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Newspaper accounts of the recent extraordinary episode at the White House, are pointedly suggestive of conditions under the old regime of France just before the revolution. It is out of such incidents that French revolutions may easily flame forth.

In the place of the old noblesse were a group of autocrats of American highways and American coal deposits. The third estate was represented by the leader of a great labor union and two of his lieutenants. Both groups had appeared before the head of the nation, an executive of peculiar weakness, who had called them together for the purpose of inducing them to compromise their differences. But the American nobles knew no compromise.

Haughty in their sense of power they scorned the canaille with whom the President had dared confront them; and with a degree of impudence to which history affords no parallel, they arrogantly formulated orders for the President himself. They would tolerate nothing from him but the performance of his imperial duty to resort to arms in their behalf. With this significant living tableau in the foreground, one can almost hear the rattle of distant tumbrils and see the advancing shadow of a guillotine.

Simply as a matter of conventional good manners, the conduct of the representatives of the coal trust compared most unfavorably with that of the labor leaders. The latter were

dignified, self-contained and respectful. They offered to arbitrate the issue—which, by the way, is not a question of unionism, but of wages and honest dealing—and to allow the President to appoint the arbitrators. The trust magnates, on the other hand, were unreservedly angry and defiantly insolent. They had nothing to arbitrate; what they demanded was guns. And they presented their demand to the President in a manner that would have disgraced a guest in any gentleman's drawing-room.

The President was entitled to common courtesy at least. It may be true that he had no official right to summon the conference. It may be true that he has no authority over the persons or the subjects of controversy. It may be true that he cowered before the powerful capitalists who confronted him. Yet he had respectfully invited these men to appear before him and they had come. Their right to refuse to go was undoubted. They might without impropriety even have represented the unauthorized summons. But they did go. They were voluntarily in the President's presence, in his home, and upon his invitation. Under these circumstances, arrogant demands, impudent suggestions and insolent criticism were inexcusable.

But the contention of these magnates with reference to what they call their "property," is a different thing from their bad social manners and their arrogant assumption in setting it forth. Under the existing laws of property the contention of the coal trust is unassailable. It owns the mines, it owns the railroads. These are as much its property under the law as the humblest man's hat or his coat is his property,

or any home owner's house is his house or farmer's crop his crop. They have the same legal sanctions as every other kind of property. The laws make no distinction. When the trust magnates insist, therefore, upon managing their own mines and railroads in their own way, refusing to tolerate outside interference and demanding military protection, they are in precisely the same relations to the law of property as the householder who calls in a policeman to eject an intruder. And so they are with reference to the prevailing ideas of what may rightly be property. Not only are the railroads and the coal mines the sacred property of the trust, in contemplation of law, but they are their sacred property also in accordance with the idea that highways as well as conveyances, coal deposits as well as coal products, are alike proper subjects of ownership.

This confusion of different kinds of property—of property in products with property in natural sources, places and ways—is not confined to the greedy nor to the indifferent. In the present emergency, which has been caused by the coal strike, the air is full of propositions to interfere with the management of the railroads and coal mines, by the owners, not because the recognition of highways and of natural coal deposits as property is wrong, but because all "property has duties as well as rights!" Property has neither rights nor duties, though property-owners have both; but property-owners have no duties which require them to keep their property in use when their own interests, of which they themselves are the proper judges, demand that it be withdrawn from use. Just as workingmen have the right to stop working,

so have property owners the right to stop using their property. This is of the essence of property rights. To say the contrary as to property in general is to deny the principle of property rights altogether; and to deny that principle is to support the opposing principle of servitude. So long as the difference between property rights that are just and property rights that are unjust is not distinguished in the public mind, the contention of the coal trust will properly have all the support of a stand for the defense of just property rights. But let that difference be once clearly recognized and asserted, and their power for evil will be gone. To expose their fallacy is to dissipate their strength.

The conditional character of President Roosevelt's proposal to the striking miners is inexplicable upon any possible theory of his duties as President. He either has the power to appoint a commission of investigation, or he has not. It is either his duty to do so, or it is not. Yet he makes his doing it conditional upon Mr. Mitchell's securing the immediate return of the miners to work! From that humiliating exhibition, it is a far cry back to Mr. Roosevelt's bold speech about "shackling the cunning" of the trusts, and his later one about the futility of "words without action." Is it possible that his courage is only physical? At any rate, Morgan's deputation of coal mine magnates seems to have cowed him completely.

No reply to such a request was possible, other than the one Mr. Mitchell is reported to have made—unless the strikers were actually losing ground and glad to avail themselves of an opportunity to make a "patriotic" virtue out of an economic necessity. Acceptance would have been regarded as graceful submission to defeat, and disorganization would have followed. It would have been better for the trust than an injunction against the union. In worse

plight than before they struck, the miners could have hoped for nothing from Mr. Roosevelt's promise of an investigation. A President who bows his head so abjectly to financial combinations which he has the legal power to call to account, would be weaker than a broken reed to lean upon in an emergency like that with which his cowardly request confronted the striking miners.

Gov. Stone's order calling out all the militia of Pennsylvania assumes an insurrection which the local authorities cannot control. It is rather remarkable that observers like Bishop Fallows, who have gone all over the country, see no signs of the insurrection which the coal trust magnates describe so loudly and the governor acknowledges so submissively. Is it not somewhat significant of a design on the part of the coal trust to arouse indignation and incite violence by marching troops into the affected communities?

Mr. Baer's assurances that mining operations can proceed if non-union miners are protected by troops, implying as it does that there are plenty of men willing to work for the wages he pays, is either a wilful misrepresentation, or else there is no such prosperity among working men as Mr. Hanna and his plutocratic cronies are boasting of. According to Mr. Baer himself the wages of the 26,270 miners employed by the Reading mines, which he controls, average \$296.20 a year. Mr. Mitchell puts it at much less, but never mind; let it go at Mr. Baer's figures. Out of this sum comes rents, and rebates for powder, oil and company's doctor, leaving a neat balance of \$148—slightly more than \$2.75 a week—for the support of a miner's family. If miners can be easily got for these wages, provided they are protected by troops, what kind of prosperity is it that we are enjoying? Does it quite warrant the Republicans in declaring that prosperity is the foremost issue of the campaign, and urging the people to "stand pat."

It is a piteous wail that Congressman Grosvenor, of Ohio, sends up to J. Pierpont Morgan through the president of Mr. Morgan's ship trust. "Stop the coal strike, and stop it now, or the 9,000 miners in my district will vote against me!" is the burden of his cry. And so demoralized is Mr. Grosvenor that he silences his civic conscience and begs Morgan to interfere. If you do not, screams Grosvenor, there will be a Democratic Congress and your trusts will go to smash; but if you do, you will not only be the greatest man in the country but your trusts will continue to flourish under the fostering care of another grateful Republican Congress. Mr. Grosvenor's fears have run away with his discretion.

"There is no duty whatever on anthracite coal," said President Roosevelt at Cincinnati, when arguing that trusts are not fostered by the tariff. This was supposed to be a "clincher," for it showed that the tariff does not foster the coal trust. But alas for Mr. Roosevelt's argument, there is in fact a duty on anthracite coal. Ordinarily it would not be needed, for but little anthracite coal is known outside of the United States, and the tariff on bituminous coal ordinarily serves to protect anthracite. Yet the anthracite trust evidently feared that a time might come—something like the time that has come—when a tariff on anthracite itself would be handy. So, while leaving anthracite on the free list, in order to cover their tracks—it had been on the free list since 1870—the makers of the Dingley bill fixed a duty upon it surreptitiously. This was done in paragraph 415, which reduced the old duty on bituminous coal from 75 cents to 67 cents, and by which it is provided that not only bituminous coal, but "all coals containing less than 92 per centum of fixed carbon," shall pay the 67 cents duty. Now the fact happens to be that there are no commercial imports of anthracite which come up to that standard. Consequently all imports of anthracite pay duty.

This construction of the law was made by the board of general appraisers and has been sustained by the Federal courts. Mr. Roosevelt was mistaken when he asserted so positively that there is no duty on anthracite coal.

It is boasted by Republican papers, upon the authority of some statistician, that "a rail roller in an up to date mill is paid less than 1 per cent. per ton for rolling, against 15 cents at a not remote date;" also that within the same period "a wire rod roller has seen his earnings per ton reduced from \$2.12 to 12 cents per ton, and yet he earns larger wages at the lower figure; while 5 cents is paid to-day for heating billets to make wire rods, against 80 cents during the period referred to." If all this is true, then, in view of the further fact that the products mentioned have not been reduced in price but are rather higher, a very significant question arises: Who gets the difference?

While the Republican majority in the Ohio legislature is carrying out the orders of Senator Hanna, Senator Foraker, and a greater than either—"Boss" Cox of Cincinnati—to make a municipal code that will keep Tom L. Johnson's hands off the railroad tax dodgers and the street car monopolists, and to that end is striving to establish some municipal system with divided responsibility admitting of boss-ships, it is interesting to compare one of the most important results of that kind of government with the corresponding result under the federal plan which was in vogue so long and satisfactorily in Cleveland. The result to which we refer is the personnel of city councils. Cincinnati has a board system which divides responsibility and thereby enables one man, "Boss" Cox, to rule the city—a "boss" who could not be elected by popular vote to any office. The low character of this irresponsible kind of government is reflected in the city council

of Cincinnati, the personnel of which is as follows:

Merchant	1
Detective	1
Commission man	1
Brewer	1
Gasoline lighting contractor	1
Collector for telephone company	1
Retired saloon keeper	1
Brick contractor	1
Newspaper man	1
Salesman	1
Locomotive engineer	1
Doctor	1
Cigar dealer	1
Lawyer	1
Saloon keepers	17
Total	31

Cleveland, on the contrary, has had popular government under the federal plan. The only kind of "boss" that can get in power there is one whom the people choose at municipal elections and whom they can hold to a strict responsibility at the polls. Compare, then, the Cincinnati council, as shown above, with the Cleveland council as shown below:

Manufacturers	3
Merchants	3
Mechanic	1
Doctor	1
Newsdealer	1
Undertaker	1
Cigar manufacturer	1
Instructor of gymnastics	1
Printer	1
Dock foremen	2
Bartender	1
Foreman	1
Real estate dealer	1
Lawyers	4
Total	22

Isn't that a fair commentary on the difference between a city where divided responsibility generates the "boss" system, and one where the people rule? And doesn't it stamp the action of those Republicans in the Ohio legislature, who are "standing pat" for "boss" rule in cities, as treacherous not only to the political rights of the people but to their local interests as well?

To recommend board government, its supporters in Ohio have circulated a comparison of the cost of government in Cincinnati under "boss" rule with its cost in Cleveland under the "federal" system, in which they profess to show that the Cincinnati government costs less than that at Cleveland. But this comparison is not confirmed by an actual comparison of the auditors' statements of the two cities. Though the Cincinnati rate is less, the taxes are \$500,000 more than in Cleveland. "The reason Cleveland pays less taxes than

Cincinnati although Cincinnati has a smaller rate," says the director of accounts of the former city, "is that in Cincinnati everything that lives, walks or can be located on the surface of the earth is assessed for taxation. Consequently Cincinnati has an assessed valuation of \$215,000,000, while Cleveland is assessed at only \$190,000,000. This gives out the impression that people in Cincinnati are not paying as much taxes as Cleveland, whereas the actual facts are just the opposite." Added to this exposure is the revelation that the exact difference in the cost of the Cleveland and the Cincinnati governments for 1903, as shown by the department estimates, is \$994,000 in favor of Cleveland.

The Republican machine in the Seventh senatorial district of Illinois is evidently demoralized by the vigor of the campaign that Western Starr is making against Humphrey, of "Humphrey bill" fame. Otherwise it would not have charged Starr with having been indicted in Dakota 15 years ago upon a charge of perjury. This has served to bring out the fact that while in Dakota Starr fought a corrupt and powerful ring there, as he is now fighting a corrupt though not so powerful ring here. The president of the Voter's League, who vouches for Mr. Starr's integrity, gives this frank account of the matter:

Mr. Starr swore out a warrant charging a certain person with theft. The man was attempting to take stolen property out of the Territory. Mr. Starr in behalf of a client secured a warrant and it was served. Afterward the client lay down and the case was not prosecuted. Mr. Starr had been fighting a political ring in the Territory, and several months afterward, on the last day of the grand jury term, he was indicted on ex parte testimony, the whole job being put up by the prosecuting attorney, who belonged to the ring. Mr. Starr was released on his own recognizance. There was no term of court for a year, and when it met the indictment was quashed. The matter was submitted, with all witnesses present, before the next grand jury and they refused to reindict. The records of Stark county, North Dakota, bear out these facts. We have investigated