

# "IT'S A GREAT CAMPAIGN IF YOU LOVE QUIET"

## SAYS THE HOTEL CLERK.

BY IRVIN S. COBB.

"WILL it has been a great campaign," said the Hotel Clerk.

"Great for who?" asked the house detective of the St. Reckless, scornfully.

"Great for all persons favoring a quiet and peaceful life, free from noise or excitement," said the Hotel Clerk. "I don't think it could have been a quieter, subtler, civiler-spoken campaign if it had been personally conducted by Edward Bok, Professor Nicholas Murray Butler, Luther Burbank and Mrs. Rorer, author of the North American Egg and One Thousand Ways to Disguise It."

"If I had any dear and dear relatives that were suffering from nervous prostration this Fall, I'd never think of shipping them off to some expensive sanitarium. No, sir, I'd save money and at the same time insure the right sort of treatment for those afflicted kin-folk by sending 'em to the National Headquarters of one of the great parties—it would not matter greatly which—where naught disturbed the brooding calm except the low poignant groans of the national treasurer every time he passed the office safe and the fretful exclamation of the national secretary, going over the morning mail in the hope that some malefactor of great wealth had written in a disguised hand, inclosing check."

"It didn't use to be this way, Larry. There have been mellow Octobers when the mere mention of the simple word 'Tariff' had the same effect upon the average citizen that Niagara Falls would have upon a hydrophobic patient. Then there was Ninety-six, when by simply coupling the figure 16 with its least common divisor in the presence of a bank president you could make him froth at the mouth like a soda fountain. Men in Colorado went home and beat their wives because they had golden fillings in their teeth. You remember Ninety-six, I take it? D'ye recall glorious Bourke Cockran leading his silver tongue to the cause of the silver standard, or perhaps I should say renting? That was the year when every true American stood ready and willing to lay aside whatever he had in hand, unless it happened to be a scantling, or a set of brass knucks, or something that would be equally handy, and engage in an intelligent argument of the issues of the day with any man that he thought he could lick."

"Well, what d'ye think about it, now?" one would say to the other, pleasantly, by way of beginning the conversation.

"I think William Jennings Bryan will carry the state by not less than 100,000 votes," the second would respond promptly at the same time laying down his pocket edition of Coin Harvey and slipping a loose chair rung out of its socket.

"And I think you're an infamous liar, the same as all your family was before you," the first speaker would respond, as he took a flying leap out of the second chair and reached for one of those large ironstone china cuspidors. And having thus opened the subject they would take up the vital questions one by one and debate them until the cops came. That was the campaign when a man who wanted to take an active part in politics needed to be there with a good arm and an ear which adhered firmly to its natural moorings.

"You may have noticed how different it is now, Larry. Some people say it's lack of money for the campaigning, and some say it's lack of I'm sure from what I can hear that campaigning for money, although both Mr. Ridder and Mr. Sheldon have done all they could and tried to do a lot more, who wouldn't come across. But be the reason what it will, there's something wrong. Once upon a time, this late in the month, the transparencies would be transpiring and the roobucks would be roobacking and every man who really had the interests of his country at heart would deem it his sacred duty to go out and take part in at least one torchlight procession and come home the next morning only a short lap ahead of the milkman, smelling of kerosene except where he smelled of beer. And there'd be monster final rallies by both parties, only the Democrats usually held theirs the night before the election, thus leaving the Republicans free to hold theirs the night after, when the returns were all in."

"But this year I haven't heard anybody whooping very loud for the candidates except the candidates. There's some talk, of course, on politics, but not much more talk, so far as I can tell, than there is on the subject of those new green Alpine lids that are being worn so extensively by persons who are quite sane and normal in other respects. When a bunch of leaders get together for a few earnest words of cheer and up-lift, the picture reminds you vividly of a group of root and herb doctors attending an ailing cow."



"There also has been a strange, unaccountable silence on the part of the patriot who's able to devote a good deal of time to politics, owing to his wife having all the plain sewing she can do. He used to come into every gathering and announce that after a careful study of the conditions he felt so confident that he'd bet half a million dollars on the general results just as quick as he'd bet five. And he would, too, probably, because he had just as good a chance of getting half a million as he ever had of getting five."

"Here four or five weeks ago it did look as if there'd be a few feverish flutters. Mr. William R. Hearst, unfurled some spicy letters which had an added interest aside from their contents by being the only things of value that ever got away from the Standard Oil Company. Former Senator McLaurin of South Carolina, was induced thereby to tunnel his way back to the surface and utter a few posthumous remarks over the top of the footstone; and then he went back to his present location and found the premises crowded by Senator Foraker and Governor Haskell, who'd moved in during his absence. Then the President felt called upon to write a few brief remarks from time to time, thus causing His Own Candidate great joy. And after that Nicholas Longworth gave vent to certain sentiments tending to show that a man can be bald-headed inside and outside at the same time. But they went out and threw a minnow net over Nick and since then there's been nothing to excite, disturb or harass."

"A man opens his paper of a morning to find a new poem by Alfred Austin, and skips that, and a cable dispatch stating that there have been a few more of those barks in the Balkans, and skips that, and a special department for women containing a three-line paragraph on

the suffrage movement and a column and a half in regard to the new Fall sleeve which all competent authorities agree will button all the way up to the shoulder, but should or should not it come down over the hand? which after all is the real question—and he skips that—and then finally he comes to the political intelligence, or anyway that's the common or cant name for it—and most generally he skips that, and if he doesn't he continues, nevertheless and notwithstanding, to remain comparatively calm.

"He strolls along Broadway and at Fulton street he sees a large blue banner with pictures on it of a retired police captain and a club butler labeled 'Taft' and 'Sherman,' and then he strolls two miles further and he sees a large red banner with pictures on it of an old-time Shakespearean actor and a half-pay Methodist minister labeled 'Bryan' and 'Kern,' and that's all he does see that's calculated to make him realize that we are all in the throes of the most momentous battle for the cause of human liberty in the history of the civilized world and trembling on the verge of anarchy and about to be made slaves of by the plutocrats and raising the banner of labor, and rescuing the downtrodden from the clutch of the vampire and engaged in the last final death-grapple for the rights of the great common people, but otherwise doing fairly well and able to report that things are going along about as usual, with promises of an open Winter."

"Yesterday I went out looking for a little campaign excitement. I said to myself that it wasn't possible for the average man to exhaust all the possibilities of being foolish on April the First and July the Fourth. Surely, I figured, there'll be somebody getting all hot-up over the election."

"Well, after awhile I found a crowd on a corner, clustered about an earnest orator and showing signs of deep interest. I pushed my way into him. He was a stranger to me. I hadn't seen any picture of him printed among the list of speakers, but his mission was soon made plain. He was trying to sell a new kind of self-acting collar button. In the park I observed a group of unemployed, clustered together, and I investigated there. A neat and nobby member of the marines corps was standing guard over a colored pic-



ture showing a handsome lad in Peter Thompson clothes shaking hands with a Rear-Admiral, the apparent object being to induce the younger generation to enlist in the Navy so they could hobnob with all the high officials. I headed for what looked like a noonday political meeting and it was a crowd going into a moving-picture show. A soured party wanted to cheer for Bryan alongside the Hoffman House and a cop told him he'd run him in if he didn't stop annoying the gentlemen in the National Democratic Headquarters, by yelling that way. Finally on a street car I struck a solid looking party who was willing to talk over the outlook.

"Do you think the campaign has hurt business?" I said to him.

"Well," says he to me, "It hasn't done my business any good."

"Did he tell you what his business wuz?" asked the House Detective.

"Yes," answered the Hotel Clerk. "He said he was a manufacturer of campaign buttons."

# Jim Nasium, on Autumn.



**JIM NASIUM.**  
Through the leaves  
Of the Autumn days  
The golden leaves are falling  
And the cool air's blent  
With the moth-bait's scent  
And the grip-grip's gaily calling  
Now the pumpkins grow quick  
At the basket's trick  
Of filling the house with smoke  
And when both you've tried  
You finally decide  
That you'd sooner freeze than choke  
The coal man since a runderly, and the  
trolley-car grows cold.  
When the maple turns to crimson and the  
sassafras is gold.

Now the new Fall styles  
The breadwinner tries,  
As he coughs up his hard-earned dough.  
And the plumber's bill  
Keep him from becoming too slow.  
Though we save the price  
Of the summer's ice,  
We know it for Winter's coal.  
And it makes us sick  
To hear the gas meter's click.  
As it chucks up its costly toll.  
And we've got to dig for the dough to get  
our overcoat out of hock.  
When the frost is on the pumpkin and the  
toddler's in the shock.

NATURE, like many a young man,  
begins her Fall by painting things  
red. We of the city's walled canyons,  
whose daily experience with the  
green things of the country is limited  
to the survey of a sprig of parsley on a  
15-cent steak at the lunch hour, are  
probably more familiar with the young  
man's artistic efforts than we are with  
the masterpieces of "Mother Nature's

paint pot." The glories of Autumn,  
"the sweet incense of the forest," and  
"the painted landscape melting into the  
bazy distance" and "the hush of nature's  
annual funeral" and all those things  
that the poet stows over the pages of  
the magazines are reserved for the  
verdant country dweller who doesn't  
give a continental cuss for them. The  
chief glory of Autumn to him is the  
fact that he can assassinate a few  
swine and load up his old car with  
mince-meat and liver-wurst and elder,  
applebutter and hoghead cheese and  
cabbage pears and triple-plated pumpkin  
pie plants and patent adjustable po-  
mestone potatoes, and drive his man-  
aged old plug into town and collect all  
the available wealth of the neighbor-  
hood, while we of the city's busy marts  
of trade, who would fain experience  
a few of the poet's "glories of the Au-  
tumn season," must now mortgage our  
little home to keep our wife from being  
snubbed by the neighbors because her  
last Fall's clothes are out of style, and  
at the same time have enough left to  
keep the gas from being shut off and to  
pay our share in the joint stock com-  
pany that is being formed among the  
prominent citizens of the town to pur-  
chase a wagon load of coal from the  
Coal Trust.

When John Frost comes hiking over  
the hills on his annual spree painting  
things red, opening the chestnut burr  
and touching the woods and the fields  
with his icy finger until the golden  
leaves drift idly to the ground and the  
limbs of the trees are so bare that the  
corn is checked, most of us begin to  
feel that if we can get through this  
season of the year without taking out a  
petition in bankruptcy, and succeed in  
dogging the various new styles of Winter  
dresses, that will be the proper form for  
the coming season, we can manage to  
plug along through another year in  
comparative ease and comfort. I have  
managed to weather a few threatened  
Autumnal financial disasters by point-  
ing out to my wife that if she waits till  
after the holidays she can buy her  
Winter clothes at half price, then after  
the holidays I show her how useless  
it is to buy Winter clothes when Winter  
is most over. But this isn't a game  
that can be repeated very often unless  
you are blessed with an unusually  
thick-headed wife.

Autumn is the glad season of the year  
when we pack the kids off to school  
and they trade germs sight unseen with  
the other kids of the surrounding  
neighborhood, and introduce into the  
family circle an assorted collection of  
bacteria that is guaranteed to last  
through the Winter and provide plenty  
of home entertainment till the cholera  
morbus season opens. As I sit here in  
my cozy magnificence, my memory  
likes back down the vista of years to  
those Autumn days in the mellow past  
when I used to go to the old red school-  
house and lug home a diphtheria germ  
for which I had traded the mumps and  
the measles and a white marble to boot,  
and I recollect with what patience and  
Christian forbearance I would cheer-  
fully neglect my studies and devote all  
my time to domesticate this microscopic  
little pet and keep it in the family till

the end of the school term. Ah, what  
recompense have fame and fortune for  
the joys of childhood?

Looking back over my past life I  
have always noticed that when I live  
through Autumn I have never died be-  
fore the next Autumn. This fact gives  
me a great feeling of relief now when  
Autumn is over, as after the first of  
December I feel comparatively safe and  
can allow my insurance policy to lapse  
without feeling that I am neglecting  
the interests of my family.

One of the chief blessings of the Au-  
tumn season is the fact that then the  
baseball pennants are all decided and  
business throughout the country can  
again resume something approximating  
a normal condition, and the leather-  
lunged perpetual motion baseball bug  
with the brass-mounted nerve crawls  
into his hole and pulls the hole after  
him and hibernates for the Winter,  
while the long-haired college youths  
gird up their football armor and splat-  
ter each other over the houndscape till  
the Coroner has to collect them with a  
blotting paper, and thus reduces the  
number of educated pests that the  
world at large will have to plug along  
with.

With the first tinge of Autumn in the  
air the tin-horn politician and the wild-  
eyed office-seeker emerge from their  
Summer lethargy and get busy with the  
bull con and prove to us that the age  
of chivalry and martyrdom are not yet  
dead. As the festive but overworked  
politician in the cow pasture the over-  
worked politician leaves his burr and drops  
in the highways and byways, and we

are filled again for the nine thousand  
seven hundred and seventy-second time  
with a deep feeling of gratitude and  
confidence that the country will not  
yet go to the demitison bow-wow so  
long as there are so many men who  
are willing to sacrifice their own per-  
sonal interests to serve those of the  
Nation at an increased salary and a  
rake-off on all grafts.

As Fall approaches the campaign  
speech limbers up and grows more ac-  
tive, and the laboring man's confidence  
in human nature that had been get-  
ting groggy and hanging onto the  
ropes gets a new lease of life and  
comes back for more as he hears again  
of the vast number of men who are  
devoting their lives to securing legis-  
lation in his behalf, while old Ananias  
groans and turns over in his grave as  
he thinks of how the records that he  
set in ages past are being smashed to  
smithereens.

In the Fall that species of city dwel-  
ler called sportsman in the magazines  
and unprintable names by the residents  
of the rural districts packs up some  
corkscrews and snobbish medicine and  
giant powder and whiskey and dynamite  
and corn juice and bombs and biter-  
ters and hits the trail to the primeval  
truck patch, where he lugs an arsenal  
through the underbrush and devastates  
the surrounding scenery and introduces  
a widespread mortality in the agricul-  
turalist's barnyard.

This particular form of mania in the  
human race breaks out annually "when  
the maple turns to crimson and the  
sassafras to gold," and the persons af-

flicted lock up their comfortable homes  
and steam-heated offices and kick holes  
in the virgin forest with their effete  
skin bones, jam their lumbar vertebrae  
into their vest pocket, performing acro-  
batic stunts with the landscape, eat  
food that would cause them to kick  
their wife in the short ribs at home,  
fill each others' systems full of bird  
shot, and then they'll come and back  
you up into a corner and stand on your  
toes and talk you insensible blowing  
about the glorious time they've had.  
And yet there are padded cells to spare  
at the foothills farms.

I was afflicted with this Autumn  
mania once, when I was younger, and  
the brain that has since caused the  
world to stand aghast at its marvelous  
propensities had not fully developed,  
but I outgrew it with my "calf love,"  
and all my other bad faults. After due  
deliberation and sober thought I de-  
cided that it'll become a man from  
whom the country expects so much, to  
go out annually and lay waste the  
scenery of his native land.

I am now trying to plug along with-  
out "communion with nature in her  
visible forms." I find that the best place  
to satisfy the cravings of my savage  
nature for the pursuit of game is be-  
tween the covers of the sportsman's  
magazines, where there is more cheer  
and less gloom splattered through the  
bosky dells, and you are closer in  
touch with your base of supplies and  
can have the use of the home cuisine  
at meal time. I find now that my  
mature nature requires very little aw-  
inspiring grandeur, and a good deal of

woven wire mattress and nutritious,  
digestible food.

Perhaps I am not gifted with a poetic  
nature. At any rate it does seem to  
me that these Fall and Spring poets  
exceed the speed limit set in a poetic  
license. While appreciating the fact  
that a poetic license is more flexible  
than an automobile license, or even a  
dog license, or a saloon license, still I  
do not think that it should permit the  
manufacturer of Fall styles in poetic  
preparation to jump the entire pre-  
arranged system of the seasons and  
drag in dog-days and spring-fever at  
a time of the year when all humanity  
north of the Mason and Dixon line is  
hustling into its fleece-lined underwear  
and a fellow can't take off his winter  
and arctic without flying into the face  
of Providence and dying of pneumonia.  
Neither should it permit him to intro-  
duce a "mellow haze" in the middle of  
a drizzly fog that is so thick that the  
White Wings have to dig a tunnel for  
the trolley car to move through.

Of course this is only my personal  
opinion, but I would advocate that any  
poet who borrows a bucket of coal from  
his neighbor and booms up the fire to  
159 degrees Fahrenheit when the wind  
comes whistling down from the North  
Pole charged with grip and pneumonia  
and maliciously tears off a little else  
that is slipping over with mellow sun-  
shine and soft sighing asphyria should  
have his license revoked. Anyway, we  
have entirely too blamed many poets  
who would make a bigger hit driving  
an ash cart or biting holes in trans-  
fers on the rear end of a trolley car.