

## LIBERTY OF SPEECH

They have a "Citizens Protective League" in Denver, one object of which is to protect the city and individuals from gross libel. It is perfectly proper that the press should have all the liberty necessary for the discharge of its important functions but in too many instances liberty has meant license, and even the public is entitled to protection from injustice. We have recently had some notable examples of misrepresentation by newspapers. One newspaper was so explicit in publishing false charges that Theodore Roosevelt was a drunkard that Mr. Roosevelt brought libel suit against the editor and while libel suits are not, as a rule, satisfactory in their results, it is well that Mr. Roosevelt saw fit to run down this particular libel, and the result will probably be, that we will hear no more of this false accusation. A similar and equally false accusation was made against Speaker Clark. The story is told by a writer in the Hartford Courant in this way:

Somebody clipped an editorial article from a Chambersburg newspaper and mailed it to the speaker of the house. It dealt with—and condemned—a statement made by a normal-school teacher named Barbour. The statement was that Hon. Champ Clark had a lecture date at Ann Arbor—the seat of the University of Michigan—but was so drunk when the time came that the mortified local members of his Greek-letter fraternity "took him to their chapter house so that he could 'sleep it off' and not make a spectacle of himself. Mr. Clark wrote to the Chambersburg editor, and his communication was published in the Philadelphia Public Ledger.

He has lectured in Ann Arbor three times, he says; the last time was a year or two ago. On that occasion—and on no other occasion—he was the guest of the local members of his fraternity. They met him at the depot and took him to the chapter house. There he dined, read wrote letters, took a nap, and ate his supper. "That night," he continues, "I lectured before an immense audience, and received a vast amount of applause. I never had a finer reception anywhere, and never lectured in better form."

Now as to the Ypsilanti normal-school teacher's story. Of that, in this letter to the Chambersburg editor, Speaker Clark says:

"Barbour's statement is a malicious lie, made out of whole cloth. I never took a drink at Ann Arbor in my life. I was never to any extent whatever under the influence of intoxicating liquor at Ann Arbor in my life. I never did drink much at any time. I have not tasted intoxicating liquor in any shape, form or fashion since the fifth day of July, 1904. \* \* \* I have just written to Barbour notifying him that he must retract his statement or suffer the consequences. Colonel Roosevelt felt under the necessity of suing two editors for slander on the same subject. I have been lied about until my patience is threadbare."

A general discussion, on the point at issue, is now going on among the newspapers and the better class of papers are denouncing the libel practice in unmeasured terms. The Brooklyn Citizen says:

Speaker Clark seems to be abundantly justified in taking legal action against the western professor, of prohibition proclivities, who charged him with drunkenness. The charge was made under what appear to be peculiarly exasperating circumstances. The lecture being delivered had no relation to politics in the ordinary sense, and called for no sort of attack upon the personal habits of any public man. The libeller had to go out of his way to utter the baseless accusation of which Speaker Clark now complains.

What he said in substance was that Mr. Clark had become so much under the influence of liquor at Ann Arbor that he was unable to fill an engagement to deliver an address. The reply to this is complete. First of all, it is untrue as to Ann Arbor or any other place; and second, it is manifestly false in every possible aspect, since Mr. Clark, who never was given to the excessive use of liquor, has not used it in any form for more than eight years. Under these circumstances, it is not difficult to sympathize with Mr. Clark when he says that he has been lied about until his patience has been worn threadbare. Patience plainly ceases to be a virtue when it gives encouragement to men of the type of the offender in this case to go about the country defaming public men.

That Mr. Roosevelt has had a similar experience, is well known. He, too, was held up to criticism as given to excess in the flowing bowl. From one end of the country to the other, and for months before the nomination at Chicago was made, this attempt to discredit Mr.

## CHRISTMAS

While the Christmas bells are ringing out the message of good will,  
And the echoes fling the tidings over ev'ry vale and hill;

While the Christmas star is shining with a radiance the same  
As it had that wondrous morning when the blessed Christ Child came;

When we raise our voices, singing songs of earnest, loving praise

For the joys that lie about us, making bright our earthly ways—

Let us give a thought to others who in joy have little part

'Till we've learned the blessed lesson—keeping Christmas in the heart.

Hark! Above the Christmas carols hear the children's plaintive cry;

Hear the broken sobs of widows doomed by pestilence to die

In the tenements so fetid; victims of inhuman greed;

Slaughtered to the god of Mammon—they for justice vainly plead.

See the pallid little faces, hear them vainly beg for crumbs;

See the noisome hives of humans where no Christmas ever comes.

You who have enough of blessings ne'er can have a rightful part

In the real joys of Christmas till you've Christmas in the heart.

While the Christmas bells are ringing out their messages so clear,

Go ye out among your fellows, spread the gospel of good cheer.

From some heart bowed down in sorrow lift the bitter load of woe;

In some home with gloom o'ershadowed spread the cheerful Christmas glow;

To some child, some weeping widow, working out a wretched lot

Take a share of Christmas blessing—show them God has not forgot.

Just divide your Christmas blessings, give unfortunates a part,

And you'll double joys of Christmas—keeping Christmas in the heart. —W. M. M.

Roosevelt in the estimation of his sober-minded countrymen was kept up, sometimes insidiously and at others in the openest manner, as if it were the least dangerous of crimes to blacken the character of a president or possible president of the United States.

The only victims or sufferers from this sort of defamation have not been Roosevelt or Clark. It is notorious that many of the best men in the public life of the country have been similarly assailed, and by essentially the same kind of people, people who make abstinence from liquor the one supreme test of morality, and who decline to regard veracity as of much importance. It will be a decided service to good politics, as well as good morals, if either Mr. Clark or Mr. Roosevelt, or both, resolve to bring about the punishment of some few of their more conspicuous vilifiers.

In reply to Speaker Clark's demand Mr. Barbour wrote the speaker an apology and withdrew his false words.

## POOR OLD WALL STREET!

Call-loan interest touching 20 per cent has brought forth the familiar cry that the treasury should help out poor old Wall street by dumping surplus money into the mart.

Really, the case is pitiful! Country banks have recalled for business use much of the money they commonly keep in Wall street; and now, with war rumors and peace assurances following each other at short intervals, and perfectly lovely gambling weather, there is a shortage of chips. "Underspeculation" is complained of, which sounds an impossibility.

There are two measures that might help. One is to reduce taxation so that the treasury will not collect so many unneeded millions; this we hope to see done soon. The other is to make usury illegal south as well as north of Trinity's afternoon shadow and thus abolish privilege. Neither would make Wall street wholly happy.

For the present, if Secretary MacVeagh does "come to the relief" of stock-gambling he will find the trail well worn by obsequious predecessors.—New York World.

## PURELY SOCIAL

The Sioux City (Ia.) Journal, a republican paper, says: "A recent dinner by Thomas F. Ryan was organized as a company for mutual protection. Among the guests were Senator

Joseph W. Bailey, ex-Senator Nelson W. Aldrich, Oscar W. Underwood, Frank A. Munsey and prominent New York bankers. It was a particularly happy thought on the part of Mr. Ryan to call in Mr. Munsey, referred to in publicity channels as one of the 'angels.'"

Surely Editor Perkins can not have overlooked the statement authorized by Mr. Underwood's friends to the effect that this dinner was "purely social" and of no political significance.

## VALUE OF THE CHAUTAUQUA

Mr. Bryan said recently, as an introduction to one of his lectures: "I have for seventeen years been using the chautauqua platform as a means of reaching the public and I acknowledge an increasing appreciation of the opportunity which it affords for presenting a message. I did not think it presumptuous to aspire to go from the chautauqua platform to the White House and, had I been elected, I would not have considered it a stepping down to return from the White House to the chautauqua platform. In a land like ours, where public opinion rules, it is surely an honorable ambition to seek to aid in the molding of an opinion that will compel such governmental action as is proper and restrain such governmental practices as are improper. In some respects, a chautauqua audience is superior to a political audience. In a political audience one's auditors are broadly speaking, divided into three groups. In the first group are political friends who come with a predisposition to accept what is said; in the second group are political opponents who are predisposed to reject what is said; in the third group are those who come from curiosity and who retire when their curiosity is satisfied. A chautauqua audience is composed of those who come because they want to hear and who listen that they may hear. They remember anything that is worth remembering and they multiply any good seed that may be sown. I am glad that more and more of our public men are giving time to the chautauqua platform. It gives the people a chance to learn from public men their views on important public questions without campaign coloring; it gives public men a chance to come in touch with the people and to feel the public pulse; and last, but not least, it affords a legitimate means of adding to one's income—a means not to be underestimated at this time when predatory interests seek to allure public men from duty by secret employment."

## AN ENGLISH EARL AND AN AMERICAN REPORTER

A New York dispatch to the Los Angeles Tribune says: The earl of Leven and Melville sail for home on the Carmania to enjoy the Yuletide.

Reporters observed that his trousers bagged at the knees.

"Your grace," began the first reporter of the group, and blushed. He could not help glancing at the knees.

"I say," cried the earl, "do you know you have marvelous assurance. You don't even know me. You have not been presented."

"My lord," interposed another reporter, "it's customary for us to introduce ourselves when we discover a distinguished personage."

"Bally rot!" declared his lordship. "I know your sort. Why, in England the press men, don't you know, would not dare to do such a thing."

"But we're not in England, my dear sir," it was suggested.

"Very well; I know it. You Americans are unique. I've read about you. You know what to say better than I can tell you. Go ahead, print it. You know everything."

"Have you seen any of our girls that might have caught your fancy?"

The earl took on an aeroplane flight.

"Well, fancy!" he exclaimed. "What cheek! what a question! How very absurd!"

"How is your lordship's health?" queried a reporter who hasn't been on the job long. "You had appendicitis or something when you came over here, didn't you?"

"It's nobody's business what I had. Oh, I say—you are unique. Awfully unique, you American newspaper reporters. Fancy! Don't you want to know when I had the measles? Gad! But you are unique!"

## TOO EARLY?

The republican governors held a conference and decided that it was too early to undertake the effort to re-organize the republican party and put it in fighting trim. Too early—or too late?