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The decision of the Supreme Court in the railroad merger case does no more than determine, 5 to 4, that a consolidation of railroad lines by means of a corporation organized to hold and control their stock, violates an act of Congress about the Constitutionality of which there is no substantial disagreement in the court. On this point it is difficult to understand how any disagreement could have arisen. The "holding" company device is so manifestly a subterfuge, a mere mask for a combination in restraint of competition, that there seems to be no possibility of a violation of the Sherman law by "high financiers" if this device does not violate it. In economic effect, it is doubtful if the decision will produce any beneficial result. You can't tie up locomotives with pack thread; neither can you hold powerful monopolies in check with restraining statutes. No anti-trust law can cope with trusts that own grants of sovereign power, as railroad companies do.

What has become of the "full dinner pail," that prestidigitatorial present of the political bunko man to American workingmen? The coal miners have dolefully answered, in the expressive language of the street, "You may search me!" They wanted to strike against a reduction of wages; but John Mitchell urged them not to, because times are hard and getting harder. So they have voted against a strike, agreeing to accept lower wages; not because they wanted to, but because times are getting so dull they dared not do otherwise. But why are times dull? Bryan

is politically dead. Isn't he? Johnson was defeated, wasn't he? and by the "full dinner pail" vote, which responded so confidently to Mr. Hanna's cheering appeal to "stand pat!" These enemies of the Hanna-McKinley dinner pail haven't brought on hard times. They haven't had a chance to. Everything has been under the control of Hanna, McKinley, Roosevelt and their protection "joss," who, as Roosevelt has put it, gives us good times under Republican administrations and bad times under Democratic administrations. It begins to look as if the Republicans would be caught in a Presidential election with empty dinner pails on their hands, which they can neither fill nor again successfully pretend to fill.

"What we need to-day in our discussion of capital and labor," said George B. Cortelyou, Secretary of Commerce and Labor, in his speech at Chicago last week, "is less twaddle and more truth." That was a very just and very timely observation, and we shall be glad to learn that Mr. Cortelyou is disposed to take his own advice and to act upon it as fully as his official position will permit. He gave some evidence of an intelligent disposition in this direction during the rest of his Chicago speech; but only some, as the local papers reported the speech. For, while he recognized the often neglected truth that the special interests of hired workmen do not by any means comprise all labor interests, yet he treated his subject as if capital consisted of every kind of business property. But in truth some kinds of business property are legitimate capital, while others are illegitimate monopoly. The man who does not distinguish those essential differences, cannot discuss the subject of capital and labor in any of its phases

without indulging in more twaddle than truth.

Groverclevelanditis seems to be the most appropriate name for a subtle species of political inflammation which the respectability of its victims forbids one to designate by a more inclusive and colloquial term. This disease consists for the most part of what, being a moral disease, may be described as a tendency to suggest the false by suppressing the true. Its peculiarity limits it, however, to a particular interesting episode in American political history. Victims of this disease are observed to point with gentle pride to the overwhelming popular vote for Grover Cleveland in 1892, and then with a snarl to the defeat of Bryan in 1896, from which they feverishly infer that Bryan demoralized the Democratic party. They suppress, with some manifestations of effort, the fact that Bryan polled more votes and a larger percentage of votes in 1896 than were cast for Cleveland in 1892, and the further fact that at the intermediate Congressional elections of 1894, in the middle of Cleveland's administration and before Bryan had been heard of except as a brilliant Democratic member of Congress, the Democratic party absolutely collapsed. To a normal mind those facts would indicate that Cleveland demoralized the Democratic party in 1894 and that Bryan made much headway in reviving it in 1896. Not so with the victim of groverclevelanditis. By suggesting the false through suppressing the true, he deceives even himself.

One of the most virulent cases of groverclevelanditis has developed in the editorial columns of the Brooklyn Eagle. In its issue of the 10th, the Eagle displayed

unmistakable symptoms in this paragraph:

Twelve years ago Grover Cleveland carried the commonwealth of Illinois. The State then spoke for Democracy with no uncertain sound, backing the credentials of the victor in that year with a majority of more than 25,000. Four years later it went the other way, after the fashion of an avalanche, giving to McKinley more than five times the majority placed to the credit of his immediate predecessor as President of the United States. Bryanism operated either as an opiate or an irritant. Whether it chloroformed or incensed, it had one ultimate, one net result—it demoralized.

“Twelve years ago”—1892; “four years later”—1896. Observe the symptomatic omission of 1894. A truth suppressed. What is that truth? Turn to your political almanacs and see. In 1894, before Bryanism was heard of, the Democratic delegation in Congress from Illinois was reduced from 11 to 0, and the popular plurality of the State was changed from 26,993 Democratic to 123,427 Republican. This truth is concealed by the Brooklyn Eagle for the purpose of suggesting that Democratic demoralization occurred in 1896 under Bryan’s leadership and not in 1894 under Cleveland’s. A clear and somewhat aggravated case of groverclevelanditis.

The endorsement of William Randolph Hearst by the Democratic convention of Rhode Island as its candidate for President, has shocked the Cleveland contingent of the East into journalistic spasms. They see in this Eastern declaration for Hearst, coming in the midst of a bitter faction fight between Hillism and Clevelandism in New York, the waning of their fond hopes for a revival of the era of pluto-Democracy. In their consternation, they begin to realize, furthermore, that New Jersey may make the same endorsement. They are horrified to learn, also, that Illinois can be saved to them, if it can be saved at all, only by the desperate and to their minds unpleasant expedient of substituting Mayor Harrison of Chicago, for the distinguished friend of J. Pierpont Morgan, the ex-President they so

much admire, who swapped the tariff issue on which his party was united and he was elected, for the money issue on which his party was divided and he was not elected. Between Cleveland and Hearst the choice is a hard one for democratic Democrats. In the light of that alternative, even the erratic Roosevelt looms up invitingly. Harrison as a Cleveland substitute doesn’t help matters. But the consternation the Hearst movement has wrought among the “remorganizers” is not altogether disagreeable to the on-looker who, even if he doesn’t know Hearst, does know Cleveland.

An associate of the late William C. Whitney, Mr. Thomas F. Ryan, of New York, who describes himself as a Democrat, and who may possibly be one notwithstanding his suspicious associations, is reported as advocating the nomination by the Democratic party of a Southern man for President. The suggestion is not at all bad. There should be an end to the sectional bigotry which disqualifies a Presidential candidate for no other reason than that he hails from a part of our common country which once waged a war of secession. That war ended nearly 40 years ago, and it is high time that its animosities and its prejudices, its hypocrisies and its vanities, should be ignored. If a man of John Sharp Williams’s abilities and democracy were suggested for the Democratic nomination, his being a Southern man ought to raise no objection. But let the Democrats beware of picking up some railroad tool at the South, and putting him forward in the garb of a Southern candidate.

Governor Herrick has warned President Roosevelt that he must distribute Federal patronage in Ohio in strict accordance with the rules of the spoilsman’s game. Senator Dick must have as much of the plunder as Senator Foraker, or Gov. Herrick will know the reason why. Let us quote his own words, spoken at a

Republican committee meeting in Cleveland on the 12th:

The two United States Senators from Ohio represent all of the people of the State, and have all of the people of the State behind them, and I want to say right here that we, the people of Ohio, shall request, nay, we shall demand, that these two men shall be shown equal consideration and respect at Washington.

What Gov. Herrick meant by “all of the people of the State,” he disclosed farther on in the same speech. He meant the Republican machine. For he said:

I want to say that I believe in absolute party loyalty, which is loyalty to those in control. I believe that no man should accept or retain any office when he is disloyal to the organization that bestows it.

That there might be no mistake about his confusion of the interests of a spoils-grabbing and spoils-distributing party machine with the interests of the State, this full-blown flower of Republican virtue, this delectable representative of “our better classes, gentlemen, our better classes,” proceeded:

The interests of the party, and when I say the party I mean the State, demand that the individual give way his personal allegiances to allegiance for the party. If we follow this principle we shall go on to success.

If by going “on to success” Gov. Herrick meant anything higher or nobler than gathering in more and more of the spoils and plunder of official power, he gave no indication of it. How marked the contrast between this pigmy partisan and his recent political adversary, Tom L. Johnson, who, in his administration of the Mayor’s office in Cleveland, has challenged the spoilsmen of his party by putting public interests first and party interests second, and casting out spoils interests altogether. It is because he has done that, that Gov. Herrick and his party have used their party power in the State legislature to discourage independent voting in the Cleveland municipal elections. In partnership with “Boss” Cox, of Cincinnati, Gov. Herrick and his re-