

Government Clerks Feel Their Importance, Attorney States

BY RODERICK CLIFFORD.
Washington, July 30.—"Occasionally I have run-in with the Chief of a division, and sometimes the chief clerk of the Department," remarked a prominent attorney the other day, whose business is largely of a Departmental character, searching public records, "and not infrequently I am forced to appeal to the Secretary before I am allowed to examine the papers. With few exceptions all the correspondence carried on by the government is of a public nature, and attorneys having business before the Departments, have the right to inspect the records. In the course of my work I have met subordinates that almost took my breath by the amount of dignity they assumed, and the importance they attached to their small office."

"I remember an incident that happened when President Taft was Secretary of War. It was my first meeting with that official, and I shall never forget it. I received a letter from a very prominent gentleman who lived in Ohio. He had requested me to get him a copy of a certain public document in the War Department. I was familiar with the case and knew the division that had jurisdiction over the matter. So I sauntered into the room of the chief and made known my errand. He was one of the self-important subordinates, who imagined that the entire responsibility of the Department rested upon his shoulders, and impressed you with the idea that you were in the presence of the high and mighty. With not so much as a take a seat, he said: 'Have you an order to copy the document?'"

"Why no sir, it is a public document, and as a citizen I have the right to copy it," I answered.

"If you have not an order to copy it, then I cannot let you have it," was the reply. "And that closed the interview."

"Leaving the room of the chief I immediately sought Secretary Taft. As soon as my name was sent in by the messenger I was ushered into the Secretary's room and was cordially greeted by Mr. Taft, without any formality I explained my mission and told him of my experience. Smiling he said that it was singular that some men who were capable of holding the position of chief of a division could not appreciate the fact that documents of a public nature were to be shown to any citizen who had occasion to inspect them, and it was not necessary to call for an order from superiors. The document I wanted a copy of, the Secretary said, was a public one and I should have it without delay. I will add that I got it, and soon afterwards that self-important chief was demoted by the Secretary of War.

"In this connection I want to say that when President Taft was Secretary of War it was a real pleasure to do business with that Department, for he impressed the subordinates that it was a part of their public duty to assist every one who sought infor-

mation of a public character and he would not tolerate little technical objections so often practiced by the petty official."

Among the book worms in the house one has a keener appreciation of old editions than Representative Henry A. Cooper, of Wisconsin. It is not an uncommon thing to find him almost any day after his work is through at the capitol in the rear of some second-hand book store among the dusty shelves reading and examining the titles of musty volumes of forgotten lore."

The Statesman from the Badger State says that he has made many a find of rare editions of the old authors and has bought such prizes for almost a song. Not every dealer in a second-hand book store, says the member from Wisconsin, can place a value on first and second editions of the early books and magazines that contain the work of authors who have become famous after their death. In his wanderings among the old book stores Mr. Cooper, who regards Poe as the greatest literary genius of America, has come across some of the early editions of that author's works which he highly regards for their typography and binding.

The desk used by Colonel Roosevelt when he was an active member of the civil service commission, twenty years ago, is still in use. It is now occupied by Commissioner Washburn, the only member of the commission appointed by President Taft. Commissioners Black and McIlhenny being held over from the last administration.

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interest. It may be interesting to know that it was as a civil service commissioner during President Cleveland's second term that Colonel Roosevelt flashed full upon the scene as the champion of the merit system, as he always termed it, and for four years he was in the limelight fighting the Democratic spoilsmen at the head of the Executive Department, who never lost an opportunity to beat the commission about the bush in the matter of minor appointments which the commission claimed should be selected from the eligible lists. It was as a civil service commissioner that Colonel Roosevelt became known from one end of the country to the other.

A Really True Snake Story

New York, July 30.—This is a combination fish and snake story—and listen, child, right at the start. If you don't believe it you can go over to Newton, N. J. and ask the population all five of 'em, and they'll prove it to you by showing you the very spot where it happened.

(End of introduction. Beginning of story.)

A boy on the farm of Amanira (not Ananias) Westbrook, near Newton, was ordered yesterday to "mow the medder along down that by the brook." The lad started out with a fishing line concealed beneath his hickory shirt, and after he had mowed a section he cut a birch pole, baited with a worm and pulled out fine six inch trout which he laid alongside the brook bank.

Another section mowed—another trout caught. Repeat procedure (for purpose of saving space). Hurrying up the action, it might be said that Amanira's boy when his meadow was mowed went to the brook to get the trout and didn't find them where he left them.

Amanira boy was gun-swizzled if that there wasn't queer. Here was his pole and line. Here was a dried-up worm that he had intended using but

didn't. Here was his straw hat—but no trout! And there hadn't been anybody seen about, for he could have seen them from the saddle of his moving machine. By heck! It was gosh-blamed funny, this business of here's trout and here's no trout.

He looked around a bit, did Amanira's boy, and then what do you suppose he saw. Five yards back in the rushes an all-fired big black snake a-squirming around and fussing back and forth, and in the black snake's mouth, twistin' and wrigglin' and slap dashin' from side to side—one of Amanira's boy's trout!

"Hey!" yelled the boy, "gimme that trout! I haint ketching fish for you!" The snake kept on getting the trout farther and farther into his mouth. The boy got mad and cracked the snake over the neck with a club. Both snake and trout died from the blow. Then Amanira's boy got out his trusty jackknife, cut Mr. Snake in longitudinal sections, and there in the reptilian interior, as he had suspected were the other trout.

Amanira Westbrook says his boy has always been reliable and trustworthy, and his Sunday school teacher and others who have had doings with him add their favorable testimony.

Commons butter is made from pure pasteurized cream which gives it that purity not found in other butters. Mr. Jones, superintendent of the butter department is a graduate in butter making from the University of Wisconsin and knows naturally all there is about butter. It is deserving of your patronage.

The milk and cream from which the Commons Dairy products are made are procured from CITY INSPECTED DAIRIES and not promiscuously from farms not under the jurisdiction of city dairy inspector.

CONTRACT DRAWN
BY GARDNER FOR
COUNCIL ACTION

(Continued From Page One.)

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Once each year an annual report of the business of the company for the preceding year shall be filed with the city controller. The city reserves the right to audit the books of the company at any time.

The city issues the contract for a period of twenty-five years, except in case it is terminated by a purchase of the entire plant.

City Attorney Gardner considered the proposition at the time the water works question was up several months ago, but it was dropped at that time, and a contract for the Richmond Natural Gas company was drawn up along the same lines. This proposition also failing to materialize the City Attorney has reconstructed the ordinance for the water works company.

Commissioner Rodenberg, however, did not like the routine work of the commission, nor did he relish the suggestion that he must not discuss nor take an active part in politics. He served just 13 months, resigning from the office after Roosevelt had succeeded to the Presidency to make the race for Congress. And he has been in Congress ever since. Friends of the Illinois congressman say his success in keeping his seat in the House is due to the fact that he occupied Colonel Roosevelt's desk.

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