

THE BOOKMAN

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CHRONICLE AND COMMENT

Thomas Dixon's new novel, *The Southerner*, is dedicated "To the First

"The Southerner"

Southern President since Lincoln, My Friend and Classmate, Woodrow Wilson." In

connection with this dedication there is a story. Woodrow Wilson and Thomas Dixon were in Johns Hopkins together, and Mr. Dixon from the beginning felt that the other man was destined for great things. In the first months of 1912 his belief that Governor Wilson would be nominated by the Democratic Party and elected became positive conviction. The Baltimore Convention was held in July. Three months before, in early April, Mr. Dixon was about to sail for Europe, to be gone until the autumn, and it was necessary to turn over to his publisher all the copy for the new book. The day before sailing he wrote the dedication which is here reproduced and sent it with the rest of the manuscript. Three months later he cabled his congratulations to Governor Wilson from Vienna.

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In connection with the last of Mr. Tassin's papers on "The Grub Street Problem," which appears elsewhere in this issue, it seems interesting to print a price list

which indicates the cost of living problem which confronted such scribes as happened to be in California in the early

mining days. Edgar Allan Poe, living in his Fordham Cottage, was faced by prices that he deemed high. But toward the end of the same decade, 1840-1850, the traveller patronising the Ward House, of San Francisco, was obliged to adjust his purse to the following bill of fare:

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Oxtail soup.....	\$1.00
Baker trout, anchovy sauce.....	1.50
Roast beef	1.00
Roast lamb, stuffed	1.00
Roast mutton, stuffed	1.00
Roast pork, with apple sauce.....	1.25
Baked mutton, caper sauce.....	1.25
Corned beef and cabbage.....	1.25
Ham	1.00
Curried sausages.....	1.00
Lamb and green peas.....	1.25
Venison, wine sauce.....	1.50
Stewed kidney, champagne sauce...	1.25
Fresh eggs, each.....	1.00
Sweet potatoes50

To
The First Southern President
Since Lincoln,
My friend and classmate,
Woodrow Wilson

FACSIMILE OF THE DEDICATION OF "THE SOUTHERNER"; WRITTEN THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE BALTIMORE CONVENTION

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Irish potatoes50
Cabbage50
Squash50
Bread pudding75
Mince pie75
Brandy peaches	2.00
Rum omelette	2.00
Jelly omelette	2.00
Cheese50
Prunes75

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Conditions in California outside of San Francisco were much the same. At the El Dorado Hotel at Hangtown (a mining-camp) the dainty menu offered "beef with one potato, fair size," \$1.25; "beef, up along," \$1; "baked beans, greased," \$1; "new potatoes, peeled," seventy-five cents; "hash, 18 karats," \$1; "roast grizzly," \$1; "jackass rabbit, whole," \$1.50; "rice with brandy peaches," \$2; and "a square meal" for \$3. All payable in advance. "Gold-scales on the end of the bar." But the small, cheap gold-scales cost \$30, and the coarse knives and forks not less than \$25 the pair. Of course incomes were proportionately large. Clerks in stores and offices had munificent salaries; \$5 a day was about the smallest stipend even in the custom-house, and one Baptist preacher was paid \$10,000 a year. Labourers received a dollar an hour; a pick or a shovel was worth \$10; a tin pan or wooden bowl, \$5; and a butcher's knife \$30. At one time the carpenters who were getting \$12 a day struck for \$16. Lumber rose to \$500 per thousand feet, "and every brick in a house cost a dollar, one way or another." Wheat flour and salt pork sold at \$40 a barrel, a small loaf of bread was fifty cents, and a hard-boiled egg a dollar. You paid \$3 to get into the circus, and \$55 for a private box. Men talked dollars, and a copper coin was an object of antiquarian interest. Forty dollars was the price for ordinary coarse boots; and a pair that came above the knees and would carry you gallantly through the quagmires brought a round hundred. When a shirt became very dirty, the wearer

threw it away and bought a new one. Washing cost \$15 a dozen in 1849. Rents were simply monstrous: \$3000 a month in advance for a "store" hurriedly built of rough boards. Wright and Company paid \$75,000 for the wretched little place on the corner of the Plaza that they called the Miners' Bank, and \$36,000 was asked for the use of the Old Adobe as a custom-house. The Parker House paid \$120,000 a year in rents, nearly one-half of that amount being collected from the gamblers who held the second floor; and the canvas tent next door, used as a gambling-saloon, and called the El Dorado, was good for \$40,000 a year. From ten to fifteen per cent. a month was paid in advance for the use of money borrowed on substantial security. The prices of real estate went up among the stars; \$8000 for a fifty-vara lot that had been bought in 1848 for \$20.

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There are many times when we are inclined to disagree with Mr. Frank

Harris, but we have	
Mr. Harris	never accused him of
Surprises	being uninteresting. In
	taking up an article

from his pen one may reasonably look for something in the nature of a surprise. A recent number of *The Academy* of London begins a series of papers by him on American novelists of to-day, the first one dealing with the work of the late David Graham Phillips. Here the chief surprise is that a man who should know considerable about this country, for Mr. Harris tutored for a time at the University of Kansas and practised law in the Middle West, could achieve so many inaccuracies in a short page and a half of text. Mediocrity and ignorance go hand in hand, but it needed talent and imagination to make the surprising mistakes that Mr. Harris has made. The second surprise is in the writer's curious appraisal of Mr. Phillips's work. He begins his paper by a general glance at American literature. He finds that until the Civil War the literature of the