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Ex-President Cleveland has contributed to the discussion of anarchism which the Czolgosz crime precipitated. Mr. Cleveland's contribution, which appeared in the Saturday Evening Post, of Philadelphia, last week's issue, cannot be especially encouraging to those of his Democratic friends who have continued to regard him as a democrat. "Our people have liberty," writes Mr. Cleveland, "and are devoted to every guaranty of freedom to which their government is pledged." So far, Mr. Cleveland, uttering his own sentiment in the name of the people, rings true. But he thus expresses his love of liberty and devotion to the guarantees of freedom only to repudiate both in the next sentence. Still writing in the name of the people, who, in dealing with anarchy, "impatiently chafe under the restraint which bids them to wait for the tragedy it prepares, and to content themselves with visiting retribution upon its worthless and miserable tools," he runs up to this climax:

If to suppress and punish those who directly or by suggestion incite assassination savors of monarchy, they are prepared to take the departure.

If so lightly as that he would have this republic take the departure toward monarchy, Mr. Cleveland's hold upon its guarantees of freedom cannot be very tenacious. We should be sorry to believe that "our people," in whose name he assumes to speak, have in reality so little love for liberty and devotion to the hard won guarantees of freedom. For observe, it is not for the punishment of assas-

sins, nor for the prevention of assassination, that Mr. Cleveland ventures to say our people "are prepared to take the departure" which "savours of monarchy?" It is in order to "suppress and punish those who directly or by suggestion incite assassination." By suggestion! Who is to say what speech or writing may not suggest assassination to a madman? To decide so delicate a point as that, the arbitrary authority of a monarchy would indeed be necessary.

Some of the things that Mr. Cleveland himself has in mind as possibly inciting to assassination by suggestion, and as, therefore, proper subjects for suppression, even if we must take a departure that "savours of monarchy" to do it, he discloses in the same article. He does not confine these suggestions to anarchistic teachings, but says:

A serious and thorough consideration of the peril which has so shockingly broken in upon the peace of our national life would be incomplete in its lesson and warning if it failed to lead to an honest self-examination and a frank inquiry whether there are not causes other than anarchistic teachings, and perhaps near our own doors, whose tendency, to say the least, is in the wrong direction. Have not some of our public journals, under the guise of wholesome criticism of official conduct, descended to such mendacious and scandalous personal abuse as might well suggest hatred of those holding public place? Has not the ridicule of the coarse and indecent cartoon indicated to those of low instincts that no respect is due to official station? Have not lying accusations on the stump and even in the halls of congress, charging executive dishonesty, given a hint to those of warped judgment and weak intellect that the president is an enemy to the well-being of the people? Many good men who are tearful now, and who sincerely mourn the cruel murder of a kindly, faithful and honest president, have perhaps from partisan feeling or through heedless disregard of responsibility supported and encouraged such things. They may recall it now and realize the fact that the agents of assas-

ination are incited to their work by suggestion, and this suggestion need not necessarily be confined to the dark councils of anarchy.

So Puck, Judge, Harper's Weekly, Life and the Chicago Tribune, as well as the New York World, the New York Journal, the Chicago American and thousands of other papers of all parties, are within the purview of the crime for the suppression of which Cleveland regards the people as "prepared to take the departure" that "savours of monarchy"—the crime of inciting to assassination by suggestion.

It is to be observed that Mr. Cleveland does not indicate the method he has in mind for suppressing abusive editorials and coarse cartoons. But only one inference is possible. He is not thinking of orderly criminal prosecutions. He cannot be, because they would require no departure savoring of monarchy. Criticisms which descend "to such mendacious and scandalous personal abuse as might well suggest hatred of those holding public place," are indictable now. There is no necessity, in order to suppress them, for doing anything whatever that "savours of monarchy." Any publisher so indicted can be punished in good democratic fashion, unless he proves that the abuse is justified by the truth—in other words, that the official abused deserves the abuse. Nor need the abused official himself come forward to complain in order to set the legal machinery going. Any grand jury within whose jurisdiction the offensive publication is made can find an indictment. This is true also of publications which really suggest assassination. Mr. Cleveland knows all that. Then what does he mean by suggesting a departure savoring of monarchy in order to suppress sug-

gestions to assassination, whether by abuse, coarse cartoons or otherwise? He can only mean to invite us to adopt a censorship of the press.

Under a censorship, the truth of an abusive article or coarse cartoon would cut no figure. What the party in power objected to would be suppressed. The fact that a criticism did not incite assassination would be of no consequence if the censor thought or pretended to think it did. It would have been a great convenience for Tweed, a censorship, when the New York Times abused him with figures and adjectives and Harper's Weekly with cartoons. It would have been convenient for Mr. Cleveland himself at the time of the Morgan bond deal.

If this departure, savoring of monarchy, which Mr. Cleveland says the people are prepared to take were taken, not only would abusive papers be suppressed and abusive speakers be silenced, but all opposition papers that were vigorous would come under the ban. The spirit in which such a departure as Mr. Cleveland suggests would be managed, is inferable from the sentiments of the Republican press during the past three weeks. The St. Louis Globe-Democrat denounced the Republic as an accessory to the assassination. The Springfield Union pointed at the Springfield Republican a similar denunciation. The Trenton Gazette traced the assassination to the True American. The Philadelphia North American was stigmatized with the rest of the "anarchist" press. And so on. Even the opposition party itself would have to deal with the censor if Mr. Cleveland's departure toward monarchy were adopted. Has not Gov. Stone deliberately, in his opening speech of the Republican campaign in Pennsylvania, charged that the Democratic platform of that state is "anarchistic?" What would prevent its suppression if Mr. Cleveland's departure, which

"savors of monarchy," were adopted and a censorship established?

To some extent a censorship has already been established in this country. It affects so few people, comparatively, that but little is known about it; but to those who have made themselves acquainted with its workings its dangerous trend is obvious. This is a censorship of the mails. So perfect is its mechanism already, that the postmaster general can deny the use of the mails to anyone he pleases. He has only to decide arbitrarily, upon such evidence as he chooses to consider, and without the intervention of a jury, that a person is engaged in a fraudulent business, and thereupon he may withhold that person's mail. This has been done with Helen C. Wilmans, of Florida, of whose case we wrote on page 386. Having decided that she is engaged in a fraudulent business, the postmaster general cuts her off from mail rights. That case goes to prove that the censorship of the mails is already theoretically absolute. Whether Mrs. Wilmans is using them fraudulently or not is not the question. The vital question is whether charges of fraud, involving so great a right as the equal use of the postal service, shall be left to the arbitrary decision of the postmaster general.

With this power the postmaster general now not only stops private letters, but publications. Papers and magazines containing lottery advertisements, fraudulent advertisements or obscene matter are excluded from the mails. That the mailing of such things should be punishable is certainly true as to some and may be conceded as to all. But when the postmaster general is given authority to exclude them, he is invested with the power of a censor. What are lottery advertisements, what are fraudulent advertisements, what is obscene matter—questions so vital to the rights of persons accused, that only a jury should decide them—are ques-

tions which the postmaster general determines. Let anarchistic literature be now added to the list of non-mailable matter, and the press would be at the mercy of every strenuous postmaster general. He could with impunity exclude from the mails any expression of opinion whatever that happened for the moment to be unpopular. It remains to be seen whether the people will permit this departure that "savors of monarchy" to go any farther.

Without waiting for congressional action in the matter, the postmaster general appears to have advanced a step on his own account. According to the press dispatches the Challenge, a socialist paper heretofore published at Los Angeles, but which was recently removed to New York by its editor and publisher, H. Gaylord Wilshire, has been refused further newspaper rights in the mails. The reason reported is that the paper is merely an advertising sheet. If that is really the reason, the department is guilty of a transparent subterfuge. Though there was a good deal of "faking" about the Challenge and its editor, it was the kind of "faking" that violates good taste and not the kind that violates postal laws. The paper was one of the many socialist publications of the country, and if the postmaster general may suppress it with impunity, there would seem to be no reason why he may not suppress every other socialist paper. He need only be discreet enough to pitch upon them one at a time.

For superlative ingenuity in finding reasons in the law for suppressing obnoxious newspapers, the corporation counsel of North Plainfield, N. J., is entitled to a medal. Wishing to prohibit the sale upon the streets of his town of the New York Journal, this astute limb of the law, if the New York Sun is to be believed, advised the mayor that—
a person selling the Journal may be arrested on any one or all of the following charges: Peddling without a license; disturbing the peace; carry-