

THE SPECTATOR



SINCE the outbreak of the war we have all become acquainted with the term "slacker," and in fact many of us have become acquainted with the character as well. With the "slicker" we are not so familiar, although every American community of size, our own included, can boast of furnishing one or more of this type of patriot. The "slicker" is a— but I believe I will let the able editor of Reed's Mirror describe this all to common character in his own fascinating fashion.

Mr. Reedy gives Senator Stone the credit for discovering the "slicker," and then goes on to say: "The slicker is a slacker who is smart enough to get a bomb-proof position that will entitle him to wear a uniform and be inferentially, in drawing-room and clubs, a hero. If a more presently popular senator than Stone had slammed the slicker, the country would have applauded, but Stone voted against going to war and that damns him." * * *

"It was a gruff old soldier man who said not long since, looking over the war workers around Washington, 'This danged town is just chock full of fellows with flat feet and great executive ability.' Over in England they have the same sort of critters, but they call them 'Cuthberts.' A fearsome lot of dead wood has been foisted on the officers' list of the army and it should be cleaned out. At least the fighters and workers should be distinguished in some way from the fakirs and posers. And it should be done in spite of the fact that unpopular Senator Stone proposes it." * * *

I HAVE promised myself time and again that I wouldn't say anything about the police situation until Commissioner Scheid has had time to get his chair warm. However, I hardly think it will be using undue influence to caution him to beware of the preachers. They are all right in their place, but their place doesn't belong in politics. Many a well-meaning public official has pinned his faith to that aggregation, only to find himself ingloriously abandoned by his pretended friends at the first sign of foul weather.

Last week these fine fellows loudly proclaimed their friendship for the new commissioner of public safety. That was immediately after reading his declaration of intentions to clean up the city. Also they took the trouble to pin a gorgeous bouquet on friend Scheid, metaphorically speaking. Then a few days later they got wind that the commissioner was seriously considering the appointment of Martin Mulvey as chief of police.

That settled matters; and now to hear them talk, "Scheid is everything that they thought he wasn't last week" and "nothing that they thought he was." Which is mighty poor diction, but it conveys the idea all right.

I hold no brief for Mulvey or anybody else. The point I am trying to make is that it doesn't lie within the scope of mortal power to please the preachers any two days in succession. I have seen them pin a bouquet on a fellow one day and kick him in the seat of his pants the next day. Their decided tendency to vacillate recalls a jingle that I once heard DeWolfe Hopper sing. It runs something like this:

You can't tell a thing about the women,
And that's why we think they're very nice;
You'll never find two alike at any one time,
And you'll never find one alike twice. * * *

FOR once I am in accord with Commissioner Green. His suggestion of a city manager, although not original with him by any means, it well worth considering. The plan has proved a success in other cities and it ought to work here. Certainly it couldn't possibly make matters any worse. The commission scheme of government has been a joke in Salt Lake, ever since its inauguration. Its failure is chargeable partly to the system, but mostly to the commissioners themselves. Whether it can be patched up in such a manner as to give the people a semblance of satisfaction, or whether it will eventually have to be abandoned altogether, still remains to be seen.

Green's scheme involves the appointment of a city manager, empowered to personally direct all departments of the city government and charged with full responsibility for their conduct. I am not at all surprised that this plan appeals so strongly to the commissioner above mentioned, particularly the transfer of responsibility. It is a matter of common knowledge that his teeth chatters at the thought of having to assume even the slightest responsibility himself. So naturally he is desirous of shifting the miserable amount of responsibility he is now charged with unto the shoulders of someone else. That is the chief trouble with the city commission; it always has been, and the present board doesn't promise much improvement.

But if we are going to have a city manager, what's the use of having the five commissioners. Granting that the right kind of a man could be found, the chances are that he wouldn't even consider the job unless the commissioners either promised to resign or to furnish a bond to keep their hands off.

So if Green will amend his plan, so as to abolish the five commissioner-ships or give them mere perfunctory powers, I will agree to join hands with him. The probabilities are, however, that before we got our plans perfected to patch up the present scheme, the next legislature will have thrown the whole shooting-match on the scrap heap.

HERE'S the latest argument in favor of Prohibition. Also it assumes to account for the Germans' loss of the Battle of the Marne. They (some enthusiastic prohibitionists) would have us believe that it all happened this way:—that while the Germans were crossing the champagne country of France they got their feet tangled in the celebrated wine cellars, and by the time they reached the Marne they were all gloriously intoxicated and in no condition to fight. Perhaps so; at least it makes a pretty story, even though it does rob the French of much of the glory of winning this decisive battle.

Moral: the use of intoxicants cost the Germans the city of Paris, and perhaps the war. But the anti-prohibitionists are likely to reason inversely, and, admitting the allegation, argue that because of such use of intoxicants, Paris and France were saved to the world. It all depends on how you set your sights.

Which recalls that other explanation of how the Germans came to defeat at the Marne, one that is being given a great deal of credence by the military critics. It is alleged that von Kluck purposely checked his forces for a short period to enable the Crown Prince to come up and lead the triumphant entry of the Germans into Paris, and that the time thus lost enabled the French and British to solidly form their lines. The delay is said to have likewise allowed Gallieni sufficient time to rush the Paris garrison in 30,000 taxis to the front. The source of this story has been lost in the telling, but it is certain that it never originated in France.

REPRISALS

Col. Richard L. Woodhouse said in a recruiting address at Lexington:

"Nothing will stop the Huns' barbarities but reprisals. If Rheims cathedral is destroyed, let us destroy Cologne cathedral. And on every ship that enters the submarine murder zone we ought to put Germans of high rank."

Col. Woodhouse paused and sighed. "There's nothing like reprisals," he said. "A tobaccoist sent a doctor the other day a ten-dollar box of cigars, saying he knew they hadn't been ordered, but they were so excellent he was sure the doctor would enjoy

them. Bill enclosed. Terms. Strictly cash."

"The doctor wrote back: 'Delighted with the cigars. Though it is true you haven't called me in, I venture to send you herewith two prescriptions for rheumatism and dyspepsia, respectively, that I am sure you will like, as they have given universal satisfaction to my patients. My charges being \$5 per prescription, we are now quits.'"—Washington Star.

HELPING THE FARMER

The town man told the farmer man: "Your duty's plain, raise all you can. To beat the far-fung German foe you needs must plant and reap and sow. Bend to your task with zeal and haste. Don't let an acre go to waste. To win the European fight just spade all day and hoe all night!"

"Quite so!" the honest farmer said. "At half-past three I leave my bed. The horrid sound of war's alarm has made me tackle this old farm and raise the dickens without stops, besides my ordinary crops. And I'll be true unto my trust, and raise a bumper crop or bust. But there I pause in my hard task to bow my head and humbly ask: 'What have you, gents, with all your prate, done for us farmers up to date?'"

The town man threw his hands on high, then pulled them down to loudly cry:

"Ungrateful agriculturists, by cold rains soaked and hot winds kissed, do you not know that we are through when we have told you what to do?"—Kansas City Star.

NOBODY KNOWS

ABSOLUTE knowledge have I none.

But my aunt's washerwoman's sister's son

Heard a policeman on his beat
Say to a laborer on the street,
That he had a letter just last week
Written in the finest Greek,
From a Chinese coolie in Timbuctoo,
Who got it straight from a circus
Of a colored man in a Texas town
Who got it straight from a circus clown,

That a man in Klondike had the news
From a gang of South American Jews

About somebody in Borneo
Who heard a man who claimed to know

Of a swell female society fake
Whose mother-in-law will undertake
To prove that her husband's sister's niece

Has stated in a printed piece
That she has a son who has a friend
Who knows when the war is going to end.
— The Graphic.