religion of the Japanese, most of whom are Buddhists. That is, the idol in the world stands twenty miles from Yokohama, near the village of Kamakura. It stands on a terrace near a temple, and the approach is so arranged that the gigantic image is very impressive. It was erected during the reign of Shomu, who was forty-sixth in the present line of emperors, who died in the year 748, A. D. For more than 1,200 years crowds of devotees have gathered daily around this great idol, which is still perfectly preserved. The image from the base of the lotus flower upon which it sits to the top of his head is 63 1/2 feet, and above this rises an aureole 14 feet wide, above which again rises for several feet the flame-like glory which incloses or arches in the whole figure. The face proper is 16 feet long, its width 8 1/2 feet. The eyes are 3 feet 9 inches long from corner to corner, the eyebrows 5 1/2 feet, and the ears 8 1/2 feet. The chest is 20 feet in depth, and its middle finger is exactly 5 feet long. Around the sides, shoulders and head of the god, in front of the aureole, are 16 figures, each in a sitting posture, and each 9 feet in height. The leaves of the immense lotus upon which the god sits are each 10 feet long and 6 feet wide, there being 56 of them in the cluster. The right hand of the god is open and raised. The left rests in his lap. The image weighs about 450 tons, and is made of a bronze of gold, tin, copper and mercury, 500 pounds of gold being used in the composition.—Harper's Young People.

A JUVENILE CRITIC.



Younger—Listen, moosie! Older—With much disgust!—Dat ain't moosie dat's Aunt Annie play'n planner.—Brooklyn Life.

This Soup. First Child—What's the matter with Nellie Newcome? Second Child—She's got the chicken-pox. First Child—I guess she can't have it very bad. She lives in a boarding house.—Good News.

A Bad Break. Kirby Stone—See that man across there? He is the only man I ever knew to break a bank at gambling. Job Lott—Indeed! Kirby Stone—Yes. He was president of the bank he broke.—Puck.

FARM AND GARDEN.

PEANUT CULTURE.

Not a Very Profitable Crop North of the Tennessee Latitude.

Mr. Abner H. Miller writes the Prairie Farmer, asking if peanuts can be raised in eastern Iowa, for mode of cultivation, kind of soil and variety to plant.



THE PEANUT.

In reply, we say, as we have repeatedly stated, that the peanut—gouber botanically known as *Arachis hypogaea*, is not a profitable crop north of the latitude of Tennessee, but is sometimes grown as a garden curiosity, and in warm seasons will ripen the nuts. As to variety, fresh nuts of the Tennessee variety such as are sold everywhere, are, all things considered, the best. The cultivation is simple. The blossoms when fertilized turn down, pierce the ground where the pods form and ripen. The soil should be rich, sandy and plowed not more than three inches deep.

The following is the mode of cultivation and harvesting. When all danger of frost is over, the soil is bodied up and prepared, as for tobacco, leaving only a slight furrow—made between the rows in the center of each of these beds, in a straight line, plant two seeds, at distances of eighteen inches; also have reserve plants, to fill the places of those that may be destroyed by cut-worms, etc.

The cultivation is simply to keep down the weeds, preserving the shape of the beds until near the time of blossoming. A narrow cultivator is then run through the rows, followed by a horse team to earth up the plants. The earth is afterwards leveled to present a flat hill in which the nuts can grow down through the grass, after appear they must be pulled by hand.

The crop is not harvested until the vines are touched by frost, for the longer the vines grow the greater the number of sound pods, except in the farther south, where the vines ripen fully. Hands follow the rows and loosen the nuts with pronged hoes or flat-tined forks. They are followed by others, who pull the vines, shake the earth from them and leave them turned to the sun to dry. In dry weather they will be sufficiently cured for shocking. The shocking is done somewhat after the manner employed for beans; or they may be finally cured as beans sometimes are on scaffolds under sheds.

CONTINUOUS MILKERS.

A Habit in Cows That Needs Judicious Development.

The continuous milking habit in cows should be developed as far as possible. It is not a source of disease and improves the condition of the young, in many suppose—such instances are more often the result of improper supply of the cow with foods that lily sustain all parts of the system. If the cow is well fed, not starved to reduced condition, as is often the case the few weeks preceding calving, there is no possible danger of milking a cow up to within a few weeks, even days, of her full time. It requires more food at this period to sustain the cow and embryo, but if the milking period can be prolonged for sixty or ninety days beyond the usual milking period of average cows, the returns will amply justify this outlay. That a cow needs six weeks of rest before calving may be desirable, as the "freshening" may be a great aid in bringing out under development. While we may object, with some force, that continuous milking in some cases is injurious, yet it is only by having cows that have a long and profitable milking period that we can expect to extend as we would wish the milking periods of the cows to be born in the near future, for we must rely upon heredity quite as much as feeding and handling to fully succeed.—N. Y. Tribune.

DAIRY SUGGESTIONS.

NIGHT'S milk is richer than morning's. WATER cows after feeding; horses before. A cow that has aborted should not be allowed to run with pregnant cows. The pastures are more valuable than they get credit for being. Don't let the cattle upon them until they are hard. Punching of the soft surface destroys more feed than anything else.

The best dairymen gradually take all grain away from their stock during the flush of the grass season and make the green crops cheaply raised take its place as much as possible later. Still later comes ensilage. It is a common sight to see a milk peddler's horse going home alone six to eight miles from any city, the intelligent animal turning out for manna, his master asleep in the wagon. The early rising and excessive work of this business would break down many a man were it not for the fact that he can doze for an hour or more on the return trip. And this privilege he owes to his good dairy friend.

An Excellent Cattle Tie. This cattle tie is made of half-inch round iron with two 3/4 rings on the stanchion. The lower one is 8 inches in diameter and the other 4 inches, to allow room for passing in the hook. The point of the hook is furnished with a small ring which drops down after passing the large ring, thus effectually locking it. To adapt it to small cattle and calves make the bow nearly straight. Any blacksmith will make them for about 20 cents each.—John Eddy, in Farm and Home.

An Argument for Good Roads.

The following Associated Press dispatch which was sent out from West Union, Ia., a short time ago, preaches the case for a better road and its improvement: "Northern Iowa, owing to rains the last few days, is becoming a vast marsh. Roads are impassable. Teams starting to the country returned, not able to get out of town. Serious results are feared."