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The Man With the Muck-Rake

Perry Belmont of New York, in a letter addressed to John A. Mason, president of the Bronx Press club, says:

"Returning to Washington after a long absence, I have had great satisfaction in renewing agreeable relations with the correspondents of the great newspapers, some of whom I have known fifteen or twenty years. In many cases I have found the same men still here, actuated by the same principles, having the same code and by public men recognized in all the departments of the government as most important factors in our political system.

"Often from a mistaken sense of propriety they have refrained from discussing or but lightly have touched what they could and in some instances ought to have disclosed. Yet as a whole they have proved themselves fully alive to the responsibility of their relation to the newspapers, they represent and to the public, and they are not unmindful of their duties as citizens.

"The faults of any administration are thus at times and under such conditions rather minimized than emphasized, because it is the duty of party leaders of the opposition to point out failures and subjects for criticism. It is only recently, during the present administration, that the leaders of both parties, especially the senate, and the Washington correspondents have been in substantial accord.

"During his whole political career the president has been very skillful in and has greatly benefited by his relations with the press. Finding an unsatisfactory attitude on the part of conscientious correspondents in his controversy with the senate, he availed himself of a magazine writer.

"Some of them have gone too far and the reaction which was bound to follow has come. A just appreciation of the true character of the upper legislative branch has found expression in many quarters, and the

great ability and independence of the senate of the United States have made the deepest impression on the country.

"Recognizing the very evident drift of public opinion, he quickly, with his usual ability and agility, attempts to place himself in a new light as the defender of the senate.

"The president has always proceeded on the lines adopted by him in this emergency. At the outset brandishing the 'big stick' over the Santo Domingo treaty, the Panama question, the Philippine tariff and the statehood bill, but having found resistance and defeat he invited confidence with those to whom his ultimatum had previously been addressed. This identical course was pursued with respect to the railroad rate bill, and, as might have been expected, there are palpable indications that the difficulties and opposition encountered have brought about a complete change of front.

"President Lincoln said that all the people could not be fooled all the time. There are times when the optimism created by great prosperity, engineering short memories in regard to even the most recent and important executive and congressional acts, renders such an attitude partially and temporarily successful.

"Excessive criticism is to be condemned mainly because attention is often diverted from those who are really culpable to those who are unjustly assailed. But the cue now seems to have been given to assume a tone of indignation at the turning of the searchlight of criticism upon all those holding public positions. It finds expression in a reference to 'the man with the muck-rake,' who naturally is denounced by everyone. That reference recalls another character in 'Pilgrim's Progress,' Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, an attitude to be avoided by all intrusted with public office, whether of minor responsibility or the most exalted in the gift of the American people."

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A RETORT

"You are not in it with me," said the nightingale, with a superior air. "You can't touch a high note at all."

"No?" replied the bird of paradise; "why even when I'm dead and embalmed on a bonnet, I'll bet I'll come pretty near touching a 50 note, all right."—Philadelphia Ledger.

DIDN'T MIND THE MACHINES

"I hope," said the renter of room No. 1197, "that the rattle of the typewriters in my office doesn't annoy you."

"No, sir, it does not," responded the crusty capitalist, whose office was in No. 1199; "but their gabble does annoy me exceedingly."—Chicago Tribune.

SPEAKING IN ALL CANDOR

Miss Peachley—Mr. Spoonamore, have I ever given you good reason to think I preferred you to other young men and wanted to marry you?

Mr. Spoonamore—No, to tell the truth, you never have. I learn from the other fellows that you kiss them good night when they go away, same as you do me.—Chicago Tribune.

COULDN'T FOOL HIM

"I'd have you know sir," said the congressman from one of the tall-grass districts, "that I am walking in the footsteps of George Washington."

"I see you are," rejoined the wise guy, "but for some reason unknown to me you are headed the wrong way."—Columbus Dispatch.

UNEXPECTED RESULT

The Clerk—Sir, I would like to have an increase in salary. Billings is getting \$5 a week more than me and he doesn't do any more work.

The Boss—Much obliged to you for calling my attention to the matter. I'll cut Billings' salary \$5 a week at once.—Chicago News.

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