

The Public

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EDITORIAL

Senator Dolliver's Insurgency.

Senator Dolliver's impatience at the enthrallment of his party organization by the Interests, and his eager wish to throw off its plutocratic shackles at the first fair chance, have been an open secret in Washington ever since the proprietary collar of the Interests upon President Taft became visible to the naked eye. This Republican Senator from Iowa has now yielded to his wish so far as to confess and to denounce, officially in the Senate and without hesitation or reservation, the fact of that enthrallment. The rest cannot in the nature of things be very long put off, either by Mr. Dolliver or the other Insurgent Republicans. Whether they be those of the timid kind, who have run back and forth between insurgency and obedience, or the holdbacks who have thus far patterned after the village lawyer who when he loses a case goes into the woodshed to swear, or those like Senator La Follette who has long been conspicuous in the open and on the firing line—whatever brand of Insurgents they are, they cannot much longer yield any allegiance whatever to the Republican party under its present control. The parting of the ways is surely almost at hand, when a distinguished and able Republican Senator like Mr. Dolliver, representing a great Republican State like Iowa, rises in his place in the Senate as Mr. Dolliver did last week, to denounce the Republican party for being under the hand of an "ironclad organization" of Interests.

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Not at all does it follow, however, that the Insurgents either will or should go into the Democratic party. That would only expose them to the pluto-Democratic taunt that they are newcomers and should take a back seat, just as they are now exposed to the pluto-Republican taunt that they are rebels and ought to get out. Nor would it probably do any good if they were really welcomed into the Democratic party. Time was when there was nowhere else for a disgusted Republican to go, but the signs are that this may be so no longer. At any rate, Mr. Dolliver was quite right in coupling the Democratic party's organization with that of his own party when denouncing plutocratic control. It is painfully true, as he said, that—no man looking towards a larger progress in our institutions can count with much confidence on the ironclad organization which has had its hand on one or the other political party in the United States. The rank and file of the Democratic party, and a very few conspicuous leaders, have indeed tried hard to shake loose the grip of that "ironclad" hand; and not without temporary successes within their party, but at the cost of defeat in battles with "ironclads" sailing under Republican colors. And now that Republican treachery, defiant and unashamed, makes Democratic prospects fair, those same "ironclads" are putting on Democratic paint. Signs are plentiful of such an outcome of Democratic victory as the outcome of 1894, when the Interests, now represented in the Senate by a Republican Aldrich, were represented there by a Democratic Gorman. The Interests are so catholic politically, that Senator Dolliver's arrow went true to the mark when in his Senate speech he said: "I know, and every Democratic Senator knows, that it has been as difficult to use the Democratic party to promote progressive government in the United States as it has been to use the Republican party."

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What, then, is that parting of the ways which appears from Senator Dolliver's speech to be so surely almost at hand? To answer this question would be to indulge in futile prophecy. As one may see a storm coming without so much as an inkling of the course it will take, or may watch the sprouting of a crop without knowing exactly what the harvest will be, so one may predict a political revolution without perceiving its processes or foreseeing its results. Senator Bailey of Texas ventures the statement that unless the Insurgents either stay Republicans or join the Democrats, they must become Socialists. Well? Couldn't worse than that happen, if there were enough socialistic sentiment in the Republic to raise it in

national affairs above the level of merely playing at politics? Senator Dolliver declared his intention of remaining as a democratic Republican inside the Republican party, in the hope—which he must feel to be vain when he reflects upon the failure of democratic Democrats to drive plutocracy out of their party—of rescuing his own party from the bedevilment of the Interests. But out of the contest now raging he thought he saw possibilities of new parties, one the champion of special privileges and the other based upon Abraham Lincoln's maxim of "an unfettered start and a fair chance for every man in the race of life." Not a happy simile, that of a race, as if one man's success were necessarily another's failure. But the thought rings true. What Lincoln meant, as doubtless Dolliver does, is that every man shall have the fruit of his own labor, with an unfettered opportunity to produce it; and this implies, of course, that none shall have what is another's without the other's free consent.

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We should be glad to believe that a great party might soon base itself securely upon that principle. Possibly such a party is coming. But whether so or not, Senator Dolliver's speech is further assurance that there is near at hand a parting of the political ways, after which, be the political parties in name what they now are or something else, the political cleavage will be along the line that separates privilege from democracy. And the warfare will be fierce. The best guess at the moment, for it can only be a guess, is that the Insurgency now stirring in the Republican party, coupled with that which has so long saddened the spoilsmen of the Democratic party, may bring about one of those political upheavals over a burning issue, like the historic one over the Kansas-Nebraska bill, out of which a new party of democracy will spring spontaneously, and ready equipped not only with a good platform but with an army of enthusiastic voters to give it political vitality, as did the Republican democracy of the '50's.

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The British Revolution Under Asquith.

If the world realized the big meaning of the British Budget, the news of its enactment last week would not have been overshadowed in our newspapers by sensational reports of scandals. But something like this has always been true. Even the greatest event in the history of civilization—the career of the Founder of Christianity—was so lightly considered at the time, that no con-