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Timely Quotations

Frank A. Perdue, Cumberland, Md.—I herewith send you two quotations, to be inserted in the "Timely Quotation" column of The Commoner:

"Among other admonitions, Washington left us, in his last communication to his country, an exhortation against the excesses of party spirit. A fire not to be quenched, he yet conjures us not to fan and feed the flame. Undoubtedly, gentlemen, it is the greatest danger of our system and of our time. Undoubtedly if that system should be overthrown, it will be the work of excessive party spirit, acting on the government, which is dangerous enough, or acting in the government, which is a thousand times more dangerous; for government then becomes nothing but organized party, and, in the strange vicissitudes of human affairs, it may come at last, perhaps, to exhibit the singular paradox of government itself being in opposition to its own powers, at war with the very elements of its own existence. Such cases are hopeless. As men may be protected against murder, but can not be guarded against suicide, so government may be shielded from the assaults of external foes, but nothing can save it when it chooses to lay violent hands on itself."

From Daniel Webster's Eulogy on Washington, delivered in Washington, February 22, 1832. "If ever this free people, if this government itself is ever utterly demoralized it will come from this incessant human wriggle and struggle for office by men who have their own selfish and partisan aims rather than the good of their country at heart."

This is a quotation from Abraham Lincoln. I am of the opinion that that singular paradox that Daniel Webster foresaw might occur has actually occurred; and that our national government is now little more than organized (republican party) party. That party has not

only acted on the government in a manner that is detrimental to the spirit of our free institutions; but it has been and is now acting in and through the government, (in an evident attempt to perpetuate itself, by means of perverted uses of governmental agencies, and by the corrupt use of the great sums of money it is enabled to collect, because of its community of interest with the great monopolistic concerns—which concerns owe their very existence to the vicious tariff laws enacted by it—and thereby securing a perpetual hold or lease upon the offices and emoluments thereof) in a manner that is clearly and absolutely in opposition to the powers of the government, at war with the very elements of its (the government's) existence.

The dominant element of republican "officialdom," that is, the leaders of that party, and those that the leaders are able to control, are demoralizing our government, because, as Lincoln has well said, they have their own selfish and partisan aims, rather than the good of their country, at heart.

Our country has indeed chosen to lay violent hands upon itself. But I do not think that it is a hopeless case. I rely upon the patriotism of the rank and file of all parties—even of the republican party—to overcome partisanism, selfishness and every other consideration, and rise up in their might and turn out in disgrace those faithless servants, that would be their masters. It is the glory of our form of government, that it retains the right and power to release the grip of the violent hands that it may, or may have by mistake or inadvertence chose (or have chosen) to lay on itself.

George H. Bell, Fowltown, Ga.—Your quotation column is a bright idea. Here is one from a print I found in an old attic. It is said, by some, to have been written before the advent of that type of human intelligence called "up to date:"

"For three things the earth is disquieted, and for four which it can not bear: For a federal judge when he reigneth and a public officer when he is filled with bribes. For a senate when she is married to the 'interests' and a secretary of treasury who is heir to a bank presidency."

Here is one from Byron: "The country is the traitress which thrusts forth her best and bravest from her. Tyranny is far the worst of treasons. Dost thou deem none rebels except subjects? The prince who neglects or violates his trust is more a traitor than the poor worm that turns."

Virginia H. Andrews, Estero, Fla.—Having seen in your estimable paper of January 28 a request for contributions of quotations "that may be serviceable just now to the American people," I was reminded of a sentiment recently observed in the editorial columns of the "American Eagle," published at Estero, Fla. I will enclose the paragraph referred to.

"Show me a land where the majority of its law-making body are bankers and financial magnates; where former corporation attorneys sit on the bench as justices of the supreme court, and whose judiciary is not elected by the people, and I will show you a country where no popular legislation is enacted; where gold is god, and whose national emblem is the dollar sign."

INCOME TAX AMENDMENT

The Maryland legislature has adopted a resolution, ratifying the income tax amendment. "Maryland, My Maryland" will therefore be sung more heartily than ever by the lovers of popular government. The New York Tribune gives the progress of the income tax amendment in this way:

"The amendment has now been definitely accepted by these six states—Alabama, South Carolina, Illinois, Oklahoma, Mississippi and Maryland. The Kentucky legislature of 1910 passed two ratification resolutions, both of which were supposed to be defective in form, and a third was under consideration when a sine die adjournment was taken. It has recently been announced, however, that Governor Wilson will forward the second resolution to Washington and let the secretary of state decide whether it is technically regular and valid.

"Only one state legislature—that of Virginia—has so far defeated a ratifying resolution. The Virginia house of delegates rejected the amendment, while the senate voted to approve it. Last year the lower branch of the Georgia legislature passed a ratifying resolution, but the upper branch postponed its consideration. The Connecticut legislature of 1909 also decided to defer action. Four state legislatures are now in session—those of Massachusetts, Rhode Island,

New York and New Jersey—none of which has acted upon the amendment. The legislature of Georgia will meet again in June and a special session of the Louisiana legislature is likely to be called soon. Vermont's legislature assembles in October, so that by the end of 1910 practically one-third of the states will have had an opportunity to pass on the amendment and its chances of approval will have been fairly tested.

"An affirmative vote by six—possibly by seven—states, with a negative vote by only one, indicates a substantial popular pressure behind the amendment. It has to overcome a formidable inertia, since it must carry both branches of the legislatures in three-fourths of the states, but it has in its favor the fact that each victory it gains is final, while each defeat may be repaired on subsequent trials.

CANNONISM REVEALED

What is the difference between the new committee, for which the entire republican membership is responsible, and the old committee, for which the speaker was directly responsible?

There is no difference but this: the new committee is twice as large as the old one.

There is absolutely no difference in its quality. It is as strongly standpat; as strongly pro-Cannon; as brazenly representative of "the system," as the committee against which the revolution was gained.

This is a self evident fact, which it is impossible to deny.

Dalzell of Pennsylvania, the speaker's right hand man, was a member of the old committee and is a member of the new one.

Smith of Iowa was a member of the old committee and is a member of the new one.

These two men represented the speaker's first choice, out of the entire house membership.

The four new members chosen by the republican caucus are a strip off the same bolt of cloth; each of them is a warm personal friend and an ardent political supporter of Cannon. Each is a tory; each represents the extreme of standpatism.

J. Sloat Fassett is a millionaire New York politician—"practical" to his finger tips. In last week's fight he made the bitterest speech that was made against the insurgents and insurgency.

George P. Lawrence is a graduate of the Lodge Massachusetts machine, and of the Massachusetts legislature of which he was once speaker.

Henry S. Boutell is a chief of the Illinois standpatters, and for years has been one of Cannon's most trusted lieutenants.

Sylvester C. Smith is a California standpatter. In what is this new committee better than the old? How is it less under the influence of "the system?" It would be interesting indeed if some kindly insurgent would tell.

And this new committee, be it borne in mind is a committee for which each insurgent in the house is as directly and personally responsible as is the speaker himself. It is a committee for which the entire republican membership is responsible.

And, since it differs in nothing but size from the old committee, it stands as living proof of the fact that there is no difference between Cannon and the republican membership of the house! It stands as living proof of the fact that Cannon, in naming the old committee, was a true representative and servant of his party, in congress!

Cannon can no longer be made a scapegoat. "Cannonism" can no longer be explained away as a usurpation of power by Cannon himself and a few of his cronies. "Cannonism" now stands revealed as the republican majority in the house of representatives!

More than that, Cannonism, as now constituted and in power, is a Cannonism in which every insurgent member who went into the caucus has acquiesced, and to which he gives his assent!

The insurgents in congress may be thanked, in any event, for having rendered a signal service to the country. They have conclusively proved that Cannonism is something more than a few individuals; they have proved that it is an inherent and dominant element in the republican party.—Editorial in Omaha World-Herald.

"Mr. Bryan must have visited Rome when he circled the earth in 1906. How in blazes did he manage the vatican and the Methodists?" inquires the Springfield Republican. By adopting the eminently sensible course, perhaps, of not trying to manage them at all.—Washington, D. C., Herald.