

## RETURN OF SPEAKER KIEFER

WAS CZAR OF THE HOUSE WHEN PRESENT SPEAKER "JOE" CANNON WAS MEMBER

One of the Three National Speakers Who Have Been Returned to Congress After a Long Lapse of Years.

The return of General J. Warren Kiefer to Congress after an absence of 22 years is of more than passing interest for the reason that he was speaker of the House which was organized in 1881. It was a famous Congress and Kiefer's pathway was not one of roses. He became involved in a controversy with H. V. Boynton, then dean of the Washington correspondents, and the bitter attacks of Boynton had much to do with Kiefer's retirement from public life although he was but 48 when he finished his fourth term in the House. Since then he has not been idle but has been prominent in civil and military life. He returns to Congress as Eld Nathaniel P. Banks and Galusha A. Grow. They had been Speakers



J. WARREN KIEFER AT 48 AND AT 70.

many years before and their return was notable. Each, like Kiefer, lived for years without prominence in politics but both were older when they came back. General Kiefer is now 83 but remarkably hale and hearty. He was always a conspicuous man and is the more so now because of his white hair and beard which were brown in the days of his speakership. He clings to the garb of the old time statesman and wears at all times an old fashioned swallow tailed coat cut much like the dress coats of to-day. General Kiefer served four terms in Congress, coming to Washington first for the special session of 1877. He was chosen speaker of the 47th Congress, Dec. 18, 1881, serving but the one term. Last year he was nominated for Congress and had no very hard time in getting the honor. The district is strongly republican and his majority was the largest ever given any candidate.

General Kiefer has a great war record. As a fighter and leader he had few equals in the Union army. He was practicing law when the first alarm of war was sounded in 1861 and he at once volunteered as a private. Before going to the front he was commissioned major and was promoted very rapidly, re-organizing in 1865 as brevet major-general and as a brigadier in active service. At the battle of the wilderness in 1864 he was severely wounded but would not give up. He stayed at it until Lee surrendered. A born soldier he could not resist the call to arms when the war with Spain came on, and was made a major-general of volunteers. He commanded a brigade under Sheridan in the Virginia battles that led up to Appomattox. At the battle of Ball's Bluff, General Kiefer had an experience out of the ordinary. Going alone at dusk to observe the lines of the enemy he found himself suddenly surrounded by a large body of confederates. They could not distinguish his Federal uniform in the dark and he was equal to the occasion. Wheeling his horse about he rode out in tones of command "Attention, men, right about face, march." Thinking it was one of their own officers the confederates followed him into the Union camp where to their disgust they found themselves prisoners.

He returns to congress vigorous and eager for active participation in the politics of the nation. As an ex-speaker he has been given a chairmanship and was also allowed the privilege of posing his old seat without going into the lottery scramble. Speaker Cannon was in Congress during general Kiefer's term as Speaker and they were warm friends. General Kiefer represents one of the best districts in Ohio containing big manufacturing establishments. He has found few of his old colleagues in the House. Many are dead and many more long ago retired to private life. Cannon and Bingham, Hitt and Payne, also Ketchum of New York, are about all who are now in the House who were with Kiefer in the stirring days of his speakership.

### Very Trying.

A man who usually grumbled at everything and on every occasion, was attacked by rheumatism. He was carefully nursed by his wife, who was very devoted to him, in spite of his fault-finding disposition. Sometimes the sight of his suffering caused her to burst into tears as she sat at his bedside.

One day a friend of the invalid came in, and asked him sympathetically how he was getting on.

"Badly, badly!" he exclaimed; "and it's all my wife's fault."

"Yes. The doctor told me that damp places were bad for me; and there my wife sits and cries just to make the air in the room moist."

The highest mountain in Africa is in Uganda. On this mountain there are one hundred square miles of snow and ice directly under the equator.

## NO INSURANCE LEGISLATION.

Congressmen Will Talk, But Won't Pass Bill.

Legislative experts at Washington do not look for the passage of an insurance law during this session of Congress. Statesmen of all sorts and conditions will talk much about it. There will be a great deal of discussion on the floors of both houses. Senators and Representatives alike will vie with each other in denunciation of the methods of the insurance magnates as exposed in the legislative investigation which occurred in New York. Already divers and sundry lawmakers at both ends of the Capitol have submitted remarks that have stirred their constituents to increased admiration of the eloquence and alertness of the men whom they have had the wisdom and foresight to send to Congress. But in the end nothing will be done—that is, nothing except a heap of talk.

### No Constitutional Provision.

The reason of this is that the Judiciary Committee, both of the Senate and House, thus early have about concluded that the Constitution of the United States does not provide for the kind of legislation which is recommended in the President's message.

Meanwhile, a great deal of wire-pulling is going on in favor of the general proposition. It cannot be asserted that any one of the numerous bills thus far presented has the approval either of President Roosevelt or Senator Dryden, though it is presumed that a measure embodying their exact views will be submitted within the next few weeks. It is known that so anxious are the insurance people for some form of legislation taking away from the States the supervision of insurance companies that they are prepared to spend unlimited money in the work of education, but thus far they have not been able to make much headway. Like all campaigns of education to which Washington has become accustomed, it is expected that the usual amount of speculation as to the outcome will be indulged, but this will not effect the judgment or the conduct of those members of Congress who have the final decision of the question through their influence with the Judiciary Committee.

### States Insist on Rights.

A factor of no inconsiderable weight in the matter is the insistence of nearly all the State governments upon their rights in the premises, and as Congress does not seem to care to lead further aid at this juncture to the centralization movement which is rapidly becoming an acute issue in State politics, it is regarded as altogether likely that the Federalization of insurance will at least be held in abeyance for some time yet.

### Aerial Mail Box.

In Delaware, Ohio, an ingenious citizen by the name of Taggart lives on a high hill some little distance off the main road. The hill is of loose gravel and at its foot is a small creek, innocent looking and easily forded in ordinary weather, but swelling rapidly with heavy rains. The rural carrier, whose route extended to Mr. Taggart's residence, found the frequent high water and the rough, hilly road such a source of delay and inconvenience that the Department ordered the route changed and Mr. Taggart was directed to place his box on the main road. Mr. Taggart protested, declaring that he would not walk that distance. Then his inventive brain conceived the trolley or aerial mail box. At a convenient corner of his porch he placed a windlass, with a small steel cable extending down to the box-post on the main road, around a deeply-grooved wheel on the post, and back to the porch. As shown, the box is connected in this cable, forming the link for the broken ends. The box is fitted with top wheels, which run on a fixed cable, stretched tight from the porch to the post.

When the mail carrier reaches the box-post (which is visible from the house), he puts in the mail and raises a signal. Some one at the house takes the handle of the windlass and turns it rapidly, and the box, with its burden of mail, comes sailing up the wire. The mail is then removed and the box



THE INGENUOUS MAIL BOX.

coasts back to its post. The distance of one hundred yards is covered in about ten seconds, which is as fast as a good sprinter can cover the distance. Multiplying gears in the windlass increase the speed. So far as is known, Mr. Taggart is the first to apply this idea to a rural mail-box.

### Would Spoil His Pleasure.

A certain Irishwoman, on her death-bed, called her husband to her side. "Patrick," she said, "I've a last request to make of ye." "I couldn't refuse ye anything, Mary, darlint," responded the sorrowing husband. "Patrick," said Mary, solemnly, "I want ye shud lave mother ride in the carriage beside ye to me funeral." "Tis too much ye're askin' of me, Mary!" cried Pat, springing to his feet in desperation. Mary, however, was determined on this point, and Pat finally yielded to her "last request." "I'll lave her ride by me side," he promised, weeping bitterly. "but mark ye, Mary, darlint, 'twill spoil the day for me entourage, that it will!"

The English authorities are so reluctant toward the adulteration of food and drugs that recently a soda-water manufacturer was fined for putting too small a proportion of carbonate of soda in the water.

## CHARACTER OF AARON BURR

Defender of His Fame Was Willing but Didn't Know Tricks of Oratory.

The first secret society with which I was ever affiliated was called the "Omega," which was two-thirds literary and one-third social, said an old college man, who has since won distinction as a national orator and campaign speaker. In our rival society, the "Alpha Rho," this order of things was reversed and we prided ourselves greatly on the fact that our "feast of reason" outranked the "flow of soul." Ours was a good deal of a debating society, and though I early gained some reputation as a speaker, I was either too bashful or too ignorant to take part in any of the debates.

One of my intimate chums was named Grant, who excelled in that line and although much younger than the average member, never hesitated to cross swords with the older ones and was not infrequently the victor.

He was very anxious that I should learn to debate, and frequently urged me to at least make a commencement, arguing that after I had gotten over my embarrassment, I would enjoy the fun and excitement.

The subject of debate one evening was to be, "Was the influence of Aaron Burr, upon the time in which he lived, good or bad?" Grant knew that I was quite an admirer of Burr, and read quite extensively about him, both in history and fiction, and said to me that this would be an excellent opportunity for me to make my debut.

Grant himself was to answer one of the oldest and best debaters and I could answer the one who followed him. He coached me very thoroughly, and I told him to listen carefully to what the opponents urged against Burr, to cite my proofs, showing he was neither a drunkard nor a libertine, as they would assert, and then show what a debt Washington and the country owed him for his military skill and ability during the Revolution. He said I must not allow myself to become flurried or excited, that I could occasionally refer to my notes and in fact talk and act just as if I were simply arguing with one or two of my school-mates.

During the day I thought much of the important part I was to play in the coming drama, and there seemed to me no reason why I should not score a complete success. But as the hour of the meeting drew nearer the success seemed to grow more problematical and by the time the debate opened, my thoughts were completely topsy-turvy and I could hardly remember whether Burr was an Italian or a Chinaman.

The man who opened the debate showed plainly that my hero was everything that was vile and wicked and should have been tried and convicted as a traitor, and I found myself wondering how Grant could possibly answer all these terrible charges. But his defense was splendid. He spoke in

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