

**ALMOST A CENTURY.**

That is the Age of the U. S. Supreme Court.

**HISTORY OF THE TRIBUNAL.**

Only Two Ex-Associate Justices Now Living  
—One Resigned Because His State Seceded—The Vacancy.

The Supreme Court of the United States is nearing its 100th anniversary as the highest judicial power in the country. Although it has been more than a century since it was established by law it was not fully organized until 1790. During its century of existence it has passed upon all phases of the law, interpreted the constitution of the country, and is the only tribunal before which law-maker and law-breaker alike must bow in submission.

From its findings there is no appeal. Its decisions are final and its mandates are enforced even if it is necessary to call upon the military power of the government to enforce them. It is the sole arbiter of all legal disputes between the States, and in fact, is the sovereign of sovereignties. Questions of law of all kinds come before it on appeal from all other Federal courts, and in criminal cases where questions which involve rights claimed under the constitution, laws or treaties of the United States. In civil cases where the validity of a law is attacked it can be appealed to without regard to the amount in controversy in the case. When the statute of a State conflicts with an act of Congress the court is made the arbiter of the dispute, and by its action only can the state law be declared a nullity. When Congress passes a law which is in conflict with the Constitution the Supreme court has the power to declare it void. But the construction of a law, either State or National, cannot be decided except it comes before the Court in a case, and it must have regularly passed through the lower courts. Thus it is that this court, whose decisions have come to be looked upon with awe by the majority of men, and with respect by the legal fraternity, has come to be called the expounder of the Constitution. It is in one sense, but it goes farther and besides settling questions involving law, has also at times decided those where life and liberty were involved.

The Supreme court, at its organization in 1790, consisted of a Chief Justice and five Associate Justices. The number of Associate Justices was increased to six in 1807, by the appointment of Thomas Todd. For thirty years it remained the same, but in 1837 it was increased to eight by the appointment of John Catron and John McKinley. During the war, or, to be more precise, in 1863, President Lincoln raised the number to nine by appointing Stephen J. Field, one of its present members. Two years later its number was decreased to eight by the death of John Catron, and the death of Joseph M. Wayne, in 1867, decreased the quota to seven. In 1870 President Grant increased the membership to eight by the appointment of Joseph P. Bradley, who still retains a seat on the wool sack.

At the present time the crowd consists of seven Associate Judges and a Chief Justice, the vacancy among the Associate Judgeships having been caused by the recent death of Stanley Matthews. The Associate Judges of the court are Samuel F. Miller, Stephen J. Field, Joseph P. Bradley, John M. Harlan, Horace Gray, Samuel Blatchford, L. Q. C. Lamar, and Chief Justice M. W. Fuller.

Of these Miller is the oldest in time of service and he enjoys the proud distinction with Justice Field of being the two oldest justices on the bench. Both are seventy-three years old, and each has been a member of the Supreme court for over a quarter of a century. Justice Miller was appointed in 1862, and Justice Field in the year following.

The tenure of office is for life, during good behavior, and a member can only be removed by impeachment for high crimes and misdemeanors. As an instance of the old maxim, it may be said that in addition to the present members of the Supreme court, there but two living ex-Associate judges. One of these, John A. Campbell, of Alabama, was appointed by President Pierce, in 1853, and at the breaking out of the war he opposed the secession of his state, but went with it, resigning his position on the bench. He is now practicing law in New Orleans. The other, Justice Strong, was retired in 1880 on full pay, and is spending his declining days in Washington.

Since the organization of the court there have been eight Chief Justices and forty-four Associate Justices. Of this number, nine resigned, five were retired, one failed of confirmation by the senate, and the others died in office or are now holding the position.

Justice Campbell is seventy-eight years of age, but Judge Strong is three years older. Of the eight Chief Justices which the court has had, two resigned—John Jay and Oliver Ellsworth—and one Rutledge failed of confirmation. Chief Justice Marshall and Justice Story had the honor of serving on the bench longer than any of their confreres, each serving thirty-four years.

The act of April 10, 1869, permits them to retire with full pay for life, after reaching the age of seventy, provided they serve ten consecutive years. The pay is \$10,500 for the Chief Justice, and \$10,000 for the Associate Justices.

with the cases, and usually dispose of them within a short time after they were submitted. But a change has come over the court. Shake-care, when he wrote of the law's delays, must have had in mind the litigious people of America in this year of our Lord, 1889. For surely if ever a litigant deserves sympathy it will be when he appeals a case to the Supreme court, with the expectation of having it decided at an early date. At the present time there are 1,484 cases on the docket, and new ones are being added constantly daily, while there is but one day in the week on which decisions are rendered, Monday.

The court is able to dispose of about 425 cases per year on an average, so, provided there is no delay in the pending cases, the man who has his case docketed to-morrow may reasonably hope to have it reached between three and a half and four years.

Only one term is held annually, beginning on the second Monday in October, and lasting until about May. By February the judges are usually behind in their opinions on the cases which have been submitted, and that month is taken as a recess in which to write up opinions.

The mode of proceedings is similar to that in every court of any importance. When the case is appealed the record is made up and sent to the clerk's office. Usually the record is printed, and the arguments also printed. The record is docketed and numbered, and then put away until it is placed on the calendar to be reached within a few days. When reached the arguments are made and the case submitted. The Justices consult about it, reach a decision, and one of their number is assigned to write up the opinion, which is read usually the following Monday.

**THE UNHAPPY SULTAN.**

A Skeleton in the Closet of Turkey's Ruler.

If things were done in Turkey is elsewhere the decease of the Sultan's mad half-brother, Murad V, would have been notified to the diplomatic body and the Turkish court would have gone into mourning, says a correspondent of the Glasgow Herald. But it is forbidden to speak openly of the Sultan's female relatives or of the Sultan's heir. The man who will succeed Abdul Hamid is a wretched, lean, pale-faced creature of 45 years, named Mehmed Rehad. He is the Sultan's own brother, and is kept a close prisoner in the palace grounds, lest he should conspire for his Majesty's downfall. He has certainly no such intention, but usage requires that a Sultan's heir apparent should be treated as a suspected criminal, and Abdul Hamid is much too nervous a creature to innovate in this particular. He has a horrible fear lest his brother, Murad V, who became crazy from having been raised to the throne too suddenly, should recover his reason; but of this there is no chance, and now that Murad's mother is dead who will there be to prevent the poor lunatic from being hurried to his end by a "punch of something" in his coffee? Murad's mother, the Sultana Nadine, superintended his household and never left him. It would have been impossible to molest him while she was alive, but it would only be too much in keeping with Turkish traditions if the unhappy madman were not quietly removed in order that Abdul Hamid might sleep more soundly.

**AUTHORS' FULL NAMES.**

**Literary Leaves.**  
Bayard Taylor's first name was James.  
Frank Stockton is really Francis Richard Stockton.  
Wilkie Collins' full name was William Wilkie Collins.  
Duffield Osborne is in reality Samuel Duffield Osborne.  
Howard Seeley's full name is Edward Howard Seeley, jr.  
Joaquin Miller is a corruption of Cincinnati Heiner Miller.  
Laurence Hutton is a contraction of James Laurence Hutton.  
Henry R. Haggard sounds strange to thousands of ears who know Rider Haggard.  
Edmund Willam Gosse is to-day known only to the world by his first and last names.

**Some Curious Things.**

Something curious happened in Kent's meat market recently, which seems unexplainable. The butcher while cutting a hog in two, had his knife strike some hard substance, and, on examination, found that the knife had struck a ten cent piece, which was firmly imbedded in the backbone. How the coin got into such a place is somewhat of a conundrum. — Walla Walla Union. Pshaw; that's not hard. The hog swallowed the dime when he was a little, wee, wee pig. Talking of swallowing things, they tell in Yaquina, of a Wisconsin lady, now there, wuo yea's ago, when quite a little girl, swallowed a needle; that was as much as fifteen years ago, and last week the same identical needle worked out of the right arm of her youngest child, a healthy boy baby four months old. Now that's lets stranger than the pig and the ten-cent piece. — Astorian Nov. 23.

**Dr. John B. Pilkington.**  
Surgeon, oculist and medical specialist, will be at the Revere House, Albany, all day Tuesday, December 3, 1889. Eye, ear, catarrh, rheumatic, neuralgic, rectal and chronic sufferers of either class will be given free consultation. Two hundred references given.

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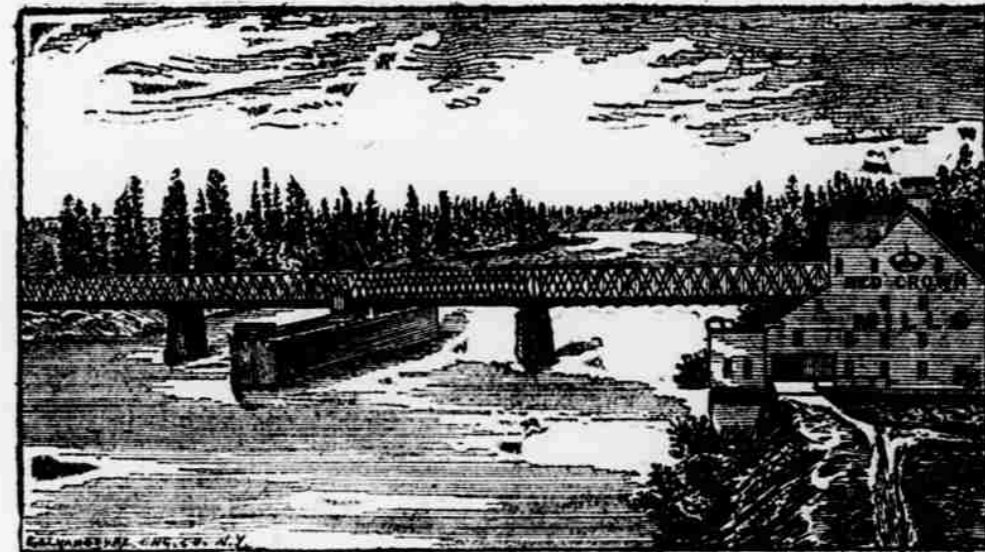
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