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THE LAST MAN BROTHERHOOD
 Organized Nearly Half a Century Ago to be Dissolved

Walter W. Bell the Sole Survivor, Will Drink to Memory of Departed Brothers.

On the evening of Feb. 15 Walter Bell, only survivor of the Last Man Brotherhood, will stand at his table in his own dining room, Seattle. The table will be set for thirty-three diners. But when aged Mr. Bell shall lift to his lips the Madeira wine that he with thirty-two others established just forty-two years ago there will respond to his toast only the voiceless voices of thirty-two im-possible presences.

Another member of the brother- hood died. Not that they but their evanescent spirits will meet to- day for the final dissolution of the band formed in youthful days almost half a century ago.

Walter Bell, whose melancholy fate will be to drink thirty-two silent toasts to thirty-two vanished friends, is sixty-nine years old. For many years he was prominently known in Philadelphia as a newspaper man. Later he took up the real estate busi- ness, in which he has been success- ful.

Since the brotherhood was founded in 1856 he has never missed one of its meetings. Once a year he has eaten and drunk and laughed and jested with the slowly dwindling ranks of comrades who once swore to be- come brothers to each other for life. The banquet has been soberer, sad- der, than the last. And this year's banquet will be so solemn an occa- sion that the solitary drinker that he will not as supper, but will confine him- self to drinking to the memories of his dead friends.

The story of the founding of the Last Man Brotherhood has been told in the following article.

Happy old creature!

As the companions gone before him. As he sits at his lonely sup- per, eyes, companionless— good bottle of wine before him, and no one to join him in quaffing its contents;

—no imaginary faces, in ghost- ly garments, haunting his memory.

Thirty-two graves over which to drop a tear.

—to look forward to but the Last Day.

—to look for the Cypress Crown of the poor old Last Man?"

When I offered that toast on Feb. 15, 1856, in Barney Field's restaur- ant, Ninth and Arch streets, Phila- delphia, at the supper that was the feast of the Last Man Brother- hood, I did not dream that I would survive the other thirty-two members to live to drink alone at the brother- hood's last banquet, surrounded on- ly by the memories of my old friends who dropped of one by one, leaving only plates as the years rolled by.

It must, to be true to those memories and wind up the associa- tion of friends that endured for forty- two years, assemble with the spirits of those comrades on the "high seas" of the "galling" sea, and then drink a bottle of wine that is corked and sealed upon our first meeting together and set aside for the one who should outlive all the other members of our band.

That wine, which I have in safe- keeping, shall be duly opened in the presence of myself and the spirits of departed associates and I shall drink to the memory of each and ev- ery one of them. The observance of this duty imposed upon me by the members of our brotherhood shall fall at the moment of midnight of Feb. 15. Four that we always spent together once every year. The table shall be spread the same as it has al- ways been at our suppers. There will be thirty-three plates laid, and at the end of them there will be bou- quets for each of the departed members. Every year the place of a departed associate was marked by a bouquet of fresh flowers, tied with a white ribbon, on which the name of the departed one was print- ed.

It shall be no supper this time. I shall make my accustomed place at the table and, shut in from the out- side, shall break the seal of the bottle and proceed to drink to the memories of the members who have died. He turns the leaves of that massive tome.

He raises his head with a sigh pro- found.

While his dim eyes wander the table round.

"Here sat this one, there sat he,

declare the brotherhood dissolved. The Last Man Brotherhood was or- ganized among leading printers of this city and was suggested by read- ing of a similar association of Lon- don, which had quarters on the Thames. The organization and sup- per were events of one night — Feb. 16, 1856 (which by coincidence was my birthday)—the banquet having been given in the third story of Barney Field's restaurant, a favorite re- sort wiped out by time's progress a generation ago.

On the membership roll at the time of organization were these names, ar- ranged in the order of ages, starting with the oldest:

Eldridge G. Waterhouse, William B. Woodriddle, John Dickinson, Robert Dyball, Edward M. Meader, William Winfield, William B. Eckert, Henry G. Fisher, John A. Queen, Thomas Murnane, Samuel Sweeney, William C. Barnard, James Welsh, William Syckelmore, Michael C. Hart, Wil- liam Lowery, J. L. Anderson, John Curry, George W. Hurst, George W. Richards, Thomas J. Choate, Sam- uel R. Magonie, John M. Perry, Charles W. B. Acks, Peter W. Shin- del, George H. Dyball, Lafayette Horter, Orlando C. Ketcham, Walter W. Bell, William R. Farnwald, Henry L. Stevens, Charles S. Lindsay and Charles F. Dickinson.

At the first dinner was put up the bottle of wine that was to be drunk by the man who survived the other thirty-two members. The wine ex- perts who were in Barney Field's place at the time were called upon to give their opinion as to the best wine to bottle for preservation through the years. The majority declared for old Madeira and in the presence of all the members a short quart bottle was filled with Madeira that was then two years old. The wine that I am called upon to drink next month is consequently forty-eight years of age. Most delightful were the annual gatherings of the brotherhood. A busi- ness meeting always preceded each supper. At the feast the oldest mem- ber was always president.

After the banquet the table was cleared and the cigars and wine were served. The secretary then called the roll and each member had to respond with a song, recitation or story.

During the first four years of the existence of the brotherhood our ranks remained unbroken. Then a number of deaths occurred at the same time. Six or more of our mem- bers went to the war, but all came back safely with one exception. This was Chas. F. Dickinson, our young- est member. He was twenty-one years old when the brotherhood was formed. I was but twenty-two, but there were several of the brothers younger than I by a few months.

Dickinson came back to us after three years of service, but bade us good-by on the occasion of his re- enlistment, realizing in some occul- t fashion his approaching death.

Our dinners were held at restaur- ants up to 1873 and after that at Robert Dyball's home until 1891. By this time there were but six of us left and only three responded to the roll call, Robert Dyball, J. L. An- derson and myself. During the next year Dyball died. Besides Anderson there then remained J. Welsh, John Queen and William Eckert. All the others died in the few years following except Eckert and myself. On Nov. 14 last Eckert died at the age of eighty, leaving me the Last Man.

There is a touching bit of poetry which my toast "The Last Man" prompted Robert Dyball to compose and recite the year following. I give it complete:

There is a storm in the sky and the cold, cold rain Chills into ice on the window pane.

Within the lights are ruddy and bright, Mocking the gloom of the wint'ry night.

A feast is spread, but no guest is there, Save one who reclines in yon cushion- ed chair.

The cares of many long years have shed Their silvery snows on his low-bowed head.

With quivering lip and tear-dimmed eye He scans the record of times gone by.

While the only sound in that lone room heard Is the rustling leaf by his fingers stirred—

Fingers that tremble as, one by one, He turns the leaves of that massive tome.

He raises his head with a sigh pro- found, While his dim eyes wander the table round.

"Here sat this one, there sat he,

Save I, the last of this company.

'Twas his fingers traced this final line— I will drink to his rest in this good bright wine."

But chill in his heart and his limbs scarce bear His weight as he rises before his chair.

Yet he calls the names in order due— (The sad, sad list so nearly through.)

He raises the glass to his shrivelled lip, And essays the generous draught to sip.

Then sinking down, with palsied hand He makes the last note of our wasted band.

The date — his name. His senses drows— "Mine, mine, alas! is the Cypress Crown!"

—New York World

TO CALL IN OLD MONEY

Torn and Soiled Bills to Retire From Circulation.

Washington, January 18.—When Secretary Gage's attention was called to the action of the Ohio state board of health in condemning all soiled, torn paper money, he expressed sincere approval.

The action of the Ohio authorities and Secretary Gage's subsequent in- dorsment is in line with the sugges- tion made in the Hearst newspapers for clean money. The death of a man and his wife at Melrose, Ohio, from smallpox, the germs of which were communicated by filthy paper money, brought the question forcibly before the Ohio authorities.

Commenting on the suggestion printed in the Hearst newspapers, Secretary Gage said tonight:

"I would indeed be glad if we could get rid of all old soiled paper money. The treasury department sends out each day approximately \$1,000,000 in new paper money in exchange for old, torn or soiled paper bills. The treasury is always glad to exchange new money for old. As fast as the old money comes into the department it is noted and destroyed. Of course there is no way to call in the old old money, and unless the in- dividual holders volunteer to send in their currency for exchange we cannot reach them. I repeat, if any one has any old money they want exchanged for new money and will send it or bring it to the treasury department, we will be glad to issue new money for the old."

It is said that the new secretary of the treasury, who will come into office February 1st, is in favor of calling in all old paper money and issuing new, fresh, crisp bills in its place.

OPPOSING THE BILL

Revenue Cutters Not Wanted By Officials of the Navy.

Washington, Jan. 22.—The navy, or at least a considerable part of it, as represented by a number of leading officers, has taken an attitude of de- cided hostility toward the bill for the reorganization of the revenue cut- ter service now pending in congress. Similar opposition appeared last year, when the same bill was under discussion in the house, but the ac- tive movement on the part of naval officers against the measure appears now to be more determined than ever. Several officers of the navy, evidently acting according to a concerted plan, have been around the corridors and committee rooms of the capitol dur- ing the last two weeks, using their best efforts to defeat the passage of the revenue cutter bill. Their actions have attracted so much attention among the friends of the cutter ser- vice that an effort will be made to have the secretary of the navy put a stop to the practice of naval officers seeking to influence legislation.

The acts complained of are in direct violation of the navy regulations and the present case is precisely parallel to that which caused Secretary Root to issue an order recently reminding officers of the army that they must desist from any effort to influence legislation by congress.

The revenue cutter bill before the present congress has been changed in some important particulars from the form in which it was before the house last winter. The object of these changes has been to remove some of the objections that were made last year, and the friends of the service believe that there is an excellent

chance that the bill will become a law before the end of the present ses- sion. Last year an overwhelming majority of the members of the house were pledged to vote for the bill, and without question it would have passed if the session had been longer. As it was, the rush of business toward the end of the short session prevented the passage of the bill.

The same absolute certainty regard- ing the chances of the measure in the senate does not exist, but some of the most influential members of the upper branch of congress are sincere friends of the bill. Among these is Senator Frye, who is, perhaps, more deeply interested in the reorganization of the revenue marine than in any other measure except the ship subsidy bill. The Pacific coast senators are also strong supporters of the measure.

No good reason is given for the op- position of the navy, and the naval officers who are fighting the bill are doing their work most quietly, and by methods of private "pull" rather than by open warfare. Officers of the revenue cutter service characterize these efforts as evidences of a dog-in-the-manger policy on the part of naval officers, and jealousy lest the pre- stige of the navy shall be encroached upon by the rise of the revenue marine service in general standing and dignity.

It is only fair to say that this feel- ing of hostility to the cutter bill is not shared by all naval officers in Washington. One officer who holds the rank of rear admiral said today:

"I know perfectly well what some of our officers are doing, and I call it an outrage. The revenue cutter ser- vice deserves well. Many of their of- ficers would be ornaments to the navy. They would be better than orna- mental—that is an unfortunate word. They are the sailors and many of them are possessed of advanced technical education. In time of peace their vessels are often more useful than vessels of the navy, and in war time we have learned that the revenue cutters are mighty useful in cam- paigns against the enemy. The only gold medal awarded by congress to an officer during the war was voted for the commanding officer of the revenue cutter Hudson, for gallant conduct at Cardenas."

The Wrong Shop.

Vancouver, B.C., Jan. 17.—Mrs. Barbara Farron, an American woman has a strange story to tell the police which sounds more like fiction than fact. Mrs. Farron says that she was a passenger on the Hating when that steamer piled up on the rocks. That when the passengers were put upon the little island she wandered off to look over the ground, and tracing up some float ore, stumbled on to a promising looking lead of mineralized rock.

She did not have a Canadian miners' license and as she was on Can- adian soil could not stake the prop- erty, but she declared before a number of people that she had found the mine and would record it as soon as she legally could.

One of the persons she gave this in- formation to had a Canadian license, however, and when her back was turned found her mine and staked it. She has been legally advised that the claim she has to the property is good inasmuch as she first discovered it, and further advised to have the man arrested who "stole her gold mine."

Chinese Exclusion Act.

Washington, Jan. 25.—When the foreign affairs committee of the house resumed its hearings today on the subject of the re-enactment of laws prohibiting the coming into this country of Chinese, it was informed that if it had not been understood fully by the people of the Pacific coast that Chinese would be excluded by a Republican administration and by a Republican congress California's elec- toral vote would have been cast for Mr. Bryan. This statement was made by E. J. Livernash, of the San Fran- cisco Examiner.

In the course of his argument, Mr. Livernash particularly supported the section of the proposed act which prohibits the coming of Chinese into this country from the Philippines or any other insular possessions of the United States.

Will Not Fight a Duel.

Paris, Jan. 22.—The intervention of Paul Deschanel, president of the chamber of deputies, has averted the projected duel between M. d'Estour- nelles de Constant (Republican) and M. Lasies (Anti-Semite) growing out of yesterday's incident in the house, both of the parties to the dispute having repudiated any intention to insult the other.

Monster Packing Plant.

Denver, Colo., Jan. 23.—The News today says: Work on the construc- tion of a monster packing plant, to be erected in this city by local capiti- alists will be commenced within the next forty days. The company is to be incorporated with a capital stock of \$1,000,000.

"Hurry-Up Jobs" Done In a Manner To Surprise The Rush-Job Fiend.

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