

Beware of the Special Interests

As the time approaches for the selection of candidates the voters should beware of the special interests. Reform is making headway, but the victory has not been won everywhere, and even where it is won it is not complete. Special privilege is still contesting every inch of ground. The fight is on in every state and in the nation as well. Governors are to be chosen in many of the commonwealths and legislators, congressmen and senators are to be selected. Any one of them may on a close vote become a deciding factor.

There are four special interests that need watching. First, the railroads, for they have a pecuniary interest in opposing effective regulation, whether it is attempted through the enactment of new legislation or through the enforcement of laws which now exist. The voters should see that men selected are not under obligations to the railroads, for every official who deals with the special interests is in the attitude of a judge or juror. He can not be impartial if, either by general bias or because of some particular relation, he is connected with those in charge of the railroads.

Second, the trusts, they die hard. Some of them are showing a disposition to conform to the new public opinion but others are still stubborn and are contending for "regulation" with the expectation of controlling the regulators.

Third, the money power, it is still potent. Its claws have been drawn by the new currency law, but it is still obsessed with the idea that business exists for it and therefore should be controlled by it. Beware of the aspirant who puts the dollar above the man.

Fourth, the liquor interests. These wage their contests on the lowest level and are most power-

ful because of their ability to debauch those whom they control. No man is in a position to discharge his duties as he ought to who takes orders from them, and they can generally control those to whom they give office. The saloon is a nuisance; even its defenders can not say more in its behalf than it is a necessary nuisance. It ought to be dealt with as a nuisance and not as a thing to be respected or feared. It is a horrible indictment against a community to say of it that it is not free to act on the liquor question as it pleases—that its officials can be bullied and intimidated by those who set man traps for young men and conspire against morality. There is scarcely a representative in any state legislature who does not have to deal constantly with the liquor question. How can a representative of the brewery or distillery or saloon act with fairness or impartiality? Every member of congress, every senator, every executive, has this question constantly before him; how can he be true to his conscience and to the public if he owes his elevation to those who despoil our citizenship and degrade our civilization?

As the citizen must decide this question at the polls, so the member of the party must decide it at the primary. Let every member of every party make it a matter of conscience. The democrat has special reason to insist upon a high standard of individual virtue and independence; our party is on trial throughout the nation; it is bending to its great task with splendid energy and high purpose. Let not its hopes be frustrated by subserviency to the special interests that in one form or another prey upon the public. Only that which is good endures. Let the party lay the foundation for permanent success by showing that it can be trusted to measure up to its responsibilities.

W. J. BRYAN.

SOME COMPARISONS

The speeches of republican congressmen from the western districts indicate that they propose to make their appeal next November for support for the grand old party on the ground that the democratic tariff bill has been a severe blow to the agricultural interests of the nation. Now the only blow that a farmer or any other business man can feel is with respect to prices. Here are some comparisons, based upon market quotations in Chicago, the last day of March in the years 1913 and 1914:

	1914	1913
May wheat	91 7-8	90
May corn	67 5-8	53 1-8
May oats	39	33
May pork	20.80	20.52
May lard	10.45	11.10
May ribs	11.05	11.17

On the two days compared cattle were selling on the Chicago market at slightly higher prices in 1914 than they were in 1913, while hogs were selling slightly lower. When any republican talks about how the democratic tariff is injuring the farmer, pull these figures on him.

The attempt of the opponents of President Wilson's canal toll policy, to take a few words out of their environment and then give to those words a meaning directly opposite to that which would be drawn from another part of the platform dealing with the same general subject, reminds one of the preacher who took for his text "Top-knot come down," and used it as the basis for a sermon in denunciation of the custom, then prevailing among the ladies, of wearing the hair in a knot on the top of the head. His congregation was amazed to find upon consulting their Bibles that the entire sentence read, "Let he that is on the house-top not come down."

The effort to identify the tolls question with the Venezuela incident is embarrassed somewhat by the fact that ex-Secretary Olney, who wrote the Venezuela message, stands with President Wilson on the tolls question.

The disturbance which the ship subsidy proposition has stirred up suggests a query: A little democracy, injected into the republican party split it wide open. Can a little republicanism split the democratic party?

THE MORE THE BETTER

The treasury board upon which rested the responsibility of dividing the country into districts, went to the full limit of the law and recommended twelve regional banks, the maximum, instead of eight, the minimum. They acted wisely. The big financiers wanted as few banks as possible because monopoly has become with many of them an instinct. But there is no reason why there should not be a sufficient number of banks to satisfy the needs of the several communities. It is likely that as time goes on new banking districts will be carved out rather than that any of these will be consolidated.

A STRONG FORCE FOR PEACE

The supreme council of the Ancient Accepted Scottish Rite of Free Masonry, southern jurisdiction of the United States, at its last regular meeting, unanimously concurred in the recommendation made by Grand Commander Richardson in behalf of the peace plan which is now being adopted by the nations, providing for investigation in all cases.

THE PEACE PLAN PROGRESSES

A year has not yet passed since the peace plan was proposed and fourteen treaties have already been signed. Six more will be signed within a short time and then more than one-half of the population of the world will be bound to the United States by treaties which will prevent war between our own and any of these nations until after investigation of the cause.

Since the constitutionalist army in Mexico has been winning battle after battle and steadily forging its way towards the capital, less criticism is heard from those Americans who were quite sure that the administration's Mexican policy was a mistake. The president's decision to raise the embargo on arms made it possible for Villa to make his triumphal march southward.

Common laborers to the number of 220,000 passed through the inswinging gates of New York during the four months ending with February 28th. Several editors have suggested that it would be worth while to discover who induced this number of men to come to America during the dull season for unskilled workers. And it would.

THE CANAL TOLLS VOTE NOW AND THEN

The Vote in 1914	The Vote in 1912
Total membership	Total membership
house 432	house 392
Total voting 410	Total voting 275
For repeal 247	For tolls exemption 147
Against repeal 162	Against tolls exemption 128
Majority 85	Majority 19
Democrats for repeal 220	Democrats for exemption 70
Democrats against repeal 52	Democrats against exemption 87
Republicans for repeal 23	Republicans for exemption 76
Republicans against repeal 93	Republicans against exemption 41
Republicans voting "present" 1	Democrats voting "present" 2
Progressives for repeal 3	Republicans voting "present" 6
Progressives against repeal 17	Not voting
Independents for repeal 1	Democrats 63
Not voting	Republicans ... 44
Democrats 16	Independents .. 1
Republicans ... 6	Socialist 1

Here is the provision in the Hay-Pauncefote treaty which President Wilson believes makes it incumbent upon the United States to repeal the tolls exemption clause in the Panama canal act: "The canal shall be free and open, in time of war as in time of peace, to the vessels of commerce and war of all nations ON TERMS OF ENTIRE EQUALITY so that there shall be NO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ANY NATION, or its citizens or subjects in respect to the conditions of charges of traffic or otherwise." It requires no finely trained mind to learn therefrom that when the United States charges the vessels of commerce of other nations and permits free passage of certain vessels of commerce of its own it is not keeping the canal open to all nations on terms of entire equality.

Republican congressmen are embracing every opportunity presented to get in a speech on the tariff, if they happen to be from the agricultural districts. If the opportunity does not present itself they make it by submitting a few remarks under the general heading of "the state of the union." They possess the delusion that the importation of beef from Argentina, sufficient in a year to supply one small section of the country for a day, is having an effect upon the price the farmer gets for his cattle. A look at the market reports would effect a complete cure. They say that the imported corn is robbing the American farmer, who is getting 14 cents more a bushel now than he did a year ago.

The financial magnates find it difficult to learn a lesson no matter how often it is repeated. The poverty stories of the railroads and their discharge of men just prior to the submission to the interstate commerce commission of the demand for an increase in rates is but a repetition of the old methods employed by big business to influence government. Net earnings are less than they were a year ago, but more than they were two years ago. Yet two years ago, when the railroads had no case pending before the commission, no large number of men were laid off.

After declaring for weeks that a three cent fare would spell ruin for the corporation, the street car company of Toledo has agreed to permit a full and fair trial of the new tariff. It will be remembered that the railroads, in opposing the two cent a mile rate, declared that it meant bankruptcy. Yet every report now being filed with the interstate commerce commission shows increased passenger receipts, even where a decrease in freight collections is noted.

The surest way to insure democratic success in the coming campaign is for the party in every state to make the fight on the record of the national administration. It is the strongest asset of the party today, and the candidate who is not willing to put his fate to this test will never get beyond a primary campaign.

Outside of the youths unfamiliar with war but who are attracted by its glamour, the demand for armed intervention has simmered down to the fellows who are too old to be accepted as volunteers and those who are so badly crippled that they could not be drafted.