CONGRESS IN THE DOG DAYS.

Sketches With Pen and Pencil of Our Leading Congressman Caught on the Fly.

Legislators Who Wear Spectacles and Dusters—Tom Reed's New Costume—A Look at Johnson of Cleveland—How He Made a Fortune in Street Railroads and His Queer Political Methods—Bourke Cockran on the Floor—His Wonderful Voice and Memory—Young Men From the West—Bryan of Nebraska and Peace of Colorado—How Lafe Pence Dresses—Soap Shoes at Isadore Rayner and Silver-Dollar Bland—Gossip About Catchings and Cannon—A story of Hannibal Hamlin and a Pen Picture of McCreary of Kentucky.

Special Correspondence of the NEWS.

WASHINGTON, D.C. August 27, 1893.—"If Congress were sitting in New York and the Wall street brokers could see it as it is now they would mob the House."

These were the words of a New York merchant as he stood in the press gallery a few days ago and looked down upon the House during the silver debate. There were one hundred empty chairs on the Republican side of the chamber and every other Democratic desk was vacant. The remainder of the seats contained men who were writing, reading, loafing and chatting, picking their teeth, playing with their keys and doing the thousand and one other thing which the average congressman does when he is not making a speech. Catchings of Mississippi had the floor. A baker's dozen sat around and watched him, and you could not imagine from the scene that we were in the midst of one of the great financial crises of our national life nor think that Congress was going to do much to help us out of it. The people outside of Washington have little idea how the House of Representatives really looks when it is in session. They think that the Democrats and Republicans are at swords points. The truth is some of the strongest friendships of public life are between men of opposite politics. They fight each other in debate like Kilkenny cats, but they hobnob together in the cloak rooms and go about the hall of the House arm in arm. As I write this David B. Henderson of Iowa and Isadore Raynor of Baltimore are laughing together at the back of the chamber. Henderson can't speak without denouncing the Democratic party, and Rayner has never said anything good of the Republicans. On a lounge at the side of the chamber Lafe Pence of Colorado and Bynum of Indiana are telling stories. They had a fight on the floor the other day, but they seem good friends now. Tom Reed and Speaker Crisp are holding a conference in another corner, and the smiles which shine out of the baby face of the ex-czar are thrown back from the brunette phiz of the present ruler of the House.

CONGRESS AND THE DOG DAYS.

The hot weather takes all the dignity out of Congress. The day used to be that no statesman ever appeared in any thing else than a swallow-tail coat with brass buttons. The list of the "steel pen" statesmen passed from the Senate with Omar D. Conger and from the House when Luke P. Poland finished his term. With these come the era of the Prince Albert coat and the double breasted frock, and for a generation or so there was a mixture of swallow tails and black broadcloth suits. Now every one dresses to please himself and there are seersuckers and dusters to be seen everywhere. One of the queerest dressers is Tom Reed, and he is one of the queerest looking characters on the floor. He weighs over two hundred pounds and he rolls about like an elephant. His every pose would make a newspaper sketch, and he comes out every Congress in a new and striking costume. A year or so ago he wore a white sash about his waist and a derby hat as large as a peck measure. Now he has a rakish sailor straw chappean and he clothes his great form in a flimsy iron gray stuff which is known here as Kentucky jeans. The cloth is loosely woven and it makes the wearer feel as though he were dressed in a sieve. The air whistles through it almost without hindrance, and one of Reed's fellow members told me the other day that he had put on one of these suits and had thrown it away. Said he: "It seems so open that I really felt indecent. I imagined every one could see through it and I thought I was naked." This light suit of linen affords a given him a very different appearance. He is, you know, a strawberry blonde. His big round face is as rosy as that of a baby. His head puts has the porcelain whiteness at the top of a new drumhead, and his eyebrows are of the color of his little mustache and the tinge of hair about his ears are of a reddish silver. This iron gray suit adds to this white effect and makes the great statesman of Maine a symphony in light gray. It is in marked contrast to the black suits in shape, and Mr. Reed's pantaloons bag at the knees and fit in wrinkles over his yellow shoes. Under his fat chin shines out a sky-blue necktie and he keeps his linen coat fastened up with three of the six. Physically he appears to be in splendid condition, and mentally he was never greater than he is today. He is by all odds the strongest man on the Republican side of the chamber and his tongue has as much vitriol at its roots as ever.

TOM JOHNSON OF CLEVELAND.

No one ever speaks of Reed otherwise than as "Tom Reed." He is more like an overgrown boy than a man, and he has none of the airs and snobbishness of the five-cent statesman who thinks he is great. The Democratic side of the chamber has also a "Tom." I refer to Tom Johnson of Cleveland, one of the shrewdest and most practical business men in the House and, at the same time, one of the wildest theorists. Johnson believes in Henry George and he says that his property really belongs to his fellow men as much as himself. I have not noted, however, any inclination on his part to make a division. He is, you know, a street railroad magnate and is probably worth somewhere to the millions.

He began his life as an office boy to Louisville and when he was hardly out of his teens got hold of a street railroad in Indianapolis. The road never amounted to anything while he managed it. He paid no attention to improving it, but he learned the business, made some money and then went to Cleveland. The city was already covered with a net work of roads belonging to close corporations. These objected to Johnson laying new tracks and opposed him in every way. He finally got a franchise for two streets in the suburbs. The run through one of the best parts of the town, but he had no line by which he could reach the heart of business and the other roads would not let him go over their tracks. He changed his gauge so as to fit the character of his road from those which he had used in Indianapolis. In Cleveland he put down everything of the very best. He paved Scoville avenue at his own expense, spending $25,000 on the street which he named for a friend of the people. He got a little bits of track on the west side of the city and he began to carry passengers from one side of Cleveland to the other for one fare. He had to have something to make his passengers two fares in order to do this, but he stuck to it and in this way made himself more popular, as the regular roads charged two and three fares for the same distance. In the meantime he did everything to get his roads connected. He worked with the city council, but in his own way. He never gave any passes over his road. He said he did not use a pass himself and no one should ride free. He was willing to pay a man or a corporation for his services, but he would not give him a pass. Well, he finally got his measures through and eventually secured one of the most valuable street railway properties of the city. In connection he invented a number of things connected with street cars and he gets a big royalty from them. He has a rolling mill at Johnstown, Pa., and he is said to have an income of a hundred thousand dollars a year. He is now particularly annoying aristocrats in that city by his street car fares. He frankly says his railroads ought to belong to the city, but until Henry George principles prevail he will keep them. Tom Johnson looks like a business man. He makes me think of Dickens's fat boy. His round fat head is a cannon ball of rosy flesh, thatched with wavy brown hair and covered at the front with two bright eyes, which look out at you over a pair of fairly shaped noses. His head is fastened by a short, thick neck, to fat, round shoulders and his rotund form rolls around the house at a good pace. Tom Johnson does not look to be over thirty years old, but he is in reality forty. He is a good off-hand speaker and he is especially happy in ten-minute orations. He dresses in a business suit and rools his fat face during these warm days with a palm leaf fan.

A LOOK AT BOURKE COCKRAN.

One of the most marked men on the floor of the House this session is Bourke Cockran. He would be a striking character if he had no brains, and his figure would attract attention anywhere. The fact that he has brains and an eloquent tongue make him the more interesting. He is one of the straightest men in Congress. His tailor could lay him on his back and measure him for his well-cut suit of clothes and he dresses like a French dandy. He looks like a Frenchman, but he is an Irishman and his voice has all the mellowness of those of the best speakers of old Erin. His French appearance may come from the fact that he was educated in France and also that he is well up in French literature. He reads French and a great many of his heroes are Frenchmen. He is a great admirer of Napoleon and he is not averse to French morals. He stood in well with Tammany and is has been a practicing young lawyer from his birthhood. His greatest speeches have been made at conventions. He jumped into fame at Chicago when Cleveland was first nominated and he added to his reputation at the last session of the last convention. Mr. Cockran is a rich man. He lives here at washington in Secor Robinson's house on 16th street. He paid I think $20,000 for it. He has a magnificent country seat on Long Island and he is a member of the New York city clubhouses. He talks from the sidewalks and he can speak for hours without tiring. He has an extraordinary memory and usually talks without notes. His best sentences are framed after he is on the floor and he don't believe that the greatest speech can be made otherwise than on the spur of the moment. He is still a young man and was born on the last day of February just thirty-nine years ago.

BRYAN OF NEBRASKA.

Bourke Cockran is a great orator. Bryan of Nebraska is a very fair speaker. He lacks Cockran's form and physique, and his square face is almost as full. He is a black eyed, dark faced man of thirty-three. His jaw is heavy, square and smooth shaven. His cheek bones are prominent and his forehead square. He is a pleasant talker and is fond of dealing in figures of speech. His speeches are full of poetry. His first speech in Congress was a surprise. Sayers of Texas gave him a portion of his time, and Bryan spoke on free wool. He had not talked long before the Democratic majority of the House, and he held them for an hour. Bryan is comparatively a young man. He is a lawyer of Lincoln, Neb., and he comes originally from Illinois.

HIS NAME IS LAFE.

The latest sensation among the youngsters of the House is Lafe Pence of Denver. He created a sensation as soon as the House opened, and he made one of the bright, shrewd speeches of the time. He had quite a contest with Isadore Rayner, in which he showed himself as regardless of the feelings of his opponent as is Tom Reed. He kept the House in a roar of laughter during his attack on Bynum, and he promises, in fact, to be a second John J. Ingalls. Pence is a typical westerner. He looks like his two cow boys of Frederick Remington's sketches. Tall and lean, he has a long, thin head, the most striking feature of which is a long, thin nose. His cheeks are thin, his jaws strong, and his smoothly shaven face is full of lines of determination and grit. He is all nerve, bone and muscle. Just how much brains the future will show, but he has demonstrated that he has a fair quantity and no lack of grit. His face is rather sallow, and his arms are as long as those of John Sherman. He has shed his vest during these dog days, and he wears a flannel shirt with a turnover collar, about which he has a long blue scarf. This scarf is tied in a sailor knot, and the blue ends of it stand out on each side of his chin against his white flannel coat. With all his rough air he is a college-bred man, and he comes here at the age of thirty-six as a Populist and a silver Democrat.

A WORD ABOUT ISADORE RAYNER.

Speaking of Pence brings to mind Isadore Rayner. Rayner is a clean-cut, dark faced member from Baltimore. He made a reputation for himself during the Fiftieth and Fifty-second Congresses as an able debater, a sound thinker and an all-around good fellow. He is of Jewish descent, but there is no sign of the Israelite in his make-up. I don't know how rigid he is in his beliefs, but I have been told that he is rather liberal. He comes of a wealthy family, and he makes about $25,000 a year at his law practice in Baltimore. He is well educated, studied and is very ambitious. He talks smoothly and well. He calls himself a binnetallist, but he is one of the sort which leans toward a gold standard. Isadore Rayner is about five feet eight inches in height; he weighs about 150 pounds. His face is dark and ruddy, and his jet black hair, which he parts very near the middle, is smoothly plastered down upon his head. His forehead is high and broad, and he looks more like a club man than a Congressman.

SILVER DOLLAR BLAND.

Silver-Dollar Bland on the other hand looks like a grocer or a lay Methodist preacher who devotes himself to selling goods between Sundays. He wears a white necktie, a black alpaca sack coat and black pantaloons and vest. He is a short stocky man well along in the fifties. He has the sallow complexion of the Missourian and much thinking has gouged his face full out of top of his head. His hair is not noticeable, as has been said of Allen of Mississippi, but it is well thinned out at the crown and over the forehead. He has a reddish brown beard covering the lower half of his face and he keeps his mouth well shaded while not speaking by chewing tobacco. He is a man of considerable ability and of half-dog tenacity. His silver dollar bill in reality was invented by Senator Allison and Bland was at that time in charge of the coinage. He is frequently posted on all silver questions and his district sends him here as the advocate of silver. He is not a great speaker. He is a man of small means notwithstanding that he lived in the mineral belches of the west during the days of the greatest gold and silver finds. He is not a conversationable man and he is rather quiet and reserved that "hale fellow well met."

CATCHINGS AND CANNON.

"Mississippi Catchings" and "Illinois Cannon" have created considerable attention already and they will keep themselves before the people during the rest of this Congress. Catchings of Mississippi looks for all the world like George Daniels, the general passenger agent of the Big Four railroad. He has long red chin whiskers, a square forehead, from the middle of which a white part runs back to the crown, and that light hair so carefully combed that you can see the parallel lines of white scalp shining through it. He makes me think of the Maine speaker of the House who got so angry at Hamlin one day. This man had very few hairs and he combed them just in order to cover his baldness. One day Hamlin went up to him and in a joking way said: "Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, but you have one of your hairs crossed this morning." This remark made the speaker very angry and he became Hamlin's enemy for life. Well, Catchings' head is not exactly bald, but the hair is very thin and very fine. His head is very full at the top and the ears are well set down on the sides. He is not a bad looking man and he is a fairly good speaker. He delights in quoting Jefferson and Jackson and tackles early and well.

Joe Cannon, on the other hand, is the greatest air leaver in Congress. He makes a dozen gestures a minute and when he begins to shake his finger it moves up and down at the rate of one revolution to every sixty seconds. He looks a trifle older than when he was in Congress a few years ago, but he has, if anything, more energy than ever, and he appears every day on the floor fresh for the fight. He is more at home here than he was in Illinois, the larger part of his life has been spent in Congress and he once told me that he would be a rich man today if he had kept out of it. As it is I have been told that he is worth in the neighborhood of $200,000. Some of this has been made in land speculations. He is a strong advocate of a protective tariff, is in favor of a postal telegraph and is a Republican first, last and all the time.

A WORD ABOUT MCCREARY.

Governor McCreary has made a number of good speeches during this session. He is a homespun and he rings all the changes on Kentucky. He is strong in sectarian issue and gesturing the while with a pair of spectacles which he puts on his nose every time he has to look at his notes or read a quotation. He is a big man, weighing, I judge, about 200 pounds, and stands six feet two inches in his polished boots. He has a heavy head, a dark rosy face, which he keeps as smoothly shaven as was that of Daniel Webster, and he cultivates, it seems to me, Webster in his vests and manner. He seldom gets on the floor, though he is a good story teller in private. He is a lawyer from Richmond, Ky., and is worth about a quarter of a million dollars. He lives in Richmond, within a stone's face and he says he was born. His law office there is the headquarters of the politicians of the state, and he was spoken of for the United States Senate when Carlisle was elected.

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