

something like six hundred and fifty bills to a committee.

Mr. Esch. Of course over three-fourths of those bills are private bills, pension bills, etc.

Mr. Bryan. Of course there would be a great many of those, but quite a number of them are on general subjects.

Mr. Esch. That is true.

Mr. Bryan. When you take the number of bills that go to the committee you see that with the work that a committeeman has to do it is impossible for him to know much about all these bills, so that you have your subcommittees, and these bills are divided among the subcommittees, and then the subcommittee divides the bills among a still smaller number, and finally you get down to one man who takes a bill and reports it, and what you know is what one man reports largely, and unless it is a matter of some great public interest you have simply the opinion of one man who has investigated it, and that will largely guide the thought of the rest of the people.

Mr. Hamilton. Mr. Bryan, in practice that seems to me scarcely to be the fact. Committees take up bills for consideration, and when they do take up bills for consideration with a view to reporting upon them it is the custom of those committees, so far as I have had experience, to examine them very, very carefully, because each member of the committee has certain responsibility. I think, in fairness, that ought not to be said.

Mr. Bryan. I am very glad to have any correction made. I am only stating it mathematically.

Mr. Hamilton. Exactly.

Mr. Bryan. If the number of bills averages 650 to a committee—

Mr. Hamilton. Yes, sir; but comparatively few of those bills are reported.

Senator Cummins. I suggest that the rule of the committee ought to be observed.

Mr. Hamilton. I was not the first to violate it.

The Chairman. There have been many violations of the rule, and as a member of the committee has called attention to it I will say I will enforce it hereafter.

Mr. Bryan. Let me say, Mr. Chairman, that I would not like to have the rule invoked if it is with the idea of protecting me, because I am here to contribute, if I can, to the understanding of this subject, and I am very glad to have any member of the committee interrupt me at any time.

The Chairman. Mr. Bryan, the rule is not invoked with a view to protecting you. We know that you are abundantly able to protect yourself. But the rule, as originally made in the committee, was that the committee would not interrupt a witness whilst he was making his opening statement; that after he had closed they would then examine him in order, in an orderly way.

Mr. Bryan. I must hurry through, because I want to give you time to ask questions.

Mr. Adamson. I understand the witness himself may refer to any member of the committee, or all of us, and ask us any questions he wishes?

Mr. Bryan. Yes. I will now refer to you all.

The Chairman. The committee has not yet ruled on that question.

Mr. Adamson. I make the point.

DUAL GOVERNMENT ESSENTIAL

Mr. Bryan. But the point I am trying to emphasize is this—that the dual character of our government is essential to its permanence. The fact that we now have 40,000 bills, when a few years ago we only had 10, gives you some idea of what it is going to be, for our country is a growing country—50 years from now the work of the federal government will be very much larger than it is now, with no change whatever in this organic division. But if we are to consolidate things here at Washington it only multiplies the demands, and I believe that it necessarily follows that in the course of time, if not now, the work that would devolve upon this government would be so great that it would be physically impossible to give the same careful attention to these questions that could be given by these units acting alone, and my observation in congress was that a measure that affected a locality was really left to the people of that locality. For instance, if a subject came up in regard to oysters down on the Ches-

apeake, the men who represented the districts immediately affected would be the ones who would have almost absolute, exclusive control of the action on that measure. In other words, if you attempt to put everything here, it will result in our really turning it over to the people who act for those particular sections, and they act under much less restraint than the people who act upon them at home and are nearer to the people.

WOULD CENTRALIZE GOVERNMENT

What I wanted to say I have said; that is, the principles that I speak of I have presented. I believe that the transfer of this policy would bring a tremendously increased pressure to bear upon those who deal with this question. That it would centralize this government more than anything else that has ever been suggested since this government was organized. When you remember that these railroads are now actually collecting more than twice—we have not the exact figures—but more than twice the entire amount that the federal government has collected, you can see that to bring that business from 48 states and deposit here would work such a revolution as we have never known in our governmental work.

And I may remind you of this, that the lessening of the restraint is not merely theoretical—that is, the statement that the restraint would be less is not a matter of theory—it is a matter that is demonstrated by experience; and I may add, if you will not take it as a reflection upon anybody who appears for the railroads, that the fact that the railroads ask for it is conclusive proof that it is not intended for greater regulation.

When I say that those in charge of the railroads are like other people, I say all that can be asked. If they say they are better than other people the burden is on them, and they will find it difficult to present the evidence. If I say that they are just like other people, selfish, biased, looking after themselves, I am not only stating a general fact that is universally applicable, but I am stating a fact that can be proven by abundant testimony, if the truth of it were challenged.

THE FACT THAT THESE PEOPLE ARE HERE ASKING FOR THE SURRENDER OF ALL THE POWER THE STATES HAVE IS PROOF CONCLUSIVE THAT THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF THIS IS TO GET AWAY FROM REGULATION AND NOT TO GET A BETTER REGULATION, AND THAT IS SUPPORTED BY WHAT WE HAVE SEEN.

Where have our laws come from that have given us whatever regulations we have had? Largely from the states. We have a 2-cent rate, for instance, that has been given us in a number of states. Today the railroads in some instances, I will not say in all, are charging more for the interstate rate than the sum of the local rates, and I know several cases where the people, in order to avoid the higher rate, get off at the state line and buy another ticket in order to take advantage of the lower local rate.

I had an experience myself the other day in going from one city to another. The man who was with me said, "I am going down to get my ticket; I will get yours at the same time." I said, "I wish you would." When we got on the train I said, "How much do I owe you?" He gave me the amount, and he said, "I only bought to a certain place, because by buying there we get the 2-cent rate, and we save 85 cents." So my friend had been good enough to save me 85 cents by buying there.

A few years ago I wrote to a member of congress and suggested to him that we ought to have a federal statute requiring the railroads to sell interstate tickets for a price not greater than the sum of the local rates, and surely if there is any proposition that rests upon sound economic grounds it is that a railroad can carry a passenger the whole distance for as little per mile as the two parts of it.

My friend could not interest congress in so simple a proposition, and today, with our congress in session, we have no successful effort, and I am not sure whether we have even any unsuccessful effort, but we certainly have no successful effort to give to the people of the nation the protection that has already been given to the people of the states by these states.

Now, if we can not get through congress a measure that will give to the people who cross

state lines as low a rate as they can get in different states through which they travel, certainly, gentlemen, he will have to find some other reason for advocating this national transfer than the better restraining and restriction of railroads.

Mr. Adamson. Mr. Bryan, I think that is the proper place to answer your appeal for suggestions. I referred that bill to the interstate commerce commission, and the substance of their reply was that to pass that bill would be to enable the different states to make the rates for the interstate commerce commission, and that they could not approve that.

Mr. Bryan. I do not see that that answers the proposition. (Note: As the railroads contest the state rate when unfair, there could be no unfairness in an interstate rate based on state rates.)

Mr. Adamson. That was their reply. Did I say "answer" or "reply"?

Mr. Bryan. I will call it "reply." But that does not change the fact that when it comes to Washington there are so many ways of denying the relief that is desired, that the relief is more difficult to secure than it is at home where the people live near to their constituents and go back to their constituents, and more amenable to public opinion.

These are the general objections I have to this, and while I state them as my personal objections, because I do not come here in a representative capacity, there is no one that I know of for whom I can speak, yet I am satisfied that the opinion that I present is entertained by quite a good many people. And I believe that when the issue is presented to the people and the people understand it that there will be a very unanimous objection to the surrender of the power of the states over these corporations. The proposition that I beg to submit has a substitute for the proposition which you are discussing is that NATIONAL REMEDIES SHOULD BE ADDED TO STATE REMEDIES, AND NOT SUBSTITUTED FOR THEM.

NO REASON FOR INTERFERENCE

There is no reason why congress should not use all the power that it has for the regulation of railroads, and there is no reason why the fullest use of its power should in the slightest degree interfere with the fullest use of the powers of the states.

And when the federal government has done all it will do, and when the states have done all they will do, we will not have any more regulation, in my judgment, than the people of this country need. Any attempt to destroy the power of the state, and to consolidate all authority at Washington would, to my mind, inevitably lessen, and not increase, the restrictions and restraints and control; and I think a removal of all legislative power would, very naturally, be followed by a removal of all judicial power. I need not tell you, gentlemen, that it makes a great deal of difference whether a man who has a cause of action against a railroad is able to prosecute it in his county, or must travel around and prosecute it before some United States court. There are two ways of denying justice: One is to absolutely refuse it, and the other is to make the securing of it so expensive that a man can not afford to prosecute his claim. If this theory, as I have seen it presented here, is to be adopted, and the states are to surrender all their power and the federal government is to assume it all, I think the same arguments that would lead to that, would very soon lead to the surrender of all judicial control, and then, if a man had a cow run over, he had better give the rest of the herd than sue for the cow. I am convinced that the general public is not entertaining the thought of giving up any power it has to regulate these corporations, that have become so great that the God-made man is at a great disadvantage when he comes to compete with the man-made corporation. If you will pardon me for speaking in so rambling a way—I have not had time to present this in a logical way; I have been so occupied with matters that I could not put off, that since I learned I was to come here this morning, I have had no time to arrange my thoughts in any logical order. There are other things that I would be glad to present on other subjects, but I understand you are now discussing only this question of the railroads—I mean, the change in control.

The Chairman. We would be glad to hear