

appoints men of another party to a bi-partisan board, the man appointed has either betrayed his party or is expected to. This is not always the case, but this is the rule. In the case of Mr. Dickinson the appointment is given him because he is not in harmony with his party, and he is not expected to act in the interest of his party as a cabinet officer.

Mr. Dickinson's appointment will not break up the south; if it has any influence at all, it will simply arouse the real democrats to more earnest action that they may rid themselves of the weight of those who constantly strangle democratic legislation and emasculate the platforms of the party. It weakens the democratic party rather than strengthens it to have men in it who call themselves democrats but who oppose the things that are democratic. These men are a weakness whether their opposition to democracy comes from aristocratic sentiment or from corporate connection. The democratic party must be a people's party or a party of the predatory corporations; it can not be both, and as the republican party is already firmly entrenched in the affections of predatory wealth, it is bad in policy as well as vicious in principle for the democratic party to attempt to win the support of the exploiting interests. Mr. Dickinson's appointment only emphasizes the necessity for making the democratic position so plain that men can not wear the livery of the party and yet continue to advocate republican policies.

BELATED PRAISE

President Taft is quoted as paying a tribute to Ex-President Cleveland in a speech made in New York on the latter's birthday. The belated praise which is now heaped upon Mr. Cleveland by republicans would have been very much appreciated by him during his life. In 1896 the republican leaders blamed the democratic administration for the panic of '93, and ever since that time the republicans have called it a "democratic panic" because it occurred under the administration of one who was elected as a democrat. Mr. Cleveland was denounced by the republicans for the issuing of bonds in the time of peace, although the republicans are preparing to do the same thing now. The tariff which Mr. Cleveland favored was denounced as a menace to the country and as disastrous to our industry and as a concession to the foreigners. Nothing that Mr. Cleveland did was supported by the republicans except what he did on the money question, and that was endorsed only because he adopted the policy of the republican leaders on that subject.

Mr. Taft says that it was a relief to the republican party when the leadership in the party passed from Mr. Cleveland, and this in forgetfulness of the fact that the republicans had a larger majority in congress during the second half of Mr. Cleveland's administration than they have ever had since. It was not necessary in that congress to secure the support of a few democrats in order to carry out the policies of a republican speaker.

A MAJOR GENERAL OF INDUSTRY!

In its issue of February 26 the New York Sun (financial and commercial column) printed the following:

"So far as any intelligent comment regarding the steel situation was heard today it was, as a rule, to the effect that this situation appeared to be rapidly working out in the proper direction. It is now evident that the policy of the United States Steel corporation is not to make successive reductions in list prices for steel products, but to quote no list prices whatever and to make every effort it can to secure business. As a matter of truth contracts are now being concluded by the corporation at figures far below any offered in the last few months by the small independent producers, whose price cutting has led to the recent disturbance in the trade. It was said today that in consequence of this many of these independent producers have retired from the steel market, realizing full well the impossibility of waging a successful war with the steel corporation in a contest of this character. If this is a fact it seems plain that the steel corporation has in substance gained control of the iron and steel market and that the beginning of the end of the trouble in the steel trade is at hand. There were also rumors today that some of the independent steel producers had asked for a conference of representatives of all the leading producing agencies, a circumstance which if correctly stated would seem to

also point strongly in the direction of a settlement of trade difficulties."

A prominent New York lawyer who sent this clipping to The Commoner, makes this notation: "This constitutes a nutshell of the social, political and financial morals of the Sun, Wall Street, Morgan and the rest. According to these the 'proper direction' in which to work out 'the industrial situation' is that the steel corporation (controlling about one-sixth of it) shall use its power to go it blind on prices to secure the iron and steel business of the country and so force all the independent producers to 'retire.'"

BIG EXPECTATIONS

Evidently the special interests are expecting a great deal of the Taft administration. In his weekly letter of March 13 Henry Clews, the New York banker, says that Wall Street has settled down to the feeling that "there will be a cessation of the disturbing methods towards great corporations which have been so prominent for some time past." Mr. Clews adds:

"The Standard Oil and the Missouri rate decisions, although they had no great effect upon the market, served to strengthen confidence. It is believed that now the harmful consequences of radical and extreme agitation against large corporations are fully seen, that a more temperate policy will be adopted in dealing with such important matters. This does not mean that there should be the slightest leniency shown in the enforcement of law against the large concerns, but that demagogic attacks should cease, and that the attempts at confiscatory legislation will be fewer and far between. In other words, the hope seems justified that we are about to enter a period of more rational treatment of the great economic and financial problems of the day."

By "demagogic attacks" Mr. Clews plainly means Roosevelt messages and by "more rational treatment of the great economic and financial problems of the day," he means plainly that sort of treatment for the great trusts which might be expected from a political party whose campaign funds were provided by representatives of the special interests.

THOSE CONTINGENT ORDERS

Mr. Bryan wrote for the March number of Munsey's Magazine an article in which he said: "Mr. Brown, the vice president of the New York Central system, was quoted after the election as saying that he confirmed purchases to the amount of thirty-one millions of dollars which were made on orders given before the election, contingent upon republican victory." As a footnote to Mr. Bryan's article and referring to this statement Munsey's prints the following statement from Mr. Brown:

"This story had its origin in some newspaper office in Omaha. It was telegraphed all over the country, and was promptly denied by me at the time it appeared. There was not a road in the New York Central system that had placed an order for equipment, or for anything else, contingent on the result of the election, and I have never made the statement referred to by Mr. Bryan."

Prior to election day statements of the character referred to by Mr. Brown were printed in nearly every republican newspaper in the country and relating to nearly every railroad. Railroad magnates permitted these statements to go uncontradicted and they were used with telling effect upon timid voters. Mr. Brown says that he denied the statement which was attributed to him after election. No one, however, ever heard of any of these gentlemen denying one of these statements prior to election day.

THE BIG NAVY PROGRAM

President Taft has espoused with enthusiasm the big navy program inaugurated by his immediate predecessor. He uses the phrase "strong navy" and insists that "the policy of maintaining a strong navy" is "the best conservator of our peace with other nations, and the best means of securing respect for the assertion of our rights," etc. The advocates of a big navy, recognizing the universal desire for peace, attempt to conceal their military enthusiasm under the guise of an advancement of peace. No one ought to be deceived. The theory which the president advances is not a new one; it is centuries old, but it is fallacious. Big navies are not built in the interest of peace and they do not promote peace. The spirit that justifies them is the spirit that leads nations into war,

just as the spirit which prompts a man to carry a revolver is the spirit that leads him to use the revolver. Does anyone suppose that we would have less shooting if every citizen equipped himself with a number of revolvers? Does anyone believe that the carrying of revolvers promotes the observance of the law? As little can we expect to promote peace by rivalry in the building of warships. They have a navy league in nearly all of the leading nations, and the navy league of each nation demands an increase in the navy of its country every time a battleship is built in another country. If we build two ships, Germany must build two or three, and England must build three or four, and then we must build again, and then the other nations must build more. There is no end to this insane policy except the bankruptcy of the weaker nations and the burdening of the people of all nations. War is much more apt to come from the cultivation of a war spirit than from the infliction of a real injury by an enemy.

This big navy program brings the country face to face with a question of the first magnitude. Shall we join in the cultivation of the war spirit and in the craze for battleships? Surrounded by oceans we are in a position such as no other nation occupies. We are not only the moral leader of the world, but we are so situated geographically that the arguments addressed to fear ought not to influence us as they do other nations. We can with less risk than other nations apply the Christian doctrine to our national policy and trust to the righteousness of our policies and to the sense of justice which guides us in dealing with other nations. Our resources are so abundant and the capacity of our people so well known that no nation is going to invite an encounter. If we had not a single battleship, it is known the world over that we could build and equip a navy, if we so desired. And if any nation was foolhardy enough to inflict injury upon us before we were ready for battle, its indemnity would only be the larger when the real contest began. But those who oppose the extravagant navy program outlined by the president do not ask that our ships be dismantled; they only ask that we shall have a policy of our own and not be driven into naval expansions by the example of others. We ought to lead, not follow; and it is time to recognize the superiority of moral greatness over mere physical prowess. It is time that the moulders of public sentiment and the exponents of the nation's conscience speak out against this rash embarkation upon a policy of swagger and boasting. It is time to invoke again the words of Lincoln. He declared that the nation's strength was not in its army or its navy, in its forts or its towers, but in the spirit that prizes liberty as the heritage of all men in all lands everywhere. This must be our reliance if we escape the fate of the nations that have gone down to death.

WHAT ABOUT PROSPERITY?

Henry Clews, the New York banker, was one of the strongest supporters of the republican ticket during the recent campaign. Mr. Clews wanted the American people to elect Taft and Sherman in order that prosperity might be maintained. He was anxious for the defeat of the democratic ticket in order that hard times for the people generally and low wages for the laboring man particularly might be avoided. Commoner readers may, therefore, be interested in a statement made over the signature of this same Henry Clews and printed in the Weekly Financial Review issued by the banking house of Henry Clews & Co. In this letter, which is dated March 13, Mr. Clews says that the only dark cloud upon the horizon at present is the labor situation. He adds:

"A number of reductions in wages have already taken place in the steel trade, and more are expected. In the copper industry lower wages are also in force. The coal trade dispute with labor will begin on April 1, the outcome of which will be awaited with intense interest. Since both sides are ready and even anxious for a struggle, it is quite likely that a month or six weeks will elapse before a settlement is reached. How far-reaching the lower wages movement will become it is impossible to determine, but all rational beings are convinced that labor can not expect to entirely escape its share in the general depression in the inevitable readjustment."

But what about the great prosperity which was promised to the people in the event of republican victory?