

MARSHALL DESCRIBES THE HUMORS OF ORATORY

Vice President Was a Witness at Many Battles With the English Language—Fourth of July Celebrations—Election Methods That Have Passed Into History

THIS is the eighth chapter of the "Recollections of Thomas R. Marshall," Vice President and Hoosier Philosopher. These memoirs are appearing in twenty-nine instalments, daily and Sunday, in The New York Times. In the ninth chapter, which will be published tomorrow, Mr. Marshall writes "On Politics and Government."

By THOMAS R. MARSHALL.

INDIANA has waded through much slaughter of the English language to her throne of literary excellence. Scarcely a town that has not had its "Mrs. Partington"; scarcely a spot where some perfunctory orator was not beset with the sonorous quality of his words rather than the clarity of the sentiment he was seeking to express. These battles with the English language having won for pure English are nevertheless worth while to be remembered because of the humor injected into them. I have listened to many of the world's greatest orators; have been moved by their words to sympathy, to anger and now and then to enthusiasm. But what it was all about, and what they said has either been lost to my memory or pigeon-holed in the basement, with the elevator out of repair. But I can never forget some of the amusing things which in the earlier days I heard from the lips of incipient orators.

I see now a slow procession wending its way to the county fair grounds. I observe, astride a prancing horse, a veteran of the Civil War, acting as the marshal of the day. I note a float with beautiful girls of tender years representing the several States of the Union, each waving an American flag. I see the citizens on horse and on foot joining in the ceremonies of the day.

It was the Fourth of July. Dedicated as much to keeping alive the bitterness toward the British Empire as it was to glorifying in the natal day of the Republic. I follow with the rest of the crowd, get myself as close as I can to the stand, broll in the hot summer's sun, listen to a long-winded prayer by a local clergyman, then the leading lawyer of the town reads the Declaration of Independence, and by that time we are almost ready to declare war anew against Great Britain.

Scrambled History.

Then comes the orator of the day. I see him now—tall, gaunt, clean shaven, wearing a Prince Albert coat that reaches below his knees, and a white bow tie that buttons with a clasp at the back and has the inherent viciousness of a razor-blade. He tries to time to climb up and rest itself on his left ear. Indeed, it is questionable whether his oratorical effort or his effort to keep his necktie occupied the more of the time of the distinguished gentleman.

What all he said I do not know. It has passed into the limbo of forgetfulness, save this portion of it, which still abides in my memory: "Methinks I hear the tramp, tramp, tramp of the Pilgrim Fathers as they march from Plymouth Rock to Fennell Hall to sign the Declaration of Independence." It was the end. We vociferously cheered him, and then we nominated him and elected him as our Representative in the next General Assembly of the State of Indiana. We felt that we had a champion who would be true to the great principles of American Independence.

No Fourth of July, in those days, was complete without baiting the English. They were the legitimate subjects of universal condemnation. It has taken a long, long while for that ancient bitterness to have ceased to be, at least measurably. In fact, I doubt whether it would not be as intense as ever if these old-fashioned Fourth of July celebrations were as common now as they were fifty years ago. This hatred of the Briton, his works and his ways, consciously and unconsciously permeated the minds of all classes of citizens. It was only after mature study that I was enabled to ascertain that not all the people of Great Britain were to blame for George III and his Cabinet and to ascertain that in the years which followed they had in their own Government substantially fought revolution after revolution to acquire just the same rights that we have.

Sly Twist to the Lion's Tail.

So slow has been the disappearance of this sentiment that it continued with some degree of bitterness down even to the time when the mutations of politics made me the Governor of Indiana. I have always been much for keeping alive patriotic sentiment. I have always thought that the oftener "The Star-Spangled Banner" were played the more clearly would be impressed upon the minds of the citizens the greatness and glory of the Republic.

Therefore, when there was presented to me for signature an act of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana requiring that "The Star-Spangled Banner" be sung in its entirety in all the schools of the State of Indiana, I cheerfully affixed my official signature. When, however, it came to the practical application of the act I discovered that it was not accompanied by an appropriation to furnish it to the scholars of the State of Indiana; that to do so would, the first year, have cost in the neighborhood of \$100,000; that as no appropriation was made, and I dared not take that sum of money from my contingent fund, the act became a mere bit of bombastic legislation.

Some months after the General Assembly had adjourned I was called upon by a friend of Irish descent who asked me to inform him when the act was to be put into effect. I explained the financial situation. I said to him that for patriotic reasons I was extremely sorry that it could not be done. Whereupon, with the frankness that always



"My Great Effort to Restore Constitutional Government to Poorhook."

marks the conduct of a man of Irish descent, he notified me that the act had been prepared and presented by the Clan na Gael; that they had no patriotic purpose in it whatever, but that they desired it sung in its entirety because there was one verse in it that gave the British lion's tail a particularly vicious and nerve-racking twist. He was frank about it, at least, and I was again impressed with the view that Providence looks after fools. It did no harm to sign the bill, but if I had read it and understood its purpose I most assuredly should have vetoed it.

Politics the Chief Amusement.

The real amusement of those earlier days was not golf nor mah jong. It was local politics. It was played by everybody with the zest of the confirmed gambler. I have had some delightful experiences in life. There have come moments to me when if I had not been conscious of my own lack of merit I should have been proud beyond compare. But looking back over fifty years of life filled full of many small and a few important events, I think the proudest moment of my life was when I saw a four poster bill stuck up in front of the court house carrying in different colored inks the announcement that Honorable William Jones, John Smith, Esq., and Little Tommy Marshall would address the citizens of Poorhook on the political issues of the day.

Honor, enjoyment and happiness are all relative. Why not take the gifts the gods bring you and be content? It was at this important meeting, when the fate of the republic and civilization hung trembling in the balance, that one of the orators of the occasion announced that the principles of democracy were spreading all over this country of ours—from the lakes on the north to the "Mediterranean" on the south.

It was also at the conclusion of my great effort to restore constitutional government to the people of that neighborhood that we adjourned to a neighboring farmhouse and witnessed a wedding ceremony. The services were performed by a Justice of the Peace who had just been inducted into office. I assume that when he married his own wife he was so frightened that he did not know what had taken place, and I rather think he had never seen an organ performed, for this was the substance of the ceremony: He asked the bridegroom whether he took this woman to be his lawfully wedded wife, without relief from valuation and appraisement laws, and upon an affirmative answer he asked the bride whether she took this man to be her lawfully wedded husband, without benefit of clergy, and upon her nodding her head and assenting, he concluded the service by pronouncing them husband and wife, in the name of the State of Indiana, Whitley County, SS.

Gave the Bride Away.

Years afterward, when I was struggling desperately in my campaign for Governor, a certain District Committeeman in Indiana introduced me to a young man on the railroad train and asked him where he was going. He gave the name of the town and informed the committeeman that he was going there to get married. Upon inquiry as to whether his prospective bride resided in the town, he said no, she was on the train. He pointed her out—a round, roly-poly, good-natured and care free girl, of some foreign extraction.

The committeeman, beguiled by his Satanic Majesty, told the young man the next Governor was going to talk in that town and that if he would marry the girl on that platform all license fees and clergyman's honorarium would be attended to. Imagine my surprise, therefore, when I climbed upon the platform and faced the audience, to find this young fellow there with his girl and with the clergyman, and a demand at the hands of the committeeman that I give the bride away. I looked her over and concluded to do so. I did not want her myself, and had no objection to anybody taking her who did. Indeed,

this has been the law of my life: To give away gladly and joyfully anything I did not want myself to anybody who did want it.

During the time I was Governor there was never a Christmas came around that I did not seek to scatter sunshine somewhere if I could do it gratuitously. Preceding one of those days I discovered that there was a man in the penitentiary for deserting and falling to support his wife. I thought there was a chance to disclose the Christ-like spirit, and so I sent him a parole conditioned that he return home and support his wife, with orders that it be delivered to him by the warden of the prison on Christmas morning.

The day following, the parole was returned to me with a polite letter from the prisoner stating, in substance, that he hoped I would not believe him unappreciative of my thought of him at the holiday season. For that remembrance he was deeply grateful, but he was compelled to return the parole to me as he enjoyed himself far better in the Indiana penitentiary than he did in living with his wife. I thought a man of that frankness was entitled to some kind treatment and so on the next Independence Day I pardoned him.

Tariff Versus Dog Law.

One of the most interesting stories of those early days was of a political meeting in which a United States Senator had discussed national questions with the crowd and as he sat down they began to trail out of the hall, when a local candidate arose, lifted up his voice and said: "My fellow-citizens, I hope you will not leave, I want to say something to you touching the dog law that is now in force." Every man returned to his seat, with his coon dog by his side, and I am not sure that the Democratic majority of the county that Fall did not come more from the candidate's opinion of the dog law than the candidate's opinion of the tariff.

All my life long I have been interested in the politics of the country. That interest was bred in the bone and was accentuated by the stormy clashes which took place in the North after the conclusion of the Civil War and during the period of reconstruction. Nobody who was not an active participant in the campaign of 1876 in the State of Indiana can now understand how grave a crisis faced the Republic for a second time. I regret these modern political days not because they are not just as good as the ones in which I spent my young manhood, but because they are

different. I regret the disappearance of the oilcloth caps and the oilcloth coats and the smelly gasoline torches; the music of the amateur drum corps, the long processions, the eye with "a fine frenzy rolling."

Liquid Measure. It was in my days at Wabash College that the Democrats made one night a demonstration of this kind in behalf of the candidacy of Governor Hendricks. In the morning the Democratic newspaper, in giving an account of the po-

quently no laws tending to duplicity and perjury in that respect. The candidate was expected to leave enough money in each saloon to see that the boys obtained gratuitously their favorite tipple. Nothing was thought about it, nor did it detract from the popularity of the candidate with stanch temperance principles.

I remember a wave of temperance reform, no one as yet having dreamed of prohibition, which swept over the State of Indiana. It was the first muttering

and that he too proposed hereafter to vote for a temperance Democrat rather than for a drunken Republican.

Prohibition by Resolution. There were some amusing incidents accompanying that first low wash upon the shores that were afterward to become arid with prohibition. In one community there were three distinguished citizens, all devout members of the church but all with a cocktail taste, who were appointed a committee to draft resolutions on the temperance question. They were in a rather close strait as to how to phrase the resolutions without condemning themselves or pledging themselves to prohibition. Fortunately for themselves, they were gentlemen of great expediency, and so the resolution which was reported and adopted read as follows: Resolved, That we will do all in our power to get other people to quit drinking liquor."

It was no unusual incident of those earlier days, before the Australian ballot and when anybody could have tickets printed containing names from both tickets or even independent names, to corral what was known as the floating vote, fill it full of red-eyes and lock it up and march it to the polls early the next morning, where it voted what was known as the vest pocket ballot. Sometimes these fellows were not sufficiently recovered from the debauch so as to enable them to distinguish the ballot. I remember sitting upon one election board when we found in the box an unrecipited store bill and a tax receipt.

Where the county vote was close stealing these floaters was the great political pastime of the night before the election. I know a man who took one of them to his room to keep him all night in order that he might vote the Republican ticket the next morning. How to get him away and put him in the Democratic corral was the problem. It was finally solved by some irresponsible Democrat setting fire to a woodshed and then raising the cry that the Republican's store was on fire. He rushed to save his property and the Democrats stole his chattel.

A Well-Brewed Speech.

We liked fondly to refer to the German-American, the Irish-American and the Franco-American. We made our appeal politically to them as though they had one foot on their native soil and the other upon the soil of Indiana. We did not even stop with this question of blood. We catered as it paid to Protestant and Catholic views. We were

very liberal with the Catholic vote where it was the predominant element in the election, and were very censorious of it if it did not happen to be for our party. The only man I ever knew who sized the thing up right and did not know it was the Mayor of one of our cities.

There was a country Catholic Church where each year, in August, they had a picnic, and where all the politicians and incipient officeholders foregathered and where they were expected to make a speech. Upon one of these occasions some sons of Belial concealed a number of kegs of beer in an adjacent wood, and this Mayor tarried longer at the beer than he did at the picnic. He arrived more than half seas over and was immediately seized, conducted to the platform and called upon for a speech. He was barely able to hold himself up and utter these words: "Fellow citizens, we meet today upon a common level—Protestants and Presbyterians—" and then he dropped dead drunk upon the platform. It was a Catholic picnic, but the humor of it amused everybody.

A Remarkable Campaign.

The campaign of 1876 was perhaps the most remarkable one that I have witnessed. Instead of the ordinary guerrilla warfare of the party newspaper the Democratic partisan press all over the country each week was printing the same editorial. These were prepared in the Democratic headquarters in New York, at the expense of Mr. Tilden, and in my judgment were responsible for his election. I had risen that year to the dignity of Captain of the Tilden Guards. I was enthusiastic, in a small way, for Mr. Tilden.

When the well-known troubles in the South began we were all anxious for Mr. Tilden to announce that he had been elected President and intended to be inaugurated President of the United States. If all communities were such as was our Samuel J. Tilden could have plunged us again into a fratricidal war, for we were foolish enough to have met secretly and to have declared that we would purchase guns and go to Washington and help to inaugurate him. Tilden and Douglas have been my idols. They are the two men in all American history who, when the peace and good order of their country were at stake, cast aside every hope of personal preferment for the good of the Republic they loved so well.

Individuals and parties that seek vindication from defeat should learn one thing; and that is that the composite mind of America soon forgets. The campaign of 1880 might have contained some hope for the Democratic Party if it had been fought out upon the tariff question and the rectification of the wrongs which, in the judgment of so many of us, had been done to Mr. Tilden. I wonder what James Russell Lowell would have done in the year 1924 if the election had been in danger of going to the House and had been an election in the State of Massachusetts. He was such in 1876. He was quite convinced that Mr. Tilden had been elected President of the United States. He admitted that, as an elector, he had the perfect right to vote for him, and had he done so Tilden's election would have been assured and the controversy at an end. But so stanch a party man was he that he announced he believed an elector was bound to vote for the candidates of his party, and consequently he voted for Mr. Hayes. Party loyalty has been so loosened since that time that I am venturing to guess that under like circumstances he would exercise his own judgment and do what the Constitution of the United States gave him a perfect right to do.

When Tariff Was a Local Issue.

But the campaign of 1880 drifted away to the question as to who saved the Union—the Democratic or the Republican Party of the North. And so we quarreled about who saved it, as though that were a matter of any moment whatever—it having been saved—and then we were chagrined and the Republicans were jubilant because General Hancock announced that the tariff was a local issue. Well, what is the folly of one generation may become the wisdom of



Thomas R. Marshall When Governor of Indiana.



"He Returned the Parole Because He Enjoyed Himself Far Better in the Penitentiary Than He Did in Living With His Wife."

another. And what is true today as a political axiom may be denounced as a political heresy tomorrow. I have lived long enough to see the sarcasm hurled at General Hancock turn out to be the sober God's truth, for this heresy that the benefits accruing to a few must inevitably permeate the whole has not only been accepted as the God's truth by all those who claim to be Republicans, but a vast number of men, who claim to be Democrats have been convinced that so far as their little interest is concerned the theory is correct. Who now doubts that the tariff on a few thousand soy beans has lightened the burdens, increased the income and brought peace, contentment and plenty to every home in this land of ours?

So much has been written and so much is held in remembrance about these years of political conflict that it is neither wise nor needful to elaborate upon them. Out of the real tragedies of life it seems to be impossible for the American people to not, here and there, extract a bit of humor. Indeed, if it were not for our ability to laugh the Republic would many times have run red with blood when the passions were aroused over great injustices. When the awful and lamentable tragedy, the assassination of President McKinley, occurred, a rampant religious leader in our town tore his hair and shrieked aloud to heaven, again asserting that the Democratic Party had murdered another Republican President. A big, fat Democrat standing by him said: "Shut up, parson! If you'll let us elect a Democrat once I give you my word that you can take a pot shot at him."

A Money Election Without Funds.

That campaign of 1886, when I was a member of the Democratic State Central Committee, was perhaps the most disheartening of my life. We had no money; disloyalty was everywhere apparent in State and local organizations. I could not get a notice inserted in the papers without paying for it out of my own pocket in advance. I felt then, as I feel now, that, like most of the great things of life, the fight was made over a false issue.

The Spanish-American War was not fought because the Maine was sunk in the harbor of Havana, although that was the ostensible reason given to the people. The real reason was that the soul of America had been so long outraged by Spanish misrule in that island that it could no longer keep silence. The Great War was not entered in reality because a few of our ships were sunk and a few of our citizens were lost upon the high seas. It was because the soul of America could no longer yield its assent to the doctrine that there were two measures of conduct—one for the individual and one for the State—and that the State could order the individual to break every moral law and the individual go scot-free in the courts of man and God because he had obeyed constituted authority.

So, too, the campaign of 1896, regardless of what the wise men may say about it, was not fought over the free and unlimited coinage of silver at the ratio of sixteen to one. It was not a question of coinage and currency at all. It was a question of banking, and the election disclosed it to be such, for every State that had sound and responsible banking institutions, and where people did their business by check and not by cash, went for McKinley, while all the States where the banks were wild and irresponsible, and where men carried in their pockets currency with which to pay their debts, went for Bryan.

A German District.

I was in a district that was largely of German extraction. They liked to hear the jingle of the guinea. They had a dread and fear they were to see it no more and so they left the Democratic Party in droves. This lack of confidence spread itself to organizations. In my mad effort to straighten up the lines I had an incident which shows conclusively that it is useless to argue against fate.

Still striving to straighten up the Democratic lines in the old Twelfth Congressional District, we began, in 1898, to put men of German extraction upon the ticket. In one county the nephew of the most important man was nominated for County Auditor. So I went to this leader of his people and congratulated him upon having returned to the Democratic faith; hoped that we might rely upon his aid and assistance in the campaign, and received as an answer: "I'll do what I can for my nephew, but I'll do nothing for anybody else."

In some mysterious way unknown to me, however, although I stood fast by the organization, I was enabled to retain the friendship and goodwill of these people so that when it became necessary for them to determine whether they would vote for me for Governor or not I received more votes in that district than were ever cast for any candidate for office prior to the adoption of the Woman's Suffrage amendment.

Things drifted along politically until the year 1906. I considered an active interest in political affairs not only my duty but my diversion from the practice of my profession. In that year there was an effort to nominate me as candidate for Congress. I promptly killed the movement. I had had a partner who had been in Congress and I thought one from the firm was sufficient. In the course of conversation with the leaders of the party it was suggested that I ought to run because every county save ours had furnished a candidate and he had been beaten since 1896. The pleasure of running for office and being elected, however, never appeared to me. I had not the slightest desire to be classed among those who also ran. They were a little bit impatient with me, and finally inquired whether I ever proposed to run for office. To get rid of the situation, I suggested I did not think I ever would, but if I ever did I would be a candidate for Governor of my native State.

Tomorrow: "On Politics and Government."