

"CALFSKIN" SENATOR FROM VERMONT NOW

**Carroll S. Page Got Nickname by
Making His Millions in
Tanning Hides.**

BIDED HIS TIME 15 YEARS

**His Chance Came When Young Fletcher
Proctor Declined to Follow
in His Father's Footsteps.**

With the election to the United States Senate of Carroll S. Page of Vermont to fill out the unexpired term of the late Redfield Proctor, Washington has acquired a new brand of legislator—namely, a "calfskin" Senator. There have been "oil" Senators, railroad Senators, and lumber Senators, but never before has the humble calfskin reached such heights of dignity. In this instance, however, Mr. Page represents his own tannery, and not a cattle trust.

Meeting a loyal son of Vermont, he was asked: "What has this new man Page, your new Senator, done to be sent to Washington?"

"Calfskins," replied the loyal son of Vermont; "Carroll S. Page has bought more calfskins than any other man in this United States."

Then was told a characteristically American story of a poor boy who built up a big business, and is now President of two banks, a Director of railroads, and one of the very few millionaires in his State. This is regarded as no slight achievement because, as the Vermonter put it, "any old fool can find a million in New York, but it takes brains to do it in Vermont."

Mr. Page's fortune all originated in the tannery business at Hyde Park, in Lamoille County, and the inquirer was immediately assured that the nomenclature of the town containing the tannery is merely a coincidence, and not a hideous attempt at the jocular. When, however, the "King of Hyde Park" decided to "break into" politics his troubles began.

In 1890 he was elected Governor of Vermont, and in the campaign to secure the Republican nomination received the title which has stuck to him ever since. Some political rival referred to him as "Mr. C. S. Page, whose initials aptly fit his business, calfskin," and "Calfskin Page" he has been in Vermont ever since. It made excellent material for campaign humor, this play on his name, but while his opponents were chuckling over his joke Page got the nomination and was elected Governor.

It looked then as if that must be the limit of the calfskin millionaire's political ambitions, for the chair in Washington was held by the late Redfield Proctor, creator of the Vermont Marble Company, the largest business of its kind in the world. According to an old custom one of the two Vermont Senators is chosen from the east side of the State and one from the west. Hyde Park lies in the western portion, Proctor's district, so that all chances of Page's further advancement in the marble man's life were hopeless.

"More than that," explained the visitor from the Green Mountains, "Vermont had sort of got the Proctor habit. There was the old Senator's son, Fletcher, and everybody knew that Redfield Proctor had set his heart on having his son succeed him. 'Fletch,' however, always said he didn't like politics; he'd rather stay at home and run the marble business, but in 1906 the old man wanted Fletcher to be Governor, and there wasn't any trouble electing him. Then everybody took it for granted that he would be the next Senator from the west side."

Last Winter, during Gov. Fletcher D. Proctor's administration, his father, "the old Senator," died, and ex-Gov. Stewart of Middlebury was appointed by Gov. Fletcher Proctor to fill his father's place until the meeting of the Legislature this Fall. To the disappointment of all the west side, the Governor announced that when his term expired with the opening of the session he would retire to private life and would not stand for the Senatorship. This decision found Vermont rather unprepared. "If it hadn't been for Carroll Page," continued the Vermonter, "we might have been hanging out a sign, 'United States Senator Wanted. No Questions Asked.' We should have been mighty glad to send 'Fletch,' but he wouldn't go. Some of us wanted to return Stewart, but he did not care anything about it. Then we woke up and saw that Page had had his wires laid for the last fifteen years."

It was indeed only the unexpected end of what the opponents of "the old Senator" called "the Proctor dynasty," that gave the astute and patient millionaire his opportunity. Vermonters had long recognized Senator Proctor as their political leader, but had given little thought to his son. But when the new Governor sent to the Legislature a sweeping reform programme in his first message the State was distinctly surprised. It found its Governor a twentieth century man, with sociological views of government.

They would have been glad to send young Proctor to succeed his father in the Senate, but his voluntary retirement gave Page his chance, probably all the better because he alone among the Vermont politicians foresaw this extraordinary outcome of the so-called "Proctor dynasty."

"With 'Fletch' Proctor out of the running," said the Vermonter, proceeding with his political comments, "we could see Page's wires begin to work, and then all the people who didn't like Page started yelling, 'Calfskin' again, and declared they weren't going to send 'bonedust' to Washington. They thought Stewart could get it if he was willing to fight, but it looked too much like work. I don't know as it would have done any good, though," the Vermonter remarked thoughtfully, "for when it came to the elections for the Legislature Page had every one of his men right there and walked off with every election contest, even in Middlebury, Stewart's own town. They say, too, that this Summer, while we were all fussing and stewing about the elections, Page was up in his country place, cool and comfortable, inviting his intimate friends to visit him in Washington this Winter. That wasn't a bluff, either, and I guess he had had the whole thing planned out since he was Governor, way back in 1890."

Such a picture is unquestionably true of one of the shrewdest business men Vermont ever produced. Page began sorting calfskins at the age of 12, has since branched into lumber, real estate, and banking, and in recognition of his keen grasp in these matters was appointed State Inspector of Finance under two administrations. Although the tannery business brought down upon him his unwelcome nickname, Mr. Page never ceased to flood the State with advertisements encouraging the youth of Vermont to follow his example and make a few dollars by collecting calfskins for Carroll S. Page, Hyde Park.

The election of "Calfskin Page" to the Senate could not be called the result of popular enthusiasm. "Vermont has always been proud of two things," said the Vermont visitor, "our war record back in '65 and the men we've sent to Washington. Collamer and Foote, back in Lincoln's time, with Edmunds and Morrill and Proctor since, gives us a mighty fine list. So we can't help feeling that, though sorting calfskins is all right in its way, it isn't quite the proper training for statesmen in their class," was the Vermonter's final verdict on the recent election.

Hyde Park, the seat of the Page millions is a village of less than 500 inhabitants, situated under the shadow of Mount Mansfield. There is a railroad which occasionally lets trains go there. It is conceded to be the worst railroad in Vermont, which is saying much. While its schedule time permits a train to cover forty miles in two hours, this seldom happens.

"Why," exclaimed the visitor, "along that road they unhitch the engines from the passenger trains to switch the freight and leave you sitting there on the track watching the cows and counting daisies. When I think of that railroad to Hyde Park, I get real respect for Carroll S. Page. Any man who could hustle his hides and tallow fast enough over that road to make a million dollars can go to the United States Senate or anywhere else he pleases, calfskins and all."

Reception to Hearst Candidates To-day

A reception is to be tendered by the German-American element in the Independence League to-day to the candidates on the League ticket, including Thomas L. Hisgen, John Temple Graves, and Clarence J. Shearn. The reception will take place at the Hotel Astor at 3 o'clock.