

Champ Clark's Letter

Lee's Status and Lacey's Objection. Senator Stone on the Democratic Party—Cleveland's Swing Around the Circle.

[Special Washington Letter.]

TO be perfectly plain about it, it seems that some people, who are given to seeing hobgoblins and ghosts, are laying too much stress on ex-President Cleveland's proposed swing around the circle. It may be that Grover is estimating the educational effects of that much advertised trip too highly himself. This is a free country, and we say, "Let him swing!" A president of the United States once swung around the circle, hoping thereby to drum up votes enough to nominate himself to succeed himself, but his swing was a testotal failure. The writer of this is not authorized to speak for G. C. and therefore does not know that he is swinging around in search of votes, but if he is—and his whole past justifies the belief that he is—he may be, and perhaps will be, as greatly disappointed as was A. J. in 1893. So let the old man travel. It will not hurt him unless the train jumps the track or there is a collision—things which may happen to all travelers—and his perambulating about the country will not hurt anybody else. He may even pick up some valuable information to enable him to write some more of his delightful essays on fishing for the Saturday Evening Post of Philadelphia, the paper started by old Ben Franklin. G. C. shines in that line of literature, and it causes people to have a kinder feeling for the portly old gentleman. He is doing no harm fishing until he turns fisher of men. As long as he sticks to the gospel of Izak Walton he is all O. K. If people could be convinced that he is not a candidate for president—and at his age he should not be, he is sixty-six—he would receive a more generous welcome than he is likely to receive as it is, but unless he chokes off such yappers as Joseph Pulitzer and ex-Governor Charles T. O'Ferrall of Virginia his trip is likely to be construed as the device of a perpetual candidate, and he will find the cold shoulder oftener than the glad hand.

A Wise Constitutional Provision.

The constitution of Missouri contains a provision which authorizes the governor to veto any particular provision of an appropriation bill or to scale it down. What a pity that a provision like that was not placed in the federal constitution! It would save the people millions annually. As it now is the jobbers all seek to have their jobs fastened on to a bill of general import and general necessity. That done, they feel certain that the president will not veto the bill of which their job constitutes a paragraph, section or item. The Missouri plan takes from the jobber his golden opportunity provided there is an honest and courageous man in the executive chair.

There is another provision of the Missouri constitution which is invaluable in operation. That is the requirement that on roll call there must be an affirmative vote cast by a majority of each house in order to pass any bill. If that were also a part of the federal constitution, it would cure many legislative ills.

The Philadelphia North American-Wanamaker paper and therefore Republican—says: "As a stern warning to officeholders the assistant attorney general's bill is accepted, and a change of methods will be effected in the office. This will be a severe blow to the get rich quick concerns and Mr. Tyner's clever young relative."

Truth to tell, Tyner had been in his quiet office as long as that people thought he was dead. A great many public men live too long.

Lee's Status.

The ways of making an ass of oneself are so numerous that it may be superfluous to point out one, more or less. The fact that the legislature of Virginia has selected the statue of General Robert E. Lee to be one of her two representatives forever in Statuary hall, the American Valhalla, has afforded occasion for several gentlemen to spring into sudden prominence by making exhibitions of themselves. Among them I regret to note my friend Major John F. Lacey of Iowa. The major is unreservedly against the Lee statue and rushed into print to say so.

Now I am too young to have been in the civil war, but are a large majority of American voters, and men of my generation and of the younger generation regard the prominent actors in that bloody drama as great historic personages, no matter on which side they fought.

Within the last four or five years we have heard a vast amount of talk—a good deal of it glib and treacherous—about "a reunited country." If it is reunited, neither Major Lacey nor anybody else ought to object to General Lee's statue in Statuary hall. If it is not reunited, let us hear no more not about it. Certainly if General Fitzhugh Lee and General Joe Wheeler are fit to wear Uncle Sam's uniform and to be on Uncle Sam's roll of his General Officers R. Lee, the courtesant knight of them all, would not contaminate the other inmates of Statuary hall by standing in their midst.

Another thing Major Lacey and other kickers should remember is this: they have nothing to say about who shall stand in Statuary hall—that is nothing to a majority, and such a

distinguished sons in Statuary hall, and nobody has a right to say the state nay. It is a matter exclusively for the state.

Another thing, the fame of General Lee grows day by day. The consensus of public opinion is that he was one of the greatest of all English speaking captains. If the American people had their way, unbiased by cheap John politicians, they would decree that General Grant and General Lee should be disinterred and reburied side by side at Arlington. Inter alia we claim to be the most generous people on earth. Let us prove it now. It has taken the English government—not the English people—250 years to so far forgive that immortal rebel, Oliver Cromwell, as to permit his statue to be erected in London. That Robert E. Lee's statue will some day be erected in Washington there can be no doubt. Will we imitate the English example and wait two centuries and a half? That's really the question and the only question.

Absurd.

Of all the ridiculous farces certainly the senate secret session heads the list. Executive sessions are not really secret, and everybody knows it. They ought not to be. The reason why they are not is that there are and always will be senators who are extremely anxious to curry favor with reporters, and they will blab. There used to be a man in the house from Missouri whose chief stock in trade was to give away the secrets of the delegation. It paid him.

Gammon.

The New York Evening Post, independent, does not appear to be much stuck on the Ohio crowd of politicians and delivers itself of the following more or less sarcastic remarks touching presidential politics in Buckeye-dom:

It is astonishing how early and at how many different places the presidential campaign of 1904 begins. We intended to claim the real starting point for New York by showing that the fate of both parties would depend upon the success of some candidate for mayor next fall, but Senator Foraker has anticipated us by announcing that Cincinnati has superior claims. The Democrats of that city have nominated Mr. Ingalls, the well known railway manager, for mayor, and the Republicans have named a Mr. Fleischmann, not widely known to fame, but believed by Foraker to be "equally good."

The overwhelming reason, according to Foraker, why Fleischmann should be elected is that "this is the beginning of another campaign of best year." He says "it is impossible to disguise this fact," from which we infer that the Democrats are doing everything possible to conceal it and are pretending that nothing but municipal issues, such as the rule of Boss Cox, is fit to be considered. Foraker will tear off that mask. He will show that not only in Cincinnati, but in all the cities of the Union, the Democrats are making believe that they are trying to reform local abuses while they are actually aiming to defeat the Republican party next year. The proof of this is that "everywhere they are preaching harmony and perfecting their organization."

What better evidence could you have than that? If they were everywhere preaching discord and allowing their organization to fall in pieces, there might be some ground for saying that the nomination of such a man as Ingalls was intended for the sole benefit of Cincinnati, but when they are avowedly harmonious and energetic their designs must be dark indeed, in short, Foraker thinks that if Ingalls is elected mayor he will be "in line for the governorship of Ohio and the presidency." That would be awful.

Now, unquestionably the Post is a great paper. It was founded by the attitude of "Thanatopsis." William Cabell Bryan, but it is not an fait as to Ohio politics. Senator Joseph Benson Foraker knew precisely what he was doing when he wrote his earnest and tear compelling address to the Republicans of Cincinnati. He knows that all decent folks in Porkopolis are tired of Cox's old age, and his machine, perhaps the very worst case of boss rule in the land, and he knows that unless something desperate is done they will elect M. E. Ingalls, the Democratic candidate, and bury Cox, old boy, so deep that even Gabriel's trumpet will not resurrect him. And what would Joseph Benson Foraker do then, poor thing? Foraker is still a presidential candidate and will be until he dies. He needs George B. Cox in his business and proposes to save his machine if possible.

Query.

The Washington Post rises to remark as follows:

When the Republican leaders wanted to strike a decisive blow at a trust, they removed the duty on coal when they wanted to fool the people on the question they wanted some new laws.

Now, what I want to ask, if it will not be considered impertinent, is this: if taking the tariff off anthracite coal was a decisive blow to the anthracite trust, what is the reason that taking the tariff off steel would not be a decisive blow against the steel trust, and so on to the end of the alphabet? Now, do not let all the Republicans and trust defenders answer at once. There is no reason under heaven known among men why the trust that works well as to coal will not work well as to everything else on the list of trusts.

Interesting.

The senate arrogates to itself the title of upper house of congress, and yet its lower feet reveal that there are more college graduates in the house of representatives in proportion to population than in the senate. That was making in Washington, a performance which will be worth a great deal to Bailey in his impending trials with J. R. Ralph.

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Good.

The supreme court of Missouri has dealt the beef trust, one of the greatest trusts in the land, a body blow by fining each of the criminal companies \$5,000 and assessing another \$5,000 for costs, etc. Of course this is only a foretaste of what they may expect hereafter. When it was charged that they were in a criminal conspiracy to put up the price of meat food products to abnormal figures, much in the spirit of Boss Tweed they defiantly inquired, "What are you going to do about it?" Well, the boss found out to his sorrow, and the trusts are finding out in Missouri. I feel especially proud of this decision of the Missouri supreme court because it was rendered under and by virtue of a law reported by the committee of which I was chairman when I was in the legislature. As a matter of fact Hon. Lyndner Thompson of Macon and Hon. J. O. Allison of New London were the subcommittee which I appointed to redress the bill to proper shape, and together we piloted it through the legislature. This was in 1880. I suppose the bill has been somewhat amended since then, but it is substantially the bill of 1880. Now, if Mr. Attorney General Knox will secure a few convictions, people will begin to think that the trusts are not bigger than the government.

Senator Stone's Opinion.

The following Washington dispatch must be of interest to all persons interested in the next presidential election:

William J. Stone, junior senator from Missouri and vice chairman of the Democratic national committee, said tonight when asked as to the future of the Democratic party:

"I prefer not to make prophecies as to 'paramount issues' for 1904. If my effort is being made to eliminate him, it will fall, for he is still undoubtedly the most commanding individual force in the party. He cannot be eliminated, and any effort in that direction will recall on those attempting it. The business of 'eliminating' people from the party is the business I want Democrats to engage in. It would be more profitable to get men into instead of getting them out of the party. We have plenty of able men who would make safe, conservative presidents, although they might not indulge in such erratic strenuities as would keep the country on the tiptoe of some dread expectancy."

"The Democratic candidate for president must be a Democrat who has always supported his party ticket—every one there, who, if elected, would give us a straight Democratic administration."

"It is not necessary that a man should have subscribed unconditionally to every declaration of the Chicago and Kansas City platforms. It is sufficient if he has always stood loyally by his party flag."

"Talk of reorganizing the Democratic party is puerile and silly. Some men may need reorganizing, but the party does not."

"When asked what he thought of the recent talk to the effect that the regular Democrats were insisting on too many concessions from old Democrats who wanted to come back into the party, Senator Stone said:

"So far as people getting into the party is concerned, I was every one there. It is no question of repentance, sackcloth and ashes. The doors are open, and if a man wants to co-operate with the Democratic party all he has to do is to get into line with the party. There is no form of doing it that I know of except to do it."

Under a Cloud.

It is a pity—indeed it is pitiful—to see an old public servant like Assistant Attorney General Tyner of the postoffice department retiring under a cloud after a long life spent principally in the public service. He has cut a wide swath in Republican politics. He was postmaster general under Grant, being appointed by that president to succeed the great Connecticut banker, Marshall Jewell, who had become enmeshed in the "Belmont" scandal, a thing which was an abomination in the sight of the "silent soldier." Tyner was also one of the main instrumentalities in defeating Blaine for the presidential nomination in 1876. He claimed that Blaine had promised him a great chairmanship in the house provided he would support Blaine for speaker, which he did, and that Blaine failed, neglected and refused to deliver the goods though frequently requested so to do.

The thing alleged against Tyner is that in his rulings in the postoffice department he has favored the swindling trust investment companies which have fleeced the public out of millions of dollars. It is even claimed that a young man related to him resigned a position in his office to accept service with said companies, as he could use his knowledge of postal affairs greatly to their advantage.

If the news from Kansas is true, then the Kansas Republicans are the hungriest set of politicians on top of ground. It is said, for instance, that thirty palpitating Republican patriots are struggling for the congressional shoes of Chester L. Long, "Hungry Joe" must be the proprietor of the Republican statesman in "the big seventh," rendered famous by Jerry Simpson.

Again, that voracious Republican fiasco, Senator J. Ralph Burton, has hardly warmed his curule chair, yet, and still has four years to serve if he lives; but wicked Republicans are already scheming to yank him out. Among these aspiring Jayhawkers is Governor Bailey. How Burton must have gnashed his teeth when he found that Bailey was lunching with the president in Washington, a performance which will be worth a great deal to Bailey in his impending trials with J. R. Ralph.

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