

Campaign Funds by Government

A reader of The Commoner calls attention to the fact that the political fund contribution suggestion made by Mr. Roosevelt in his recent message was suggested by Professor H. J. Davenport, Chicago university, in an article printed in the June, 1906, Journal of Political Economy. In that article Professor Davenport said:

"Meanwhile it is to be noted that President Roosevelt has recommended, and a senate bill under consideration proposes, that corporations shall henceforth be prohibited from contributing to the expenses of election campaigns. A possible connection exists between the customs of campaign contribution and the established habits of official remissness.

"But what, in careful analysis, is the basis of this prohibition of corporate contribution? One of two things must seemingly be assumed: (1) That these contributions are made for good and sufficient business reasons, or (2) that they are not. Surely, if the danger to be guarded against is merely that the corporation managers will, under the stress of partisan favor, be over-generous with the stockholders' moneys and will fail of sound business discretion in the choice of expenditures, there is, then, good reason to distinguish between private gifts and corporation gifts—though precisely how, in this aspect, the question becomes one of federal rather than of purely state concern is not readily made clear.

"But if the legislation in question rests upon no assumption so naive as this—if the proposed law really proceeds upon the conviction that all these contributions have distinctly and dangerously a purely business aspect, why continue to the individual the privilege of contribution as somehow justified under the inducement of profit, the while that the same privilege is denied to the corporation on the ground of immorality?

"Recalling also that more and more are great individual interests coming to dominate entire groups of corporate organizations, and are thus coming to furnish the unifying principle under which groups of trusts are combining into great central trusts of trusts, this prohibition of corporate contribution alongside of the permission of subscription by individuals falls little short of the grotesque.

"Back, however, of this seeming irrationality are probably half consciously present some considerations better worthy of respect.

"Our political system is perhaps to be re-

garded as the greatest educational force in our American life, and the political campaign is, on the whole, the leading educational factor in this greatest of educational systems. For the maximum of effectiveness in this direction campaign orators and campaign literature are indispensable means; these means and methods cost money. No small share, then, of the expenses of election rank as not merely permissible, but as commendable. If, however, they are covered by assessments upon the candidates, post-election activities must be expected to make these expenses good, and we must face further probability of the lax enforcement of law.

"But that the political training of the electoral contest is indispensable for the purpose of popular government—that this political training costs, and must cost, and must somehow be paid for—is worlds away from justifying the permission that these funds must be secured by the methods under consideration. It may, indeed, be possible that the necessity is of a character to outweigh in importance the attendant dangers, were it at the same time true that there is no other and better way open. In point of fact, however, the individual contribution, if truly a pure philanthropy under the stress of some supreme social need, could be justified only upon the assumption that society were itself unable to make its own provision for the social service in view. That is to say, precisely to the extent that the campaign funds are justifiable for any purpose, there is on the one side, every reason why they should be provided for at public expense, and on the other side, no possible excuse for allowing them to be provided for at any other than public expense.

"With adequate appropriations in favor of the rival parties—and there is little danger that they would ever turn out inadequate—no right motive could exist and no possible excuse be pleaded for the solicitation or the offer of private contributions. It is, in truth, not in human nature that the individual consent to pay what the public has recognized as its own obligation to provide. It is precisely for this reason that state educational institutions are so rarely able to make effective appeal for private donations; if the situation is safe to care for itself, why should any philanthropist's attention be enlisted? It is only when someone else will not do, that most of us are able to recognize our own obligation to do. And thus it falls out that if, for any particular institution, any definite sect or any group of men or any man has actually or apparently assumed the responsibility, all other donations are on the way to cease. So all public charity discourages private benevolence."

COLONEL A. S. COLYAR

Colonel A. S. Colyar, one of nature's noblemen, died December 18 at Nashville, Tenn. A local article in the Nashville American says:

Colonel A. S. Colyar, veteran lawyer, editor and industrial leader of Tennessee, contemporary and biographer of Andrew Jackson, died at his home here Friday morning in his ninetyeth year. Old age caused his death. The funeral services were held at the First Presbyterian church Sunday afternoon and were attended by a large number of his friends, many men prominent in the affairs of the city, state and nation being present.

Colonel Colyar was a strong factor in the progress of his state. He was born near Jonesboro, Tenn., in 1818. His father settled in what was then Franklin, but is now Coffee county, when Colonel Colyar was a small boy. He was admitted to the practice of law in 1846, and opened a branch office in Nashville.

He canvassed the state in the campaign against secession, and unsparingly denounced the "war party," but when the first "Yankee gun" sounded he went with his state, and was, without solicitation, elected to the confederate congress. After the war he associated with Henry S. Foote in the practice of law.

In 1866 Colonel Colyar went to New York as attorney for the Tennessee creditors of the Tennessee Coal & Railroad company, effected a compromise with the New York creditors and in the reorganization of the company he was elected president. He held the position for many years and the company developed greatly under his guidance. Now, as the Tennessee Coal, Iron & Railroad company, it is capitalized at \$50,000,000, produces 5,000,000 tons of coal a year,

500,000 tons of pig iron and 250,000 tons of steel.

In the late seventies he ousted the Alden ring of Nashville, throwing the city into the hands of a receiver, this being the first time in the history of English or American jurisprudence that such a thing was done.

He was editor of the Nashville American from 1881 to 1884 and established himself as one of the leading journalists of Tennessee. He then resumed the practice of law, practicing frequently in the supreme court of the United States. Ten or twelve years ago he commenced his "Life of Jackson," which was published two or three years ago.

The following editorial appeared in the Nashville American: "The death of Colonel A. S. Colyar removes from Nashville the most unique and forceful character that has ever lived in Tennessee except old Jackson, whose make up physically, mentally and morally, Colonel Colyar very closely resembled. There certainly has been no man for fifty years past whose life and energies were so industriously and so successfully devoted to the development of the state through advanced systems for education, increased facilities for transportation and increased knowledge and value of the resources of the state in agriculture, minerals and timber. All over Tennessee and far into the sister states of the south, the endeavors of Colonel Colyar found their way oftentimes with just reward to him and his associates, and again with disaster. Like many men not half so good as he, he sometimes failed. Too often men judge by the lack of success, measuring a man's character by some pitiful loss that may have come to him who judges, forgetting the loss of years of health and sometimes of life of him who strove only at last to

be misjudged. Who of us, who throughout the whole of Tennessee, can claim the initiative, the organization, the guidance and the result that has brought to all the south the power, the position and the money that came through the brain and labor and endeavor of A. S. Colyar? His life as shown in another column will at last let the world know of the man, his worth, his abilities and his achievements. If there be those who, seeing an old man stride the ways these past few years, bent but little beneath the burden of many more than three score years and ten, who have forgotten the success of that man's early life and middle age, those who only remember him in the sere and yellow when the sap was gone, let the announcement of his death, after ninety years of active, energetic, valuable living, deeply impress them that he whom the good God favored with a loan, without security, of more than many another man's entire life, deserves from poor living humanity at least a meed of praise. Tennessee is honored by the birth and life and achievements of A. S. Colyar, Nashville sharing in all this, yet shares all in holding forever the dust of the honored dead."

Washington Letter

Washington, D. C., December 23.—Once again comes the proposition for the revision of the tariff by its friends. And again the revision is to take the shape of an increase of the tariff. Senator Gallinger of New Hampshire, who is serving his third term in the senate, has offered a resolution which has for its ultimate purpose the destruction of the reciprocity arrangement with Germany. Senator Gallinger comes from a state in which there is little manufacturing done. In the senate he is a sort of friend and philosopher of the republican machine, not exerting any very wide influence, but on the other hand having no serious enemies. When he was elected to the senate men laughed. He was a druggist and also had a small practice as a physician. At first he was known in Washington as Doctor Gallinger. He has carefully eliminated that honorable title. In the politics of the senate he has proved himself a master. He has secured a position on the most eagerly sought committee, namely the District of Columbia committee, and since the retirement of Mr. Babcock of Wisconsin is practically the mayor of Washington.

Mr. Gallinger has aligned himself with the men in the republican party who declare that there shall be no revision of the tariff unless upward. His prominence gives especial force to what he has to say.

These are the men who insist that the tariff shall stand as it is or be increased: Senator Foraker, Senator Dick, Vice President Fairbanks, Speaker Cannon, Senator Lodge, Senator Crane, Senator Gallinger, Senator Perkins, Senator Guggenheim, Senator Cullom, Representative Madden, Senator Allison.

But after all it is not worth while to enumerate all. It is fair to say that the dominant forces at the capital today stand against any sort of tariff revision and that the Sixtieth congress will do nothing to relieve the burden of taxation until after the presidential conventions are held, and probably not until after the presidential election.

Following the lead of Senator LaFollette in defying that long established senatorial precedence which cautions new members to be seen but not heard, Senator Jefferson Davis of Arkansas, who has been but nine days in the senate, delivered an address on Wednesday that at least made the senate sit up and take notice. His opening remark that he did not propose to retain his senatorial seat in silence until his hair had become gray, or until he had grown out of knowledge of, and lost identity with, his constituents, made many a gray haired senator wheel in his chair and eye the gentleman from Arkansas—many with astonishment, some with disgust written on their features.

Senator Davis was addressing himself to the features of a bill which he introduced shortly after congress opened, which provides for the extinction of trusts and monopolies that conspire to control prices and restrain trade, and that also provides for the punishment of the conspirators. The charters of such corporations are to be revoked. Their officers and the co-conspirators heavily fined and imprisoned for a long term of years, and the public allowed to