

The Commoner.

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CORRUPTION IN HIGH PLACES.

The Globe-Democrat reports that four indictments have been returned by the St. Louis grand jury "against boodlers of high degree." It thus describes the persons indicted:

"Ed. Butler, millionaire blacksmith and political boss; two indictments for attempted bribery, one for offering \$2,500 to Health Commissioner Henry N. Chapman, and one for offering a like sum to Health Commissioner Albert Merrell.

Robert N. Snyder, banker and millionaire promoter, indicted for bribery in giving Frederick G. Uthoff \$50,000 to influence his vote in favor of the Central Traction bill.

George J. Kobusch, president of the St. Louis Car company, indicted for perjury in denying before the grand jury that he had given a promissory note to Oliver L. Hogan.

John D. Becker, deputy factory inspector and political worker, indicted for offering a consideration to the jury commissioner to influence him in the preparation of a special venire to try Charles Kratz."

It also mentions as on "the roll-call of boodlers as it now exists in the circuit attorney's office":

"Emil A. Meysenburg, convicted for bribery, sentenced to three years in the penitentiary and under \$25,000 bond pending an appeal to the supreme court.

"Three travelers in the unknown land, out of the reach of the sheriff's process and with no apparent intention of immediate return to St. Louis. They are:

"Ellis Wainwright, millionaire brewer and director in many high-class corporations, under indictment for bribery; speculative address, Egypt.

"John K. Murrell and Charles Kratz, holders of the safe deposit box keys to the \$135,000 corruption fund; in the land of the Montezumas.

"Two millionaires under indictment for bribery without date as to trial, to-wit: Henry Nicolaus and Robert M. Snyder."

The Central Traction company of St. Louis started out to purchase a franchise, and in the furtherance of this purpose distributed a corruption fund of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The company secured a franchise which was afterwards sold for a million and a quarter. A scale of prices was established for the persons who were partners in the corruption. The grand jury after investigation, said: "The evidence shows us that there are men in this city of seeming great respectability, directors in large corporations and prominence in business and social circles, who have not hesitated to put up money for the purpose of bribing through the assembly measures in which they are interested. When called before our body some have added to the offense of bribery the crime of perjury, and only escaped the ignominy attaching to their infamous conduct by reason of the fact that the evidence, satisfying our minds, would not be admissible in the trial courts."

The investigation resulted in bringing out more facts than are generally made public in such

cases, but most of the large cities have had experiences quite similar to those through which St. Louis is now passing, and attention is called to this instance for the purpose of emphasizing the necessity of cultivating a public sentiment which will punish great criminals as severely as petty criminals are punished.

"Seemingly respectable men" who debauch legislatures and perjure themselves to conceal their criminality ought to pay the full penalty and also be made to feel the force of public opinion. How can respect for the law be cultivated among poor people if law is not enforced against the rich? And how can the small criminal be taught the disgracefulness of wrong if no disgrace attaches to the prominent wrong-doer? The church and press must play a conspicuous part in the cultivation of this public sentiment, and it would seem an opportune time for an expression from those ministers who in 1896 were so jealous of what they called the "nation's honor."

The El Paso County (Colo.) Democrat calls attention to the fact that Senator Hill and Henry Watterson have both defined democracy for us and told us how we can get together, and yet each has a different plan. Mr. Watterson would accept imperialism as a settled fact; Mr. Hill would fight it. Mr. Hill would make a declaration in favor of bimetallism, while Mr. Watterson would say nothing about it. The El Paso County Democrat is now awaiting for Mr. Cleveland to give a reorganizing plan different from the other two.

THE FOWLER COINAGE BILL.

On another page will be found a bill introduced by Mr. Fowler of New Jersey by "instruction of the majority members of the committee on banking and currency." This bill, it will be seen, combines the three vicious propositions that are now being urged by the financiers. It provides for an asset currency to be issued, not upon government bonds as now but upon the assets of the bank. It provides for branch banks and it also provides for the redemption of silver dollars and for the recoinage of silver dollars into subsidiary coin. In addition to these features the bill gives to the banks control of the paper money of the country. It would be difficult to conceive of a more iniquitous financial measure. It is so bad, in fact, that the republican party is not likely to pass it at this session of congress. If past methods are any guide for the future the bill will be rushed through during the second session, immediately after the election is over, so that indignation will have time to die out before the next presidential election. The bill is given in full so that the readers of The Commoner may know what is going on and be prepared to call the bill to the attention of their republican neighbors. The readers of The Commoner will remember that The Commoner discussed these propositions during the campaign of last year and predicted then that the bankers intended to push the measures through as soon as they dared to do so.

PHILIPPINE QUESTION DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION

Below will be found a copy of the amendment agreed upon by the democratic members of the senate committee and introduced by Senator Rawlings. It is to be offered as a substitute for the republican Philippine measure. As the republican bill and the democratic substitute will play an important part in the coming congressional campaign, special attention is called to the Rawlings' amendment. The democrats of the house committee are also at work on a substitute, but as it will follow the same general principles as the senate substitute (both following the Kansas City platform), whatever differences there may be between it and the senate substitute can be adjusted at a conference. The main point of difference between all democratic plans and the republican plan is that THE DEMOCRATIC PLANS RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT OF THE FILIPINOS TO SELF-GOVERNMENT AND PROMISE THAT INDEPENDENCE SHALL BE GIVEN AS SOON AS A STABLE GOVERNMENT IS ESTABLISHED, WHILE THE REPUBLICAN PLAN CONTEMPLATES A PERMANENT COLONIAL POLICY PATTERNED AFTER ENGLAND'S FORMER GOVERNMENT IN AMERICAN COLONIES AND HER PRESENT GOVERNMENT IN INDIA.

An appeal to the people on such an issue ought to insure a democratic majority in the next campaign.

The following is the amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Rawlings to the bill (S. 2295) temporarily to provide for the administration of the affairs of civil government to the Philippine islands, and for other purposes, viz: Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

Sec. 1. That, subject to the provisions hereinafter set forth, the United States of America hereby relinquish all claims of sovereignty over and title to the archipelago known as the Philippine Islands.

Sec. 2. That the United States shall continue to occupy and govern said archipelago until the people thereof have established a government, and until sufficient guarantees have been obtained for the performance of our treaty obligations with Spain and for the safety of those inhabitants who have adhered to the United States, and for the maintenance and protection of all rights which have accrued under the authority thereof, as hereinafter provided.

Sec. 3. That ninety days after the president of the United States shall have proclaimed that all armed resistance to the United States has ceased in the archipelago, the United States Philippine commission shall make and promulgate rules and regulations for the holding of an election in the province of said archipelago for members of a convention, which convention when organized shall proceed to the adoption of a constitution for the government of said archipelago. That all male inhabitants of said archipelago twenty-one years of age and over who speak and write either the English or Spanish languages or any of the native languages of the said archipelago, and who