

mean who shows this lack of candor. Time and again republicans have made the criticism that Secretary Taft makes, and by doing so have been guilty of the same unfairness.

Mr. Bryan has constantly and persistently opposed imperialism; he has from the very first insisted upon the promise of independence. The ratification of the treaty was only a means of securing independence, and the only means in sight. If we could not defeat imperialism when the Bacon proposition was presented, we could not defeat it when our fight was embarrassed by the prolonging of the war and the incurring of dangers incident thereto.

There has never been a time since the treaty was ratified but we might have settled the question by a promise of independence, but republican leaders were willing to surrender the doctrine of self government in order to secure trade advantages in the Orient, and not being able to defend their policy, they have tried to lay the ratification of the treaty upon Mr. Bryan, as if the ratification had made it impossible for them to avoid colonialism. We have spent more than five hundred millions in this foolish attempt to ape the monarchism of the old world; we have more than doubled our army, and we are constantly increasing our navy, and imperialism is the only excuse that can be made for either. Our annual appropriations for the army and navy are more than one hundred millions a year in excess of what they were ten years ago, and are still increasing. The republicans refused to announce a policy; they refused to discuss the subject, and yet the expenses go on. The democrats say, just as Mr. Bryan said in 1899, "promise independence and fulfill the promise as soon as a state of government can be established." Secretary Taft ought to have enough courage to meet the real issue and not attempt to hide behind a bogus issue.

Secretary Taft in the Omaha speech made another criticism of Mr. Bryan, referring to him as "a gentleman who still seems to have the power of leading the democratic party against its will." He adopts the language of some of the corporate papers which have made the same charge. Secretary Taft ought to be well enough informed to know that Mr. Bryan has no means of leading the democratic party against its will. He has no offices to distribute; he has no great corporate influence back of him; he has no way of influencing men except by persuasion; he has never had a political commission and he has never had any fund to draw on to keep up an organization. When he was nominated for congress in 1890, no one else desired the nomination, and it was not supposed that he could be elected, for the district was strongly republican, but he was elected, largely owing to the landslide of that year. He was re-nominated without opposition in 1892. In 1894 he was nominated for the United States senate by the democratic state convention, receiving every vote on the roll-call. In 1896 he was nominated in Chicago because the delegates wanted to nominate him; in 1900 he was re-nominated, nearly every state and territory instructing for him. He announced immediately after the election in 1900 that he would not be a candidate in 1904, but the disastrous results of the campaign of 1904 showed the folly of any attempt to conciliate predatory wealth, and as soon as the election was over, he was discussed in connection with the nomination of 1908. In the fall of 1905 Mr. Bryan left home for a trip around the world and was gone about a year; he was not in correspondence with anyone in regard to politics, and yet while he was out of the country, something like half of the states passed resolutions favorable to his nomination. Notwithstanding this very unusual endorsement, he refused to announce himself as a candidate, and for more than a year waited to see if the political conditions would make some one else more available. In November of last year he announced that he would accept the nomination if it was the desire of the democratic voters that he should do so, and this announcement was made to put an end to the constant misrepresentations that were being made by unfriendly papers. That is as far as he has gone. Whatever work others have done in his behalf has been done voluntarily and without solicitation from him. How, then, can he be accused of leading the democratic party against its will?

But the strangest part of this charge is that it comes from Secretary Taft whose candidacy is backed by the president and who has the aid of nearly all the government officials in securing delegates. Everyone who is connected with politics knows what an advantage it is to have an army of workers who get pay from

the people while they devote themselves to politics. The activity of the government officials in behalf of Mr. Taft has been such that contesting delegations have been sent from a number of districts.

Not only has the secretary the backing of the president and the support of the officials, but he has the powerful aid of a rich brother who is prepared to spend more money in securing the secretary's nomination than the democrats can hope to collect for a campaign fund. Surely Secretary Taft must have forgotten himself when he complained that Mr. Bryan was leading the democratic party against its will.



"PUBLICITY," MR. PULITZER!

In its issue of Friday, April 3, the New York World pays just enough attention to The Commoner's oft propounded question to say that it has urged revision of the duties on steel "in order to curb the steel trust and correct the injustice by which it sells its products abroad cheaper than at home;" also that the World has urged "a drastic corrupt practices act to prevent the railroads from buying the government that is to regulate them." The World will find it difficult to deceive many of its readers now that the light of publicity is being thrown upon the Pulitzer motives and methods.

Let Mr. Pulitzer take his readers into his confidence by telling them of the extent of his financial interest in railroads and in other great corporations commonly known as trusts.

"Publicity! Publicity! Publicity!" Mr. Pulitzer with respect to the source of the generous income enjoyed by the owner of the New York World!

And why not publicity? Are not the men who read the New York World's fervid appeals to democrats in behalf of the "national honor" and the "safety and sanity" of the party entitled to know the motive of the man behind the editorial?



WHENCE THE MONEY?

The powerful interests which are now attempting to control both national conventions do not ask for instructions, for instructions imply that the voters are in control. All that predatory wealth asks is that the delegations shall be turned over to a few bosses to be used as circumstances require. These men who are so ready to put up money to control conventions, but who would not subscribe a dollar to elect a real democrat to office are not concerned as to the candidate, provided he will accept their aid and put himself under obligation to them. A number of democrats have been approached and offered this support, but nearly all have refused, knowing that no man, however good his past record, can stand any chance of winning if he is handicapped by the support of the men who have made government an asset in their business and who seek to control legislation for their own pecuniary advantage. There was a time when the voters could be fooled, but they have learned by a sad experience and know that a candidate can be judged by the company he keeps. Whence the money is a question which is being asked with increasing emphasis, and the answer to it is a death blow to everyone in whose interest the money is contributed.



OR IT MAY BE—

A magazine writer who seems to be "groping blindly in the darkness," says:

"The thing which has made Bryanism again possible may be a mere spinning ecstasy in the nerves of an overwrought people; it may be a slow moral revolution, swinging tidelike from party to party; it may be a recognition of the enduring power of an unsullied manhood, coupled with an incomparable tongue; it may be a mere habit, or it may be a mood of despair in which all candidates retire in favor of the one man who has learned how to make defeat pay."

Or it may be that the American people have grown weary of the impositions put upon them by trust magnates posing as "defenders of the national honor."



THE AMERICAN GAME

"Play ball!" is the slogan today, and soon the great American game of base ball will be on in all its glory. And a glorious game it is, too. It can be played by the small boy on the vacant lot, the young man on the school and college campus, by the business man who wants

an hour or two of pleasant exercise in the open, and by professionals who entertain millions of Americans with their skill. Next to playing ball the greatest and most healthful fun indulged in by Americans is filling grand stand and bleachers and yelling with enthusiasm when the favorite slugger of the home team drives one over the right field fence and forces a couple of men in ahead of him. The resultant shouting inflates lung cells long unused, exercises muscles almost forgotten and drives dull care away beyond immediate recall. If there is a cleaner, manlier sport—a sport that invigorates spectators as well as players—like our own American game of base ball, The Commoner would be much obliged for an introduction thereto. And in addition to being clean and healthy sport it is typically American. One never hears of a "fake" ball game, and that is why it appeals so strongly to the average American. On a thousand vacant lots and well appointed grounds the good old game of base ball is in progress, and it is building up bone and muscle and sinew, strengthening the eye, clearing the brain and inculcating a love for out doors that means great benefit to the entire citizenship of the country. May the old game always be as clean and manly a sport as it is today, and may its devotees increase.



FAIRBANKS' COUP

That was a clever game that Candidate Fairbanks played on Candidate Taft! Mr. Taft made his bid for the tariff reform vote in his party; he prepared a platform for Ohio in which he advocated a special session, to be convened immediately after inauguration, to revise the tariff. And then he sat down and chuckled to himself over the trick.

But Brother Fairbanks was not asleep. He heard the chuckle and winked a sly wink to himself in the glass. "He platforms best who platforms last," mused the vice president and then he took his pen in hand and prepared his bid. He raised the secretary about four months, so to speak. "Why should business be kept in suspense for a third of a year?" queries the gentleman from Indiana? And so he insists upon an extra session EARLY IN NOVEMBER!

This is not only sooner but the revision is sure to be by a republican congress while the next congress will probably be democratic. This is a coup worthy of a general. The protectionists would rather have revision—if revision must come—by the republicans and the republican tariff reformers want it as soon as possible.

Who will deny that Mr. Fairbanks has won a victory over Secretary Taft?

But what will Senator Knox do? And what kind of a platform will Governor Hughes write? All this is very interesting but why not submit sealed bids?

The fellow who speaks first is at a disadvantage and Mr. Fairbanks has made good use of the advantage. Now for Knox and Hughes. Bid up, gentlemen, next!



CORRUPTION WORKING DOWN

A press dispatch from Philadelphia says that four policemen have been arraigned on the charge of burglary and that two sergeants have been suspended pending investigation. It is added that the allegations involve half the policemen in the district, which covers most of the rich warehouses and wholesale section of the city. It is not to be surprised that venality is working its way down from the high officials. With state officials looting the state house and municipal officials robbing the city, it is not strange that the policemen should fall in with the custom that prevails among those higher up. It might, however, be worth while to inquire whether the rich warehouse men and wholesalers were supporting the gang that has been trafficking in vice in Philadelphia. If so, they can not consistently complain if they thus become the victims of petty thefts. No one can set a limit to a bad influence or a good one. The story is told of a little boy who was making a trough. When asked what he was making it for he stated that it was to feed his father in, as the boy's grandfather was being fed. The parent's neglect of a father was having its effect upon the child. So official corruption, unrebuked, is likely to extend until petty officials begin to engage in petty graft, and when they begin stealing from the public it is only a step to stealing from individuals. If the people of Philadelphia would only wake up and cleanse their city of official rascality they would find it easier to protect themselves against the ordinary forms of crime. It never pays to do wrong.