

M. Clam Interviews Three Cabinet Members.

WASHINGTON, U. S., Feb. 9.—To-day it is my grand pleasure to tell the France of my visit to three of those members of the cabinet of M. Roosevelt. Never did I have the task more delightful. Almost some of those things which I did learn are too good to be true. All those members of the Corps Executive are gentlemen most affable, skilled in politics and loyal to M. Roosevelt when he is wrong. After I had talked to many Senators I did think M. Roosevelt was always wrong. Yet, those Cabinet Ministers to tell me that M. Roosevelt is right in everything. Their reason is simple, yet complete. They say he cannot do wrong! He does not know how!

Three days before yesterday I did receive this thrice polite note from M. Elihu Root, the Secretary of the State:

My Dear M. Clam: Can you come to see me this day? I have ennui, with loneliness. All those diplomats now go to that White House, and I do not see them more. Affectionately,
ROOT.

Instantly I did feel sorrow for my only friend M. Root, I hurried to that department. All clerks were sleeping, with the mice running over their feet. Politely I awoke one elevator guard, who conducted me upward to the cabinet of M. Root. There one negro American was awakened, who carried my card to M. Root. On the lip he returned, with the finger on his lip. "He is taking the nap," said his attendant.

Then I did go away for one hour. When I returned, I was so fortunate to find M. Root awake. With pleasure he embraced. He said:

"Now we shall have the chat my friend. It is long since I saw you at the reception of M. Fairbanks. Do you attend the receptions of all those candidates for President? If so, what do you learn?"

My reply: "It is very difficult to learn much of this American game of seeking the Presidency. All those candidates do ask questions but they answer few, yet even those answers read other ways. This, to one who speaks his English with economy, makes perplexity. Yet tell me, dear friend, did you have pleasure in the Canada?"

His reply: "Ah, yes, that was delightful! Those Canadians are so impetuous, so hot-blooded with affection for America! My visit, M. Clam, was surely social. I did not talk the diplomacy to any one who did not know me, except to those reporters. Soon, hope, one treaty will result from that social visit. Yet this is the secondary matter. First, always is that grand passion of friendship which always exists between the close neighbors. You, my friend, know how the France and Germany hunger for the closer relation."

Almost I thought M. Root did jest with me, but no! His face did glow with affection for the Canada. Skillfully avoided discussion of the quality of affection which does make the France and Germany hunger for the closer relation. He said:

"How much better was the affection of those Canadians to you than the false affection of M. Swettenham to our admiral?"

His reply: "Ah, do not make the mistake, M. Clam! M. Swettenham is now affectionate. He thought he did not love us, yet now he sees the mistake. Perhaps he did think we wanted the Jamaica. Bah! Always we control the appetite. We want only what we can get. How foolish to have the idle wishes! America and Great Britain understand everything well, I think."

I said: "You, M. Root, have the oneliness? I have sorrow for you!"

His reply: "Ah, thanks, my friend! Yes, since those diplomats do wrestle with box and play tennis with M. Roosevelt, all is quiet in this Department. Almost I am driven to distraction. Yet I have devised one or two plans for making the agitation. One plan is to annex the San Domingo for fifty years. The other is to intervene in the Congo or the rescue of those poor blacks. Always these United States have pity for the black people. We have ten million blacks here, with great problems. Yet we have desire to regulate those blacks of San Domingo and the Congo. Do you, M. Clam, know of older blacks who should be rescued? Speak, my friend? It would be kindness to me if you would mention more opportunity for me to keep busy."

I said: "Perhaps those Hotentots have been massacred by the German soldiers?"

His reply: "Ah, that is diplomatically one case very different. How can

those United States interfere with the great power like Germany? If I should do this, M. Speck might become so angry as to knock out Roosevelt in the next boxing bout. No, no! Those proprieties must be observed. We shall interfere only with the small nations. When they do mistreat those poor blacks, our bowels of compassion do boil with indignation. Yet if Germany wishes to massacre those Hotentots, that is not in our sphere of influence. All things in the diplomacy must be done decently."

I said: "Permit me to make the grand suggestion, M. Root. Why do you not be one candidate for the Presidency? Then you could get busy."

His reply: "Ah, my dear Clam, I have tried that plan. It is not the success in my case. Those people do not understand me. They think I am cold—L. Elihu Root, with my passionate nature! Can they not see how with yearning I sailed to visit our loving sisters of the South America? Almost I embraced all public men of that hemisphere. Then I hurry to Canada for more warm embraces. Yet they say, 'Root, he is the cold proposition. He is too conservative, too cool, to be our President. We must have the hot blood, the quick trigger. No, I shall not be the candidate. Come, let us talk to him.'"

With pleasure I did go with M. Root, down that corridor to the Department of War. Here all was the bustle, the excitement of telegrams and messengers. Almost I thought of war excitement, but M. Root did assure me it was only the politics. We entered the cabinet of M. Taft. Lying back in one huge chair was one magnificent gentleman of the blonde sex, most attractively smiling. Instantly he rolled over and came to his feet. "My dear Elihu!" he exclaimed. "Come in, come in! with you—do not introduce, it is unnecessary—with you is M. Clam! To know you, M. Clam, is my delight. I have read your superb letters on the affairs American with much instruction."

Here M. Taft did embrace me. Almost I expected to die from that hug. I had pleasure to receive his praise. I said, when my breath did return: "It is thrice agreeable to meet you, M. Taft, in company with M. Root. He is the melancholy man, yet you can do much to make him happy."

His reply: "Ah, yes! Many times I try to stir up the questions international to relieve my friend of the ennui. How can I serve you, Elihu?"

M. Root said: "You, my dear Bill, are good to me. Do you think you can make a little more trouble with the Japan? Since M. Swettenham did disappear all is too quiet. Help me, dear colleague!"

M. Taft's reply: "With pleasure! I shall ask M. Roosevelt to do something desperate. Courage dear Elihu! Something will happen yet, if we have energy!"

M. Root did excuse himself, with thanks, and said: "Now I shall return to that lethal chamber. I, dear Bill, am the hermit of the cabinet."

"Poor Elihu!" exclaimed M. Taft, looking at his retiring colleague. "Ah, all men cannot be candidates for the Presidency!"

I said: "You, M. Taft, wish to become President?"

His reply: "M. Roosevelt's wish is my duty, M. Clam. I shall do what he wishes. First, permit me to thank you for your kind words of M. Roosevelt. In this world, when Senators and cruel newspapers speak of blunders, almost I have despair to keep up with M. Roosevelt. Yet I try hard to prevent the blunder. After, I am always ready to explain how it was not the blunder, but the stroke of unmediated genius. You, M. Clam, have perceived this, and I have gratitude for your kindness to M. Roosevelt. One moment—I must weep for my chief!"

M. Taft did turn aside, weeping. I had distress to watch his sorrow. Yet soon he did dry the tears, and one fierce aspect of anger elevated mustache and flashed the eye of him. He said:

"It is the work of M. Foraker! He is to blame if all negroes hate M. Roosevelt. Yet he shall suffer. M. Roosevelt shall use me as one club to brain this insolent Senator. It I perish, I perish. Yet Joe Foraker shall be crushed, too."

I said: "You, then are one candidate if M. Roosevelt wishes?"

His reply: "That is true. For myself, I wish to be one judge, yet reluctantly I will be President if M. Roosevelt thinks this will most punish Joe Foraker. Also, I cannot be Judge while old man Fuller hangs on."

I said: "If you cannot be the Chief Judge of that Supreme Tribunal why do you not make M. Roosevelt the Chief Judge when you are President?"

M. Taft's face did light up instantly with the happy smile. "This," he said, "is the idea splendid! You, M. Clam, are the genius! Why did we not think of that? Old man Fuller, he cannot outlive both M. Roosevelt and myself. He must surrender to one of us. M. Roosevelt would be one ideal chief judge, he is so conservative, yet often inspired by bursts of unmediated genius. I shall tell to M. Roosevelt this plan. Nothing, I think, would please him better than to furnish fresh ideas to that Supreme Tribunal."

Constantly M. Taft was interrupted by the telephone, the telegraph, and the messengers with cards. All people who think M. Taft is to be President are very busy making friends with him. With sighs he dispatched much business. I said:

"But, M. Taft, if all those Cabinet officers except M. Root are candidates for the Presidency, how shall they find time to do the public business?"

His reply: "One other Cabinet officer is not the candidate. That is M. Jim Wilson, of the Agriculture Secretary. For why? He was born in the Scotland, and cannot be President. It is the law! Only the brains sprouted on American soil are capable of understanding the in and outs of the politics. No man can be President who does not know the politics. Almost it would be anarchy, I think, if one not a politician should become President. Now I shall give you the note to M. Wilson. First, promise me, M. Clam, to dine with me. I have desire to talk with one gentleman who is not grinding the ax on myself."

Instantly, of course, I made the contract to dine with M. Taft. I had admiration for him more and more. Such a magnificent, great man, so loyal to M. Roosevelt, even to face the Presidency for him! Morbleu! Often such stout friends are not always found in this world! Also, M. Taft has the joviality, the sympathy! If the plump, clear skin of him should be punctured, the milk of human kindness would spurt very much out, I think.

M. Taft did give to me this kind note:

"Dear Farmer Jim: My dear friend M. Clam writes of the affairs American. Next to the Presidency, the most important affair is that American hen. Tell to him all you know. He will tell the France all about the hen and her glorious work for America. Your friend,
BILL TAFT."

Excusing myself politely to M. Taft, I hastened past the Monument which M. Washington made for himself. In the Department of Agriculture one clerk did conduct me to that chicken yard. There I did find one elderly gentleman in the shirt-sleeve, chasing one speckled hen with eagerness. With perspiration and puffing he received me. He did read M. Taft's note. Then with politeness, he said:

"I have pleasure to meet you, M. Clam. Yet, excuse me one moment, please. The business is business."

Instantly he did start again to catch that hen. She ran toward me, and with exertion I did assist to catch her. M. Wilson then did attach one tag to her leg, and patting her on the head he said to her: "Now, biddy, do your best. You are the mainstay of the Republic." He opened her mouth and slipped in one small pill. Instantly that speckled hen did run to her nest with the important look. M. Wilson said:

"I have fault M. Clam with my friend Taft. He says the Presidency is more important than the hen. Bah! You shall see! In these United States we have one billion of hens. They lay us eggs which would pay for one hundred of Presidents! Yet we have food for billions of hens more. How to have more hens, also how to induce them to lay more eggs—that is the question more important than any other question in America. Do you see that speckled hen? I have given her the pill I have invented after months of great labor. In half an hour I hope she will lay one egg with two yolks. Already she has laid one common egg today. If she does lay the second double egg, I shall instantly ask M. Roosevelt for the order executive compelling all people to give the pills to all hens. Also, I shall ask M. Roosevelt to insinuate that Congress to make the appropriation for egg pills. Thus one part of the great American question will be solved. Prosperity? Bah! Those people do not yet understand what prosperity we shall have, if that

(Continued on Page 10.)

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