

should take to heart. It discloses the fact that the great corporations are vulnerable on the side of their self-interest. As long as they can deceive a majority of the people all is well with them, but once they find a united public sentiment arrayed in opposition to their designs they begin to understand that the power which created them can destroy them.

PLANS TO DESTROY THE LOBBY

The extensive power wielded by railways and corporations through paid lobbyists to influence legislation has aroused much interest in the remedies which have been suggested for the evil. In Wisconsin Governor La Follette is anxious to secure a law that will prohibit lobbyists from working in secret and requiring them to state their views at open hearings before legislative committees. In Missouri Governor Folk treated the lobbyists much as a police judge sometimes treats a tramp whom he orders out of town because he has made himself a public nuisance. In Ohio Governor Herrick, when accepting re-nomination at the hands of the republican convention, said:

"In Ohio today, and in all the states, there is a growing evil which gravely threatens to destroy the freedom of action which is the most important concern of the representatives of the people in the legislative department of the government. I refer to the professional lobby. The people of Ohio, in the making of their laws are entitled to the best judgment of all their representatives in the general assembly, as well as that of their chief executive, and they are entitled to this judgment free and untrammled by any opportunities from special interests. I care not what the purpose of the lobbyists may be, nor whether their object be good or bad, it is subversive of the basic principles upon which American institutions are founded, to permit a few men to direct or control legislation, and to put their judgment as to what is best for the people against that of the representatives of the people, elected for the sole purpose of registering their will."

If the present form of representative government is to remain unchanged it will be necessary either to keep the lobbyists away from the legislators or the legislators away from the lobbyists. Governor La Follette's law is designed to hold the lobbyists at a respectful distance. But it might be even more productive of good results to shut up the legislators as we now isolate grand juries.

The necessity for such disciplinary laws, however, indicates the weaknesses that exist in our present form of representative government. The power of making laws is transferred from the people to a selected few. The attention of the corporation lobby is constantly devoted to influencing these men. The lobby is alert, watchful and untiring. Its organization is most effective and the lobbyists are paid not to be indifferent. On the other hand the public is divided. Many are indifferent because their information, obtained through the daily press, is inadequate. And even when the people understand clearly what is doing at their state capitals they realize that their only weapon of defense is the right of petition.

The most certain method of overcoming these defects would be the application of the initiative and referendum. The state of Oregon has applied the system with excellent results. A petition of five per cent of the voters is sufficient to force a popular referendum upon any act of the legislature. A petition of eight per cent is sufficient to propose a new measure and if a majority of the people vote for it, the measure becomes a law.

The people of Oregon exercise the right to veto the acts of their representatives and, also, to pass laws independently of their representatives. If such a check were applied in all the states the corporations would find lobbies of little or no use. The most serious defects of popular government would disappear, and if a democratic form of government is to be preserved these defects must be removed.

JAPAN'S ASIATIC POLICY

In view of Admiral Togo's latest victory Americans have good reasons to congratulate themselves that their imperialism has taken them no nearer than the Philippines to the Asiatic continent. The ultimate result of Japan's increased naval and military prestige will be the announcement, sooner or later, of an Asiatic Monroe doctrine. As the American Monroe doctrine led rapidly to the elimination of Spain from the western hemisphere, so a Japanese doctrine of similar import will lead at least to a radical readjustment of European influence in Asia.

The progress of this readjustment will, of course, be unfavorable to the weaker nations. If the warlike spirit continues in Japan several gigantic conflicts will mark the first half of the Twentieth century. While the Japanese may be inspired by motives of revenge to soon try conclusions with France, motives of policy will probably prompt them to first loosen the frail hold which Germany has acquired in Asia. This prospect frightened the German emperor early in the present war and made it possible for the czar to obtain positive assurances that he need fear no attack from his western neighbor.

It is true that Japan has declared for the open door, but this declaration was made before Japan had become the dominant influence in Asia. Japan's policy will shift as its influence grows. It will be recalled that the Japanese opened the present war with comparatively moderate demands. They said that they would be satisfied to free Korea from the grasp of Russia and to recover Port Arthur, but after each victory their demands grew and now their ambitions have been revealed in a clearer light.

As soon as Togo's victory became known to the world a high Japanese

official took occasion to announce the new terms on which Russia could obtain peace. He said that not only would an indemnity of \$1,000,000,000 be required, but that Korea would be placed under a Japanese protectorate. All of which makes it clear that Korea will soon be declared a permanent Japanese possession.

As long as there was any chance that Russia might regain lost ground in Manchuria the Japanese were moderate in their demands, but now that Japan's actual hold on Manchuria and moral hold on China are assured, Japan will insist on her right to dominate Asiatic affairs.

It is unlikely that anyone alive today will live to see troops of the European nations again employed in suppressing a Boxer or any other uprising in China. It is no more to be expected than it is to be expected that European troops would be permitted by us to interfere in the settlement of any internal troubles in Mexico. Hereafter Japan will be the policeman of Asia and for a time she may share her prerogatives with her ally, England, but in the end England is bound to occupy a secondary position in Asia just as she occupies a secondary position on this continent.

All well-wishers of Japan will hope that it may use its powers wisely. Americans will continue to hope that the doctrines of the Prince of Peace will spread rapidly among these wonderful islanders. If Japan continues Pagan she will continue warlike. "The pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war" will appeal to her people more than the Christian doctrines of charity and peace. Perhaps, in view of Europe's sanguinary history of 2,000 years, it ill becomes Christians to lay so much stress on Christianity's influence in preserving peace. And yet this influence cannot be ignored. It undoubtedly had much to do with the settlement of the controversy which arose between England and Russia over the North Sea affair. The Hague Tribunal is a noble monument of its power. The arbitration treaties recently concluded between France and England and France and the United States give testimony that among the Christian nations there is deep and sincere desire for peace.

In Japan the war spirit is rife. As long as the state of her treasury permits Japan will be for war to settle old scores and to make more certain her mastery of the Orient. If a "Yellow Peril" exists it lies in the war spirit of Japan. If that spirit can be softened by Christianity it will be a wonderful boon to civilization.

PATHETIC PLIGHT OF PROTECTION

President Roosevelt and Secretary Taft are now said to desire "directive legislation" from congress with reference to the purchase of Panama canal supplies.

This shifting of the terrible tariff dilemma to the shoulders of congress will not be a source of pure delight to republican members. They would have greatly enjoyed the spectacle of the strenuous president and his heavyweight secretary wrestling with the tariff barons and tramping into splinters a long succession of republican platforms. But to be asked to take part in the struggle is dismaying.

The democrats, on the other hand, look forward to the contest with grewsome joy. They foresee a feast of carnage. They expect to scatter their opponents, jab the elephant in the ribs ad libitum, tear the tariff deity from the joss-house and demean themselves generally in a riotous and irreverent fashion. When Rojestvensky was ordered to the Far East he must have experienced a small portion of that terror which now tugs at the throats of tariff defenders.

The Independent renews for the benefit of congress the suggestion it made to Secretary Taft two weeks ago. If congress must adopt "directive legislation" and must, for party reasons, order the secretary to buy only American goods, it should direct him, however, to make the purchases abroad, where American goods are sold more cheaply than at home. Republican members of congress may regard this suggestion as rude, but they should not forget that the government must practice economy if it is to meet the treasury deficit without lowering the tariff. The situation is, of course, full of pathos. Everyone will understand that the high protectionists have fallen on evil days. While the voters will no doubt deeply sympathize with the tearful tariffites, nevertheless they will insist respectfully but firmly that high protection has been found guilty and must "hang by the neck until dead."

WHAT THE RAILWAYS ARE PLOTTING

The senate committee on interstate commerce, in its several weeks of pretended investigation, brought forth and flourished before the country much idle talk from railroad officials and favored shippers in reference to rate regulation. This talk of rate regulation is brought out partly for the purpose of preventing any sort of real rate regulation by congress, and partly to attract and hold the attention of the people to the one question of regulation, so that they will lose sight of the other part, and the vastly more important part of the rate question—rate reduction.

The people want regulation of interstate rates, to be sure; they want secret rebates and all forms of discrimination abolished, but more than anything else the freight-paying public wants rate reduction. Nebraska people, for example, according to the net profit reports of the Nebraska and Iowa railroads, are paying over \$7,000,000 more annually for their railroad service than the same number of people with the same railroad mileage would pay in Iowa. This \$7,000,000 annual extortion is the burden that is pressing most heavily upon Nebraska people. To remove discrimination merely adjusts the difference between shippers and shipping points. It removes the injustice as between shippers, but does not remove the greater