

## MR. ROOSEVELT'S PLAIN TALK AT RALEIGH, N. C.

In a speech delivered at Raleigh, N. C., October 19, Mr. Roosevelt left no room for doubt as to his present day purpose with respect to the railway rate question. While making it plain that he does not believe in government ownership, Mr. Roosevelt made it equally plain that he favors such governmental control as will provide protection for the people.

In his Raleigh speech, and referring to the railroad question, Mr. Roosevelt said:

"It is out of the question for the government not to exercise a supervisory and regulatory right over the railroads; for it is vital to the well-being of the public that they should be managed in a spirit of fairness and justice toward all the public."

"The actual experience has shown that it is not possible to leave the railroads uncontrolled. Such a system, or rather lack of system, is fertile in abuses of every kind, and puts a premium upon unscrupulous conduct in railroad management."

"Experience has shown that the present laws are defective and need amendment."

"What we need is to have some administrative body with ample power to forbid combination that is hurtful to the public, and to prevent favoritism to one individual at the expense of another. In other words, we want an administrative body with the power to secure fair treatment as among all shippers who use the railroads—and all shippers have a right to use them. We must not leave the enforcement of such a law merely to the department of justice; it is out of the question for the law department of the government to do what should be purely administrative work. The de-

partment of justice is to stand behind and cooperate with the administrative body, but the administrative body itself must be given the power to do the work and then held to a strict accountability for the exercise of that power. The delays of the law are proverbial, and what we need in this matter is reasonable quickness of action."

"The abuses of which we have a genuine right to complain take many shapes. Rebates are not now often given openly. But they can be given just as effectively in covert form; and private cars, terminal tracks and the like must be brought under the control of the commission or administrative body, which is to exercise supervision by the government. But in my judgment the most important thing to do is to give to this administrative body power to make its findings effective, and this can be done only by giving it power, when complaint is made of a given rate as being unjust or unreasonable, if it finds the complaint proper, then itself to fix a maximum rate which it regards as just and reasonable, this rate to go into effect practically at once, and to stay in effect, unless reversed by the courts."

Mr. Roosevelt expressed the hope that congress would provide this power, and he added that he hoped that congress would confer upon the interstate commerce commission the authority to examine into the books and affairs of all railroads whenever there should be "in the minds of the commission any suspicion that a certain railroad is in any shape or way giving rebates or behaving improperly."

He said he wanted the commission to have this power as a matter of right, not as a matter of favor, in order that it might make a full and exhaustive investigation of railroad affairs, so

that any violation or evasion of the law may be detected.

Some who are really opposed to effective railroad legislation have, while pretending to favor a reform, suggested the creation of a special court whose duty it would be to deal with all such complaints; and these have urged, too, the desirability of holding the reformed rates in abeyance until final adjudication. But Mr. Roosevelt plainly says that he is opposed to the creation of a special federal court and that he is in favor of placing this power with the interstate commerce commission, so that the people may hold to the strictest accountability their agents charged with the performance of this important duty. He says that when the commission has fixed a maximum rate which it regards as just and reasonable, that rate should go in effect practically at once, and stay in effect unless revised by the courts.

This is the plainest talk which the president has made upon this subject, and he will, doubtless, in his message to congress make recommendations in line with his Raleigh speech.

Mr. Roosevelt has faithfully described the lines of battle. Those who favor effective railroad legislation will approve Mr. Roosevelt's plan in this respect. But he will not win the victory easily. He will be required to wage desperate battle with the representatives of special interests, and conspicuous among his foes will be some of the most distinguished leaders of his own party. Every American citizen, regardless of political prejudice, who believes that government should be administered for the greatest good to the greatest number, owes it to his country to give to the president in this great contest every possible help and encouragement.

## AN INSIDE VIEW OF SOME PRETENTIOUS MEN

When but a very little boy I had a little drum,

And oft I wondered to myself from whence such music come,

"Methinks," says I, "there surely is some wondrous works inside."

And so I got my hammer out and in that drum I pried.

Alas! I only ruined the drum and won a load of woe—

Now, honestly, my friends, have you not often found it so?

You see a man who poses great and struts the streets around.

But when you get a closer view you find him empty sound.

I had a little dolly once—'twas early childhood's day—

And with that little dolly I loved oft to sit and play.

"Methinks," said I, "this doll's insides some wondrous things contain."

I opened it—Alas! I found sawdust for heart and brain.

A hollow mockery it was—my heart was grieved and sore,

But since that time the sawdust side has shown up more and more.

I've seen some men the world called great until an inside view

Showed only sawdust. Hasn't it, good friends, occurred to you?

I think 'twas eighteen ninety-six some captains of finance

Stood up before the public gaze and never lost a chance

To talk about the honor of our nation strong and great

And say upon their shoulders broad they bore the country's fate.

They posed as saviours of the state and with glib pen and tongue

On "honesty" and such like words a thousand changes rung.

But since that time we've looked inside and found nought else but craft--

They were not filled with honesty, but with sawdust of graft.

My drum gave forth a noisy sound—but it was empty quite.

My doll was plump, and pretty, too—'twas sawdust met my sight.

I heard the Chauncey M. Depews, McCurdys and McCalls

Stand forth to shout their honesty upon the outer walls.

And for a time I really thought they were the nation's pride—

Alas! I found but empty sound and raw sawdust inside.

And human drums of hollow sound, and sawdust dollies, too,

Are being opened day by day—and we don't like the view.

—THE MISANTHROPE.

## TO COMMONER READERS IN THE BUCKEYE STATE

One frequently hears during a campaign the statement "My ballot won't have any bearing on the result, and there is no use in my going to the polls." Men who habitually make this statement forget that they do not stand alone. Public interests have suffered greatly in the past by the stay-at-home vote. One ballot by itself does not greatly count, and yet in the aggregate these stay-at-home ballots would in many cases have changed results. And there have been many instances where even a single ballot might have turned the scale. The St. Louis Republic says that at a recent municipal election in St. Louis one of the nominees for the city council was elected by a plurality of three votes, out of a total of about 98,000, and these three votes definitely decided the majority of the superior branch of the municipal assembly. These three votes caused a majority of one in the city council; by such a small majority putting the council in sympathy with the mayor and his administration. These three votes practically determined the general working policy of the council.

Commenting upon this fact the Republic says:

At some time in the nation's history one vote might determine the government's policy or the country's destiny. The small plurality of three votes out of 98,000, impresses the value of one ballot and accentuates the duty of patriotism upon every occasion. Every ballot is equal. Every ballot is a unit, which, whether applied or not applied, has some bearing on results.

At this moment these observations are important to the Ohio voter, and particularly to the Ohio democrat who, having lost hope, may imagine that it is a waste of time for a patriotic Ohioan to cast his vote against the reign of bossism that has so long dominated the Buckeye state. There have been so many instances when one vote would have changed results that no voter can by remaining at home assume the great responsibility of permitting evil influences to prevail.

But it happens that in Ohio all well informed men agree that the one thing necessary to elect John M. Pattison governor is to obtain a full

democratic vote on November 7. There have been so many desertions from the Cox ticket on the part of republicans who have grown weary of boss rule that the only hope republican leaders have of defeating Mr. Pattison is that a large number of democrats may remain at home, thus offsetting the considerable number of republicans who will cast their votes for the democratic nominee. The democratic committee understands the situation thoroughly, and is bending every energy in the effort to bring the full democratic vote to the polls. This desirable result cannot be accomplished by circular letters nor by newspaper appeals. It can be accomplished, however, if every democrat who is impressed with the opportunity at hand will urge upon his careless neighbor the importance of going to the polls.

It is to be hoped that every Commoner reader in Ohio will constitute himself a committee of one to see to it that every one of his neighbors votes on November 7. If every Commoner reader will pass the word along the line, there are many reasons for believing that John M. Pattison will be elected governor of Ohio, and that the rule of Boss Cox will be terminated.