

lowing of mercenaries—powerful in the nominating convention and powerful at the polls. But let us make no mistake, he also has a tremendous and disinterested progressive following under splendid and disinterested leadership. Republicans in shoals who have been only recently awakened to the dangers to American democracy are looking to him. Perhaps it is a mirage they see—the upright image of an inverted democrat. We think it is. Yet they may say that they have drawn from him that Columbus speech; and we freely acknowledge, not only that this is a great triumph for them but that it may be a sufficient guarantee of good faith and an ample bond for good behavior. At any rate we are bound to recognize the force of their contention when they argue that Roosevelt is the only man who, in the Republican convention, can defeat Taft the plutocratic Republican, and the only Republican who can defeat a Democratic reactionary at the polls if the plutocrats carry the Democratic convention.



But will Mr. Roosevelt be as strong politically as progressive Republicans of the Governor Johnson type think him, and as indeed he seems to be? Granted that a large contingent of mercenaries will follow no one but him into the Progressive camp; granted that he has a large following of baseball fans, sporty-minded collegiates, “by-george” bad men, and chewing-gum democrats, as well as a vast following of earnest democratic Republicans; granted that his Columbus speech will tend to fire enthusiasm for him among thoughtful democrats in all parties; granted that if the Initiative, Referendum and Recall were once firmly established in the heart of our representative system of government, we might safely trust good men in office, even the bad good-men, regardless of their opinions or ambitions, and no longer fear usurpation by a democratic Bonaparte,—grant it all, and yet Mr. Roosevelt once in the fight might encounter political obstacles that would make the progressive Republicans wish, even on the point of relative political strength, that they had clung to La Follette. Mr. Roosevelt must struggle with the “third term” objection, the logical unsoundness of which we freely concede. It is true that his election this year would not be for a third term in the objectionable sense. The only sound objection to a third term is that it may enable a President to perpetuate himself in office, as Diaz of Mexico did. Inasmuch, then, as Roosevelt was only acting President in his first term, and there has been an interval since his second, the objection to a third term does not apply

logically. But public feeling seldom makes logical distinctions very strictly. Mr. Roosevelt having been President one full term as President and almost one full term as acting President (another distinction not likely to be weighty with the man in the street), his election this year would be for “a third term” in popular apprehension. Moreover, didn’t Mr. Roosevelt promise that if elected in 1904 he wouldn’t be a candidate again? Here are elements of unfathomable political weakness. With all the power behind ex-President Grant, his friends were unable to nominate him for a third term, although it would have been after an interval and there were no pledges to embarrass them. If it be said in reply that Grant’s prior administrations were against him, what about Roosevelt’s? His Panama usurpation will be no boy’s-play issue in a Presidential campaign if flung at his candidacy. Neither will the now notorious campaign-fund affair, nor his Napoleonic interference with due process of law in behalf of the steel trust’s Coal and Iron grab. As it proceeds, Mr. Roosevelt’s campaign is likely to look less and less attractive to progressive Republicans, although the Columbus speech with which he opened it is of incalculable value in advertising the popular strength of the Initiative, Referendum and Recall, thereby adding strength to strength for those controlling reforms.



Murdering the Souls of Men.

Worse than all the dynamite outrages ever perpetrated—worse for the victims, worse for their families, worse for society—are those cases of soul-murder by rich and respectable beneficiaries of special privileges of which Senator La Follette tells in the March installment of his autobiography in the American Magazine. Here is one of the instances he gives of this wicked and cruel dynamiting of the morals of public men:

Assemblyman E. was a fine young fellow, and regarded as thoroughly reliable. He was often in the executive office and I trusted him absolutely. . . . He was one of the most enthusiastic men we had, and being a high-spirited, energetic young fellow, he was of great assistance in our fights. Whenever we gathered a little group of the members in the Executive office to talk over any critical situation in the legislature, E. was always with us. He was an active young manufacturer. He often talked with us about his business. I think he had some special machine which enabled him to make his product more cheaply than other manufacturers. One day E. Ray Stevens came into my office and said, “Governor, I wish you would send up and ask E. to come down here. I don’t just like the way he talks.” “Why,” I said, “Ray, there can’t be anything wrong with E.” Then I began to think that he had not

been in to see me for three or four days. "Well," I said, "I will send up." When he came through the door he did not meet me with his characteristic frankness. But I greeted him exactly as usual and said, "E, I want to have a little talk with you." I moved my chair right up to his, placed my hands on his knees and looked him in the eye a moment before I spoke. Then I asked, "E, what's the matter?" The tears started in his eyes and the response came at once: "Governor, I can't help it. I've got to vote against the railroad taxation bill." After a moment he added, "I haven't slept any for two or three nights. I have walked the floor. I have thought of resigning and going home."

"Tell me all about it, E," I said.

"Well," he replied, "you know that all I have in the world I have put into that factory of mine. I have told you about how proud I was of the thing. Now," he said, "this railroad lobby tells me that if I vote for that railroad taxation bill they will ruin me in business. They can take away everything I've got. They have threatened to give my competitors advantages over me in railroad rates that will offset any advantages I have with my new machinery. Now, I can't beggar my family. I have a wife and babes."

I said, "E, you can't do this wrong. You can't violate your conscience." I talked to him quite a bit. He got up and walked the floor. He said he would always be for our measures, but he could not risk being driven to the wall. And then he left the office.

A few minutes before the roll call on the bill, E, who sat next to Lenroot, turned to him and said, "Lenroot, in five minutes I am going to violate my oath of office."

Lenroot was shocked and said, "What do you mean?"

He replied: "It is a question between my honor and my bread and butter, and I propose to vote for my bread and butter."

And he voted against the bill.



Stealing Wages in Lawrence.

For seven weeks a strike has been in progress at the textile factories in Lawrence, Massachusetts. These factories are subsidized through the Federal government by means of the protective tariff. The reasons given are the necessity of the subsidy in order to maintain American wages. The wages are nevertheless reduced below the living point, and a long strike results. Thereupon the powers of the State—judicial, police, and military—are brought to the aid of the subsidized employers; and this interference in their interest is extended so far beyond the law as to interfere with the sending by strikers of their children to temporary homes in other cities. By what law have the police done this? If by none, why do the higher authorities allow it? And then that tariff subsidy. This makes the question national. The

people of the United States are empowering those Lawrence manufacturers to charge excessive prices for their products *in order to pay good wages*; but the employers *pay starvation wages* and put the extra prices into their own pockets. Hasn't this a good deal the flavor of stealing by trick and device? and isn't it time for Congress to take up Congressman Berger's investigation resolution and find out why tariff protection for workers does not profit workers?



For a "Money Trust" Whitewash.

Several members of Congress went on record last week in unblushing defense of secrecy for the "money trust." Ex-Speaker Cannon led them. There is no telling how many more may do the same thing when the attempt to uncover these "money maggots" reaches the danger point. At present, however, it seems as if the caucus vote which suppressed a special committee and referred the matter to the neatly packed committee on banking, may have failed in its anti-publicity purpose. By a vote of 207 to 8 in the House on the 24th the committee on banking were given pretty strict orders. They may not now be able to sidestep the investigation, as was undoubtedly the original expectation. And none the easier will it be since other and unpacked committees are asking authority to investigate the "money trust" with reference to their own respective functions. Thus the judiciary committee proposes to investigate the "money trust's" violations of the Sherman law, and the committee on Presidential elections proposes investigating its connection with campaign contributions.*



That Postal "Surplus."

Why should the Fourth Assistant Postmaster General demand of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association that it withdraw its endorsement from its organ? If because the organ had misrepresented the Department, a demand for correction would have been more appropriate. For the Department to demand a boycott by its employes of their organ has a high-handed appearance. As to the misrepresentation, it appears to have been to the effect that the recent Department boast of a "surplus" is not true. The R. F. D. News (the organ in question) had explained that this "surplus" was arrived at by bookkeeping methods, and did not represent the actual financial condition of the postal service. And now this "misrepresenta-

*See The Public of February 23, page 172.