

Coaxing Republicans Into Line

Interesting Methods of Stamp-
ing out Tariff Revision Sen-
timent Among the Republican
Rank and File. ❖ ❖ ❖ ❖

THE methods adopted by republican leaders to stamp out the tariff revision sentiment are interesting. The Iowa republicans, in state convention assembled, adopted a platform in which revision of the tariff was demanded wherever the tariff provided shelter to monopoly. Governor Cummins led the fight for this plank. He had the assistance of the Des Moines Register and Leader as well as of other republican newspapers of the state. He was compelled to fight a practically united congressional delegation, one member of which, Congressman Cousins, referred to the Iowa tariff plank as "a dirty lie."

The Idaho republican state convention adopted a platform equally strong on tariff revision.

The Iowa plank and the Idaho plank evidently met with the approval of the rank and file of the party, so it was necessary that something be done.

Then Walter Wellman, in the Chicago Record-Herald, gave out that famous interview with Secretary of the Treasury Shaw, in which Mr. Shaw pointed out the dangers, as they appeared to him, involved in tariff revision; and at the same time Mr. Shaw declared that agitation was even worse than revision.

Subsequently in his speech at Morrisville, Vt., Mr. Shaw said he was not opposed to revision of the tariff. Mr. Shaw then explained:

"Whenever congress is of the opinion that the friends of protection are strong enough to modify the tariff to meet conditions and conservatively to meet opposition to a revision of the entire tariff law, thus paralyzing business for a season, I am in favor of it. I have expressed some doubt, however, about the wisdom of instructing by resolutions, or exacting pledges from candidates for congress, when the effect is liable to precipitate a protracted debate with very uncertain results."

Now it will be seen that this is by no means an indorsement of the Iowa platform. The Iowa platform is in favor of tariff revision wherever the tariff provides shelter to monopoly. Mr. Shaw is in favor of tariff revision whenever congress is of the opinion that the friends of protection are strong enough to modify the tariff, and Mr. Shaw admits that he expressed doubt about the wisdom of "instructing by resolutions or exacting pledges from candidates for congress, when the effect is liable to precipitate a protracted debate with very uncertain results." In other words, Mr. Shaw does not believe in revising the tariff whenever the tariff provides shelter to monopoly, and he does not regard the adoption of the tariff plank by the Iowa republicans as a wise move.

But now we find that republican leaders and republican organs that had indorsed the Iowa plank have suddenly discovered that Secretary Shaw is all right on the tariff question, that the administration is all right on the tariff question, and that there is, substantially, no difference between the position of the Iowa republican convention and the administration.

Charles Emory Smith, former postmaster general, and editor of the Philadelphia Press, cordially approved the Iowa platform and insisted that the republican party must come to that platform; and yet in commenting on Secretary Shaw's speech, Mr. Smith, in an editorial, says: "Secretary Shaw's speech is in the right line. It puts the case with force and effect on a ground on which all republicans can stand together."

Then there is the Des Moines Register and Leader which in an editorial concludes:

"There is not so very much difference between republicans on tariff legislation. About all it amounts to is that some want the tariff revised, but in such a way as not to disturb our industrial prosperity, others are willing to have it revised providing it will not disturb our industrial prosperity. There is no occasion to magnify differences. It is much

more important to magnify the common purpose and to go about accomplishing it in a harmonious and effective manner."

A few weeks ago no paper was more zealous in impressing upon the republicans the importance of the Iowa plank than the Register and Leader; but now that paper tells us that there is no occasion to "magnify differences," but that it is much more important "to magnify the common purpose." "The common purpose" perhaps is victory for the republican party entirely regardless of the fact that the republican party may be depended upon to provide shelter to monopolies in any tariff with which the republican party has to deal.

And now comes the Chicago Tribune. In commenting on Secretary Shaw's speech, the Tribune says, "This expresses in a way the sentiments of most republicans," and then the Tribune adds:

"Whenever there is sufficient discipline in the republican party to insure a solid vote for a bill altering a single tariff schedule, then such a bill can be passed without the slightest difficulty, and the quiet of the industrial world will not be disturbed. There is not sufficient discipline now. There are a few ultraprotectionists in congress who will go to the last extreme to prevent the reduction of a single duty on the most insignificant product.

"Secretary Shaw has described the conditions under which he will be in favor of tariff readjustment. He does not venture to say when the conditions may be looked for or what can be done to hasten their arrival."

To be sure, Secretary Shaw's position is a wholly uncertain one. "He does not venture to say when the conditions may be looked for or what can be done to hasten their arrival." He advises the republicans to abandon all discussion of this question, to go to the polls and vote blindly for candidates for congress, and to trust the republican party to uphold national honor and business interests!

But how different this editorial is from an editorial that appeared in the Chicago Tribune immediately after the Iowa republicans had adopted their tariff revision plank. In that editorial the Tribune said:

"It is a notorious fact that some of the tariff schedules do afford shelter to monopoly. That is, they permit certain trusts or combines to exact from domestic consumers unreasonably high prices for their products—prices higher than could be exacted if the tariff afforded no more protection than is necessary to enable the American producers to compete on even terms with their foreign rivals.

"As some trusts make an illegitimate use of the protection they enjoy, why should the republicans of Iowa and of the United States hesitate to say so? Why should not they promise to deprive the trusts of a shelter they are abusing? The language used in the Iowa platform is not a confession that the tariff is the parent of trusts. There are trusts in free trade England. The language is a simple statement that the party which made the tariff will change the tariff whenever it appears a wrongful use is being made of any of the duties levied by it."

Now, if, as the Tribune said, "It is a notorious fact that some of the tariff schedules do afford shelter to monopoly," and if, as the Tribune says, "the party which made the tariff will change the tariff whenever it appears a wrongful use is being made of any of the duties levied by it," then the time for a change in the tariff is at hand, the Iowa tariff plank was right, Secretary Shaw was wrong, and the Tribune, in its position today in giving indorsement to Secretary Shaw's Vermont speech, is likewise in error.

The Sioux City Journal is another republican paper, but the Journal, at the latest account, took a little different view of Secretary Shaw's position from that of these other republican papers. The Journal intimates that the Des Moines Register and Leader was compelled to stretch a point to find any confirmation of the attitude taken by Iowa republicans in Mr. Shaw's speech, and the Journal declares that if Iowa republicans find

any gratification in what Mr. Shaw said, they should admit that they made fools of themselves in declaring, as they have, for tariff revision.

Congressman Charles H. Grosvenor, in an address on receiving his nomination, said that the tariff schedule would be overhauled and such changes made as are found necessary "when the proper time comes." The Washington correspondent of the Des Moines Register and Leader, who seems to be a bit more faithful to the tariff revision policy than the editor of the Register and Leader is, provides an interesting story in connection with General Grosvenor's "proper time." This correspondent says:

"Awaiting the proper time is likely to be the fundamental policy concerning the tariff of the extreme school of eastern protectionists.

"No better answer to the question as to when the proper time will come could be found, in their estimation, than that given by an orthodox clergyman at Andover, Mass., early in the last century, in a sermon discussing the proper time to dance. Josiah Quincy tells the entertaining story in his "Figures of the Past." It seems that a proposal had been made to teach dancing in the town by some rash professor of the accomplishment. Under this threatening invasion there was clearly but one subject for the next Sunday's discourse. The good minister, although armed for the encounter, would take no unfair advantages. His adversary must be allowed every point that seemed to tell in his favor. In pursuance of this generous desire the text, selected from Ecclesiastes, was announced with unflinching emphasis, 'There is a time to dance.' After disposing of the strict translation of the Hebrew, which cleared the skirts of David from responsibility, the clergyman declared it as pertinent to consider what that time to dance might be. He divided life into three parts to see if it fell to any of them. Quoting from Mr. Quincy's recollections:

"'Could a man find time to dance before he was converted? To ask such a question was to answer it. The terrible risks to which the unregenerate were exposed, and the necessity that was upon them to take summary measures for their avoidance, clearly left no time for dancing. And how was it with a man while he was being converted? Overwhelmed with the sense of sin and diligently seeking the remedy, it was simply preposterous to imagine that he could find time for dancing. And how was it with the saints who had been converted? Surely such time as they had must be spent in religious exercises for the conversion of others; obviously they had no time to dance. And so the whole of human life had been covered, and the conclusion was driven home with resistless force.'"

This Washington correspondent then fits a moral to his tale in this way:

"By a fitting analogy the life of the nation may be considered as divided into hard times, good times, and periods of transition between the two. The present is no time for tariff revision, according to General Grosvenor, because business conditions are so favorable that they deserve to be let alone. When times are bad, as they occasionally must be, the first resource is to raise duties, in order to check the importation of something, and so turn or modify the current of international balances, and so make times better at home. One of the seeming axioms of the reciprocity conference held here last October was that so long as we are importing any proportionate part of our demand of any article, and manufacturing the rest, this was a sign that the duties were not high enough; we should be manufacturing all or none of an article. Hence, times of adversity may be set down as occasions for closing up the chinks by higher tariffs, just as times of prosperity are occasions for letting high tariffs once established severely alone, while times of transition are too serious with all their threatenings of financial uncertainty and business disturbance for any unavoidable changes. It is clear that in extreme protective logic General Grosvenor has sufficiently negated the suggestion of changing schedules by making it conditioned upon the arrival of 'the proper time.'"