

CURRENT TOPICS

UNDER THE headline "If Mr. Patten had Lived in Berlin," LaFollette's Magazine says: "We Americans, being the smartest people under the sun, do not care to adopt the institutions of the effete monarchies of Europe. Far from it. But it may be interesting to note that if Mr. Patten, who waited until the farmer had no wheat and then boosted the price through a skillfully worked corner, had lived in Berlin, he would now be explaining to the authorities instead of the reporters. Over there grain dealers are obliged to gain permission of the authorities before they can operate in futures, and when the 'longs' catch the 'shorts,' a la Patten, the victims may settle with the Patten of the occasion by paying him six per cent on the average price instead of going into convulsions and bankruptcy. It seems much more our way, however, to let the bulls make the bears dance, while the bakers raise the price of bread, and the mills shut down because Mr. Patten's wheat is worth more to speculate with than it is to grind, and is too rich for the plain people's blood. Odd people, those Germans, aren't they!"

AN ASSOCIATED Press dispatch from Washington, D. C., tells an interesting story concerning man's thoughtfulness for a faithful beast. The dispatch follows: "A faithful government servant has been recognized and rewarded by Ormsby McHarg, assistant secretary of commerce and labor. This servant is an old horse named Caleb, which for twenty-four years has devoted his energies to pulling a wagon belonging to the United States fish commission at Green Bay, Me. Last week, after a serious attack of boils, he showed his inability to serve the government any further by lying in his stall and refusing to be harnessed. The officials at Green Bay, knowing that the animal's day of usefulness was over, reported the fact to the bureau of commerce and labor and asked for a new horse, also expressing the intention of killing Caleb. This report fell under the eyes of Secretary McHarg, and he immediately issued an order that the faithful animal be placed in the pasture until he died a natural death. This is one of the few cases on record in which a horse has been placed on the government's pension rolls."

SENATOR GORE of Oklahoma, precipitated an unexpected debate in the senate when he declared that the scale of wages per ton of coal mined in the Pocahontas fields of West Virginia was less than the wages paid in the coal mines of Nova Scotia and England. The Washington correspondent for the New York Evening Post says that the republican senators were "rudely awakened" by Mr. Gore's attacks. The Evening Post correspondent added: "So keen and acute were the shafts of the blind senator that he soon had the 'standpatters' in the upper house reverting to the panic of 1893 for a defense. Senator Gore met them here on their own ground and for half an hour kept the republican debaters dodging. The vice president was compelled to rap the galleries to order on several occasions."

CONCERNING Senator Gore's attack upon the protective citadel the Evening Post's correspondent says: "At the conclusion of a radical 'standpat' speech by Senator Scott (Rep.) of West Virginia, Senator Gore said that, following the mandate of the American people, he was ready to join with the republicans in framing a tariff bill which should cover the difference in the cost of protection here and abroad, and at the same time allow a reasonable profit. He said the standard on which labor wages should be reckoned into the equation should be the labor cost, and not merely the wages. Arguing from this point, he inquired if it were true that the wages of the coal miners in the Pocahontas West Virginia region was 27 cents per ton. This brought Senators Elkins and Scott of West Virginia to the fore to assure the senator that he was wholly mistaken. They declared that the cost of coal per ton at the mouth of the West Virginia mines ranged from 85 cents to \$1 per

ton, including all incidental items of transportation and outside labor. Senator Gore then asked at what price this coal was selling at the mine mouth, and was informed at from \$1 to \$1.10. Senator Elkins said the operator usually counts upon a profit of from 12 to 15 cents per ton. He said this cost was double what it is in England and Canada, and three times that of Belgium and Germany. Senator Elkins also called attention to the cost of transportation from the mines to the New England market, saying it cost the West Virginia operators about \$2.10 a ton to Boston, as against 60 to 70 cents for the Nova Scotia operators. Senator Gore replied that the cost of mining coal in Oklahoma was 72 cents per ton, and in West Virginia from 27 to 56 cents, according to figures furnished him by an expert. He wanted to know if the Payne bill duty of 67 cents a ton was not more than sufficient to meet this cost of labor and a reasonable profit, as provided in the republican platform."

SENATOR CLARK (Wyo.) said "government experts were the 'wildest guessers' extant. Senator Elkins said that the West Virginia miners were making from \$3 to \$4 a day each, and, with the help of an apprentice, could make \$6 a day, a rate of wage several times higher than that of Europe or elsewhere. To this assertion Senator Gore replied that he had heard such 'ordinary sophistry' before; that the real reason for the high wages in America had been revealed by Senator Elkins to be the superior intelligence, industry, and efficiency of the American workmen, and not the protective tariff. At this juncture Senator McCumber of North Dakota inquired if it were not true that more than half of the American coal miners were foreigners. Senator Gore retorted by declaring that he had always understood it to be the function of the republican party to ward off competition of the pauper labor of Europe with American labor. Senator McCumber then revived the panic of 1893, indicating that the superiority of American labor at that time had not saved it from the soup house. Senator Gore promptly replied that 'the republican party had always been adept at reversing the fundamentals of logic by making the effect precede the cause,' and that he welcomed a 'departure from the real of facts into the atmosphere of speculation.' He then reviewed the history of that era, with especial emphasis on the passage of the Wilson-Gorman tariff law more than a year after the panic of 1893 broke out, and he taunted the republicans with having prepared the plates for a bond issue during the Harrison administration. He said he was willing to have the panic of 1893 attributed to the democratic party if the republicans would shoulder the responsibility for the panics of 1873 and 1907."

SPEAKING IN the senate Senator Bailey of Texas denounced the principle of a protective tariff as unfair in taking money from one man to give to another. Referring to Senator Bailey's speech the Associated Press said: "After he had proceeded without interruption for over an hour several senators engaged in colloquies with him. Referring to Mr. Bailey's statement that the duties of the pending bill might be lowered 33 1-3 per cent, Mr. Aldrich asked whether he supposed the profits of American industries equaled that amount. Mr. Bailey replied that in case of the United States Steel corporation he believed they had and he cited the increased capitalization of that organization as an evidence of enormous profit. He insisted that such a lowering of the rate of duty would not seriously affect importations because he believed American manufacturers would be stimulated by the added foreign competition and would continue to supply the markets. Mr. Bailey discussed his amendment providing for an income tax, which was criticised by Mr. Aldrich as tending to reduce the protection that would be given American labor if it should result in a proportionate decrease of customs duties. Mr. Bailey favored restriction of immigration as a protection to American labor. Mr. Aldrich retorted that while Mr. Bailey was ready to keep the foreign laborer from our shores, he was not averse to allowing the produce of this

cheap labor to come in competition with the product of American workingmen. Speaking of the proposition to turn over to a tariff commission the consideration of the schedules of the tariff bill, Mr. Bailey declared he did not believe in 'turning over to political eunuchs' the consideration of such a great question. At some other time, he declared, he would speak on 'the folly of attempting to guarantee profit by any law and the injustice of taking from the millions who labor in any line of employment to bestow an advantage upon the few 'particular industries.' He would not, he said, at this time discuss free trade, which he declared was impossible in this country. 'I do not hesitate to say,' he added, 'that I believe in taxing wealth instead of consumption.' Mr. Bailey said if he could do so he would abolish all tariff duties and support the government by the same general system of taxation that exists in the different states, but the restrictions would make that policy impossible."

MESSRS. ALDRICH and Bailey became involved in a discussion concerning Mr. Aldrich's statement in the senate in 1894 that the income tax was supported by the socialist, populist and democratic parties. Mr. Bailey said that Mr. Taft now favored an income tax and asked Mr. Aldrich if he considered the president a socialist, populist or democrat. Mr. Aldrich replied that his statement was true at the time it was made. Mr. Bailey declared that Mr. Aldrich had voted for substantially all large appropriation measures. He said that the Rhode Island's senator's recent stand in favor of economy occurred when the burden was about to be placed on the rich. "If this bill as he presented it," said Mr. Bailey, referring to the chairman of the finance committee, "coupled with an income tax will raise too much revenue, let's reduce the rates that we collect on the necessities of life." Referring to an "expatriated citizen," who he said owned \$10,000,000 of real estate in New York City, he said that the workingmen of this country were taxed to protect his property, while he went untaxed during the war with Spain. For more than eighty years, said Mr. Bailey, the action of congress and the decisions of courts had maintained the validity of an income tax law. Postponing the conclusion of his remarks until tomorrow, when he said he would give some attention to supreme court decisions on an income tax, Mr. Bailey said in conclusion: "I do not think that any citizen or senator is precluded from indulging in just and fair criticism of any question relating to any department of this government. The judgment of the supreme court governs me in any particular case and I submit without complaint to that judgment, but I do not subscribe to the doctrine that because the judges have spoken all other men must receive their speech in silence."

ERVING WINSLOW of the anti-imperialism league writes to the Boston Herald to say: "It is a mistake to suppose that the enactment of the proposed tariff revision law for the Philippine islands, urged upon congress by the president in his message, is acceptable to the Filipinos or to many of the true friends of the Filipinos, in spite of the president's recommendation and the statement by General Edwards that 'the proposed revision has the approval of the governor-general and the government he represents in the Philippine islands.' General Edwards' statement is true only if it be assumed that the 'government' which the governor general represents is the civil commission. It is in fact but a part of the legislature; the representative part, the assembly, protesting through their delegate against any such enactment. I quote the words of Senor Pablo Ocampo de Leon, the Philippine commissioner, spoken under the assembly's instructions in the house of representatives April 2: 'Furthermore, viewing the question under its political aspect, is not there a danger that the future independence of the Philippines would be hindered by the ties consequent upon the establishment of free trade? The trusts and other corporations that would establish themselves in the Philippines, encouraged by free trade, will oppose a formidable barrier against Filipino freedom. If we have elements