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THE PUBLIC THIEVES.

Speech of Mr. Dawes on Corruption in Contracts for the Army.

Mr. Speaker, though I have spent the better part of my Congressional life upon investigating committees, no one was ever yet raised upon my motion, no resolution was ever carried upon my motion calling for inquiry, no motion was ever made by me, the result of which has been an investigation by this House, and yet I have felt that it was proper for me to speak, in order to decline the service that has been imposed upon me. But I felt again that it was incumbent upon me to discharge it fearlessly and cheerfully, however much mortification and discomfiture might come from it.

Sir, I have not failed to notice, and I believe the committee of which I am a member have not failed to notice, in common with the whole country, that for some unaccountable reason the charges upon the national treasury, at this time of war, have been such as to reach nearly the bottom of the public chest. During our investigation startling facts have come before the notice of this committee, and to the notice of the whole country, touching the mode and manner of the expenditure of the public money. Some of these things I propose to call public attention to, and then to ask gentlemen the plain question, when they purpose to meet this question, if at all, and if so, how, when and where. The very first contract entered into by this government after the troops had left their homes to come here in April last, to defend the Capitol, by which they were to be fed, was a contract entered into for cattle. It was not made with a man whose business it was to supply cattle to the market, not with a man who knew the price of beef in the markets of the country, but was entered into by the government here with a man well known in this, and in the other branch of Congress, for the last ten years, as an old political stipendiary—one of the class of men who, in times past, made their money by such operations as buying the certificates of members for books at a discount and then charging the full amount. This contract was made so that the first twenty-two hundred head of cattle furnished was charged at a rate which enabled their original contractor to sub-let it, in twenty-four hours after, to a man in New York who did know the price of beef, so that he put into his pockets, without stirring from his chair, thirty-two thousand dollars, and the men who actually furnished the cattle in question put into their pockets twenty-six thousand dollars more, so that the contract under which these twenty-two hundred head of cattle were furnished to the army was so made that the profit of fifty-eight thousand dollars was realized over the fair market price. It takes a longer time to make a thousand head of cattle to reach this city than it takes the States where they are purchased than it takes the army to consume them. I ask the House, at this rate, to consider how long the most ample provision of the Treasury would be able to meet the simple demands for the subsistence of the army. Sir, poorly as the army is shod to-day, a million more are being manufactured, and yet upon every one of these shoes there has been a waste of seventy-five cents. Three quarters of a million of dollars have been already worn out, and another three quarters of a million of dollars upon shoes is now being manufactured. In that department of the government, contracts have been so plenty that government officials have gone about the streets with their pockets filled with them, and of which they made presents to the clergymen of their parishes, and with which were healed old political sores and cured political feuds. Even the telegraph has announced that high public functionaries have graced the love feasts which were got up to celebrate these political reconciliations, thus bringing about while the hatchet of political animosity was buried in the grave of public confidence, and the national credit crushed among mal-factors. We have resorted to as the first fruits of one of these contracts. A regiment of cavalry lately reached Louisville, one thousand strong, and the board of army officers there appointed for the purpose have condemned four hundred and eighty-five out of the thousand horses as utterly worthless. The man who examined these horses declared, upon his oath, that there was not one of them that was worth twenty dollars. They were blind, spavined, ring-boned, afflicted with the heaves, with the glanders, and with every disease that horse-flesh is heir to. These four hundred and eighty-five horses cost the government, before they were mustered into the service, fifty thousand two hundred dollars, besides more than an additional thousand dollars to transport them from Pennsylvania to Louisville, where they were condemned and cast off.

Mr. Maloney (Union), of Ky., asked what regiment these horses belonged to and who furnished them?

Mr. Dawes—They belonged to Col. Williams' regiment of cavalry, and they were purchased in Pennsylvania, from which state they were forwarded to Louisville, where they were condemned. There are eighty-three regiments of cavalry to-day, one thousand strong. It takes two hundred and fifty thousand dollars to put one of these regiments on foot before it moves. Twenty million of dollars have thus been expended on these cavalry regiments before they left the encampments where they were mustered into service, and hundreds and hundreds of these horses have been condemned and sent back to Elmira, and to Annapolis, and to this city, to spend the winter. Any day hundreds of them can be seen round this city, chained to trees, where they were left to starve to death. Gangs of two hundred horses, in various places, have been thus left to die and rot, till the Committee on the District of Columbia have called for a measure of legislation to protect the city from the danger to be apprehended from their horses' Galloping. An ex-Governor of one State offered an ex-Judge of another State five thousand dollars to get him permission to raise one of these regiments of cavalry, and when the ex-Judge brought back the commission the ex-Governor takes it to his room at the hotel, while another plunderer sits at the key-hole watching like a mastiff while he inside counts up forty thousand dollars profit on the horses, and calculate twenty thousand dollars more upon the accoutrements and on the other details of furnishing these regiments. In addition to the arms in the hands of six hundred thousand soldiers in the field, there are numerous outstanding contracts, made with private individuals—not made upon advertisement, not made with the knowledge of the public, but made by ex-members of Congress, who knew no more of the difference between one class of arms and another than does a Methodist minister. There are outstanding contracts for the manufacture of Springfield muskets, the first one of which cannot be delivered in six months from this day. There is a contract for the supply of one million and ninety muskets, at twenty-eight dollars apiece, when the same quality of muskets are manufactured at Springfield for thirteen and a half apiece; and an ex-member of Congress is now in Massachusetts, trying to get machinery made by which he will be able in six months hence, to furnish at 21 dollars apiece, those rifle muskets manufactured to-day in that armory for thirteen dollars and a half. Providence, before six months, will dispose of this war, or He will dispose of us. Not one of those muskets thus contracted for will be of the slightest service in this emergency, or before the providence of God whether for good or for evil will dispose of it. I ask my friends from the North and North-west how they expect to benefit by an armory at Chicago, at Rock Island, and at Quincy, when a million and ninety-two thousand muskets will, according to this contract, be thrown upon the country, and that after the war is over, and at such an enormous price, in addition to other outstanding contracts for the manufacture, sometime hence, of two hundred and seventy-two thousand Enfield rifles. Besides these are seventy-five thousand five hundred and forty-three sets of harness, to be delivered by and by, at the cost of one million nine hundred and seventy-eight thousand four hundred and forty dollars. I have not time to enumerate all these contracts. When we appropriated, at the last session of Congress, for this purpose, twenty millions of dollars, thirty-seven millions and some thousand dollars had been already pledged to contractors—not for the purchase of arms for the men in the field, nor to protect them in fighting their country's battles in this great emergency and peril, but for some future use, for some future occasion, or to meet some present need of the contractor, I don't know which at this moment. And not only the appropriation of last session has been exhausted, but seventeen millions put upon it. The riot of the 19th of April in Baltimore opened this bait, and on the 21st of April, in the city of New York, there was organized a corps of plunderers of the Treasury. Two millions of dollars were entrusted to a poor, unfortunate, honest, but entirely incompetent editor of a paper in New York, to dispose of it in the best manner he could. Straightway this gentleman began to purchase linen pantaloons, straw hats, London porters, dried herrings, and such like provisions for the army, till he expended in this way three hundred and ninety thousand dollars of the money, and then he got scared and quit. (Laughter.)—There is an appropriation, also, for the supply of wood to the army. This contractor is pledged the payment of seven dollars a cord for all the wood delivered to the different commands; wood collected after the labor of the soldiers themselves had cut down the trees to clear the ground for the batteries; and then this contractor employs the army wagons to draw it to the several camps, and he has no further trouble than to draw his seven dollars for a cord, leaving the government to draw the wood. (Laughter.)—It costs two millions of dollars every day to support the army in the field. A hundred millions of dollars have thus been expended, and all that time the army has been in camp. What the expenditure will increase to when that great day shall arrive when our eyes shall be gladdened with a sight of the army in motion, I do not know. Another hundred millions will go with the hundreds more I have enumerated. Another hundred millions may be added to those before the 4th of March.

What it may cost to put down the rebellion I care very little, provided, always, that it be put down effectually. But, sir, faith without works is dead, and I am free to confess that my faith sometimes fails me, I mean my faith in men, not my faith in the cause. When the history of these times shall be written, it will be a question upon whom the guilt will rest most heavily—upon him who has conspired to destroy, or upon him who has proved incompetent to preserve, the institutions bequeathed to us by our fathers. It is no wonder that the public

treasury trembles and staggers like a strong man with too great a burthen upon him. A strong man in an air exhausted receiver is not more helpless to-day than is the treasury of this government beneath the exhausting process to which it is subjected. The mighty monarch of the forest himself may hold at bay the foremost, mightiest of his foes, while the vile cur coming up behind him and opening his fangs gives him a fatal wound, and although he may struggle boldly and valiantly, the life blood is silently trickling from his heart, and he is at last forced to loosen his grasp, and he grows faint, and falters and dies. The Treasury notes issued in the face of these immense outlays, without a revenue from custom houses, from land sales, from any source whatever, are beginning to pall in the market. Already have they begun to sell at six per cent. discount at the tables of the money changers; at the very time, too, that we here exhibit the singular spectacle of fraud, and of a struggle with the Committee of Ways and Means itself, in an endeavor to lift up and sustain the government of the country. Already the sutler—that curse of the camp—is following the paymaster, as the shark follows the ship, buying up for four dollars every five dollars of the wages of the soldiers and to them in Treasury notes. I have no desire to hasten the movements of the army, or to criticize the conduct of its leaders, but in view of the stupendous drafts upon the Treasury, I must say I long for the day of striking the blow which will bring this rebellion to an end. Sixty days longer of this state of things will bring about a result one way or other. It is impossible that the Treasury of the United States can meet, and continue to meet, this state of things sixty days longer, and an ignominious peace must be submitted to unless we see to it that the credit of the country is sustained, and sustained, too, by the conviction going forth from this hall to the people of the country that we will treat as traitors, not only those who are bold and manly enough to meet us face to face in the field of strife, but all those also who clandestinely and stealthily suck the life-blood from us in this mighty struggle. Whatever measures may emanate from the Committee of Ways and Means to meet and retrieve this state of things, they will but fall like a dead pall upon the public unless they give this assurance, that these extraordinary and extreme measures to resuscitate, revive and replenish the treasury, are not made to fill farther and longer the already gorged pockets of the public plunderers. Here, then, are we to contribute in this matter to revive public confidence in our public men here, if it be not when these appropriations come up that we probe them, that we ascertain whether there be any thing in them that at this moment can be spared. Our pressing duty now is to protect and save the treasury from further wholesale or other system of plundering. In conclusion, he argued against paying for printing the Treasury notes, on the ground that the contract was improperly obtained.

Curious.—Eight years ago the wife of John Lawton, of Pink Prairie, in this county, died, and was buried there. A short time since it became desirable to take up and remove the remains of Mrs. L., and last week Mr. D. L. Smith, of this place, was employed to perform the labor. The grave was opened, and the coffin which was in a state of perfect preservation, was removed; but before depositing it in the new place, it was concluded to open it, especially as it appeared uncommonly heavy. It was, therefore, opened, and the body of Mrs. L. was found to be perfectly petrified; every part being as full and firm as on the day of her burial, eight years ago, except the lower part of the face and the hands, which were partially decayed. Her limbs, breast and every part, with the above exceptions, were solid stone, and as firm and perfect as when she died. The soil of the grave was clay, and possessed no peculiarities that were discernible. This is an uncommon case, and, without a curious one. We get these facts from Mr. Smith, the sexton.—*Genesee (Ill) Republican.*

John Randolph Outdone.

Of the many anecdotes of this eccentric man of Roanoke, we don't believe the following was ever in print:

He was traveling in a part of Virginia with which he was unacquainted. In the meantime, he stopped during the night at an inn near the forks of the road. The innkeeper was a fine old gentleman, and no doubt one of the first families of the Old Dominion. Knowing who his distinguished guest was, he endeavored to draw him into conversation, but failed in all his efforts. But in the morning, when Mr. Randolph was ready to start, he called for his bill, which on being presented, was paid. The landlord, still anxious to have some conversation with him, began as follows:

"Which way are you traveling, Mr. Randolph?"

"Sir!" said Randolph, with a look of displeasure.

"I asked," said the landlord, "which way are you traveling?"

"Have I paid my bill?"

"Yes."

"Do I owe you anything more?"

"No."

"Well, I am going just where I please—do you understand?"

"Yes."

The landlord by this time got somewhat excited, and Mr. Randolph drove off. But to the landlord's surprise in a few minutes the servant returned to enquire which of the forks of the road to take. Randolph, not being out of hearing distance, the landlord spoke at the top of his voice:

"Mr. Randolph, you don't owe me one cent! just take which road you please."

It is said that the air turned blue with the curses of Randolph.

A REAL INCIDENT.

In the autumn of 1823, a man was descending the Ohio river, with three small children in a canoe. He had lost his wife, and with the emigrating spirit of our people, was transferring his all to another country where he might again begin the world.

Arriving toward evening at a small island, he landed them for the night. After remaining a short time, he determined to visit the opposite shore, for the purpose, probably, of purchasing provisions; and telling his children that he would soon return to them, he paddled off, leaving them alone on the island. Unfortunately, he met with some loose companions on the shore who invited him to drink. He became intoxicated, and attempting to cross the river after night was drowned. The canoe floated away, and no one knew of the catastrophe until the following day.

The poor deserted children in the meanwhile wandered about the uninhabited island, straining their little eyes to get a glimpse of their father. Night came, and they had no fire or food—no bed to rest upon, no parent to watch over them. The weather was extremely cold, and the elder child, though but eight years of age, remembered that persons who slept in the cold were sometimes chilled to death. She continued to wander about, and when the younger children were worn out with fatigue and drowsiness, and were ready to drop into slumber, she kept them awake by telling them amusing or alarming stories. At last nature could hold out no longer, and the little ones, chilled and aching with cold, threw themselves on the ground. Then the sister sat down, and spreading out her garments as wide as possible, drew them into her lap and endeavored to impart the warmth of her own bosom, as she slept sweetly on her arms.

Morning came, and the desolate children sat on the shore weeping bitterly. At length they were filled with joy at the sight of a canoe approaching the island. But they soon discovered that it was filled with Indians, their delight was changed into terror, and they fled into the woods. Believing that the savages had murdered their father and were now coming to seek them, they crouched under bushes, hiding in breathless fear, like a brood of young partridges.

The Indians having kindled a fire, sat down around it and began to cook their morning meal; and the eldest child, as she peeped from her hiding place, began to think they had not killed their father. She reflected that they must inevitably starve, if left on this lone island; while on the other hand there was a possibility of being kindly treated by the Indians. The cries, too, of her brother and sister, who had been begging piteously for food had pierced her heart and awakened all her energy. One of the little ones, over whose feeble minds her fine spirit had acquired an absolute sway, to get up and go with her; then taking a band of each she fearlessly led them to the Indian camp fire. Fortunately the savage understood our language, and as the little girl explained to them what had occurred, they received the deserted children kindly, and conducted them to the nearest of our towns, where they were kept by some benevolent people until their own relations claimed them.

THE SCHOOLMASTER ABROAD.

EDITED BY SIMON SYNTAX, ESQ.

Friends of education who wish to enlighten the public on the subject of teaching the "young idea how to shoot," are respectfully requested to send communications to the above, care of "Bedford Gazette."

VISITING SCHOOLS.

—Most poor matters
Point to rich ends." Shakespeare.

The teacher and parent sustain a near relation to each other; and they, in their respective capacities from and build up the mind that is to sway a powerful influence throughout future generations. They both have a great work to do, and their stations are fraught with great responsibilities. When the child leaves the parental roof and is under the care of the teacher, the parent's obligations do not necessarily all devolve on the teacher. "This true, the teacher is recognized in loco parentis, but to him are not delegated all the duties and responsibilities of the parent. The parent has still a task to perform, and one which is so very much neglected, viz: visiting his children at school. We believe it to be the imperative duty of all parents to visit the schools, but how few consider it such! Every where we hear teachers complaining that their schools are not visited by the parents of children under their care, and the teachers naturally infer that none are interested in their work but themselves, and become discouraged.

But some persons look upon the school room as a kind of reserved place, into which none but the teacher and pupils are allowed to enter. This is a fatal mistake. Our schools are emphatically free schools; free and common to all; and all have, or should have, a common interest in their welfare. For four long months the teacher is impounded with his pupils and it is a matter of surprise, if, during all that time, a single parent find his way to the school-room to impart a word of encouragement, or by his presence to indicate that he has an interest in what is there transpiring. In fact parents have no idea of what is being done in the schoolroom, except what they gather from report—which is often exaggerated and untrue,—and if the teacher is not of the right stamp, if he performs not his whole duty toward his pupils, their education, moral, physical, and intellectual, will be woefully neglected.

"But," says a teacher, "my school is occasionally visited, for it was but the other day that Mr. Sensitive came flying in, and because I had taken occasion to rightfully punish his son John, was so enraged that he threatened my very existence as a teacher." Such unlawful visitations should not be tolerated by the teacher, and much less attempted by the parents. Let them come, not for the purpose of intimidating the teacher on account of some imaginary wrong which he has committed to their children, but to examine for themselves the machinery of the school room, and see whether these things are so; and they will go away, pleased with their visit, and convinced that the teacher is a reasonable being after all, and not such a cruel monster as some would represent him to be.

What an amount of misrepresentation would be checked if the schools were visited by the parents! What an encouragement it would be to the pupils to see that their parents are really interested in their going to school; and what a stimulus to greater exertion to the teacher, to have the assurance that his labors are appreciated! It would be a ray of sunshine to the pupil, illuminating his dark path up the rugged steps of the Hill of Science!

Parents should make it their duty to visit the school regularly; and nothing would be more gratifying to the teacher than to see one or more of them at his school every day. They will be most cordially welcomed, both by the teacher and pupils.

Parents, try it! It is a simple experiment and will cost you nothing but a little time, which you cannot better employ; and the result will far exceed your most sanguine anticipations. Its influence will be as "bread cast upon the waters, that shall return to us after many days."

RURAL.

A WARNING TO TEACHERS.

Fellow teachers, be careful of fire!—Last night, about two hours after returning to bed, my peaceful slumbers were disturbed by the cry of fire. The gentleman with whom I am boarding heard the barking of his dog, and supposing something to be wrong about the barn, arose and went to the window to see what was the matter, and noticed what appeared to be a building on fire. When he first saw the reflection of the light, he thought his barn was on fire, but on going out he beheld my school-house enveloped in flames. He instantly gave the alarm; but it was too late to save any thing, as the roof was then falling in. We have no idea how the building caught fire, unless it was from some wood that had been placed about the

stove to dry for the purpose of making a fire in the morning. It was a nearly built log house, situated on a beautiful eminence, and about a quarter of a mile from Esquire Thomas W. Horton's. It was called Mount Pleasant, from the beautiful scenery which surrounded it. I had been teaching one month and fifteen days, and had nineteen as bright scholars as ever entered a school-room. They always came with their lessons prepared and their youthful faces glowing with smiles until yesterday morning. I have witnessed touching scenes, but none so pitiful as a group of scholars standing around the ruins of their schoolhouse, giving vent to their feelings in tears and sobs. Follow teachers, once more I entreat you, to be careful of fire.

Hopewell, Jan. 8, 1862. M. E. P.

GOV. LETCHER'S MESSAGE.

On the 6th inst. Gov. Letcher, of Virginia, sent his message to the legislature of the State, accompanied with a letter from Governor Brown, and the joint resolutions recently adopted by the Legislature of Georgia, in which they declare that the separation of the latter State is final and irrevocable, entertain any proposition from any quarter which may have for its object a restoration or reconstruction of the old Union on any terms or conditions whatever.

The message is an extraordinary "State paper," a portion of it imitates the style of our Declaration of Independence, substituting the name of President Lincoln for George the Third, in setting forth his grievances.—The Governor is full of fight, and manifests a spirit of reckless daring and a determination to conquer or die. One of his closing paragraphs is the following:

"The occurrences of the past nine months have demonstrated conclusively that we cannot live together as equals under the Government of the United States, and the habitual violation of the provisions of the Constitution, and the open disregard of the laws by President Lincoln and his official, render governmental association between us impossible. Mutual confidence has been succeeded by mutual hatred and aversion. No government can be enduring which does not possess the affection and respect of the governed. It cannot be that the people of the Confederate States can again entertain a feeling of affection and respect for the Government of the U. States. We believe, therefore, separation is and ought to be final and irrevocable!—that Virginia will, under no circumstances, entertain any proposition, from any quarter, which may have for its object a restoration or reconstruction of the late Union, on any terms and conditions whatever."

A Cheap Breakfast.

A son of Erin, at Schenectady, heard the breakfast bell ring on board a canal boat just starting out for Buffalo. The fragrance of the viands induced him to go aboard.

"Sure, Captain, dear, (said he) and what'll ye ax a man for travelin' on yer illegand swan of a boat?"

"Only a cent and a half a mile, and found," replied the captain.

"An' is it the vittals ye mean to fiod, sure?"

"Yes. And if you are going along, go down to breakfast."

Pat didn't wait to be told a second time, but having descended into the cabin and made a hearty meal, he came on deck and requested that the boat might be stopped.

"What do you want to stop for?" inquired the captain.

"How far have we come?" asked Pat.

"Only a little over a mile."

Pat thereupon handed the captain two cents, and coolly told him that he believed he would not go any further with him, as July would wait the breakfast, not knowing that he had breakfasted out.

The joke was so good that the captain took the two cents, ordered the boat stopped, helped Pat ashore, and told him that should he ever have occasion to travel that way again he would be most happy to carry him.

SCENE IN A SANCTUARY.—Enter a large strong man, with a cow-hide in hand.

"Is the editor in?"

"He is."

"You?"

"Yes."

"I have come to settle with you."

"Well, (editor draws a revolver,) go a head."

"I have taken your paper now about a year."

"Well (Capping his pistol.)

"An article in your last issue, (editor cocks his pistol,) has convinced me, sir, that—you need—"

"I deny your right to give it—be cautious, sir."

"Give you what?"

"A thrashing."

"Why, no, my dear sir, I came to pay in advance for another year."

The editor wilted.

"Where did you get that turkey?" said Col. Billy Wilson to one of his amiable recruits, who came into camp the other day with a fine bird. "Stole it," was the laconic answer. "Ah," said the Colonel triumphantly to a bystander, "you see my boys may steal, but they won't lie."

Flattery is like a flail, which, if not adroitly used, will box your own ears, instead of tickling those of the corn.

All of us who are worth anything, spend our manhood in learning the follies or expiating the mistakes of our youth.