

PRESIDENT WILL TRAVEL 13,000 MILES

Will Visit Twenty-four States and Speak More Than 200 Times.

By JAMES A. EDGERTON.
WHenever the president has nothing else to do—and at some other times—he “swings around the circle.” As a circle swinger Mr. Taft is the greatest of them all. Colonel Roosevelt was sometimes in the swing, but as a plain and fancy traveler Taft has been running circles all around Roosevelt. In the time of the first King Olaf there was in Iceland, Norway, Russia and elsewhere by turns a gentleman called Thorwald Kodran-son, who was known as the “far traveler,” but compared with our president this Thorwald was securely anchored to an iceberg. A few years ago it was estimated that Mr. Taft had covered enough ground to take him to the moon and back, and since then his journeys have extended the distance to at least one of the fixed stars. Our amiable and abundant chief executive can certainly wander, go, trek, journey, move onward, charge from point to point, tour, hike, travel, take a trip, globe trot or do any of the other things that indicate motion across the earth's surface.

Now he is at it again. Starting Sept. 15, he remains out forty-seven days, covers approximately 13,000 miles, travels over twenty-five different railroads, visits twenty-four states, speaks more than 200 times and spends \$18,000. He outdoes his previous record in 1909. He intends to visit every insurgent that is at home, and the others will have to do some tall traveling if he does not overtake them. For nearly seven weeks he sleeps in a car berth and eats at enough banquets to give indigestion to the whole Japanese navy. Think of the number of reception committees and local chairmen he must meet during this time, the wearying monotony of hearing “Hall to the Chief” from bands that are uncertain on the high notes and the occasions he must listen to “We have with us tonight” or “It gives me great pleasure to introduce,” to say nothing of talking eighteen times a day in railroad yards, town halls, picnics and county fairs. Believe me, the job of being president of these United States is not all pie and doughnuts. Neither does our hearty chief magistrate journey about for health and pleasure alone. Far from it; also to the contrary and quite otherwise. He has a stern duty to perform—viz and to wit, to explain to a somewhat extensive country why he vetoed those tariff bills, why the Democratic majorities of last year should be revised downward and why some of his fellow Republicans should quit insuring and come into the reservation. These are no slight chores for one man, even though he does weigh more than 300 pounds and is quite strong for his weight. Nor are they tasks any man would undertake for the mere enjoyment. The crusaders may have gone about their enterprise in a holiday spirit, and perhaps Columbus considered his trip across the Atlantic as a junket, but a speechmaking tour by a president of the United States deserves a sterner title.

There are already twenty large volumes of Mr. Taft's speeches, and the present tour will make it twenty-one. Nor do these include his messages and state papers. Think of the labor it must have been to make the speeches in the first place! We gasp at such a vast literary output as the result of an entire lifetime, yet the president is comparatively young and has been fairly busy at other things, such as being reporter, lawyer, prosecutor, internal revenue collector, solicitor general, judge, dean of a law school, governor of the Philippines, secretary of war, procurator in the affairs of Porto Rico, Cuba, Panama and elsewhere, besides being the most industrious and prodigious traveler of whom there is official record. A man who can play golf, eat various chains of banquets without missing a course, make all these speeches and do so many other stunts makes the “busy bee” and the ant, to whom “thou sluggard” is told to go, look like sons of rest.

It is frankly admitted by the president and his friends that he is going out this time to talk politics and is going to do most of the talking in the insurgent states. Whether he intends by this to bid defiance to La Follette, Cummins, Bristow and their followers or designs to cut the ground from under them and win their followers is not stated. At any rate, it is a declaration of war and is so regarded by the progressive leaders. Senator Clapp has already been sent to the Pacific coast to counteract the Taft tour in advance, and it may be that others of the progressive group will follow the president. On the part of the Democrats it has been proposed that Speaker Champ Clark “swing around the circle” in Mr. Taft's tracks. But, whatever the insurgents and Democrats may do, Mr. Taft himself is frankly making political speeches. It will be his last chance to do so on an extended scale before the presidential campaign opens, and he is not one to overlook the political hay crop while the sun is shining. There is a tradition in the land that it does not comport with the dignity of a president to make

TRAVEL IN 47 DAYS

Trip Will Exceed His “Swing Around the Circle” in 1909.

speeches in his own behalf while an actual campaign is on, but a year beforehand is a different matter. It is not alone the veto of the wool, cotton and free list bills that the president is discussing, but the arbitration treaties with France and England that the senate has shown a disposition to hold up and amend. By appealing to the people Mr. Taft hopes to bring public opinion to bear on the honorable senators. There are also those who aver that the latest presidential tour may result in getting more Taft delegates in the Republican national convention and that the shrewd surmise to this effect may have been present in the minds of those mapping out the trip. The president's friends reply, “No such thing!” or something of that general tenor, and in proof of their



PRESIDENT TAFT LEAVING HIS PRIVATE CAR

denial insist that Mr. Taft already has the renomination clinched. To schedule a trip of 13,000 miles for the president, sort out of thousands of invitations from almost every city, village and hamlet of the country a few hundred that shall be accepted, work out a list of stops, hours of addresses, time tables and all the other details, is a task the size of which the average man can hardly realize. The culling over of the invitations is attended to by Secretary Hilles and the White House office force. The selection of the actual points to be visited is, of course, a matter for the president himself. The arrangement of time tables and running schedules is made by the passenger department of the railroad on which the trip originates, in this case the Boston and Albany. The notification of the cities the president is to visit, also of the committees having matters in charge, is attended to by the White House force. By far the heaviest portion of the details falls on the shoulders of a secret service man, however. His name is Lucien Wheeler, but he is known from the Atlantic to the Pacific as “Jack” Wheeler. He is only a little past thirty years of age, yet he has been looking after presidential tours for some years. He has not only to provide for the safety of the president, but for his comfort, entertainment, precedence of those who are to welcome and who are seated with him at banquets and a thousand and one other things the mere thought of which would make the average man's head spin like a top.

Jack Wheeler acts as the advance agent of the presidential tour. He goes about two weeks ahead of the main show and arranges everything except the presidential smile. When and where Mr. Taft speaks, where he is to go and in what conveyances, where he is to eat and sleep, who is to meet him, who forms his guard—all of these and many other things are kindly worked out and organized by the thoughtful and omnipresent Jack Wheeler. Perhaps the president is still a free agent and can follow the prearranged programs or not as suits him, but he seldom breaks over.

We enviously speak of the president as having the greatest power of any man in the land, yet as a matter of fact there is scarcely one outside of a penitentiary with so little liberty. He is the slave of his office and of the public. He can go nowhere in privacy. His time is mostly taken up with interviews, demands, requests, public affairs and delegations. In all of his

moves the whole press of the country spies on him and tells of every syllable he utters, every crook of his elbow. If he plays golf that is wired from Los Angeles to Boston. If he steps on a banana peel and strains the sidewalk that is known from London to Manila. If he scratches his left ear somebody talks about it. If he wrinkles his nose it is photographed. The Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid used to break away and be a private citizen now and then, and even modern kings and princes travel incog, but Taft cannot thus escape. It is impossible to disguise 300 pounds or to conceal a smile that is famous from Guam to Porto Rico.

Following the lines laid down by Jack Wheeler is only an incident of the presidential slavery. Most men are bossed by their wives, but Mr. Taft is bossed by everybody. Committees here and there are pulling him this way and that, editors and senators are telling him what to do, his cabinet is advising him, reporters are watching him, photographers are waiting around the corner, banquets are beckoning to him, congress is sending him bills and making him read them, and Jack Wheeler is leaving directions as to when and where he is to do everything except slap at mosquitoes. This is what it means to have the biggest and most sought after job on earth. When a man once attains this proud eminence he has less personal liberty than anybody except a bridegroom at his own wedding. If he should slip out to Casey's bar like an

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DIMENSIONS OF HEAVENS.

Louisville Pastor Tells of Building 792,000 Stories High.

Heaven's exact dimensions were figured out in a sermon the Rev. M. E. Dodd, pastor of a Louisville (Ky.) Baptist church, preached to his congregation. In the course of his sermon the preacher said:

“In Revelation xxi, 16, nervous Christians have read where the dimensions of heaven are only 1,500 cubic miles. Immediately they jump at the conclusion that even this space will not accommodate the vast multitude of which the Bible speaks.

“However, calculation will show that this space will accommodate a building 792,000 stories high and, counting rooms of ten cubic feet, the first floor of the structure would have 627,264,000 such rooms. Multiplying this by 792,000, it is easy to demonstrate that such a building would indeed accommodate an innumerable multitude.”

The Divine Sarah's Rule. Mme. Bernhardt at a supper smiled sympathetically over the story of a young actor who applied vainly for the post of secretary to a rich widow, says the Detroit Free Press.

“He failed, I understand,” said Mme. Bernhardt, “because he didn't wear his best clothes. Now, a young girl applying for a secretaryship to an elderly millionaire would never make such a mistake as that.

“I believe, do you know, that the one great difference between men and women is this: “When an important step is to be taken a man asks, ‘What shall I say?’ a woman, ‘What shall I put on?’”

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