THE UNDERWOOD INCIDENT AGAIN

On another page will be found an extract from the Congressional Record containing the speeches of Mr. Underwood and Mr. Kitchin. The reader will note:

First—That both ask for Mr. Bryan's authority. Mr. Bryan has given it—the Omaha World-Herald, owned by Senator Hitchcock.

Second—That Mr. Kitchin admits making the speech attributed to him. He expresses surprise that a democrat would use it. That is the partisan view—that it is proper to criticise an opponent but improper to criticise one of your own party. Mr. Kitchin is now convinced that Mr. Underwood was right in favoring delay in reporting a bill reducing iron and steel schedules. Mr. Bryan is not convinced. The action of the senate on other bills should have no influence on the house program. There is no good reason why the house should not proceed to report bills as long as it is in session—the more the better. But the most notable thing about Mr. Underwood's speech is that it does not meet the real point at issue. DID SOME ONE OFFER A RESOLUTION INSTRUCTING THE COMMITTEE TO PROCEED TO REPORT OTHER BILLS AND DID MR. UNDERWOOD OPPOSE AND DEFEAT IT? The World-Herald dispatch says he did and that is the basis of Mr. Bryan's criticism. Mr. Underwood admits that SOME ONE offered such a resolution and that HE OPPOSED IT. Did Mr. Clark offer or support such a resolution? If so, why did Mr. Underwood not so state? If Mr. Clark did NOT introduce or support such a resolution why did Mr. Underwood not specifically deny the report?

The fact that IN THE BEGINNING he asked for immediate reduction then on iron and steel has weight but it does not outweigh his opposition to immediate reduction now. His REASONS for his present attitude are proper subjects for discussion.

Finally it will be noticed that he did not answer the criticism of the secret caucus. Does he stand for dark lantern methods? Does he believe that members should be permitted to hide behind a caucus which furnishes no record vote? As a member of congress Mr. Underwood can avail himself of his personal privilege to denounce a criticism but his explanation does not explain. If Mr. Underwood's answer is satisfactory to the democratic members of congress Mr. Bryan appeals from their judgment to the judgment of their constituents.

EXPLAIN, MR. UNDERWOOD

Mr. Underwood, in a fit of irritation, attacked Mr. James of Kentucky. He afterward withdrew his criticism but he ought to rise to a question of personal privilege and explain:

First—Why it irritated him to have Mr. James oppose a fifty-year lease to a water power company?

Second—Why he impugned the motives of a fellow member of the ways and means committee?

Third—Why he used the stock phrase employed by the representatives of predatory corporations when they are denouncing those who defend public interests?

He will have to make the first explanation himself; it is incomprehensible to the outsider that he should have been irritated by Mr. James' remarks when he had no personal interest in the measure.

He will have difficulty, too, making the second explanation. He must have a deep seated grudge against Mr. James to make such an attack upon him. The language was intended as an insult—the worst insult that a man like Mr. Underwood could hurl at an opponent. Men like Mr. Underwood can not think of anything more offensive to say of a man than that he "is making a play to the galleries." Of course, Mr. Underwood is sorry that his anger led him to reveal his disappointment at Mr. James' great victory. But it is illuminating to know that Mr. Underwood's sympathies were with Mr. Paynter and against Mr. James. It gives us a side-light on Mr. Underwood that helps us to understand him.

The public can make the third explanation itself. When Mr. Underwood accused Mr. James of winning his senatorial fight by an appeal to the galleries he gave the public an interior view of himself. He looks at questions from the plutocratic standpoint; he has a contempt for those who appeal to the masses. To him Mr. James appears as a rank demagogue—so does any one else who takes the people's side against the demands of the predatory interests. Of course, he congratulated Mr. James on his victory and he would have congratulated Mr. Bryan also had he been elected, but in his heart Mr. Underwood has felt toward Mr. Bryan as he has felt toward Mr. James. He has had an opportunity to express himself against both. He has withdrawn his remarks so far as Mr. James is concerned, but he can not obliterate the flashlight which he gave the public of the real Underwood when he accused Mr. James of having won his senatorial contest by "a play to the galleries."

MR. ALDRICH THINKS SO, TOO

Mr. J. P. McClure, Purdy, Mo., writes: "Much is being said and done by republican organs masquerading as democrat papers. I enclose a sample which is clipped from the St. Louis Republic of August 4. This paper, together with many others, has been quite busy since the convening of congress 'eliminating' Mr. Bryan from democratic politics. Let Mr. Bryan continue his good work, the people are with him."

The Republic editorial follows: "We trust that western democrats will not become unduly disturbed over Mr. Bryan's criticisms of Chairman Underwood; they are but evidences, we take it, of a 'summer mood' which soon must pass.

"The ground of our confidence is the work Mr. Underwood is doing. No democrat for a generation has shown higher capacity for practical service as a legislator. The country is getting the kind of legislation it wants. Mr. Underwood is helping, in a position of focal importance, to supply it. And there you are.

"We should like gently to remind Mr. Bryan that one of the frontiers of free speech touches the domain of the common scold. To Mr. Underwood and his associates has come the opportunity—which has never been vouchsafed to Mr. Bryan—to undertake constructive legislation. They are doing yeoman service, and should be supported.

"That Mr. Bryan should be dissatisfied with the precise order of events in congress is natural—and negligible. The independence of the course of events of our individual prejudices and prepossessions is one of the sad and familiar facts of life. The Lincoln statesman is shooting well, but his piece lacks elevation. From a comfortable position in the rear—where, of course, the artillery ought to be—he is hitting the front rank in the back."—St. Louis Republic.

Mr. Aldrich, also, doubtless thinks that Mr. Bryan is "a common scold," because Mr. Bryan has opposed many of Mr. Aldrich's schemes, among them the Aldrich currency scheme.

If the editor of the St. Louis Republic would get nearer to good old Missouri democrats he would not take offense because Mr. Bryan insists that the democratic party shall be true to its principles. Nor would the editor of the Republic write such editorials, for instance, as appeared in his paper of March 1, wherein he commended the Aldrich currency scheme.

From the indorsement of the Aldrich currency scheme as worthy of support, to the denunciation of Mr. Bryan as "a common scold" because he protests against the democratic party going republican is but a short step.

Let the St. Louis Republic look to its own standing among true and tried democrats. That standing is imperiled by the indorsement of such trust schemes as the Aldrich currency plan.

WHY NOT PROBE IT?

Representative Beall of the house investigating committee asked George W. Perkins of the steel trust about that trust's contributions to campaign funds. Mr. Perkins refused to answer and the committee held a meeting in which the democratic members decided to insist upon an answer from Perkins and in the event of further refusal to order him before the bar of the house for contempt.

Later Representative Littleton of New York, democrat, who had not attended the previous session of the committee induced other democratic members to reconsider. The Associated Press says that Representative Bartlett of Georgia, democrat, supported Mr. Littleton in this position. Mr. Littleton made a statement in which he said that the committee had no authority to ask Mr. Perkins as to his contributions to campaign funds unless it could be shown that he was afterwards reimbursed by the trust.

Following Mr. Littleton's statement, Chairman Stanley declared that it was well known that campaign contributions "that were not spread on the records with any degree of voluminousness" were made by corporations.

"An inquiry," said Mr. Stanley, "as to the methods by which the United States Steel corporation kept its books with reference to this practice is relevant. Mr. Beall may and will exercise a wise discretion in the matter, but as to the question as to what difference there was in the way the United States Steel corporation and other corporations, that is the New York Life Insurance company, kept its records, the chair still is of the opinion that it is relevant and competent, and should Mr. Beall insist upon an answer to that question the decision of the chair is not to be altered."

Why is it that every time "the system" is pushed into a close place by some faithful democrat, some other democrat rushes to "the system's" relief?

WRITE YOUR CONGRESSMAN

If the democratic members of the house did not submit to secret caucuses on public affairs there would be no doubt concerning any of their proceedings.

Why should any democratic member submit to the secret caucus? Why should not the public business which these men have to do be transacted in the open so that their constituents may be able to fix responsibility for all that they do and for all that they fail to do?

The secret caucus is one of the worst foes of popular government. If you are opposed to it write your member of congress and urge him to protest against it.

ON ITS OWN TESTIMONY

John I. Haynes, St. Louis, Mo.—Apropos to your splendid articles on guaranteeing bank deposits, I enclose information from the New York World, May 24, 1911, showing the loss of thirty-seven million dollars in two years in the state of New York. Yet the New York World is opposed to bank guarantees.

From the New York World: "The new state superintendent of banking will take charge, tomorrow, it is expected, of the principal office of the department—the one in this city. When he does so he will receive as a legacy from his predecessor fifteen banking corporations which have failed in the last two years and six months, sweeping away more than $37,000,000 of the people's money.

* * * * *

"In some cases dividends have been paid, but in the majority not one cent has been handed back to the depositors who placed their money in the institutions."

THE PEACE TREATIES

The treaties between the United States and Great Britain and the United States and France ought to be ratified at once. They have gone as far as public sentiment will permit in submitting questions for final settlement, but the most important clause is the one providing for INVESTIGATION in EVERY CASE. This clause closes the door to war. Investigation will result in reconciliation; wars are the outgrowth of acts done while the nation is mad.

The primacy of our nation is peace, the peace movement is a matter of congratulation, and it is appropriate that Great Britain—whose people share our language—and France—our ancient friend and ally—should be associated with our own country in the signing of these epoch-making treaties.

President Taft will look back to these treaties with pride and satisfaction.

"CUT DOWN THE ROBBER TARIFFS"

Editorial in Houston (Texas) Chronicle: Bryan charged that Underwood feared to try reducing protective tariffs on iron and steel.

Underwood says Bryan's charge is false.

But Underwood, with power to reduce, doesn't reduce the iron and steel tariffs.

Talk is cheap. The right way for Underwood to prove Bryan's charge is false is to do what Bryan says he dare not try to do.

As for the "wild applause" given Underwood by his fellows in the house at Washington, it may, as Bailey's Houston organ claims, prove his fellows believe him a "pure" man, but it is a long way from proving him a square democrat.

The way for him to prove that is to obey the democratic party's promises, and the American majority's orders, and cut down the robber tariffs on iron and steel.