

AND HIS PRESIDENTS AND TWO WARS

Being Some Episodes in the Life of Capt. Daniel Delehanty, in Which Lincoln, Archbishop Hughes, Roosevelt, "Bob" Evans, Cervera and John D. Long Figure in a Way to Delight the Heart of Old and Young Alike.



CAPTAIN DANIEL DELEHANTY



In the early days of the Civil War, when the soldiers of the South were victorious on many fields, Abraham Lincoln summoned to Washington two eminent men of New York.

"Gentlemen," he said, "there is imminent danger that the Confederacy will be recognized by England and France. You can do more to prevent it than any other two men now living. You," he said, pointing to one of them, "I ask to go to England, and in the cities and in the towns, in the factories and in the fields, use all your great powers of eloquence in the cause of the North."

"You," he said to the other man, "I ask to go to Catholic France, where, by reason of your gifts of oratory, your high office in the church and your wide influence you may be able to accomplish what no other man could do. I can make no higher call upon your patriotism than I now am making."

A little later the two eminent men—Henry Ward Beecher and John Hughes, archbishop of New York, were on their way across the Atlantic. Never did two more brilliant speakers go to plead the cause of freedom and right did two men fulfill their mission better.

The archbishop was the first to return. He reported that the North had no friends or sympathizers among the rich, the titled and the powerful in France, and that the danger of the empire recognizing the Confederacy was very great. It was the pleasant news for Mr. Lincoln to receive, but the President thanked him in that plain, simple way he had with all men.

"I wish," said the President, "that there was something that I could do—something that you personally desire—that would lessen the debt of gratitude under which you have placed me, and there anything you want for any of your people, any of your friends?"

"Nothing," replied the archbishop. "I am sorry," said the President.

But as he was about to go the archbishop remembered something.

"There is one thing, Mr. President," he said, "One of my dear friends has a boy too young to go into the army, but whose hope and ambition it is to become a soldier. If he could go to West Point—"

"And let that all," asked the President. "That is all," replied the archbishop.

In New York the following day the archbishop sent for the boy and told him how the President of the United States had offered to send him to West Point.

"But," said the boy, "I don't want to go to West Point. I want to go to Annapolis. I want to go in the Navy."

The archbishop was chagrined. He had misunderstood what the boy's father had said about the boy's ambition.

"Well," he declared, "there is no mending it now. The President has appointed you to West Point, and to West Point you must go."

But the boy had no ambition except for the Navy, and nothing the archbishop could say could change him. Finally the archbishop told him to go home and if he did not change his mind over night and decide to go to West Point the archbishop would write to the President and tell him the appointment could not be accepted.

That night the boy slept very little, and the following day he went to the archbishop and said he had decided to go to Annapolis on earth so much as to go to Annapolis.

The archbishop could not see why a boy should be so obstinate.

"Well," he said finally, "I'll not ask the President to change the appointment, but if you want to go to Washington and ask him yourself I'll give you a letter to him."

The boy was delighted.

The archbishop wrote a letter, and as the boy was leaving the archbishop said to him: "My boy, I doubt whether you can see Mr. Lincoln. Every minute of his time is taken up with great affairs, and he is surrounded by so many persons that it is difficult indeed to get an audience. But there is one man there who will get you to him if any one can. When you go to the White House inquire for him. Tell him you have a letter to the President from John Hughes."

To Washington went Daniel Delehanty with the archbishop's letter. The man the archbishop named, was one of the President's messengers.

"You have a letter from John Hughes and you want to see the President—wait a minute," said the messenger. When he returned he told the boy the President had been in council with the Cabinet, but he had called him out. "Go up the stairs there. The President is waiting. Don't detain him a moment more than necessary," he urged.

Up the stairs bounded the boy and when he got to the top and straightened up he stood before what seemed to him to be the tallest, strangest looking man he ever saw.

But the boy did not look at the man. He was so flustered he could not speak at first, and to add to his embarrassment a pair of eyes seemed to be looking at him from the President's feet. Mr. Lincoln had on a pair of embroidered slippers, and worked in the vamp of the slippers were heads of tigers, the eyes of some animal. These eyes fascinated the boy and he could not draw his attention from them. Queer notions came into one's mind in times of agitation, and the one thing the boy thought of just then more than anything else was that those were real eyes that were looking at him out of the slippers, maybe tiger eyes.

Then, suddenly, he was roused from his odd thoughts by the sound of Mr. Lincoln's voice.

"You have a letter for me from Archbishop Hughes?" inquired the President. The boy handed the letter to him and the President read it.

"my boy," he said, placing his hand on the boy's head in a moment.

Then he turned to go back to the Cabinet meeting.

The boy's mind was crowded with words of thanks, but somehow he could not give expression to them. Instead he said, "Mr. President, you'll never regret what you have done this day."

Mr. Lincoln smiled that sad, strange smile of his and before he reached the door of the Cabinet room the boy had bounded down the stairs and was racing toward the Navy building. In 15 minutes he had his commission for the Naval Academy.

More than 25 years of service Daniel Delehanty had given to his country, climbing steadily in rank, when one day he received an intimation that he would be asked to take the governorship of Sallor's Snug Harbor. The Navy has nothing to do with the Harbor, but the duty of the institution started to mutiny and the trustees had applied to the Secretary of the Navy to help them by letting them have an officer of high administrative ability and well able to handle men. Captain Delehanty had served in the Asiatic Squadron and Pacific fleet, the North Atlantic station and at the Naval Academy. He had been on the Saranac, the Independence, the Colorado, the Catskill, the Lathrop, the Adams, the Watchung, the Texas and other warships, and had been Supervisor of New York Harbor.

Ordinarily the governorship of Sallor's Snug Harbor would be a pleasant berth, but just at that time Captain Delehanty did not want it. His friend, Theodore Roosevelt, was Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and he went to see him.

"Mr. Secretary," he said, "we are going to have a war with Spain, and if it comes I don't want to be left on the beach."

Previously in conversations with the Captain Mr. Roosevelt had expressed the opinion that war was certain, but now he said that the affair was being treated as a matter of course, and there would be no rupture of peace.

The Captain was not convinced by what Mr. Roosevelt said, and Mr. Roosevelt jumped up and went in to see his chief, Secretary Long.

"Long says to take it," he announced when he returned.

Maybe he was doubt still shadowed in the Captain's face. At any rate he said: "Captain, there is no reason why you shouldn't take it. In the first place, there is going to be a war, and in the second place if there is a war I promise you I'll give you a ship."

"You promise?" said Captain Delehanty.

"Yes, I promise," said Mr. Roosevelt. "All right, I'll go," said the Captain.

To Sallor's Snug Harbor went the Captain. He had taken charge there before the Maine was blown up in the harbor of Havana. In a day the Nation was aflame. Was was in the air, was the war for the Government of the two countries directly concerned to try to settle the trouble by diplomatic treatings. Millions of the hundreds who went to death on the Maine. Outwardly protesting that war was not intended and would not be resorted to, all other efforts failed, both the United States and Spain rushed their preparations for the conflict that both knew was inevitable.

In Washington the Navy Department was straining to bring into play its most formidable force. Night and day the officials studied the problems of equipment, personnel and concentration. Every commander saw in the coming conflict an opportunity to win for himself a high place in his country's regard and niche, perhaps, in the temple of fame. For more than thirty years the Nation had been at peace. Service in the Navy had been a reward, a little reward. Men had given the best years of their lives to it and had grown old and gray without having attained much in the way of rank. A year of war meant more in the way of promotion than decades of service in times of peace. To the captain who had powerful friends in Congress there was the chance of appointment to command a fleet.

Captain Delehanty, newly installed in his office at Sallor's Snug Harbor, read the news day by day, and every day he regretted more and more that fate had been so unkind to him. After all his years to be pigeonholed or sidetracked just at the time when the door of opportunity seemed about to be opened to the men of the Navy was indeed a tragedy. That he would be brought out from Snug Harbor for service was most unlikely. He had no reason to expect it except for the promise made by Theodore Roosevelt, and that promise undoubtedly would be forgotten in the stress of activity and the multitude of things that would overwhelm the Assistant Secretary of the Navy in the preparations for the war.

Day by day the tension between Spain and the United States became more strained. In Congress the war party grew stronger and stronger, and the demand upon the President to act became more insistent. And as the tension became more strained and as the war feeling increased Captain Delehanty's regret that he ever accepted the commission to Snug Harbor became more acute.

One day he was in the city, riding down Broadway in a car, when he heard the news, "Spain has declared war." Extra! In a voice that told its own story. He got off the car and bought a paper. There across the whole page was the great news. War had been declared. The United States and Spain were to settle their differences by clash of arms. The navies were ready to be hurled at each other. Armies were assembling to meet each other and battle to the death. To the men trained to the service the door of opportunity was flung open at last, but

not to Daniel Delehanty, neglected and forgotten, buried away at Sallor's Snug Harbor after thirty-five years of service.

As he went down Broadway after reading the extra, there was not a sadder man in all New York than Daniel Delehanty. He crossed the ferry to Staten Island and boarded the train at St. George for Snug Harbor with little thought of anything but his own ill fortune. As he entered the gate at Snug Harbor an orderly stepped forward, saluted, and thrust forward a paper.

"Telegram for you, sir," he said, and saluted again.

The Captain opened the envelope mechanically. Then he read: "War declared. You may have command of Sallor or —. Which do you prefer?"

"THEODORE ROOSEVELT, Assistant Secretary Navy."

In a moment the man who had been burdened with regret was transformed into a man full of hope, eagerness and activity. He hurried to the telegraph office and rushed a message to Washington. In a few days he was on his way to take command of the Sallor. In a few months he was in the great light at Santiago, where the navy of Spain was crushed in one of the remarkable battles in the history of naval warfare.

When the fight was over he went in his launch to the companyway. "Fighting climbed up the companyway," "Fighting" Evans hurried forward, flushed of face and with both hands outstretched in greeting. "Delehanty," he exclaimed, "I want to present you to one of the finest gentlemen I've ever seen."

Captain Delehanty went forward and

was presented to a man who, despite the rough garments of a common sailor, the first he could get into after being rescued from the water, nevertheless was an imposing figure. Dignified but gracious, greater in defeat, perhaps, than he was at any other time, Cervera, in his coarse common garb, was no less the Admiral and the gentleman than in the most resplendent of his uniforms.

To go back to Sallor's Snug Harbor after the war with Spain was no hardship to Captain Delehanty. He had rounded out a fine career in the Navy and in the manner every true officer of the Navy hopes to round out his career. But there was one thing that he craved for, one thing he had sought for, petitioned for many times and never had been able to get, and one day in the Navy Department in Washington he got that.

He had been talking with John D. Long, Secretary of the Navy, and as he was about to go the Secretary asked him if there was anything he could do for him. "Yes, there is," replied the Captain. "There is a paper on file here in the Navy Department that I want more than anything else on earth. And then he told Secretary Long the story of the letter Archbishop Hughes had written. He told, too, all the details regarding his visit to the White House, his impressions of Mr. Lincoln, of the indorsement, "I wish this done. A Lincoln!" of how the

President put his hand on his head as if in benediction, and of the flustered boyish speech, "Mr. President, you'll never regret what you have done this day."

The Secretary listened to the plain, simple, human story, and then he summoned one of his secretaries and instructed him to get the letter. Out of the archives where it had lain for nearly 40 years was brought the faded letter of John Hughes, and together the Secretary and the Captain read it over and commented on it, and on the clear, legible writing of the great President.

"Captain," said the Secretary, "you should have this, but as it is an official record of the department, we cannot part with it except in regular form. I shall see about getting it, and so soon as the formalities are complied with I'll advise you."

"Mr. Secretary," said the Captain, "every time I have asked for the letter I have been told the same thing. If I ever am to get the letter, which to me is so much and which to the department is so little, I am going to get it now. You asked me if I wanted anything, and I want the letter. You said I should have it. If I leave here today without it I am sure I never will get it."

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description of the married President. Then he summoned the secretary again. "Make a copy of this letter in strict conformity with the fullest requirements of the department," he said. "Have the copy certified and attested. Bring back the original and the copy as soon as possible."

When the original and the copy were brought back the Secretary compared the two and gave the copy to the clerk for filing.

And then, turning to Captain Delehanty, he handed him the faded letter of John Hughes.

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BUILD MONUMENT TO BILL NYE, AT LARAMIE

Scene of the Humorist's First Work to Be Marked by a Memorial.



LARAMIE, WYO., WHERE BILL NYE MONUMENT WILL BE ERECTED

THE American Press Humorists are going to put a monument in this little town on the Laramie plains, where Bill Nye did his humorous work that attracted world-wide attention. Although America is the home of humor, and is justly proud of the famous wits who have made the world laugh, this will be the first public recognition of an American humorist.

The organization of humorists that has the matter in charge consists mostly of newspaper writers who conduct humorous columns in the daily press. Cy Warman, the famous Western poet and short story writer, being secretary. The newspaper humorists have felt that some form of public recognition is due Nye, and in all probability their testimonial will consist of a monument or drinking fountain erected in Laramie near the Union Pacific Park, where Nye and much of the humorist's life was spent.

When Edgar Wilson Nye was looming large on the horizon as a humorist of national reputation. The old Boomerang, struck observers at the first glance, and acquaintances soon forgot the awkwardness and the generally strange appearance of the man when he began to talk. A quiet flow of dry wit, which was vastly different from the anything-but-subtle humor of the frontier of those days, soon made him the center of a large number of willing listeners.

Not finding a great amount of law work in Laramie, Nye "took a job" as a general writer on the Laramie Sentinel, under Judge J. H. Hayford. At once he "made a hit," as the same quality of humor that marked his conversation was noticeable in his writing. His chronicling of the small affairs of a small town was immensely funny, and it was observed at the start that Nye

had found his true field in journalism. A company was organized, and the Boomerang was started, with Nye as editor. Soon after the successful launching of the new paper, the Boomerang began to attract attention throughout the West, on account of the humor that crept into its columns. Nye was well worth the quote it freely, and then Nye conceived the idea of enlarging his sphere. He sent a Laramie letter to the editor of the Denver Tribune, on which paper Eugene Field was to shine a few years later. The letter came to City Editor Thomas F. Dawson, who must be given credit as the real "discoverer" of Bill Nye. Dawson thought the letter was well worth the \$15 Nye asked for it. He took it to Herman Becker, the owner of the Tribune, who with true business-office caution, told him to offer Nye \$7. This was done, and Nye took the \$7 and wrote more letters at the same figures. These letters gained a wide circulation in the East, and were really the starting point of Nye's career as a National figure.

Soon Nye had an offer from a great publication in the East, which he accepted. He went through Denver, where he had made many friends among the newspaper fraternity, and a banquet was tendered him at the St. James Hotel. Eugene Field was one of the banqueters, and John R. Lee, a veteran newspaper man of Denver, made Field smile by predicting a great career for that young poet. Only a few years later Field followed Nye to the East, under much the same circumstances. The Denver banquet was an all-night affair. Nye was to speak on "Wyoming," and when his turn came he rose and read an interminable list of statistics on the territory. Several of the banqueters, including Nye, finally sought their beds, but Field and the more valiant of the spirits continued the hilarity until daybreak. Just at dawn they paraded through the business part of the city, visiting each saloon just as the bartenders were opening up. The paraders marched in, no man speaking a word. The bartenders tried to get up a conversation, but not a word was spoken, and the newspaper men marched out again, without tendering pay for the drinks that had been consumed during the silent visit. Then the procession marched back to the hotel, and one man after another sent his card up to Nye. Finally Nye

being blue and the other harel. This peculiarity, and his premature baldness, struck observers at the first glance, and acquaintances soon forgot the awkwardness and the generally strange appearance of the man when he began to talk. A quiet flow of dry wit, which was vastly different from the anything-but-subtle humor of the frontier of those days, soon made him the center of a large number of willing listeners.

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gave up in despair and dressed and rejoined the bunch, keeping up the practical jokes and the general hilarity, under Field's leadership, until noon. Afterward he wrote a humorous letter of his experiences, calling it "Insomnia."

While he was struggling in Laramie, Nye received his first and only political appointment. He was elected Commissioner of the United States cases examined by the government, or because I am displeased with public life. There is no reason why the government and myself should not continue to be friends, but under the new regime for United States Commissioners of District Courts, I am compelled to retire from the official capacity which I have so long filled with so much credit and credit both to myself and the United States.

"The Department of Justice now requires me to furnish a detailed statement, within a month of all the business done by the Commissioner, with his official certificate attached. I am also required to keep a large volume in my office as a record of the United States cases examined by me. I am to do this at my own expense, in order that the honor and high moral tone of the Nation may remain unimpaired."

"All these requirements I could, of course comply with, but I am cursed with the horrible apprehension that in the future I shall be required to do more of this until the expense will be more than I can meet. I could now, of course, get little chores to do around town, enough for necessary funds to buy the records, etc., but before another year the government may require me to buy a marble-topped center table and two or three paintings by the old masters, in order to give the popular amount of terror to the United States criminals. This would compel me to go without a new overcoat and underclothes, of which I am sadly in need. I had hoped that with the financial prosperity of the past year there would be one case at least for examination, for which I could realize \$6 or \$7, and which would ease this branch of the Department of Justice temporarily, but I have been disappointed all the way through. I could squeeze along without the overcoat in order to get the required record this winter, but the underclothes I feel as if I ought to have."

"I might die suddenly while in the bench, and it would sound harsh if the telegraphic dispatches were to state that the United States commissioner had died from exposure and temporary starvation of underclothes."

"Our Winters here are quite severe, and if the Department of Justice should require me to buy an upright piano and keep it on file, I would have to clothe myself in my unwavering integrity and a pair of galloped eye-glasses."

"There is no question about the air of cheerfulness a piano would give to my office, especially if some lady were to be tried on some charge or another, for she could bang an overture over the instrument while waiting for the United States attorney to come, and it would help her to tell time, but the court would either have to lock itself in an adjoining closet till the defendant had gone, or ask her to loan him her shawl during the trial."

You will see from these suggestions whether we are drifting.

"I will now turn the office over to the department. It consists of a pine box with some specimens of second-hand chewing tobacco preserved in sawdust and a bald-headed feather duster. The department will please send a receipt to me for these articles, as I desire to preserve everything done correctly and with the usual amount of precision and delay."

While in Laramie, Nye was married to Miss Fannie Smith, and he and his attractive and clever wife were prominent at many of the social gatherings in the little plains town. In fact Nye's years in Laramie were, as he afterward said, the pleasantest of his life. He liked the wholesome, breezy spirit of the Western town, and evidently the feeling was reciprocated. The only time Nye ever came near getting in personal trouble in Laramie was when he wrote one of his famous sketches entitled "A Monumental Liar," in which he drew freely upon the personality of Colonel Bill Root, the town's chief story-teller and most prominent figure. Colonel Bill armed himself and started to hunt Nye, and the humorist was accused on the Homer ranch near Laramie for a day or two. Then Root's life had cooled, and he was ready to laugh at the picture of himself that had been drawn by Nye. The men shook hands, and Nye continued to write many other articles in which Colonel Bill was the leading figure.

The old-timers in Laramie still relate many stories in which the humorist figures, and the whole town will "point with pride" when a memorial is erected to its one genius.

The Home Days.
When the goldenrod has withered,
And the maple leaves are red;
When the crickets are heard to sing,
And the children cluster around;
Of the swiftly hastening Fall
Come the dear and happy home days,
Days we love the best of all.

Then the household gathers early,
And the twilight hours are sweet;
The children cluster around,
Wears the glory of the rose;
Then the grandiose thinks of stories,
And the children cluster around;
And the floor is just a keyboard
For the father's patter.

Oh, dear face of the mother,
As she tucks the babies in;
Oh, the big voice of the father,
How over all the merry din;
Home, and happy, home, home come,
How they weave their paths across time,
Heart and life and creed and memory,
In the farmstead's holy ground.

—Margaret L. Sangster.