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At an interview in the White House, duly heralded by the press, between Mr. Roosevelt and Helen Keller, the young woman who in spite of having been blind and deaf from infancy has become an intellectual wonder, Mr. Roosevelt entertained his sensitive guest with a story of how one of his boys enjoyed a rabbit hunt in the White House grounds. Does this man ever think of anything but killing?

In his bid this week at the Tammany "harmony" dinner for the Democratic nomination for the presidency, David B. Hill urged upon the party the importance at this time of unity and aggressive action. Aggressive action in what? Unity for what? Not the tariff, surely; for Hill is as good a protectionist as Roosevelt. Not the money question; for he stands as unflinchingly for hard money and the national bank of issue system as Mr. Gage, or Mr. Shaw. Not imperialism; for if he is opposed to that he has thus far borne the infliction with great fortitude and singular reticence. Not direct taxation; for he prefers indirect taxes, which surreptitiously rob the poor, to an income tax that would fall upon the rich. Not anything that would prejudice the interests of property in legal privilege; for as a thick and thin defender of established privilege he yields to no plutocrat in the land. Upon what principle, then, and for what policy can the Democratic party unite with Mr. Hill? If for anything under heaven which the Republican party does not already represent more efficiently, we should like to be en-

lightened. As at present advised we discern no other motive for a reunion of the Democratic party with Mr. Hill than an earnest hope and a lively expectation of sharing in the spoils of office. For that policy, and for that alone, Mr. Hill stands preeminent.

Senator Depew has saddled the constitutional amendment for the election of senators by popular vote, with a clause requiring that "the qualifications of citizens entitled to vote for United States Senators and representatives in Congress shall be uniform in all states." His implication is that in fixing these uniform qualifications his party in Congress will secure the Negro in the south his right to vote at least for members of both houses of the national legislature. The primary object of the tricky clause is probably what it is suspected to be, a weapon to force Southern senators and congressmen to oppose the principle of popular election of senators. Incidentally, however, the Republican managers expect to get some cheap capital out of the matter by pretending to be the very good friends of the Negro race. If they were really friendly to Negro suffrage rights they would not confine their efforts to making such a clause the condition of an amendment to which it is not especially related. They would at once take steps to secure those rights to the Negro regardless of the senatorial election amendment. But there is possibly an ulterior motive. Suppose the Depew condition were conceded. Suppose Congress were given power to make those uniform suffrage qualifications. Is there any certainty that the qualifications would be broadened so as to include the disfranchised Negroes of the South? Is it not as probable that they would be narrowed so as to exclude great bodies of enfranchised,

white men as well as Negroes everywhere? What better opportunity to perpetuate its power could a plutocratic party already in control of Congress want, than authority to define the qualifications of voters for its successors? May not Mr. Depew be working only nominally for the Negro and more liberty, but really for the great corporations and more restrictions?

The third successive Democratic victory in Cuyahoga county, Ohio, under the leadership of Tom L. Johnson, is attracting marked attention all over the country. It is made especially notable because, for one thing, this is a Republican county, and for another, the Republicans appear to have been generally successful elsewhere in the state at the recent local elections. In these circumstances another fact regarding the spring elections in Ohio is significant. In Loraine, in a neighboring county, Joseph King became the Democratic candidate for mayor at Johnson's suggestion; and, although this town had never before in its history elected a Democrat to office, Mr. King received a plurality of 70 votes. The truth is that Johnson's methods are becoming as acceptable to the people as they are peculiar to politics. Candor and fidelity have been the chief points of his political policy. His purposes are radical, his plans are conservative, his judgment is sound, and his word is at par. These are the qualities that are making him, indeed have already made him, the Democratic leader in Ohio. He is a leader who leads.

One thing about Johnson is only just coming to be recognized at its full value—his civil service policy. He believes in the merit system, and unlike some more pretentious civil service reformers in office, he is apply-

ing it with the same bold confidence and open candor that characterize all he does. Already, for the first time in the history of Cleveland, three important departments of local government have been rescued from the spoils system. One is the water department, which Johnson has placed in charge of Prof. E. W. Bemis, to whom he has given in fact and not as a pretense—as recent developments have fully shown—a free hand to manage the department without reference to party politics, but in the best interests of the city. Another is the city treasury. Upon the death of the republican incumbent, Mayor Johnson appointed Mr. Coffinberry, who was known to be his candidate for the office at the recent election, and Mr. Coffinberry has placed that office upon the merit basis. The third is the public school system, to the head of which Starr Cadwallader was chosen at the same election. Mr. Cadwallader, who was universally regarded during the campaign as the candidate of Mayor Johnson, to whose influence the nomination and election was unquestionably due, has supplanted the Republican spoils system heretofore prevailing in the school management in Cleveland, by the non-partisan merit system. And much to the surprise of old-fashioned politicians, Mayor Johnson's civil service policy has actually strengthened him and his party in politics.

Johnson's possibilities as Democratic leader in Ohio are naturally enough disturbing the Republican managers. They do not understand his kind of politics as well as the voters who have had a chance to express themselves upon it seem to. They are frank enough to admit that Johnson's third successive triumph in Cuyahoga as Democratic leader, means for them a hard battle for supremacy in the state next fall; and they don't conceal the fact that Johnson has them badly frightened. At the same time they are manufacturing an abundance of campaign material for him. Not only are they

openly identifying the Republican party with the street railroad and the steam railroad monopolies, and trying to rip up the government of Cleveland (established by their own legislation and enjoyed by them for more than a decade), so as to deprive Johnson of the power the people have reposed in him and which he has used faithfully in the public interest; but they have in addition enacted tax laws for the state the operation of which ought to damn a far better party than the Republican party of Ohio has come to be.

The Ohio tax laws which have just been enacted were proposed by the Republican governor and forced through the legislature as party measures. They will save the steam railroads and other public utility corporations hundreds of thousands of dollars in the taxes they would have to pay if they were taxed on the same basis as farmers, merchants, mechanics, etc. Moreover, the laws are so drawn as to tax unprofitable private corporations of a given capitalization, and those that are only moderately profitable, more than others of the same capitalization which are profitable enough to put their shares at a premium.

Let us explain this remarkable legislation. To establish the eminently sound policy of home rule in taxation, the Democrats in the legislature proposed bills abolishing the general tax levy of the state and charging the deficiency, as it might appear from year to year, to the various counties in proportion to their respective tax totals for local purposes. This would have relieved the state of its pestiferous board of equalization, for the apportionment would have been arrived at by a simple arithmetical calculation, mere clerical work, and every county could have been left wholly free to raise public revenues in its own chosen way. But that was not satisfactory to the party of tax-dodging monopolists. Its political patrons and legislative beneficiaries would have been in danger under such a system

of being taxed equally with other interests. Yet it was anxious to pose for home rule in taxation, which is popular in Ohio. So two Republican "home rule" tax bills were passed. Under these an annual tax of one per cent. will be imposed on the gross receipts of steam railroads and other public service corporations. As they have heretofore paid one-half of one per cent. the reform will double their taxes, which seems, at first blush, like a bad thing for them. But it is not so bad after all. For under this law they will escape with an aggregate increase of about \$700,000; whereas, under the old law, taxed upon a 60 per cent. valuation like other property owners—and there was growing danger that with Johnson's advent into Ohio politics this would be done—they would have had to pay about \$7,000,000. It was quite worth their while, therefore, to accept the Republican tax "reform" measures. Another feature of these measures is of like inequitable character. All Ohio corporations are to be taxed one-tenth of one per cent. on their capital stock, estimated at par. Consequently every little business which has become incorporated, must, whether profitable or not, pay the same tax as a highly profitable corporation owning special privileges, if the capital stock is nominally the same. Thus, a corporation capitalized at \$100,000, but whose stock is worth only ten cents or less to the dollar, would be taxed the same as a telephone company capitalized at \$100,000 but whose stock was worth 200 cents to the dollar.

There is enough political dynamite in that Ohio tax legislation to blow the party organization responsible for it into fragments. This in itself, of course, would not be worth while. But the Democratic tax bills that were shoved aside by these monopoly-fostering tax laws are worth while. And after the comparison of the opposing policies the two sets of bills respectively stand for, which is certain to be made under Johnson's leadership this fall on the stump throughout Ohio, it

will reflect upon the intelligence of the average Ohio voter if the tax-dodging monopolies and their political friends are not worsted as badly in the state as they have been already in Cuyahoga county.

Why is it that Congressional resolutions expressive of sympathy with the resistance of the Boer republics to the efforts of the Tory party of Great Britain to subjugate their people and annex their territory, never see the light after once getting into the possession of the committee on foreign affairs? Why are they "held up"? Perhaps none of them ought to pass. Possibly the committee ought not recommend all of them or any one of them. It may be that the adoption of any of these resolutions would put our nation in a false light as a neutral power. We might thereby seem to be taking sides with and aiding the cause of the Boer republics, somewhat as in connection with the British army depot at New Orleans we are actually taking sides with and aiding the British empire. This, of course, ought not to be done. No resolution regarding the Boers ought to be adopted by Congress which would really conflict with our obligations of neutrality. But that is not a valid reason for burying the resolutions in committee.

The function of a committee is to inquire into and report upon matters referred to it, not to "pigeon-hole" them. Whether it reports favorably or unfavorably is for the committee itself to decide. But it is its duty to report. When it refuses to do that, the people have a right to complain. And this is what the committee on foreign affairs of the House does refuse to do with the Boer resolutions in its hands. It has "held up" some of them two years, and congressmen and private citizens have tried in vain to get it to make any report, favorable or otherwise, upon any. How is this accomplished? Through the chairman of the committee, as everyone familiar with congressional procedure knows. What the chairman wants

done his associates of the party in power, constituting a majority of the committee, agree to. Unless they do, they get no plums. It is the same with what he doesn't want done. Consequently, if the chairman of a committee wishes to "hold up" any matter referred to his committee, he does so and "no questions asked."

Upon Robert R. Hitt, then, the chairman of the House committee on foreign affairs and a congressman from Illinois, rests the responsibility for the long and comprehensive "hold up" of Boer resolutions in Congress. Of that there can be no question. But what is Mr. Hitt's motive? There can be but one motive for such conduct. If the resolutions ought not to pass, the chairman should report against them with the reasons. But if there are no valid reasons why they should not pass, yet they are objectionable to him, his only recourse is to bury them. And this is what Mr. Hitt has done with the Boer resolutions that have accumulated in his committee during the past two years or more. Opposed to fair play for the Boers, but conscious of the popular sympathy for them which prevails in his state and over the country, he avoids the issue by pigeon-holing the resolutions. Mr. Hitt serves the Tory party of England, by putting the Boers at an unfair disadvantage with reference to American sentiment. He prevents a discussion and vote upon the resolutions in Congress upon their merits, and thereby fosters the notion, of which the British ministry makes much, that in the South African war the sympathy of the United States is with the British. This ought to answer the question of the Chicago Tribune, which wants to know why Mr. Hitt should not be the next senator from Illinois. It is to be hoped that Illinois wants no sympathizer with British toryism to represent her in the United States Senate.

Senator Hanna is widely commended for his fidelity to Rathbone, the Cuban postal defaulter. This is as it should be. Was not Rathbone

the man whose name figured conspicuously in the charges of bribery in connection with Mr. Hanna's election to the Senate—the man who, as the Toledo Bee tersely puts it "handled the legislators who had to be bought"? If Rathbone did push Mr. Hanna into the Senate, it would be only fair for Senator Hanna to pull Rathbone out of the penitentiary.

#### OUR DEMORALIZING CONQUEST.

##### I.

The inhumanity which has characterized the American occupation of the Philippines can no longer be denied. It must now be either defended with bravado or confessed with shame. The trial and verdict in the case of Maj. Waller leave no other alternative.

Maj. Waller was court-martialed for killing natives in the island of Samar, not in battle but in cold blood after capturing them.

His plea in part was that the natives in Samar were treacherous. But he conceded that he had not put his prisoners on trial to ascertain their individual guilt. He had executed them off-hand, without regard to whether they were individually guilty of treachery or not. Defending this as being within the usages of war, he urged that without criticism he had dealt in the same way with "boxers" in China; and that not only did this conduct there go without criticism from his superiors, but it was practiced and approved by officers of the European troops. Indeed, they were inclined to make sport of the Americans for chicken-heartedness, because in other respects the American policy was excessively fair and humane from the prevailing military point of view. Maj. Waller admitted the execution of 11 of his Samar prisoners in this unceremonious fashion, justifying the homicide as a legitimate act of war.

But he did not rest his defense on that plea alone. He made a further plea, the nature of which strongly indicates that his motive after all was not to punish treachery, but to terrorize a stubborn enemy by giving them to understand that they were to receive no quarter. He testified that he had acted pursuant to the orders of Maj.