

WHEN SENATORS LAUGHED AND SNEERED

The New York Press is a republican paper. It can not be said to be prejudiced against the republican senate. From the pen of its Washington correspondent The Press prints this description of the manner in which Mr. Roosevelt's message relating to the Standard Oil was received in the American House of Lords:

"What the American people have to expect in the regulation of the trusts was disclosed today in congress when the president sent to the senate and the house the report of the bureau of corporations, showing that the Standard Oil corporation not only violates the law, but is a partner with many railroad corporations in preventing competition and raising prices of all Standard Oil products throughout the country. The report of the bureau of corporations was accompanied by a strong message from the president. In the house of representatives the closest attention was paid to the reading of the message and the report, and there was generous applause which proved that party lines were broken. The situation in the senate suggested plainly that there would have to be a great change in that body before any good results can come from the president's campaign. Not two-thirds of the senators had the courtesy to listen to the message. Many of the pronounced corporation senators were in their seats, and, as the reading progressed, cracked jokes or sneered audibly at the expression of Mr. Roosevelt.

"It may be said, moderately, that the presi-

dent's message had no effect upon the men that control the senate. Several of them regarded it with contempt and a few of them insisted that the president was beginning his campaign for another term. It was clear to old observers of the senate that the message had no special effect and would not accomplish any practical result.

"Senator Kean of New Jersey snickered audibly at the announcement that the Standard Oil trust had profited to the extent of three-quarters of a million a year from unlawful and unfair railroad rebates.

"When the clerk read that much of these rebates had been done away with, Mr. Kean grinned back to Mr. Aldrich and made a laughing comment to Mr. Dryden, his colleague.

"The reference to pooling provoked a hearty laugh from Mr. Aldrich, but when the recommendation for prompt action on the free alcohol bill was read there was a great explosion of mirth. Mr. Kean threw back his head in sheer enjoyment, and Mr. Aldrich grew red with laughter. Messrs. Foraker, Lodge, Burrows, Scott and Wetmore joined in the chorus.

"Whatever apprehension was felt at the outset regarding the teeth in the message was quickly dispelled, and at the conclusion of the reading of the document the senate was in rare good humor.

"Senator Foraker moved that the message be printed and laid on the table, the parliamentary method of shelving a measure. Noticing that

only a part of the Garfield report had been submitted, Senator Culberson of Texas hastily wrote with a pencil a resolution calling for the full document. This resolution was adopted."

The president of the United States sends to the senate a report showing that a gigantic trust conspiring with the railroads has repeatedly and persistently violated the law. He accompanies that report with a message inviting serious attention to this deplorable condition. And, according to this republican paper, "many senators cracked jokes or sneered audibly;" also "several of them regarded it with contempt;" also "Senator Kean of New Jersey snickered audibly;" also "when the recommendation for prompt action on the free alcohol bill was read there was a great explosion of mirth. Mr. Kean threw back his head in sheer enjoyment, and Mr. Aldrich grew red with laughter. Messrs. Foraker, Lodge, Burrows, Scott and Wetmore joined in the chorus;" also "at the conclusion of the reading of the document the senate was in rare good humor."

And these are the men who claim a monopoly upon the intelligence and the patriotism of the country! These are conspicuous among "the defenders of national honor!" These are the champions of public interests! Who will say that they were not entitled to laugh at the suggestion that a great corporation be held accountable to the law? Who will say that they were not justified in a sneer?

THE STANDARD OIL "ATHENE"

A Padonia, Kan., reader of The Commoner sends to this office what he calls "a sample of the rot that is being sent out by the Standard Oil company." Enclosed in this letter is a booklet entitled "Standard Oil Company a Public Benefactor." L. A. Bone appears to be the author, and the work is from the press of the Wichita Star.

Mr. Bone thinks the Standard Oil company is entitled to honor because "its commodity has been so raised in quality and so lowered in price;" and because "it has added to the world's wealth" and has "developed to its utmost degree one of the great resources of our country and has enriched in this way the whole people."

Mr. Bone is evidently greatly impressed with the value of the services rendered humanity by John D. Rockefeller and Standard Oil. Following are some extracts from his article:

"It (Standard Oil) is the friend and benefactor not only of the public in general, but of the laboring man in particular."

"It should be a matter of pride to an American that the merchant prince of the world, John D. Rockefeller, is a native-born citizen of our own country."

"The Standard Oil company is a friend of Christianity by its donations to benevolent institutions and for charitable purposes. Mr. Rockefeller is the largest giver in the world."

"The Standard is the firm friend and able exponent of good citizenship by its conformity and obedience to the laws of our country, notwithstanding what may be said to the contrary. A favorite maxim of the company is 'illegal methods are sure to end in disaster.'"

"It is the friend of both Christianity and good citizenship, by the high moral standard required in its employes. Measured by any standard, when the truth is revealed, it will be found that the Standard Oil company is a public benefactor; and could the common people by some magical draught or potion be brought to a complete realization of their debt of gratitude to the Standard Oil company they could do no less than employ some modern Phidias to raise the statue of John D. Rockefeller like that of Athene in the Parthenon in ivory and gold."

Mr. Bone's sincerity is not to be doubted. That is attested by his earnestness. And even many of those who will today smile at the picture Mr. Bone draws of Standard Oil and the Rockefellers were, in 1896, pointing to that institution and its managers as representative of intelligence, patriotism and business interests.

While not desiring to disturb the serenity of the Standard Oil's Wichita champion, The Commoner begs the privilege of asking: When this statue of John D. Rockefeller is made, will it represent a stalwart man who with unflinching eye looks his fellows in the face and with open hand gives to the cause of education and religion?

Or will it present the bended figure of a terrified creature skulking through the underbrush and hurrying to cover in the effort to avoid the service of a writ commanding the Standard Oil "Athene" to appear in a court of justice and tell the truth?



'T WAS A FAMOUS VICTORY

Mr. Roosevelt does many strange things. The haste he made in giving his approval to Senator Aldrich's plan known as "the Allison amendment" and the readiness with which he sought to defend his position has strained to the very limit those who prefer to believe that he enlisted in an intelligent and sincere effort in behalf of railroad legislation.

Mr. Roosevelt ought to know that he has nothing to gain for his own reputation, for his party's record or for his country's welfare by making even the smallest compromise with Senator Aldrich and his associates. Mr. Roosevelt has given the monopolists many a bad half hour. He has rendered distinct service to the country by directing attention to the seriousness of many of the evils of the day and the monopolists hold him responsible for stirring up much of what they call "present day discord." They will not soon forget his accomplishments on that line, and they will never forgive him.

The reception accorded the president's Standard Oil message in the senate serves as a hint of the feeling these gentlemen have toward the present occupant of the White House. They will smilingly lure Mr. Roosevelt to a skillfully devised compromise, and when by this means he has lost in prestige among the people they will be the first to taunt him with his fall, and the first to openly assail him.

Many people believe that Mr. Roosevelt is such a bitter partisan that his chief anxiety now is to save his party; but it must be plain to every one that the republican party can not be perpetuated without the monopolists who have contributed to it so liberally; and it must be evident, also, that under such circumstances the republican party is not worthy of preservation so far as public interests are concerned. Within the republican party there is not room enough for men who honestly believe along the lines preached by Mr. Roosevelt with respect to railroad legislation, and men whose interests lie with the Rockefellers and who believe with the Aldriches. Harmony among such elements means complete surrender by one side or the other. Whatever pretense the representatives of monopoly may make, they never surrender. Sometimes they pretend to yield, and so skillfully do they veil their propositions that that which amounts to a victory for them is often palmed off as a victory for the people. So thoroughly disciplined is the republican party, so truculent is the republican press, so thoughtless are the men who vote the republican ticket simply because their fathers voted it, that we often find a considerable number of people seriously applauding a triumph

for monopoly under the impression that it is a triumph for popular government.

If the campaign for railroad rate legislation is to terminate with the Hepburn bill and the Allison amendment then, knowingly or unknowingly, Mr. Roosevelt has surrendered and the American people who, suffering under the burdens of corporate imposition, asked for bread, have been given a stone.



THE SNEER A "BACK NUMBER"

Secretary Taft in discussing the duties of citizenship before Yale students paid attention to "socialists of the parlor," which is interpreted by the Chicago Record-Herald to mean "young and sentimental gentlemen who find happiness in reflecting on the misery which the world presents in abundance, and who take no pains to study actual life—the conditions of the people they would help, the causes of the misery, the difficulties in the way of reform, and so on."

Mr. Taft will discover that the old-time method of meeting proposed reforms with sneers will no longer be of avail. The policies of the political organization to which Secretary Taft is devoted have done more to advance the cause of socialism in this country than all the literature that has ever been written upon that subject. If that cause has progressed far enough for republican leaders to give it serious attention, they should meet the issue with something more substantial than a sneer. We have reached that stage in American politics where the sneer is a back number.



WHAT, NEVER?

Senator Perkins of California in a magazine article said. "I think that the present senate will stand forth in history as one which has exhibited in the highest degree the qualities of fairness and impartiality, a determination to arrive at the truth and a courage to maintain the truth as found against the popular demand for hasty and inconsiderate action."

Courage is all very well, but how does it happen that the fine courage of the senate seems invariably to be displayed in behalf of special interests? Can it be possible that "the popular demand" is never a just demand?



"IN LINE WITH BUSINESS"

The Kansas City Journal says: "The insurance officials doubtless acted illegally in giving trust funds for political uses, but nevertheless it was in line with sound business principles to aid in preventing a Bryan panic."

Andrew Hamilton doubtless acted illegally in using trust funds for the corruption of legislatures, but nevertheless in the opinion of Andrew Hamilton and the trust magnates who employed him it was in line with sound business principles to aid in preventing a panic which, in their view, would certainly result from any legislation requiring justice for the policyholders.