

WASHINGTON GOSSIP

LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER LIKE FLORESTA'S EXHIBIT.

SENATOR MORGAN'S TALK

A Man with Happy Faculty in Denying Applications and Requests—Patron Saint of the Harassed Rural Mail Carrier.

WASHINGTON.—Congress has finally abolished the practice of having flowers presented to the members of the house and senate on the first day of the session. The senate took the initiative last year when it passed a resolution forbidding the placing of flowers in the senate chamber. Speaker Cannon took the matter into his own hands so far as the house is concerned this year and instructed the employes not to allow any floral display on the floor of the house.

The giving of flowers had been carried to a ridiculous extent. The desks of members were so piled up with floral pieces that nothing else could be seen and the crowded hall looked more like a floral exhibit than a legislative chamber. It got to be so that the friends of various statesmen attempted to outdo each other in the size and gorgeness of the floral gifts that were sent in on the first day of the session.

It became a common practice that secretaries to members and senators would institute a regular campaign for funds from clerks in the departments who were from the district or state, and these contributions were in a small way a sort of blackmail. The poor clerks believed they could improve their standing with the senator or member by giving up from their hard-earned stipends one to five dollars for flowers. This practice became known to leaders in congress and they determined to put a stop to it, and there will be no more ostentatious display of flowers on the members' desks. The clerks, always detracted from the dignity of congress, and it was a common remark that men of the least prominence and ability usually secured the biggest bouquet.

An Old Man of Vigor.

SENATOR MORGAN of Alabama is now in his twenty-ninth year of service in congress, and in the eighty-second year of his age. He comes to this congress with a vigor and determination that might characterize a man 20 years younger than he is. He has no idea of allowing four score and two years to bar him from the most active participation in the legislation of the country. He has come prepared to debate all the important questions that will be before congress. He is giving particular attention to the railway rate question and has the independence to hold views that are contrary to those of a majority of his Democratic colleagues.

Senator Morgan was always noted for his independence of action. This he demonstrated most effectively during President Cleveland's last administration, when he, as one of the democratic leaders in the senate, caused a good deal of astonishment by opposing many of the administration policies. It was he who made famous the term "cuckoo statesman." One day in answering Senator Vilas of Wisconsin, who was the administration's spokesman on the floor, Senator Morgan referred to those who answered "cuckoo" every time the white house clock struck. The application was so pertinent and humorous that the senate fairly roared, especially as Mr. Morgan seldom indulged in wit or humor.

The Alabama senator proposes to have a voice in public affairs as long as his brain is able to conceive ideas and his tongue to utter them. His speeches and his statements in the public press are usually of a very illuminating character and the young men of the senate are ready to accord Mr. Morgan a hearing, although it requires a good deal of patience to sit out his speeches, which sometimes last for days.

Senator Pettus of Alabama.

SENATOR PETTUS, of Alabama, a colleague of Senator Morgan, continues to be probably the most picturesque character in public life. He is now in his eighty-fifth year, and is really possessed of more physical vigor than his colleague, although he does not put so much strain upon it. Mr. Pettus is not one of those who indulge in "long talks" in the senate. He generally has some pertinent and illuminating observations to make on the principal subjects before that body, but he has no difficulty in defining his position in one-tenth the time that Mr. Morgan occupies in the same duty.

Senator Pettus is known as the "Chinese Mandarin" because of his remarkable physical appearance to the late Chinese statesman, Li Hung Chang. He is a trifle over six feet in height, like the late Earl Li, and wears a mustache and imperial that give him the facial expression of the Chinaman. To augment the resemblance the sen-

ator wears a pair of very large spectacles with steel bows. Senator Pettus attributes his long life and his ability to stand hard work to early rising and regularity of habits. He is up by five o'clock in the morning at all seasons of the year, breakfasts between six and seven and does his work in daylight. He is ready to retire at "early candle light," and only on rare occasions does he put on his evening clothes and attend a dinner or other society function.

Senator Pettus is almost a connecting link between revolutionary times and the present. His grandfather, on his mother's side, was Capt. Anthony Winston, of Virginia, a revolutionary soldier of distinction. The senator's own activities extend over two-thirds of a century. He began the study of law about 66 years ago and was admitted to the bar 64 years ago and has practiced ever since except for the term he served as a lieutenant in the Mexican war and as an officer of the confederacy in the civil war, which he entered as a lieutenant colonel and came out as a brigadier general. Mr. Pettus has over three years to serve and the prospects are that at the end of the term he will be vigorous enough to seek a reelection.

The Right Man.

FOURTH ASSISTANT Postmaster General De Graw is proving to be the one man in 10,000 for the place. He is the buffer between congressmen and the postmaster general and the man to whom a thousand and one complaints and protests come, which he must answer in a way to placate all parties. Mr. De Graw is a great, big man, physically, with a wonderful fund of good nature and the very happy faculty of denying applications and requests in a way that gives no offense, but rather tickles the pride and humor of the congressman or postmaster.

As the official who has in charge the rural free delivery service, Mr. De Graw comes in contact with some odd people and hears some very unique experiences. He is looked on as the patron saint of the rural mail carrier, and they relate to him all their trials and tribulations. The life of the rural carrier is full of unique experiences, and all is not "beer and skittles" in their daily existence. They unfortunately make enemies on their routes, who try to interfere with their performance of duty. A carrier up in Pennsylvania wrote to Mr. De Graw the other day, detailing his recent experience as follows:

"As I was on my way from Leraysville to Rummerfeld with the mail they had a lot of sticks in the roadway, and one stuck in one of my wagon wheels. I got out to remove it and found one end fast with wire, and somewhat vexed, I removed it, and began to remove the others. John Blank's wife ran from the house with a large dipper full of water and threw it on me, also the second one, and then hit me on the back with the dipper and then grabbed up a hoe which was on the yard fence, or near it, and hit me across my back three times, and the last time she hit she broke the handle. By that time I had removed all the sticks I could get loose."

Mr. De Graw could send no great comfort to this badly misused mail carrier.

Speaker Cannon Busy.

SPEAKER CANNON has his hands full nowadays trying to find places for all the new members for the present house of representatives. He has been compelled to take from the democrats some 12 or 15 places, in order to accommodate the increased republican membership. In the last house there were 210 republicans and 176 democrats. With a membership of 54 per cent the republicans enjoyed 62 per cent of the committee appointments, numbering all told 759.

Speaker Cannon has figured out that in the present house the republicans have nearly 64 per cent of the membership, and if they were given the same proportion of committee assignments as in the last house they would receive 73 per cent of the total committee membership. This is too much and would require too great a reduction of the democratic membership to appear absolutely fair. So the speaker has taken another basis for committee assignments. He finds that while there will be 66 new republican members to be taken care of in the coming congress there will be but 15 new democratic members.

Under this plan he has been compelled to disappoint a great many republicans and democrats are kicking because they have lost a dozen committee places. The speaker advises Mr. John Sharp Williams, of Mississippi, the minority leader on the floor, to take out his pencil and do a little figuring. He says he believes that "John Sharp" as he affectionately calls his democratic friend, will find that the democrats have been most generously treated.

Low Dresses Barred.

Notice in an Australian ballroom: "No lady shall wear a dress cut lower than from point to point of the shoulder, the committee to be judges of the matter."

Aged Mountaineer.

Franz DeFreger, though 70 years of age, spent part of the past summer in climbing Tyrolean peaks, some of them over 10,000 feet in altitude.

Quick Awakening.

There's nothing half so swift in life as the awakening from love's young dream.—N. G. Picayune.

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