

men with whom the average member spends his time and with whom he consults as to the state of the country.

Is it any wonder, then, that he easily comes to believe that he hears the awful voice of the people, when, in fact, it is only the clamor of the "workers," who are always the *seekers*, too?

The Cincinnati Commercial estimates this class as 1,000,000, all of whom want the law repealed, as against 69,000,000 of citizens who demand that it be retained and enforced.

I am not responsible for the figures, but they are near enough for practical purposes.

It is fifteen years since the people were heard at the general elections upon this subject, and since the congress described by Mr. Curtis, which had adjourned in August laughing and sneering at reform, heard the thunder of the elections, and fairly tumbled over itself to vote for the Pendleton bill the following December or January.

Probably the present congress is not so different from its predecessor, except that one was repentant.

The story of these fifteen years, with their marvelous extension of the merit system, constitutes one of the most notable chapters in our history. Civil service reformers are apt to become impatient with the tardiness of its advance. They are prone to exaggerate the obstructive and destructive force of the influences that oppose its rapid and complete supremacy. They sometimes forget how long the spoils method flourished, and what a natural outgrowth it was in our democratic system of government; and in their impatience to pluck it up by the roots, and sow the place where it stood with salt, they forget that it is sometimes wise to make haste slowly, that this reform cannot move successfully any faster than the people.

But, as one of those who have been its friends from the beginning, I have to acknowledge that it seems to me as if the progress this reform—which has no purse to award and no offices to distribute—has made among the people of the United States and in its official service is simply marvelous.

It is this progress that alarms the politicians and officeseekers. So long as the classified service did not embrace any very large proportion of the desirable places, so long, too, as the law was inadequately enforced and might, with the aid of official cowardice and fraud, be evaded or circumvented, at least a tolerably decent deference to party pledges and platforms was maintained; but, as it has gradually become apparent that it is true, as Mr. Jenckes said thirty years ago, that this system—call it the merit system, the business system, the anti-spoils system, or what you may—will work an entire change in the appointment to and tenure of office of the subordinate civil-service of the govern-

ment, the significance of the situation has dawned upon them.

This is the reason of the present disturbance in congress, not that the law does not prove a success, but just because it does prove a success, not that the people do not approve of it—for, if ever a law was the people's law, this is such a one—but because it restores to the people their own offices—not democratic nor republican offices, but the people's offices—which they have created for the transaction of the business of all the people, and which all the people pay for.

I am not only surprised at the great progress made by the reform system during these fifteen years, but I am also impressed with the wisdom of the men to whom the responsibility of inaugurating the new system was intrusted.

In the first classification of places, covering the period from 1883 to 1885, only 13,924 were included, simply because they deemed it prudent to proceed with care, and not in any sense for the purpose of limiting the scope of the law, which by its terms was applicable to all subordinate places, clerks, and offices in the departments. Mr. Cleveland in his first term added 1,939 to this classified service, exclusive of the places in the railway mail service. You will remember that Mr. Cleveland's classification of that service, made shortly before his term expired, was suspended by his successor until May 1, 1889. During Mr. Cleveland's second term he classified 36,705 places, not counting 5,216 navy yard employees, who had been practically classified through the action of the secretary of the navy in Mr. Harrison's term. Mr. Cleveland also classified 10,752 places that had always been regarded as non-political; that is to say, as places which might not properly be interfered with upon change of administration, and, therefore, as not belonging to the spoils-hunters.

These figures I obtain from the testimony of Mr. Commissioner Procter, lately given before a senate committee; and they may be summarized as follows:

Classified under republican administrations	32,987
Under democratic administrations	27,892
Non-political places	10,752
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	71,641
By natural growth the classified service had taken on from 1883 to March 4, 1897	15,467
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Places, making the present classified service, with perhaps some slight modifications since Mr. McKinley's term began, a grand total of	87,108

It will be seen from this resume, assuming that all the political places classified by the different presidents were in fact filled at the time of their classification by officials of their own parties—which, of course, we all know is not the fact—that under republican administrations 32,987 places filled by republicans, and under democratic administration 27,892 places filled by dem-

ocrats, have been brought under the protection of the merit system.

Will any fair-minded republican complain of any such result as this?

And yet nothing can be clearer than that the assault in congress upon this law has its sole origin in the extension of the classified service by Mr. Cleveland during the last year of his official term.

There is no time in which to enter upon any detailed consideration of the arguments presented by the assailants. They have been abundantly and conclusively answered by Mr. Brosius, the very able chairman of the house committee on civil service reform, by Mr. Johnson of Indiana, by the members from Massachusetts, and by representatives from other states.

Nor can I at all debate the question whether there may not have been included in Mr. Cleveland's last extensions some places that were better excluded. These are questions of detail—questions of administration, proper to be dealt with by the executive, and which are not within the functions of a legislative body.

But, if this debate in congress shall once and for all dispose of the bugbear of life tenure and a privileged class and a civil-service pension, as it is likely to, it will not have been in vain.

Gentlemen, I have already spoken so long that I cannot enter upon the large subject of the civil service reform in the cities and states of this great country.

The federal government touches the citizen much less closely in its official service than the state and municipal governments. We feel the former chiefly when the carrier hands us our mail. We do not notice where the taxes come in, because of the indirection of their levy. But the state and city always have their hands upon us—in the streets, in the schools, in the institutions of charity, in the courts, everywhere; and if the merit system be a good thing, and the spoils system a corrupting and offensive thing in the federal offices, it is equally so in the offices of the city and the state.

Therefore, if the civil service reform, which the spoils orators in the fifty-fifth congress pretend to believe was intended to set apart only a little cluster of places in the federal departments, and was never expected to go any farther, be, as we believe, essential to the well-being of the republic, it must be essential also to that of the state and the municipality. In fact, the different jurisdictions cannot be separated in the consideration of this subject. When Mr. Jenckes brought it first before congress, he inaugurated a revolution as far-reaching as the entire subordinate civil service, federal, state and municipal. The principle involved is one that sooner or