

WHERE ARE THE PHRASE MAKERS?

During political campaigns clever phrases have been used to such advantage that we have been told by some eminent politicians that in every national campaign the victory has been won by some concise phrase. For instance, in 1896 we became quite familiar with such phrases as "the maintenance of public integrity," or "the preservation of national honor," or "honest money," or "no fifty-cent dollars," or "a dollar good the world over."

At the beginning of the campaign of 1900 it was decreed by the skillful men in charge of the republican party that two of these phrases were sufficient, and so during that contest we became very familiar with the phrases, "Four years more of the full dinner pail," and "let well enough alone."

The phrase makers in the republican party do not appear to be quite so active just now as they were during the campaigns of 1896 and 1900. It is difficult to understand why this is so, because in recent disclosures there is so much good material. There are among the disclosures before the insurance committee at New York, and in the developments consequent upon President Roosevelt's active movement in behalf of a popular reform so many things that provide material for the phrase maker that one is compelled to wonder why he is not doing busi-

ness at the old stand. To be sure, there would be some difference between the phrases of 1905 and the phrases of 1896 or of 1900.

Admitting, as we are bound to do, that the phrase makers of 1896 and of 1900 were actuated by patriotic and intelligent motives, then we may take it for granted that if they were today engaged in their old-time task the results of their labors would be somewhat as follows:

Start the printing presses—the public can be induced to buy the stocks.

A sucker is born every minute and suckers were born to be worked.

Open the mills, the trusts will take care of themselves.

The stomach is a bigger target than the head—keep on talking about the full dinner pail.

One share of watered stock sold to the public beats two shares of watered stock in the promoter's safe.

Keep on relying on the cohesive power of public plunder.

What's the constitution that it should be allowed to prevent private gains at the expense of national traditions?

Vested rights confer the privilege of doing wrong.

It is cheaper to buy the laws you want than to give justice to the people.

A seat in the senate is better than two attorneys in court.

Give the Napoleons of finance their way and

they'll make money enough to buy all the chloride of lime necessary to preserve the national honor. Public office is a private graft.

Honest money is anything upon which a crook may lay his hands.

An honest dollar is the one you get.

The first duty of the defender of national honor is concern for his own pocketbook.

Anything goes if you are not found out.

No repudiation of the privileges of the few; the rights of the many are of no consequence.

Preserve the bold standard—that is the essential course for the highwayman.

A dollar must be good the world over so that the Depews, the Hydes, et al., may refresh themselves at European watering places after their exacting toil in behalf of the widows and orphans.

No "fifty-cent dollars," but plenty of no-cent service.

Four years more of speculation and graft.

Of course, it is always difficult to improve upon the work of phrase-makers especially employed for the exigencies of a presidential campaign; but these may perhaps provide a hint to the republican phrase-makers who, while conspicuous in 1896 and in 1900 seem to have recently lost all interest in their art. The products of their facile pens were, however, so interesting that we have the right to insist that they be brought from their retreats and urged to give to the American people the benefits of their high priced talents.

AMONG THE UNFAITHFUL STEWARDS

In its issue of November 23 the Chicago Inter-Ocean, republican, printed an editorial in which it arraigned Senator Platt of New York because he accepted policyholders' funds for use in the New York state campaign. After convicting Senator Platt of "corruption" the Inter Ocean in that same editorial said:

The case was not the same as were the gifts in aid of the national campaign against free silver and repudiation. The success of Mr. Bryan would have endangered the property of the policyholders. Those gifts met a real danger, although in an irregular and morally unjustifiable way.

W. B. Clarkson of Albert Lea, Minn., has written to the editor of the Inter-Ocean the following letter:

I have read with some interest a recent editorial in the Inter-Ocean entitled "The Unfaithful Stewards." You ask the pertinent question, "Now what legislation really hostile to the policyholders could be enacted?" and then you proceed to answer your question, and to my mind you make a most complete answer. Your reasoning is splendid, and is an unanswerable argument. A little further along in your editorial you say: "The case was not the same as with the gifts in aid of the national campaign against silver and repudiation. The success of Mr. Bryan would have endangered the property of the policy-

holders. Those gifts met a real danger, though in an irregular and morally unjustifiable way.

It would be of considerable interest to one of your readers, at least, if you would explain fully, by what process of reasoning you arrive at two conclusions that are so much opposed to each other? Do you assume that the policyholders in question are all republicans? Or to put it better, do you assume that all the policyholders are of the same mind in regard to the proper solution of the silver issue? Did it occur to you that Senator Platt and his kind could take the view, and that honestly too, that they had a perfect right to do the thinking for the policyholders, and that they were justified in putting money into the hands of one political party, and help elect its candidates to office in the state, and thereby shut off any hostile legislation? I repeat, could not Thomas C. Platt have determined his course in this regard by the same process of reasoning that you assume to speak for the policyholders in their supposed desires about the results of the national campaign of 1896?

If you choose to explain yourself in answer to this question, I should be pleased to be enlightened on the subject.

If any one has observed that the Inter-Ocean editor has replied to Mr. Clarkson, The Commoner

would be pleased to be informed on this point.

Bad as Platt's practices were, republican editors who are not prepared to condemn the acceptance by the republican national committee of funds stolen just as Platt's campaign funds were stolen, will do well to "let well enough alone." Thievery is thievery. When Platt said "the use of these contributions in the election puts the candidates under obligations not to attack the interests supporting them" he admitted the obligations he assumed for himself and his associates in accepting those contributions. At the same time he gave an accurate description of the expectations entertained by the men who contributed several hundred thousand dollars of stolen funds to the republican national committee.

Everyone knows that the men who contributed to Cortelyou were no more interested in national honor than were the men who contributed to Platt interested in the honor of the Empire state. All of these men contributed liberally to the republican national committee and to the republican state committee money stolen from the trust funds committed to their care; and as the Inter-Ocean says of the men responsible for the misappropriation in the New York state campaign affair, so it may be said of all the men concerned in the contributions to the republican national committee "for them there can be nothing but the condemnation given to the unfaithful steward."

ELECT THE POSTMASTER

The Washington correspondent for the Houston (Texas) Post says that many republican members of congress are indignant because of "the new plan of the president and the postmaster general to ignore congressional recommendations as to postmasterships." This correspondent adds: "So angry are some of the influential members of the majority that they are talking of introducing legislation providing for the election of postmasters in cities of more than 20,000 inhabitants."

Why not adopt this proposed reform, for it would, indeed, be a reform?

Why not elect postmasters not only in cities of more than 20,000 inhabitants, but in all towns?

Doubtless some republican congressmen are very angry at the president, but it is not likely that a republican congress will carry out the threat. It is not likely that a republican congress will willingly do anything to place any feature of the government more directly than it now is in the control of the people.

Why should a president be permitted to turn the postoffice department into a partisan machine and use thousands of postmasters as paid agents to advance his political fortunes? He should not. Why should a member of congress be per-

mitted to build up a personal organization composed of the postmasters recommended by him but paid by the government and use this organization to defeat other congressional aspirants in his own party? He should not. Why should a chief executive be permitted to fill the most frequented office in the community with a postmaster objectionable to the community and reward him for his services with the money paid in by the community? He should not. Why should the "Great Father at Washington," as the Indians call him, be permitted to electioneer among the colored voters of the north by appointing black postmasters in the south against the protest of the patrons of the office? He should not. And yet all these things are openly and notoriously done today. The election of postmasters by the people whom they are to serve will correct all these abuses. It is in harmony with democratic principles; it is consistent with the doctrine of local self-government. What objection can be raised to it? Can a president know the aspirants more intimately than the community and better judge of their qualifications? Is he more interested than the community in prompt, honest and efficient service? By leaving the appointment, the removal and rejection for cause in the hands of the president, by restricting appointment to a list furnished by the community, the rights and interests

of both the federal government and the various communities can be protected. Presidents and congressmen will then run on their own merits and not on the machines which they have built up; the public service will be improved and communities will be protected from the impositions that are now practiced upon them.

VERY "COMPLETE"

The Kansas City Journal, a republican paper, says that the decision of Judge Phillips in the United States court quashing the injunction proceedings instituted by the government against the Santa Fe for violating the federal law against rebates "is not only a complete victory for the railroads, but also for President Roosevelt and Attorney General Moody."

It is a "complete victory" for the railroads because they escaped punishment for their wrongdoing; and, in the opinion of the Journal, it is a "complete victory" for the president and his attorney general because Judge Phillips went a bit out of his way to relieve President Ripley, of the Santa Fe, and Paul Morton of any responsibility.

It seems, then, to be a "complete victory" for everybody except the people.