

NEWS OF THE WEEK

A Weekly Resume of the Really Vital News by the Editor

Roosevelt is making the same benevolent protestations that the British did when "simply taking control of the financial affairs" of Egypt. The British are in Egypt yet. As long as the republican party rules the United States will be running that little negro republic. Aside from that, Roosevelt's policy will make us responsible for more than 2,000 millions of debts and the keeping of order among 60 millions people of mixed Spanish, Portuguese, Indian and negro blood, divided up among sixty little republics where a revolution is the ordinary way of getting the ins out, and outs in. With all that, the senate does not seem to be concerned, but it gets hot over infringing one of its prerogatives. An American Grand Duke of the senate is very much like a Russian Grand Duke of the imperial council.

The ship subsidy bill is being pushed forward in congress and will likely become a law. The mullet heads have had their objections overcome by changing the word "subsidy" to the word "subvention." So they go around declaring that no ship subsidy bill will be passed. Whatever appropriation the bill carries will be a direct gift of money taxed out of the people and turned over to the steel trust. Americans cannot build ships because the steel trust will sell the steel that goes into an ordinary freight steamer to foreign ship builders for \$50,000 less than it will sell it to an American ship builder. The way to start up American ship building is to take the tariff off from steel, instead of passing subsidy and subvention bills.

The plutocratic press seems undecided, as every one is, about the sincerity of the president in pushing his reform measures. The moment that the press becomes satisfied that the president is in earnest, he will be denounced as "a demagogue," "a dreamer," and "a disturber," just as every man has been who has tried to make the common lot of people better and happier. We will have to wait for these denunciations before any of us can become certain about what Roosevelt will do. The plutocrats will find it out first. Let every man wait until he sees that sign before he gives Roosevelt his confidence.

In a private letter, a gentleman who is familiar with affairs at Washington and New York declares that the whole democratic party in congress, with the exception of three or four men, have gone over to the republicans. They will put up no sort of opposition at all, and in fact the leaders, of the party, if it can be said to have any leaders, are at present the great laudators of the republican president. Furthermore he says that there is not a newspaper correspondent in Washington that dare write the facts as they exist. There is no longer any opposition to plutocracy in either the senate, the house or the press. When plutocracy captured the St. Louis convention and not a leader made a protest, but all remained "regular," that ended all opposition until some new party arises with leaders in whom the people have confidence.

Harriman is making fast strides toward the coming dictatorship of politics and government in these United States. During the last few weeks he has picked up, without any trouble at all, three or four United States senators and got a decision from the United States supreme court against Morgan and Hill that will give him control of the Great Northern. Not a man in either house of congress has had the courage to say a word. Democrats and republicans alike, are trying to con-

vince the great financial moguls that they are true vassals. John Sharp Williams is about the most complete failure that ever appeared on the floor of the house.

From recent reports there seems to be continuous and pretty heavy fighting in the Philippines, confined so far to the provinces of Cavita and Batangas. United States troops garrison all the towns and the writ of habeas corpus has been suspended. The disaffection is laid to the ladrones and dissatisfaction with the internal revenue law. The indications are that the situation verges on a state of war. One of these days, and not long hence, the republican party will get very tired of that Philippine business.

The Japanese have done another thing that was never heard of before. Aside from treating their tens of thousands of prisoners of war like honored guests, they have established schools at every prison and are teaching the ignorant Russians how to read and write. Whether so intended or not, that is the worst blow that could be struck at bureaucracy.

It seems that the Hepburn bill was too transparent a fraud to get through congress and that the committee on railroads will present another that will give the commission power to fix rates. It is not believed that such a bill can ever be gotten through the senate but it will pass the house with a yell. The railroads think that just at present it will be well to throw a tub to the whale and have given orders accordingly to the men they have sent to congress. During this discussion they have dropped the old phrase "quasi-public" and substituted for it another. They now say that railroads are "semi-public" property. If that is so The Independent hopes that the roads will immediately turn over one-half of their stocks and bonds to public treasury.

The legislature of Wisconsin did not deem it necessary to ask LaFollette to pledge himself to stand for a regulation of rates on the railroads. That shows the difference between Harriman's Nebraska man Burkett and LaFollette. The Nebraska legislature called on Burkett for a pledge, and when Burkett made the pledge, the Nebraskans did not believe a word of it.

Secretary Taft was before a congressional committee last week pleading for a reduction of the tariff between the United States and our subjects in the Philippines. The greatest objectors to such a policy are the tobacco growers in Connecticut and the beet sugar growers. As both of these interests declared that if the reciprocity treaty with Cuba was ratified "the industry would be ruined." But as it was not ruined at all, and has been prospering more than ever, it would seem that no attention should be paid to their tariff howling.

The supreme court handed down a decision in the beef trust case and it was headlined in the corporation press as a complete knockout for the trust. The synopsis of the opinion that followed the next day does not "knock out" anything. It simply declares that live stock sent to Chicago, for instance, from other states, is interstate commerce and the shipment of dressed meats from Chicago to other states for sale there, is also interstate commerce, and fall under the prohibition of the so-called anti-trust act. The dispatch concludes with these words. "The attorney general declined to say anything

with reference to any further proceedings in this or any other anti-trust case." As far as this decision is concerned, the beef trust stands just where it did before. The only way to reach it is by prosecution under the criminal law, and there are no indications that that will be done under the present administration.

The starving children of New York city are again causing a few remarks to be made in the plutocratic press of that city because it can't be avoided. Hitherto the highest estimate has been 50,000. But now Robert Hunter, a specialist in slum work, declares that 70,000 children go to school hungry each day. Superintendent of Schools Maxwell remarks that "Mr. Hunter has had unusual opportunities for forming a judgment in this matter, and I should think that he would be more likely to underestimate than to overestimate the number." The sordid millionaires who can carelessly ride up and down Fifth avenue in their \$10,000 automobiles and spend \$5,000 on pet dogs with starving children all around them, are as near devils as are seen in this world. Think of Carnegie, giving away millions for libraries while within half a mile of his residence there are 10,000 starving children! Carnegie never gave a cent to the poor in his life.

Mr. Steffens in his article in McClure's magazine on the infamies of Senator Aldrich's little bailiwick of Rhode Island, reaches the same conclusion concerning the clergy that The Independent has so often expressed. He says the clergy of Rhode Island have been wanting in courage, and even derelict in the performance of their duty, in not attacking the bribery of voters and other shameful practices. If the clergy have any mission in this world at all it is to preach righteousness and not to admit to the best seats in the churches bribers, extortioners and financial pirates, because they are big contributors to the minister's salary.

Higher prices for shoes are promised, along with the higher prices which have prevailed for pretty much everything else entering into the cost of living. Some grades of shoes were marked up by manufacturers on January 1, and the prospect is said to be good for a general advance in the spring, amounting to some 50 cents a pair. There is where the beef trust strikes the American people another stiff dig. The supreme court decides that the beef trust is engaged in interstate commerce. But the trust is all right and the 15 per cent tariff on hides is all right, so walk up and pay the additional fifty cents a pair on shoes, continue to "vote 'er straight" and above all things, be "regular."

Some of the dailies begin to remark that the democratic devotion to Roosevelt exhibited in congress is getting to

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