

business. He is the worst boy I have to get his feet in his hat. What would you say, John, if you'd sent a boy to a neighbor's to borrow a quarter, or somethin' you wanted, with instructions plain, if he couldn't get it there to go to the next neighbor; and the boy turns highwayman, holds the first one up with a double-barrelled shotgun and takes it from him, without goin' to the second neighbor at all? Well, that's Theodore in the Panama business. If my Congress wasn't a Congress of commercial rabbits, they'd spank him good. Why, I had hopes of Theodore. I thought all New Yorkers were born diplomatic—took it natural like milk and measles; and here he breaks the law of nations with a football rush and a slide. It's all well enough on a college campus—you own the ground there; but it's sometimes a serious business in international law and means war.

Why, I mind the time of my civil war in '63; you, John, and Louis Napoleon had recognized the South as belligerents, and wanted bad to recognize 'em as the Southern Confederacy, but didn't quite dare. It was June, '63, or July, and Roebuck, who'd been over talking to Napoleon 3d, made a howling speech in the British parliament fer recognizing the independence of the South.

"Are they afraid of war?" says Roebuck, half quotin' Napoleon. "War with whom? With the Northern States of America? Why in ten days, sir, we should sweep from the sea every ship. Why the Warrior would destroy the whole fleet! Their armies are melting away. Their invasion is rolled back. Washington is in danger; and the only fear which we ought to have is lest independence is declared without us!" That's the way Roebuck gave it to 'em; and, John, I was pretty close run them days. But just at the time when they were a talkin' so peart an so sassy, some fellow started the yarn that France had actually done it; that Louie Napoleon had recognized the South fer a slice off Texas. Louie Nap. had just conquered Mexico and it looked likely. It was the same thing Teddy has done with Colombia. An' what happened then? Why everybody commenced a huntin' cover. Nobody really wanted the job of cleanin' me out in ten days. The French were scared to death in a minute. "The bourse became very much excited and a fall of the public funds occurred greater than had been known in so brief a space of time for several years."\* My man Dayton at Paris—

\*From diplomatic correspondence, Part 2, 1863, department of state, page 769.

he was a good one, too—he put on his hat and hunted up Napoleon's best man, Drouyn de l'Huys.

"Drouyn," says he, "what's all this?"

"It's groundless; it's all a lie," says l'Huys; "we don't want any war."

"Neither do we," says Dayton. And that ended it. It's all in the dispatches of the time, but it shows what happened them days when you just talked about stealin' canal land from a helpless fellow.

Of course, I don't keer much fer pinchin' Colombia. I ain't a doin' right these days, nohow, and I've pretty near lost all shame; but I hate to have the name fer breakin' treaties and fer general dishonesty that I deserve, an' I hate like time a precedent that I'll have to pay for some day. "Twon't be Colombia that'll raise the pint on me, but some chap with a big navy.

Now Theodore has gone and done this thumb-fingered thing. Instead of being neutral, he has taken sides fer a slice of territory, an' my funds 'll have to fall some time, I'm afeered, to pay fer it.

Cowboys don't make very good Presidents, John. They're too sudden.

UNCLE SAM.

#### THE NAVAJO INDIANS AS LABORERS.

In view of the customary slurs against the character of our American Indians, especially as regards industry, trustworthiness and similar virtues, it is interesting to read the following statement of experience, written for The Public by a friend who lives in Colorado.

It is some time since I received your request for a short paragraph on the Navajo Indians as laborers. At that time I had only our own experience to speak from. Since then I have tried to learn more.

The four men who worked for us through the haying, did their work as well as white men do the same work; but they could not take hold of so great a variety of things to do.

They were as alert, steady and thorough as other hired men. They were cleanly in person, and decorous in manner, when at table or about the house; and they showed a very keen and intelligent interest in pictures, drawings or designs of any kind. They were delighted to draw with colored chalk upon the blackboard figures of Indians dancing, animals, or designs for blankets. They carefully examined all articles about the house, and wanted to know how and where they were made, and what the price was. They were good judges of silverware,

and several of them were very fair silversmiths and jewelers.

Some people do not like Indians, because they peek into everything about the house; and some say they steal, but we never lost anything by them, though they manifest great curiosity.

They live in their own camp, with their wives, but take their meals where they work.

The women spend their time in washing and dyeing wool, spinning and weaving blankets.

They had many visitors of their own tribe, who were passing to and from the reservation in search of work. These were fed upon the earnings of those who worked.

They seem a lively and sociable people, full of fun, and ready to laugh and sing.

Their chief fault is gambling. After working all day in the fields they would be up over half the night playing cards; and we would notice the next day that many of their personal belongings had changed hands. They sometimes drink whisky to excess.

From 30 to 40 Navajos are working at the Durango smelter, where they have taken the places of strikers. They are kept on the premises, under guard to prevent communication with strikers, receiving from \$1.50 to \$2.50 per day or night, and board. They have also found work shoveling dirt in the construction of railroads and ditches.

I am sorry to say that most white men look upon them as "niggers," and treat them accordingly. But they have never been enslaved, and are independent and self-respecting.

They have no prejudice against work, such as the Ute Indians have. They do not think it a disgrace to work. But white laborers do not look upon them with favor, and often object to sitting at table with them, or working in the field with them.

There are many thousands of them upon their reservation, where often by failure of water for irrigation they are reduced to want, and have to seek work amongst the white people to get food for their families. They raise corn, squash, melons and tomatoes upon their reservation, and keep sheep and ponies. Within a few years they have lost many hundreds of lives by starvation, owing to failure of the water supply.

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"Well, come to think of it," said the rabbit, "I guess a rabbit trap is like the stock market—it won't hurt you if you keep out of it."—Puck.