

corporations controlling between ten and fifty per cent of the total product.

No corporation can justly complain because it is not allowed to control more than one-half the supply of any given article. To sell to some forty millions of people ought to be sufficient to gratify any reasonable commercial ambition. If to sell to even a less proportion jeopardizes the interests of the public, the licensing board would be justified in refusing permission. Corporations are created by law and it must be presumed that they are created for the public good. There can be no justification for any departure from the purpose of their creation.

The democrats in congress ought to see to it that the licensing of these interstate commerce corporations does not confer upon such corporations any powers in derogation of the rights of the states. The proposed license should be an added restriction upon the corporations, not a grant of authority or privilege.

The law should draw the line between the natural individual and fictitious persons called corporations. Natural persons having the same needs, the same aspirations and being within a reasonable degree equal in their general capabilities, there is no reason why one state should be permitted to protect its citizens against the natural persons of another state, but corporations may vary so greatly in authority conferred upon them, in restrictions imposed upon them and in capital stock that a state is under no moral obligation and ought to be under no legal obligation to permit corporations created in other states to do business within its borders.

Experience has shown that some states have entirely disregarded the rights of other states and have for their own pecuniary advantages chartered corporations, well knowing that the corporations chartered intended to forage upon the rest of the country.

The purpose of this editorial, however, is to call attention to the fact that the democratic party was the pathfinder in the matter of effective anti-trust legislation, but the administration is not only welcome to adopt the democratic method but is to be congratulated if it has the courage to do so.

### Befogging the Issue

The Portland Oregonian, one of the most ultra of the corporation organs, recognizing that it can not meet the arguments advanced in support of democratic reforms, attempts to befog the issue. It assumes that the contest is between "the haves and the have-nots." It accuses the democratic party of warring against "property" and appealing to the discontented. This is the method usually employed by the champions of plutocracy: they pose as guardians of "business" and of "property" and accuse reformers of desiring to overturn society. Democracy is the friend of every legitimate enterprise and it aims to protect legitimate business by separating it from illegitimate business. The line should be distinctly drawn between those who as business men are really serving society and performing a useful part and those who under the pretense of doing business are really plundering the public on a gigantic scale.

The farmer is engaged in a very important work and should be counted among the business men. The laboring man fills an important place and is a business man in every true sense of the word. These two classes together constitute a considerable majority of the people. Besides these there are small merchants, the teachers and the professional classes, nearly all of whom suffer from the abuses which the democratic party is trying to remedy. If the classes above mentioned really belonged to the "have nots" that fact alone would be a sad reflection on the republican which has been a power so long. But these people are not to be classed with the destitute or with those—if there be such—who envy the successful. They are the bone and sinew of the land; they are the nation's strength in peace and war. The predatory class is comparatively small in numbers but it is influential because it can control newspapers (like the Oregonian), corrupt law-makers and supply campaign funds.

The republican party is today the political representative of predatory wealth. It helps the manufacturers to tax the consumers through a high tariff and it shields the rich from taxation by opposing an income tax. It allows the trusts to extort hundreds of millions from the people. It allows the railroads to water their stock and then wring from their patrons excessive rates. It allows the great corporate employers to coerce their employes with writs of injunction. It turns the treasury department over to Wall street financiers.

It burdens the producing masses with an army larger than we need and with a constantly growing navy. It is trampling upon the doctrine of self-government in order to give syndicates a chance to exploit the Filipinos. To be sure, the president has shown some reform symptoms since the election but it is too early to know how far he will go or whether his party will support him in any effort he may make.

The democratic party is not the enemy of honest wealth when it seeks to reduce the tariff, secure an income tax, harmonize the difference between capital and labor, exterminate private monopolies, restore the treasury department to the people, rid the country of imperialism and make the government, not merely in theory but in fact, "a government of the people, by the people and for the people." Finding that corruption and unfair rates are unavoidable when municipal franchises are turned over to private corporations, democrats generally favor the municipal ownership of water plants, lighting plants, street car lines, etc. It is not hostility to honestly acquired wealth that leads democrats to favor municipal ownership but hostility to boodle, graft and excessive charges. When democrats favor—as many do—the government or state ownership of railroads it is not evidence of antipathy toward property or property rights but rather evidence of a desire to enforce respect for the property rights of those who are compelled to patronize the road. In like manner democrats favor making banks more secure, not because of dislike for bankers but because depositors have a right to protection. If it is found that the insurance companies are not providing adequate life insurance at reasonable rates, democrats will for the protection of the public be forced to favor state insurance. In other words the democrats believe that the instrumentalities of government should be used for the benefit of the whole people and the government itself administered according to the maxim "equal rights to all and special privilege to none." The Oregonian can not justify the promoters, the monopolists and the exploiters who have debauched politics and plundered the public, and therefore it seeks to misrepresent the democratic position but this misrepresentation can not long succeed. The issue between plutocracy and democracy is becoming clearer and clearer and the Oregonian will soon have to fight in the open.

### A Rebellious Republican

Ex-Governor Van Zant of Minnesota is the latest republican to show signs of rebellion. In a recent speech he is quoted as saying:

A freight rate is a tax on everything which enters into the life and commerce of the country. Unreasonable rates are charged and discriminations are common. These evils exist and should be remedied. To admit that we are helpless is to declare that constitutional government is a failure. I am ready to join hands with any man or any body of men to carry on the contests. Before joining battle you would better take time for reflection. Do you know the power of corporate wealth? Do you fully realize the vast influence it wields? Do you know how mercilessly it punishes those who stand in its way and oppose its will? I do. I enter the fight with the full knowledge of these facts.

Good for Van Zant. He seems to have joined the LaFollette group of republicans. Next! Maybe Cummins will be encouraged to be a little more independent. And how about Deneen? Some of his friends expect to see him blossom out into a reformer.

### Afraid of Democracy

In an editorial under the head "Less Voting, More Thinking," the Chicago Tribune attempts to answer the arguments in favor of the election of postmasters by the people, saying that the people are too busy to look after the election of so many officers. The argument that the citizen can never become sufficiently intelligent or interested to do his own voting is the argument of monarchies. The king relieves the people of the irksome duty of thinking or acting for themselves. There is among what are called "successful business men" quite a strong sentiment in favor of lengthening the term of office of the president. One business man announced at a banquet a few years ago that the president's salary ought to be increased and his term made to last during good behavior, so that business would not be disturbed by frequent elections. This suggestion was made at a banquet

held at Atlanta, Georgia. Now comes the Tribune, a representative republican paper of a northern city, and it complains that the people do too much voting,—that they cannot give enough attention to politics to know anything about the candidates nominated. Because the Tribune thinks the people not especially interested in a coroner it is opposed to giving the people a chance to elect a postmaster. The postmaster occupies a position only second in importance to the mayor and his business comes into even closer contact with the people than the mayor's work, and yet we are seriously advised that the postmaster should be appointed because the people haven't the time or the interest to vote on such questions. The Tribune will have to find some better argument if it expects to prevent the growth of sentiment in favor of the election of postmasters. If the ballot is cumbersome it should be made more simple. That is the natural democratic remedy. To advise a lessening of the number of elective officers is retrogression, not progress.

### A Pleasant Prospect

Mr. Bryan has received the following resolutions passed at the Wetmore & McCann Hunting Lodge, Dec. 16th, and he is looking forward with pleasant anticipations to the time when he shall be able to accept the invitation and secure for his home the Elk's head. Having visited the Wetmore & McCann Hunting Lodge on two former occasions Mr. Bryan is acquainted with the superiority of the Elk kept at the lodge and he can also testify to the splendid hospitality extended by Col. Wetmore and Major McCann to their guests. The resolution reads:

"Wetmore & McCann Hunting Lodge, Mo., December 16, 1904. Guests assembled in main hall of lodge at 3 p. m. this day. Major George H. McCann, president of association, in the chair. Following resolution was offered by Col. D. J. Dean of Kansas City, seconded by Capt. J. W. Shea of Philadelphia, Penn., that

"Whereas, The absence of W. J. Bryan is greatly regretted and

"Whereas, There are many fine elk with splendid antlers, the head of any one of which would be a splendid ornament to his library, it is resolved that the said Hon. W. J. Bryan be requested at his earliest convenience, to come to the lodge and make his own selection of elk, and, after making said elk the victim of his unerring aim, with rifle, to transport the body to a competent taxidermist and have it mounted, at the expense of Wetmore & McCann Game Preserve association, and the Hon. W. J. Bryan be requested to publish these resolutions in the columns of The Commoner. W. C. Wetmore, Secretary pro tem."

### The Southern Attitude

The Commercial Appeal is discussing the Southern attitude and in so doing it makes a grievous mistake. It assumes that the overwhelming defeat visited upon the democratic party in the north was due to the fact that the southern leaders took a prominent part in the St. Louis convention. The Appeal says that they "entirely overshadowed the western democrats, or indeed those of any other section." It claims that the "Southerners by reason of their intellectual pre-eminence were predominant in the affairs of the party, and the possible election of Judge Parker was criticized as a southern victory."

The Appeal is very much mistaken if it assumes that the result in the north was an expression of sentiment against the south or due to fear of southern prominence in national affairs. If the editor of the Appeal will examine the election returns he will find, first, that the falling off in the democratic vote was not off-set by a corresponding gain in the republican vote. In fact, the gain in the republican vote was only about half as great as the democratic decrease. Second, the editor of the Appeal will also find that there was a large falling off in the democratic vote in the south, which could not have been accounted for by the reasons which he suggests. Third, he will also notice that the socialist party—the most radical of the parties on economic questions—was the party that made the largest relative gain. This indicates that democratic dissatisfaction was due to the failure of the democratic party to take as strong a stand as it should have taken on economic questions. The enormous plurality recorded against the democratic party was a rebuke to the democratic plan of campaign—not to the southern democrats, except insofar as the southern democrats endorsed that plan of campaign. In other