

out of the pockets of the people, for the lobbyist is present to enforce his claim while the people are far away and usually unsuspecting. Unsuspecting? Yes, but their confidence when once forfeited is hard to regain. An official honor is in sacredness next to a woman's virtue and no one holding a public office can afford to allow the slightest suspicion to rest upon him. To no one more than to the statesman does the proverb apply—"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches and loving favor rather than silver and gold." If one is willing to become a grafter he can make money out of politics. Every senator can become rich if he will only sell his soul, and the opportunities of a congressman are but little less—in the end, however, it is disgrace and humiliation. In state legislation the field is more limited, but in most of the states there is a chance for the conscienceless to barter away their honor. The science of government is a noble science and office-holding is an honorable service, provided the service is performed with an eye single to the public weal.

The first lesson for the official to learn is that no man can serve two masters. This is not only Bible doctrine but it is founded on human nature. To ignore it is to disregard all experience as well as Holy Writ. One is himself deceived or is a deceiver if he attempts to serve both the public and the beneficiaries of special legislation—deceived if he thinks he can be faithful to both and a deceiver if he accepts money from both knowing that he must be false to one.

It is often said that every question has two sides but it is not true of this question. A man is lacking in either intelligence or honesty (or both) who defends the acceptance by public servants of employment from those whose interests are adverse to the interests of the public.

No legislator need be led astray. There is a test which he can apply and by this test he can safely abide. He should not accept employment from any one unless he is willing to announce the employment and the fee immediately in the papers of his state or district.

"Our congressman, Mr. _____, finding that his special work does not occupy all his time, has accepted the offer of the Consolidated Watered-Stock Railroad to act as its Washington counsel. He is to receive ten thousand per year and his constituents will be pleased to know that he will not allow his connection with this corporation to lessen his zeal for the regulation of railroads." How would this read in a country weekly to a man who was dismissed from a jury because he was pecuniary interested in the result of a suit?

Or suppose the notice read: "Senator _____'s friends will be pleased to know that he has secured a position as contract-drawer for the Grab-All Trust at an annual salary of twenty-five thousand. The senator is chairman of the committee which is considering several anti-trust measures, but it was his legal ability and not his official position which brought him this bit of prosperity."

What congressman or senator would like to have such a notice published? And yet why should a public servant conceal from his constituents facts which would affect their judgment of him? He is their representative and is guilty of an embezzlement of authority if he makes money by using his position against their interests. If we are to have good government we must have honest and conscientious officials, and such officials do not fear publicity—their lives are an open book. With a conscience "void of offense toward God and man" they work faithfully in the day time and sleep soundly at night. No fears haunt them and no blackmailer can levy tribute upon them. Honored while they live and mourned when they die they leave to their children an inheritance more valuable than a fortune—the good will of a community and the inspiration of an upright life.

TWO CENTS IN NEBRASKA

If any reader of The Commoner has occasion to visit Nebraska he should be careful to buy to the state line only and then purchase a local ticket for the remainder of the trip. By so doing he can secure the benefit of the 2-cent rate in Nebraska. The roads are still charging three cents on through tickets.

RUSSIAN REFORM

One of the Russian reformers now visiting in this country expresses the opinion that Russia will be a republic within ten years.

He says that his country was originally a group of republics and that local self-government has always existed among the people. Education, too, is more general than is commonly supposed. Of the adult population about twenty per cent can read and write while it is estimated that some forty per cent of the younger generation can read and write. When it is remembered that these

figures apply to the total population and that a still larger percentage of the males are educated it will be seen that there is an intelligent mass upon which the government can rest with security. In Japan less than ten per cent of the adult males vote and yet no one doubts that Japan has stable and progressive government, and Japan's government would be stronger if instead of being a constitutional monarchy it were a republic.

It may be a surprise to some to learn that Russia had a religious revolution before her economic or political revolution began. There are some fifteen or twenty million dissenters in that country and the dissenting ministers are more or less identified with the political uprising.

Russia has had a long, dark night but the day is breaking.

ALDRICH BILL "JOKER"

And now they say that there was "a little joker" in the Aldrich bill which recently passed congress. The language of the law providing for security to be given by banks for government deposit was as follows:

"The secretary of the treasury shall require the associations designated as depositories of public money, to give satisfactory security by the deposit of United States bonds and otherwise for the safe keeping and prompt payment of the public money deposited with them."

Now it has been claimed by the banks that the words "and otherwise" authorized the treasury department to accept securities other than government bonds. At the time of the enactment of the law the people were told that government bonds alone would be accepted as security for government deposits. The language of the law above referred to was not changed by the Aldrich bill. But the "little joker" was inserted by the provision in the Aldrich bill requiring an annual report on the first day of January of each year showing the securities which had been required during that year for deposits of public money. And referring to this provision the Wall Street Journal calmly tells its readers: "By the passage of the Aldrich bill, congress has made lawful, if there was any doubt about the legality before, the acceptance by the secretary of the treasury of other bonds than those of the United States as security for United States deposits in national banks."

The Journal says that when Conrad N. Jordan was treasurer of the United States under the Cleveland administration he "required the officers of the banks in addition to depositing United States bonds, to give their personal bond for the security of the public money deposited in their institutions."

The Journal adds:

"If the law was construed in that manner at the time of its enactment there seems to be no good reason why it could not also be construed in like manner at the present time if an emergency should arise requiring larger deposits of public money in national banks at any point than could be secured by United States bonds or state, municipal and railway bonds."

Plainly this means that under the terms of the Aldrich bill when it is not convenient for the bankers to deposit United States bonds they may give state bonds, municipal bonds or railway bonds, and when it suits their purpose not to give any bonds whatever, then the personal notes of the officers of the bank will be accepted.

The Wall Street Journal printed many editorials concerning the Aldrich bill while that measure was pending. Why did it not tell its readers of the "little joker"? Why did it not tell its readers that the very men who had laughed to scorn the populists' sub-treasury proposition, which, as described by one republican, meant "the loan of the public money on hay stacks, hogs and hominy," had provided for loaning the public money without interest upon the personal notes of national bankers?

A DOUBTFUL ENDORSEMENT

Mr. Carnegie gives the following endorsement to President Roosevelt: "I absolutely endorse the president's attitude toward the railroads. He is the best friend they have and they ought to realize it. The railroads had better stand with him. If they do not accept his modest measures they may be confronted by a man in the White House who will approach the question of the railroads from an entirely different standpoint. I regard the

president's attitude toward the railroads as wholesome and conservative."

Now there are two sides to the railroad question—the railroad's side and the people's side. If Mr. Carnegie speaks for the railroads and is satisfied with the president's course it would look as if he feared that the next president would view the railroad from "an entirely different standpoint"—the standpoint of the people. President Roosevelt may look upon this as a doubtful endorsement.

HE MUST BE ALL RIGHT

The Nashville American tells of a New York man who was sent to the insane asylum because he played tag with the children in the streets. The American adds that "in New York a man who recognizes the existence of children is regarded as being lame in the head." This is too severe on the New Yorker. But the man who does not love children, and who does not occasionally unbend enough to take part in their play, is to a greater or less extent "lame in the head," as the American so forcefully, if not elegantly, puts it. If you never tried playing with your children, or somebody else's children, you have a big joy coming. It costs so little to make a child happy, and the returns on the investment are so great, it is a wonder that more men do not try it.

THINK OF THESE THINGS

Those exposed Pennsylvania grafters talk like men who imagine their "vested rights" infringed upon.

Mr. Harriman says he is willing to let the people in on the ground floor. Got the hinges of the trapdoor greased, eh?

It may be difficult to make remedial legislation as deliberate as the exploitation of the public has been—it would take too long.

Texas has joined the procession and abolished the pass. The late Governor Hogg is being vindicated in the state which he loved so well and served so faithfully.

A gambler shot several citizens in Fort Worth and as a result the Texas legislature drove gambling from the state. It seems to require some great tragedy to awaken the people to an evil, but the tragedy at last comes.

Texas has enacted stringent laws against gambling and the gamblers are leaving the state. Good for Texas. Now will New York drive out her stock gamblers? Their business is far more destructive of public morals.

It is argued that President Roosevelt should stop talking about railroad regulation because the railroads object to it. What, are the railway managers to be raised to the rank of the tariff barons and the trust magnates and their will made law?

Mrs. Carrie Nation gave a building to the associated charities of Kansas City some years ago and now she offers to employ nurses for abandoned children, but she will still be ridiculed by many who themselves give nothing to help the unfortunate.

The apologists for railway extortion seem to fear that some laws may be "written in anger." Well, revelations like those brought out at the Harriman investigation may have a tendency to make the public mad, but why not criticize the railroad managers?

The railroads of Alabama are endeavoring to defeat the 2 1-2-cent passenger rate recently put into force in that state. Some good friend ought to whisper to the R. R. presidents that they are doing more to arouse an anti-railroad sentiment than all the agitators.

The republicans seem to be more or less infected with the state's rights doctrine themselves. Taft and Foraker, for instance, are quarrelling over the Ohio delegation just as if Vice-President Fairbank's residence in another state excluded him from consideration.

And now it is the turn of the express companies to be investigated. When the facts are known it will be found that they are owned by the railroad managers who turn a part of the railroad earnings into their own pockets by giving favorable terms to the express companies.