

## A POINT WELL TAKEN

OMAHA, Dec. 15.—To the Editor of The Bee: Your reference to the disclosure that the state bank examiners in Illinois have been doing extra work for compensation from the institutions they examined, and your remark about similar practices elsewhere, are apt and timely, but do not go far enough. You know, or you ought to, that here in Nebraska, salaried officials are constantly accepting employment on the outside, which they would never get except for the fact that they are public officials. This practice ought to be stopped all along the line.

Our correspondent makes a good point and one that will strike a popular chord. The trend of public sentiment everywhere is against the old idea that a public office is to be regarded, if not as an instrument of graft, as a means of promoting private interests elsewhere.

Without going into specifications, it is notorious that here in Nebraska, state and local officials of all political parties have greatly abused their positions by making them merely a base of operations for private activities. In many cases the public official has persuaded himself to look at his salary as merely a retainer, entitling the people to his time and attention only when no one else wants it or he has nothing else to do. Schemes are projected and employment accepted whose financial success depend upon favor procured in an official capacity. That this is all wrong and should be stopped is perfectly obvious, but how to stop it is not so clear. If the salaries we pay our officials were on a scale by which we could rightly demand their exclusive services, all outside work could be prohibited. Under present conditions and in this day of publicity, perhaps the abuse could be obviated by requiring all these salaried officials to record publicly all private business engagements during their terms of office and make sure that they do not conflict with their public duties.

## THE CENSUS ENUMERATORS.

Congressmen, republicans and democrats alike, have joined in rejecting the recommendation of President Roosevelt that the enumerators to be employed in the taking of the next census be appointed only after a competitive examination. The charge was made in the course of the house debate on the question that the republicans and democrats were to share alike in the appointment of enumerators, thus placing the distribution of patronage on a "pork" basis and securing the votes of all who expect to share in it.

The bill as agreed upon by the house provides that the enumerators in the several congressional districts be selected by the congressmen, leaving the director of the census no option but to appoint the men thus named. As there will be about 3,000 additional clerks appointed for the service in Washington and a good many thousand enumerators for the work in the field, this will give the congressmen the largest volume of patronage they have had for years. The present director of the census and all his predecessors have protested against this method of appointing clerks and enumerators, insisting that the work of the census is delayed and its efficiency impaired by the failure of congress to provide men selected by merit rather than by personal influence or political pull. Apparently we have not yet reached the stage where our congressmen will voluntarily forego the filling of a few jobs with political camp followers, even though the census work suffer.

## THE CONGRESSIONAL INSURGENTS.

The close fight in the house over a resolution looking to change the report of the committee on rules furnishes an illustration of the growth of the sentiment among members for a modification of the existing system of conducting the business of that body. This fight is now being made as a matter of principle and not as a display of personal opposition to Speaker Cannon. While opposition to the speaker's re-election has practically subsided, the sentiment in favor of placing important limitations on the executive power lodged in that office is growing rapidly, with promise of real results when the new congress comes in with a considerable number of its first-term members pledged to a revision of the rules. Congressman Hepburn of Iowa, who has always been classed as a close supporter and personal friend of Speaker Cannon, is leading the movement for reorganization of the rules. His program, according to a published statement, would confer on the speaker authority to appoint one-third of the members of such committees, on the party caucus authority to name another third, and on the minority authority select the remaining third. He would delegate to the committees as selected the right to elect their own chairmen, and would make it obligatory on the speaker to call the committees once or twice a week so that they could present, without the permission of the speaker, measures on which they desire action by the house. Mr. Hepburn would also abolish the rule which makes it optional with the speaker, whether or not he shall recognize a member who addresses the chair.

Some action of this kind would do much to restore the house to greater freedom of action, and make it nearer an open forum for discussion. It is, of course, necessary that an unwieldy body like the house should have its order of business arranged in advance, its time assigned for bills and speakers recognized by agreement, but it is evident that the program should be made up after a more general consideration by the membership of the house, instead of having it firmly and definitely fixed by the committee on rules, dominated by the speaker. This committee now really exercises absolute power of life and death over legis-

lation, practically denying the right of consideration by the house.

The proposition of Mr. Hepburn to have the speaker name one-third of the committees, the party caucus to name the second third and the minority party to name the other third strikes at the real seat of the trouble in the house at present. It would deprive the speaker of two-thirds of his power in choosing members of the committees and deprive him wholly of the power to name chairmen, who would naturally be favorable to his legislative program. These propositions of change are radical, almost to the extreme, and it is doubtful if they can all be effected, but the appearance of an effective sentiment for revision of the rules promises some corrective measures by the new congress.

## THE PHILIPPINE SUGAR TARIFF.

The reported agreement of the ways and means committee of congress to admit annually 300,000 tons of Philippine sugar free of duty, with a duty of 75 per cent of the regular tariff on all excess of that amount, will probably be accepted by congress, as it is urged by Mr. Taft and is generally felt to be due as a partial performance of the pledges made to the Philippines to grant them trade concessions under the tariff laws.

The present production of sugar in the Philippines is only slightly in excess of home demands and but little of it is sent to this country. Those familiar with conditions in the islands contend that it will be ten years or more before the sugar available for export to the United States from the Philippines can amount to anything like 300,000 tons. The importation of that amount, duty free, from the Philippines would not seriously affect this country, although it would act as a stimulus and encouragement to the industry in the islands. The free admission of 300,000 tons annually from the Philippines would be felt only by other sugar exporting countries, Germany, Cuba and the Dutch East Indies, which now send annually to the United States more than 1,600,000 tons of sugar. There is apparently no danger that sugar importations from the Philippines will make any marked inroad on the domestic market for years to come.

## THE JANUARY DIVIDENDS.

In face of all the complaints of financial and business depression throughout the country in the early months of the present year, reports show that the January dividend disbursements will be the largest on record, amounting to more than \$200,000,000, and exceeding last year's dividends by nearly \$20,000,000.

The money to be thus disbursed has been earned largely by the railroads and the big industrial corporations, nearly all of which have not only met their regular dividend payments, but have added to their surplus reserves. The record appears to discount the complaints made by the railroad managers and the captains of industry to the effect that the administration policies of the government were ruining investments and frightening investors. The opposite effect appears to have been produced, the legislation and investigation relating to the operation of big corporation and industrial enterprises having reassured the people of the soundness of these concerns. It is expected that most of the \$200,000,000 to be disbursed in dividends will seek reinvestment, thus assuring an abundance of money for safe and sane enterprises.

Mr. Bryan wants the coming Nebraska legislature to enact into law all the pledges in the Denver platform applicable to state legislation. If Mr. Bryan would kindly specify how far the platforms on which the democrats won out in Nebraska are binding, both as to what they contain and what they omit, we would know better what to expect.

The completed table of the popular vote cast at the last election emphasizes again the gross disparity between the values of the electoral franchise north and south due to negro disfranchisement. The southern democrats not only prevent the negroes from voting, but in substance vote for them themselves.

The usual tail-end rush for pardons and paroles from the outgoing governor is on. The safe plan is for the governor to grant no commutations of sentence in the last month of his official term that he would not have granted just as freely in the first month of his official term.

Omaha and Council Bluffs have been fraternizing more during the past week than for many a month. Omaha and Council Bluffs people have so many interests in common that they ought to be pulling together all the time.

The Department of Agriculture has started experiments with hen food, to extend over a period of twenty years. If the experiments are successful, we may have an abundant supply of eggs after twenty years.

It is all well enough to make swearing over the telephone a flimsy offense, but how is one going to prove it? When it comes to a question of telephone veracity the average juror will take to the woods.

Charles Frohman has returned from Europe where he has been making astronomical observations. At least, he has been looking over the new stars.

Walter Damrosch says that if there were more music there would be fewer divorces. Depends upon the kind of

music. The chin music variety would not help the situation a little bit.

Diamond importations for the month of November amounted to \$1,899,605, as compared with \$541,395 in November of last year. The sparkler follows the prosperity flag.

A Philadelphia man is said to have contracted hydrophobia from eating sausage. This seems to verify certain popular suspicions as to the source of the sausage.

Mr. Roosevelt is quoted as saying that Julius Caesar was the greatest man the world ever produced. Yet Prof. Ferrero insists that Caesar was a democrat.

The Christmas shopper would like to know why the shortest days of the year should have been put on the calendar just in front of the holiday season.

If swearing at a person over the telephone is to be a misdemeanor, the profane man will have to take it out swearing at the other fellow to his face.

## The Family Roll Call.

Washington Herald: It will cost "Uncle Samuel" some \$12,000,000 to find out how much he has grown during the past ten years. Still the old gentleman probably realizes it is cheap at the price.

## Giving Itself Away.

Chicago Record-Herald: We are told that congress has neglected to do a lot of things it might have done for the benefit of the country because it desired through its inaction to spite the president. This being the case it should not be difficult to get a correct estimate of the patriotism which prevails in congress.

## Why Were Limits Fixed?

Cleveland Leader: When congress gets through with plans for punishing the president for his comments upon the law which restricted the use of the secret service men to the single field of counterfeiting, possibly it may occur to the senate and the house that the country would like to know just why such limits were fixed.

## The Pace of the Century.

Baltimore American: The world may have a 4-cent cable. With facilities formerly lacking coming as necessities within the reach of all, it is next to impossible to predict the possibilities which the present century will develop, yet barely hinted at. That, with the extraordinary facilities of modern invention and scientific resources within popular grasp, a corresponding change will take place in the standards of living is impossible to deny.

## Wouldn't that Fix 'Em!

Chicago News and Courier: If Mr. W. M. Lusk of the New York Sun and Mr. Delavan Smith of the Indianapolis News are convicted of criminal libel against President Roosevelt in the Panama canal matter, we trust that they will be committed to the jail in Charleston, a very large and commodious building, so that we may have the satisfaction of visiting them on Sundays and reading to them from the messages of Mr. Roosevelt. They might, however, regard this as an excessive punishment, but what they evidently need is such instruction in righteousness.

## CONGRESSIONAL "ADAM GODS."

Turning the House on Warm Members of the Lower House: William Allen White in Emporia Gazette. The members of congress who quietly cut off the appropriation for the secret service men are now insulated because the president told the truth about their motives. He said the members of congress who cut off the appropriation for the secret service men are now insulated because the president told the truth about their motives. He said the members of congress who cut off the appropriation for the secret service men are now insulated because the president told the truth about their motives.

What stupid donkeys they are—these congressional Adam Gods who think they cannot be harmed, who regard them as people and who believe that they are immune from the processes of law and the course of justice as it follows other men. These congressional Adam Gods, ignorant, arrogant and not above approach, will have the same experience that Adam God Sharp had in Kansas City. When the bullet of public wrath hits them they will say, "I am Adam God. As a matter of fact, many of the furnishings in the ways and means committee's room are imported. When the gypsum men were making their plea for protection on their product they called attention to the fact that the plaster used on the walls of the committee room was manufactured from gypsum imported from Nova Scotia.

Champ Clark and his democratic colleagues laughed gleefully when it was brought to their attention that the advocates of the protective policy who have been clamoring for a home market for American products went abroad for their gypsum in firing out headquarters of the tariff committee of the house. They recalled that when, eleven years ago, Mr. Dingley was making a speech in the house and pointing out the advantages that would accrue to American industry under his tariff bill, Representative Jerry Simpson of Kansas turned to the members of the Maine congressional by calling the attention of the house to the fact that the lining of Mr. Dingley's silk hat bore the mark of a London maker.

## BOOST IN FREIGHT RATES.

Move to Grab Two Dollars for Each Dollar Lost. Wall Street Journal.

The advance in freight rates of 10 per cent, notified to the Interstate Commerce commission to take effect January 1, is perhaps the most important development of the week. It is the shortest way of settling the disputed question whether the price of transportation can be raised without restricting the demand for it. Up to the time of the rate increase it was believed that the addition of a live fish to a bowl filled with water to the brim would not displace any of the liquid. The king was informed of this remarkable fact in nature and had the experience tried. Possibly it was not the right sort of fish, but the water ran over to exactly the bulk its body displaced. It is not necessary to fall out of a window to demonstrate the law of attraction of gravitation, but there is no actual decision by the courts against trying the experiment. That a reasonable advance in rates is justified by prevailing conditions of wages and prices is the prevailing consensus of opinion.

## Fine Card for the Game.

Boston Herald: Virtuous have little to brag! They not only spared the bribe, but they are prepared to expose the names of the would-be bribers. It is a fine card for the incorruptibility of the game.

## BITS OF WASHINGTON LIFE.

## Minor Scenes and Incidents Sketched on the Spot.

Last year when congress adopted the provision restricting the employment of secret service men, a restriction denounced by the president in his regular message, there was a good deal of excitement among certain members of congress, who were believed to believe they were watched and spied upon by a cabal of political police. Capital gossip spread the stories in all directions, and eventually brought about the clause restricting the operations of the secret service men. That there was some basis for the shadow about spying into the private affairs of members appears from recent inquiries, but the spying was not done by government secret service men. A Washington correspondent of the New York Tribune explains this feature of the controversy. He says: "The rumor that the president employed secret service men to watch the conduct of members of congress appears to have grown out of the misguided enterprise of a member of the local police force. This man sought to obtain an increase of pay for District of Columbia policemen. Failing to do so, he undertook to secure a number of members of congress. He obtained evidence, as he believed, to insure the increase of pay, but when he laid it before his superior he was dismissed from the service. Nothing ever came of his efforts, but some members of congress learned that they had been shadowed and they immediately assumed that it was by secret service men acting under the direction of the president, although nothing could be further from the fact."

The quarters occupied by the ways and means committee in conducting the tariff hearings is known as the marble hall, or audience chamber, of the new House of Representatives' office building. The room is arranged with a studied design to lend the committee the pomp and dignity of a high court; but the actual result laughable. The room is a cold, bare, and lonely letter. The committee members are seated on a raised platform behind a semi-circular desk or bar of dark, rich wood, mounted and polished stone. They thus look down upon the witness, who stands, as it were, in a well at the center of the semicircle, while the seats for the public extend to the other end of the long but comparatively narrow hall. If properly treated, it might have been a beautiful room; in fact, it was beautiful until its effect was marred. It has a high vaulted ceiling, with arches springing from pillars on either side, and its windows are large, but some one with barbaric eye for stage effects has provided elaborate and costly hangings of deep crimson. Not only do these shroud the windows, but at the rear of the committee's platform there hangs from a carved and gilded cornice a similar folded curtain of crimson, which stands out from the wall a distance equal to the concealed steps, which on either side lead down to the special door which the curtain hides. This detailed description is given because of the instant impression which the scene has made on more than one observer.

With the crimson window curtains drawn together and the brilliant electric chandeliers, hideously swathed in flags, the long and lofty chamber takes on the aspect of a chapel or temple. The likeness is intensified to the last degree by the crimson hangings which stand out from the end wall behind the committee, as if an altar, the very holy of holies, were hid beneath the richness of their folds.

Embarrassing and amusing incidents crop out in the tariff hearings. Some enemy of the protective system, anxious to score on his opponents, discovered that the words "made in America" were stamped on foreign manufactures, the "made in Great Britain" being conspicuous on the linen. Says the Washington correspondent of the New York Evening Post: "The episode, Chairman Payne is reported to have been visibly embarrassed when he detected the use of a committee word in foreign manufacture, the 'made in Great Britain' being conspicuous on the linen. Says the Washington correspondent of the New York Evening Post: 'The episode, Chairman Payne is reported to have been visibly embarrassed when he detected the use of a committee word in foreign manufacture, the 'made in Great Britain' being conspicuous on the linen. 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