

which are at work. They do not need a guardian to protect them from the misuse of the knowledge which they may acquire, and they ought not to be required to employ detectives to find out what the officials are doing after the election. Mr. Taft knows that a great many matters come before executives and legislators where it is difficult, if not impossible, for the average voter to investigate the facts. The people have a right to know in advance of election whether those with special interests to look after are contributing sums larger than public spirit, patriotic motives and general interest would explain. If, for instance, a candidate for governor is likely to have to pass upon railroad legislation, the people have a right to know whether men largely interested in preventing railroad legislation have contributed liberally to his campaign fund. If a man aspires to an office in which, if elected, he will have to pass upon anti-trust laws, it is only right that the public should know to what extent the trust magnates are financing his campaign. And so if a man is a candidate for office which brings him into official connection with tariff legislation it is proper for the public to know whether he will be so obliged to the beneficiaries of a high tariff as to be embarrassed when he attempts to protect the consumer.

Mr. Taft misrepresents what I have said in regard to Mr. Hughes. I called attention to some of the contributions that were made to Mr. Hughes' fund, and in view of the fact that Mr. Hughes attacks the remedies without advancing any remedies of his own, and in view of the further fact that this testimony was quoted by the president against me I asked the president whether he thought that these contributions by trust magnates would lessen or increase the weight of Mr. Hughes' testimony on the subject of trusts. It will not do for Mr. Taft to put Mr. Hughes upon a pedestal and claim for him immunity from criticism. It is not necessary for me to pass judgment upon Mr. Hughes or upon what he has done in order to pass judgment upon the question under discussion. He is only human and was one of "the allies" before the Chicago convention. We assume that public officials will be honest, and yet we require bonds of those who handle money, no matter of what character they may be. The law will not permit a judge, a juror, or an official to accept a gift, if the gift is from one who has an interest in the official action of the official, and in forbidding this the law does not ask as to the character of the official. The law is based upon human nature and human experience, and it is not necessary to furnish specific proof of special weakness in the man who receives the money, or to prove that his decision was in any manner affected by the gift. No scales have yet been invented for the accurate weighing of the reasons which enter into an official's decision.

It is only fair, however, to assume that in using Mr. Hughes' case as an argument, Mr. Taft means to say that he will not object to contributions from trust magnates, railroad magnates and tariff beneficiaries, no matter how much those contributions may be, even though he may; if elected, be compelled to pass upon questions where their demands may be on the one side and the interests of the general public on the other. He must not complain if he finds that many republicans of the rank and file will differ from him on this subject, for the average man will judge aspirants for office by the rules applied to average men. Common sense and the universal judgment are against Mr. Taft's position, and against the arguments which he advances in its support.

After giving out the above statement, Mr. Bryan referred to Mr. Taft's statement that Thomas F. Ryan contributed \$15,000 to the Nebraska campaign fund in 1904, and said: "This has been denied, but I assume that he has taken the statements of some of his republican advisers without taking time to verify those statements. Mr. Ryan did not contribute any money to the Nebraska campaign fund. The national committee contributed \$15,000 in 1904, and the members of the national committee who had charge of the fund, have stated that the contribution was made from the general fund of the committee, and was not contributed to the committee by anyone for the purpose of being sent to Nebraska."

WALTER WELLMAN'S STATEMENT

Walter Wellman, writing in the Chicago Record-Herald (rep.) of October 29, 1908, said: "During the past week or ten days money has been pouring in upon the republican national committee in a golden stream. The con-

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.:

Gentlemen—Enclosed find \$1.00 for which please send The Commoner to the following five new subscribers under your special campaign offer—FIVE FOR \$1.00—from now until the close of the presidential campaign.

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tributions are coming from heads of large business concerns, from the big banks, from the chiefs of corporations, from men of wealth and substance. The explanation is fright. Serenity has given place to panic. And the men of wealth have reached for their check books. Fear of Taft's defeat is no longer felt by the men who are managing the campaign. If extraordinary means should be necessary to win they are prepared to employ them. In other words, they will use money to bring victory. The practical politicians here admit that the "floater" class of which we hear so much in Indiana, is also known in this state. In this city alone, it is said, there are 40,000 votes that can be turned one way or the other with money. Up the state, sorry to relate, there are said to be 60,000 or 70,000. Not all of them need to be bought. Some of them can be 'hired' to bring in the voters on election day, in the Indiana style. The democrats, of course, are making ready to raise a dreadful howl about a purchased election. But those of us who know the game know they would do the same thing if they had the money to do it with."

A SUGAR-COATED PILL

The democratic house of representatives, it will be recalled, passed a bill placing sugar on the free list. It was estimated this would reduce the price approximately 2 cents a pound. Another bill was passed placing a slight tax on incomes in excess of \$5,000. This would have meant, in a few words, a transfer of a small portion of the burden of taxation from the breakfast table to wealth. The corporation-controlled senate has objected to this program, and both bills died with the session.

The democratic program of substituting a tax on wealth for the tax on sugar was class legislation, the standpatters and protectionists cried out in chorus. They were never heard to complain, however, of the existing class legislation which permits the burden of federal taxation to fall entirely upon the shoulders of the masses, taxing the average man, woman and child on every stitch of clothing they wear and everything else they must have in order to live, while permitting fortunes to go untaxed.

The masses of the people produce the wealth, and by legislative advantage few get possession of it, and now those few object, and have pre-

vented, the transfer to wealth of even the small amount of taxation derived from the tariff on sugar, which is but one of more than 500 things on which the consumers pay a tax. They would prefer that the government continue to tax sugar instead of wealth, because they eat no more sugar than the section hand on the railroad or the worker in the mill, and therefore under the present system of protection are compelled to pay no greater tax to the federal government than does the poorest man.

If a fiscal system which requires a millionaire to pay no more tax to the national government than the section hand or mill-worker is fair and just, there is no need of reform; but if such a system is unjust, the free sugar bills were moves in the right direction.

The average citizen of this country eats 80 pounds of sugar a year. A saving of 2 cents a pound would have meant \$1.60 a person a year, or a saving of \$8 to a family of five.

Because of the obstructionists in the senate, however, this saving is not to be. The people must go on paying an artificial price for sugar so that the poor old sugar trust shall not want for dividends on its watered stock, while the millionaires need not bother about paying a single penny of taxation on their wealth for the support of the government. Perhaps some day it will be different. But it will not be until .. democratic senate and president are elected to co-operate with a house of representatives that is really trying to represent the will of the people of this country.—San Francisco Star.

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"Total incapacity"—that is the fault the national progressives find with the democratic party is it? Well, that does sound a little harsh when one remembers how slow they have been in finding out the true inwardness of the republican party.