THE BUSINESS OF WEARING A TOGA

BY EDWARD B. CLARK

WASHINGTON.—The senate of the United States stands for dignity. Sometimes the dignity is overdone, but on one occasion the senate was undignified to the point of striking several of the older senators with horror.

Senator Tillman of South Carolina was making nothing less than an impassioned speech. He was reaching toward the skies of oratory, when Senator Warren left his seat, unseen by Tillman, and took station behind the South Carolinian. The speaker had both hands high over his head directing the soaring of his thoughts and words. Warren took a step forward. His hand stole to Tillman's side, slipped into his pocket and came out again holding in its clutch a big black bottle.

All unconscious, Tillman went on with his words of fire. Warren held his find aloft in full view of the presiding officer, of his colleagues and of the crowded galleries. There was a gasp, then a smothered and simultaneous gurgle of horror from a hundred throats, and then roaring laughter.

Tillman turned and knowledge of the awfulness of the situation came to him. For once, possibly for the first time in his life, he was staggered to speechlessness. He strove for words, but they would not come. His face was black with something much like anger. Then the cloud cleared and a smile broke through. Speech returned, and two words came: "Boracic acid."

It was boracic acid, but unfortunately for Senator Tillman, it had been put into a black and suspicious bottle. A sore throat was the reason for its carrying, and while the South Carolinian is a man of truth, he would not let the matter pass until he had passed the bottle and had forced his comrades to smell the stuff and make clean his temperance record.

Senator Burrows of Michigan, by a graphic presentation of the case of Maj. Seymour Howell, an army paymaster, secured an order on the treasury of the United States for $2,000 to reimburse the officer for that amount which disappeared in the Philippine islands. The story as told by Senator Burrows to his colleagues had all the interest of a Sherlock Holmes tale, save that for the mystery involved there was no solution. To this day there has been no solution. It is known definitely, however, that the paymaster was in no wise to blame for the disappearance of the money.

Maj. Howell, paymaster, was traveling through the Philippines with an armed guard. He had with him a chest containing a large sum of money with which to pay the troops at the different camps. The chest was double locked at all times, and night and day a sentinel stood by it with a loaded rifle in his hands. No one had keys to the chest save Maj. Howell and he kept them fastened to his person.

If one of the sentinels had been dishonestly inclined he could not have opened the chest without duplicate keys, and the originals were of a kind difficult in the extreme to counterfeit. The guard was composed of men picked for the pay journey at the last moment. The trip was a rapid one and no possible chance was offered for the making of keys.

Money to the amount of $2,000 disappeared from the chest at some time while it was under the watch and ward of a sentinel standing so close to it that he could reach it with his rifle. Search failed to reveal a cent of the money. Maj. Howell at once made the loss good by a personal check drawn on his own bank acount. The case is one of the army mysteries to this day, and the recital of the story gave congress an interesting quarter of an hour.

Neither senate nor house makes light of pension pleas in the presence of the galleries, but some of the would-be pensioners play comic roles in the committee rooms and corridors. Claimants who can prove things are treated as old soldiers and old soldiers' widows ought to be treated—decently and reverently.

Congress in its weakness has voted pensions on many an occasion, though doubtless knowing that pensions were unearned and undeserved, but the day of that sort of thing is passing, if it has not altogether gone. One member was asked to use his influence to secure an increase of pension for the widow of a soldier. There were papers forwarded to him which bore on the case, and these he turned over to the committee on pensions after his bill had been introduced.

The widow did not get her money, and it was not long before the whole house knew it. The member who had espoused the widow's cause had been in congress for years, and the joke at his expense was too good to keep, and one after another of his colleagues walked up to his desk and congratulated him on the wisdom shown in the plea which in written form he had turned in to the committee to win the widow's case.

It is perhaps needless to say that the member had never read the plea. It set forth the fact that while the amount of pension increase that the widow of the soldier hero asked for was large, it must be understood that she came of good family, moved in the best social circles and was in need of a large sum of money to keep up appearances.

Upon occasions senators and representatives permit their constituents to do their talking for them in congress. Petitions come in floods at times, with the object of securing legislation by external pressure. In the Smoot case and in the pure food and canteen matters the pleas of the people came in by the tens of thousands. The members of both houses present these letters, call attention to their import and then allow the petitions to do the rest if they are potent enough.

Senator Latimer of South Carolina once introduced a good roads bill calling for the expenditure of government millions for the improvement of the highways. The automobilists all over the country began sending letters of approval. They pressed their friends into the writing service, but that they did not always pass upon the persuasive merits of the friends' productions is shown fairly well by one letter on the good roads' subject received by Senator Cullom. It read like this:

"Dear Mr. Cullom—Please vote for this d—d bill, and you will oblige a fool friend of mine who runs an automobile. Yours more or less sincerely. ——."

It was a Chicago man who wrote this appeal. There were others like unto it. The good roads bill still sleeps.

There are two things which the house of representatives infinitely would prefer should never come before the members for consideration—religious matters and immigration matters. Immigration the house must, of course, deal with directly; religious matters it is forced to touch indirectly, much to the inward discomfiture of many of the legislators. We are living supposedly in an enlightened age, and yet religious bodies have not forgotten how to use the instruments of coercion. It makes no difference at all how utterly without foundation the charge of bigotry may be it always finds its believer, and the charged one suffers personally and at the polls.

An immigration bill which was before the house of representatives had no bigotry in any of its provisions, unless it be bigotry to wish to deny admission to America of a class of people who can work little but injury to the land which they wish to enter. The real reason that the charge of bigotry was entered was because the men making use of the accusation knew well that when everything else failed the insinuation of harrowness was bound to have its effect.

The bill contained a clause which forbade entrance to America to illiterates. Unquestionably it was not the desire of the framers of the measure so much to keep out people who could not read and write as it was to keep out certain disorder-breeding elements and certain pauperized elements.

Most of the illiterate and those who are likely to become public charges come to America from certain well-defined sections of Europe. It would be utterly impossible for congress to pass a law saying in plain words that immigrants from these sections were not to be admitted. If such geographical discrimination were made mortal offense would be given to some nations of Europe, and likewise mortal offense would be given to the people already in America who owed former allegiance to those nations. The illiteracy prohibition was put into the bill as the best way to accomplish an end without giving offense.

As it was, the members of congress whose duty it was to press the measure to a passage were made bright and shining marks for those who chose to hurl the "bigot" missile. It was a hard duty which the friends of the exclusion measure had to perform. They knew that nine-tenths of the Democrats and the Republicans in the house were in favor of the retention of the illiteracy clause, but they knew also that these men feared personal criticism and campaign antagonism if they voted for the bill as it stood. The measure did not pass in its original form, but perhaps it will pass at another session.

Representative A. P. Gardner of Massachusetts, a member of the house committee on immigration, and a representative who favored the passage of the immigration bill as it stood, made a speech in favor of the measure, and stated openly on the floor of the house that he had been acused of bigotry because of his advocacy of the educational test. He defended himself so successfully against the charge that he brought confusion to those who made it. The insinuation had been made that the movement to exclude illiterate immigrants was a revived "Know-Nothing" scheme. It was said that Americans who, so to speak, had been long enough in this country to have had a grandfather born here were desirous of shutting out the foreigners for purely selfish reasons.

Mr. Gardner had his answer ready to these charges in the form of a letter from Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor. He also had petitions from 4,000 local labor unions asking that the illiteracy clause be kept in the immigration bill. Thousands upon thousands of these laboring men who urged the passage of the measure as it stood were foreign born. The fathers of thousands upon thousands more of them were foreign born. The petitions effectually disposed of the charge that the desire to keep out illiterates was born of native American bigotry.

As for Samuel Gompers, he was born in England, but his letter, which Mr. Gardner read, a letter written to Representative James E. Watson, showed conclusively how the laboring people represented by Mr. Gompers felt upon the matter of the admission of illiterates. The letter was as follows:

"The organized workers of this country feel that the existing immigration laws, while not without their value, are of trifling effect compared with the needs and the just demands of American labor. . . . The Nashville convention of the American Federation of Labor, by a vote of 1,858 to 353, pronounced in favor of an educational test for immigrants. Such a measure would check immigration in a moderate degree, and those who would be kept out by it are those whose competition in the labor market is most injurious to American workers. No other measure which would have any important effect of this kind is seriously proposed. . . . I earnestly hope that you will be able to procure the embodiment of an illiteracy test for immigrants in the bill which the house now has under consideration."

A New York representative had his sneer ready when this letter was read in the house. "I would like to ask the gentleman," he said, "if Mr. Gompers represents the Mayflower or those who landed at Jamestown?"

The truth of the matter is that the insinuation of the New York man that the old-time native American element was back of the movement to bar out illiterates was baseless, and the house knew it. Curiously enough, perhaps, the strongest opponents of the illiteracy clause in the whole land were men who traced their descent back through the centuries to those first immigrants who founded the nation in America. These men, while holding that it was the part of wisdom to keep out the criminals and the paupers of Europe, held also that it was un-American to bar a man because he could neither read nor write.

The bigotry charge was used solely because it is an ugly charge and because it hurts. No man, even though he is as broad as the sea in his views, ever can clear himself of suspicion when the accusation once is made. It is not hard, therefore, to understand why the men who are opposed to the immigration bill used the weapon that they had in hand. It may, however, prove useless to them on another occasion.

WHERE THE WOMEN DO THE WORK.

Americans are greatly impressed in visiting foreign countries to find out how hard foreign women toil, often shouldering more than their just responsibilities. This is certainly true in southern countries, where women are sometimes degraded by hard and menial labor. Nowhere is this more noticeably true than in Italy, where the women do their own work, care for the children, and help support the family. In the north wages are better and taxes are lower, so the burdens of women are not so heavy. But in Venice, Rome and Naples life means hard toil.

The women are forced to earn a living, and so they do whatever they can put their hands on. They clerk in small shops and stand in the squares selling flowers, jewelry and plaster casts. But competition is so great and the wares so cheap that many are forced to earn a living by harder methods. The narrow streets are thronged with women carrying infants on their arms, hawking their fruits and flowers. Others trudge along carrying heavy sacks and great loads on their backs. Many walk for miles along the country roads selling their garden product and the fleece just shorn from the sheep.

In Rome and Naples more especially the women do most of their work out of doors. They are usually seated before their doorways spinning, carding and washing the wool. Others are hard at work making straw baskets and cording them of rope. Most of the poorer homes are without water, and these women are often compelled to trudge miles with heavy copper jars in which they get their water. They cannot wash their clothes at home, so they are compelled to use a stream or fountain.

When work is scarce they rent a stand near one of the old walls and sell fish, fruit and baskets. A mother often has a baby in her arms and three or four other children playing about her. The long rows of tenements simply teem with human life. It is not unusual to find families of ten or more crowded into one room. Some of them are so crowded that the clothes after they are washed have to be hung out of the windows.

But this poverty and struggle for livelihood does not mar the sunny disposition of the Neapolitan. Tired looking women are heard singing popular airs as they trudge home from work. When a pretty Italian girl finishes selling her flowers she often starts out at nightfall carrying a guitar and serenading strangers, who increase her small living. But to make the best of life is the motto of the Neapolitan. Though many of their farms are well cared for, they are chiefly cultivated by the women and children. Many tiny tots are to be seen digging potatoes and working with the fruit trees. It is not unusual to see mothers carrying loads of grain on their heads and infants in their arms.

The women make nearly all the clothes for the family. Their fare is limited to bread, macaroni, cheese and port wine. There is such a heavy tax on salt that to these poor peasants salt and meat are a luxury reserved for Sundays and holidays.

The German peasants are the hardest working women in the world. They toil out in the fields all day long; they do not question their strength, but do whatever their husbands command. It is not an unusual sight to see women thinly clad, hard at work in the blinding rain. No less hard is it for them to work all day under the burning sun. In southern Germany the women cultivate the land way up the mountains, but their hearts know no fear.

Though these women work uncomplainingly, they enjoy few comforts. Their little houses are almost bare of furnishing, and they are compelled to wash their clothes in the stream. Their children are not idle and they help on the farms before they are half grown. A German of the middle class takes it for granted that his wife does their housework, looks after the home, and helps him in his shop. In a bakery a German woman, replying to the queries of an American woman as to the work she did, said: "You have no idea how glad you ought to be that you are an American woman—you have such good times. Look at me. I do all my housework, take care of my three children, and am scarcely finished with my work when my husband says: 'Catherina, come down and wait on the customers.' Some of these men think that we are as strong as horses."

ONE AGREEMENT.

Mr. Henpeck—It's no use. We can't agree on a single subject.

Mrs. Henpeck—You're wrong, dear. I always agree with you on the weather.

A Boomerang.

At a small country boarding-house sort "down in ole Virginie," this past summer, the girls decided to give a dance in the town hall on the mutual benefit plan, so to speak. Half of the expenses of the hall, music and refreshments, it was planned, should be borne by them and the other half by the men. The fair chairman of the refreshment committee, in exhorting the prospective dancers to make no mistake in the details agreed upon, wrote:

"The girls will furnish the sugar and the men will bring the lemons."

Sheer white goods, in fact, any fine wash goods when new, owe much of their attractiveness to the way they are laundered, this being done in a manner to enhance their textile beauty. Home laundering would be equally satisfactory if proper attention was given to starching, the first essential being good Starch, which has sufficient strength to stiffen, without thickening the goods. Try Defiance Starch and you will be pleasantly surprised at the improved appearance of your work.

Standing Fad.

The wandering agent who was selling cigar-bands found Remus sitting on the porch mending his fishing lines.

"Do you have any fads down here in Dixie?" asked the agent.

"What am them, mister?" inquired Remus, curiously.

"Why, take the collecting fad. Do you make any collections of anything down here?"

Remus laughed.

"Oh, yeas, sah," he chuckled, "de same collections we've always made. De collection of pickaninnies en dogs, sah."

Only Sure Cure for Tubercuolsis.

In view of the constant agitation and misrepresentation with regard to the treatment of consumption, the National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis has issued a statement in which it states that the only sure cure for this disease is fresh air, rest and wholesome food. Hardly a week passes without some quack "doctor" or "eminent specialist" informing the public that he has at last discovered the sure cure for tuberculosis. After examining every one of these so-called cures, several hundred in number, the National association states that, one and all, they are misrepresentations or fakes.

WHERE PAT DREW THE LINE.

Patient and Long Suffering, But No Man with a Face Like That Could Work with Him.

Pat had been at work for three days digging a well, and as the foreman wanted it finished within the week he had promised Pat another man to help him. It was getting on for 11 o'clock, and Towser, the foreman's bulldog, was looking over the edge of the pit, when Pat said to himself, "Smoke-o."

He had just filled his pipe, and was about to light it when he glanced up and beheld Towser's handsome features.

Slowly removing the pipe from his mouth, he said: "Be-e-egorra, Oi've wor-rked wid Germans and Hengar-rians, and Oi've wor-rked wid Oitalians and naygers, but if a man wid a face like that comes down here to work besoide me, I gets up."