

a few hundred thousand by giving it a perpetual franchise in place of a hundred year franchise, which it then had. And in his testimony before the committee—he being then secretary of war—he urged the passage of a bill which authorized the Philippine commission to give to railroads a perpetual guarantee of income. A perpetual franchise? And a perpetual guarantee of income? Remember that the Filipinos are our wards and that we are their guardians. Now, a guardian must be very careful about what he does for his ward, for he acts under restrictions that he does not feel when he acts for himself. If Secretary Taft would bind the Filipinos forever by a perpetual franchise and by a perpetual guarantee of income to railway corporations, what would he do to the people of this country? Does Secretary Taft favor the national incorporation of railroads, as suggested by the president? Would he favor a law withdrawing from the states their control over railways and vesting exclusive control in the federal government? And if he favors national incorporation, would he be in favor of giving the railroads a perpetual franchise and a perpetual guarantee of income? If not, will he explain why he will be more unjust to the Filipinos than to the people of his own country?

How long is eternity? How long would one of Secretary Taft's perpetual franchises run? When I was a boy, they tried to explain the length of eternity by telling me that if a bird carried a grain of sand from the earth to the farthest star, occupying a million years in the flight, and then came back for another grain, and continued until every grain of sand had been carried from the earth to the star; and that if it finding then it had made a mistake, proceeded to carry the sand back, a grain at a time, it would not be sun-up in eternity when the little bird would get through with its task. And yet if Secretary Taft were in authority and gave one of his perpetual franchises, with a guarantee of income, when the bird began, the franchise would still be in good health and drawing its annual income from the people when the bird got through.

What chance of reform is there at the hands of republican leaders who take the side of corporations against the people and act upon the theory that inducements must be held out to capital, no matter how great the burdens imposed upon the producers of wealth? There is no doubt that the masses of people, republican and democratic, are in favor of reform. If we can only convince the voters that the democratic party will be true to reform, victory is assured; and the only way in which we can convince the public that we honestly desire to administer the government in behalf of the people, is to give them an honest platform, employ honest arguments, and conduct a campaign by honest methods and through an honest organization.



Washington Letter

Washington, D. C., April 6.—When the president sent his latest and most conciliatory message to congress he carefully ignored one topic, namely, the national publicity bill and he urged the creation of a tariff commission which would make its report after the coming election.

These two facts taken in conjunction mean much politically. A tariff commission like the bureau of corporations which Mr. Cortelyou managed some years ago, will have much power to influence and even to compel campaign contributions. If the publicity bill by which such contributions must be made public is set aside the one protection against the contributions of the protected manufacturers is lost.

It may be an unfortunate coincidence that President Roosevelt should at the same time have pressed the one and forgotten the other. But here in Washington the feeling is that in the last days of his administration he has become desperate and turns to either side, or accepts every expedient for the purpose of not being dismissed from office discredited and with his policies abandoned.

He has said to a republican senator within twenty-four hours of this moment of writing that he will not under any circumstances reconsider his former declaration against his renomination. It so happens that that information comes to me in a way that makes me feel assured that the president said it—whether he will adhere to it, nobody who knows him can

assert with any degree of confidence. But as it stands now the White House is in a condition of panic. It believes that even if Secretary Taft should be nominated he can not be elected, and it has come belatedly to the conclusion that should the hoped for stampede to Roosevelt be accomplished he himself would prove a weak candidate. Nor will his toga, falling on the shoulders of Taft, confer any very great dignity or strength upon him. Taft suffers more than he profits by the attempt of the administration to force him upon an unwilling electorate.

When John Sharp Williams, leader of the house democrats, declared that if President Roosevelt would deliver twenty-nine votes out of the overwhelming republican majority in behalf of the measures for which he (Roosevelt) stood, namely, the employers' liability bill, the revision of the law respecting the use of injunctions, the revision downward of the duty on wood pulp, the democrats would give a solid delegation in support of the same measures, he spoke quite within the facts. It seemed to be the policy of the republican party to permit Mr. Roosevelt to appeal to the country on issues that are commended heartily by the democratic members of congress, and to get no action upon them. The president breaks into the newspapers with magniloquent messages concerning perfectly proper reforms and after having been heard in silence by the republican side of the house and the senate they are pigeon-holed and the recommendations never re-appear. But before being pigeon-holed, they have been given the widest of all possible publicity and the country as a whole believes that the republican party is struggling to effect these reforms, whereas as a matter of fact the republican party, so far as it is represented at either end of the capitol, is struggling to prevent any reform or any positive action. Whether Mr. Roosevelt is a party to this can only be determined as the latter days of the Sixtieth congress come on. If he really wants legislation on the things about which he has been preaching so loudly and so well, he should have power to get it. Theoretically both the house and senate follow his lead. If they do, it is a most extraordinary thing that no recommendation made by him in any of the messages he has sent to the Sixtieth congress has yet been put into the form of an enacted bill and presented to him for signature. People are beginning to wonder whether after all the big stick was not a boomerang.

The democratic congressional committee, under the leadership of Rep. James T. Lloyd of Missouri has begun already a magnificent fight for the control of the next house. Moreover this congressional committee is so closely in touch with those democrats who believe that Mr. Bryan will be nominated that another national committee, in the event of that nomination, is likely to be at least friendly with the congressional committee. In three campaigns there has been a tendency for the national committee to antagonize the congressional committee. This year there is the inclination to put the two committees into a position of perfect harmony and of complete co-operation. Of course it is too early to say who is to be the chairman of the national committee, but Chairman Lloyd of the congressional committee is not merely willing, but eager to effect the most through co-operation between the two.

WILLIS J. ABBOT.

THE FOLLY OF THE BLIND

The following editorial is taken from the Omaha World-Herald:

The palm for enlightened ignorance will have to be accorded the newspapers of the Atlantic seaboard which think they are making a great fight to defeat Bryan's nomination. In a single article in the New York Herald it is easy to see first, how astounding is the extent of their misinformation, and second how worse than ineffective are their methods.

First as to ignorance. We quote from the Herald's elaborate political article of March 30: "It had been expected that the Johnson boom in the northwest would prevent the South Dakota state convention from instructing for Mr. Bryan. The convention met last week and although there was a strong movement for Johnson the Bryan men were in control and the convention passed resolutions of instructions for the Nebraskan."

The South Dakota convention, as a matter of fact, has not been held. It will be held April 7, and will certainly send a Bryan delegation to Denver. It was the North Dakota convention that met last week and instructed for Bryan.

Again we quote, from the same article:

"Iowa endorsed Bryan but did not instruct

for him. The action of Iowa in indorsing instead of instructing leaves the opposition with the hope that if they can make headway and show the unavailability of Bryan they may get Iowa's twenty-six votes around to their side in Denver."

We quote now from the Iowa platform:

"We hereby instruct the delegates from Iowa to the national convention at Denver to vote as a unit on all questions coming before the said convention, and to support for president of the United States, first, last and all the time, that typical citizen, exalted patriot and incorruptible democrat, William Jennings Bryan."

Comment would be wasteful and ridiculous excess.

Another quotation from this article in the Herald will show the suicidal "arguments" to which the Bryan opposition resort in the effort to weaken him:

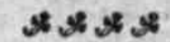
"If President Roosevelt should be the candidate there will be a terrific fight in Denver to prevent the nomination of Bryan and to get some new blood into the democratic party. The financiers, it is argued, would go to the support of a conservative democratic ticket. They would like to see it composed of Gray and Johnson or Johnson and Harmon. On the other hand, should Secretary Taft be nominated at Chicago the opposition to Bryan would not be so aggressive and would be willing to have Taft in the presidential chair, believing him to be conservative enough to suit the interests of business."

Now, what does this show?

Simply that the fight against Bryan is a fight of the "financiers;" that "the financiers" are anxious to see either Gray or Johnson nominated by the democrats if Roosevelt is nominated at Chicago; that, if Taft is nominated, he would satisfy these "financiers," because they believe him safe and "conservative," and that they would lose interest in the Denver convention, meaning to support Taft for the election in any event.

Does the Herald think, do the short-sighted enemies of Mr. Bryan think, that the people are going to fall over themselves to nominate and elect the candidate "the financiers" are behind?

"The financiers" and their newspapers only think they are fighting and injuring Bryan. The real fact is they are boosting him by opposing him. They are doing more, by their malignant enmity, to win him the confidence and good-will of the people than all his friends are able to do for him.—Omaha World-Herald.



HARMONY

The proceedings of every southern republican convention held so far have been marked with dissensions so serious as to almost reach proportions of riot. The Tennessee republican convention was particularly disorderly. The New York Evening Post prints this interesting story:

"Those who accuse the newspapers of invariably affecting omniscience must be confounded by the frank admission of the Tennessee press that it knows no more than any one else what happened at last week's republican convention. 'What was done by either side was practically impossible to follow,' says the Memphis Commercial-Appeal. 'What either faction did in the first hour of the dual convention,' agrees the Nashville American, 'will ever be shrouded in mystery.' The only fact which appears clearly is that the 'trainload of mountaineers which W. I. Oliver brought from the three congressional districts on the east,' stormed and captured the convention hall without waiting for breakfast. The next phase was a fight to see which faction should hold a convention. This ended in a temporary arrangement by which both factions held conventions at once, superposed, as it were, with one chairman, Newell Sanders, on the regular rostrum, and another, W. S. Davis, astride a bronze eagle on top of a twelve-foot sounding-board behind him. The incident of the first period which interests us most is thus reported by the Commercial-Appeal: 'In the struggle the chairman lost his coat entirely and his shirt was torn into shreds. At the height of the tempest the chairman, during a moment's stay on the platform, seized a reporter by the hand, exclaiming huskily: 'My name is Sanders. You see I am at my post of duty.' After perusing the saga of the double convention, we are quite unable to read with any emotion the account of the next day's gathering in which the seceding faction met in a calm and orderly assemblage to endorse Taft and Henry Clay Evans for president and vice president."