

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.

WHY CONGRESS VOTED THEM \$50,000 EACH.

Alarm and Joy in the House of Representatives—What They Thought when They Voted the Bill—How They Comforted Their Conscience.

A SIX reporter recently called on the Hon. Robert B. Roosevelt, M. C. The Congressman is the same courteous, genial gentleman as ever, and he was happy to see the representative of THE SUN. The reporter said that he would like to have a talk about the increase of the President's salary, and Mr. Roosevelt smiled sympathetically, and said he had something to say about it, but he was hardly ready to say it. He did not care to talk about it in its personal bearings, he said, but after a moment's reflection he added that he had some objections to speaking much discussion of it, and the House was divided into three classes—those who went for the money way, those who wanted the money but were afraid to face their constituents if they voted for the measure, and those who opposed it.

Mr. Roosevelt—it came up in Congress in connection with the motion to increase the President's salary to \$100,000, and added \$500 to the \$25,000 as finally passed. The same bill, as you know, increased the salaries of other officers of the Government, and it was not until the bill was passed by a bare majority, that every one, however, who had been opposed to the money badly, they were still afraid to face the music, and there was another outward division.

WHERE THE MAJORITY HELD. First those who wanted the money and said so. Second, those who were not ready to face their constituents if they voted for the bill but wanted it to apply to the future. Third, a very small number who wanted to support the bill, but were not ready to face their constituents if they voted for the bill.

Mr. Roosevelt smiling as he thought of it—there were not more than five men in Congress had thought of it, and it came suddenly. There was not a word said about it until the President's salary, but the additional pay to Congressmen made a stir. A tremendous influence in favor of the measure, and to those who were committed to the measure, then began to speak in favor of the bill.

Mr. Roosevelt—This thing has always been done, and money is not taken through for that argument. To the Society Civil Service Association, that has been doing a good work, and added two millions and a quarter for the District Board of Public Works. The majority of the House were afraid to face their constituents if they voted for the measure.

Mr. Roosevelt—Why all this talking and filling? Did they think they were doing wrong in voting themselves the money? Mr. Roosevelt—Considering this matter there are only two points. Whether Congressmen are to be paid for their services, and whether they are to consider the honor some compensation. Congressmen's salaries have been increased four times, and it is not fair to say that they are to consider the honor some compensation. Congressmen's salaries have been increased four times, and it is not fair to say that they are to consider the honor some compensation.

three, Merriok of Maryland, Hoar of Massachusetts, and may be one or two more, with very few exceptions, and I don't know if I ever heard a member say he wouldn't draw the money. I didn't say I wouldn't, and I don't say so now.

Reporter—Do you believe that among those who voted for the measure there were many who were sincere, who supported the bill because they thought it just?

Mr. Roosevelt—Mr. Randall is certainly an honest man, and Mr. Garfield, though a little mixed up in Credit Mobilier, and Mr. Banks, I think believe the bill just, and therefore supported it.

Reporter—You think the surrender of the franking privilege had anything to do with it?

Mr. Roosevelt—I think that the surrender of the franking privilege was used somewhat as a bribe to get the bill passed. I know what Congressmen will do with their books now. I employed a clerk to mail mine, and as it was a thousand letters, it was a great deal.

Reporter—It was always seemed a good old custom, the franking privilege, and I think it pleased the people. It is a good thing to have a rural constituent to receive a Patent Office report from his member, and to have him draw them from his pocket, for they take it as a personal compliment, and away by the member.

Mr. Roosevelt—If the abolition of the franking privilege leads to the printing of reports it will save the Government a great deal of money. I think it is a good thing to have a rural constituent to receive a Patent Office report from his member, and to have him draw them from his pocket, for they take it as a personal compliment, and away by the member.

Reporter—Why didn't they vote for it themselves? Mr. Roosevelt—Because many of them came to me and implored me to vote for the bill. I think it is a good thing to have a rural constituent to receive a Patent Office report from his member, and to have him draw them from his pocket, for they take it as a personal compliment, and away by the member.

Reporter—What effect did that have? Mr. Roosevelt—I have not yet but I have not made up my mind what to do about it. I am considering. Reporter—You think that the increase in the President's salary is a good thing? Mr. Roosevelt—I do. It seems strange to vote money into our own pockets, and I voted against it.

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