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LAW OR LAWLESSNESS, WHICH?

The republican party has long boasted of being the party of "God and morality;" it has had the support of a large majority of the ministers and religious papers, and it has constantly charged the democratic party with being an ally of the saloon and in league with lawlessness. The time has come to put it to the test.

The republican party is in absolute control of the federal government. It has the president, the senate and the house. It can pass any laws that it wants to pass and repeal any laws that it wants to repeal. The federal government is today issuing licenses for the sale of liquor in territory where the local authorities have prohibited the sale. In several states the sale of liquor is prohibited by statute, in a number of states its sale is prohibited in a majority of the counties, and in all of the states it is prohibited in many villages, towns, cities and precincts. But in spite of the attempt of local authorities in these districts to prohibit the sale of liquor as a beverage, the federal government continues to issue licenses in contemptuous disregard of local sentiment and local law. The government receives \$25 for each license, and in receiving the money it must either intend to collect that sum without giving anything valuable in return (in case the one receiving the license does not sell liquor) or to encourage the one receiving the license to violate the local law, for he can not use his license without violating the law. Can the federal government afford to continue a partner with the lawbreakers? Can any party afford to longer legalize this partnership?

A democrat, believing in local self-government and in the right of each community to attend to its own affairs, can consistently oppose the action of the federal government in thus overriding the laws of states, counties and communities.

It matters not whether a person favors prohibition or opposes it, he ought to be in favor of the enforcement of law whether that law suits him or not. Popular government rests upon respect for law, and nothing is more calculated to cultivate disrespect for law than this action

of the federal government in not only ignoring the wishes of the people in various localities, but in actually reaping a profit from the issue of licenses which stimulate law-breaking.

Now, while the tariff bill is before congress, it will be an opportune time for the democrats to propose an amendment to the internal revenue part of the Payne bill prohibiting the issuing of federal licenses for the sale of liquor in states, counties or communities where the sale is locally prohibited.

Let the fight be in the open, and a majority of the voters will be found on the side of law and order whether they believe in the regulation of the liquor traffic by license or in its entire prohibition.

THE INCOME TAX

It looks as if events were about to vindicate another democratic position. The press dispatches report that Senator Cummins, of Iowa, has introduced an income tax amendment to the tariff bill, and it is claimed that he has secured the support of enough republicans to pass it with the aid of the democratic vote. It will be remembered that the democrats passed an income tax law in 1894 over the opposition of the republicans. In the campaign of 1896 the democrats endorsed the income tax principle and it was in the platform of last year. The republicans have never mentioned the matter in their platform, but Mr. Roosevelt endorsed the principle and President Taft has also given it a half-way endorsement. It is said that the democrats of the senate will be a unit in support of an income tax amendment. This is gratifying news and it is to be hoped that enough republicans can be found to secure the adoption of this just provision.

A tax upon consumption is necessarily unjust to the poorer members of society, for people do not eat food, wear clothing or purchase other taxed goods in proportion to wealth or income. It takes as much food to sustain the poor man as the rich man, and as much clothing to keep him warm. While one may spend more than another for food and clothing, the difference is not at all proportionate to wealth or income. As all taxes are paid out of the income, the tax upon consumption is in fact a graduated income tax—the largest per cent being paid on the smallest incomes and the smallest per cent on the largest incomes. A direct tax on incomes is, therefore, a tax to equalize the burdens of government, and a graduated income tax makes a still nearer approach to justice.

The income tax is needed to correct the inequalities in internal revenue taxes as well as to correct the injustice in tariff taxes. Internal revenue taxes are collected on liquor and tobacco, and these taxes, too, are more burdensome to the poor than to the rich for men do not use either liquor or tobacco in proportion to wealth or income. While it is proper that both liquor and tobacco should be taxed, it is only fair that those who are under-taxed through the internal revenue system should be taxed in some other way so as to compel them to bear their share of public expenditures. The income tax is the only tax in sight which will

give any approximation towards justice in the matter of federal taxation.

As is being pointed out at Washington, it is not at all certain that any income tax measure will be able to run the gauntlet of the supreme court, and for that reason the democrats ought to insist upon an amendment to the constitution at the same time that they urge an income tax measure so that in case of adverse action by the supreme court there may still be a chance of securing an income tax in the future. It is intolerable that our government should be so restricted in the taxation of wealth, and so unlimited in its power to call for the personal services of the citizen. The president can summon every able-bodied citizen to military duty. The husband can be taken from his wife, the son from his mother, and the father from his children; their lives can be required of them if the country's welfare demands it. Why should the property of the citizen be so hedged about by constitutional guarantees—or by judicial decisions—as to make it impossible for the government to collect a tax for its support when it protects property? Congress ought to have the power to collect an income tax whenever in the judgment of congress that tax is necessary, and to make sure of this power we ought to have an amendment of the constitution specifically authorizing the income tax. Now that the need of a tax is apparent, the amendment should be pushed.

THE PRESIDENT'S SOUTHERN POLICY

President Taft will be universally commended for one position which he has taken, namely, that he will not appoint colored men to positions where "appointment of one of their number to a local office in a community in which the race feeling is so widespread and acute as to interfere with the ease and facility with which the local government business can be done by the appointee." He very properly remarks that there is doubt whether such an appointment "is of sufficient benefit by way of encouragement to the race as to outweigh the recurrence and increase of race feeling which such an appointment is likely to engender." He might have said that it is certain that such appointments would injure the black man as much as they would offend the white man. The colored man has been harmed rather than helped by those who have increased the antagonism between the races by attempting to force colored appointees upon communities where objection was made to them. The republican politicians instead of recognizing conditions have attempted to discharge their political debts in the north by appointments made in the south, and in doing this they have retarded the progress of the colored race in two ways; first, by kindling race feeling, and second, by leading the black man to overestimate the importance of office holding. Office holding ought to be an incident, not the object of a life. Instead of emphasizing the importance of industry, development of character, the exercise of self-restraint and of education some northern republicans have encouraged the colored people to believe that office holding is the only occupation worthy of the aspiration of colored youths. Mr. Taft will be remembered with gratitude if he inaugurates a new policy in this respect.

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