myself, that they have not given her three suppers. People with pets are far too prone to forget that the pleasure of giving may be as nothing to the pain of having accepted."

Aunt Isobel could not sleep. She saw before her eyes pictures of an Isolde thinking that nobody loved her and all was over. A clock struck 12. Aunt Isobel crept out of her bed into a dressing gown. The day of Coventry was over. She had a legal right to go and comfort her cat and explain things.

She had also a fear of black beetles—though in that immaculate house there were no black beetles. Her slippered feet reached the kitchen—so strong is love—and the cat's basket. She scratched the animal tenderly behind the right ear and said: "Poor Isolde! It was all for your good."

The cat, which had been asleep, hunched its back, swore, turned round twice and went to sleep again.

"It must have felt it!" said Aunt Isobel, convinced.

Now, the cat, Isolde, kept a diary. Do not ask me how or where or why, but simply take my word for it. And the entry on the day she was sent to Coventry consisted of two words only, but they were not "In Coventry;" they were: "Whole holiday."—Barry Pain, in Chicago Chronicle.

BAKER, THE IRREPRESSIBLE.

From the New York Evening Post of May 4.

Of the half hundred new Congressmen who took the oath of office last November there was but one at the close of the long session whom every frequenter of the national capitol could point out and call by name. New York city, which has sent to Washington some of the most consistent absentees and most nearly voiceless statesmen in the entire House of Representatives, supplied an effective contrast when it elected Robert Baker.

The longest biographical sketch in the Congressional Directory is his; no other member of equally short service has to his credit so many printed speeches, delivered or undelivered, in the Record; and no one, certainly, has got himself talked about so much in a body ordinarily disposed to ignore entirely the efforts of a new member.

In six months he has contrived to do enough curious and unexpected things to furnish a ten-year programme of incidents to the ordinary public man.

The humdrum, work-a-day Congressman resembles in some particulars the frog of the physiological text-books whose cerebrum has been carefully removed—the spectator can predict with absolute certainty his actions at any given time, the votes which he casts with his party, and the remarks which he puts forth when the floor is yielded to him in due form. Baker is one of the very few indeterminable factors.

The phenomenon which has attracted the notice of the galleries to him is the instantaneous transformation of a slender, spectacled member of quiet mien and amiable countenance into an avenging fury, palpitating with emotion.

One moment he is in his seat listening as placidly as any of his colleagues to some speaker on the other side of the aisle; the next, he is on his feet, his eyes snapping, his blond hair bristling, his long minatory forefinger upraised and shaking with righteous wrath.

Debaters more experienced than he listen tolerantly to the theories of their opponents. If they interrupt, it is because they see some point that can be deftly turned. To Baker an economic heresy is what the Moslem crescent was to a crusader. He is ready to give battle on the instant. A slurring allusion to his political faith arouses him as would an attack on his personal honor. Your correspondent had occasion not long ago to comment on the patient and modest way in which Tim Sullivan the great had taken his place at the foot of the political line at Washington. That is a thing which Baker cannot bring himself to do. He would covet above all things the chance to join in mortal combat with the most astute and powerful speakers of the whole Republican party.

On one day when the heavy artillery of both sides had been brought into action and the House was listening to one of the great debates of the year, there occurred a momentary hush. Robert Baker could not resist the impulse to fill it. "You fellows are afraid," he shouted. A supremely great orator with a voice of thunder and a majestic and commanding presence might have done it and been taken seriously. Anyone might have shouted it half jocosely to get a good-natured laugh on both sides. Baker shouted it in dead earnest, and the House laughed, because that was not its accustomed way of uttering a defiance.

"I don't think anyone disputes," a Republican speaker was saying, "that the protective tariff brings about high wages." "I do," interposed Baker.

In the same way he was eager to get in a word in reply to Mr. Littlefield's tariff argument on the closing day of the session. As a last resort he used the terrible weapon which the rules put in the hands of even the humblest member—objection to unanimous consent. In retaliation for what he considered a slight, he would not allow the gentleman from Maine to have the additional 15 minutes which he wanted. It would have been a more impressive rebuke, but for the triumphant crescendo, "There!" with which Baker plumped into his seat. Littlefield sat down in a puzzled way as if he did not know what to do next, and the House buzzed with excitement. By and by Champ Clark strolled in a leisurely way down the aisle and talked it over with Baker. Then he repeated himself the request for unanimous consent to continue debate, and, in the words of the official reporter, "there was no objection."

This is only one aspect of the Brooklyn single-taxer, and unfortunately it is one that has invited snap judgment. "That young man is fresh," was the complete and final estimate of a Republican Representative, portly, pompous, exaggerated in his dignity, as far as possible removed from the man he was criticising.

In the same intolerant way, a knot of Republican leaders rode roughshod over him when they expunged from the Record, good, bad, and indifferent, the whole of his postal speech, of which a part was an attack made on a fellow member through ignorance of usage and excess of zeal.

Excess of zeal, after all, is at the bottom of all the troubles he has had in Washington. Representing in the Radical Democracy of Brooklyn one of the most aggressive and individually militant constituencies in the country, and himself a fighter by training and by inclination, the enforced idleness of the new member, always a heartbreaking ordeal, was doubly galling to him. Of course he failed to accomplish what he wanted. Yet in the limited time for which he managed to secure the floor he contrived to make some very creditable speeches. He thoroughly stirred up Ohio's Republican delegation with a pointed arraignment of Boss Cox's school of politics. He spoke pointedly and well against the overpayment of the railroads for carrying mail; and later in a carefully-prepared and temperate speech outlined the theories of his single-tax brethren as they related to taxation in the District of Columbia. If nothing else, he deserves thanks for having called attention to the Congressional free-pass evil, in a way that started people talking and wondering how it could be abated.

"You are not the only man in Congress who sends back passes," remarked

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a friend to him one day. "There are a good many who are just as conscientious as yourself. They send them back, but they do it privately, quietly, without making a public furore. There is McCall, of Massachusetts, for one."

"I know it," said Baker, "but if Mr. McCall held the railroads responsible as I do for the evils of our political life, I think he would do what I have done."

Beating about the bush is an occupation unknown to the young radical's working hours. The New York Board of Trade and Transportation telegraphed him to use his influence for the bill providing a commission to investigate the merchant marine. He replied in two minutes as curtly as possible: "Shall oppose ship-subsidy schemes as I shall all special privilege legislation."

In the Congressional pharmacopoeia some men may be likened to tonics, some to stimulants, some to healing lotions, some to powerful opiates. Baker is a mustard plaster, which makes the patient uncomfortable and starts the circulation, though it occasionally slips and blisters the wrong spot.

TAFT A BIASED JUDGE.

Prof. William James, in the Boston Transcript, as republished in the New York Evening Post.

May a humble citizen add his word to the discussion between the Secretary of War and those who are asking the coming Presidential conventions to put planks promising eventual independence to the Filipinos into their platforms? Secretary Taft thinks that any such promise will unsettle the Filipino mind, now in a fair way of being "educated" politically. It will start all the native politicians to intriguing for position in anticipation of the promised day, and if that day be less than a hundred years off, Mr. Taft thinks it will find the natives still untrained, still unfit, and prove to be more of a calamity than a blessing to them.

Now, I yield to no one in esteem for Secretary Taft, whom I believe to be one of the finest characters now in public life anywhere. The candor of his speeches on this question wins my especial admiration. Unlike the simple, brazen official utterances to which we have grown accustomed in Filipino affairs, what he says is really instructive. Assuming that we are something more than partisan rooters, to whom he must supply phrases, he seeks to persuade our intellects by the very reasons which persuade his own, and he conceals no facts. It would greatly raise the tone of political discussion everywhere if his example could be followed.

On all these accounts, and because he has been there, and knows the places where the shoe pinches, Mr. Taft's prestige is naturally enormous. His knowledge is concrete and solid, men say, while that of the bishops and college presidents who have signed the petition for independence is vague and remote. It would be no wonder if at the conventions his advice should carry the day against all the voices that urge an independence plank. "In the very nature of things," the delegates will think, "his opinion must be wiser than that of all these people at this distance."

I wish now to give some reasons why the opinion of a man who has played Gov. Taft's position in the islands does not deserve to carry this preeminent authority, and why the remoter view of long-range judges may well on the whole be wiser. I believe that his close personal relations to the struggle, so far from strengthening the prestige of any general views of policy which he may utter, ought, on the contrary, to be allowed for and discounted. It seems to me emphatically a case for applying the "personal equation."

Secretary Taft is himself the creator of the present regime in the Philippines. He was sent there to repair the work of mere destruction which President McKinley's administration had with such a light heart originally blundered into, and to turn, if possible, a purely military conquest into a genuine assimilation. He accepted the mission in good faith, and organized a government, of which the sole animating principle is the permanent welfare of the natives—as we are able to conceive that welfare. He started this work under incredible difficulties, in the midst of war, with American army opinion dead against him, with all the riff-raff of American exploiters and editors in Manila down upon him, with native support inefficient and suspicious when not actively treacherous, and with no help save that of his few official coadjutors and of his conscience. The hard beginnings of the task are over, and the infant administration toddles on two legs successfully. Evolution on the lines attempted seems possible; one by one the later features of the programme may be realized.

Is it humanly conceivable that the creator of such an unfinished state of things should willingly suffer its evolution to be interrupted? It is the child of his loins and he must insist upon its growing to maturity. The good of the islands, as he is able to imagine it, is identified with that programme exclusively. Other good, as other people may imagine it, is not that good, is but that good's destruction. Secretary Taft is in the very nature of the case bound, even though there were a flagrantly better possible alternative, to remain a passionate advocate of the system of which he is himself the author. He is morally unable to be an impartial witness.

As regards the system's prosperous evolution, his hopefulness ought also to be taken with a large discount by the American delegate and voter. The governor general of an Oriental dependency cannot possibly see into the full rottenness. The information he goes by is certain to be accommodated and predigested for his reception. Hardly a native meets him sincerely; and his official family, laboring under identical drawbacks, cannot restore the balance to his sense of reality.

Mr. Taft, in short, is too close to the Philippine job to estimate its general historical bearings. These general bearings are, it seems to me, probably more justly apprehended by such educated men at home as those who have signed the petition to the conventions.

To myself, as one of the signers, the great historical objection to Secretary Taft's scheme is that it is so desperately Utopian. "The Philippines for the Filipinos" is an admirable watchword, but that it actually should be a watchword reveals the whole priggishness and spuriousness of the situation. Countries that really are for their inhabitants have no such watchwords; the fact that they are for them is obvious. The watchword in this case is to remind us conquerors of our duty. We are to "give" the Filipino true liberty instead of the false liberty he aspires to; we are to reveal his better self to him, to be his savior against his own weakness.

The officials entrusted with the carrying out of such a policy ought to be the offspring of a marriage between angels and steam engines. They ought, at least, to be an apostolic succession of missionaries. Secretary Taft himself and a few of his colleagues have the best missionary spirit. But the frankness with which he admits his moral isolation is pathetic. If the natives are ever to do the American character justice, he thinks, the Americans who go to the Philippines must, first of all, change their character and manners. Even the teachers, if reports can be trusted, have become rowdies, and scores of them deserve to be deported.

Mr. Taft says: "Give us a hundred years and we may outgrow these difficulties. Let the question of independence then be broached, if need be, but not sooner." But is this anything but the

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