Unpublished Letters of Pat

Dear Spotts—Have ye missed me? 'Tis meself who asks yer forgiveness for leaving ye in the midst of yer primary gum-shoe stunt, but if ye knew how me dear chum, Jim Taliaferro, begged me to come to Washington and put him next to his plain duty on voting for the kind of canal we will leave for posterity to dig across the isthmus of Panama, then, me darling Spotts, yer vexation would pass away as fast as a bill to favor the railroads passes the average Florida Senate.

Ye see it's this way, Spotts. The canal committee is betwixt and between. Some want a sea level canal and some want locks. I says to Jim: "Taliaferro, me boy, we don't want anything locked. Make everything wide open."

"That's my opinion, Pat, and yet I was not sure. I wanted the free and untrammeled expression of a lofty and unbiased mind, and so I asked ye, Pat."

"No mistake have ye made, Senator. But, hold! Tom Platt is on the committee with ye; how does he vote? He's an expert, having juggled with the Erie canal many a time and knowing the first name of every mule on the towpath from Albany to Buffalo."

"He for the sea level," says Jim.

"Then me boy," says I, "follow Platt; ye can't be wrong."

Spotts, will ye believe me, he almost shed tears in his gratitude. "Pat," he says, "ye have lifted a burden from me breast."

"Tut, Jim," says I. "'Twas but a touch of indigestion that bothered ye, and I chased it away with me sunny smile."

"Pardon me, Pat," he says. "I nearly forgot until ye said 'touch.' Will ye accept?"

Will a turkey gobble? How much, ye say. Not in a thousand years will I tell ye. 'Tis a divvy ye would be wanting.

Spotts, would that you could could have been in the Senate gallery and listen to B. Ryan Tillman lambast the colonel of our dear old regiment—Theodore Roosevelt.

Ye remember that dreadful day at San Juan, Spotts, when bullets were flying thicker than bees in a South Florida orange grove. Ye were detailed for special duty that day on the southwest corner of Bay and Hogan Streets, and I—where was I, Spotts—heroically standing by yer side.

But I digress. Ye know what that means—'tis a fashionable way of saying that your rivulet of thought has leaped out of the basin. But the joyous recollection of the glorious days of the past when we were "23" almost bunkydoodled me.

Where was I? Oh, yes, I was telling ye about Tillman and how he threw the fork into Roosevelt. He reminded me of our own Albert Gilchrist when he used to paw the air and jar the ear drums of the members of the Florida House. Can ye see any similarity, Spotts? I can't; I just mentioned it as a point of comparison.

Ye see, Spotts, Tillman declared that Theodore had double-crossed him on the railroad rate bill—that while he was making Tillman believe that he was with him big guns, foot and critter back, he really slid down the subway, leaving Ben to defend the forlorn hope.

Once in the rear Theodore puts out one of his famous round-robins, so Ben says, and runs up the white flag. Then Joe Bailey, whose looks are improved since he had his hair cut, brought out his silver-mounted hammer and said that after careful consideration he was forced to declare that the President was not a man of iron, but a man of clay, and "a very common clay at that." This able opinion frees Roosevelt from suspicion of connection with the Steel Trust.

But the Strenuous Teddy, from his den in the White House, bawled through the telephone to his phonograph, Senator Lodge: "'Tis false, a Rough Rider may dodge, but he never retreats, or if he does ye can't get evidence of it."

And then, with this strong denial in his mouth, the Senator who thinks the sacred codfish of Massachusetts is a grander bird than the American eagle, made Tillman seek refuge in a page of the Congressional Record.

Delightful repartee it was, Spotts, but the incident is not closed yet, and if Ben don't give Theodore something to chew on that will hurt his throat more than embalmed beef, may I never feed at Reddy's again.

Spotts, ye have heard of a place that the name begins with an H. I'm going there. Ye laugh; 'tis on ye for a wrong guess. I mean Hague—The Hague, where the international peace conference is due. Ye know I'm a peacemaker from peaceburg. Ask John Redmond when ye see him how it was I saved Ireland from a revolution by leaving the country.

Did I tell ye about Frank Clark? He was so delighted to see me that he unwound his hands from the whiskers of Grosvenor, grabbed me hand, and said, "Charmed, Pat, charmed. Did ye come to see me measure the sword of debate with the great statesmen of the House? I sure cut a gash, Pat, in the cave of the winds known to the dear people as the chamber of the House of Representatives. 'Tis there that I, like McGregor, stands on his native heath, defying the elments, or whatever it was the rampant Scot done."

"Pat, me boy," continues Frank, "how do the Crackers like the Egyptian cotton I stuffed in their ears? Ain't I the real sap, and don't it tickle ye to have John Dalzell pat me on the back and say, 'Frank, ye are the material out of which statesmen are made?'"

"Frank," says I, "didn't I tell ye twenty years ago when ye were working fourteen hours a day in a sawmill, that ye would one day be one of the hands running a planer in the Government legislative factory with short hours and good pay, and a helper to tote the sawdust and chips away from yer machine?"

"Sure ye did, Pat. God bless ye. Have a cigarette. I'll never forget ye."

Goodby, Spotts, I'm due now to ride out to Chevy Chase with Bill Taft. Tea will be served at 5 o'clock, ye know. If I'm not back in Jacksonville in time, please vote for me—ye know how. Ever yer devoted,

PAT MURPHY.

Agriculture of the Lands of the Pharoah's

By W. E. Pabor

It takes a vast amount of water to irrigate and fertilize the sandy flats along the valley of the Nile, and for four months the lands are under water from the vast overflow that comes down during the spring months from the torrential rains of upper Africa. These floods carry the sediment that settles down on the rice and cane lands and produces a crop with little labor from those who sow and wait idly by until they reap. Frost the Egyptian farmer does not fear. Drouth through eight months of the year he knows is sure to follow the floods; but they make the harvest, so he is content now, as his ancestors of Pharaoh's time were, when a certain grain speculator named Joseph had "a corner on corn."

But a new outlook has begun and the simple shadoof of olden time is to disappear, and camels to carry water for irrigation are to succeed nature's method of inundation. The great dam at Assuan is to imprison a body of water one hundred and sixty miles long, which will water over a million and a half acres of hitherto waste land, because above the inundation area. Thereby the desert is truly to be made to blossom as the rose, and the area of cultivatable land increased 20 per cent. The cotton and the cane and the rice of the descendants of the builders of the Pyramids will ere long become an important factor in the commercial world of America and Europe.

This dam, built by English capital, consists of a solid wall of masonry a mile and a quarter long, eighty-two feet thick at the bottom and twenty-three at the top; height one hundred and thirty feet. Has one hundred and eighty openings twenty feet high and six feet wide, and these can discharge 15,000 tons of water per second. The cost is figured at nearly thirteen millions of dollars, a figure that makes the one or two millions being expended by our Government on irrigation systems in the West, look very small and unimportant.

We are apt to think of Egypt as a God-forsaken country, given over to poverty, Moslemism and Nile tourists; but a Mr. Frederic J. Haskin, who recently has sent letters to the newspapers from various points in the Far East, has opened the eyes of his readers, shaken the dust of delusion from them, and we begin to catch glimpses of an agricultural future that even the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings of old did not not dream of.

He writes as follows: "Most of the soil restored by this great enterprise is to be used for growing cane. Where there was formerly dreary sand banks along the Nile, there are now clusters of cane mills, and large sums of money are being invested in the industry. The quality of the Nile cane is very high, the value of the crop ranking next to cotton. This last named crop is now (and is to be in the future) the staple crop of Egypt. The soil is so rich that the Nile farmer gets twice as much from each acre as the American cotton planter produces. The country realizes nearly sixty million dollars a year from the sale of cotton, which is sufficient to pay the interest on the big foreign debt and all the expenses of the Government. If it were not for this cotton crop the land of the Pharaohs would be hopelessly bankrupt."

But, of course, it is not the energy, the vim, the push of the native population that has brought about this condition of things. In the main the Egyptian peasants are as miserable as the soil-tillers of India. Poorly housed, poorly fed, they do not live long, and Dr. Osler's theory is carried out by nature and circumstance and superstition to its finale, for there are few, if any, old people there; only old-young people, and the marvel is, as Mr. Haskins truly observes, "that a race of people who treat all their ills by charms and absolutely senseless formulas of superstition can even survive."

"It is pathetic that the Nile people, who are the oldest and hardest-working farmers in the world, should profit so little from their great toil and the rich land that nature is constantly restoring for them. Their country is old—so old that it was a place of refuge for Joseph and Mary when they fled from Palestine; so old that its tombs have told the story of the ages to men of science; and yet poverty and ignorance and blind superstition still lie upon it like a blight."

Will Egypt rise again to part of its ancient splendor? On the north the Mediterranean Sea washes its shores; on the east the Red Sea and Arabia Petra; on the south Nubia; on the west the Libyan desert. Here lies a total area of nearly 400,000 square miles, of which only 3 per cent, or 13,000 square miles, are cultivated at present. A desert indeed. Yet with a population of over ten million people, who annually pay two million dollars to Turkey, while a British army occupies the land and the Khedive governs with the assistance of England. Could Menes, the first known in history king who founded Memphis 6,000 years ago appear—re-incarnated—what would he think of his people and his land, as they exist today? or even Rameses the Second, who built the Theban temples, of which Karnak alone consisted of a group "a mile long and one third of a mile wide?"

Shall we say, with Thackeray, that nations, like men, are the sport of destiny? or with Schiller, that it raises to fame but also grinds to powder? or with Hippocrates, that all, both great and small, but fulfill the task set for them by destiny?

"Alas, what stay is there in numan state?
Or who can shun inevitable fate?
The doom was written, the decree was passed,
Ere the foundations of the world were cast."

So wrote Dryden, and if we are but creatures of fate and nations are as men in this regard, then greater happiness lies in the creeds that rule in old world lands and the Egyptian fellah, working all day long at the shadoof, lifting pails of Nile water to carry to its little patch of beans, is wiser in his ignorance than we in our knowledge, that only brings us doubt.

History Professor Gets Kaiser Into Trouble

Berlin.—The Kaiser and the Minister of Justice are coming in for a lot of abuse on account of a speech to which they listened, "with a pleased countenance," it is charged. The speech was delivered by Professor Gierke at a banquet given in the palace of the Minister of Justice. Gierke, who calls himself a historian, declared: "The Socialist party is the quintescence of lawlessness, and its deeds emanate from a culpable spirit that ought to be severely punished and suppressed."

Even the conservative papers protest against "such a perversion of facts," but the Socialists only laugh. They say they will triumph, despite the ignorant Kaiser, the Minister of Justice, fool historians and corrupt judges, encouraged by the Government.

Storers Can't Tear Themselves Away from Vienna

Vienna.—Mr. Bellamy Storer, to the great delight of his aristocratic friends, has consented to remain a little longer in Vienna. However, himself and wife expect not to have a moment of time for themselves during their stay here, for society will go out of its way to pay them court, and even increase their regrets at leaving so hospitable a place as the Austrian capital and court. There are rumors that Mr. and Mrs. Storer will buy a villa near Vienna, or palace in town, as they desire to spend a couple of months yearly in Vienna society and with the noble diplomats with whom they lived on terms of intimacy for so long.