

THE HONORABLE SENATE

A COWARDLY BLOW AT AN HONEST EMPLOYEE'S REPUTATION.

THE OUTCOME OF ITS JEALOUS DESIRE TO HIDE ITS PROCEEDINGS IN EXECUTIVE SESSION—FALSE CHARGES AGAINST EXECUTIVE CLERK YOUNG.

WASHINGTON, March 27.—“The honorable Senate,” in its fretful and jealous desire absolutely to exclude the public from all knowledge of the work that it does with closed doors, is on the point of doing something that will entitle it to be stripped of its high-sounding and misleading description.

Exasperated beyond endurance at the fullness and accuracy of the reports of the executive session of Wednesday last, as given in THE TIMES and some other papers, when the remarks of several Senators and the injunction of Mr. Sherman to observe the strictest secrecy were given with more than usual accuracy, the “honorable” body has been seized with a determination, encouraged by the contriver of the expensive and useless Smelling Committee of last session, to make an example of somebody.

There are two sets of officers of the Senate. One force of clerks, under the direction of Clerk Johnson, occupies the desk during the open session, and the other, which is directly under the control of Secretary McCook, is called in when the Senate goes into executive session. The executive force keeps the records of the proceedings of the close sessions, the entries showing the nominations sent from the President, and the action of the committees upon them, and, when the nominations are confirmed or rejected, they make note of the transactions. These clerks are Col. Morrow, Mr. Shanklin, and James R. Young. They are all sworn, as are other employes of the Senate, to observe the rules, among which is one to guard all the secrets of the executive sessions and to hold them inviolate. That the clerks of the Senate have regarded this obligation may be assumed from the fact that there is no recollection, in the memory of anybody now in service here, that the charge of infidelity was ever heard against any of them.

At the Thursday session of the Senate, when the doors were locked and the Senate was about to proceed to executive business, all of the employes who have been allowed to be present during the executive sessions, including the executive clerks and Mr. Bassett, who has been upward of sixty years in the service of the body, were turned out, very much to their surprise. After their expulsion an attack was begun by several Senators upon Executive Clerk Young, and it is understood that Senators argued that it was impossible, with the precautions that had been taken to prevent the leakage of executive session secrets, for the remarks of Senators, reported with reasonable accuracy and with so much exact language, to get into print unless they were repeated by some one who was present and was skillful enough as a writer to put them into shape.

These astute Senators went further. They suggested, in the safe privacy of the executive session, what they would be ashamed, if they are governed by any notions of decency or fairness, to assert in an open session or on the streets, where they might be constrained to give a reason for their opinions. Mr. Young, they said, is a newspaper man of training and long experience. What was more likely than that he was the person who furnished to the reporters the information upon which they constructed the stories about executive session that were as nearly accurate, for all intents and purposes, as if the entire body of correspondents was permitted to be present in the galleries?

The storm over this suggestion, which was fully elaborated by the shallow-pates who brought it forward, beat over the unconscious head of Mr. Young all that afternoon and was renewed the next day. The men who had invented a new cure for the leaks of the Senate and who, perhaps, are simply seeking for a pretext to put a clerk out, insisted that Executive Clerk Young should be at once discharged. There was a remonstrance from several Senators, who thought this had a brutal and cowardly sound, and who also thought that it would be fair to have an investigation and to give Mr. Young an opportunity to say something about the atrocious charge that had been brought against him in his absence.

No; this was not satisfactory to the “honorable,” who were wild for blood. In their frenzy to protect their own “honor,” they purposed to do a thing that would stamp any man not a Senator as a blackguard and a boor—to sacrifice an employe for the offenses that the punishing body had itself committed, and for nothing else than the purpose, it may be assumed, of giving the impression to the public that the Senate is a really honorable and decent body of gentlemen.

Mr. James R. Young is well known to all the correspondents who have been here for a number of years. He is a man of family. He has lived for many years in this city. He held positions of trust for newspapers with which he was connected, and he has held the office in which he still is without a whisper against his efficiency or his honor for many years. He was elected Executive Clerk back in 1873 or 1874, and held the place until the Democrats gained control of the Senate. Then he went into the office of the Attorney General under Mr. Brewster and remained Chief Clerk of the Department of Justice until the reorganization of the Senate with the help of Mahone, when he was again chosen to be Executive Clerk.

For about ten years he has filled the place without question as to his respect for the rules of his employers. If he were inefficient, the Senate would say so, it is to be presumed, and ask him to resign on that account. Instead of resorting to so comparatively manly and considerate and decent a course, the Senate adopts a method that the stranger and the vitriol thrower could not practice. They adopt one that is more comfortable, if less honorable, and proceed to smirch the reputation of an honest man behind closed doors, to turn him out without a line of evidence to sustain their accusations, and without affording the accused a chance to refute the charges that are discreditable only to the men who prefer them in the safe seclusion of the Senate executive session.

There was a way by which the Senate could have ascertained, if it had chosen to do so, whether there was any reason to entertain for one moment the suspicion that Mr. Young has been giving the secrets of the Senate to the newspapers. They could have called every member of the press named in the gallery list printed in the Congressional Directory, and it may be safely asserted that, without hesitation, qualification, or evasion, every one of the one hundred and fifty, more or less, would testify under oath that he had never received from Mr. Young, or from any other Senate employe, any paper, line, suggestion, remark, objection, approval, or opinion uttered by a Senator in the executive sessions.

The mere mention of the idea strikes every man who knows how the reports of executive sessions are obtained as too ridiculous to be entertained for a moment, except by Senators who have a fancy that they are bound in “honor” to show that some one besides Senators is responsible for the fact that some of the public business the Senators respect here to perform is made known to the public. No one ever thought of asking a clerk of the Senate to tell what he knows about secret sessions. The Senate would be as fully justified in suspecting Gen. McCook, its Secretary, as it is in suspecting Mr. Young, and no one who knows Gen. McCook would assert for a moment that he has trifled with the secrets of the august and “honorable” body that is now stabbing a man in the back, with all the probable immunity from danger that has attended the atrocities of “Jack the Ripper.”

But these “honorable” Senators who are about to make an example of a gentleman whose reputation is of longer standing than that of some of his accusers, and much better than that of some of them, propose to let him down easy. How does it occur to these “honorable” to do it? By letting Mr. Young resign. There’s “Senatorial comity” and human decency for you. With this accusation over his head, that he has been faithless, that he has parted with something not his and which he was sworn to guard, without having the particulars of his alleged offense stated to him, and without being permitted to deny or prove the falsity of the accusations brought by some one whom he is not permitted to know, he is informed that if he does not resign he will be put out. There is no alternative for Mr. Young under these circumstances.

The men who wrote the reports of the executive sessions of last week, if they are the basis of the charge against Mr. Young, know that they can prove that he did not give the information upon which they were written. There are Senators in the body of eighty-eight, all of whom will share the responsibility for his dismissal if it is made, who could prove that the charges are infamously and disgracefully unjust to Mr. Young, and that they should not be entertained for an instant. If those Senators could stand the consequences, they could find correspondents who could help them to clear the skirts of Mr. Young of the charges upon which the “honorable” men, his accusers, propose to make an example of him. But these Senators know that nothing but their demand, which will not be made, will unlock the lips of the correspondents to tell from whom they obtained, here a little and there a little, to be woven into a reasonable whole, the accounts of the discussions of Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday on the Berling Sea question.

This assumption by the Senate of a mantle of superior virtue is, to those who know anything about the matter, nothing more or less than a shameful and unnecessary exhibition of puerile rage and stupid hypocrisy. The dismissal of Mr. Young will not stop the reporting of executive sessions. Dismiss all of the clerks, and dismiss the Secretary of the Senate, too, and accounts of the next executive session after their dismissal will go to the public if they can be obtained. The only effectual bar against reports of executive sessions will be the dismissal of eighty-eight Senators.

What will be thought of the standard of “honor” of the Senate if it be ascertained that the report is true that some of the most indig-

nant men in the body, determined to fix the blame for many leakages, have employed detectives, “shadows,” skulkers, who are to follow Senators to their homes and lodgings and to report to their employers who it is that calls upon them. If any newspaper man ventures to approach the house of any watched man, that will be enough for the “shadow.” He will be able at once to fix the suspicion of dishonor upon that Senator. And yet the suspicion may be absolutely not justified, as Senators are called upon much oftener by correspondents for information upon which they may freely talk than they are for the secrets of the executive sessions that they are forbidden to reveal.

If such an espionage were to be set up on one side, why would not the press be justified in employing “shadows” upon Senators, to report whither they went, at what hours, how accompanied, to see whom, to do what, and publish times, persons, places, and occasions in their dispatches to the newspapers? Some of the Senators could stand such a spying better than others. But there is no newspaper man here, it may be safely asserted, who would not regard such a method of criticism as fit only for the slyster lawyers of the Tombs and as utterly beneath the “dignity” of the press.

Perhaps this is to be the Senate way of throttling the newspapers. It will not do. They do not need to tell that the critical side of the press is hated when it is exhibited to them. If it could be silenced how much easier it would be to “do business!” And how many jobs, reeking with the pith of the corruptionist, might be rushed through the Congress, if the press gallery could be shut up and “the little bill” made law without the tedious and burdensome formality of discussion? The day is far distant, unless the Senate shall prove to be a greater terrorizer than some of its members imagine it to be, when it will be able, by brutally sacrificing one of its own employes, to scare the press of the country into an abandonment of the search for news of executive sessions.

If the Senate did its duty in this matter, it would, as it should, in open session apologize to Mr. Young. A gentleman who had offended a gentleman would be ashamed to do less. The Senate ought not to be less honorable than a gentleman.

DUE TO MR. PAGE.

THE REAL FOUNDER OF THE UNITED STATES FISH COMMISSION.

In the notices calling attention to Mr. George Shepard Page, who died at Stanley, N. J., on Saturday, his devotion to the study of natural history may have been in a measure overlooked. His acquaintance with fish, their habits and methods of spawning, was thorough. Twenty years ago, when fish culture was in its infancy, and regarded rather as an amusing personal hobby than as capable of becoming practically useful, Mr. Page was among the first to appreciate its possibilities.

In the *Century Magazine* of this month, in an article on “The United States Fish Commission,” the following may be found:

“The matter was taken in hand by Congress during the Winter of 1870-71, and a bill was passed for a scientific study of the subject.”

It was through the personal exertions of Mr. Page that the United States Fish Commission was created. He had been instrumental in founding what was known at first as “The American Fish Culturists’ Association.” This association, soon opening up a wider sphere of usefulness, changed its title to that of “The American Fish Cultural Association.” In the minutes of this association, with the names of Prof. Spencer F. Baird, G. Brown Goode, Charles Hallock, Robert Roosevelt, Eugene G. Blackford, and some fifty others, may be found that of George Shepard Page, with the date of organization, Dec. 20, 1870.

At the first meeting of the association Mr. Page presented plans for the prosecution of the study of fish and fish culture by scientific means. The resolution was as follows:

Resolved, That a committee of four, including the President and Secretary, be appointed, who shall draft and present to Congress, at its present session, a memorial upon the subject of the creation by the Government of two or more fish-hatching establishments, one for salmon, in the vicinity of Puget’s Sound, and the other in some convenient point near the Atlantic coast, for the propagation of shad for stocking our rivers and streams.

Mr. Page and Dr. Edmonds were appointed to act under this resolution, but before that the originator of this motion had been in Washington and had interested Senators and members of the House of Representatives in the plan for the establishment of a Fish Commission, to be under the direction of the Government.

There can be no question that fish culture in the United States in its inception was due in no small measure to the active interest taken by Mr. Page. The late Prof. Spencer F. Baird, who was Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution and Chief of the United States Fish Commission, always declared that the origin of the department, over which he presided with such distinction for sixteen years, was first conceived by George Shepard Page.

THE REV. DR. FARLEY’S FUNERAL.

The funeral services over the remains of the Rev. Dr. Frederick Augustus Farley, who was the first pastor of the Unitarian Church of the Saviour, Pierrepont Street and Monroe Place, Brooklyn, took place yesterday afternoon in the church. Dr. Farley died on Thursday at his home, 130 Pacific Street. Preliminary services were conducted by the Rev. H. Price Collier, the present pastor, the Rev. Charles H. Hall, D. D., the Rev. John W. Chadwick, the Rev. H. W. Morehouse, and the Rev. R. H. Camp.

After these services the Rev. A. P. Putnam, who succeeded Dr. Farley as pastor of the church when he resigned in 1863, made an address of eulogy. The Rev. Dr. Robert Collier of New-York followed with an address, the Rev. Richard S. Storrs, D. D., offered the prayer, and the benediction was pronounced by Dr. Hall.

The pall bearers were: A. A. Low, A. M. White, E. H. R. Lyman, A. Augustus Low, J. S. Hollinshead, Gen. John B. Woodward, James Blossom, Edward Low, Alfred T. White, James Littlejohn, and Isaac H. Cary. A number of carriages followed the body to Greenwood Cemetery.

Among those at the church were: Dr. Truman J. Backus, Franklin W. Harper, Sydney V. Lowell, John Winslow, J. M. Greenwood, George W. Meade, and Henry W. Maxwell.

JOSEPH DE ST. ANGE DEAD.

An octogenarian who was said to have a right to the title of Baron Joseph de St. Ange engaged board at the Hotel Gaultier, 103 Clinton Place, two weeks ago. Yesterday morning he was served with *café au lait* and went for a walk. At noon he sat down to lunch and ate heartily. A soon after he complained that he was ill, and a chambermaid aided him in reaching his room on the third floor. Once there he sat down on his bed and fell over dead.

St. Ange was a partner at 37 Clinton Place, in the Floral Perfume and Chemical Fluid Company. Little is known of his history. His wife, Mathilde, a woman much younger than he, lives with her parents in Canada.