

## DECLAMATIONS FAMILIAR IN THE 1896 CAMPAIGN

The New York World recalls the fact that in its issue of December 31, 1899, it printed from the pen of Senator Chauncey M. Depew, the following very interesting essay on "Honesty:"

Honesty is too much talked about, as if it were scarce in these days. The business principles of today are better, purer and more universally honest than they were in the days of my boyhood.

I have seen many men become wealthy through dishonest methods, and my experience with them has taught me this: That most men who gain wealth dishonestly, if they live long enough, get poor again. It is almost an invariable rule; and it is reasonable enough, if you stop to figure it out, for it comes about in this way: A man employs dishonest methods and yet he becomes very wealthy. All his creditors know that his career is just a little bit shady as regards business methods, but he sails serenely along until a crucial moment arrives—a moment such as we had last week—when ready money, "cash at any price," was the cry of the maddened brokers.

Then he finds his Waterloo. The credit which he might have obtained, the confidence of reliable, reputable firms which he might have commanded, are not forthcoming.

The main temptation with which the ordinary business man of today is beset is the temptation to misrepresent his capital or business prospects, and thus obtain greater credit. But don't do it; it does not pay. The old, old adage, "Honesty is the best policy," is the safest motto for every business man to

follow. And I know what I am talking about, too.

"Be good and you'll be happy, but you won't have a good time," may sound very well and elicit rounds of applause, but it is a fallacy through and through. It is easier, much easier, for an honest man to become wealthy than for his dishonest brother, who may seem to prosper for a time; but, mark my words, his is only a temporary success.

The World intimates that in the light of recent disclosures, comment upon this essay is at this time unnecessary. That is all very true, and Senator Depew's poor old heart must suffer many an ache when he reads his interesting and instructive essay of 1899.

But this is not the only interesting declamation on "honesty" that is to be found in old-time newspaper files and written by men who, at the moment posing as the special champions of "honesty" and the particular "defenders of national honor," have recently been exposed as men who preached but did not practice.

The files of the New York World say, for the year 1896, will show that every United States senator and representative indicted for malfeasance in office, every insurance magnate exposed as an embezzler of his policyholders' money, every national banker detected in the act of stealing the deposits intrusted to him, every federal official whipped from the service in disgrace, every "frenzied financier," shown before New York's insurance committee to be a perjurer—posed during the presidential campaign of 1896 as one divinely ordained to defend the "national honor" and as one whose moral convictions were shocked

because the democratic party in that year charged to be true the very facts which are now being revealed to the public gaze.

Nor must we forget that at that time the New York World—now so indignant because of the wickedness of these "defenders of national honor"—stood as their faithful and stalwart sponsor.

Andrews, the Detroit banker, expressed the opinion of the entire outfit of "defenders" when he charged that the democratic candidate in 1896 was "the dishonest leader of dishonest men." Since then it has developed that Andrews embezzled the money belonging to the depositors of his bank to the extent of \$1,600,000. Since then it has developed that the men whose manifestos and interviews the New York World and other newspapers gladly and conspicuously published—and all in behalf of the republican party—were engaged in playing a gigantic confidence game upon the American people.

The appeals they made to the conscience of men were with the view of obtaining special advantages for themselves and new opportunities for graft. And for all their pretense and their bombast there was not, during the presidential campaign of 1896, a more stalwart champion and a more willing sponsor than the New York World itself.

If the World is now seeking to make amends, well and good. But it is to be hoped that history will not repeat itself with respect to that great newspaper to the end that, while today it is found denouncing the wrong-doing of the "frenzied financiers," it will during the next campaign be found lending its powerful influence to the support of the very element it now condemns.

## PHRASES FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

The magazine known as "Public Opinion" says: "Yeller journalism, as exemplified by Mr. Lawson, seems to have about run its course. We note in the very magazines that have been yelling our national disgraces into the ears of the public a tendency toward constructive criticism. This is as it should be. If the 'literature of exposure' were carried much farther it would make us all deaf and indifferent. We do not wish to learn so much of evil as to believe that there is no good in any man. We know enough now to keep us busy with remedies for some time."

The disclosures concerning the corrupt practices of men who have pretended to possess a monopoly upon the virtue and patriotism of the country need not lead men to the notion that "there is no good in any man."

The truth is that these pretentious rogues have not been above suspicion. It was long ago openly charged that in 1896 they used ill-gotten gains for the purpose of controlling elections, and while they succeeded in their political efforts, it was no considerable surprise when the mask was lifted and their real character was exposed.

What fearfully and wonderfully made expressions some of these high class publications coin! What is "constructive criticism," anyway? Pre-

tentious men have been exposed in corrupt practices; it has been shown that they have resorted to thievery, to perjury and to all manner of crimes. In the presence of such evils, criticism should take the form of vigorous condemnation, and should be followed by the unrelenting prosecution of the men guilty of the wrongs.

What "Public Opinion" calls "the literature of exposure" has not been carried far enough. It must be clear to every intelligent person that the half has not been told, as it must be clear to every intelligent person that the whole truth must be known if popular government is to be preserved.

"Public Opinion" says: "We know enough now to keep us busy with remedies for some time." What has become of all this talk of "publicity" with which "Public Opinion" and other journals of that class regaled their readers? Why, just at the moment when the people have obtained a mere hint of corruption in high circles, do these high class publications abandon their pleas for "publicity" and call a halt lest ordinary men, reared in accordance with the old fashioned notions of honesty lose faith in one another?

"We know enough now to keep us busy with remedies for sometime;" yet where, and when, have these remedies been applied? We see many

members of congress, some of them indicted by grand juries, others actually convicted in courts of justice, and others whose disreputable acts have been exposed before the insurance committee, yet all holding office. We see men high in the councils of the republican party, and men conspicuous in commercial circles, accused of the theft of trust funds, of giving perjured testimony and of various crimes. These men have no defense; yet they are permitted to go free.

Why have not some of the remedies been applied? One reason is that we have not had half enough of what "Public Opinion" calls "the literature of exposure." The rising tide of public indignation finds itself checked by appeals put forth by distinguished republicans to the effect that we must not indulge in "hysteria," while publications like "Public Opinion" plead that "constructive criticism" be applied to existing evils. As "a man's a man, for a' that, and a' that," so a thief is a thief, whether he be the hapless wretch hurried to jail because he has stolen a loaf of bread, or a peck of coal, or the well dressed rogue of New York who, though he has stolen millions, is permitted to escape with his plunder and required to endure no more serious punishment than that involved in "constructive criticism."

## A NOVEL CONTEST AND BANQUET

During the past summer a novel contest was waged in Nebraska under the supervision of the state superintendent of public instruction. The object of the contest was to familiarize the boys and girls of the state with the production and use of corn products. Nebraska is one of the great corn states of the union, and it is fitting that the boys and girls be led into the study of improved methods in corn culture. This contest aroused great interest and nearly a thousand contestants were supplied with seed and made regular reports to the committee in charge.

On December 14 a majority of the contestants met in Lincoln and in addition to being awarded prizes were given addresses by prominent agriculturists and educators. One of the most interesting features of the contest was the section devoted to the cooking of corn products. Naturally the girls took the greatest interest in this feature, and the good results of their work will be felt in the future.

This novel "corn contest" will have good results along different lines. Not only will it familiarize the boys and girls with agricultural work, but it will teach them habits of thrift, industry and observation and benefit them by

bringing them into contact with the soil and filling their lungs with fresh air. It is a form of contest that might with profit be adopted by every other state in the union. Anything calculated to interest the boys and girls of the land in useful and healthful pursuits should be encouraged, and the educational departments of the various states are in position to help along the work.

## THE TERRITORIES

In his message to congress the president recommended that Indian Territory and Oklahoma be admitted as one state, and that New Mexico and Arizona be admitted as one state. The president said: "There is no justification for further delay," and in his opinion, "the advisability of making the four territories into two states has been clearly established."

While there is a strong sentiment in the territories against such a union, it may be taken for granted that the people of the four territories will prefer the plan suggested by the president rather than to be kept longer in territorial form.

Whatever opinions and prejudices may be held on this point, it must be clear that there is

no possible hope for the admission of these territories, at an early day, other than on the lines suggested by the president. Indeed, The Commoner believes that it will be difficult for the president to persuade the republican congress to act upon his suggestion. Long ago, and repeatedly, the republican party promised statehood to these territories, and repeatedly that party has broken its pledge. But now that the president has formally recommended a plan, it would seem the part of wisdom for all who favor the admission of these territories to unite their influence behind that plan, and work for its accomplishment.

## APPEALING TO THE COURTS

In the light of the nominal punishment inflicted upon the government land monopolists by the federal court at Omaha, and the decision with respect to the Santa Fe rebate cases by the federal court at Kansas City, one sentence in President Roosevelt's message to congress provides mighty interesting reading, to wit: "Events have shown that it is not possible adequately to secure the enforcement of any law of this kind by incessant appeal to the courts."