

Morning

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Astorian.

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INCREASE NOT MADE

Congress Sits Down on the Proposed Salary Grab

CABINET PAY MAY ADVANCE

Secretary Root Advocates More Centralized Government—More Land Frauds Found in Indian Territory—Week in Washington.

WASHINGTON, D. C., December 22.—The clerks in the Government service in Washington are clamoring, as loudly as they dare, for an increase in their salaries, in which demand the local press is supporting them. It is natural, for if the clerks have more money to spend the local merchants will ultimately profit and everybody will be pleased. But no one yet has touched the practical side of the question in public discussion. The fault is not in the low salaries but in the system itself. It is properly pointed out that the cost of living has greatly increased here or elsewhere within the past ten years; that \$1200 a year will not go as far now as it would ten years ago. But the fact has been overlooked that the clerk who drew twelve hundred a year ten years ago, is now receiving \$1,400, \$1,600, \$1,800 or even \$2,000 per annum. Thus his salary has kept pace with the increase in the cost of living. There are three exceptions, the clerks who were at the top ten years ago and who are still there, and those clerks who did not deserve promotion or who find their promotion stopped by the failure of those above them to die or resign. Yet these three classes are insignificant as compared with the total number of clerks. Twelve years ago there was a clerk in the post office department receiving \$1200 a year. He is now a member of President Roosevelt's Cabinet. This goes to show it can be done. The grave fault with the system is that the extremes are too close together. Practically no young man who can earn \$900 a year in private employment will enter the Government service, for the reason that the utmost limit for clerks is practically \$2,000 a year. The majority of men prefer private employment, where, if successful, the prizes range from \$5,000 to \$100,000 a year. A man may be a good copyist but if he is no better now than ten years ago, and if he is receiving say twenty per cent more than he would in private employment, for the same work, the argument that he should receive more salary is not conclusive. A much better remedy, indeed, is to rearrange the grades, reducing the salaries at the start and increasing them at the top, giving more flexibility to the service. If a young man could be started in the Civil Service at \$480 per annum, but with the knowledge that if he earned promotion he could rise to \$2,000, \$4,000 or even \$5,000, there would be some incentive. As it is, he takes a civil service examination and lands a place at \$900 at the start, with the certainty that the higher grades are full of healthy men and women and that after he serves intelligently and faithfully for twenty years he can never reasonably hope to receive more than \$2,000. No wonder he clamors for his 30 days annual leave, his 30 days sick leave, and all holidays. No wonder he appears on the last stroke of nine and passes out of the building at 4:31. The writer is one who does not believe the average government clerk is badly treated. He has thirty days annual and the same amount of sick leave; if he is inclined he can get away with only about ten months work a year. During nine months he works from 9:00 to 4:30, the terrible total of seven and a half hours, but he has half an hour for lunch. During three months he is off at one o'clock Saturdays. He gets every national holiday off and the half day preceding. If the holiday falls on Sunday he gets half of the day before and the next day after, he gets his money regularly and knows his job is secure as long as he behaves himself. Most of the work is purely mechanical: copying letters, taking dictation, following established rules and precedents or filling out printed forms. Most of it is well-paid, exceedingly well-paid, when the class of work and the amount accomplished, the easy hours and the vacation periods, are taken into consideration. The

trouble is that the limit is too small to attract active, energetic young men. Let Congress gradually establish a line of positions paying from \$3,000 to \$5,000 a year, to which clerks can be promoted and it will do more good than any flat increase of ten per cent for good, bad and indifferent clerks alike. Government clerks should remember one thing and that is that the fat goes with the lean. Those who were receiving \$1200 from '90 to '96, and those who are now getting the same amount, should remember that during the former period they received their money regularly and their positions were secure, where others were out of work and the price of everything was very low. At a time when hundreds of thousands of men were out of work, the writer was getting \$60 a month for sealing envelopes and pushing a cart around the pension office, and even when there, only worked about four hours a day. Then the job was a snap. It is still there and still pays \$60 a month when the average boy would be glad to do the work for \$5 a week. The fact that the price of living has gone up has nothing to do with the case of that particular position. It was entirely too well-paid at that time, it is too well-paid now and to increase it ten per cent a month would be absurd. Had the writer remained in the Pension Office he might possibly have risen to \$1,500 or \$1,800 a year by this time. The newspaper business is not noted as a lucrative profession but it pays better than that in return for twelve or fourteen hours a day about 360 days in the year, after fifteen years devotion. "Shorter hours and more pay" is the slogan of the average government clerk. "More work, fewer idlers and increased opportunities" would appeal more strongly to the country at large.

INNOCENT VICTIM.

Women Quarrel While Baby Girl Smothers Close Beside Them.

CHICAGO, Dec. 22.—A quarrel of two women yesterday indirectly caused the death of a baby girl. Mrs. Anna Paptrak and her sister, Mrs. Petrina Masuga, were quarreling beside a crib in which Mrs. Paptrak's daughter Elizabeth, five weeks old, lay. In her excitement Mrs. Masuga tossed a bundle of clothing into the crib and the child was smothered to death before the women finished their altercation. After the death of her niece, Mrs. Masuga returned to her home and barricaded the door leading to her bedroom in anticipation of the arrival of the police. When the detectives attempted to enter the house they were deterred for a time by Mrs. Masuga, who threatened them with violence. After waiting a few minutes they pushed the door open and arrested the woman who struggled some time before being subdued. She will be held pending a coroner's inquest.

NEW YORK CARS

Has Plenty of These Antiquated Relics Yet.

SOME COSTLY MODERN BRICKS

Metropolitan Alchemist Discovers Process for Making Gold from Common Sand, Mixed with Copper and a Secret Ingredient.

NEW YORK, Dec. 22.—Facts which have just come to light show that when the average New Yorker visiting in other cities describes with pride the greatness of the metropolis, certain of his remarks should be taken with a grain of salt. For instance a good deal has been said about the subway as an illustration of the city's up to date transportation system. But on top of the fact that this subway has already reached the limit of adequacy, the figures show that the city has not so much to boast of after all. There is another side to the question which may be summed up in the statement borne out by figures, that in antiquated street car service New York leads the whole country. Manhattan Borough alone has more old fashioned horse cars than all the rest of the United States together, even counting the mule cars in the south. The miles of horse-car lines operated in the city total a little more than 98 as against 213 miles of trolley track. It takes 25-033 horses to pull the 394 cars of this supposedly outgrown equipment. Last week car 243, the last of the old horse cars to run on Grand Street, was retired. For years it has been run only as a franchise holder, bumping along over cobble stones when tracks were lacking, with never a passenger to enliven the lives of the crew. Manned by a couple of sailors the car has long been known as the "Packet" and these same sailors are now rejoicing that she has at last as they express it "reached harbor." The truth of the whole matter is that the city's transportation lines are even now inadequate. One day last week 1,485,777 nickels were taken in, of which 569,634 were in the subway. This system was designed to handle a maximum of only 600,000 passengers a day, so that trouble looms close ahead. Meanwhile the city continues to hold the record for horse car equipments.

Just what will be left in the line of possible new toys for the metropolitan children of the next generation unless it be flying machines, is a Christmas problem which seems to have reached nearly the limit. From the simple home made toys which delighted

the child of thirty or forty years ago on Christmas morning, the question which most vexes the modern Kris Kringle is that of finding something new for New York youngsters. The results, as indicated by the modern toys now to be seen in the city, have been astonishing. There is the toy cow which can actually be milked, the studd being put in through a small opening in the bag to flow out a milk nature. Then there is the flitting doll, who sweeps a long deep glance beneath half raised eyelashes to say nothing of the doll baby which will consume milk from a bottle like its human prototype. There is also a mechanical hen with real feathers that lays real eggs,—or china ones if this is deemed safer,—and cackles like her barnyard sister. There is the elephant which curls its trunk, trumpets and charges about the nursery, to say nothing of many other animals. In the mechanical field complete railroads are already old, the latest thing being a child's automobile now on exhibition for the first time. It is 47 inches long and 17 inches wide, just large enough to accommodate a good sized youngster. It has wheels only 18 inches in diameter, and with a correspondingly small motor is capable of traveling some twenty miles on one charge at a speed of eight or ten miles an hour. Altogether the New York Santa Claus is, an extremely up to date person bringing the city's wealthy children the very newest toys in the world. But the question still remains as to what the next generation can have unless it be airships.

A strange consignment of 14,000 precious bricks which are being carefully guarded by the police was received in New York this week. They were not gold bricks, as the unwary might suspect, but plain small white bricks, of an old fashioned appearance straight from Holland from a kiln which has been making them without change for 250 years. They are to be used by the Sons of the Revolution in their work of repairing in its original style the old Fraunces Tavern at Broad and Pearl Streets so that it may present the same appearance as it did when Washington bade farewell to his officers there. Since then the first wall has been torn out to make a show window for a store which afterward became a saloon and in the work of restoring it as a club house its patriotic owners were confronted with the problem of securing small white bricks for facing it in the original style. A fruitless search revealed the fact that these were not to be obtained in this country and the Sons were almost despairing when it was discovered that fifteen miles outside of Rotterdam in Holland the identical factory which made the original bricks 206 years ago was still doing business at the old stand, and the bricks were ordered accordingly.

New York now has a real alchemist in her midst, and if the assertions of one John Raffel be true Wall Street can shortly give up making money and take to making gold. Every one can be as rich as he likes, apparently, for the process of acquiring the yellow metal is a simple one, according to Mr. Raffel. All that is necessary is to bury a chunk of copper with some "dordium," the makeup of which Mr. Raffel keeps to himself. He has, however, written to the Secretary of the Treasury at Washington concerning his discovery and is even now ready to open negotiations for its sale to Wall Street interests. Of course if Wall Street does get hold of the secret, the "common people" can expect little profit from it, and it is therefore to be hoped that Mr. Raffel will reconsider and decide to allow the entire country to participate in this easy method of getting rich.

UNPRECEDENTED TRAFFIC.

While the Interstate Commerce Commission is preparing to investigate the railway car shortage in the northwest and elsewhere, the press is not slow in securing facts on the situation. The Kansas City Journal declares that last Sunday 3,000 empty freight cars stood in the yards of that city, and 1,000 more were scattered about in smaller cities. On the other hand, only a few loaded cars had been received. The trouble, the Journal says, lies in lack of motive power, and does not constitute car shortage at all. Railways often are hampered by lack of fuel. The unprecedented traffic consumes the entire tractive capacity and leaves many cars over. This puts a new light on the problem. In the mountain country, such as surrounds Butte, winter complicates the situation, as the power of a locomotive is lessened by slippery tracks on heavy



hardt's Ideals," at the Star Theater. GEORGEIA A. NICHOLS, with "Eck