

clination to amend his platform, for he has already made a patch-work quilt of the convention's platform by promiscuous amendments.

And to what "well known" methods does he refer? To the underselling of competitors in one section while the price is maintained elsewhere? And yet this is the very thing which we propose to remedy, but he proceeds to denounce our remedy as absurd and socialistic. The trouble with Secretary Taft is that he spends so much time trying to discover excuses for inaction in trust matters that he has none left for the consideration of effective remedies. He spends more time uttering warnings against remedies proposed than he does in pointing out the evils to be remedied or in suggesting remedies. He says:

"The combination of capital in large plants to manufacture goods with the greatest economy is just as necessary as the assembling of the parts of a machine to the economical and more rapid manufacture of what in old times was made by hand."

And he adds that:

"The government should not interfere with one any more than the other, when such aggregations of capital are legitimate and are properly controlled, for they are the natural results of modern enterprise and are beneficial to the public."

No one proposes to interfere with production on a large scale. No one objects to production on a scale sufficiently large to enable the producer to utilize by-products and take advantage of all the economies that large production makes possible. It is just here that the trust magnates attempt to confuse the public mind, and Mr. Taft has unconsciously adopted their language.

Let the issue be made plain; let the distinction be accurately drawn; let the respective positions of the parties be fully understood. The democratic party does not oppose all corporations; on the contrary, it recognizes that the corporation can render an important service to the public. The democratic party wants to employ every instrumentality that can be employed for the advancement of the common good; but the democratic party draws the line at the private monopoly, and declares that a private monopoly can not be justified on either economic or political grounds.

From an economic standpoint, a monopoly is objectionable. The moment a corporation secures a practical monopoly in the production or sale of any article, certain evils appear which outweigh any good that can come from large production or control. Wherever private monopolies exist, certain irresistible tendencies manifest themselves. First, it raises prices—this is the first thing thought of for the increasing of profits. Then, in proportion as it becomes the only purchaser of the raw material, it reduces the price of the raw material, and the producer of that raw material, having no other market, must accept the price offered. In this way, too, the profits of the corporation are increased. Third, a reduction in the quality of the product affords an opportunity for increasing profits. Fourth, reduction in wages follows wherever conditions will permit.

Competition protects the purchaser, for when a number of independent producers stand ready to supply him with what he needs, he can choose between them and buy from the one who offers the best product at the lowest price. He is also protected in quality because those who compete for the opportunity to sell to him must show either advantage in price or advantage in quality. Competition protects the man who produces raw material, for when there are a number of bidders for that which is being sold, he can accept the highest price offered. Competition also helps the wage-earner, for his skill is the finished product which he offers upon the market, and where a number of independent industries are endeavoring to secure the highest skill, the skilled laborer has the best assurance of obtaining a fair recompense; when there is but one employer, the employe must take the price offered, because he will lose the advantage of his experience if he must go out to find a different kind of employment.

The business men of the country have felt the pressure of the trusts. The retailer has been compelled to enter into contracts which restrict his management of his own affairs, he has found the terms of sale and payment changed to his disadvantage and he has been forced to carry more and more of the risks of trade. He is convinced that there are no good trusts and that his only safety is in the democratic plan which lays the axe at the root of the tree.

The traveling men naturally take especial interest in the trust question, because the more complete the monopoly secured by a corporation the less they are needed. We have no more intelligent class than the representatives of commerce, and their retirement from the road would mean a serious loss to the country while a few promoters would be the only persons benefited, they gaining by the capitalization of the salaries saved by the elimination of competition.

Mr. Taft either misunderstands or misrepresents the democratic

position in regard to the extermination of the principle of private monopoly. In his notification speech, he says:

"Mr. Roosevelt would compel the trusts to conduct their business in a lawful manner and secure the benefits of their operation and the maintenance of the prosperity of the country of which they are an important part; while Mr. Bryan would extirpate and destroy the entire business in order to stamp out the evils which they have practiced."

Here is a confession by Mr. Taft that he regards the trusts as necessary to the nation's prosperity, for he declares that they play an important part in the maintenance of prosperity, and he charges that I would "extirpate and destroy" business in extirpating and destroying the principle of private monopoly. Surely, his study of the trust question has been very superficial, if he sees danger in the restoration of a reign of competition.

Let us take an illustration: Suppose the democrats succeed in the enactment of a law in harmony with the democratic platform—a law requiring every corporation to take out a federal license before it is permitted to control twenty-five per cent of the business in which it is engaged. Would this "extirpate and destroy" the business of the country? As already stated, but a very small per cent of the corporations would be affected by the law, and those affected would be the ones that have been giving the officers of the law so much trouble during the last eighteen years. As the licensed corporation increased its business from twenty-five per cent to fifty per cent, it would be under the watchful eye of the government, would be compelled to make such reports as the government required, would be prohibited from watering its stock, and would be required to sell to all customers upon the same terms, due allowance being made for cost of transportation. Would it "extirpate and destroy" business to require these licensed corporations to do business on an honest basis and to be reasonable in their business methods? Would not the benefit accruing to the ninety-nine small corporations thus protected from conscienceless methods be enough to offset any evil effects that might follow from such restraint of a few big corporations? Is business so dependent upon dishonesty and unfairness that it would be "extirpated and destroyed" if morals were introduced into it? When the licensed corporation reached a point where it controlled one-half of the business in which it was engaged, it would, according to the democratic plan, have to stop expanding. Would it "extirpate and destroy" business to put this limitation upon the greed of a few corporations? Surely our plan could not injuriously affect corporations that might hereafter seek to establish a monopoly.

But possibly Mr. Taft thinks that it would "extirpate and destroy" business to apply the plan to existing monopolies. Let us see: Suppose we have a corporation now controlling seventy-five per cent of the output of the article in which it deals, and through this control, regulating the price and the terms of sale. How would the democratic plan affect it? A date would be fixed at which the law would take effect, and on or before that date the corporation would be required to apply for a license. The evidence would show that it controlled a larger proportion of the product than the law permitted, and it would be compelled to sell off enough of its plants to reduce its output to fifty per cent of the total product. It could then comply with the law, obtain its license, and proceed to carry on its business in accordance with the law. Would it "extirpate and destroy" business to compel such a corporation to dispose of enough of its plants to reduce its production to fifty per cent? The people would still need the article which it produced, and the plants which it was compelled to sell would become independent plants competing with it. This competition would reduce prices, and the reduced prices would increase the demand for the article, and this increased demand would stimulate the building of more factories and give a larger employment to labor. The restoration of competition in that industry, instead of "extirpating and destroying" the industry would revive and enlarge it. A part of the benefit would go to the consumers in the form of a cheaper product and a better product, part would go to the producer of raw material in the form of a better price, and part would go to the wage earners in the form of better wages. The only persons to lose would be the trust magnates, who would no longer be able to collect dividends on watered stock by controlling the market. When the subject is analyzed it will be seen that Mr. Taft must either be in darkness as to the remedy and its effect, or he must argue that the introduction of morals into business would "extirpate and destroy" business.

I have quoted and re-quoted Mr. Taft's language because I want to impress upon the minds of those who listen to me the absurdity of the objection which he raises to the democratic plan of exterminating monopolies. He fails to distinguish between the honest business that makes a country prosperous, and the brigandage practiced by private monopolies. The people have been