

whom he could more justly criticise. The disinterested observer can hardly escape from the conclusion that in the Tillman case the president has been straining at a gnat while in other cases camels have been swallowed without a grimace.

BUYING A CONGRESSMAN

A Joplin (Mo.) paper gives the following bit of history, showing how the republican leaders purchase congressmen and pay for the same with legislation:

"Colonel Greeg said that while in Washington he saw Speaker Cannon and informed him that southwest Missouri had done certain things asked for by Mr. Cannon on his recent tour of this section. 'I told him that we had heeded his advice and had elected a republican congressman to show that in reality we desired protection in this part of the state on zinc ore. I told him that his speech was largely responsible for the vote, not only for Morgan, but for Taft. I told him it was the vote of Jasper county that had thrown the electoral vote of Missouri in the republican column, and also I said that if the election had been close and Missouri had been the deciding state, certainly Mr. Taft would have been deeply indebted to Mr. Cannon for his election. Mr. Cannon advised me that it would not be good policy to go before the ways and means committee again. He said we had made a good showing and that the justice of our cause had been felt.'"

Here is the evidence that tariff rates were to be effected by the election of a republican congressman. According to the reported interview Speaker Cannon's speech made such an impression on the people of Jasper county that they elected the republican congressman and helped to give the state of Missouri to Mr. Taft. Those interested in the tariff on zinc ore then went to Washington and demanded the fulfillment of the pledge. Missouri is a large state and this year the vote was very close. In a close election the electoral vote of a state like Missouri might decide the result, and the vote of a county like Jasper might decide the vote of the state. Thus the promise of a tariff law for the benefit of an industry in one county might decide a presidential election. Congress is sometimes close, and the promise of a tariff for a particular industry in a particular section might determine the election of a congressman, and thus the political complexion of congress. The political complexion of congress also determines the speakership contest, and Speaker Cannon may not have been unmindful of his own political interests in offering to help make the tariff schedules conform to the election returns in that county.

For a generation the republican leaders have been in the habit of offering to make the tariff laws suit particular communities. Wherever the tariff schedules could be used to win votes, they have been used, and while these republican leaders have been purchasing congressmen and electoral votes in some sections with legislation, they have been defending the tariff system on patriotic grounds in the sections where voters could not be deceived by the promise of direct benefits. If the man who pays the tariff was as sensitive to the tax imposed by a tariff law as the man is who gets the direct benefit of the tax, it would be impossible for the republican party to maintain its hold upon the office, but as long as the average voter votes the ticket without asking any questions, while those especially interested make a business out of politics, the exploitation of the public by the privileged classes will go on.

REPUBLICANS CRITICIZE THE PRESIDENT

As the time for the president's retirement from the White House approaches, the republican papers begin to criticise Mr. Roosevelt quite freely. The Kansas City Journal, which was a very enthusiastic supporter of Mr. Taft published the following editorial criticism of the president:

LINCOLN AND ROOSEVELT

Upon one occasion Mr. Lincoln, walking down the street in Springfield, observed a little girl sitting on a doorstep weeping bitterly. He stopped and inquired what the trouble was. It seemed that the little girl had been going on a short railroad journey to visit her grandmother. Her trunk was packed and she was all ready, but the express wagon had not come. The train was almost due; it was too late to get an express wagon, and so the journey must be given up. "Never mind," said Mr. Lincoln, "I can handle that trunk all right. Come on, we can

make it." The trunk went up on Congressman Lincoln's back, and the two arrived at the station out of breath, but in time for the little girl to catch the train.—From "Anecdotes of Lincoln."

The Chicago Tribune contains the following telegram:

"Washington, D. C., December 31.—Carelton B. Hazard, a wealthy Virginian who lives on a thirty-acre tract near Rock Creek park, where his young daughter takes daily rides, has sent the following letter to the president:

"Theodore Roosevelt.—Dear Sir: My little daughter, Martha, fourteen years old, came home about two weeks ago from a horseback ride crying, and stated that she had been accosted by you while riding in Rock Creek park. She informs me that she unexpectedly came upon your party and guard, and, not wishing to pass you, she simply rode slowly back of you until she should come to the road that would lead her toward home, whereupon you turned on her and asked her if she did not think she had followed you long enough, and ordered her to take a side road, which would have led her away from home. She refused to do this, and promptly told you she would take the other road, which led toward her home, and did so. Did you expect my little daughter to dismount upon meeting you? I can not comprehend how a gentleman could accost young girls unprotected on a public road with fits of anger. As for my little girl, she shall take her rides as usual, and if she should be so unfortunate as to meet you again I feel confident that this communication from me will be sufficient to assure her safety hereafter.

"CARELTON B. HAZARD."

In forwarding this letter Mr. Hazard addressed it to Mr. Roosevelt as an individual and not as president of the United States—though we don't see what difference it makes how he addressed it. All individuals are not presidents, though all presidents have the misfortune to be individuals. Mr. Hazard and his daughter will, of course, have the sympathy of all who learn of the occurrence, though he is not wholly free of blame. He should have known (and by this time does) that any young lady riding unattended in or near Washington is liable at any moment to meet people who are drunk or otherwise not in their right minds, or who are suffering from bigheaditis, or who are bullies or generally ill-mannered.—Kansas City Journal.

If republican papers say this now, what will they say when the president is no longer clothed with executive authority?

THE FIRST PLEDGE REDEEMED

The Nebraska legislature has started out well. It has commenced by redeeming one of the pledges—the first it has had time to redeem—of the national platform. The convention at Denver pointed out that the rule of the speaker in the national house of representatives had overthrown popular government in that body and reduced the members to a position of servitude to the speaker. While, for many reasons, the tyranny has not been carried as far in state legislatures as it has at Washington, still the principle is the same, and the democratic legislature of Nebraska has acted wisely in stripping the speaker of the power to obligate members to him through committee appointments.

The democratic caucus elected a speaker, and then proceeded to appoint a committee to act with the speaker in the selection of the house committees. This committee made up a list and submitted it to the democratic caucus for ratification, the republicans having been permitted to name the republican members of the committees. The caucus endorsed the action of the committee, and the speaker went through the formality of announcing the appointments. While the caucus endorsed the action of the committee, practically without opposition, still it was important that the caucus should have had the final word, because the very fact that the caucus had power to ratify or reject put a restraint upon the committee on committees and compelled it to act with wisdom.

The Nebraska legislature has been organized according to a democratic plan. The speaker will perform the duties properly belonging to his office, and the members of the various committees will be free to represent their constituents and to give expression to their individual conscience and judgment. This is as it ought to be, and it is to be hoped that the legislatures in the various democratic states will in like manner conform to the doctrine promulgated in our national platform. The legislator occupies a responsible position; he ought to be free to voice the opinions of his constituents and to guard their interests. It is not fair to compel him

to submit to the yoke of a speaker, for a speaker may, under the old plan, use committee appointments to compel obedience. Our government is not a government of one man, it is a government of the people, by the people and for the people, and this principle should be preserved in all of its departments.

The Nebraska legislature is to be congratulated upon its initial step; it is looking in the right direction and is now in position to march forward.

SENATOR LAFOLLETTE'S PAPER

The Commoner has received the first copy of Mr. LaFollette's paper—LaFollette's Weekly Magazine. The following letter addressed by Mr. Bryan to Senator LaFollette outlines the position that The Commoner will take toward the new magazine:

"Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Madison, Wis.—My Dear Mr. LaFollette: I am just in receipt of the first number of your paper and hasten to congratulate you upon its appearance and its promise. I am heartily glad that you have entered the journalistic field. The fact that we do not agree upon all questions is not so material, for those who think for themselves are likely to differ. If we all seemed to think alike, it would be evidence that we did not think at all.

"We are greatly in need of journals published with a purpose and giving expression to the conscience and judgment of a person whose identity is known. Nearly all our great dailies have become business enterprises operating through corporate forms. The owner of the stock is seldom known, and the editor still less. I wish we had a number of papers like yours with a national circulation, and still others with state circulations. There can not be too much publicity. Out of discussion comes truth; only error seeks the cover of darkness. Strength to your arm! If you can purge the republican party of its corruptions, improve its tone and elevate its ideal, you will render a public service. If your efforts fail and the corporate influences that have dominated, and continue to dominate it, your party successfully resists the efforts of the reform element in that party, our party will be inspired to greater effort to win that reform element. You may help us, therefore, as well as your own party; but insofar as you promote any worthy cause, you will help your country, and that is more important than that you should help any party.

"I shall be glad to co-operate with you as far as I can, and where we are compelled to disagree, I shall still be glad to have the opposite side as ably and as honestly stated as it will be in your paper.

"Very truly yours,
"W. J. BRYAN."

GEORGE IVES

Mr. Bryan's attention has been called to the death of Mr. George Ives, at Dunkirk, N. Y. Mr. Ives died since the election at the age of 105 years. The local paper, speaking of him, said: "He was a strict vegetarian and during his latter years ascribed his long life, health, and happy old age to his frugal habits of life and outdoor activity. He was an active and enthusiastic democrat and at the last election voted for William Jennings Bryan, having taken a keen interest in the campaign."

The Commoner extends its sympathy to the friends of George Ives.

SPEAKING ABOUT DIRT

Senator Foraker, in a speech delivered in the senate, charged that the sum of \$15,000 had been wrongfully diverted from the three million dollar emergency war fund of 1899 and used for the employment of private detectives in the Brownsville investigation. He placed the responsibility of this alleged misappropriation upon the head of the outgoing republican administration and upon the head of the incoming republican administration. Senator Foraker is a republican. It would seem, therefore, that these republican leaders—outgoing and incoming—would do well to devote some of their energies toward sweeping the dirt from their own doorsteps.

A GOOD PLAN

A reader of The Commoner writes that he is undertaking to increase The Commoner's advertising by bringing it to the attention of advertisers and asking them why their advertisements are not found in The Commoner. It is a good plan and the readers of The Commoner can assist the paper by thus bringing it to the attention of advertisers.