

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper.

OUR VICE PRESIDENTS AND HOW THEY ARE CHOSEN.

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HO IS TO BE the Republican candidate for Vice President? Tom Reed will be a big possibility if McKinley heads the ticket. But Reed, I am told, turns up his little, fat nose and sneers whenever the place is mentioned in connection with him. And still, in many respects, the vice presidency is far better than the speakership. It pays \$8,000 annually, and it is a four years' job. When Jefferson was elected to it he said it was the only office of which he could not tell whether he wanted it or not. Its holder has to work less than two years during the whole time, and as far as labor is concerned, he gets \$32,000 for this amount of work. It has also a big percentage in favor of the presidency and the \$50,000 job in the White House. There have been twenty-three presidents, and of these more than sixteen per cent have gotten there through the vice presidency. Tyler, Fillmore, Johnson and Arthur had almost full terms in the White House, through the deaths of the heads of the ticket. President Harrison died during the same year that he was inaugurated, and gave Tyler an almost four years' term. Lincoln had hardly served a month of his second term before he gave place to Johnson. Garfield was inaugurated in the spring, and before summer was at its full he was shot by Guiteau, and a few months later gave place to Arthur, while Zach. Taylor, inaugurated in 1849, in 1850 was supplanted by Millard Fillmore.

Yes, the vice presidency is a good job. It is a fat job, and still many of our great men do not seem to realize it. A number of the most famous men of our history have refused it. Thomas A. Hendricks felt humiliated when he was placed on the ticket with Cleveland. He intended to decline and it took some persuasion to make him accept it. He said to his friends that he did not object to being second on the ticket with Tilden, who was the acknowledged leader of his party, but he considered Cleveland a much lesser light than himself. Hannibal Hamlin did not want the vice presidency, and for some time after the convention of 1860 he debated whether he should decline it or not. He had told the Maine delegates that he would not be a candidate, and they had promised to respect his wishes. Still, he was nominated on the second ballot. When the news was brought to him he was very indignant, and it took Ben Wade,

Footo, Fessenden and others of his friends to persuade him to run. They visited him in a body. He held out against them until they told him that his refusal to be a candidate would be fatal to the ticket. Said Ben Wade:

"Hamlin, if you don't run they'll think you are afraid, and your fear will be taken as indicative of our defeat."

"What's that?" said Hamlin. "You don't mean that?"

"That's just what I do mean," replied Ben Wade.

"What? You mean they say that I am afraid to run on the Republican ticket?"

"Yes, Senator Hamlin, that's what I mean."

"Well, then," replied Hamlin. "I shall run, and be damned to them."

As a result of the interview Hamlin did run, and he proved a strong addition to the ticket. He and Lincoln were on the most friendly terms, and it was through Hamlin largely that Lincoln chose Seward as his Secretary of State. He treated Hamlin well, advised with him somewhat about state matters and gave him what he wanted in the way of appointments.

Many vice presidents, however, have not been graciously treated by the presidents. President Cleveland seems to think that a vice president has no more claims than any other citizen. He snubbed Hendricks again and again, and Hendricks had trouble in getting even the smallest office for his friends. One place which he wanted was the post office at Indianapolis. He had to cool his heels in the ante-rooms of the White House to get it, and Hendricks said that Cleveland made him "wait at the outer gate as a suppliant before he granted him the position." He said that there had not been a time within twenty-five years that he could not have gotten this, had any other Democrat been President, for the mere asking, and that he was put off day after day, and that the office was finally given to him apparently as a matter of charity. The snubs which Hendricks received from Cleveland and his cabinet sank deep into his soul and he was so ignored by them that at one time he wanted to resign. This was at the end of the first session of the Senate after he came into office, and it was only the requests of his friends that kept him from doing so. And still it was Hendricks that carried Indiana in 1884 and not Cleveland, and the loss of the state would have defeated the ticket.

Adlai E. Stevenson is as to most points at war with President Cleveland. He has little influence with the administration and his only patronage consists of the appointment of a secretary, a messenger, a telegraph operator and a telegrapher's page. These are all connected with the Senate and Cleveland would not think of consulting Stevenson about an important appointment.

This snubbing of vice presidents by the presidents has been common from almost the beginning of the government. During most of our administrations the president and vice president have been at logger-heads. Thomas Jefferson, as vice president under Adams, was the leader of the opposition. He expected to have something to do with the administration when he was first elected,

but President Adams snubbed him at the start, and he gave it up. Adams was disgusted when Jefferson was elected as his successor. He would not wait in Washington to see the inauguration, but drove off in his carriage the night before in order to be out of the way. Aaron Burr was one of the vice presidents under Jefferson. They too were fighting most of the time, and it was through Jefferson that Burr was finally prosecuted for treason. It is hardly possible that President John Quincy Adams and his vice president, John C. Calhoun had anything in common, and President Jackson, you know, threatened to hang Calhoun on account of the nullification matters which were gotten up in South Carolina during Jackson's presidency, when Calhoun was again vice president. Jackson got along very well with his second vice president, Van Buren, because Jackson was king and Van Buren merely his factotum. Van Buren's vice president was Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky, the first vice president chosen west of the Alleghenies. He was the man who killed Tecumseh, the great Indian chief, but his name is now almost forgotten. John Tyler was a cipher, as long as Harrison lived. Millard Fillmore had little influence while Zach. Taylor was alive, and Andrew Johnson had no influence to speak of until the death of Abraham Lincoln. So far as I can learn, we have never had a vice president who has ruled the president or directed the administration. It is said that John Adams tried to do this when he was vice president under Washington, but Washington had a mind of his own. John Adams is said to have been quite jealous of Washington's prominence, and in the memoirs of Ogle Taylor, published for private circulation some years ago, you will find a story telling how Adams rebuked a man who had used the words George Washington and John Adams. Vice President Adams said:

"My man, you should not say George Washington and John Adams, but John Adams and George Washington, for John Adams made George Washington."

Some of the ablest of our statesmen have held the vice presidential office, but their reputations have been made outside of it. Look at the list. The names are great enough. Take John C. Breckinridge, Vice President with Buchanan; George M. Dallas, who reigned with Polk; and William R. King, Vice President with Pierce—all of these men will go down in history through other acts than those done during their vice presidencies. Then there were Elbridge Gerry, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and the author of the system of changing legislative districts for congressional purposes, called, after his name, gerrymandering; George Clinton of New York, Schuyler Colfax, who was mixed up in the Credit Mobilier; Heury Willson and others, once famous, but now forgotten. There have been, altogether, twenty-three vice presidents elected by the people. Of these five have died in office, three have risen to the presidency by election, four have gotten to the White House by the death of the President and none have through their positions made reputations which will outlast a century.

Speaking of vice presidents who have become presidents by the death of their chiefs, the best of the four may be said to be Chester A. Arthur. He was to a large extent a politician pure and simple