

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL.

POLITICIANS AND ORATORS IN CONGRESS.

Two Recent Examples Which Show the Power of Old Time Methods—The Rejection of Mr. Hornblower—The Same Old Fight Over "Senatorial Courtesy."

Who was it that recently remarked that the day of oratory had passed? I rather think the name of this individual is legion. The fact is, it has been rather a fad for some years to depreciate both the politician and orator. We were to have a new era of government, in which business men—plain-spoken fellows, guileless alike of duplicity or genius—were to run things.



Hon. Bourke Cockran.

The great financial interests of the country were almost hopeless, he suddenly flashed into prominence as the master of the situation, and by a display of consummate skill, restored confidence to the broken Administration ranks, whipped the recalcitrants into line, and presto! the bill was passed.

The Democrats in the House have been getting into the same sort of muddle over the tariff bill as characterized the conduct of the silver bill in the Senate. They have acted in a dazed, half-hearted way, as if they feared inevitable defeat. Mr. Boutelle, of Maine, and several other sharp Republicans, were having no end of fun with them. The debate dragged. The House welcomed with enthusiasm the eccentric and sockless Simpson, of Kansas, as a relief to the dreary round of Republican attack and Democratic apology which the debate had exhibited.

The action of the Senate in rejecting the nomination of Mr. Hornblower for the Supreme Court bench has probably brought matters to a head between the President and the New York Senators. It is the general opinion that the defeat of the Administration was rather needless. I have no doubt that Mr. Hornblower was both an able and capable lawyer. President Cleveland has a rare faculty for selecting new men, and doubtless he exercised unusual care in this case in choosing a



Senator Hoar.

man whom he deemed fully qualified for the office. A new man is always very open to attack upon the question of eligibility, and there is a quite general conviction among Senators that the Administration is proceeding too far in the matter of ignoring Senatorial advice. There is nothing new in the situation. It is the same old fight. It is safe to say, however, that Senators Hill and Murphy will not follow the example set by Senators Cockran and Platt in 1880, by resigning their seats. I am told that Senator Hill will attempt to take quite as prominent a part with regard to the Wilson tariff bill when it gets in the Senate as he did in the case of the silver bill. Should the Republican Senators assume the role of talking the bill to death he will be afforded a second opportunity to spring his closure programme. The Republicans, however, may not afford him an opportunity.

There is a strong sentiment in favor of allowing the bill to pass. New revenue legislation is absolutely necessary. The Government cannot go forward upon its present or prospective income under the McKinley bill without running steadily in debt. Mr. Carlisle now estimates the deficiency at the end of the fiscal year at about \$80,000,000. The Democrats are responsible for providing ways and means to run the Government, and should be allowed to carry out their programme. Senator Hoar, who is the guiding spirit of the Senate minority, is understood to be in favor of fair debate and early action. Hoar is naturally opposed to filibustering, and thinks, with many other members of his party, that the best partisan results will follow from an actual application of the principles of Democratic tariff policy to the interests of the country. He, with other Republicans, hopes to see such a reaction as will return the Republican party to power in all branches of the Government.

The Senate Hawaiian Committee is going pretty thoroughly into the details of that now famous question. The country will be treated to a decided sensation when the committee reports. A great constitutional debate will follow. This question is not generally understood, but, although of slight consequence in itself, it involves the whole subject of the future foreign policy of the Government. There is a much stronger sentiment than is suspected among our public men in favor of cutting loose from our traditional policy of non-interference in the affairs of nations commercially allied to the United States. This will be made plain when the committee reports. The late Administration rather cautiously took up the annexation policy. President Cleveland undertook to thoroughly reverse this action. He has met temporary failure, through not properly estimating the strength of the forces that are actively at work in the interest of a more aggressive foreign policy. Whether he will be able eventually to rally his party unitedly in favor of his policy remains to be seen. The question is not going to be shelved. It involves a subject of real national importance, and neither party is thoroughly united in regard to the issue. In fact, upon what question is either party united at present? The political situation is full of puzzling problems, and underneath the surface the politicians of both parties are seriously anxious in regard to the trend of public sentiment. TOWNSEND.

Digging for a Fortune. Near the town of La Plata, in the Argentine Republic, there is a fortune of some \$1,800,000, securely bound in a steel chest, buried in the ground outside the city.

This treasure is somewhat on the order of the supposed Capt. Bidd treasure, but the money is in Bank of England notes, and the following is the way in which this enormous amount of cash was hidden from a large party who are on the hunt for it.

When the civil war broke out in Chili, President Balmaceda, feeling the necessity for several men-of-war, commissioned Col. Pinto, one of his most trusted friends, with the amount of money above mentioned to purchase vessels in England.

Col. Pinto embarked on one of the steamers plying between Valparaiso and Liverpool, but the time required for him to get to England was so long that before he reached port Balmaceda had telegraphed him to return without purchasing the ship.

Col. Pinto changed the bills of exchange which the President had given him into Bank of England notes, put them into a steel chest and returned to Valparaiso. En route he learned of the downfall of Balmaceda, and he concluded that the Argentine Republic would be a more agreeable country for him to live in.

He consequently took up his abode in that place, but, being afraid to put the money in any bank, for fear that his enemies would claim it, he buried the treasure, and later, foolishly, went to Valparaiso, where he was arrested and imprisoned.

Naturally the Government wanted the money, and they tried all the means in their power to obtain it. Col. Pinto refused to divulge the hiding-place of the treasure, and the fact getting abroad that the money was buried, almost everybody around the usually quiet town of La Plata is digging with pick and shovel in their hunt for the steel chest.—Science Sitings.

The Moulting of Birds. The strain of a year's wear, with exposure to wet, sun and wind, upon the innumerable fibres and hooklets brings the feather into a somewhat dilapidated condition. It then, by a natural process, falls from its attachment, and a new and perfect one grows in its place.

Although the feathers develop rapidly, there must naturally be an interval between the loss of the old one and the time the new one is sufficiently perfected to be of use, and it may consequently be thought that the bird's power of flight would be impaired or destroyed during the time of the moult. To a certain extent this is the case, but the injurious consequences are greatly mitigated by several compensating circumstances. In the first place, the moult of the wing feathers takes place in the autumn, after the season and activity called forth by the domestic duties of spring and summer—the courtship, nest-building and feeding of the young brood—are over, and existence has become comparatively quiet and monotonous. Then, again, by a most admirable physiological arrangement, instead of all the feathers moulting simultaneously or even irregularly, the change takes place according to a regular plan, and symmetrically in the two wings; the feathers on the two sides falling out in pairs.

In this way the wings of opposite sides are always in the same condition, and the inconvenience is minimized to the greatest possible extent. It is well known that to incapacitate a bird from flight it is only necessary to produce an inequality in the wings by clipping one end of one. If both are shortened to a par, they will be retained, although, of course, not in the same perfection as before. On this principle birds are able to preserve to a considerable extent the faculty of flight during the whole period of moulting their wing feathers.—Good Words.

A wife is usually a powerful extinguisher to the man who thinks he will set the world on fire.

Free Coal and the People.

As to what free coal will do for the people of the country at large, The Post has already expressed its opinion more than once. That it will injure ninety-nine where it benefits one, seems to us as clear as the noonday sun. Now comes Mr. John H. Inman, a man of affairs, a leader in the financial world, a profound and a successful student of the problems of economy, who has his doubts as to the remaining one after the ninety-nine shall have been disposed of.

Mr. Inman says: "It is highly problematical whether free coal would benefit the poor of even a single Southern seaport, but, on the other hand, it would prove a tax on many thousands of Southern consumers at inland points. Take away the through traffic of a railroad, and it is inevitable that the loss will, as far as possible, be recouped by the raising of local freight rates. The people in towns between the mines and the seaboard, along lines of rail having long hauls of either coal or iron, ought, from a standpoint of self-protection, to be the most vigorous resisters of either free coal or free ore, or the cutting to 2 1/2 per cent. ad valorem of the duty on pig iron."

We quote from an interview with Mr. Inman published in a recent issue of the Manufacturers' Record, in the course of which he discusses the significance and probable operation of the Wilson bill should that measure eventually become a law. It may be said, of course, that Mr. Inman is a railroad man and that he speaks in the railroad interest. Friends of the bill may easily attempt the argument of prejudice and in that way seek to break the force of Mr. Inman's proposition. In all likelihood they will. But it seems to us that his warning is all the more weighty in that he knows whereof he speaks, and forecasts the course of the railroads in the light of a perfect familiarity with their necessities. No one, we imagine, will deny that free coal will cut down the through freight business of many of our great trunk railroads, and no one except a poet or a dreamer expects the railroads to be conducted at a loss. It is only rational to assume, therefore, that if legislation should curtail their revenues in one direction they must recruit them in another or close out entirely. If they adopt the latter expedient, untold misery will be entailed upon millions of people. If the former, every patron of the railroads will have to contribute to make good the deficit. In either event, free coal becomes a costly luxury to the people. In either event it is a blunder.

Only dupes and demagogues declare that the railroads are a curse and that the country would be better off without them. Honest and intelligent men know that they are the most potent agents of civilization and the largest factors in our National prosperity. All the blatherskites that ever brayed to a credulous rabble are not worth as much in the scheme of human progress as a tramway from here to Bladensburg. Railroads build up waste places; they populate deserts; they make nations homogeneous and therefore strong, they furnish employment for whole communities of industrious and frugal people. And legislation that strikes at them strikes at everything useful and wholesome and civilizing in the entire country.—Washington Post.

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