

tariff revision should go over until he was safely out of office.

Mr. Roosevelt is supposed to have left college a free trader, but one may doubt if he ever had any real convictions on the subject. Here is what he says in his life of Thomas H. Benton on the question of protection:

Now whether a protective tariff is right or wrong may be open to question; but, if it exists at all, it should work as simply as possible, and with as much certainty and exactitude as possible. If its interpretation varies, or if it is continually meddled with by Congress, great damage ensues. It is in reality of far less importance that a law should be ideally right than that it should be certain and steady in its workings.

Nobody will deny that the Dingley and Payne-Aldrich bills have been "certain and steady in their workings." But it goes without saying that the man who wrote that passage had no knowledge of the tariff question, either from a protectionist or from a free-trade standpoint—that he has no conception of the economic phase of the question, and that the possibility of a moral principle being involved in it has never entered his head. Lacking both knowledge and conviction, he would be a totally unfit leader for a movement which aims to wipe out or at least mitigate tariff abuses.

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Another reason why Mr. Roosevelt will be careful to avoid identification with the Insurgent movement lies in the fact that never in his life has he publicly acknowledged himself guilty of a mistake. To become an Insurgent he must confess to the whole American people that he was guilty of a gross blunder in forcing the nomination of Mr. Taft and vouching for his fidelity to the principles with which Mr. Roosevelt himself was identified in the public mind. Such an acknowledgment Mr. Roosevelt will never make.

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Mr. Roosevelt would be an unsafe leader of the insurgent cause, even could he be induced to assume its leadership. Those who trace back his career will discover that he has been the most agile trimmer and compromiser with the powers of darkness in modern times. With him the result of the immediate contest in which he is engaged excludes every other consideration. He is never willing to pursue with unwavering fidelity a given principle to the bitter end, regardless of its effect on his personal fortunes or ambitions. If by an artful and timely compromise he can boast of the shadow of victory, he willingly surrenders the substance. The most glaring example of that trait

in his character was afforded by his capitulation to Aldrich, Spooner and Allison in the struggle over the Hepburn rate bill.

There has never been a time in Mr. Roosevelt's career when he was not willing to deal and dicker privately with those whom he was publicly denouncing as enemies of mankind. Once or twice he has been caught and exposed at it, notably in the case when while he was President of the United States, he wrote a personal letter to E. H. Harriman, soliciting campaign funds.

He is not of the stuff of which martyrs and crusaders are made—content to wait for time to vindicate his course and force the adoption of his ideas. He is not patient enough to sow the seed and await the due coming of the harvest time. What he demands always is immediate results, which shall redound to the public glorification of Theodore Roosevelt. Too often he has surrendered what he has paraded as his undying principles in order to achieve his immediate ends.

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If ever in the world there was a movement that demanded a militant, uncompromising leader, who would not abate a jot or tittle of principle, but would pursue an undeviating course to the last, it is this Insurgent movement. In the hands of a compromiser or trimmer, a man who is willing to bargain in a back room with its enemies, it is bound to be wrecked.

Senator Cummins evidently understands this. Not long ago, when Aldrich sent for him and asked him for terms of compromise on the railroad bill pending in Congress, Mr. Cummins declined to name any terms, or to discuss the matter with the reactionary leader. That was the stand of a man who is as good a politician as Roosevelt and infinitely more faithful to principle.

Instead of needing the leadership of Mr. Roosevelt, the progressive Republicans are fortunate indeed that they will probably escape it.

D. K. L.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

OBSERVATIONS OF HERBERT S. BIGELOW.

Cincinnati, May 22, 1910.

A Columbus friend of mine who builds houses for a living and lives to preach the gospel of Henry George, says that when his customers are impatient because their work is not ready when expected, he usually can satisfy them by taking them to the mill and letting them see the chips fly. A trip of ten days in Maryland, New Jersey and Massachusetts,

such as I recently enjoyed, should be almost enough to cure the most stubborn case of impatience. For everywhere one sees the chips flying. I spoke from one to five times a day, and my mission was a success if I gave a fraction of the encouragement that I received.

My first stop was at Cumberland, Md., where Phillip Smith has been for years an effective witness to the truth which came to him one day in a snow-bound camp in California. He says he wishes everyone might be snowed in for three weeks with nothing else to read but Progress and Poverty. Cumberland, too, is the home of David J. Lewis, a man who works at the Single Tax, and who as candidate for Congress two years ago, reduced to 500 a party majority of 2,000. Lewis is in the fight again this year with good prospect of election. On the second night of my stay in Cumberland, the first primary election occurred under a new charter modeled after the Galveston plan.

At Haworth, New Jersey, Charles O'C. Hennessey was the moving spirit at a most representative assembly of citizens who were as enthusiastic as a convention of Populists.

At Newark, I discussed a model city charter, speaking under the auspices of the Newark School Board. Thomas Walker is a man who describes himself as "just a mechanic," but who always has a copy of *The Public* in his pocket and can make a single tax argument as well as a watch. Walker is a member of a most active and progressive Improvement Association, the president of which followed me with an earnest endorsement of the initiative and referendum, and urged that the association use its utmost influence with the charter commission which is soon to report on a new charter for Newark.

I had committed the sin of having lived forty years without going to Boston. In three or four days one can see many impressive things in Boston and Cambridge, but what impressed me most was the personality of Professor L. J. Johnson, professor of civil engineering at Harvard. I suppose he knows a lot about his subject. The Harvard stadium is one of his monuments. But I was surprised to find a Harvard professor who knew so much about economics. It was explained to me that most of the applied science men of Harvard are single taxers, but this is not true of the economists and philosophers. You see, the applied science men have to think straight. There are consequences. The bridge will fall down if their deductions are faulty.

E. T. Clark of Melrose would take first prize, were I judge, for the most successful advertiser and manager of a meeting I ever met. Clark got a Melrose councilman to take Professor Johnson and me from Boston to Melrose in his automobile, had a reception for us in the Mayor's office, had moving pictures and popular music, and a house full of people. It was a remarkable showing of what enthusiasm and industry and tact can do. The subject was the "Building of a City," and even Clark was surprised that the single tax sentiment should have won from his large audience its greatest applause.

But there were no disappointments anywhere. S.

H. Howes of Southboro told me that he believed Southboro would go for the Single Tax now if it were possible, under the Massachusetts law to make a local application of it. In the Beneficent Church in Providence, in which Senator Aldrich has a pew, I spoke to a good government club of a hundred men as intelligent and progressive and fearlessly democratic as any audience I ever faced. New Bedford gave me an audience before the Civic League of business men, whose interest in the subject of taxation opened wide the door to our message.

The house is not built. But how the chips are flying! Our ideas are no longer "queer." The world is coming our way.

HERBERT S. BIGELOW.

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CHARTER-MAKING AT MODESTO, CAL.

Modesto, Cal., May 26, 1910.

As *The Public* is watching and giving earnest support to the progress of municipal democracy, I believe it will interest its readers to learn what is being accomplished in small communities in the matter of charter-making and the establishment of municipal democracies, the more so as owing to the size of these communities, these accomplishments are not likely to be noticed by the Eastern and metropolitan press.

The city of Modesto is situated in the county of Stanislaus, State of California, in the great San Joaquin valley. While the town has existed for several decades, it is only recently with the introduction of irrigation that the population has reached its present number, 6,000.

The city is being administered under a legislature-made charter, which has long ago outgrown its usefulness. Hence, about a year ago an agitation commenced for the enactment of a new charter, under the provisions of the Municipal Government act, providing that cities whose population exceeds 3,500 may elect a board of 15 freeholders to draw a charter, which if adopted by the people may be submitted to the Legislature for its approval or rejection. This does not give cities complete home-rule, as it gives the Legislature the right to reject the charter adopted by the people, and it is to be hoped that the Legislature will amend the Constitution so as to do away with the necessity of legislative ratification.

In this agitation for a new charter both papers, *The Morning Herald* (Rep.) and *The Evening News* (dem. Dem.) worked hand in hand, publishing many articles written by the members of their staffs and by special contributors on the commission form of Government. The trustees ordered a special election, and 15 freeholders were elected in April, 1910, to draw a charter. Mr. E. I. Fisher of the *News* staff and Mr. De Yoe of the *Herald* staff, who had been indefatigable in the fight for a new charter, are among those elected.

Since their election the freeholders have been at work on the proposed charter. Many propositions have been advocated and proposed for adoption by this board of freeholders, among others, the preferential system of voting (Grand Junction plan), and the