

averse to the proceeding, and some rebel against it. The result is that they lose their employment. They must either submit to the obduracy or be without a job—the latter a very unfortunate condition now-a-days. A custom that forces a workman to such a choice is no better than highway robbery, even when committed directly by or through the connivance of employing contractors who lay a claim to respectability which is not borne out by their conduct in this regard.

In the special interest of the workman as well as for the general good of the people, something should be done to end this practice. If a laboring man wants to spend his earnings in a saloon, he should at least have the privilege of going there voluntarily; and if he does not have such a desire he should not be under compulsion to go against his will. The workmen themselves ought to array their influence against an employer who degrades himself by following the custom; and whether it be corporation or private citizen who lets out a contract, it should be refused to individuals or firms who will not make the time and place of paying their men such as can be approved by the respectable element of the community. There is no more reason for requiring a common laborer to go into a saloon to get his pay, when he is not engaged in work connected with the saloon operation, than there is for insisting that the judge on the bench or the bank clerk shall go into a gambling den to have his salary turned over to him; and then be subject to an assessment in the way of patronizing the house, possibly as a percentage of his earnings can find its way back to the employer's pocket. The employers who subject laboring men to an indignity which would not be borne in trade and professional circles, ought to be known for the foes that they are to the welfare of workmen who engage with them.

#### DOCTORS AND WHISKERS.

The Medical Record, published at New York, contains in its issue for January 4th a brief article on the important question as to whether doctors should wear beards. A New Hampshire physician has brought the matter to recent attention, by discussing in a candid and pointed manner the dangers and propriety of wearing a beard, although he admits that he does so and almost implies that he admires it. He cites a number of cases in which doctors, by reason of wearing beards, have carried the infection of diphtheria home, or have infected themselves, and he speaks also of the additional danger of carrying the scarletina infection when the physician wears a beard. The responsibility of the surgeon in this matter is practically insisted upon. Some time ago the Medical Record discussed the subject, advising, not necessarily a total abolition of the beard, but restricting it to modest and sanitary limits. At that time, however, such severe criticisms were received from correspondents who had for years worn long and breezy whiskers, that it seemed to the Record wise that the subject be dropped. A great many besides physicians themselves

will be interested in the ventilation of the subject is sure to receive from the discussion which now seems to be precipitated in real earnest.

#### THE OFFICE-HOLDING PASSION.

Now that the new State has been fairly inaugurated there may be anticipated, especially among young men, and perhaps (though it is to be hoped not) among young women, a considerable increase of the malady known as the office-holding passion. There are offices which individuals may hold, and individuals who may fill offices, where good results to both and also to the public; but in the modern trend of politics the area of these is very limited. As a rule, office-holding is a detriment to the officer. The reason for this is that when once a person tastes of the exciting "sweets" of office he is almost as much, if not quite, as completely under the control of the office-holding passion as is a drunkard under the control of his appetite, and will submit to sacrifices of money and manhood that are appalling.

A case of a well known local politician is in point. He got into office, and in order to get there again he paid out more than half the salary for the entire term, leaving for the amount that will come to him when his political bills are paid less than a laboring man could earn shoveling dirt in the same time. Besides this, he abandoned the dignity of manhood in his often piteous pleadings for his friends to place him in office another term. He has the craze so bad that it seems as if nothing but a position at the public crib will satisfy him, although he has ability to earn much more outside, and is really now getting insufficient to give him a comfortable living. This illustration may bring others to mind, where business men, for instance, will strain every nerve and spend lots of money to get into a job for a few weeks at \$5 a day; and when they are defeated regard it as a serious and almost irreparable misfortune, while sensible men not affected by the passion would consider it a blessing. But the disease makes them blind to every other consideration except getting into office.

It is often related of men who hold office, especially those of an appointive character, for a number of years, that when they are dismissed they are helpless as babes and entirely unfit to do good work in other occupations. This is notably the case with those of this class at the national and larger state capitals. If an office holder they have made money it has been because their fingers "have had wax on them;" and their ill-gotten means usually goes in as had form as it came, or even worse. If they have been honest, they have found that, because of the heavy drain on their income for political purposes, there is less money than honor in the position, and less of comfort than either. Yet the "passion" has such a hold upon them that its slavery is hard to break. Thus the "office-holding fiends" in this country are much more numerous and perhaps as much to be pitied as the "opium fiends."

Of course there are persons who can

take office, perform the duties thereof for the term, and then return to their former avocations none the worse. But these are usually men of experience who have had their minds set in other directions, where they have achieved a success which rivets their attention too firmly to be called away by vexatious honors; sometimes also there are younger men of distinctive utilitarian natures who can pass from private to official life and back again without the disease "going in on them." But these are few—so few that it is far better for young men to remain on the farm, in the workshop, or at the desk, rather than embark on the troubled sea of politics. Somebody must hold office; but they are not always wise who make the sacrifices necessary to do so in these times.

#### THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER.

In view of the addition of the new star to the national flag, made necessary by the admission of Utah, the history of the emblem itself as now constituted, is attended with timely and increased interest. The Times-Herald of Chicago, recently commenting upon the forty-fifth star, gives a sketch of the adoption of the present flag, which originally was composed of thirteen horizontal stripes, alternate red and white, with a blue union and thirteen white stars. This was adopted by the Continental Congress June 14, 1777, and remained the national emblem until 1794. At that time two new states, Vermont and Kentucky, had been admitted in the Union, and a law was passed which provided that the flag should consist of fifteen alternate stripes and fifteen stars.

This remained the form of the flag throughout the war of 1812, though other new states had been admitted in the meantime. In 1818, after Mississippi came in, which made the twentieth state, it was found that with the prospects of still more new states to come in an additional stripe could not be added for each state. The law was consequently revised, and it was provided that the flag should be composed of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, to represent the original thirteen states that formed the Union, while the union should consist of twenty stars, white in a blue field, one star to be added with the admission of every new state, each addition to take effect on the fourth day of July next ensuing.

Utah is now admitted as the forty-fifth State, but the forty-fifth star will not be placed upon the flag until next Fourth of July.

THE SAN FRANCISCO Chronicle says of the Utah Senatorship that it "makes no predictions as to the success of one or another candidate, nor offers any suggestions, for either would be unpardonable;" but expresses a confidence that the Senators selected "will be devoted to a principle upon which the future of the new State so nearly depends and with which it is intimately connected—the free coinage of silver." In refraining from meddling with the Senatorial question the Chronicle displays superior dignity and good judgment to many of its contemporaries.