

current carries or reject a message from home because we must employ an idea which sprang from another's brain? He is stupid who rejects truth, no matter from what source it comes; that nation is blind which does not welcome light from anywhere and everywhere. It is to the glory, not to the shame, of the land of the Rising Sun that her people have been quick to obey the injunction, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

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"HONEST" OPPOSITION

The New York World demands: "Can there be honest dissent from an administration policy, or is everybody who questions the expediency of one of the president's measures a corporation hireling? We wish we knew."

The World is moved to say these things because it is hurt by the remarks of some of the advocates of railway rate regulation. Having, doubtless, in view its own position with respect to the railway rate question the World says:

"But is it not barely possible that there may be a few honest skeptics in the country and even in Congress?"

"We can conceive of a human being who is capable of believing that government rate-making is an experiment of doubtful value; that the evils it will create are greater than those it will destroy; that the obstacles in the way of effective rate regulation are too great to be overcome, and that in the long run the country will be better off if the government restricts its activities to the destruction of rebates and discriminations. Mistaken beliefs, perhaps, but conceivably honest."

Of course it is unnecessary to say that there may be honest dissent from an administration policy. The senator or representative who bluntly announces that he is in favor of whatever the administration desires places himself in a very unenviable position. And that man stands not upon solid ground who seeks to make it appear that everyone who opposes his position, or that of his friends, is controlled by impure motives.

Even when it comes to the question of regulation of corporations by governmental authority and the protection of the people from corporate imposition there may be honest differences of opinion. Some may honestly oppose one particular form of regulation because of what they regard its impracticability. Others may honestly oppose government control because of their opposition to the government exercising control in such affairs. And there are some men in this country who—honestly, too—oppose any regulation of corporations or any interference with the ingenious schemes of men whom they regard as "captains of industry" to the manor born. These men might prefer a king. They believe that the happiness of the people depends upon the freedom with which these money-making geniuses employ their talents; and they believe also—and honestly, too—that the best possible government in nation or in state is obtained when what they call "the business interests of the country" but which, being interpreted, means the corporations, wield a controlling voice in public affairs.

In these classes, of course, are not included the men whose direct personal interests control their position. Nor are newspaper editors, whose editorial comment seems ever to be governed by a button in the corporation headquarters, included in these classes.

National bankers—as a class—beneficiaries of a high protective tariff, organizers of trusts enjoying special privileges within the law, and without the law, and other men who, because of their anxiety to maintain special privileges for themselves and to obtain more of such privileges, are ever found advocating special privilege sought by other classes, and opposing proposed legislation designed for the relief of the people—these are not to be included in the class of men who honestly oppose a proposed reform when directed at monopoly.

The New York World would very quickly protest should any one undertake to place it among the latter named classes, and we particularly disclaim any intention of putting it in that list. But a great many of the readers of the World will be curious to know where that newspaper stands. The World objects to the proposed railway rate regulation and we know that it is opposed to government ownership. It professes, also, to be in favor of protecting the people from corporate imposition. What, then, is this New York paper's plan? While objecting to the details of Mr. Roosevelt's plan, has it nothing by way of improvement to offer? Or would it have the people submit to continued impositions and confess that though the corporation is the creat-

ure of the law the people are presumed to make they are powerless to protect themselves from the impositions of their creature?

Sifted down, the World's position on the railroad question seems to be of the "let well enough alone" order. And from what we have been able to gather, the reasons advanced by the World in opposition to railway rate regulation are not dissimilar to those advanced by the tariff barons against whose special privileges the World has vigorously protested, or those of the public utility monopolists in the city of New York whose overthrow the World has repeatedly demanded.

FEDERAL AND STATE AUTHORITY

John F. Dryden who receives \$5,000 as a United States senator from New Jersey, and \$65,000 as president of an insurance company, is the author of a measure which, according to Mr. Dryden, is designed to protect the public interests by placing the insurance business under federal control. This is no time for mincing words, and it may as well be said that any plan devised by Senator-President Dryden will not give relief to the public or interfere with the odious methods of the insurance magnates.

The disclosures before the insurance committee has led to the discussion of remedies, and the advocates of centralization in general and the insurance magnates in particular have seized upon this agitation as an excuse for legislation which will take the business of life insurance out of the hands of the authorities of the various states.

Democrats draw a distinct line between federal legislation which is supplemental to state legislation, and that form of federal legislation which would substitute a national for a state remedy. No national charter should be granted to an insurance company, and no federal supervision should interfere with the exercise of the power now vested in the states to supervise companies doing business in such states.

The democrat would not take from the federal government any power necessary to the performance of its legitimate duties but he recognizes that the consolidation of all government at Washington would be a menace to the safety of the nation and would endanger the perpetuity of the republic. He believes in the preservation of the power of both state and federal governments, recognizing in the constitutional division of those powers the strength of free government. The advocate of centralization is always optimistic when the dangers of centralization are pointed out. He is not afraid that any harm can come to the American people, and yet no enthusiastic advocate of centralization can talk long without betraying his distrust of the people. Instead of accepting the theory that the people should think for themselves and then select representatives to carry out those thoughts, he believes that representatives are selected to think for the people and he does not hesitate to build barriers between the government and the voters. While the advocate of centralization is urging legislation which obliterates state lines and removes the government from the control of the voters, the monopolist may, on the other hand, hide behind the democratic theory of self government and use this theory to prevent national legislation which may be necessary. The democrat who believes in democratic principles and who wants to preserve the dual character of our government must be on his guard against both.

There are certain things which the locality can do for itself, and there are certain things which only the federal government can do—neither the federal government nor the local government should be sacrificed to the other.

So in devising a remedy for the trusts, the democratic party should resolutely oppose any and every attempt to authorize a national incorporation or chartering trading or manufacturing enterprises. Congress has control over interstate commerce and it is the only body that can deal effectively and efficiently with interstate commerce, but to control interstate commerce it is not necessary that it should create corporations or over-ride state laws. The democratic national platform of 1900 proposed a national remedy for the trusts entirely consistent with the preservation of state remedies. It suggested a license system—the license to permit a corporation to do business outside of the state of its origin upon compliance with the conditions of the license, but the license would not permit it to do business in any other state except upon compliance with the conditions provided by the state. In other words, it would be such a license as is now granted for the sale of liquor. When a federal license is issued for the sale of liquor, it does not carry with it any immunity from the laws of the state in which the licensee lives. The same reasoning should be applied to the insur-

ance question and to all other questions which involve remedial legislation.

No advocate of centralization should be permitted to impair the power of the various states over business done within their borders under the pretense that it is necessary to transfer the power to the national capitol, and no democrat should oppose necessary federal legislation when the powers of the several states are properly safeguarded. It is possible to preserve in full force the power of both the federal government and the state government. It is only necessary that the legitimate functions of the two governments shall be clearly recognized and their spheres duly respected.

DON'T FORGET OTHER PARAGRAPHS

Those republican newspapers that are supporting Mr. Roosevelt on the railway rate proposition are just now quoting conspicuously one statement made at Chicago by President A. B. Stickney of the Chicago Great Western road as follows:

"It is my conclusion that, because the railways have assumed the common law obligation of common carriers, and because they are public highways, it is fair and right to control their rates by law, and that, because railways are monopolies, the law of self-preservation, as well as fairness and justice, demands that the people, through the government, should control railway rates by law."

Now, The Commoner would like to have some of these newspapers quote another paragraph from that same speech.

Mr. Stickney declared that the rebate evil had by no means been abolished and he also said something about that fearfully and wonderfully made affair known as the protective tariff. Thus:

"It is a notorious and undisputed fact that most of the great trade monopolies of this country are founded and sustained by the rebate in connection with the protective tariff, which has, in effect, taxed the people hundreds of millions of dollars, not to produce revenue for the government, but to enrich trade monopolies."

When a republican editor quotes Mr. Stickney on the railway rate proposition, it might be well for democrats to ask him why he does not quote Mr. Stickney on the rebate and protective tariff propositions.

"DIRECTORS" WHO DON'T DIRECT

Stuyvesant Fish, president of the Illinois Central road, recently delivered a speech at Louisville, Kentucky. On that occasion Mr. Fish said that one of the evils in the management of corporations was that a small number of men had undertaken to manage too many corporations. For instance, Mr. Fish said:

"A year ago these three companies had, as shown in the "Directory of Directors," published by the Audit company of New York, 92 trustees or directors who lived in New York. Of them, one was a member of 73 boards, another of 58, another of 54, another of 53, another of 49, another of 47, another of 43, and another of 41. And to sum up, those 92 gentlemen held 1,439 directorships in corporations which were sufficiently well known to be recorded in the directory above referred to."

Referring to Mr. Fish's statement, the Springfield (Mass.) Republican says: "There will be no dissent from this conclusion of where the trouble chiefly lies respecting the management of our corporations. They are directed by directors who do not and can not direct."

But the fact must not be overlooked that it is not intended that these directors shall direct. The "directing" is done by an even smaller coterie of men, who select their "directors" not because of any particular ability they may possess, but largely because of the fact that they could not if they would exercise a close scrutiny over the corporation's affairs.

Without in any way criticizing the anthracite coal miners for their proposition to donate a car of coal to Congressman Longworth and his bride-to-be, Miss Roosevelt, we are impelled to suggest that there are several hundred charitable organizations in this country that could use it to much better advantage.

The report that President Roosevelt took a bear dog with him when he went rabbit hunting in Virginia reminds us of the fact that he has been taking some rabbit dogs along on his bear hunts in the trust domains.