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SEEING THE CAPITAL

DEFENDING THE CONSTITUTION A SENATE PASTIME.

Uninitiated Visitors in the Gallery Listen With Growing Alarm While Senators Thunder at Each Other in Debate.

So much has been said about the Constitution and the convention that framed it, that it has reawakened interest in that all but forgotten document

has been greatly stimulated in the tourist section of the senate gallery. Visitors who are not aware of the habits of the senate have been led to believe the country was on the verge of a grave constitutional crisis. They listen with growing alarm while senators thunder at each other about the way the Constitution has been rent and trampled on, and then hurry back to their hotels to write letters home telling the folks the government is about to break up and that a whole raft of new holes has been found in the Constitution with not a thing in the house to plug them up with.

But there really is no cause for alarm and after a few days in the gallery the strangers begin to see they will have plenty of time to get home and sell their government bonds before the smash comes. Jumping through the constitutional hoop is just a way the senate has of passing the time. When-



Defending the Constitution.

ever things drag a little, and the committees are not ready to report their bills and there are no good stories being told in the cloakrooms, the senate puts on one of these shows for the benefit of the galleries, and, incidentally, to provide reading matter to be mailed home to help the folks pass the evenings entertainingly.

A constitutional set-to is greatly enjoyed by the senate, even apart from the satisfaction senators have in impressing the galleries and the country with the fact that they are keeping vigilant guard to see that liberty and freedom don't get away in the press of passing appropriation bills. Senators are only human, and they certainly do love to sit around the stove, figuratively speaking, and while on a stick. The senate isn't so all fired different from the crossroads store at home where senators got their first training. Give the senate a nice, smooth, well seasoned constitutional barrel stove to make shavings of, and it can pass a mighty comfortable, rainy afternoon. After a hard morning's work passing bills by the fatiguing method of leaning back in their chairs and watching the clerk do all the work, the senate brightens up when one of its constitutional experts rises and begins to unroll that sacred document of the fathers. After paying a high tribute to the wisdom and patriotism of the framers, he points out that they didn't mean anything like what the senators on the other side think they meant when they wrote the instrument under which the government now exists. Whereupon a senator on the other side rises and, after paying a high tribute to the wisdom and patriotism of the framers, he points out that they not only meant what they wrote into the instrument under which the government now exists, but a great deal more. The debate is then on.

The Constitution, it has been said, is the most remarkable instrument ever struck off at one time by the hand and purpose of man, and it is, in that no two senators can argue about it five minutes without totally disagreeing as to what it is all about. This is the more remarkable in view of the fact that the Constitution is not written in an unknown language and has very few long words in it.

The senate takes its constitutional debates very seriously. It pretends not to know that it has itself turned the Constitution wrong side out, let out the seams in the back, set the buttons over in front, sewed side pockets on, and otherwise adapted it to the needs of the growing stripling it was first designed to clothe. But that is just the senate's sentiment, and the senate has as much sentiment as a schoolgirl with her first volume of love sonnets. Down in its heart the senate knows that if Mr. Madison, Mr. Hamilton and the rest of them were alive now, and tried to put anything like the Constitution over on the country today, those patriots would get a more exciting run for their money than they experienced when the convention sat in Philadelphia.

And the chances are the senate would be found leading the fight against their revolutionary proceeding, and pointing with melancholy pride back to the good old days when Charlie Stuart sent out his trusty governors to rule his faithful colonies under the benign sway of a royal charter.

HE ADMIRES OUR DEMOCRACY

But This Young Berliner Meets With an Extreme Case in the White House.

A young German, connected with a big mercantile company in Berlin, who is spending some time in this country, hasn't quite recovered from the effects of a visit which he paid President Taft at the White House recently. He admires democracy, but he asserts that, in his opinion, it can go much too far.

"The man at the door says my name," relates the Berliner in his amusing English, "and believe it or not, my knees rub together and my heart raps against my right-hand upper waistcoat pocket. On my face there comes a whiteness, and my forehead drips with perspiration. He is the very first president I have seen. As I go forward and the big, fat man smiles, I smile—a very ill smile—and then we shake hands. Still are my knees shaking, and I don't know what one does with one's hands in such circumstances. Pretty soon I find my hands—truly, I tell you—in my trousers pockets.

"I take them out and say what I had learned the night before to say to the president of the great country. He laughs, and for one brief second I believe he is laughing at my heels that are so close together. I stretch them apart and find that awkward. I put one foot forward, and almost slip on the waxed floor. By that time my handkerchief is in my hands, as they also are wet from the perspiration of embarrassment. 'Berlin is a beautiful city,' I find myself saying to the president as if in a dream.

"And after all what I had done," the German added, "to impress the president, one man comes up to him. The stranger stands with crossed legs and his hands are on the desk of the president. 'Say, boss, what's the matter with your eyes?' he asks. And the big man says he has pink eye. Now, I cannot imagine a general, nor anyone else, going up to the kaiser and saying: 'Boss, your sword is not on straight' or something like that. Dear me, what would happen?"

HAVE FEW MILITARY SECRETS

Any Nation May Easily Secure Information Concerning the Resources of This Country.

Any person seeking information regarding the military resources of this country can get all he wants from the government officials or libraries, according to an article by Gardiner Mack concerning the foreign spy. Moreover, picture postcards showing views of the fortifications, range finders and guns made from detail producing photographs are to be had anywhere for insignificant sums. That other nations are not quite so liberal with their information the writer also shows. He calls the United States a kindergarten for spies because none but the veriest tyro in the business are needed to gather together the hidden (?) facts as to our armament.

There are a few military secrets kept covered in America, but Mr. Mack asserts they are few. "In only one country in the world," he writes, "is there no law against the publication and sale of all information relating to military and naval matters, the United States. The other great powers make the punishment of spies as drastic as possible. The Dreyfus case in France gives an excellent idea of the manner in which a supposed secret agent is treated. Only recently a naval spy was captured in France—a man believed to have secured secret naval plans. His punishment was as quick, as sure and as severe as that administered Captain Dreyfus.

"Frequent sights in port towns of Europe are signs in several languages warning tourists that no photographs may be taken within certain limits, the metes and bounds being carefully stated. At Gibraltar the English government will not permit tourists to land with cameras. Neither will the Japanese at Nagasaki. In fortified towns visitors are permitted only in certain specified districts. Beyond that heavy armed guards bar progress."

Cyclones Reveal Prosperity.

John Fletcher Cox of Comanche county, Kan., told his Washington friends in the lobby of the Arlington that a Kansas cyclone is sometimes a good advertisement.

"There was a cyclone at Eskridge not long ago," he said, "and the press accounts of the twister told of automobiles, pianos, Brussels carpets and finger bowls being strewn about by the wind. Doesn't that read like prosperity? A few years ago a cyclone in that district would have had nothing more valuable than rag carpets, broken chairs and bootjacks to toy with. While we are not yearning for big wind storms, if we have one we appreciate getting a little advertising out of the published stories."

Where Uncle Sam Loses.

There are 160 collection districts in the customs service in the United States and its island possessions and one-quarter of that number do not collect enough revenue to pay expenses. The treasury records show that while the customs in 1910 produced \$333,331,153, 41 of the 160 collection districts were losing propositions. The average cost of collecting the customs is a little more than three cents for each dollar, but at 31 customs houses the government was obliged to spend more than one dollar to get one dollar. It cost \$270 to collect one dollar at Natchez, Miss., and many other collection districts followed in order.

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