

## P. C. Knox, Careful Pilot For Ship of State.

Cool, Calm, Active, With a Keen Intellect and a Wide Experience in Statecraft, the New Secretary of State Will Take No Chances With the Taft Administration—His Eight Year Record at Washington.

**T**HIS is a new pilot making soundings on the bar. He is preparing to take a big ship with a great skipper out of port and start her on a long voyage. And he is going to make sure that the channel has not shifted and that the range lights and the buoys are in place, for he is a very careful pilot indeed, and although he is a little bit of a man he is a great brain, a quick eye and a steady hand.

The new pilot is Philander C. Knox, senator from Pennsylvania, selected to be secretary of state in the cabinet of William H. Taft. He has piloted many important things in the past, but nothing approaching the magnitude of the present administration, but those who know him well have no doubt that he will do the job well and with that rare gift of his of seeming not to strive at all while he is at work.

It is just eight years since this wonderful man, small of stature, conservative or mould, courageous in every fiber and cool in his mental processes or a mountain spring, came to Washington. In that short time he has made more indentations on the face of governmental history than any other man except Theodore Roosevelt.

"Gentlemen of the President House," said Mr. Knox one night, when he had called a conference of members of his cabinet and his famous "trust buster" to take into final consideration the things the Senate was about to do to the Hepburn rate bill. "I have also invited to be present Senator Knox because he is the man who is responsible for the important policies of my administration."

"Knox," said Secretary Root, who had a pretty wit, and had just tossed aside a copy of Owen Wister's "Virginian" which he had been glancing through. "I think you ought to make him smile when he says that."

### PERFECTED TRUST LAWS.

But what the president said was literally true. It was Senator Knox who perfected the trust legislation which was the first step in the great maneuver which led to an end with the rate bill. He had told the president that there was almost enough law to curb the trusts. He had induced Congress to follow him and abandon the elaborate scheme which Representative Charles E. Littlefield and others had projected to fit dozens of pages with new legislation. Then he had gone ahead and proved in court his contention.

He first blazed the way in the Northern Securities case. There had been great agitation in the Northwest over the consolidation by means of a holding company of the Great Northern, the Northern Pacific and the Rock Island. Complaints had been lodged with the president and these were turned over to Mr. Knox by the attorney-general with the request that he examine the law and if the combination could be reached. Former attorney-generals had informed the railroads that they were beyond the interference of the law. Mr. Knox looked into the matter and reported. In his opinion the Northern Securities company was illegal and could be reached by the laws of the United States. "Then go ahead," was the order from the White House.

And Mr. Knox went ahead. He did not blow a single trumpet. He did not send for a single newspaper and advertise what he was about. But when the bill in equity was ready to be filed he sent out one night to the newspapers a short statement—all his statements are short and to the point—that the department of justice was about to proceed against the Northern Securities company and expected to have it enjoined.

Nobody got an advance tip. The wind that blew through Wall street the next morning when the market opened was high and disastrous, but it was a zephyr compared with the gale that raged around the White House when Mr. Steele and others interested in ending the injurious rate war in the northwest, men who knew the president well enough to remonstrate with him, got the chief executive on the telephone.

There is no doubt that Mr. Roosevelt was greatly disturbed. It was represented to him that he had done something which would ruin all the financial interests concerned. So when Mr. Knox came in, while the telephonic disturbance was at its height, the president asked him to go to the instrument and talk to the enraged financiers.

The financiers were not only seriously disturbed, they were enraged, and they said some things to Mr. Knox and he said some things to them. Finally he said, "Well, we'll settle this; there is no truck here in the department of justice, and this suit is going on."

The suit went on, just as Mr. Knox said it would, and was carried from court to court until the supreme court of the United States wrote as the law of the land that holding companies in restraint of trade were illegal.

But later the men of Wall street, who cursed the little attorney-general from Pittsburgh, blessed him when, at the outset of the campaign of 1904, he said, in announcing the further policies of the department of justice, "The administration does not purpose running amuck."

### BEEF TRUST SCANDAL.

It was Mr. Knox who took up the Heraclitus' expense of the beef trust and enjoined it. Cleverly he moved against that giddy monopoly in an unexpected way. He not only attacked it for violating the Sherman Anti-Trust law, being in restraint of trade, but he attacked it for demanding and receiving excessive prices, adding to the cost of commerce. This was the great pioneer in giving life and vitality to the war on the rebate, which subsequently under other administrators of the de-

partment of justice, became such a conspicuous feature of the war of the octopus.

### PANAMA CANAL.

It was Senator Knox who conducted what is perhaps the greatest and most complete legal investigation the world has ever known. He perfected the title to the Panama canal. Here was a law case which began in Paris and had its ramifications all through France. Then it reached New York, where another company had been formed. It included Washington, where the title was subsequently to rest. Then it went to Panama and thence over to the mountains to get a water log. He carried it through and it is noted that in all the deliberations concerning that transfer there is not a hint that reaches the skirts of the man who brought the title to the canal from France and Central America to Washington.

It is also represented by the friends of Mr. Knox that while he was conducting the negotiations, which took him to Paris, he did not get along very well with William Nelson Cromwell. Somehow Mr. Cromwell, who tried to have a finger in the legal pie that the attorney-general was cooking, bored Mr. Knox.

For good natured plain speaking the secretary of state in the next cabinet is famous. After he had been elected to the senate from Pennsylvania he called at the White House to see the president.

### POLLED MR. DOOLEY.

"I want to know what you think of my new attorney-general," said the president.

"Who is the new attorney-general?" asked Mr. Dooley.

"Morgan," replied the president.

"Wait, I'll follow Mr. Dooley," said the Pennsylvanian. "Is Casey good for a drink?" asked the bartender of Hennessy. "Has he had it?" asks Hennessy. "He has." "He is."

The White House women thought the story cruel but when it became printed the country roared.

Many times President Roosevelt used Mr. Knox to promote policies. He sent for the senator from Pennsylvania when he was determined on asking Congress to enact some law which would insure uniformity of railroad rates. Mr. Knox talked it over.

told the president how far he thought he could go and where he could not venture. The president asked him to make a speech outlining a bill that could be passed that would stand the test of the supreme court and remedy the evils which were complained of. And suddenly a Pittsburg club that was having a dinner the day after received a message that Mr. Knox would like to make a speech. He knew his Pittsburg friends so well that he could eat it and they were more than pleased to comply.

### CAME BACK TO KNOX.

The speech that Mr. Knox made that night was the forerunner of the great rate bill fight. If the measure then outlined had been passed immediately by Congress the result would have been attained that was only accomplished after a struggle of five or six months. But the president got away from his moorings and the house and senate got away from theirs, and they came back to what Mr. Knox had said in November late in May, and put through just the bill that he said ought to be passed.

It is the view of those who know the secretaries of state that Mr. Knox has the respect of all who know him. He is a man of wealth and he made it all at the law. Everybody has heard the story of Mr. Knox and the late Benjamin Harrison, who after his retirement returned to Indianapolis to practice law. They were engaged on the same side in a great lawsuit involving the life of the street railway system of Indianapolis. When the case came up all the lawyers made very long addresses—that is all but Mr. Knox. He spoke to the court exactly 40 minutes. His argument was regarded as settling the case. When it was ended Mr. Knox approached Gen. Harrison and politely offered the suggestion that they divide their fees. Gen. Harrison has appealed to the Interstate commerce commission for a rule forcing the Hill line to grant his demands.

The case is soon to be heard in Chicago.

### LEADS THE SIMPLE LIFE.

The next secretary of state will be found by the diplomats with whom he comes in contact to be a very red-blooded man. He delights in good horses. He loves to play golf. He lives in the summer in a beautiful home at Valley Forge, Pa., his home being the old house that was occupied by Gen. Washington during the winter of the Revolution. It is surrounded with beautiful trees of various varieties and a splendid bass stream flows past by the doors. Here Mr. Knox leads the simple life. He has his horse and his cows, and he sends them to the neighborhood farms. It is the retreat for which he longs whenever Saturday enables him to leave Washington, and fortunately indeed is he well entertained under that roof.

Over the hard roads that rise and fall among the hills around picturesque Devon and Pauli the senator from Pennsylvania can be seen almost every day in summer driving his splendid team of fast trotters that still hold the record for the fastest time in dangerous harness.

### PRESERVES MENTAL POISE.

And all the time he preserves that robust mental poise which is the admiration of all who know him. Good natured, gracious, modest, a good look and an easy winner, he seems to generate sunshine wherever he goes. The senators have felt the quality of his steel and yet in debate he has never made use of the most bitter, trenchant and caustic arguments which in the last few years have come in over the debates of that body which much time will be required to dissipate. He is active in debate and has shown himself better able to take care of himself than many of those who have served in the senate during the year.

Mr. Knox will go into history as the man who would rather be a candidate for the presidential nomination than on the bench of the supreme court of the United States.

One afternoon he was sitting in the Senate chamber with his family, including the unusual trio of matinées. A messenger from the White House rode madly on a bicycle to the senator's residence in E street. There learning that Mr. Knox was at the

part of the messenger asked for orders. "Get him out of there and say the president desires to see him immediately," were the instructions.

So the messenger bolted into the theater and disturbed the senator in the midst of a hearty laugh. Much wondering, Mr. Knox excused himself and walked across to the White House, only a block distant, and entered the cabinet room.

"Senator," exclaimed the president, "Justice Brown has just resigned. I sent for you to offer you that place on the supreme bench."

"Thank you very much, Mr. President but I do not desire to go on the supreme bench."

And from that minute Mr. Roosevelt knew that, come what might, Mr. Knox would be a candidate for the Republican nomination for president in 1908 against William H. Taft, and he began to prepare for it.—N. Y. Herald.

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