

### THEIR SIGNATURES.

#### A LOOK AT A LOT OF SENATORIAL AUTOGRAPHS.

##### Penmanship of the President and Cabinet—How the Characters of Our Statesmen Are Made Manifest by Their Signatures.

[Washington Cor. Cleveland Leader.]

The mania for autographs prevails at the capital, and each day you may see the page boys of congress running from representative to representative, and from senator to senator, with long, morocco-covered books in their hands, asking each man for his autograph. Most of the great give a scratch of the pen willingly, and some write little pieces of poetry or "Yours truly" in addition to their names. Some put the date and the town, county, and state where they reside, while others merely write their names in the shortest possible way. These albums do not belong to the pages. The boys are paid by strangers and others \$2 apiece for carrying them around. Sometimes they belong to congressmen, and when Senator Tabor, of Colorado, was here he created a sensation by taking about his own album to his brother senators. This looked rather foolish to the other statesmen, but still there is a great deal in autographs, and some men can tell more of the character of a person from his handwriting than from his photograph. I am now looking over the books in their hands, asking each man for his autograph, which was left in the press gallery for the signatures of the correspondents. It belongs to McCarty, of The Baltimore Sun, and is to go to a lady friend of his in California. He tells me it has already cost him \$15 to get the signatures, and that he has been two years in doing it. The book begins with the president and his cabinet.

President Arthur writes a big up-and-down hand which sprays up from one word to the next without leaving the paper. He is evidently glad when the end of his name is reached, for he closes it with a flourish, and the final "r" takes a short right through the "Arthur" and across the "t." The president's figures are well made, a trick which he had to learn when he taught school, and his penmanship is quite legible.

No one would imagine Secretary Frelinghuysen's autograph was written by a man. It looks like the signature of a small, crabbled, and a foreign policy modeled on the autograph would be weak indeed. Hugh McCulloch, old as he is, writes far steeper than Frelinghuysen, and Secretary Chandler has a good round hand. Robert T. Lincoln's signature has an "r" bigger than all the rest of his name, and the "t" in the middle initial is monogrammed with the "L." Attorney General Brewster writes in the same lead way that he dresses. The ink flows in rivers, and every curve says "This is Brewster, with his coat-of-arms, his frilled shirt, his white plug hat." Judge Gresham pens his name in big, black curves, and his signature, like himself, is plain, common sense and outspoken.

In the same way the characters of some of the senators may be seen in their autographs. Lucius Quintus Latham writes as though he were a monk in some old monastery of the fifteenth century. The letters are small and neat and made in the up-and-down strokes in vogue before Spencer invented his curves and loops. It is a scholarly hand, and is warmer, I think, than that of George Frisbie Hoar, which stands upon the paper as cold as Massachusetts and as reserved as Boston, outlined with a red or a red-inked flourish, and abbreviated at every point.

The late Senator Anthony wrote a hand modeled on the tracks in the mud of his big turkey farm in little Rhode Island. The "y" at the close of his autograph has a flourish like a big turkey's claw, and it ends in a knob like the bone end of the same. The hand of David Davis is as heavy as himself. He uses blue ink and punctuates profusely. Howell Jackson, of Tennessee, writes an old-time style. Senator Pugh, of Alabama, scribbles in acute angles, and Isham G. Harris throws his pen about boldly as if he knew the government was paying for the ink.

John A. Logan's signature takes up half a page, and it is like nothing outside of the hieroglyphics in the subterranean tomb of TI. It is as bold and aggressive as Logan's own character, and he closes it with a dashing curve half as big as the word which he carried during the war. Senator Edmunds has also an illegible signature, but it looks more like the sign on a Chinese tea box than the Egyptian scroll of Logan. Senator Frye writes his name, state, and date without taking his pen from the paper—an emblem of quickness on the part of the senator. Camden of West Virginia and Jones of Florida have the same style of handwriting, and Ingalls of Kansas, Hendall of North Carolina, Bayard of Delaware, and little Gen. Hale of Maine all use up-and-down strokes, and write as if they were not ashamed of their names. Senators Sherman, Vest and Angus Cameron all have small, finely-written signatures, but Voorhees writes with a bold goose quill flourish a blustering hand, and Ben Harrison evidently uses a steel pen.

Philetus Sawyer, the millionaire of Wisconsin, prints his signature. Ward Miller uses a goose quill. Plumb of Kansas, writes a hand which would neglect the old printers who set type for him when he was editing a country newspaper, and Senator Sewell of New Jersey, uses more ink than any other man in the senate. McMillan of Minnesota, puts a long flourish under his signature, and pens his letters in bold, straight strokes. Van Wyck of Nebraska, has a signature like a green school-boy's and his letters are half like capitals and half like small letters. He puts his residence in all his autographs, and gives the day and date of his writing. Eli Salisbury writes on a straight line across the page and he evidently has a mathematical eye. Senator Tabor's signature is the best thing about him. Senator Garland of Arkansas, writes like copperplate, and Senator Call of Florida, has a whip-like flourish under his name which looks as though a man's hand had penned it. German of Maryland, writes a big, bold hand. It is the fist of a base-ball player and a man in sound physical condition. Hill of Colorado, writes well, but the autographs of Beck and Joe Brown look as if they were scrawled off with the wrong end of a goosequill.

Take the senators all in all, and they are as good a set of penmen as you will find in any body of the kind. They write, as a rule, plainer than the members of the house, some of whom can hardly read their own writing.

An Apparent Exception.

[Boston Post.]

Says a philosopher: "No astronomer occupied man was ever infernal." Did that philosopher ever while the conductor stand in front of him while he fitted out a search expedition for his solitary horse-car ticket.

### BIRDS FOR THE MILLINERS.

#### The Kind Most in Use—Where They Come from—Tropical rarities.

[New York Sun.]

A great heap of wide spread antlers in the window, with a simple black and white sign above them which reads, "Taxidermist," is the only street display of a down-town place of business in New York, where hundreds of thousands of birds have been flayed and their skins dressed for the ornamenting of hats and bonnets, and hundreds of hides of all sorts of animals, from a mouse to a cinnamon bear or an African tiger, have been mounted for the use of dealers in furs and the decoration of parlors and studies. The chief part of the business is the preparation of birds for milliners.

"What kind of birds do you use most?" "The common sorts—red-winged blackbirds, reed birds, snipes, turtle doves, orioles, yellow birds, thrushes. Any small bird can be used. We buy them of men who make a business of supplying us. Most of the birds we handle are from New Jersey, but a good many come from Long Island, and we receive some from the west and south. A few are imported."

"What do you pay for them?" "That depends on the fashions entirely. Two years ago the demands of the milliners was for red wings and yellow birds. We paid from 35 to 35 cents apiece, and at the same time we had to pay as high as 47 cents apiece for a lot. Last year we got all we wanted at from 7 to 8 cents each."

"Where do all these fancy birds that look like pictures of tropical rarities come from?"

"All from Jersey. By inserting a snipe's bill in the place of the bill of a crow blackbird, and then combining parts of the skin of other common birds, we produce a monster, but if the colors are well matched the result is attractive to the common eye. However grotesque it may appear to one who knows all about the appearance of birds. It is not uncommon to see in the Grand street windows hats that have half a dozen bird heads projecting from one mass of feathers that might be the breast of a swan or the pickings from a second-hand pillow. The wings that adorn some hats are about as much like wings as a stovepipe is like a lead pencil. But these queer tastes are the making of our business. The portions of the bird's skin which are cut away when mounting a bird naturally for a hat can all be used up in wings by giving them to a model."

#### What Killed Dickens.

[Chicago Tribune.]

Mr. Dolby's book on Dickens as a lecturer confirms the opinion that Dickens bronched on his death by overwork and over-excitement. According to Mr. Dolby, the reading of the murder scene in "Oliver Twist" by Dickens brought up the reader's pulse from its normal 72 to 118. "On these occasions he would have to be supported in his retiring room and laid on a sofa for fully ten minutes before he could speak a rational or consecutive sentence." Yet this reading he gave very frequently.

#### How to Spoil a Cigar.

[Chicago News.]

"I say, George, what do you pay for these cigars?" "Fifty dollars a thousand." "Splendid cigar, George. Smokes beautifully. Very fragrant. But \$50 is a good deal of money to pay for cigars." "Why, that's only 5 cents apiece." "Ah, that's so. Was thinking it was 50 cents apiece. I thought it was a dreadful price for such a miserable roll of dried cabbage. I don't see how you can smoke the things."

#### Better Than Bees.

[Norristown Herald.]

An agricultural paper informs its readers that "A life of bees planted in the orchards will increase the crop of apples, as the pollen rubbed off the bodies of the bees fertilizes thousands of blossoms which might otherwise be barren." We can assure our farmer friend, however, that one cross dog placed in the orchard will increase the apple-crop 50 per cent. more than two hives of bees. A cross dog will "go right to the spot" quicker than the pollen.

#### Self-Correction.

[Chicago Times.]

Little boy has been swearing, and mamma, to punish him, washed thoroughly the inside of his mouth with soap-suds, "so," as she explains to him, "clean away the naughty words." A few days later, while passing the bath-room, she sees the youngster with his face grimed with suds, and his mouth so full that she barely understands his spluttering exclamations. "Getting them all out, mamma. Swore five times yesterday!"

#### A Theological Point.

[Exchange.]

The students of a western theological seminary are reported to have discussed the question whether, in case of a prayer having been read from a printed slip, on a formal occasion, and there having been a typographical error entirely reversing the meaning of a passage, the petition was received by Providence as uttered or originally written. The debaters spent a whole evening over the point, and then had a vote.

#### Average Duration of Life.

[Scientific Journal.]

The average duration of life among well-to-do people is 45 years; among the middle class it is 25 years; among the laboring class 20 years. Among 100 people the wealthy would not number more than five, the middle class no more than fifteen, and the working class eighty.

#### A Verdict with a Moral.

[Arkansas Traveler.]

A coroner's jury, in Arkansas, summoned to determine the cause of the death of a well-known drunkard, returned the following verdict: "The fellow come to his death by switchin' off from one kind of whisky to another. The moral of this hear verdict is, don't switch."

#### Wolves and Men.

[Barje Nestrol.]

"When two wolves meet in the woods neither of them has the slightest doubt as to what kind of animal the other is; but two men never meet in the forest without each one suspecting the other of being a robber."

#### Prince Roland's Novel Idea.

Prince Roland Bonaparte has a novel idea. He proposes to have a collection of the different uncivilized races in Paris. We constantly, he argues, bring together the various products of the globe; why not bring together the producers?

#### To Save Coal.

[Chicago Times.]

If a piece of sheet iron is cut the same size as the inside of the bottom grate, and laid on the bars which constitute that bottom, most fireplaces will burn just as well, less heat will be driven up the chimney, and less coal will be burnt. The chimney must, of course, not be one liable to smoke; the room must have a fairly good draught, and the fireplaces which burn best are those which are the opposite side of the room from the door.

### FLOATING OVER LONDON

#### At a Height Which Makes of the Great City a Toy Village.

[Longman's Magazine.]

All who have made anything like high ascents have exhausted hopes and figures in attempting to describe their emotions in the presence of what they believed "To my thinking it is too much like trying to describe music—when all is said the emotion is not reproduced, or but very faintly. Still we have at least to deal with visual objects and scenic effects. The horror and mystery of suddenly coming to a black cloud 8,000 feet thick—so thick that the balloon ceased to be visible from the car—this can be realized. It was Glaisher's experience in a cove's well's big balloon. A snow storm at high altitudes is very expressive and lonesome. About 10,000 feet above Cambridge, in the middle of a hot June, Mr. Lithgoe told me he was refreshed with one, and came down with his balloon in midsummer still covered with snow. I have noticed the strangely solid, fixed, and often motionless appearance of the white billowy clouds, tracherous pillows inviting one to step out and recline upon them without a hint of instability. Presently, smitten with a crimson cloud, their edges may break into flame, and as one looks, a silent rift is made, and through them a distant wilderness of the deep firmament blue.

Let us ascend soon after sunset in imagination. Nothing can exceed the weird solemnity of night in a balloon. To float over London and see the whole city like one vast flame-map at one's feet twelve miles square of irradiated street, with the winding river picked out by the electric light and as one rises the whole shrunk to about the size of a chess-board. This vision in a moment reduces the mightiest city in the world to the proportions of a welly. The earth itself, as we ascend higher and higher, loses importance to the "clear obscure" above us, to which we seem hurrying space. Only the heavens are now worthy of contemplation, but the stars are changed, they hang more golden and globular, as in the tropic, or as in the poet's vision.

As a cloud rolls from the "opal widths" of the moon the stars grow faint. She is light, but hangs in the blue blackness, and seems to give no light, so greatly attenuated is the light-bearing ether which we now swim. Perhaps the physical emotions confuse or intensify the power of the eye. This singing in my ears is oppressive; this constant oozing of blood in my mouth is, to say the least, trying. I am also very cold, the thermometer many degrees below zero; but the cold is dry and bearable, and there is little wind; but a black veil hangs beneath, just edged here and there with silver, and shot with moonbeams. My heart begins to swim in the valve; let us descend. Down through the night, into the moon-flecked cloud, its 500 feet thick, and seems to have formed it. A moment. It hangs over us now. Still down, down, thousands of feet. The lights of earth gleam feebly beneath me like tiny sparks. The great city has vanished. I have had no sense of traveling, but I have floated clear over London. The rapidity of our descent is terrific. In another moment I smell the hay. 'Tis midnight, the still summer fields are close beneath us. The moonlight is now diffused and soft, the air is warm and scented. The car drops silently like a feather; we alight on new-mown hay.

#### A Cautious Pitcher-Plant.

[Floral Cabinet.]

The pitcher plant or monkey-cap of the east has a whimsical quality which borders closely upon the human economy. To the footstalk of each leaf of this plant, near the base, is attached a kind of bag, shaped like a pitcher, of the same consistence and color as the leaf in the earlier state of its growth, but changing with age to a reddish purple. It is girt around with an oblique band or hoop, and covered with a lid neatly fitted, and movable on a kind of hinge or string fiber, which, passing over the rim, connects the vessel with the leaf. By the shrinking or contracting of this fiber the lid is drawn open whenever the weather is showery or damp. When sufficient moisture has fallen and the pitcher saturated, the cover falls down so firmly that evaporation cannot ensue. The water is thus gradually absorbed through the handle in the footstalk of the leaf, giving sustenance and vigor to the plant. As soon as the pitcher is exhausted the lid again opens to admit whatever moisture may fall; and when the plant has produced its seed, and the dry season fairly sets in, it withers, with all the covers of the pitchers standing open.

#### Spain's Fighting Bulls.

[Madrid Cor New York Telegram.]

I felt some curiosity to know where the bulls came from, for all bulls are not of the fighting kind. Upon inquiry I learned that the fighting bulls came from Andalusia, in the southern part of Spain, and are carefully bred for this especial purpose. My next anxiety was to see how they took them from place to place, and my curiosity was gratified by witnessing the tradition, and there having been intended for the ring from the cars to the stables in the amphitheater. They were removed one at a time with the assistance of a drove of oxen trained for the purpose. These oxen were twelve in number, all white, and large, fine-looking animals. Most of them had bells around their necks. They are trained to surround the bull, and seem to coax him to come quietly along. They follow a leader who obeys the voice of a horseman in the arena, the guides them. Other horsemen are in the ring and on the flanks, but are mounted on good feet animals that can get out of the way of a mad bull when necessary, and it usually is necessary when the bull comes that way.

#### A Natural Healer.

[Philadelphia Call.]

Plumber's wife (sitting by his bed clad in embossed velvet gown and with \$125,000 worth of jewels scintillating on her ears and fingers)—Is he dangerously ill, doctor?

Doctor—No, indeed. He is the most comfortably off of all my patients.

"But what makes his right arm and hand shake so?"

"That's only scrivener's palsy."

"Palsy!" she exclaimed, with a clasp of her jeweled hands. "What could have so prostrated my dear Algernon?"

"He has been writing too much without a rest," smiled the doctor. "He tells me he has been steadily at work, day and night, for four months past, making out his annual bills."

#### To Save Coal.

[Chicago Times.]

If a piece of sheet iron is cut the same size as the inside of the bottom grate, and laid on the bars which constitute that bottom, most fireplaces will burn just as well, less heat will be driven up the chimney, and less coal will be burnt. The chimney must, of course, not be one liable to smoke; the room must have a fairly good draught, and the fireplaces which burn best are those which are the opposite side of the room from the door.

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