

OMITTED

President Taft omitted one paragraph from his Detroit speech, that is, from the speech delivered. He struck out the following: "I am glad to be able to add that if congress shall continue needed appropriations, every trust of any size that violates the statute, before the end of this administration in 1913, will be brought into court and acquiescent in a degree of disintegration by which competition between its parts shall be restored and preserved under the persuasive and restored and preserved under the persuasive and tining injunction."

Later when some inquiry concerning this omission was made Mr. Taft authorized the following statement: "The president's idea was to inform the public of his intention to duly enforce the Sherman law in the light of the supreme court's decision. It was not in his mind to create any fear of a wholesale prosecution of corporations and rather than leave an opening for such a misconception of the administration's plans or a misunderstanding of his words he decided to eliminate the paragraph altogether."

Mr. Taft need not worry. Wall street is not afraid of him. The special interests are not afraid of him. The stock market report printed in the New York Journal of Commerce (issue of July 28, 1908) put it as well for this time as for that time when, in referring to one of his public addresses it said: "The speech may sound somewhat unfavorable from the railroad point of view but Wall street believes that Secretary Taft's public bark does not necessarily portend a serious bite later."

There are other news reports incident to the presidential campaign of 1908 that are of particular interest at this time:

Writing from New York to his paper, the Chicago Record-Herald, prior to the Chicago convention, William E. Curtis said:

"There is a strong Taft movement in Wall street. You would be surprised to hear the enthusiastic indorsements that are given to the secretary of war by the men who are supposed to be violently opposed to the policies of the president." (Roosevelt.)

During the month of March, 1908, the Taft press bureau, located at Columbus, O., sent out, according to the Washington Herald, printed slips bearing these headlines: "Business Hope Lies on Taft." "Assert Taft is Best Candidate." "Big Wall Street House Calls on Financial Interests to Assist in Nomination." Following are extracts from the Taft circular: "Mr. Taft's long record is distinctly against any conclusion that he would continue Mr. Roosevelt's methods. He has displayed brains, ability, good judgment, and, above all, sanity, in the great and successful accomplishments of his career. We must not lose sight of the fact that there is a temperamental difference in the two men, Roosevelt and Taft. By nature and by training, as a lawyer and as a judge, Mr. Taft has always manifested a thoughtful attitude in his judgment, and a great deliberation and conservatism in his actions. Neither is it conceivable that a man of his force of character would be controlled, when in the full power of the presidency, by any outside personality."

In its issue of March 9, 1908, the Washington Herald printed an interview with General Kiefer, a member of congress, in which he said that he was for Taft and did not believe that if elected he would "too closely follow Roosevelt's ideas." It will be remembered that these reports greatly disturbed Mr. Taft and his managers and they took pains to say that the circular from the Taft headquarters had been issued by a subordinate at the Columbus office.

FEDERATION OF PRECINCT CLUBS

The last issue of The Commoner contained the constitution and by-laws of the Federation of Democratic Precinct clubs. The organization has been launched by a group of progressive democrats under the leadership of Senator Owen of Oklahoma, Senator Chamberlain of Oregon and Mr. George H. Shibley of Washington. The Commoner is glad to give the plan a hearty indorsement and to urge all progressive democrats to join such clubs. Senator Owen rightly states the issue; the first fight is to keep the party from being captured by Wall street. The predatory interests are always at work and only vigilance can protect the people from deception and betrayal. The precinct club is the unit—it is the forum of the rank and file. Let all lend a hand.



TO THE PRESIDENT

The following are Mr. Bryan's remarks proposing the health of the president on the occasion of Mr. Taft's visit to Lincoln:

"Lincoln is honored today by the presence of the highest official in the world. The president's position is greater than a king's. His authority is more vast than any civilized people would entrust to a hereditary ruler, and he holds the place not by accident of birth but by the suffrages of his countrymen. Though in campaigns he is the leader of a party, he is after election the chief executive of a nation, and his arm wields the strength of ninety millions of people. Lifted by voters to this position of supreme command, he becomes the most exalted of our public servants. It is fitting that we, a group of the sovereigns whom he serves, should pay our respects to him and to the office which he holds. I ask you to rise, fill your glasses with the beverage upon which the Almighty has set the seal of his approval and drink to the health of President Taft, and may God give him wisdom to discharge aright the onerous duties imposed upon him."



ADMIRAL SCHLEY

Admiral Winfield Scott Schley, the hero of Santiago bay, dropped dead in the streets of New York, October 2nd. Those who saw him stagger and who went to his support did not recognize the distinguished American who was then stricken with heart disease. His identity was quickly established and loving hands tenderly cared for his body.

Admiral Schley needs no encomiums. He served his country faithfully in every post to which he was assigned. As sailor and as citizen his life was distinguished by faithful, capable service and all those who love a real man stand uncovered at his bier.

THAT WINTER HOME

Mr. Bryan has been very much annoyed by the reports sent out from time to time in regard to his winter home on the Rio Grande. First he was called upon to deny the rumors that he intended to move to Texas. Now he is accused of deriving a large income from the land and of contemplating expensive improvements. The facts are that he does not cultivate any land there himself. His land is rented, part for cash and part on the shares. Returns for first year are not yet in. He is testing the land to see what it will produce and will build a modest winter home there three or four years hence if experiments prove satisfactory.

DAN V. STEPHENS

The democrats of the Third Nebraska congressional district have chosen Dan V. Stephens of Fremont as their candidate for congress to succeed the late James P. Latta.

Mr. Stephens is well known as a faithful exponent of democratic principles and he stands in the front rank of good citizens. He is a thorough organizer, a hard worker and he will make a winning campaign. More important than all, he will, after he is elected, be faithful to the promises he has made the people.

A CORRECTION

Mr. Bryan has received a newspaper clipping quoting him as saying that the socialists would sweep the country in 1916. It ought not to be necessary to correct so absurd a statement, but that no reader of The Commoner may be misled Mr. Bryan hereby denies that he ever said that the socialists would sweep the country in 1916 or at any other time.

WITHOUT HIS APPROVAL

The bill reinstating Attorney Thatcher (who was disbarred by the Ohio supreme court for criticizing a judge during a campaign for election) became a law without Governor Harmon's signature. It was one of several that he refused either to sign or veto.

"MR. TAFT'S FREE TRADE ORDER"

In the light of Mr. Taft's devoted adherence to the high protective tariff, it is interesting to recall the famous "Taft free trade order" made in the spring of 1905 in connection with purchases for the Panama canal.

Perhaps some have forgotten that in May, 1905, the Associated Press said that the executive committee of the Isthmian canal commission had decided to purchase in the markets of the world the material necessary for the building of the Panama canal. The press reports added: "This important decision was reached with some reluctance because it was appreciated by Secretary Taft and the executive committee that there would surely be a great outcry from two great interests in this country, the producers of material and the ship owners, if the purchases were not limited to the American products."

"But it was decided that the money consideration was so great that it could not be ignored, for it was held that in many cases fully fifty per cent more would be charged for the material needed in the canal construction than the same goods could be procured for in Europe."

Commenting upon this "free trade order" The Commoner printed this editorial:

The republican platform for 1904 said: "Protection which guards and develops our industries is a cardinal principle of the republican party. The measure of protection should always at least equal the difference in the cost of production at home and abroad." In his message to congress President Roosevelt went a step farther, saying that the measure of protection should be "more than" the difference in the cost of production at home and abroad. This "measure of protection" which the republican party has so freely given to the great interests that have regularly and liberally contributed to republican campaign funds has not been bestowed as a favor. It has been claimed that this "measure of protection" actually belongs to these people, and that to deprive them of it would not only be to deny them their rights, but would mean the taking of bread from the mouths of the laboring men. American consumers have often protested against this "measure of protection," but whenever it was proposed to give the consumer relief there was "a great outcry from the great interests of this country" and the republican party heeded.

But now we are told that Secretary Taft proposes to proceed in utter indifference to the boasted rights of the tariff barons; that he proposes to ignore the "great outcry" which we all know will be forthcoming.

And what is the republican secretary's explanation for the abandonment of the protective theory? "The money consideration is so great that it can not be ignored, for in many cases fully fifty per cent more would be charged for the material needed for the canal construction than the same goods could be procured for in Europe." That is the very argument that has been presented for years and for years by the consumers of this country who have protested against a high protective tariff. What moment is it that the money consideration in this instance is large? Enormous though it be it is by no means so heavy a burden as that borne by the individual consumer who for years has found it necessary to pay "fifty per cent more for the material needed than the same goods could be procured for in Europe."

It is a mighty poor excuse that Secretary Taft and his republican associates give. Having asserted the government's right to be relieved from imposition in the way of exorbitant prices made possible by the protective tariff, the administration may find it a bit embarrassing when it comes to answer the individual consumer's plea. Republican orators will find it difficult to explain how it happens that their party gives "protection" to the manufacturers, as a right, while the republican administration goes to Europe for its supplies because "the measure of protection" makes it possible for the American tariff baron to add fifty per cent to the price.

If the republican party is right on the question of protection, then Secretary Taft is wrong; if the party has not been grossly in error then Secretary Taft has no moral right to avoid the payment of that extra price made possible through "the measure of protection."

There is no doubting the importance of Secretary Taft's action. A Washington correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald likens it to "a Shimose bomb shell." While republican newspapers are everywhere insisting that the party shall "stand pat" on the tariff question, Secretary Taft, acting evidently with the consent of the president, abandons the republican position. In the way of showing the absurdity of the republican party's contention he furnishes the most powerful illustration that has ever been offered in the history of a political organization given habitually to error.

Secretary Taft's free trade order places the grand old party of plunder by protection in a very embarrassing situation. It recalls the novel written by Mark Twain. The reader was carried along with a plot that became more and more intricate until it seemed that the hero of the tale would meet death whichever of the two courses confronting him he adopted. Just as the reader's interest was at its height he turned a page and read Mark's abrupt conclusion of the story in this way: "The reader will not see this story continued in our next or in any other publication. The fact is, the author has got the hero in such a mighty bad fix that he here and now washes his hands of the entire affair."

Did congress expect the money to be used for campaign trips when it voted the president \$25,000 for traveling expenses? He has a great advantage over rival candidates in his own party and in opposing parties.