

# Commissioner Garfield's Proposal

Federal licenses for corporations doing interstate business is the plan recommended by Secretary Garfield, of the department of commerce, as the best available method for curing existing evils. The avidity with which Thomas W. Lawson's articles are devoured by the public shows how deep-seated is the popular distrust of the intentions, methods and honesty of those captains of finance who have amassed great fortunes. Secretary Garfield thinks that the opportunity for such operations in Wall street, or before the courts, or in various legislatures, as described by Mr. Lawson, is to be found in the chaotic conditions of our corporation laws as they are today.

The "state" system of chartering corporations makes possible the practice of great corporations of moving their legal residence from state to state for special privileges, paying therefor the annual taxes levied by the state which issues the charter. This has resulted in the anomalous state of the corporation law which represents the needs of special interests and not the requirements for the guidance and protection of a whole people. These incoherent and divergent principles might all be harmonized, in Secretary Garfield's opinion, if the United States government would require every corporation engaged in interstate commerce to take out a federal license. This could be done under the clause in the constitution which directly empowers congress with the right of regulating commerce between the states. So far the exercise of this right has been largely negative. True, the custom of the interstate commerce commission was an affirmative and far-reaching action. Its power, however, has been much weakened by restrictive legislation and adverse judicial constructions. There is no doubt in Secretary Garfield's mind as to the efficiency of the federal license system, if carried out along the recommended lines.

The first fruits of such a plan would be the publicity given and information acquired by means of which some systematic legislation could be prepared for the governing of corporations engaged in interstate commerce. Publicity of proper facts would help the creation of an enlightened public opinion that would go far towards adjusting many difficulties that exist at present.

After discussing the various methods of accomplishing this end, Secretary Garfield advises a federal license, as such a course would still leave the chartering, taxing and local control of the corporations in the hands of the states.

Information necessary to the department in charge of this work can be obtained by making the granting of the proposed license dependent on the compliance of the corporations with the requirements in this respect. It is suggested that all private information received through such sources be kept scrupulously secret, in order that the legitimate workings, organization or advantages of one corporation may not become the property of another. Other recommendations of a similar nature are made for the protection of those taking out a federal license.

In summing up the proposed policy

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of this department, Secretary Garfield says:

"In brief, the policy of the bureau in the accomplishment of the purposes of its creation is to co-operate with, not antagonize, the business world; the immediate object of its inquiries is the suggestion of constructive legislation, not the institution of criminal prosecution. Its purposes, through exhaustive investigations of law and fact, to secure conservative action and to avoid ill-considered attack upon corporations charged with unfair or dishonest practices. Legitimate business—law-respecting persons and corporations—have nothing to fear from the proposed exercise of this great governmental power of inquiry."

Secretary Garfield especially emphasizes his desire to prevent any increased centralization of power at Washington in the matter of control of private and public corporations. In its essential characteristics the plan embodies the proposals for the regulating corporations which Mr. W. J. Bryan made some time ago. It is likely, therefore, that it will have a good deal of strength from the democratic side of the house.—Richmond Times-Dispatch.

### A New Deal In Politics

There is going to be some extremely interesting politics in this country in the next four years. Each wing of the democratic party has had its turn now, and each has proved that it can not succeed without the other. In 1896 and 1900 the radicals tried to win without the conservatives, and failed. In 1904 the conservatives have failed to win without the radicals. What next?

American political history has shown that when a dominant party has destroyed all effective organized opposition there is likely to be a general shuffle and a new deal. So it was after 1820, when Monroe's almost unanimous second election was followed by the break-up of the too-successful Jeffersonian party and a contest among four republican candidates at the next election. It was so after 1852, when Pierce's overpowering triumph led to the disappearance of the whigs and the creation of the new republican party. The Greeley rout of 1872 brought a revulsion of feeling that gave new life to the paralyzed democracy.

Today the signs of political readjustment are in the air. They are not confined to any one party—they cover the whole field of politics. Bryan and Cleveland were not more incongruous as members of the same party in 1892 than LaFollette and Spooner are in 1904. There is a great body of republicans who really belong on the democratic side, and a smaller, but still large, number of democrats who ought to be republicans. Party names no longer correspond to real things. An English visitor who was recently writing a profound essay on American politics for one of his home reviews turned helplessly to an American friend and asked: "What is the difference between the republican and democratic parties?" The informant could not tell, and the article had to go into print without that important information. There is good reason to believe that observers of the campaign of 1908 will not be confronted by any such difficulty.—Saturday Evening Post.

### No Old Angel

She is too young to understand much about the "life hereafter," but old enough to think she has grasped that problem thoroughly. For this reason she talks often and much about heaven. The other day she was ob-

served to be revolving something in her mind for quite a quarter of an hour, and just as her mother was about to ask her what she was thinking about, the little girl said:

"Mother, is your grandmother dead?"

"Yes," answered the now thoroughly perplexed mother.

"Well, is she in heaven?" then propounded the youthful seeker after knowledge.

"I hope so," said the mother.

"Well, I am afraid not," replied the little one, "for I never saw a picture of an old angel."

And with an expression on her little face that showed she had solved another knotty question, the child returned to her play.—Philadelphia Press.

### Comparative Statistics

Representative Gooch of Kentucky, according to the Philadelphia Public Ledger, says that several years ago a young lawyer was admitted to the bar in his state, and one of his first cases was where the right of property to a lot of hogs was involved. It was a case of replevin, and the blundering lawyer addressed the jury in this way:

"There were just twenty-four hogs in that drove, gentlemen of the jury—just twenty-four, gentlemen—exactly twice as many as there are in that jury box."

The case was decided against the young lawyer's client.

### Color and Temperament

Certain sounds awaken equivalent moods in a hearer, certain colors quell a given temper of mind, and certain odors have an unexpected associational value, inducing alien and unlooked-for trains of thought. Faintly we grasp that we live in subtle but strong relations to all the phenomena of nature. Consciously or unconsciously, wherever we look we are searching for the color particularly our own, or selecting from the incommensurable thud of the universe that sound which is in tune with our own mental make-up. But the colors we choose to keep about us, or instinctively note in our wanderings, disclose more definitely than any of the other choices of inborn temperament.

Color and sensibility are closely allied, and one inattentive to clashing combinations is likely to be also a little blunt to the finer moral and intellectual distinctions, a little impervious to the more delicate tastes and acuter pains.—Harper's Weekly.

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