

friends seem to be active. As I have said several times, while regarding him as one of the men who are to be considered, I have not attempted to discuss the relative availability of himself and others whose sympathies are with our side.

A month later in an interview at New Haven Mr. Bryan expressly denied the asserted alliance between himself and Hearst. It was in connection with his answer to a question as to his attitude toward Judge Parker:

I am against Judge Parker. Why nominate an interrogation point? I am not in alliance with Mr. Hearst. I do not indorse him more than others I have named as available candidates.

Mr. Bryan is reported to have added this very significant warning:

The coming campaign will not be for the election of a President, but for the election of a Supreme Court. If the corporations succeed, they will have the people at their mercy for the next ten years. There are going to be interesting times at the St. Louis convention.

THE PRESIDENCY AND THE TARIFF

Preoccupied by war and rumors of wars, thinking of Panama and the canal, trying Smoot and finding a candidate for the Democrats, we have been too busy of late to give much thought to the question which has been rather tacitly admitted as destined to be the leading issue in the approaching Presidential campaign.

Thoughtful men who have been watching us from abroad seem also agreed as to what the leading issue is to be. The distinguished author, Mr. Sydney Brooks, in the Fortnightly Review, writes as follows: "Does the tariff foster the trusts, and whether it does or not, has the time come for revising it? These are the issues that in my judgment the coming campaign must infallibly make clear. That is to say, the tariff will be attacked, not only as 'the mother of the trusts,' but on the ground that it is now unnecessarily protective. . . . Most Republicans admit, in private, if not in public, that the Dingley rates are in many respects now obsolete and out of touch with the actual business conditions of to-day. . . . But they have differed, and still differ, among themselves, as to when the

plunge should be taken, and Congress invited to overhaul the act of 1897. They differ still more in their views as to the responsibility of the tariff for the trusts."

Mr. Brooks has shown himself to be a close observer of American politics, and he is quite correct in noting these differences among Republicans at the present time. Indeed, there are reasons for believing that the feeling of disagreement is more acute than his simple statements would indicate. The leaders are heartily afraid of the question. Not that there is any confession or suggestion of dissatisfaction with the sacred doctrine of Protection, but there has evidently been for several years a growing discontent with the Dingley act, and there is no doubt that many Republicans, especially in the West, have an increasing suspicion that there is an inner connection between the tariff and the trusts.

Where does the President, the inevitable candidate of the Republicans in the coming contest, stand as to these two questions? Does he hold the tariff in any way responsible for the trusts, which he professes to oppose? Or, irrespective of the trusts, does he think that the Dingley tariff is excessive, and is he ready to take the plunge?

In his salad days he seemed to be a good free-trader. A noble free-trade sentiment of his headed the quotations in the excellent Free-Trade Almanac for 1903. As to these early opinions, he has been quoted as having remarked facetiously that he is a Republican and party man first, and a free-trader secondarily; but if any free-trade spot still has lodgment in his brain, he has certainly succeeded in keeping it dark.

He has put himself squarely on record that trusts are not to be attacked through a lowering of the tariff. Mr. Brooks, in his article, which is as a whole highly eulogistic, says: "The President denies with emphasis that the road to the regulation of the trusts lies through a reform of the tariff. Here, I believe, he runs counter to what is already a belief, or at least a suspicion, and may possibly develop into a conviction, on the part of a majority of his countrymen."

As to the second question—does the President wish to reduce the Dingley duties?—the probability is that he does, but is afraid to say so. Therefore he resorts to the ancient dodge of suggesting the reference of the whole question to a commission of experts. "He is not opposed," says Mr. Brooks, "to revision per se, . . . but he would like to have the whole subject taken out of party politics. That, of course, is Utopian. There is little enough as it is in American politics; there would be nothing whatever without the tariff."

But not even this has been done. We have no commission considering the tariff "scientifically." Here at least the President has not been strenuous, but singularly half-hearted; and whether willingly or not, he finds himself "standing pat" on the Dingley act, along with the older leaders of his party and against the conviction of some of the newer men.

"Official Republicanism," says Mr. Brooks, "is largely in the hands of a group of elderly and conservative politicians, deeply committed to the ancient ways and answering comfortably to all demands for fresh legislation: 'Oh, let well enough alone.'" It is evident that the President, by his nature, does not belong with this elderly group, and by standing with them on the tariff he has put himself on the defensive.

Thus it is that the weakness of the party, the one point of probable disagreement in the ranks, namely, the Dingley tariff in itself and in its relation to the trusts, is also sure to be the weak spot in the armor of the party's candidate. Where the Republicans are weakest, Mr. Roosevelt himself is also weakest.

Democrats, therefore, in the search for their candidate, need most of all to find the man who by sincere conviction and aggressive argument can keep the Republicans and their candidate on the defensive along this line, and can lead a bold fight against their weakest points of defense. Such a plan of campaign was cleverly suggested by Mr. Edward M. Shepard in his Boston address before the Free Trade League. In this address Mr. Shepard showed how absolutely and ludicrously indefensi-

ble the Republicans can be made to appear in certain features of the present tariff. That such a tariff and its accompanying trusts should be the inseparable and leading issue of the approaching election is to be as warmly welcomed by the Democrats as it is to be dreaded by the Republicans. Certainly no other issue and no other plan of campaign would cause so much worry to the Republican candidate.

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EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON.

Washington, D. C., March 27.—Another week of post office! While the week was taken up in discussing its various provisions, little material change was made in the bill; the most important being the adoption of an amendment by Mr. Robinson, of Indiana, to strike out the \$45,000 subsidy to the Oceanic Steamship Company. In view of the action of the members the next day in sustaining the provisions for the railway subsidies one is naturally curious to know whether this indicates a different view of ship subsidies than of railroad subsidies, or merely that the Oceanic Steamship Company has been less industrious in extending "courtesies" in the form of passes than have the great railroads.

The corrective influence of publicity was clearly shown in the vote in the House on the two railway subsidy provisions of the bill. The practical effect of Mr. Moon's motion to recommit would have been to eliminate the appropriation of \$142,728.75 (none but an artist could figure so accurately) for "special facilities" to the Southern Railroad and the \$25,000 for "special facilities" from Kansas City to Newton, Kan., as the Postmaster General had in effect declared that the matter must be decided by Congress. Mr. Moon called for the yeas and nays, only 76 members arose, while in response to Mr. Overstreet's demand, 179 stood up to oppose the proposed roll call. The roll was called, 76 being sufficient to order it. As 114 voted in favor of Mr. Moon's motion to strike out the subsidy clause, and as but 121 voted for these subsidies, it will be seen that about 40 who opposed being placed on record voted against these provisions, while the 179 in favor dwindled to 121, when they had no choice but to be put on record for or against the steal. Such is the effect upon weak-kneed members of the lime light of publicity.

The action of the Republican leaders when the clerk read this amendment which I offered:

To reimburse the great railroads for the cost of supplying the President of the

United States with special trains, cars, and the food, wines, cigars and service therewith, not to exceed \$50,000; provided, that this appropriation shall be divided pro rata among such railroads only as shall within 90 days of the passage of this Act, file with the Post Office Department an itemized account of all such service supplied by them; and provided further, that this shall not be construed as conferring power upon the President to contract for any similar service during the fiscal year covered by this act without the express authority of Congress—

was most amusing. For two days Mr. Mann, of Illinois, and the chairman of the post office committee, Mr. Overstreet, had been openly at daggers drawn, largely on account of the attitude of the committee towards the demands of the city letter carriers for increase of compensation. The moment, however, that enough of my proposed amendment had been read to indicate its purport, all personal differences were cast aside, and a half-dozen leaders—each anxious to protect the "honor" of the President—were on their feet simultaneously, shouting: "Point of order!" and demanding that the amendment be ruled out without further reading. The manner in which the chairman (Mr. Boutell) banged his gavel and, declaring it out of order, refused to recognize me, was peculiarly interesting, as indicating the condition of terror which the majority had been thrown into by this innocent amendment. If an actual bombshell had been dropped into the Republican camp, it would not have created greater consternation. No other amendment during the entire two weeks was thus summarily treated on point of order. In every other case a proposed amendment was read through and the mover of the amendment was nearly always permitted to discuss both the point of order and the amendment itself. But the frantic efforts of the Republican leaders on the floor to prevent this amendment being read were no more significant than the action of the chairman (Boutell) in turning his head swiftly from one side to the other so as not to see the proposer of the amendment, who stood immediately in front of the desk demanding recognition for the purpose of moving "to strike out the last word," in order that in the five minutes' time which, if recognized, he would then have he could read the amendment himself to the House. The incident also indicates that the Republicans were presumably off their guard, as a result of the ultimatum sent to them the day before through two of their own members to the effect that if there was no manifest repetition by the leaders of their previous evident determination to prevent my securing a hearing, that then I should refrain from continuing my objections to "unanimous consent," which is necessary under the rules for the immediate consideration of bills not on the special calendar.

Of course this was not the most direct method of calling the attention of

the country to the fact that the President—despite the continual homilies which he delivers to all kinds of delegations and organizations; despite the lecturing on civic virtue and national righteousness which he inflicts upon almost every body of men that call upon him—has so little regard for the eternal verities that he can see nothing wrong in accepting such "courtesies" as special trains from the railroads. While it may not appear to be the most direct, yet it is apparently the only method which could have been adopted with any prospect of securing even the limited reading which it did receive. It is unnecessary to say that no bill to appropriate the money to reimburse the railroads for these special trains could be got out of committee. A similar fate also awaits any resolution calling for information as to the cost of these special trains.

The rules of this Congress are so rigid and drastic that they occasionally prevent even Republican leaders themselves from doing the things they desire to do. This was noticeably so in the case of that paragraph of the post office appropriation bill providing for the increase of the pay of rural letter carriers from \$600 to \$720, but withdrawing nearly all of the present privileges to do an express business and to act as messengers for the residents along their routes. This paragraph having been ruled out on a point of order raised by Mr. Mann, it became necessary, if the Republican party was to live up to any part of its pledge to the rural free delivery men, for a special rule to be brought in which would restore that paragraph and make it not subject to a point of order. I, therefore, could not refrain from availing myself of the opportunity to point out that the Republican members had deliberately voted for rules which would prevent the consideration of any legislation increasing the pay of city letter carriers, or any other bill affecting labor, unless favored by the autocrats of the House, the committee on rules, composed of the Speaker, Dalzell and Grosvenor.

The matter of the impeachment of Judge Swayne, of the Federal Circuit Court for the Northern district of Florida, is causing the Republicans great anxiety. At the demand of the President the Republicans are not only rushing through the supply bills with unprecedented haste, but are absolutely refusing to consider any general legislation whatever, so as to bring the session to an end at the earliest possible date. The order to "do nothing and go home!" is still in force; but the leaders are confronted with a very delicate situation from the party standpoint in these Swayne proceedings. To carry out the orders from the