

BEHIND THE SCENES IN POLITICS

THE POLITICAL SOCIAL WHIRL

By ERNEST M'GAFFEY



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The politician who is following the calling for a livelihood eats, drinks and sleeps politics. You cannot get him off the track. He finds little interest in anything else. All his reading, outside of the papers, is on political topics. He keeps track of past elections and past ward votes, knows how his ward has gone, will go, and ought to go in the future. He is the life of all political assemblies, for he has the air of the expert and the glissade of an "illustrated lecturer." He attends the "wakes," funerals, dances, parties, baseball and football games, christenings, church fairs, picnics and all other social happenings, and gets himself voted "the most popular man" whenever he has a chance.

I remember that at one political jamore there was a "beauty show" and I was appointed one of the judges. The other two judges were "pulling together," and I saw I was "double-crossed" before the "beauties" went on the platform. In front of the platform there was a big crowd on the chairs, and they were filled by the respective adherents of the contesting "fair." I had innocently supposed that things were "on the square" until I was approached by one of the judges with the idea that the first prize ought to go to a certain girl who, to my notion, was not within a thousand miles of being first in the race. I put up such a fierce "kick" that the other judges got a little bit uncertain, and at last, as first and second prizes were both gold watches, they agreed to let me select No. 2 if I would vote for their choice for first prize.

When No. 1's name was announced a groan went up from the crowd, accompanied by a cheer from one corner of the seats where the winner's partisans were bunched. When No. 2's name was given she was cheered by a big majority of the crowd, and I was satisfied my eyesight was still good. Now for both of these girls the vote had been solid, three votes for each. When it came to No. 3—and there were only three prizes worth anything—I did a little "double-crossing" myself. One of the judges proposed a girl who had a face like a custard pie at twilight. The other judge said, "Sure, that's the one!" I had selected a girl for this prize and had got her name, so I said to judge No. 2, "Where's your lady?" He pointed to her and I said, "Out of sight; but we'd better split the votes this time; you vote for Miss—" giving him the name of my choice—"so that the crowd won't have any holler coming on the split; two votes to one will win out anyway."

He did as suggested, but as I also voted for my choice the look of disgust that overspread his features when he saw how he had been "horn-swoggled" was something classic. But all he said was "Holy gee!"

After a man has been mixed up in politics for a year or so he begins to perceive that politics has as many angles in a social way as the game of "three-cushion caroms." The variety of gradations is so widely diversified and the intervals so abrupt that it takes a truly cosmopolitan spirit to successfully "take the degrees." At four o'clock in the afternoon you may be touching glasses with a young mechanic at a "rathskeller" in a friendly chat over your beer as to how things look in his end of the ward. At 6 p. m. you may be dining with a bunch of judges and party magnates in some fashionable club, making wild guesses with the rest of them as to how national politics looks up. At twelve that night you may be addressing forty or fifty people in a little hall back of some saloon. You must be prepared to meet all kinds of people at a minute's notice, and you must be able to understand them and adapt yourself to them instantly and easily, or you will be lost in political society.

Suppose you happen to drop in at a downtown headquarters where they are waiting for a meeting to be called. There may be twenty to thirty men about, some sitting in chairs reading

or talking, some at a card-table playing a friendly game of cinch, others at a pool-table or a billiard-table. Can you play cards? Now, of course, it is not absolutely essential that you can; but if you can make a hand at one card-table or "pocket eight balls from the break," or play a fair game of billiards you are a more welcome member of society in that strata of political existence.

And if it should happen that you joined a group at some "high-toned" political club, where some topics such as literature, art, science, invention or similar matters were being discussed, and could hold your own in conversation, you were "making a hand" there, the same as at the more plebeian game of cinch. Nothing that a man has learned with his head or his hands but what will come in handy in politics.

Political club meetings, in the case of the downtown organizations, took place every Sunday in my time. They were enlivened by the admission of new members, the reading of reports and making of motions, speeches, and always something in the way of a vaudeville stunt by either a member of the club or some outside talent. These downtown meetings were valuable in bringing the leaders of the different wards together and affording them an opportunity to exchange political news and to discuss the coming spring or fall campaign. They were always largely attended, and it was a disgrace for any ward to be called upon for information of any sort and not have a representative on hand. A disgrace that I never knew to happen but once. No matter what the weather: the "faithful" were on hand.

The president opened the meeting and the utmost freedom of discussion was allowed in any debate which might arise. Sometimes a recess was declared, and the men talked and smoked until the meeting was called to order again. It was amusing to see how those of the gathering who were office-holders were regarded. If their position gave them no "distributive" power, they were looked on as merely "happy accidents," and not ranking at all with those office-holders who had "jobs" to sort out. In neither of my own positions did I have the appointment of even so much as a day-laborer at my disposal, so I was merely "a lucky guy." In fact I was lucky in more ways than one, for not having anything to give out I was not bothered by applicants.

These meetings always arranged for the parades, the marching trips and the "grand balls" which were given. Don't imagine it did not cost anything to mingle in political society, polite and otherwise. You were able to buy tickets to the balls, chances on everything that could be raffled for the benefit of some needy politician, badges and gloves, plug hats to march in, together with other raiment, club dues, tickets to various dances and entertainments, and in fact, from morning until night, day in and day out, to "sift" your salary steadily into "the hopper."

The "grand balls" were of course the most important functions given by the party. They were attended by everybody, including the mayor, and he led the grand march. It was a lively time, and diamonds were as plentiful as blackberries. Full-dress suits were largely in evidence, and the dancing kept up until morning. At such a ball the extreme opposites of political life met, once a year, and the occasion was one to be remembered. Judges, with an eye to possible or probable re-nomination, were not at all too proud to attend, and occasionally some of the city's elite attended, just for the novelty of the thing. A woman might be led out by an ex-governor of the state for one set, and the next set—

"take a turn down the middle With the man that shot Sandy McGee." It was a truly cosmopolitan gathering, unique and picturesque, and rarely was there any disturbance that amounted to anything.

Another and more common phase of political social life was at the saloons. Here the ward politicians gathered, not only to talk politics, but to roll ten-pins, play pool and, at the card-tables, "play for the drinks." The amount of social intercourse thus had in a large city is enormous. After the ordinary ward politician had eaten his supper he would be ready to engage in his political cruising, and he could usually find a bunch of men at the bowling alleys, or in the card-room of his neighboring saloon. I went through a great many political fights and skirmishes, big and little, and except just at election times I saw very little drunkenness. But there was no doubt that the workmen and mechanics gathered at the saloons to see each other. And there was no doubt that they spent money there; maybe more than they should have done. But that was where they went to find companionship; to meet their "society." I have often gone to the swell political clubs and there met the professional men, lawyers, doctors and professors, business men of large interests in various channels, and they sat at the tables and drank their wine where the ward fellows drank beer, and they played "bridge" or "poker" where the ward men played "cinch," and when you came to the question of which is moral and which is not, I leave it cheerfully to every man for himself to judge.

Every year, and always in the good old summer-time, the swell picnic was held, generally away out in the country in some grove. And here political society sported itself in its gayest and gladiest "rags," and gave itself up to unalloyed festivities of all sorts and kinds. There was the fat man's race, the sack race, the greased pig (so politically suggestive), the tug-of-war between the firemen and policemen's teams, the dances, the speeches, the bowling alleys, the "nigger baby and baseball" stand, the umbrella and cane game, the lemonade stands, the wandering minstrels, and the "shell game." You could spend your money a little at a time at the diversified amusements, or you could have one swift thrill and lose it all at the "shells."

When the band struck up a favorite waltz tune at the platform you could go up and "pivot" with your partner, just to show that you were not proud, or that you knew how to "reverse." Dancing went on all the time, couples coming and going and round dancing

Find English Language Hard

Difficulties Encountered by Foreigners in Expressing Thoughts.

From the Gold Coast comes a letter addressed to the Oxford Medical Publication, which we transcribe exactly:

"Having heard your recommendation from a certain friend of mine that you are a general or magnanimously Medical publications. Hence in desire to forward me your Special Medical Manuals which contain the assorted medicine Such as, a medicine for Education, Please the main object which induces me to draw your extraordinary attention is this, that I have a son by name—being a third Standard, the age is 23 years now; But he is too much heavy mind with stupid as I could not compare him to any one in our Gold Coast here. Being as am a gentleman by every one's known, should I not endeavor to find a good medicine for my son to become a fine or purest scholar, the properties of mine will be in vain or in other respects the son will be in vain. So long as this promulgated names has had in Our G. C. here I think there will be no hesitation and despatch as above stated early as quick as possible, so as to enable me to forward you my indent very shortly. But scholars are plenty in negro

land and there is a least distinctions of knowing better. These are being required as follows. viz. (1) Memory Training—(2) Pomades Oils. (3) Charms and any Pills kind of such medicine had at your site. No fall and oblige. Wishing you Continued success "I am yours Affectionately."

"N. B. Please if any medicine for eye's sore or dim eye kindly send me the price together with."—The Periodical.

Warship's Condenser Tubes. The greatest single consumption of brass is for condenser tubes, a battleship alone having from 30,000 to 40,000 pounds of condenser tubing in it; and owing to the corrosive effect of sea water this tubing must be continually replaced. The material used is usually either Muntz metal—60 per cent. copper, 40 per cent. zinc—or else a mixture of copper, 70; zinc, 29, and tin, 1.

Real Information. "Which is the cow that gives the buttermilk?" innocently asked the young lady from the city, who was inspecting the herd with a critical eye. "Don't make yourself ridiculous," said the young lady who had been in the country before, and knew a thing or two. "Goats give buttermilk."—Springfield Journal.

"Oh! ain't dat awful, Ain't dat a shame, To keep my baby Out in the rain."

State Capital News

Breezy Gossip, Notes and Doings of Interest at Springfield.

Springfield.—Coaxed by Chairman Hill of the institution investigating committee, the solons by a vote of 88 to 14 adopted the report of the inquisitors, assailing the institutions. This was done after Hill and others had protested that they were friends of civil service, and that the committee would be turned into a "farce" if the report were not accepted. More cries betokening pleasure were heard from the Democrats, who, by this, votes are given exactly what they have been looking for from the Hill committee—namely, a document that they can use in the next campaign, and which bears the stamp of the legislature.

The senate by a vote of 27 to 9 passed the revenue bills reducing the ratio of assessment from one-fifth of the actual cash value to one-third, and decreasing the limit of taxation from one-fifth of the assessed value of property to one-third of the assessed value.

The senate adopted a resolution providing for the appointment of a committee of seven to investigate the state institutions and report if any changes in their management is necessary, and if so report out a bill to that effect at the session of the next general assembly.

Plan Meeting for May 22.

May 22, Speaker Shurtliff says, enough house members will be on hand to pass a few appropriation bills. If the senate meanwhile has taken action on the amendment to the sine die resolution. Otherwise they will stay at home, and the legislature will have put it out by proroguing. But the appropriation bills are expected to be magnet enough to pull back both senators and representatives for a few hours at least. Among the last acts of the house was the passage of a bill which gives Mayor Busse of Chicago another position to fill on the board of local improvements. As at present organized the board consists of five members, one of which is the secretary of the board. The bill removes the secretary as a member, and leaves the number of commissioners at five, so the mayor will have another appointment at his disposal. The bill has passed the senate. The bond bills are supposed to be in a hopeless condition. The house refuses to take any action on them, and David Shanahan, into whose hands they were given, asserts that it will be impossible to get them through the house.

Political society at the picnics, democratic as it seemed at first blush, had its lines of demarcation, which were quite noticeably drawn. The wife and daughters of the "big boss" were on hand, together with the women-folks of the various office-holders, but they did not mingle with the average lady picnicers. They sat by themselves in something of exclusive grandeur, and were pointed out by the more ordinary of the merry-makers to their companions.

Sometimes a possible presidential candidate graced the occasion by his presence and consented to hand out a sample of silver-tongued oratory. But I never heard one yet who could draw away any of the attendance at the baseball game or the fat women's race. There's a limit, even to oratory.

Great was the consternation when, as sometimes happened, the flood-gates of heaven opened and drowned the picnic grounds. The last political picnic I attended commenced, on a very threatening day, and at last the clouds seemed to make up their minds to sweep the grounds. Our party had taken alarm, with a number of others, and had gone down the track to where the first train to town was stationed. The crowd got there and jammed the train instantly. Just opposite the picnic ground, and a half mile from us, was a wide platform, uncovered, on which stood hundreds who were waiting for this train. "Let her go, Sam," said the conductor; "no stop till we get to Chicago." Away we went, and as we passed the picnic grounds hundreds more came down through the drenching showers in white dresses that stuck to their limbs and straw hats that were being soaked to ruin. But the train went past regardless of their yells, and as it went by the car windows were raised and the chorus of the latest song was wafted into their ears:

"Oh! ain't dat awful, Ain't dat a shame, To keep my baby Out in the rain."

Judge Hinebaugh is Speaker.

The annual address of Judge William H. Hinebaugh of LaSalle county, president of the association and a paper on "The Jurisdiction of the County Court," by Judge David T. Smiley of McHenry county, which was discussed, constituted the proceedings of the tenth annual convention of the County and Probate Judges' association of Illinois which was held in this city.

Finish Balloon at Capitol.

A monster balloon constructed by C. L. Bumbaugh of St. Louis, the largest ever built in this country, will make its initial flight from the state fair grounds in this city. The St. Louis aeronaut completed arrangements with Secretary J. K. Dickinson of the Illinois state board of agriculture for the finishing up of the balloon in the dome building on the fair grounds. Mr. Bumbaugh was anxious to secure the building, as it is the only structure in this part of the country suited for the purpose.

Scroggin Gets Advance.

Announcement was made that E. A. Scroggin superintendent of the Springfield District Anti-Saloon league and the legal adviser of the organization, will be acting general superintendent for the whole state. Mr. Scroggin will fill the duties of the office during the absence of Rev. James K. Shields of Chicago, the present general superintendent, who left to attend the Methodist conference at Baltimore, Md. Mr. Scroggin will divide his time between Chicago and Springfield.

"Dry's" Name Two for Each Office.

After an animated discussion the state prohibition convention, by a large majority, decided to place on the state primary ticket to be voted on August 8 two names for each state office. The following names were decided upon to compose the ticket:

Governor—Daniel R. Sheen, Peoria, and E. W. Chaffin, Chicago. Lieutenant Governor—J. W. Brubaker, Chicago, and Jacob Hostittler, Sterling.

Secretary of State—H. A. Dubois, Cobden, and Marion Gallup, Pontiac. Auditor of Public Accounts—L. F. Cumbart, Macomb, and John Harper, Chicago.

Attorney General—Frank S. Regan, Rockford, and M. C. Harper, Evanston. Treasurer—A. S. Spaulding, Springfield, and L. A. Chamberlain, Pittsfield.

The platform adopted demands that congress pass a law prohibiting the interstate commerce in intoxicating liquors, favoring a postal savings bank, the deep-water way, revision of the tariff against trust-made goods and many other measures. Alonzo Wilson of Wheaton was elected chairman of the state central committee and F. F. Gumbart of Macomb re-elected secretary. The new state central committee was elected as follows:

George G. Pondell, W. A. Brubaker, Mrs. Emil Hill, S. S. Williams, John Whitson, J. A. Ruth, Leo F. Jeannette, C. R. Jones, E. A. Wilson, Chicago; C. S. Regan, Rockford; J. H. Commett, Erie; L. F. Gumbart, Macomb; J. A. Hoops, Ipava; Daniel R. Sheen, Peoria; John F. Sheppard, El Paso; G. W. Wolsey, Danville, A. M. Caldwell, Champaign; L. E. Chamberlain, Pittsfield.

Robert M. Patton of Springfield was elected chairman of the convention, John E. Golden of Ford county secretary, and L. F. Gumbart of McDonough county treasurer. Chairman Patton in his speech said that the two great political parties had by their platform become the allies of the United Societies of Chicago. The following delegates-at-large and alternates-at-large to the national convention were elected:

Delegates-at-large—Robert H. Patton of Springfield, Alonzo E. Wilson of Wheaton, Daniel R. Sheen of Peoria, Oliver T. Stewart of Peoria, E. W. Chaffin of Chicago, and C. B. James of Chicago. Alternates-at-large—W. P. Allen of McLean, John R. Golden of Gibson City, J. H. Hostittler of Sterling, Mrs. Emily Hill of Springfield, L. A. Chamberlain of Pittsfield, E. W. Brubaker of Chicago.

Charity Bulletin Out.

Copious quotations from the Illinois Medical Journal which offers a defense of the state board of charities in its April number and also from the February number of the Journal of the American Medical Association constitute a large part of the quarterly bulletin of the Illinois board of charities. An address on the work of the board made by the secretary, William C. Graves, before the Physicians' club and the Chicago Medical society is reprinted in full. Other articles include one on civil service by W. B. Moulton, reprinted from the May number of the Illinois Medical Journal, and a defense of methods at the Lincoln asylum by Dr. W. H. C. Smith. Dr. V. H. Hodstat, superintendent of the Illinois Northern Hospital for the Insane at Elgin, also has an article describing the methods in vogue at that institution.

Temperature Exceptionally Low.

Cloudy weather, with unusually low temperature prevailed in Illinois, according to the report issued by Acting Director Clarence J. Root. Killing frosts and considerable damage from winds is reported from various districts. A general summary of conditions follows: Cloudy weather, with unusually low temperature for the season, prevailed, the temperature deficiency averaging 13 degrees. Freezing temperatures and lower occurred on the thirtieth and second in the northern and portions of the central district. Frosts, killing at many stations, were general on these dates in the northern and central counties. Considerable damage was reported. The temperature extremes were 69 degrees and 26 degrees. The rainfall averaged 0.72 inch. It was deficient in the northern part of the state, but was above the normal in most of the central and southern parts, the greater amount in the section occurred on the third and morning of the fourth. Snow flurries and sleet were reported in the northern and central districts in the early part of the week. The sunshine was deficient, the average for the state being 36 per cent.

Mayors Discuss Legislation.

Executives of 50 cities in Illinois assembled in Springfield and discussed methods of bringing about the passage of various bills before the general assembly. The measures that were drafted at a former meeting in Chicago were approved and later the mayors went before the general assembly to ask their passage. Comptroller Walter H. Wilson of Chicago presided at the session which was in the council chamber in the city hall. Mayor E. C. Finch of Aurora was named secretary.

Springfield Chosen for Session.

Springfield will entertain delegates to the Illinois Woodmen convention in 1909. This city was selected as the meeting place at the session held in East St. Louis, at which United States District Attorney W. A. Northcott was named counsel. The special car bearing the delegation enlisted by the chamber of commerce returned. Their mission was to participate in the convention and to "boost" for Springfield. When the train arrived to select the place of meeting, Charles Fetter nominated Springfield.

STATE NEWS NOTES

ACCOUNTS OF HAPPENINGS IN ILLINOIS FOR A WEEK.

PAUL FINNAN PASSES AWAY

Cancer Claims Representative from the Twenty-Sixth District—Had Been Ill Fourteen Months.

Bloomington.—Paul Finnan, Democratic representative from the Twenty-sixth senatorial district, died after an illness lasting 15 months, with cancer of the throat. Death was not unexpected. Mr. Finnan had not been confined to his bed until a few days ago. His last public appearance was at the A. O. H. banquet on St. Patrick's day. He was 52 years old and had resided continually in this city for the last 38 years. He was born in Sutton, Province of Ontario, Canada. His parents were natives of Ireland. Mr. Finnan entered political life when young and was a power in local politics. He served the Third ward of this city as alderman for many years. In 1904 he was elected representative and had held the office since. Surviving are two daughters, Mrs. L. L. Watson of Peoria and Miss Eloise Finnan, who resided at home. Mrs. Finnan died last August.

MINERS WANT NEW BILL.

Representatives Are Asked to Aid in Passage of Measure.

Carlyle.—A delegation of miners representing the unions of Clinton county held a conference with Representative Beckmeyer of this city and Representative McMackin of Salem. They asked the members of the legislature to urge the passage of the qualification bill, which is before the legislature. Both members promised to give their aid.

Jilted Woman Sues for \$10,000.

Danville.—Because the man whom, she alleges, promised to make her his wife, spurned her love at the last moment and turned to another, whom he finally married, Miss Jennie Harper of Potomac is seeking solace for her broken heart in the local courts by bringing action against Chauncey Golings, a wealthy farmer, for breach of promise. She asks \$10,000 damages.

Change at Illinois College.

Jacksonville.—J. G. Randall, instructor in history and political science at Illinois college, has resigned his position in order to pursue graduate work at the University of Chicago. President Rammenkamp has appointed as successor C. E. Carter, who is at present in the graduate school of the University of Illinois.

White Hall Woman Chosen Head.

Jerseyville.—At the meeting of the Twentieth congressional district of the Federation of Women's clubs in session here, Mrs. R. S. Dickson of White Hall was elected president and Mrs. E. C. Pearce, corresponding secretary and treasurer. The next meeting will be held at White Hall in May, 1909.

Saloons Out; Village Is Dark.

Thayer.—The decrease in the village budget because of the absence of the saloon license money has caused the authorities to be wary of expenses. The first step taken in this direction is the shutting off of the electric lights of the village. The electric light has been secured from the Virden Electric company.

Would Be "Bargain" President.

Decatur.—In his letter of acceptance of the presidential nomination of the United Christian party, Rev. Daniel Braxton Turney of this city says he would accept the presidency at a salary of \$25,000 and would not take the \$25,000 given the president for car fare.

Fishermen's Association Opens Office.

Havana.—The Hunters' and Fishermen's Protective association has established offices in Havana, rooms having been obtained above the Pfitzing & Wright drug and jewelry store. The president, Harry Bell, and secretary, J. C. Stevers, will attend the office.

New Rabbi to Serve Lincoln.

Bloomington.—Rabbi George Fox of Cincinnati, O., has accepted a call of the Jewish congregation of this city. He will also serve the Lincoln Hebrews.

Macoupin Creek Out of Banks.

Carlinville.—Macoupin creek was out of its banks, and as a result, Macoupin bottom was one sheet of water. But little damage resulted.

One County For; One Against.

Murphysboro.—The Jackson county miners voted to pay the shot-fires. The Williamson county miners voted against the proposition.

Mrs. Howard Gould's Father Dies.

Jacksonville.—Seldon P. Clemmons, father of Mrs. Howard Gould of New York, died here at the Central Hospital for the Insane. He was blind and formerly lived in Milton, Pike county. Mr. Clemmons has another daughter who married a Chinaman in San Francisco.

Polly Denied New Trial.

Shelbyville.—The motion for a new trial of the Polly murder case was denied. Polly was sentenced to 14 years in the Chester penitentiary.

Denounce Personal Liberty Planks.

Delavan.—A resolution denouncing the personal liberty planks endorsed by the Democratic and Republican conventions was adopted at the session here of the Ministerial association of Bloomington district. The work of the Anti-Saloon League was endorsed.

Drops Dead at Grave.

Virden.—Completing the decorating of the grave of a neighbor, Ira T. Day, James C. Bice, sexton of the Virden cemetery, fell dead.