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WASHINGTON NEWS.

Government Clerks Don't Want Longer Hours—The Jobs are Desirable and for Life or Good Behavior War Department Not a Collecting Agency—Senator Depew will Land Without Much Effort.

Correspondence of the Enterprise.

Washington, D. C., Jan. 17.

There was a rumor abroad a few days ago that the President was going to issue an Executive order to department clerks and employees that their working day would begin at 8 and end at 4.30, and my goodness gracious what a howl did go up! Well, why not. The United States Government is paying way-up salaries to men and women who for the very same services in civil life would get two hours more to the day and one-half as much money. There are departments of the Government where the employees go to work at 8 o'clock and work till 5. The addition recently of half an hour to the working day has increased the effectiveness of the present working force nearly one-sixth, it is said. The United States Government is not an eleemosynary institution, but a great big firm doing business for the people of the United States, and these same people have a right to have their business done in a business-like way. Those people who do not like to work under those conditions for a good paymaster are always at liberty to leave—but none do. It is said that none resign and few die, and not one is willing to resign, no matter what the hours, though they may "kick like bay steers" over the "imposition." As a matter of fact Uncle Sam is the best paymaster in the world today. A man or woman of reasonable intelligence and ordinary decency once in Government position is likely to end life right there, with promotion as merit warrants, and pay every 15 days without discount or failure.

Many Government clerks complain of the routine and "treadmill" existence in a department. Well, is any kind of steady work properly performed other than "treadmill"? How about the woman who marries, cooks three meals a day 365 days in the year, makes beds once each of those days, washes on Monday 52 times a year, bakes bread on Tuesday and Saturday of each of those 52 weeks, and so on through the whole train of housewifely duties? She is earning her wages in making a home for her husband and children, but it is treadmill existence just the same as that of the blacksmith who pulls off horse shoes just to nail them on again, or the bank clerk who counts money eight hours each day, or the preacher who reads two sermons each Sunday, holds prayer meeting in the middle of the week, and routines it through the whole seven days or visiting the sick, the indigent, the indolent and the backslider.

After the rumor of an added hour to the day's work had seethed and boiled and slopped over some, the President announced that such an idea had never entered his head.

The War Department has been tormented to the limit by people who try to collect old debts of army officers through the big department. The Secretary of War has announced

that the War Department is not a collection agency, and it declines to be considered one. He says that of course an army officer should pay his debts, just as any gentleman of honor would, but that in case they do not it is not the business of the War Department to make him do so. The Secretary of War declares that the civil courts are the proper agents to determine whether or not any indebtedness exists, and that it is only when the non-payment of his debts by an officer threatens scandal to the service that the War Department will take any cognizance of it.

Senator Depew is it. Governor Odell looked over the field and concluded that "Our Chauncy" was the best man in the running, so he spoke the word, and the New York Legislature will do the rest. Senator Depew says that was the way of it, and he ought to know, for Governor Odell has had him and all the members of the New York Legislature guessing for some time. It is all right, too. Senator Depew is such a good story teller, and when he laughs in the Senate Chamber he simply wakes the echoes in the marble corridor. Nobody can be gloomy when Senator Depew is around.

Protection of Women.

We may refine as much and philosophize all we please, but there is an instinctive feeling in every healthy man that insult and violence to women on the part of men should be met by corporal punishment. Privation of liberty as by imprisonment does not meet the case, nor do fines, which, in the case of wife-beating, the victim generally pays. Leave this sort of thing to women and what punishment would be awarded? Is there a woman who has suffered from a man's insults or felt the weight of his fist that would not say that whipping is deserved? Touching such outrages, it seems to us that men in making laws forget the differences of sex which make the victim practically helpless. She cannot resent it even as the smallest man can against a large one. By her femininity she is not on an equality for the protection that instinct tells us is of the lasting kind. We know by experience that the punishment that our laws have decreed is not sufficient. For ourselves we agree with the President that the wife beater ought to be whipped.—Indianapolis News.

Bad Company for Him.

"What have you to say for yourself?" demanded the bailie of the drunk and disorderly. "Am verra sorra, sir," returned the charge, "but a cam' up frae Glesca in bad company." "What sort of company?" "A lot o' teetotalers." "Wha-at!" roared the bailie. "You mean to say, sir, that teetotalers are bad company?" "Well," rejoined the prisoner, "ye ken how 'twas. A had a hale mutchin o' whiskey wi' me, an' a had to drink it all to myself."—London Judy.

In view of the report that a live Japanese gunboat is loose in the Indian ocean, the Baltic fleet should be promptly recalled lest it get a case of the rattles and shoot itself to pieces.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

LETTER FROM BILKINS.

A New and Dangerous Disease in the Legislature—The Jug Industry Threatened—Plans to Reduce the Distillery Acreage—Mr. Bilkins Gets a Suspicious Letter.

Correspondence of the Enterprise.

Betsy wuz readin' in the paper er-bout nepotism bein' in the legislater. She axed me whut it meant. I sed: "Oh! I reckon it iz sum new deseese they hev got over thar, sumthin' like apindiseetus, sirosus ov the liver, or sumphin' that the aristokrazy hev an' try ter shut out the common herd. The members ov the legislater awlways git mity sickly in Raleigh."

Betsy 'lowed that I could now see that she wuz rite in not wantin' me ter git a job in the legislater whar I'd be subjeck ter awl sorts ov deseases an' epidemicks an' nobody ter look after me. She sed: "I'm sorry fer them poor men who hev ter stay thar an' suffer frum nepotism an' nobody ter nurse them. If they were at home their wives an' children could do sumphin' fer them. I'll bet they can't even git a drink ov water fetched ter them in Raleigh. They haint got enybody ter put a wet cloth on their heads. I'm so sorry fer them. If I hed sum way ter send it I'd make sum herb tea fer the sick ones an' thet mite do 'em gude."

After readin' sum more Betsy sot thar thinkin' quiet like fer sum time. Direckly she sed: "Zeke, whut iz that anty-jug law that they air makin' such a ter do over in the legislater? Air they tryin' ter stop the makin' ov jugs, or whut air they up to enyhow?"

"No my dear," sed I, "they don't care how many jugs air made, an' don't care who makes them; they air tryin' ter break up the shippin' ov spirits ov fermenti in jugs. So far az I kin kalkilate they want awl whiskey shipped in barrels az jugs don't hold enuff. They iz so meny ov the new sort ov proherbishunists that can't git their hearts an' stumicks ter agree that they find it best ter hev nothin' but big distilleries an' ship hit by the barrel an' then sell it by the bottle. Sum ov the ran' ist proherbishunists in the State air stockholders in the big distilleries, an' sum ov 'em air drummin' fer the big distillers. Sum more ov 'em air engaged in handin' out an' sellin' the whiskey in whut they call dispensaries which air the missin' link betwixt proherbishun and bar rooms. This new sort ov proherbishun wuz invented by Senator Tillman in South Carolina. They air tryin' ter cut down the akerage ov the distilleries an' bar rooms an' make more ter the aker, I guess."

"Do you reckon the Lord approves ov that sort ov temperance work?" sed Betsy.

"I think too much ov my party ter answer thet," sed I. "So far az I kin larn the Lord haint bin considered in the new style ov proherbishun like they hev in sum seekshuns. Senator Simmons iz the whole push in this. Whut we air after iz ter reduce the akerage. Ter go further, I will hev ter tell sum party seekrets."

I got a letter the other day thet iz sorter puzzlin' me. Hit cum frum Greensboro an' red az follers:

"Dear Mr. Bilkins:

"I hev enjoyed reading your articles very much. They always contain sum good hits, show up some phases of human nature, and are full of droll humor, wit and satire. I am going to ask you to have the letters published in book form. I will buy the first copy of the book and feel sure that thousands of others will be glad to get a copy of the book."

Now, Mr. Editer, whut do you think ov that? Aint it sum cheatin' game? That iz whut me an' Betsy hev decided. She wants me ter report it ter the post office orfishuls so they kin arrest him fer usin' the mails ter try ter defraud. He writes like a frend. But I've bin in two meny green goods fracuses ter bite at every bate thet iz offered. If you agree with me, let me know what iz best ter do.

Truly,

ZEKE BILKINS.

FIRE AT APEX.

Several Buildings Burned, Including Postoffice.

About four o'clock Saturday morning fire was discovered in the store building on Salem Street, Apex. The flames rapidly spread until the following buildings were totally destroyed: Store houses of Dr. J. R. Rogers and Hunter & Olive, Wayland Matthews, Apex Feed Company. In addition to these the post office and offices of the Apex Publishing Company, W. F. Ntley and Dr. H. G. Utley and the town hall were all burned.

The loss will aggregate \$6,000, without any insurance. Only hard fighting, a snow and favorable wind saved the entire town from destruction. It is the general belief that the fire was of incendiary origin and done by burglars to cover evidence of their burglary. There is no clue as yet.

Fortunately several of the buildings were not occupied and were not very valuable. As usual, in such cases, better buildings will take the place of those burned.

A Big Hog Story.

The Charlotte People's Paper says: "Mr. M. L. Beatie, a farmer in Croft, one of our suburb towns, killed a hog last week which weighed net 725 pounds. Guess Green, of Our Home, will throw out insinuations and have hog talk about this fact." No, we have nothing at all to say except that there's nothing said about the age of Mr. Beatie's hog. Down in this country we push 'em along and then brag about the size of the hog, age considered. Only last week we reported one which was butchered at 18-months old and weighed 18 pounds net, which showed that it gained just one pound a month. In the same issue we reported one 6 months and 20 days old that weighed 230 pounds net. When it comes to hogs we have a variety. If we can get a ham out of that 18-pound hog we are going to send it to the editor of the People's Paper by mail, postpaid, and let him keep it for the 20th of May celebration.

Possibly there would be no demand for cartoons if all of us could see Governor Pennypacker every day.—Washington Post.