THE APPEAL.

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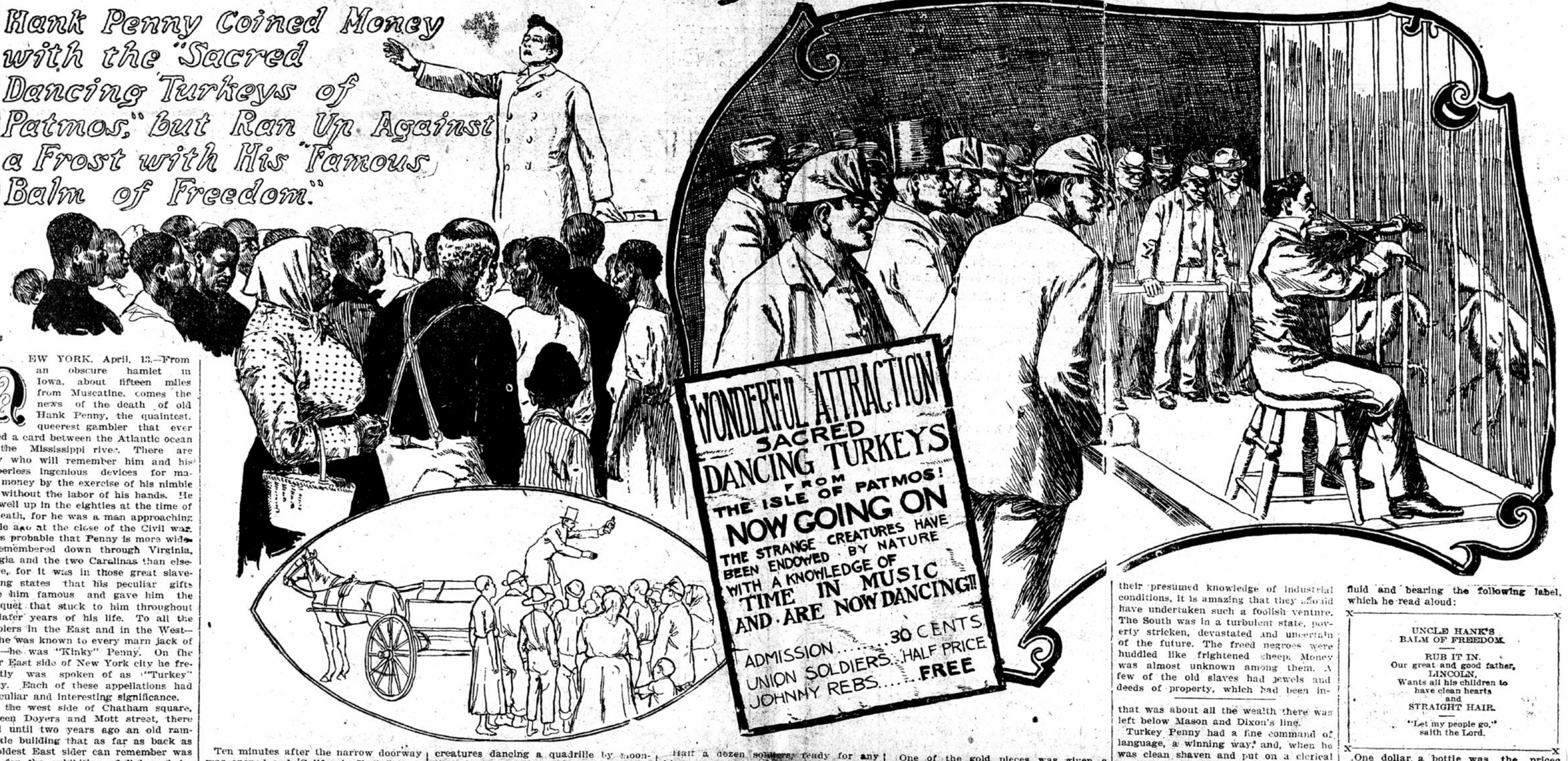
Funny Schemes of a Notorious Fakir

Hank Penny Coined Money with the "Sacred Dancing Turkeys of Patmos," but Ran Up Against a Frost with His "Famous Balm of Freedom."



NEW YORK, April, 13.—From an obscure hamlet in Iowa, about fifteen miles from Muscatine, comes the news of the death of old Hank Penny, the quaintest, queerest gambler that ever turned a card between the Atlantic ocean and the Mississippi river. There are many who will remember him and his numberless ingenious devices for making money by the exercise of his nimble wits without the labor of his hands. He was well up in the eighties at the time of his death, for he was a man approaching middle age at the close of the Civil war.

It is probable that Penny is more widely remembered down through Virginia, Georgia and the two Carolinas than elsewhere, for it was in those great slave-holding states that his peculiar gifts made him famous and gave him the sobriquet that stuck to him throughout the later years of his life. To all the gamblers in the East and in the West—and he was known to every marn jack of them—he was "Kinky" Penny. On the lower East side of New York city he frequently was spoken of as "Turkey" Penny. Each of these appellations had a peculiar and interesting significance.

On the west side of Chatham square, between Doyers and Mott street, there stood until two years ago an old ramshackle building that as far as back as the oldest East sider can remember was used for the exhibition of living skeletons, bearded women, leopard boys and other freaks of nature. A six-story building now nearing completion occupies the site.

It was there that old Hank Penny first came into prominent public notice. In March, 1865, on the day that Sheridan moved up the Shenandoah valley to join Grant, the "freak house," as it was popularly known, blossomed out with a new and novel attraction. The city was filled with soldiers who had served out the term of their enlistment and were coming home—many of them with three years' pay—to squander in one night, perhaps, the money which had taken so long to earn. Nothing was too good for any man in a blue uniform, and besides spending what he had in his own purse, he was at liberty to draw on the purses of patriotic friends. He craved entertainment of the lighter sort, and Hank Penny undertook to provide it. The canvas daubs of fat women and savage cannibals from the South Sea islands had been removed from the front of the freak house and in their place was an immense poster on which was printed in large, bold type the following announcement:

WONDERFUL ATTRACTION!
SACRED
DANCING TURKEYS
from
THE ISLE OF PATMOS!

MARVELOUS PERFORMANCE
NOW GOING ON.
These Strange Creatures Have been
Endowed by Nature with a
Knowledge of
TIME IN MUSIC!
AND ARE NOW DANCING!!
Admission.....30 cents
Union Soldiers.....HALF PRICE
Johnny Rebs.....FREE

Ten minutes after the narrow doorway was opened and 'California Ike" Saltonstall had mounted the ticket seller's box crowds were pouring into the shack. Toward night the jam became so great that the price of admission was raised to 50 cents, but the patronage was not in the least diminished. The news spread over the lower part of the city and to Brooklyn, and thousands came to see the strange spectacle of four solemn red-wattled turkey gobblers dancing in stately measure to the music of a violin played by Hank Penny.

On a platform, raised about four feet from the floor, was a wire cage, in which the turkeys were confined. It extended from the floor of the platform to the ceiling. It had a floor space of about eighty square feet. The bars of the cage were placed well apart, so that there was an easy view of the interior. Directly in front of the cage on the floor of the shanty was a chair, in which sat the fiddler, facing the cage. Behind him, at a distance of six feet, was a stout hickory rail, and inside the railed-off space the spectators were not permitted to enter.

Before the exhibition began it was Penny's custom to deliver a lecture, in which he extolled the wonderful instinct in this particular species of turkey, which caused them to recognize musical sounds. "They are so rare," Penny would begin, "that they are unknown to the students of ancient or modern natural history. It is presumed that they are the descendants of the winged creatures mentioned in the Bible as having danced before John of Patmos. Each of these birds cost $25,000 in gold, and eleven precious human lives. Only after a fierce and bloody battle with the natives were they secured, and on the voyage to this country three superstitious passengers died of fright at seeing these strange creatures dancing a quadrille by moonlight. You will now have the pleasure of seeing a quickstep by the four dancing turkeys—Athos, Porthos, Finnegan and Brannigan."

With that Penny would seat himself and start off with "The Campbells are Coming" or "The Devil's Hornpipe," the turkey standing motionless with necks craned as he began to play. In a few minutes they would move from one side of the cage to the other. "Dance, Athos!" Penny would cry. "Lift a foot there, Finnegan! Come Athos, change corners!"

All the time he would keep tapping with his right foot on the floor. As the music became faster and shriller, the awkward, stupid looking creatures would lift their long, ungainly legs first slowly and then more rapidly, and with such regularity that they actually seemed to be keeping time to the music. Then, after five minutes of this performance, which always brought roars of laughter, the music would slow down to a walk, and the turkeys would cease to dance.

Up to April 14, 1865, the date of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the dancing turkeys coined money for their owner. Two hundred and fifty dollars a day was the average receipts. The only expenses were a few bushels of corn and a nominal rental. On the night of the 14th a drunken man forced his way past the rail and lurching over Penny fell against the platform. To save himself he put out his hand. It went between the wire bars and touched the floor of the cage. The turkeys were then dancing a furious quickstep, leaping high into the air, and occasionally giving voice to unearthly gobbles.

The intruder pulled back his hand with a howl of pain. "Wow!" he shrieked. "Why, that's pretty near red hot. No wonder they dance. Come on, boys!"

Half a dozen soldiers, ready for any kind of a lark, broke down the rail and pushed into the inclosure. The crowd surged after them. Penny was thrust aside while an investigation was made, and this is what the crowd found: A thin sheet iron floor at the bottom of the cage; a charcoal brazier filled with glowing embers beneath it; the snout of a pair of bellows in the aperture of the brazier beneath the fire, and one handle of the bellows, lengthened by splicing, leading to the point where the fiddler kept time by tapping with his foot.

The cage was ripped to pieces, the turkeys carried off, and the printed announcement torn to tatters. Penny did not resume business next day, but sought the gaming table and lost nearly all he had made in two weeks. With the breaking up of his show he was dubbed "Turkey Penny," and that name stuck to him until a more ambitious project in a wider field caused him to be known oftener as "Kinky" than as "Turkey."

After the sacred birds from the Isle of Patmos had been carried off, and probably fattened and eaten by their captors, Penny was in hard luck. Of the $3,000 he had made on Chatham square, he had not more than $50 left. The gambler had a well-defined plan in his head, and he proceeded to carry it out. He wanted not less than $1,000, and more if he could get it. "California Ike," his partner in the turkey scheme (he got one-fourth of the profits), was taken into his confidence and they began operations.

Penny with his $50—all the money he had in the world—visited a broker's office and bought two ten-dollar gold pieces, paying a premium, which reduced his capital to a little less than $20. In a goldbeater's shop he bought a small "book" of leaf for $5, and from a stationer's he got a small pot of liquid gum arabic.

One of the gold pieces was given a light coat of gum on both faces. The filmy leaf was placed on each surface and pressed in with a soft bit of linen. So thin was the leaf that a magnifying glass could not detect the laying on, but when the coin was dropped on a hard surface it gave forth a dull, leaden sound altogether unlike the ring of the true metal.

Penny and Saltonstall went together to a famous old gambling house, then on Center street, but long since destroyed. "A stack of blues," said Penny, throwing down the piece not covered with the leaf. He attracted attention by ringing it several times. Gold was not current in those days, and its possessor was usually regarded with interest. Penny got his chips and began to play. "California Ike" asked for a stack and tossed over the doctored coin. He purposely caused it to fall on a marble topped table alongside the dealer.

The sound it gave forth caused the group of players at the board to laugh. "Ike" became indignant. Penny became inquiring. He picked up the piece and said it was as good as the coin he had just invested. The dealer "rang" the half eagle again and pulled a roll of greenbacks from his pocket. "Twenty to one it's a counterfeit," he said.

"I'll take that," responded Penny, flashing up a ten-dollar note. The dealer directed an attendant to go to a drug store and get some acid. Penny suggested that he could prove the genuineness of the coin himself, so he brought out a pocket knife and scraped the gold leaf from both faces. The $200 thus won became $2,000 before the night was over, and a couple of days later the partners started the preliminary of what they believed was a "big thing."

For men of their experience, and with their presumed knowledge of industrial conditions, it is amazing that they should have undertaken such a foolish venture. The South was in a turbulent state, poverty stricken, devastated and uncertain of the future. The freed negroes were huddled like frightened sheep. Money was almost unknown among them. A few of the old slaves had jewels and deeds of property, which had been in-

that was about all the wealth there was left below Mason and Dixon's line.

Turkey Penny had a fine command of language, a winning way, and, when he was clean shaven and put on a clerical make-up, almost exhaled the odor of sanctity. The partners spent four weeks in arranging the route over which they were to travel—Penny to go a week in advance. They aimed to work through middle Virginia, thence through North Carolina, from there to South Carolina and lastly through Georgia.

Penny made his first appearance somewhere in Albemarle county and worked his way down through Buckingham, Charlotte and thence to the border line of North Carolina, and so on over the route selected. His procedure was the same in all cases. Wherever he could find a group of negroes he would harangue them and gain their confidence, so they would induce others to come to a lecture later in the day. Penny's appearance impressed the poor creatures wonderfully. He told them that Father Abraham wanted all the black men in the South to have clean hearts and straight hair, and when they looked incredulous at this he adjured them to pray fervently for a week, asking the good Lord to straighten out their curly wool. He promised a bounty of $100 and a mule to every black man, woman and child whose hair began to unkink within six months. He warned his hearers not to mention the promise to any living white man, and his last words always were "Pray, pray, pray. Pray for straight hair, and the Lord will hear your cry."

At the end of a week "California Ike" followed in a wagon. He found great difficulty in getting permission to address the negroes, and was driven away a score of times. But when he did succeed, he announced himself as the agent of a wonderful preparation warranted to make the kinkiest wool as straight as tow. He affected to know nothing of the bounty offered by Father Abraham. He had eight ounce bottles filled with a dark fluid and bearing the following label, which he read aloud:

UNCLE HANK'S
BALM OF FREEDOM.

RUB IT IN.
Our great and good father,
LINCOLN,
Wants all his children to
have clean hearts
and
STRAIGHT HAIR.

"Let my people go."
saith the Lord.

One dollar a bottle was the price asked, but if he had offered a gross for a dime, the swindler would have made just as many sales. If money was not to be had he would accept rings or any article of jewelry. In middle Virginia he was offered a piano, which was buried in a corn field, for two bottles, but he couldn't accept the price. The hundred or so bottles he did sell were used with great faith and persistency, and many an old darkey's head was rubbed bare of wool in an endeavor to unkink what little black fuzz he had left.

"California Ike," disgusted with his failures, caught up with his partner at Atlanta. The expedition went to pieces there, and they came North after twice being threatened with lynching. "Kinky" Penny's partner may be living still. He was last heard of four years ago, when he was dealing in a faro bank in Chicago.

Ingratitude.

Many of the men who are at the front in Cuban affairs seem to think their island owes nothing to the United States. An acknowledgment of gratitude or any sort of concession to the Americans, they say, would "endanger the sovereignty of their republic." Who gave them the chance to organize a republic? If the United States had not intervened in the spring of 1898 the rebellion would have been suppressed by the end of that year. Instead of having Gen. Wood for a governor they would have Weyler, with all the disastrous consequences to themselves that Weyler's victory would bring to them. The antics of the men like Cisneros and the rest of the Yankee-haters in the island give some color of truth to the assertion of many Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans and other foreigners that the Cubans do not know the meaning of rational freedom, and do not deserve it.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

THE NEW VICE PRESIDENT.

What the Future Has in Store for Mr. Roosevelt.

Theodore Roosevelt's vice presidential salary of $8,000 a year will fall far short of paying his actual expenses during the next four years. The house at Seventeenth street and Rhode Island avenue which he has just leased furnished from Bellamy Storer, minister to Spain, will cost him $6,000 annually. In other words the new vice president will spend all but $2,000 of each yearly stipened for mere housing comforts. This meager balance the grocer alone will dispose of before a single season spent in Washington has gone into history. Financially speaking, he has taken a great tumble within the past few months. As governor of New York he received $10,000 a year and had free use of the beautifully appointed executive mansion at Albany. Taking all things into consideration, the governorship netted him $8,000 more a year than will the second office of the land.

Mr. Roosevelt's leasing of the Storer house indicates that he intends to shine as a social star. The rental asked for it would indicate that the Storer mansion is one of the show houses of Washington. But as seen from the exterior it is unpretentious. It is of buff brick, has three stories and a basement and contains about twenty rooms. It is of modern renaissance architecture, with classic moldings, which lend a colonial effect. Although cut up into many small rooms, it is artistically decorated inside. The entrance, on the basement floor, is reached through a vault-like vestibule with grated doors. The drawing room above is luxuriously furnished and contains many souvenirs of Mr. Storer's travels. The most notable apartment, however, is a capacious dining room, added since Mr. Storer came here ten years ago to take his seat in congress. High officials gathered about its broad mahogany board will be surrounded by rare specimens of pottery and porcelain. In one corner a valuable bronze image of Buddha now keeps silent vigil. The room is made radiant in the daytime by a large window of yellow glass overlooking Seventeenth street.

To the Storer mansion library Mr. Roosevelt will move his valuable books. Here during each morning while congress is sitting he will be engrossed with his private secretary and the early mail. Leaving for the capitol at 11:15 he will enter his private carriage—Uncle Sam will furnish him no equipage—and drive to the senate wing of the capitol. Alighting within the porte cochere formed by the eastern portico, he will enter the front basement door, take the elevator to the main floor and proceed to his official sanctum—the vice president's room. This is the most luxuriously appointed office to be seen in Washington. It is approached only from the senate lobby.

Visitors admitted to the new vice president's presence will enter his sanctum by the first door met on the right of the lobby. They will find the second gentleman of the land seated in the center of the room at a huge mahogany flat-top desk. His feet will rest upon a gorgeous royal Sennah rug, which cost $212, and the light from the two large windows at his back will fall over his shoulders through two pairs of Brussels point lace curtains for which the senate a few years ago paid $300. Looking up from his papers his eyes will fall upon a $900 grandfather clock, in a mahogany case, just to the left of the $175 silk-velvet portiere covering his doorway. Turning to his left the new president of the senate will survey a $130 mahogany sofa immediately beneath a large portrait of Washington. From either side of this portrait the marble features of Former Vice President Wilson and Former President Pro Tempore Lafayette Foster will look solemnly down upon their successor.

Mr. Roosevelt will have his back turned to a marble mantel surmounted by a large mirror covering the space between his two windows, whose light will be reflected in the polished tops of three small mahogany desks, upon another two-hundred-and-twelve-dollar rug, in the rear of the room. The vice president's necessary reference volumes will be visible through the plate glass doors of a broad mahogany bookcase almost covering the wall to his right. If he wishes to wash the dust of official labor from his hands he need but brush aside the draperies of an alcove penetrating the wall to the left of his doorway.

When Mr. Roosevelt wishes to dictate a letter he will turn to his private secretary, to whom Uncle Sam will pay a salary of $2,200 a year. His official errands will be attended to by a messenger made happy by attended to by a messmade happy by a generous annual salary of $1,440.

Roosevelt has been cramming senate rules and precedents during his leisure since the Philadelphia convention. As a parliamentarian he is not so experienced as was Mr. Hobart when he arrived at the capitol four years ago. The former vice president had been speaker of the New Jersey house of representatives for two terms and president of his state senate one term. Mr. Roosevelt was a member of his state legislature for two years, but nearly two decades have elapsed since he gained that brief parliamentary training. Therefore he has had to spend considerable time of late mastering the routine and detail of the senate proceedings. Moreover he has had to study the numerous and technical parliamentary precedents established in the senate since the very first days of the republic.

Although presiding over the senate, Col. Roosevelt, strange to say, will be neither an officer nor a member of that body. It will be impossible for the senate, acting directly, to remove him. Yet he will receive all communications addressed to the senate by the president, the house, any other branch of the government or any individual. He will not participate in debates. He will only be heard when giving his decisions and opinions. He will have no vote except in case of a tie, and this opportunity will have a slim chance for occurrence during the next four years. The most notable case of a vice president's making history thus was the passage of the Walker tariff bill by the deciding vote of George M. Dallas, vice president during Polk's administration. No bill or resolution passed by the senate during the next four years will be authentic without Mr Roosevelt's signature. But not being a member of the senate Mr. Roosevelt will have no hand in the formation of the senate committees. Neither will he be admitted to the caucuses of republican senators, which will appoint the committees and the many officers of the senate. In other words, Mr. Roosevelt's legislative powers will be almost at the absolute zero of importance compared with those of the speaker of the house. President Pro Tempore Frye of the senate is to-day a more powerful man in his body than Mr. Roosevelt will be on Tuesday and thereafter. Moreover, Mr. Frye, in addition to receiving the full vice presidential salary, enjoys many perquisites which will not legitimately fall to the vice president.

Being a senator, Mr. Frye has been entitled each year to 20 cents a mile for travel expenses to and from sessions, $125 for stationery, $10 worth of packing boxes, hundreds of bound government publications, a box of plants and cuttings from the Botanical gardens, ten charts from the coast survey, 8,000 packages of garden seed, 400 packages of flower seed and various bulbs and cuttings from the department of agriculture. But while no one appears to be legally authorized to regularly furnish these incidentals to the vice president, he will probably have no difficulty in obtaining, by courtesy of the officials, whatever products of the government grist he desires for personal use.

About two-thirds of the next four years will be a vacation, pure and simple, for Roosevelt, so far as his official duties are concerned. In other words, he will be required to devote only about sixteen months of his entire term to official work—not counting Saturdays and two weeks of Christmas vacation. Even then he need sit in the senate but about two hours each day when it is in session. During the "morning hour"—from noon until 2 p. m., while bills are being introduced, reports are being presented, he will personally preside. But after 2 o'clock he may hand his gavel to some senator, descend to the senate restaurant, eat a sumptuous luncheon and later retire to his luxurious sanctum to puff a fragrant Havana and chat with whoever of his callers he may wish to see. His presence in the senate will not be again required until adojurnment time. If he wishes to take a few days of extra holiday he can delegate his powers to the president pro tempore.

Thus you will see that the hero of San Juan Hill will have abundant time for hunting big game and for devotion to private literary work. He will be a valuable addition to the literary colony which has sprung up here among high officials, under the leadership of Senator Lodge and Secretary Hay. He will probably receive more orders from publishers than he can possibly fill. A man in high official life with any literary talent can ordinarily double his salary in this way. Tom Reed might have derived a handsome income from his pen, but he would not exert himself in literary channels to a great extent.—Washington Star.

ACROSS NIAGARA IN A BASKET.

In the Museum at Buffalo, N. Y., there is an iron basket which always arouses the curiosity of the visitor. The basket is about five feet long and four feet board, and is made of iron strips interlaced after the fashion of a common splint basket. No one would ever guess its purpose were it not labeled after the manner of museum curios.

This basket was used a half-century ago, when the then marvelous engineering feat of bridging the Niagara river just below the falls was undertaken. The basket was made for the purpose of carrying the workmen across the river after the cable was secured, but the first person actually to cross was Col. Eugene Childs, now a resident of Minneapolis, then a boy of seventeen, who had been born and reared within sight of the falls. Col. Childs was one of four to make this first trip, and the distinction was awarded him on account of the part which he took in successfully carrying out the plans of the engineer.

With the aid of two companions he flew a kite across the eleven hundred feet between shore and shore, successfully landing it upon the further side. To the string of the kite was attached a heavier cord, and still a heavier one, until after the usual manner a sufficiently strong rope was pulled across to draw after it the one-inch cable of thirty-six wire strands, the ends of which were then firmly imbedded in the solid rock. So well did he succeed with his kite flying that when the strong cable was firmly implanted and the iron basket made ready for the workmen who were to cross to the opposite shore, he, with his companions, was singled out as deserving of making the first trip.

With boyish enthusiasm they accepted the offer. To each end of the basket was attached a strong rope which ran over a windlass on each side of the river. Everything was made safe, and the boys started on their novel journey. They were only one hundred feet blow the plunging cataract, and directly over the whirling rapids, at an elevation of more than 140 feet. Col. Childs confesses that there were blanched faces in that iron basket before it reached the opposite shore and was drawn back again. But the trip was one of the experiences of his life which he would not willingly forget, although the hair-raising sensations which he underwent while suspended in midair over Niagara are as distinctly recalled as are any of the more tangible events of the day, and the odd looking iron basket in the museum has a very special significance for him.

Col. Childs served during the Civil war as captain of Company A, Fifth Iowa infantry until 1863, and in 1865 as colonel of the Forty-seventh Veteran Volunteers of Iowa. He has now retired from active business life, and his home is in one of the lake suburbs of Minneapolis.

—Julia D. Cowles.

A Clear Field.

Towne—D'Auber tells me he's in love with his art.'

Browne—Is he? Well, he need never have any fear of a rival.—Philadelphia Press.

Not Very Close.

Bighead—Isn't it strange the way the nations are acting? Americans express sympathy with Kruger, Canadians with Aguinaldo, and Russians with Cronje.

Wiseun—Oh, I don't know. That is about as close as Christian nations can get to the divine command. They love one another's enemies.—Puck.

Nature sometimes adjusts conditions when accident has upset them. It is related that Link Clem of Orr, Kan., who enlisted for service in the Philippines, was wounded in a leg in his first battle, and when the wound healed he found that the injured member was two inches shorter than the other. He was fitted with a cork-soled shoe and sent home. Soon after his return he met with an accident and broke the other leg. When the bones were set, curiously enough, both legs were found to be of the same length, but his height had been reduced by two inches.