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The latest proposition of the Spanish peace commissioners is to arbitrate a dispute over the scope of the Philippine clause in the protocol. There is nothing to arbitrate. The protocol is quite plain, and the Spanish government along with all the rest of the world well knows it. If the United States choose to go into a land-garbing speculation in the Philippines, there is nothing in the protocol to prevent. It is only a question of physical force. Throughout this whole Spanish-American affair, from the beginning to the absurd suggestion of arbitration, Spanish diplomats have shown themselves to be mere pettifoggers.

Gov.-elect Roosevelt, of New York, who posed so long as an independent in politics, and fooled so many simple people thereby, has done one thing more to convince the observant that he is Boss Platt's man for good. There was little room to doubt this, when he took so kindly to Platt's machine nomination; but he has now appointed as private secretary to the governor, the governor's confidential man, no other than one of Platt's most loyal lieutenants.

Doubtless there are still some confiding people in New York who believe that Roosevelt is not under Platt's control. For Roosevelt has blue blood, and he doesn't pick pockets by moonlight. But that only goes to show how acute Abraham Lincoln was when he said that "you can fool some of the people all of the time."

One of the interesting features of the alliance between Platt the "boss"

and Roosevelt the "independent," is the promise it gives of a battle royal at the next republican national convention between William the Unco-Guid and Teddy the Terrible Terrier, with Hanna and Platt for stake-holders.

The results at the late elections, though disappointing to the democrats, were better for them than a victory. A democratic victory this year would almost have insured a republican land-slide two years hence. That is evident from one consideration alone. Had the republicans been defeated, the democrats would have been charged with responsibility for the ensuing hard times.

To the great mass of the American people, the times are no better now than they were three years ago. The papers are full of advertisements for situations, and empty of advertisements for workers in legitimate occupations at remunerative pay. Storekeepers feel the pressure intensely. Small manufacturers are barely able to keep going. Failures continue in large numbers. Business houses are overrun with applications for work. Wages are falling. Commercial profits are receding. All classes are suffering, except monopolists who have secured privileges through paternalistic legislation. Yet with preconcerted and persistent cries of "prosperity!" a vague impression has been created that times are better than they were and are steadily improving. It is no uncommon experience to be approached by hungry men who in the same breath in which they ask you for God's sake to give them work, speak enthusiastically and honestly of the return of prosperity! Even better balanced men, who know that prosperity has not returned, have been so far affected by

all this prosperity touting as to believe that it is almost here. Now, in fact, general prosperity has not come nor will it come within the next two years or more, if indeed it ever comes again. Everybody would realize this if the parrot cry of "prosperity!" were to cease. How easy then it would have been, had the democrats carried the recent elections, for the plutocrats to have thrown up their hands despairingly and announced that the good times, so near at hand if not actually here, had been "shoo"-ed off by a democratic hoo-doo.

As it is, the republicans must keep up their prosperity touting for two years yet to come, in spite of persistent depression. Before long that will be very fatiguing. Whistling up the wind is exhilarating exercise, but it becomes debilitating when prolonged. And many a moon before the next presidential election, even the simplest and most be-fooled of the hungry masses will realize the trick that has been played upon them. Inflated imaginations cannot forever satisfy the craving of empty stomachs. And when the trick does finally expose itself, the republicans instead of the democrats will be held responsible for the hard times, by the unthinking to whom republicans now appeal and upon whose votes they now depend. Then it will be seen that the recent elections were not such an ill-wind to the democrats.

While the republicans have retained a congressional majority, and so been burdened with responsibility, as they ought to be, in accordance with their own teachings, for everything that may cause or contribute to hard times, their majority in the next house is not large enough to be reassuring. In the present house it is 47, and an equal majority was expect-

ed by the republican prophets in the next; but while the majority in the next house is not yet determined, it will be less than 20 and probably not more than 13.

To one class of voters, the elections were unalloyed disappointments. We refer to single taxers. In Delaware, where there is a single tax party, probably the only one in the world, the single tax vote of two years ago was not increased. In fact there was a falling off. But as that was about in the proportion of the falling off in the total vote, the single tax party may be said to have held its own. In 1896 its vote was 1,146 in a total of 38,520; in 1898 it was about 900 in a total of about 30,000. But the managers of the little party claim to have defeated the democrats in Delaware and to have made the state republican.

In Washington and California the single tax question was at least a more sensational feature of the elections than in Delaware. The republicans of Washington fought a "local option in taxation" amendment to the constitution, which the democrats, populists and silver republicans had indorsed, doing so upon the ground that this amendment would be an entering wedge for the single tax; and in California they fought Maguire, the nominee for governor, of the democrats, populists and silver republicans, upon the ground that he is a well known single tax advocate. In both states the attack upon the single tax was virulent. In both the issue was refused, nominally because it was not an issue of the campaign, but really because the fusion managers were in sympathy with the republicans regarding this question. The constitutional amendment was defeated in Washington and Maguire was defeated in California.

A correspondent, Alfred Cridge, of San Francisco, writes vigorously in condemnation of the fusion managers in California. Among other things he says:

Somebody has said that "God hates a coward." I don't know; but I know

that men do. And it is largely because men hate cowards that Maguire, who could have been elected governor by 40,000 majority, was defeated by a non-entity by 17,000. At least 30,000 voters hated even the appearance of cowardice. In speaking of cowardice I do not refer to the candidate, but to the fusion state campaign committee.

For some two months past two morning papers of San Francisco have averaged two columns of mud-slinging at the single tax in each issue. They asserted that under the single tax, taxes upon working farmers and small city home owners would be more than tripled. In fact, as I could easily prove by statistics in abundance, the single tax would reduce the taxes on those classes in this state by from 25 to 75 per cent. But the fusion state campaign committee, acting just as it would had it been bribed, would not allow the subject to be discussed. Any well informed single taxer could have refuted the enemy's proposition in this instance inside of 10 minutes on the platform or a column of a daily paper. I had the figures to do it, and did it, in type, so that any farmer could comprehend it. But the orders were silence. Nothing could be said of the single tax except that it was not an issue.

When small farmers and home owners are thus made to believe, or even to suspect, that a candidate for any office whatever is fundamentally determined, whenever opportunity permits, to confiscate the farm or home by taxation, what else is to be expected but that they will vote to keep such a candidate out of office? That he might have no power to enact such a law in such an office would count for little with them. That a tiger might be securely fastened in a cage would not reconcile a farmer to having it on his premises. The farmers were taught, without contradiction, to regard Maguire as a confiscator of farms and homes. Can it be wondered at that enough of them, who would have been favorably disposed had they known either the candidate or his doctrine, accepted the uncontradicted assertions of their enemy, when their friends, with abundant opportunity, failed to show them that the single tax instead of confiscating their homes would make them more secure and lessen their taxes?

Mr. Cridge believes that the fusion committee was bribed, and that a bolder campaign would have won the fight. We should hesitate to accuse the fusion committee of venality. On the face of things, its attitude is fully and fairly explained by the fact that none of the organizations it represented was favorable as an organization to the single tax. Probably a

large majority in every one of those organizations would, after a two months' campaign, have voted against the single tax. To have made the campaign upon that issue, therefore, would have insured defeat unless enough republicans could have been won over to make up to Maguire for the loss of his own supporters. Moreover, the question was really not an issue in the campaign. What Maguire believed as to the principles of taxation had nothing more to do with the real questions at issue than what he believed as to religion. That a bolder campaign would have given more luster to his name, whether he won or lost, and that it would have been better for single tax propaganda, is doubtless true. But then the question arises, whether a political committee or a candidate would have the moral right to make a campaign in advocacy of a radical doctrine held by the candidate, which the party had not only not adopted but to which as a party it was opposed.

Single tax men will have to learn patience. Their reform will not be accepted in a day. Its very simplicity, justice and perfection, will delay the time of its acceptance. While superficial reforms are quickly taken up by the multitude and as quickly cast aside, fundamental reforms are but slowly apprehended by the many whom they would benefit, and are most easily fought off by the few whom they would divest of unholy power. Those were not idle words of Henry George when he wrote:

The truth that I have tried to make clear will not find easy acceptance. If that could be it would have been accepted long ago. If that could be it would never have been obscured.

Nor when he predicted that—

for the man who seeing the want and misery, the ignorance and brutishness caused by unjust social institutions, sets himself, in so far as he has strength to right them, there is disappointment and bitterness.

Disciples of Henry George who ponder those words will lose no heart in the fight because an election or two goes against them. They will rather