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Is Mr. Jerome the next candidate for the "immunity bath?"

Young Mr. Garfield seems to be entitled to the credit of having first turned the faucets into the "immunity bath."

Just as soon as they can get the jails full the Russian people hope to get a few popular representatives in the douma.

"Uncle Joe" Cannon seems to be hedging like a man who sees a very difficult and unsafe jump ahead of his foaming charger.

Just as soon as the rate bill is amended so as to please the railroads, the eminent senatorial representatives of the railroads will withdraw their opposition.

On first impulse one is apt to favor the building of a big battleship to be called "Constitution." It is time we had a constitution that the flag will be sure to follow.

The war department will hereafter use the finger print method of identifying deserters. A whole lot of eminent financiers have recently been identified by the same method.

An eastern college professor announces that he has succeeded in mastering the Simian language. He is now prepared to become a society reporter competent to take assignments among the "400."

A few days after the paper trust was "put out of business" by a federal supreme court decision, paper advanced 10 cents per hundred pounds. Evidently the court's bailiff forgot to tell the trust about it.

A New Yorker with a penchant for anagrams has discovered that the letters in the word "senator" also spell "treason." This is unkind. No one has ever accused the senators elected to represent special interests of playing traitor.

We have been waiting with considerable anxiety for confirmation of the report that a lot of Chinese pirates held up a Standard Oil boat. It would demonstrate that John Chinaman has made some wonderful progress along the lines of "high finance."

The Lincoln Star, republican, wants to know if the democratic party is more competent than the republican party to revise the tariff. It all depends. If by "revision" is meant making a tariff in the interests of the people, yes; if it means revising the tariff in the furtherance of tariff graft on the part of the tariff-fed trusts, then the republican party is it by long practice.

The Commoner.

WASHINGTON CITY LETTER

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 15

Washington, D. C., April 23.—Democratic leaders are decidedly of the opinion that tariff revision will be a leading issue in the approaching campaign. They say that the republicans will resort to every expediency to avoid the issue, but the American people will not listen to their arguments. It will be recalled that not many days ago Speaker Cannon wrote to a protected pet of the government engaged in the pottery business that there would be no revision while the life of the present congress lasts. "Uncle Joe," however, admitted that in the not distant future the Dingley rates would have to be overhauled, although he was not in favor of touching the existing schedules. In other words the presiding officer of the popular branch of congress is stoutly standing up for the "stand pat" policy advocated by the late Senator Hanna, of Ohio.

Many forcible speeches have been delivered by democrats in the house, showing the necessity for a revision of the tariff, and Judge Griggs, of Georgia, chairman of the democratic congressional campaign committee proposes to have these speeches widely circulated. Other speeches on the subject are to be delivered before the end of the session. Mr. Towne, of New York, expects to get the floor within the next two weeks and as previously mentioned in this correspondence will in a general way state the reasons why the democrats should once more be given control of the house. Mr. Towne firmly believes that at the November election the republicans will be defeated. He does not claim there is going to be a political landslide such as occurred in 1890 when the people routed the republicans because of their disgust with the McKinley tariff law. The republicans in many of the most populous states of the union have a great advantage in the construction of the congressional districts. Under the power they have enjoyed various legislatures have shamefully gerrymandered states with a view of cutting democratic representation down to the lowest notch. But in spite of the handicap complained of the best posted democrats are firmly convinced that they are going to whip their opponents in the coming contest. They do not expect to have a tremendous majority in the next house like they had in the fifty-second congress, but they expect it will be large enough to organize the committees in the interest of reform, and at the same time investigations can be made of abuses that are believed to exist and which the republicans have encouraged during the past six years.

A great many men who are watching the drift of things will not be surprised if Speaker Cannon is brought out for the republican presidential nomination in 1908. Although he is 70 years of age he is one of the most active and best preserved of our public men. This is due to the fact that the speaker takes the finest care of himself. Illinois has no other republican who could harmonize the warring factions, and it is admitted that with the prospects of so many states having favorite sons the Illinois republicans will want to be reckoned with when the convention meets. Mr. Cannon hears the reports that connect his name with the race, but so far he is shrewd enough to give out no information that would indicate whether or not he will be in the race. Most of the republican politicians incline strongly to the opinion that if President Roosevelt can influence the selection he will be for Secretary Rooth. The president is said to realize that even if Mr. Taft could secure the indorsement of the Buckeye republicans the Foraker following would raise such a rumpus at the national convention that no Ohio man could receive the nomination. The president is known to be extremely anxious to appoint Mr. Taft to a position on the supreme court bench, but it is understood he would prefer the appointment should not be made for a year yet. He needs Secretary Taft in the cabinet to handle important questions in the Philippines and on the isthmus of Panama. It is also fully understood that Secretary Taft does not care to give up this work in the near future.

There is a great deal of talk in legislative and political circles that the closest friends of President Roosevelt believe that his party associates will insist upon his being a candidate again in 1908, regardless of his positive announcement on the night of the last election that under no circumstances would he seek another term. Of late the president has been heard to remark that it will be a bitter disappointment to him if his leading policies are thwarted by republican opposition in congress. He did not come out with the broad statement that he might be forced to run again. Of course his reference to his policies in-

cluded the railroad rate bill. He has been aware for three months that if Mr. Aldrich and his combination can control votes enough in the senate the measure finally agreed upon will be one that Mr. Roosevelt can not possibly approve. It has been no secret here that the opponents of the Hepburn bill will do their utmost to frame a law that will provide for the most liberal court review and which in its operations will practically strip the interstate commerce commission of its powers. They have also been desperately figuring to put into the bill some clause that may cause the supreme court to declare the law unconstitutional.

Mr. Aldrich is playing a deep game and professes to be certain of defeating the Hepburn bill. He appears to have his forces thoroughly organized. The followers of Senators Dolliver and Clapp waver from week to week as if they do not know what they want. Some of them talk as if they would prefer to arrange a scheme to prevent the democrats from getting too much credit. Unless the situation changes between now and the time the vote is taken it is safe to state that more senate democrats will be found supporting the president's policy than republicans.

Representative Sulzer, of New York, has a bill before the house, making the anniversary of the birth of Columbus a national holiday. Mr. Sulzer says that although most people think we have in this country numerous legal holidays authorized by congress there is only one—Labor day. He has looked up the question, Thanksgiving, the Fourth of July and other days on which public offices and business institutions are closed, Mr. Sulzer declares are not authorized but are merely by common consent. Some of the most prominent Italians in the United States are soon coming to Washington to appear before the house committee in the interest of the Sulzer bill. Its author is strongly of the opinion that he will get a favorable report on the measure before the end of the session.

It looks as if the ship subsidy bill will not get out of the house merchant marine and fisheries committee this session. And even if it should be favorably reported Speaker Cannon is known to be so much opposed to it that he would not give it a helping hand. On the contrary under the one man power that he possesses the speaker would take special delight in seeing that the measure does not have a day in court. Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, has savagely opposed the ship subsidy scheme, and in one of the most heated arguments heard on the subject repudiated the claim so frequently made that the proposed legislation would benefit the toiling masses.

The Jamestown exposition bill has been favorably reported to the house, but it will have fierce opposition from Representative Gardner, of Massachusetts, chairman of the exposition committee. He thinks that probably four other members of the committee will join him in making the adverse report. A resolution was introduced several months ago in the house by Representative Kahn, of California, reciting that it is proposed to have at San Francisco in 1913 an exposition to commemorate the discovery of the Pacific ocean by Balboa.

ALFRED J. STOFER.

AN HISTORIC RAILROAD

Recent changes in the management of the Illinois Central railroad marks an epoch in railroad history. The Illinois Central was for many years the longest railroad in the United States. It was the second railroad to enter Chicago, the Northwestern antedating it less than twelve months. It has a history of creditable and safe management, and it has wielded a splendid influence in the upbuilding of Illinois and that state's metropolis. Its land grant record is unique in railroad history. In return for its grant it agreed to pay a certain percentage of its gross income into the state treasury. This contract has been kept, although at one time the road sought release by the payment of an immense lump sum. This percentage payment has been worth millions to the taxpayers of Illinois. The days of the railroad land grant have passed, but the days of regret for grants that have been made will never pass. Had all railroads been bound as the Illinois Central was bound, the country would today be immeasurably better off, and perhaps the railroads themselves would be in better hands—the hands of men who would take some interest in the public welfare.