

New York Tribune.

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Political Blackmailers.

Governor Sulzer is to be congratulated upon his success in fighting political blackmail. For that is what the Tammany threat to ruin him if he did not obey orders, followed by McCabe's hint about the Vermont perjury charge, was.

The boss is said to have more stuff of this sort to bring out regarding the Governor in an effort to carry out the threats of ruin. The political blackmailers in Fourteenth Street are said to have caused the Governor's record to be searched. Every accusation that could be obtained against him has been collected or purchased to hold over his head. As the most damaging charge would naturally be used first, the Governor probably has nothing to fear.

But what a revelation of Tammany's political blackmailing methods the incident affords! Murphy, according to the Governor, was anxious to buy Curtis's forgery charge evidence when it was first offered—to suppress it, presumably, if Sulzer remained obedient; to hold it over his head if he showed any signs of independence.

The public obtains a fuller view of the boss system. Not only does the boss control the making of nominations and thus secure obedience by a method of rewards and punishments, but he reinforces his authority by a kind of terrorism, if he can. Let a man make a mistake, or let him have been merely the subject of unjust but embarrassing accusations, and the boss has them in his card index to hold over him and threaten him with exposure and expulsion from public life. His agents whisper in the official's ear reminders that the boss has something "on" him. And if that course is not sufficient the McCabes for their boss drop their hint that leads to "exposure." All of this is as honorable as the methods of the common blackmailer and as courageous as the ways of the foul anonymous letter writer.

It is good to see one attempt at such political blackmailing fail and react upon the blackmailers. Governor Sulzer's vindication is complete. The judge, the District Attorney, the chief counsel opposed to him in the Vermont suit out of which the perjury accusation grew unite in saying that there was no perjury. They hear out Governor Sulzer's explanation that the perjury charges were made in an effort to use the court to discredit a witness in Governor Sulzer's suit who was expected to testify in further suits affecting a considerable estate. Such attempts to misuse the courts are not uncommon. The judges and the District Attorney saw the intent in this instance and defeated it. The old charge was promptly forgotten until it was raked up to serve the purposes of political blackmailers.

Fair Play for the Railroads.

It begins to look as if the Interstate Commerce Commission would soon take up the question of allowing an increase of freight rates in Eastern territory. An order announcing an inquiry into rates in that territory was issued on Saturday and then withdrawn, for the purpose, as it is understood in Washington, of changing its phraseology.

Certainly the complaints of the railroads deserve the commission's attention. For the last four or five years the carriers have been in the unenviable position of being forced to increase their expenses without being allowed to enlarge their income. The cost of everything which they have to purchase—equipment, supplies and labor—has been going up, but they have been restrained by the government from increasing the price of transportation—the only thing which they have to sell.

Federal control has been for them an absolutely one-sided bargain. Congress has passed a law, which public opinion strongly supports, providing for the arbitration of wage disputes between the carriers and their employes. The railroads have gone into many such arbitrations, and the result of each one has been to give the employes a substantial increase in wages. More arbitrations are in sight, and the railroads are virtually asked by the government and the public to go on increasing their expenses of operation while they are debarred by federal authority from seeking the higher returns for service needed to meet the added cost.

That attitude toward the carriers is grossly unjust. It is the duty of the Interstate Commerce Commission to see that the railroads are allowed to earn enough to offset the new burdens constantly put upon them as agencies responsive to governmental supervision. Under the present scheme of regulation the balance has been running steadily and strongly against them. In the interest of fair play it ought to be redressed.

A Blow to Free Art.

An unfortunate change made in the Underwood bill by the Senate Finance Committee has escaped general notice. It is the lengthening from twenty years to fifty years of the age limit on foreign paintings and sculptures which may be brought in free. Under the Payne law a duty of 15 per cent is levied on paintings and sculptures produced within twenty years of the date of importation. That provision was a compromise between the interests which wanted to let all art in free and those which wanted to give some protection to the American artist against the entry of foreign canvases or sculptures of the cheaper grades. In removing the duty entirely on art over twenty years old an important step was taken in the direction of free art, which The Tribune has always advocated because of its educational utility and its beneficial effects on the standards of public taste.

The Underwood bill as it passed the House of Representatives went still further than the Payne law and admitted free paintings, water colors, pastels and original drawings, regardless of the date of production. It also admitted free twenty impressions of any etching or engraving. So much progress in enlightenment had been made since the Payne law experiment was first tried that no protest was raised from any quarter against free art. Yet the Senate Finance Committee, moved by some mysterious influence, has voted to put on the duti-

able list at 15 per cent ad valorem all works of art less than fifty years old.

No reason was given for adopting a policy so Philistine and reactionary. If any age limit is thought to be necessary the present twenty-year one ought to be ample. But no such safeguard is needed. American artists will be benefited more by the improvement of art knowledge and taste here through free importations than they will by a partial closing of the home market to foreign artists. The Senate ought to go back to the far saner provision of the House bill.

The Words of the Banker.

If the Wilson administration is not too full of the Bryanite prejudice against bankers and banks to heed anything that comes from such a source it will read with profit the answers which the currency commission of the American Bankers' Association has made to the questions asked by a committee of the Senate in regard to banking and currency reform.

Especially will it profit by reading what the bankers say about the dangers of political control over the credit mechanism of the country and about the weakness of mere regional reserve associations compared with a central association with branches.

The plain lesson of past experience is that the country needs a unification of its banking reserves. The administration proposes not one reservoir of reserves but many in different regions. In time of stress, as the bankers point out, there is likely to be a regional scrambling for reserves and a regional hoarding of them, which will be only a little less embarrassing than that which occurs among banks now in emergencies.

In a crisis seven Mr. Bryans in Washington and fifteen or more regional institutions each playing its own hand would make a poor substitute for such a banking system as the great European nations have. If the Wilson-Bryan plan is adopted it will not survive more than one period of stress.

Poetry in the Butcher's Shop.

With a truly British faith in the glories of his trade, a butcher of Folkestone has written a portly volume of art, philosophy, poetry and butchery under the engaging title of "The Purveyor's Path to Success." We are indebted to the London "Daily Mail" for the meat of the work.

As a frontispiece the author presents a colored picture of the most perfect mutton chop he can recall. Window dressing he treats with all the taste of a florist. Once, he relates, he excited all Folkestone by a scheme of decoration done entirely in beefsteaks—like a particularly ruddy Rubens. From this fairly British creation he turns to a row of silver vases with a single outlet in each—a delicate conceit of almost Japanese restraint.

The rarest poetry and philosophy lie in the market day, however. Here you find Sir Isaac Walton and Borrow rolled into one. The loving beasts and the bleating sheep call him like drums speaking to a soldier. A day at Ashford is a voyage of adventure. He begins, as might be surmised, by stowing away a breakfast "with an appetite as keen as the edge of my trusty cleaver to enjoy the delicate flavour and rare tenderness of a grilled Southdown chop." In the thick of the bargaining he pauses for such beautiful thoughts as these:

I was particularly struck with the appearance of two black cross-bred runts; especially of one, a long massive head with a most kindly, sleepy, self-satisfied, sweet countenance and honest broad face, just such a head I had sometimes noticed with show beasts and occasionally at market—a good deer, I thought. She stood chewing the cud with her forelegs wide apart enough to let a wheelbarrow through.

A gentle and lofty soul, it can be seen, for all his deadly habits. It is a far cry, but we cannot help noting that another Britisher, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, found something approximating poetry in the Chicago stockyards. Which only goes to show, we suppose, that when a thorough Englishman sets out to find anything, why, he finds it, whether it is there or not.

Where and Why Suffrage Gains Most.

While convicted militants in London shriek that they are rebels and will remain rebels until they get votes or die in seeking them, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt tells the Women's Suffrage Congress at Budapest that "the cause" is making more progress in the United States than in any other important country. There is no better authority on the subject than Mrs. Catt, and her statement may be accepted as true.

It will also be perceived by appreciative observers that in the United States "the cause" is promoted with less hysteria and militant violence and with more womanly dignity and grace than in other lands. The contrast between the beautiful and impressive Fifth avenue parade of a few weeks ago and the disorderly mobs which have raged in Trafalgar Square and on the streets of London is as great as that between success and failure.

It is a moot question whether the demand for votes for women is wise and commendable. But there can be no question that the manner in which it is made is wiser and more commendable, and far more successful, in the United States than in the United Kingdom or perhaps anywhere else in the world.

A Hundred Years of Locomotives.

There is cause for wonder at the failure of the industrial world to commemorate fittingly this month the centenary of the locomotive steam engine. It is, of course, still less than a hundred years since the building of Stephenson's "Rocket," and there are many who think of it as the first locomotive; but it was not then Stephenson the original inventor of steam traction on railways. Doubtless his genius well deserves the fame which it has won, as does that of Fulton and Morse; yet it can scarcely be disputed that all three of those illustrious benefactors of the race did their great works in the successful adaptation and combination of elements which had previously been discovered and employed by others.

The germ of the locomotive was first displayed by Trevithick, at the end of the eighteenth century, but he lacked the genius or the persistence to bring it to perfection. It was left to William Hedley, chief engineer of the historic Wylam colliery, near Newcastle-on-Tyne, assisted by his colleague, Timothy Hackworth, to produce in June, 1813, a practical locomotive steam engine for use on the colliery railroad. This epoch-making machine, which was named "Puffing Billy" and which is still preserved in the South Kensington Museum, worked satisfactorily and was the prototype of many others which were widely used for fifteen years, until in 1829 the Liverpool & Manchester Railway Company encouraged Stephenson to devise and build the "Rocket."

It is doubtless true that it was Stephenson who gave the impulse to the marvellous development of the locomotive which has since occurred. It is equally true that it was Hedley's great invention

which gave the inspiration and the impulse to Stephenson. The Newcastle engineer's achievement of just a century ago may therefore be regarded as the beginning of what must rank among the three or four most valuable and influential mechanical inventions in the history of the world.

President Wilson will Chautauqua again to-day in the hall of the House of Representatives.

Mayor Gaynor has not yet written a letter about the police shake-up made necessary by the exposures in the East Side truck robbery scandal. Isn't it remarkable that so many unpleasant incidents force themselves on public attention in the management of so nearly perfect an institution as the New York police?

AS I WAS SAYING

We hate to look at it that way, but since Professor Taft took to hobbling in and out of New Haven so frequently the railroad has been all out of order.

We contend, however, that this does not in the least exonerate the passengers. Reckless to the point of criminality, they have neglected the most elementary precautions. Perfect jumping daredevils, those passengers! Watch them!

See them rush to that ominous little grated window and buy tickets of an inmate whose record they never stop to pry into! See them fling themselves aboard their trains without counting the wheels or so much as investigating the engine, whereas we have beheld engines brazenly inscribed "1812," "1776," and even "1620"! And just consider their indifference to the engineer! Do they ask his age, and if his mother knows he is an engineer? Do they rub his back? Not they! Why, sakes alive, you might think they were off for a trip in a mere aeroplane!

Archdeacons are quoted higher, as one of them has attained the truthful altitude of 20,500 feet, though unfortunately without bothering to bring back the notebooks deposited there by a Brooklyn physician whose name we are too merciful to mention.

It says in an English paper that "the Berlin wedding went off without a hitch," but we trust it was not really as futile as that.

Widespread unrest has been noticed among barbers and bootblacks, and almost uncanny has been the inventiveness mothered by necessity—New Yorkers shaving themselves, Bostonians so ingenious, at a pinch, that they black their own boots. Remains, however, the question of hair, for the electric auto-barbering device leaves much to be desired, especially ears. Hence the revival of poetry, which, with barbers so obstreperous, promises to recover its lost dignity.

This will involve great changes, as it has been awful, the ignominy endured by that long-suffering pursuit. Even a reformed poet could never quite bury the past. Out would come some pitiless anthology; or worse, Mr. Munsey would fondle Scrips Books and Oceans and Live Wires and reprint lyrics committed years before. The consequences to a reformed poet would be simply crushing.

"Good morning! If you can spare me a few moments of your invaluable time I would like to interest you in the Butterfly Gold Mine. As a practical man I believe it no exaggeration to"— "By Jingo! I thought I remembered your name. You're the fellow who wrote the poem I was reading last night. No, the other door. And aren't you forgetting your hat?"

Our gifted friend, Mr. Chatterton Buck, who edits jokes for "The Ladies' Fireside Fudge," objects to predigested humor, but thinks a joke should be accompanied with knife and spoon. Perhaps. And yet we sometimes wonder. For instance: "There is not much need of my expressing any view about those dances which have of recent date been imported from the zoological gardens into the London drawing room," says Father Bernard Vaughan. This slander on those who are not in a position to defend themselves strikes us as peculiarly dastardly.

Perfect! So why does "Punch" add: "We trust that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals will carry the matter further?" "I always dislike the people I agree with," says Mr. Edwin Pugh. "They make me feel that either I have no mind of my own or that they haven't." Whoa, Edwin! Let popularity come on gradually. Don't snatch!

R. L. H.



THE PEOPLE'S COLUMN

An Open Forum for Public Debate

THE POSITION OF MR. BARNES

He Is Opposing the People's Wishes. It Is Asserted.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Mr. Barnes's reply to my letter of recent date which appeared in The Tribune brings the issue that is now pending before the extra session of the Legislature to a commanding and decisive point. Mr. Barnes's contention is that the Republican platform adopted at Saratoga has been rigorously adhered to by the Republican members of the Legislature and that many attempts have been made to introduce and pass bills that our Democratic friends failed to do.

Good! But suppose, in the lapse of time since the Saratoga convention, conditions and situations have arisen which necessitate the abandonment of those principles and the acceptance of new ones that mean a further and more forceful step to accomplish a proper result.

If at the time of the state convention the primary bill decided upon by the Republicans—that of maintaining the convention—should now be seen to be an unnecessary detail, why adhere to it? Why try to force it against the people's wishes and their implied and expressed demands? The Republican party, nor the Democratic party, nor the State of New York owns the people. The people own the state, and whatever channel of the state refuses to work for its master, the time is short when it will not have an opportunity to work at all.

Would Mr. Barnes be willing to adhere to the principles of the Republican party of twenty-five years ago? Do we not hold conventions for the purpose of formulating plans for advanced legislation? And must we be so clamant that if the change does not come at the regularly specified time, or because a change of conditions demands a broadening of laws in six months, instead of in one year, or two years, or ten years, that we should not work for it?

If an opportunity of success is thrust upon us, should we decline and postpone to a future date? It is surely not my love for Governor Sulzer that prompts me to favor his direct primary bill, because I had as little faith in him as any could have; but when it comes to an issue of the people's rights against individual preference I humbly submit to the former, as I, too, am of the conviction who "cares not who leads, so long as the people win."

If Mr. Barnes will favor the abolition of the old and stagnant labor for the new and advanced; if his activities and efforts are in behalf of raising the standard of the individual and diminishing his cares and worries, especially in governmental matters, so as to insure him more freedom to develop his individuality, then Mr. Barnes will not have a more loyal, more earnest, more sincere or more laborious and enthusiastic supporter than I. JOSEPH LEWIS.

New York, June 20, 1913.

THE ASTOR HOUSE IN 1843

What an English Visitor Thought of Its Luxuries.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: In view of the recent demolition of the Astor House the following description of the old edifice will doubtless be interesting to many readers of The Tribune. It was written by an Englishman, J. R. Godley, who was travelling in our country in 1843. It will be inferred by the tenor of the article that there was nothing like it in England:

"I dined with a friend at the Astor House Hotel, which is really quite a curiosity, from its enormous size and admirable arrangements. There are no less than 135 servants, and 500 guests can be accommodated, notwithstanding which there is more order and regularity and good attendance than in almost any country inn that I ever saw. The waiters are drilled like a regiment of soldiers, and your bell on the fourth floor is answered in two minutes. We had a most sumptuous dinner, with literally 'all the delicacies of the season.' What is more interesting is that you are allowed to take your meals at any hour you please without extra charge, yet for board, lodging and attendance the price is only \$2 a day; it is to me quite incomprehensible. The

FOR A PARTY CONVENTION

Authority Is Cited for Recalling the 1912 Gathering at Any Time.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Considerable controversy has been had and much difference of opinion expressed upon the question of the right of the Republican National Committee to recall the delegates in convention that composed the convention at Chicago in June, 1912, at which ex-President Taft was renominated, or to call a convention composed of new delegates for the consideration of the question of party reorganization, rearrangement of the apportionment of delegates to the national convention and for other purposes that have been discussed.

From a study of the proceedings of the national conventions, both Republican and Democratic, I find the rule to be that a motion made at one convention covering any subject presented by the motion may, if adopted, become the controlling rule of action for any purpose comprehended by the motion during the existence of the convention at which the motion was adopted. Resolutions, however, reduced to writing and formally adopted become, after their adoption, organic and continuous, and not only affect the convention at which they were adopted but subsequent conventions until they are repealed by motion in writing for that specific purpose.

The question is whether or not the Republican National Convention, duly organized, after a regular call of the national committee, and where delegates are chosen in conformity with the rules provided by the national committee, becomes simply a temporary body for the purpose of adopting a platform and nominating candidates at the particular time the convention has been called, or to such time as the convention itself may adjourn, or whether the convention when organized regularly and pursuant to the call of the national committee becomes not only an existing, active body for the purpose at the time to adopt a platform and to nominate candidates for President and Vice-President, but also a continuous body, with a self-perpetuating existence until the national committee shall subsequently for the purpose of the adoption of a platform and the nomination of candidates for President and Vice-President, four years subsequent, call another convention.

Much has been said and written on this subject. An examination of the proceedings of the Republican National Convention held at Chicago on May 20, 1853, at which Grant and Colfax were nominated, shows that the committee on resolutions presented to the convention a resolution that was adopted which I think fixes the rule definitely, making the continuity of the convention when once organized unbroken during the entire period represent-

ed by the four years of the interval between that convention and the next succeeding one. Colonel Richard W. Thomson, of Indiana, was chairman of the committee on resolutions, and by order of the committee on resolutions he submitted to the convention the following resolution, which was adopted: "Resolved, That the adjournment of this convention shall not work a dissolution of the same, but it shall remain as organized, subject to be called together at any time and place that the Republican national executive committee shall designate."

While this resolution was adopted more than forty-five years ago and eleven subsequent Republican national conventions have been held, an investigation of the proceedings of all the subsequent conventions will not disclose any attempt whatever at any subsequent convention to repeal the resolution given above. The resolution so adopted became the law governing that convention and all subsequent conventions.

The method of selecting delegates to Republican national conventions was fixed at the convention of 1850 that the several Congress districts at the time designated in the call would select two delegates to the national convention separate from any other district, and the four delegates-at-large, representing the votes given in the convention on account of the two United States Senators, would be chosen at a state convention called for that purpose. Those who have read or who may read the proceedings of the Republican National Convention held in Chicago in 1850 will become thoroughly advised of all the facts attendant upon the selection of delegates and the manner indicated of issuing the call for the selection of delegates. In this way the state or district committee acts upon the authority of the rule laid down at the convention of 1850, and the rule so fixed has been followed continuously without question.

The rule in Democratic national conventions of requiring a two-thirds vote of delegates to make a nomination for President or Vice-President was adopted at the Democratic National Convention of 1844 for the purpose of defeating the renomination of Van Buren, at which convention he obtained more than a majority of the votes of delegates. The Democratic national conventions have since adhered to the rule requiring a two-thirds vote, without any further action on the part of the convention than reaffirmance of the rule through the committee on rules, and because the convention of 1844 definitely determined what number of votes should be required in order to obtain the nomination.

The resolution at the convention of 1858, given above, is still in force and is the law governing the national committee. It provides absolute authority for the recalling of the Republican National Convention of 1912 at any time or place that the national committee might designate. ALBERT W. WISHARD.

Indianapolis, June 17, 1913.

THE PARLIAMENTARY TERM

Reduced from Seven Years to Five by Recent Legislation.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Will you allow me to correct a popular error in your editorial "British Political Prospects," that the legal term of the British Parliament is five years? The legal term of Parliament is seven years. The average life of Parliament is five years, and that is perhaps the cause of your mistake.

I do not remember a Parliament going its full term. I cast my first vote at a general election in 1880, and if my memory is correct I believe one of W. E. Gladstone's terms ran to six years. I take great pleasure in reading your editorials, and they are as a rule so correct.

JOSEPH G. TARR.

Huntington, N. Y., June 9, 1913.

[Our editorial was correct. Our correspondent overlooks the Parliamentary act of 1911, which, among other more important constitutional changes, provided that "Five years shall be substituted for seven years as the time fixed for the maximum duration of Parliament under the septennial act, 1715." Ed.]