

The Public

Seventh Year.

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1904.

Number 337.

LOUIS F. POST, Editor.

Entered at the Chicago, Ill., Post Office as second-class matter.

For terms and all other particulars of publication, see last page.

President Roosevelt's letter accepting the nomination of his party for election to the dignified office he now administers, is a marvel of excellence—by nearly all the tests of rough-and-tumble stump-speaking. A comic story or two aptly applied, and a few pathetic touches, would have made it perfect. But Mr. Roosevelt is not handy with pathos, and comic stories are out of his line; he is too strenuous for the one and takes himself too seriously for the other. It is not remarkable, therefore, that his letter is wholly lacking in both, nor shall we be over-partial if we judge it regardless of these qualities of the supreme artist in stump oratory. Judged thus considerately, it is perhaps not too high praise to catalogue this Presidential letter as one of the best specimens of unrestrained stump-speaking on record.

If Judge Parker is the affable gentleman he is reputed to be, we shall not expect his letter to rival President Roosevelt's in this its distinguishing quality of excellence. How, for instance, could any affable gentleman hope, in writing a public address second only to a state paper in importance and dignity, if second even to that, to match this gracious compliment which we quote from Mr. Roosevelt's letter: "Exactly as it is impossible to call attention to the present promises and past record of our opponents without seeming offensive, so it is impossible to compare their other and later official utterances and not create doubt as to their sincerity." As

Mr. Roosevelt's whole letter is written in this key, Judge Parker may well confess his instinctive incapacity to compete, and strike a key of his own.

But dare he strike a key of his own? Dare he make himself the leader of a militant democracy, for which his position as the Democratic candidate and the exceptional frankness of the Democratic platform afford him so rare an opportunity? Dare he seize this opportunity as it knocks at his gate? Or will he continue to doubt and hesitate until it passes on to another and bolder leader? Dare he meet Roosevelt's bumptious challenge with a clarion call that will thrill the democratic heart of his countrymen? Or will he minimize issues as he did in his acceptance speech?

Roosevelt's letter offers more than one impudent and cynical challenge to Judge Parker to raise the standard of national ideals. On the Philippine question, Mr. Roosevelt challenges the integrity of the Declaration of Independence; on the question of protection he challenges the moral law. These questions and all that they involve are relegated by him to the quicksands of mere expediency.

With reference to protection this is done in express terms. He calls it not a question of morals primarily, but "primarily one of expediency"—"a matter of business." And with some approximation to justice, even if without dignity, he sneers at protectionist free-traders who don't seem to realize that it is just as immoral to revise the tariff downward, still leaving it protective, as to enact it. Of course it is not as immoral to reduce the tariff as a step toward abolishing protection, as it

is to enact it; for all obstacles to the abolition of a national evil cannot be overcome at once. But Roosevelt is right as to Democrats who would reduce the protective tariff merely for the purpose of regulating the robbery. Both the moral stamina and the political strength of the tariff issue on its democratic side, lie in the policy of abolition—in the policy which the Democratic platform proclaims, that "protection is robbery."

Dare Judge Parker accept Roosevelt's challenge to avail himself of this untested strength? Dare he reply to Roosevelt to this effect: "Yes, your opponents have, as you say, committed themselves to the destruction of the protection principle in the tariff; their platform denounces 'protection as robbery; the only words in that denunciation are those of which you must admit, to quote your own language, that they 'if honestly used forbid them from permitting this principle to obtain in even the smallest degree;' and I reiterate that clause of the platform, without modification either expressed, implied or mentally reserved; if elected I will do all in my power legitimately as President to eliminate the protective principle, root and branch, from our tariff laws." Were Judge Parker to take this stand, defending it as he easily could with cogent arguments both for its morality and its economic expediency, the deathly pallor and calm of his campaign would give way to healthy activity. Though he might miss the plutocratic-Democrats who are now trying to tie him to the chariots of the trusts, he would get a response from the people well calculated to gladden the heart of even the most hopeful candidate.

For the people of this country

do respond to moral appeals when they seem to ring true. Bryan's career is an illustration of that. True, Bryan failed of election; but so will Parker if the campaign goes on as it has begun. Bryan's failure was due to other circumstances than his moral appeal. And though he failed of election, he stands to-day taller and fairer among his brethren than any who have succeeded by appeals to self-interest. Let Parker raise the moral standard of his platform, that "protection is robbery," and Roosevelt with all his party will be instantly thrown into a panic and back upon a weak defensive.

Roosevelt's contention that protection is not robbery, has no staying powers. Protection consists in compelling some of the people of a country to pay tribute to others. When it fails to do this it fails to protect. From that characterization, conceal the protective method as you will, there is no possible escape; and any law which designedly accomplishes that end perpetrates robbery. Not only is protection robbery, but it is inexpedient. No process of reasoning from effect back to cause can demonstrate its expediency. To say that we have prospered under it is only a form of words. Without showing how we have prospered under it, one may just as well say we have prospered in spite of it. It is only by referring to prosperity and protection as having existed at the same time, and tracing no relation of cause and effect between them, but only asserting it, that Mr. Roosevelt is able to make protection so much as appear to have been expedient. Such reasoning is like that of the noodle doctor, who, upon learning that a sick shoemaker had eaten cabbage and died, while a sick carpenter had eaten it and lived, wrote in his commonplace book under the initial letter C: "Cabbage—kills shoemakers and cures carpenters."

Even with this handy mode of reasoning, Mr. Roosevelt finds it

necessary to conceal the tremendous fact that right along with an enormous protection system and its alleged prosperity, there has been maintained the greatest system of free trade the world has ever known. Trade between our States has been free for over a century. There is no protection there, as there used to be. And this inter-State trade is vastly greater than our international trade. Why may not our free trade, instead of our protection, have been the determining cause of our industrial growth? Why, at any rate, does Mr. Roosevelt neglect to notice this great free trade example? Were Judge Parker to make a brave and sincere campaign for the principle of abolishing protection, it might not win in eight weeks, but it would win in four years. It would be buttressed by every sensible consideration of expediency, while resting upon the fundamental principles of morality; and to such considerations, resting upon such principles, the people would not be unresponsive.

President Roosevelt's confusion of ideas is well exemplified by the juxtaposition in his letter of his protection theory with his monetary theory. He regards protection, whereby the law levies tribute on some for the enrichment of others, as raising only a question of expediency. But the gold standard he regards as a principle. If Mr. Roosevelt were consulted about gambling, he might be expected to conclude that while the color of the "chips" raises a question of principle, gambling itself is only a matter of expediency.

One of the interesting facts about Mr. Roosevelt's letter is his innocent reference to the aggregate deposits in savings banks as evidence that "the savings of the workingmen" have "increased by leaps and bounds." It is common knowledge that savings bank deposits are made up largely not of workmen's savings but of overflow incomes of the well-to-do and

the rich. A similar mark of unsophistication is Mr. Roosevelt's reference to the increase of farm values as evidence of the prosperity of farmers. Since a very large percentage of farm owners are not farmers, and a very large percentage of farmers are tenants, it is difficult to see how increased farm values can be regarded as evidence of general prosperity among farmers. Higher farm values mean higher farm rents, and higher farm rents cannot benefit farm tenants, nor any kind of farmers who farm farms, however grateful they may be to farmers who farm farmers. They cause an increased annual outgo to tenants for a farm to till on lease, and an increased burden of purchase price and mortgage when a farm is bought. Mr. Roosevelt is evidently applying to farmers the protection doctrine that excessive exports imply prosperity—that the more the farmer sends away and the less he gets back, the better off he is.

It must be said for Mr. Roosevelt's letter, however, that in it he strikes one true note. In dealing with the Philippine question he retorts to a criticism, that the Republicans have been "true to the spirit of the fourteenth amendment" in those islands, and asks the Democrats if they can say as much of the States which they control. This allusion to the race question is fortified by an excellent statement of principle in another part of the letter. "This government," he declares in that part, "is based upon the fundamental idea that each man, no matter what his occupation, his race or his religious belief, is entitled to be treated on his worth as a man, and neither favored nor discriminated against because of any accident in his position." If that were not a case-hardened platitude, but an expression of vital belief, one might harbor hopes that Mr. Roosevelt may yet respect the Declaration of Independence when the Philippines are involved, and the moral law in its application to protection.

For the most part President Roosevelt's letter defends protection with the logical fallacy known as "post hoc ergo propter hoc," which may be Anglicized as "after the event and therefore because of it." But when he attributes the hard times of 1893 to the tariff of 1894 he may be said, as Mr. Hanna might have phrased it, to have "seen" this familiar fallacy and "gone it one better," with the logical novelty of "before the event and therefore because of it."

"We did not take the Philippines at will," pleads Mr. Roosevelt in his letter of acceptance. Of course not. With soldiers and diplomats we did our best to avoid taking them. But the Spanish peace commissioners at Paris inveigled our reluctant commissioners into paying good money for them, while Aguinaldo at Manila fairly thrust them upon us willy nilly. What a charming historian is Mr. Roosevelt, to be sure.

In an address before the Wisconsin Conference at Sheboygan on the 13th, Bishop Warren declared that "The Philippines are God's gift to us to take care of them." There is in this pious sentiment a suggestion whereby the "hold-up" man might soothe his conscience while "taking care" of his loot.

Apropos of the incident at the banquet of the International Dental Congress (p. 355), which a distinguished dentist refused to attend because he had learned that some of his fellow delegates would remain away if he did not, he being a Negro and they being white, it appears that the behavior of these whites has been represented by some of the most distinguished among the white members of the association. The dentist referred to is Dr. C. A. Bentley, of Chicago. He has received, among other testimonials, the following address of friendship from the foreign delegates:

Dr. Charles E. Bentley: Sir and Colleague.—The undersigned, foreign mem-

bers of the Fourth International Dental Congress, regretting that a local prejudice had, without their knowledge, prevented you from taking part in the banquet of yesterday, wish to express to you their cordial sympathy and the assurance of their sincere sentiments of the con-fraternity. We hope to see you taking part in future International Dental Congresses which will be open to all honorable men whatever be their race or creed, and pray you to accept, our dear confrere, the assurance of our best sentiments: Charles Godon, Paris, France; Manuel Palacios, Durango, Spain; Cav. Uff V. Guerine, Naples, Italy; Rene Anema, Batavia, Java; George A. Russell, Paris, France; Ph. Suriani, Rome, Italy; J. S. Burke, Amsterdam, Holland; Cassulo Francisco, Buenos Ayres, Argentina; Jose J. Rojo, Mexico; Louis Subriana, Madrid, Spain; Jaine D. Losada, Madrid, Spain; Florestan Aguitar, Madrid, Spain; S. A. Pratto, Buenos Ayres; B. Platschick, Paris, France; F. Martin, Lyons, France; Charles Jenkins, Dresden, Germany; Emile Sauvez, Paris, France; Joan de Otaola, Bilbao, Spain.

One of the impressive and somewhat painful indications that Negroes are men as other men, is afforded by the attitude of the Conservator, a Negro paper of Chicago, regarding the recent strike in the packing houses. This strike was defeated with the aid of Negroes who took the places of strikers. It was as unwise a thing as they could have done, for it served the ends of a "superior" class and naturally tended to revive a declining race animosity among the working class. For this the Negroes who took the vacated jobs are not to blame. They could not be expected to act in large numbers with due regard for the complexities of the labor and the race problems. But that excuse cannot be claimed by the editors of the Conservator, who seem to be "blind leaders of the blind," if the following paragraph from that paper fairly represents them:

Presuming that the packers will act in good faith toward the men and women of the race, who within the last few weeks have faced danger and almost death in many forms to serve them, the precedent once established that Negroes can be depended upon to take the places deserted by other laborers will at once become contagious and the doors of every industry heretofore closed against him will sooner or later swing open to his approach. Men

and women of the race, a great opportunity, a great chance is opening before you!

Nothing could be better calculated to revive race hatred in the one place where it is rapidly disappearing. And it serves no purpose in other directions. Negro workmen will have no better opportunities with employers because they have served as tools to break this strike; while their relations with white workingmen will in consequence be strained to the point possibly of hopelessness of adjustment.

"Oh, I never read a book before reviewing it," said Sydney Smith; "it prejudices me so." Sydney Smith has many imitators, not only among book reviewers but among editorial writers. Here, for instance, is the Portland Oregonian, one of the strong editorial dailies in the country. Not long ago it criticised a labor day orator, Mr. George F. Cotterill, of Seattle, who had spoken at Portland, because Mr. Cotterill seemed to propose that "the men who put their manual labor into a product shall receive all its value, while the man who puts his money into it shall receive nothing." Mr. Cotterill had given no excuse whatever for this interpretation of his speech, as the Oregonian writer might have known had he not adopted Sydney Smith's rule for avoiding prejudice. In that speech, as published in the same issue of the Oregonian, Mr. Cotterill had distinctly declared that capital, stored up labor, "is entitled to receive its proportionate share with new labor applied to develop a new product." In elucidation of this, that there might be no such mistake as the Oregonian promptly made, he added:

When I am ready to invest the true "capital" which is "mine," unite it with the labor which is "thine," and together we apply it to the natural opportunity, the public utility which is "ours," then and not until then will there be possible the mutual confidence, the real respect, which can come only from the equitable distribution of the joint product. Capital and labor can then travel together, each in its