

The Baltimore Sun says that now we are "a two billion dollar nation," and provides to the taxpayers this hint: "Our statesmen will be extravagant just as long as the people are willing to be taxed to pile up a surplus in the treasury. If taxpayers are indifferent to their own interests they may rest assured that congress will place no curb on the reckless expenditure of the people's money."

Blame the People.

The extravagance of the republican congress prompts the Boston Post to say: "It has been a reckless as well as an inefficient congress and the people must pay the cost. In the midst of peace the government is run at greater cost than in time of war. We may be able to stand it while trade is flourishing and labor finds employment, but let depression and hard times come again, as they surely will come, and this stupendous extravagance at Washington will bring about a pinch that will breed a political revolution."

Reckless and Indifferent.

Referring to the enormous appropriations made by the recent congress, the Chicago Record-Herald says: "Whether the country belongs in the two billion dollar class, we are certain to get a two billion dollar congress." Mr. Livingston's figures show that we already have a two billion dollar congress; and yet it is true that if the people continue to trust the republican party with power, we will be certain to have a four billion dollar congress. If the people will only consent to keep on "letting well enough alone," they will find that there is no limit to the ability of a republican congress to spend the people's money.

Two Bills in Congress.

The announcement that the war department has notified governors of all the states that it is prepared to supply them upon demand with a stock of "riot cartridges" has attracted considerable attention throughout the country. Commenting upon this announcement, the Detroit Times says: "Prosperity being almost sickeningly abundant and the trusts proclaiming that the compact organization of industry is a guarantee that it will remain for many years, is it not a little strange that the government, at this of all times, should have deemed it wise to shatter the precedents of more than a century and distribute to the governors of all the states a special 'riot' cartridge?"

Those Riot Shells.

A St. Louis paper indignantly denies that St. Louis is to be distinguished for shameless corruption. It points out that, as everybody believes, there is corruption in many of the cities of the United States, and it pertinently insists that instead of being required to bear an exceptional burden of shame St. Louis be credited with the earnest and vigorous effort on the part of its authorities, a democratic circuit attorney by the way, to enforce the law and to call the corruptionists to a strict account. Commenting approvingly on this St. Louis claim, the Pittsburg Dispatch says: "The cities which fail to send corruptionists to jail are the really shameless spots."

The Shameless Spots.

The Pittsburg Democrat strikes a telling blow for election of senators by the people when it declares: "The senate has, lately more than ever, been arrogating to itself a supremacy over the co-ordinate branches of the government. Yet almost simultaneously with this pretension it exhibits a spectacle of utter futility due to its own faults. Its members have admitted that its acts are subject to the prohibition of selfish cliques and it approaches the close of the session with a confessed inability to pass measures of which nine-tenths of its members approve. Could there be a more humiliating demonstration that the senate needs to reform its procedure as well as that the people should reform its membership?"

Reform is Imperative

The Omaha Bee, a republican paper with anti-monopoly tendencies, hits the nail on the head when it says: "It is refreshing to see the Wabash set up as one of the reasons why the courts should enjoin its employes from striking the obligation it owes under the interstate commerce law to keep its trains moving for the benefit of the public. The

Heads I Tails You Lose.

railroads are always ready to appeal to the interstate commerce law whenever they want protection from the courts, but the law never governs them when shippers or patrons ask to have the guaranties of the interstate law enforced. 'Heads I win and tails you lose' is not in it with the way the railroads play battledore and shuttlecock with the interstate commerce law."

Referring to political platforms, Henry Watterson says that "one is as binding as another because none is binding at all." Mr. Watterson might contribute an interesting article to his always interesting newspaper if he would explain why political conventions that are presumed to be composed of intelligent men go to the trouble of framing platforms. And if, after all, in the opinion of Mr. Watterson, the language of platforms is so immaterial, how did it happen that Mr. Watterson who has always prided himself on being a democrat deemed it necessary to leave the democratic party in 1896 simply because of the platform adopted by the national convention.

What About 1896

The Philadelphia Inquirer, a paper that cannot be accused of any partiality for democrats or populists, has finally concluded that "one of the changes that are bound to come sooner or later in the constitution of the United States is in the manner of electing senators. As the years have worn on the plan of permitting legislatures to make the choice has been criticised more and more. Legislatures are usually more easily handled than the people can be. The result has been scandals innumerable. The purchase of a seat in the United States senate is by no means unknown. Senators should be elected just as are governors. Let the people have their way in the matter. In that event we shall hear no more of purchased legislatures."

Election of Senators.

In his special message to congress relating to the Philippines, President Roosevelt says that "the conditions of productive industry and business are considerably worse than in November, the date of the last report, and growing worse every month." In his annual message to congress, Mr. Roosevelt said: "No policy ever entered into by the American people has vindicated itself in more signal manner than the policy of holding the Philippines." And again in his special message, referring to the calamities which have befallen the people of the Philippines, he says that "they cannot be completely repaired, but the suffering can be greatly alleviated." It is very evident that the vindication of the administration's Philippine policy has not yet arrived in spite of the statements made in Mr. Roosevelt's annual message.

A Delayed Vindication

One of the most interesting addresses delivered in the municipal ownership national convention held in New York, was that of Charles R. Bellamy, general manager of the Liverpool municipal tramway. Mr. Bellamy said that the Liverpool experiment had been advantageous to the public in all respects and in support of this statement he presented these facts: "We had inadequate service, high fares, horse traction, and unsanitary cars. We purchased sixty-eight miles of tramways, made scrap of the entire equipment and installed electricity and all modern improvements. We reduced fares, and gave employes shorter hours, free uniforms, and more pay. We increased the number of passengers from 38,000,000 in 1897, to 109,000,000 last year, and the receipts as from \$1,295,000 to \$11,000,000. We paid all charges and had a reserve of \$2,431,000 left."

Municipal Ownership.

The Springfield (Mass.) Republican directs attention to an important fact when it says: "In so far as Mr. Lodge represents the administration, it coolly refuses to permit further investigation so that the people may gain full acquaintance with the proceedings of the United States in the Philippine islands and of the conditions there existing. Autocratic monarchy could not go farther than this in dealing with a most reasonable popular request. There must be reasons for this refusal, but there cannot be any which rest upon the broad principles of a republican government accountable to the people and ready to give them full knowledge of all its proceedings. Nothing could be more un-American than a strenuousness of

Keep it Dark.

evasion and a conspiracy of suppression, and even the outward look of these things should be avoided."

In his statement to Speaker Henderson, Mr. Roosevelt said: "Taken as a whole, no other congress of recent years has to its credit a record of more substantial achievement for the public good than this, over the lower branch of which you presided. I congratulate you and it." Commenting upon this statement the New York Sun, a paper that as the generally accredited representative of J. Pierpont Morgan, must be accepted as authority on this point, says: "When a similar message was sent to the senate, the dignified members of that body burst into howls of laughter. They knew the humbug that underlay the efforts of the trust busters to prove to the country at large that they were serious in their enterprises. It is characteristic that the president should stretch his hands in benediction over bluffing for political purposes only."

Et Tu Brute.

In its reply to the petition filed by the federal government, the Northern Securities company maintains that its operations are not in violation of the Sherman anti-trust act and in support of its claim shows "that since the passage of that act other railway companies have acquired by purchase and lease parallel and competing lines, frequently under legislative sanction; that these facts have been reported to the interstate commerce commission and by the commission to congress; that the universal, popular and legislative construction of the Sherman act has been that such railway transaction are not in violation of anti-trust law." The Lincoln Star, a republican paper, in its head-lines over this report summarizes the defense of the Securities company in this way: "The Others Did and Why Can't We?" That is the defense in a nutshell; and if that could be regarded as sufficient defense, it would acquit every representative of special interests of any violation of the law under a republican administration.

A Strong Defense.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, a republican paper, says: "The United States is suffering from a great coal hold-up, with the parties responsible for it not yet identified. Coal barons and railroads standing in with them have produced an intolerable situation. The big strike of last year was largely manipulated. Fortunately, the winter is nearly over and there will be time to study means of relief. The people are especially disgusted with coal trusts and corners. They have been plundered and oppressed beyond the line of endurance and demand to be protected by effective government and legislative measures." But the Globe-Democrat must remember that the people of the United States are suffering from other "hold-ups" and that the men responsible for these "hold-ups" have produced an intolerable situation. If the people have been plundered and oppressed beyond the line of endurance, why does not the national administration provide the people with relief; and if the people demand to be protected by an effective government and legislative measures, how does it happen that this demand has fallen upon deaf ears so far as concerns action by the republican attorney general?

Other Hold Ups.

The St. Louis Republic says: "The plain fact of the situation is that the national managers of the republican party have allowed themselves to become overbold in their disregard of American public sentiment. They feel that their machine is so firmly entrenched in control of the government that it can venture to govern for the trusts and the privileged classes in general at the utter sacrifice of the rights of the many. They count upon the potency of a big campaign slush-fund supplied by the trusts, and upon the influence exerted by these monopoly organizations in controlling the votes of hundreds of thousands of employes, to hold the republican party secure in power. This is the explanation of an arrogance which has now reached the point of frank contempt for the popular will." These are facts well stated. Let us hope that the democratic party will never yield to the temptation to display a similar disregard of American public sentiment. And this being the situation of the republican party, of what value is the argument that in order to win victory the democratic party should adopt the habits of the republican party?

A Horrible Example.