

Not Plutocrats But Plutocracy

The London Spectator has stirred the bile of our usually placid neighbor the Sun by carelessly remarking that the United States Senate "may be said to be composed of plutocrats." The Sun gracefully admits, however, that the Spectator is "excusable for making so gross a misstatement; for it spoke on the authority of frequent assertions to the same effect made in reckless and mischievous American newspapers."

The Spectator is clearly wrong in saying that the Senate is composed of plutocrats. Webster defines a plutocrat as "one whose wealth gives him power and influence." Comparatively few United States Senators have power and influence due to their wealth. Indeed some of the richest members of the senate have the least influence, one of the conspicuous examples being Senator Clark, of Montana, whose annual income is represented by seven figures and whose power as a lawmaker is almost nothing.

But if the Spectator had said that the United States Senate is dominated by plutocracy, would it have been so far wrong? How many of the Senators are political agents of "vested interests," of corporations and of aggregations of wealth? How many of them owe their places to the influence exerted upon State Legislatures by organized capital? How many of them are notoriously the agents of railroads or of protected industries? These men are not plutocrats, but is it a gross misstatement to call them servants of plutocracy?

The Sun cannot have forgotten how the agents of the transcontinental railroads in Congress held up the Isthmian Canal legislation for years, and surrendered only when Mr. Roosevelt's Panama coup d'etat made further resistance impossible. It cannot have forgotten how the successor to the late Senator Quay was selected by the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and how the Governor of Pennsylvania, in ratifying the company's choice, ignored a plain mandate of the State Constitution. It cannot have forgotten how the Senatorial representatives of certain great interests so mutilated the Wilson bill that President Cleveland refused to sign it. It cannot have forgotten how certain other aggregations of capital were all but successful in defeating the Cuban reciprocity treaty regardless of President McKinley's sacred pledges and President Roosevelt's earnest pleas. It cannot have forgotten the fact that a dozen reciprocity treaties negotiated by Secretary Hay have been smothered by the representatives of protected industries in the United States Senate. It cannot have forgotten how the scandalous system of weighing the United States mail has been perpetuated by railroad influences and how these influences have succeeded in tying the hands of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

And these are but a few of the examples.

The millionaire who goes to the Senate is usually there for pleasure, not for business. He buys a seat in that august body as he buys anything else that he thinks will give him distinction. He intrusts his real political affairs, as he does his legal affairs, to more competent hands. Yet if the plutocrats themselves are few in number, the agents of plutocracy in the Senate

constitute a veritable government within a government.

In an address delivered June 1 to the graduating class of the Albany Law School David J. Brewer, Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, said:

"No one can be blind to the fact that these mighty corporations are holding out in their lawmaking those interests rather than the welfare of the nation. Senators and Representatives have owed their places to corporate influence and that influence has been exerted under an expectation, if not an understanding, that as lawmakers the corporate interests shall be subserved."

Will the Sun pretend that Justice David J. Brewer is "a reckless and mischievous American newspaper?" Or does it believe that this eminent jurist has been misled by the "Senator Sorghum" jokes in the "funny column" of a ribald press?—New York World.

To Fit the Filipinos For Self-Government.

Men prominent as educators, churchmen, publicists and philanthropists in all sections of the country have organized the Filipino Progress association, for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the nine million odd in the Philippine Islands.


The ultimate purpose of the association is to bring about a condition of affairs in the Philippines which will make possible legislation that will put the Filipinos on a par with the Cubans concerning their relations with the United States—in other words, to give them self-government.

In the association, whose formation was announced yesterday, are Andrew Carnegie, Cardinal Gibbons, Jacob G. Schurman, President of Cornell University; Charles W. Eliot, president of Harvard; David Starr Jordan, president of Leland Stanford university; Prof. Henry Van Dyke, Horace White and many others of equal prominence, who have given much thought and study to the Philippine problem. Those named are all leaders in the movement.

"Dr. Schurman of Cornell has accepted the presidency of the association, and Mr. White is the treasurer. Dr. Schurman's personal knowledge of the needs of the Filipinos, gained while he was a United States commissioner in the islands, is expected to aid the work of the association materially."

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In outlining its purposes one of the officers of the association declared them to be:

"To procure and disseminate information concerning the industrial, commercial and political conditions in the Philippine islands; to promote legislation favorable to the Filipinos and to promote the fulfillment of the hope expressed by President Roosevelt in his message that the Philippine islands 'shall stand in some such relation to the United States as Cuba now stands.'"

While the labors mapped out for the association are counted upon to cover a long period of time, because of the magnitude of the task and its great

importance both to the United States and the Philippines, there are a number of preliminary matters which are to be attended to immediately.

One of these concerns the opium traffic in the islands. To correct its evils the association has already petitioned congress, recommending as a model the Japanese law regulating the use of the drug in Formosa.

Every separate task undertaken by the association will be gone into thoroughly and exhaustively before any definite move is made. One of its watchwords is to "make haste slowly," so that there shall be no steps to retrace in the upbuilding of the Filipino.—Exchange.

The Primary Pledge

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