

James Gayley, that if the government does not take at least 15,000 tons of armor plate per annum the works—Carnegie company—would be forced to shut down, thereby throwing thousands out of employment, and leaving to the tender mercies of the Midvale company the further production of armor plate. This last threat becomes amusing when we remember it was the Midvale company that forced the Carnegie and its associate trust, the Bethlehem company, to lower their prices on armor plate. Three times the Midvale company underbid the Carnegie company but the latter's influence at court—navy board—had always obtained the lion's share of the government contracts until recently. When the last contracts for armor plate were bid on, although the Carnegie company had cut their former prices considerably, the Midvale company got the contract, but they were compelled to divide with the Carnegie company. In the face of such facts the threat by the Carnegie company to shut down their plant unless the government would take at least 15,000 tons of plate annually is, to say the least, a cause for laughter. When they first built their works they had not the assurance that half of the above quantity of plate would be taken by the government, but, nevertheless, the plant was built, and the builders—the steel trust—have been amply repaid. The promoters of this and associate interests have in a masterly way, understood the art of creating an anxiety for the "safety of our helpless colonies," the "defenseless condition of our coasts," etc., etc., that we have built ship after ship, are still building battleships, to such an extent that we have more ships than we can find men for. We shall next winter, probably, hear the same old song, varied by the cry that we must own (have) a well arranged, up-to-date plant for the manufacture of ship armor, in order to be ready for emergencies when war comes, and the poor steel trust, swollen with its millions of profits, will demand the building of more ships, or the works will be forced to close and throw thousands of men out of employment—and all these men have votes. In spite of this, if nothing be done—or if the government dare to buy from the Midvale company then woe to the government left to the tender mercies of such a corporation. As the Midvale company compelled the Carnegie company to lower its prices, the graft the government will be forced to pay the Midvale company can not be worse than the enormous sums that Carnegie has already bled this government."

Washington Letter

Washington, June 17.—Perhaps the most dangerous thing that can befall a statesman or an administration is to be made ridiculous.

Washington, which naturally watches public events more closely than any other community, has for some days been laughing at the complete collapse of this administration's noisily announced attack upon E. H. Harriman. For weeks past—indeed ever since the publication of Mr. Roosevelt's earnest appeal to Mr. Harriman to come down and talk politics "as one practical man would to another"—the White House has been emanating threats of vengeance even as the United States fleet off Santiago hurled steel bolts at the enemy. The vital difference has been that the fleet destroyed the enemy. The administration has turned and fled.

Naturally the newspapers of the country believed that the presidential outcry was to be taken seriously, and so from Sandy Hook to the Golden Gate the artists in headlines have been telling what Roosevelt was going to do to Harriman. The railroad man was to be prosecuted criminally; he stood facing a penitentiary sentence; he would be driven from control of his roads. The cartoonists did their share in depicting a small and shrinking Harriman cowering under the shadow of the "big stick." Perhaps the only penalties which were not to be imposed upon him were those described in the Gilbertian opera, "The Mikado," as "something humorous with boiling oil or melted lead."

Now after two long conferences of the whole cabinet it has been determined that Mr. Harriman shall not be touched. By way of letting the administration down easily, the news was given out that perhaps there might be some civil suits brought. But the real truth of the matter is that this administration will drop further action against Harriman, against the railroads and, except for some slight teasing litigation, any further attack upon the trusts.

This is notorious in Washington and is as safe a statement as prophecy ever can be.

The reason is obvious. It isn't because the president and the cabinet officers are going to their respective summer places, for work can be done in the summer as readily as at any other time. The present interest of the personally controlled administration is to get ready for the presidential election, and a party which has been in the habit of winning with the aid of an enormous campaign fund fears to further alienate the individuals or the corporations from which that fund is to be procured.

Another illustration of what a state can do by way of protecting its people against railroad aggression has just been finished by Texas. Some months ago the railroad commission of that state attempted to fix rates for accommodations on sleeping cars. To the resident outside of Texas the proposed rates would not be readily intelligible, as they were fixed with reference to the distance between certain towns. This fact however, is of general interest, namely that the commission demanded that the price of an upper berth should be less than that of a lower one. The usual charge which the Pullman company made of \$2.50 the commission sought to reduce to \$1.50. Of course the Pullman company went into the courts and obtained an injunction which is still pending. But in the meantime the attitude of the authorities has been so aggressive that now one of the most prominent railroads in the state has given notice that it is building its own sleeping cars, and will accede to the rates the commission is striving to fix. Of course there is no reason today why any railroad should be bound by the Pullman monopoly save for the fact that the railroad managers are heavy owners of the Pullman company stock. Nevertheless the lead taken by the state of Texas should be, and probably will be, followed by state railway commissions wherever the railroads don't own the commission.

Up in New York there is a man, formerly a governor of that state, more lately a senator of the United States, and until 1900 a possible candidate for the presidency on the democratic ticket. Mr. David B. Hill, if he remembers the things that were said about him when he suggested in a platform for the democratic party in 1902 that the coal lands of the nation should be given over to public ownership, must wonder how it is that Mr. Roosevelt, saying practically the same things today, receives cheers and commendation. Mr. Hill was denounced as a socialist. Mr. Roosevelt is applauded as a patriot. The antithesis is less unfair than it might be if Mr. Hill was still in politics, but as he is altogether out of active political action, it is reasonable to call attention to what he said, and was denounced for saying, and what the present president of the United States said and has been applauded, very properly, for saying. At Jamestown a few days ago Mr. Roosevelt said, among many other things, this:

"The mineral fuels of the eastern United States have already passed into the hands of large private owners and those of the west are rapidly following. This should not be, for such mineral resources belong in a peculiar degree to the whole people. Under private control there is much waste from short sighted methods of working and the complete utilization is often sacrificed for a greater immediate profit. * * * It is obvious that the mineral fuels should be conserved, not wasted, and that enough of them should remain in the hands of the government to protect the people against unjust or extortionate prices so far as that can still be done."

No president of the United States has said words of more importance to the public welfare than these. No candidate has done better in one speech to express his knowledge of the needs of the public, and his desire to meet those needs. He fell short of what former Senator Hill said in the platform that he wrote and which is here quoted:

"We advocate the national ownership and operation of the anthracite coal mines by the exercise of the right of eminent domain, with just compensation to owners. * * * Fuel, like water, being a public necessity, we advocate national ownership and operation of the mines as a solution of the problem which will relieve the country from the sufferings which follow differences between labor and capital in the anthracite mines. * * * It will relieve the consumers of coal, not only in this state, but throughout the whole country."

The difference between the points of view of the two men is that Mr. Roosevelt believes that only mineral or oil lands still owned by the nation should be held by the nation; Mr.

Hill suggested that the anthracite coal lands owned by individuals should be taken by the nation under the right of eminent domain and kept for the good of all the people.

Almost everybody will recall the fact that at that time the great anthracite coal strike was on.

The president had recognized its importance by creating a special commission to take evidence concerning the merits of each side, and Mr. Baer and other distinguished owners of railroads that carried coal to Tidewater had announced that they alone were entrusted by the kindness of a divine providence with the custody of the coal interests of the United States. New York, Washington and other eastern cities were compelled to take the soft coal of the west and destroy the health of their people and the appearance of their buildings by the smoke that resulted from it. It was at that time that Senator Hill demanded the plank for public ownership of the anthracite fields. He was denounced by every metropolitan newspaper. Today we find the same newspapers applauding Mr. Roosevelt for what is almost the same demand.

At the risk of seeming to harp too much on one subject I wish to again say a few words about the political conspiracy now being consummated to keep the 1,500,000 people of Oklahoma and the Indian Territory out of the United States. What is being done to effect this purpose, and to prevent the possible addition of a new democratic state to the column of that party is absolutely the most discreditable and disgraceful piece of political chicanery recorded in the history of this country.

Here is one illustration. Recently I met a certain Frank Frantz, governor of Oklahoma by appointment of Theodore Roosevelt. Frank Frantz was one of those Rough Riders who did not ride in battle, but were all, or many of them, ridden into public office by the aid of their former colonel. He was lieutenant under the famous Captain "Bucky" O'Neil, and upon the death of that officer succeeded to the captainship. After the war he went to Oklahoma and speedily became a politician. He got a \$2,500 postmastership, and when Mr. Roosevelt became president aspired higher. He was appointed by the president governor of the territory, not because he had any peculiar qualifications therefor, but because he was a Rough Rider and a trustworthy supporter of Roosevelt republicanism. The people of the territory had nothing to say about it. There were 800,000 people in Oklahoma when he was appointed, but one man put him in office. Naturally enough Governor Frantz doesn't attach much importance to voters or votes.

I wish to lay emphasis on what he said to me recently. I asked what was the political character of the convention which adopted this convention. "There were one hundred and twelve delegates," said he, "of whom one hundred were democrats."

"Supposing the constitution is approved by the voters and turned down by the president of the United States? I asked, "is it not probable that the next convention will be even more overwhelmingly democratic? Won't there be a feeling in the two territories that an unfair partisan advantage has been taken at Washington? And if another convention shall be constituted in the same way as this one, what will you do then?"

"We will appeal to Washington again."

In other words the governor of Oklahoma, appointed by the president, looks to Washington to save him, and his job, from the vote of the people of his territory. He was here accompanied by a number of the least creditable members of the republican party, to plead for a continuance of the conditions under which nearly 1,500,000 people in that growing southwestern section are disfranchised; are given absolutely no voice even in their own local affairs. They are governed as Porto Rico is governed. They are governed as England governs the people of India for the profit of a few favorites of the ruling class.

Governor Frantz was asked what objections he could urge to the constitution as adopted by delegates who were elected by the people of the territories instead of being appointed by a beneficent ruler 1,500 miles away.

He didn't like the proviso that corporations doing business in the state should become incorporated in the state. He thought the declaration for the initiative and referendum was entirely wrong, but he heartily approved the submission of the prohibition plank in the constitution to the people. In other words he shyed at the word "referendum" and yet he applauded the one immediate application of it.

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