

## MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper.

STEPHEN B. ELKINS.

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## PART I.

## SENATOR S. B. ELKINS AT HOME

A Description of the Hukedem Which Stephen B. Elkins and Henry C. Davis Own in the West Virginia Mountains.

WASHINGTON, August 28th, 1895.



IT WAS THE night of the last state election in West Virginia. The republicans and democrats had been having one of the hardest fights in their history, and Stephen

B. Elkins, the manager of the republican campaign and now Senator from the state, was seated in his library in his mountain home at Elkins, with his friends about him, receiving the returns. He had a special wire and the dispatches came thick and fast. They were favorable, but the matter was yet unsettled, when the operator turned to Mr. Elkins and said:

"Here is a dispatch about some shoes."

"Oh," replied Mr. Elkins, "that must be one of Mrs. Elkins' store orders. Tell them to hold that. What we want now is election news."

This was done. There seemed however, to be a lull in the dispatches. None were received for some time, and Mr. Elkins said: "You might as well take the shoe dispatch. There don't seem to be anything on the wire."

A moment later he was handed the following:

"S. B. Elkins, West Virginia;

"Where shall I send my shoes?"

(Signed) "JOHNSON N. CAMDEN."

There was a hearty laugh. Camden was the democratic United States Senator. He had received the news of his defeat in advance of Elkins, and hence the dispatch. Mr. Elkins has already gotten the shoes. He has them on, and I shall be much surprised if they are not stretched considerably in the way of a national reputation for himself and West Virginia before he gets through with them.

## ELKINS, THE MAN.

The people of the United States know but little of Stephen B. Elkins. He has a national reputation as a politician and a business man, but only those who have come into close contact with him realize that he is one of the biggest and broadest men of the United States. I have known him for several years, and I have just returned from a visit to him at his home in the mountains of West Virginia. He has a strong personality, and his individuality grows upon you. He is full of ideas, and Blaine used to say that he knew more people than any man in public life. Mr. Elkins is of a literary rather than of a business bent,

and today he keeps up his reading of the best authors and the study of the classics and the poets. He reads Latin, Greek and Hebrew in the original, and he can quote Tennyson and Browning by the hour. He is thoroughly posted on the history of his country, and he likes to discuss the leading novelists, such as George Eliot and Thackeray, over whom he. Senator Allen G. Thurman, James G. Blaine and Abigail Dodge had many a literary fight while he lived in Washington. He keeps abreast of the times. You find all of the latest English magazines, as well as those of America, on his library table, and his books number thousands of volumes. He is one of the healthiest physical entities that I have ever met. He never loses his temper. He is interested in every subject that is proposed, and usually has something new to offer upon it. His soul is made of the finer fibers, and his language is clean and pure. Still, he is thoroughly in sympathy with his fellows, and the workmen on his place are as much at home with him as he is in the presence of the United States Senators, after whom the stations on his and Senator Davis' railroad are named. He is a good judge of men, and he seldom forgets a name nor a face. He reads men easily, and decides quickly. He is a man of strong character. He knows what he wants, and usually gets it. He turns off work easily, never worries nor frets, and at fifty-four he has the heart and energy of a boy. He enjoys life in all its phases, and almost goes crazy over the beauties of nature and the delights of a country life. He has a big forest at the back of his home, and he knows every tree in it, and looks upon them as his dearest friends.

He has a dozen horses in his stables, but he prefers walking above all other exercises, and tramps his guests up and down over his estate, showing them his gardens, his flowers and the magnificent views which bound it on every side. Not long ago he bought a mountain for fear some fellow might destroy one of his views or take away its beauty by cutting off the trees, and he turned a county road in order to improve the symmetry of his homestead.

## THE PRINCIPALITY OWNED BY ELKINS AND DAVIS.

But let me tell you something about Senator Elkins' country home and the wonderful property which he and ex-Senator Davis, in connection with one or two other men, own there in the wilds of West Virginia. It is one of the most wonderful estates in the Union, and it will be worth untold millions in the future. They have tens of thousands of acres of the finest coal lands, and their railroad, which is 160 miles long, goes for nearly 100 miles over their own coal. They have tens of thousands of acres of valuable timber, and there are towns and factories and great tanneries all along the line of their road. They mine from 2,000 to 4,000 tons of coal every day. They make hundreds of tons of coke daily, some of which is shipped as far as Salt Lake and some goes to different parts of Mexico. They own more towns than you can count on your fingers and toes, and they are building model settlements away up there in the

heart of the Alleghenies. They made the railroad with their own money, and they are developing the property themselves. They laid out the towns, and they have caused them to spring up, like Aladdin's palace, almost in a night. The city of Davis five years ago was a forest. It has today 3,000 people and all the modern improvements. The town of Elkins four years ago was a cornfield. It has now a bank, a first class hotel, a magnificent public school building, a system of sewerage and water works and it is lighted by electricity, which is furnished so cheaply to the people that cottages with two rooms can afford it, the service costing them 75 cents a month. The town has a public square or plaza in the center, filled with trees, and there is another large park at the back, which Senators Elkins and Davis have given to the people for all time. It is here that the shops of the West Virginia Central railroads are located, and the men are so well treated that they have never had a strike. The hotel, the works, the bank and a number of the buildings of the town are heated by steam from one central station, and Senators Elkins and Davis expect to heat their homes from this same source, though to do so they must carry the steam in pipes a distance of more than a mile. This town of Elkins lies in a basin in the Allegheny mountains. It is about 2,000 feet above the sea, and it is surrounded by some of the most beautiful scenery on the American continent. Great blue and gray hills rise on every side. Just below it is rich mountain, where one of the first battles of the war was fought and the place where McClellan gained the reputation which made him a major general and gave him command of the army.

## SENATOR ELKINS' MOUNTAIN HOME.

On one side of the mountains rise two great buildings which, with their turrets and towers, make you think of the castles on the Rhine, and on another hill a little to the left is another big stone residence which is being built by Mr. Richard C. Kerens, the millionaire of St. Louis, who has been connected with Senator Elkins for years and who has some interest in this West Virginia property. The two castles are the homes of Senator Elkins and his father-in-law, ex-Senator H. G. Davis, who served in the Senate for twelve years from West Virginia as a democrat. A description of the curious features of either of them would make a good letter. I have space for only a few words about that of Senator Elkins. It stands on the side of the mountain overlooking the town, with many acres of velvety lawn sloping down to the park. Back of it is a great forest of oaks and maples, and the mountains beyond rise upward until they almost kiss the clouds. The grounds contain more than sixty acres, and they are as well kept as an old English park. You ride by them for a full quarter of a mile before you come to the entrance. This consists of gates of wrought iron fastened to walls of granite, which are so smothered with ivy and choice flowers that you can hardly distinguish the stone. At the right is a porter's lodge of blue stone, which would be considered a good-sized house anywhere else. Passing by this, you are in the grounds proper. The road on which you drive is of blue stone ground down to the size of iron filings, which Senator Elkins had brought here