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Complacent Victims of Plunderers.

Mr. GIFFORD PINCHOT says that the people of the United States have been the complacent victims of a system of plunder perpetrated by men many of whom are model citizens in their private lives, but who as members of a corporation suffer from a curious moral perversion. The directness of the statement leaves possible no other inference than that Mr. PINCHOT knows but withholds the names of these models of individual morality who, associated and organized, become thieves and pillagers.

The late ETHAN ALLEN HITCHCOCK evidently believed what Mr. PINCHOT appears to know, and strove diligently to run the rascals down. If Mr. PINCHOT can, as his statement certainly indicates, put names to these citizens who are saints as individuals and scoundrels when organized, must we believe that he never gave his friend and chief THEODORE ROOSEVELT the names of the rascals and the facts on which his conviction of their rascality rested? Was the known friction between Mr. ROOSEVELT and the fearless and faithful Mr. HITCHCOCK due in any way to the President's desire to shield some of these unnamed "plunderers" of whom the American people are the "complacent victims"?

Mr. PINCHOT appears to have said either too much or too little. If he does not know the offenders he would do well to modify his statement and give it the form of suspicion, belief or personal conviction. If he does know them he should name them.

Dr. Lowell on Panaceas.

Since Governor HUGHES first took the field in this State the direct nomination movement has suffered from no more destructive attack than that recently directed against it by President A. LAWRENCE LOWELL. Men equally honored in the public life of the nation, President SCURMAN of Cornell and President EMERITUS ELIOT, Dr. LOWELL's predecessor, have declared their distrust and opposition to direct nominations in emphatic utterances, but Dr. LOWELL is a student of government and governmental systems, whose studies have achieved international recognition, and therefore his comments have a certain special authority.

The criticism made by Dr. LOWELL, moreover, is significant above all others for its extreme lucidity, its fatally accurate and unmistakably deadly description of the "physiology of politics," and particularly of that brand of reform politics now under debate in this State. Of the whole reform motif, Dr. LOWELL says in words that have almost an encyclopedic character:

"Reformers are always prone to believe that any new device of their sponsoring will work as they believe it surely will, and when it does not they are tremendously disappointed. They are far too prone to think that they have a panacea which will change humanity, whereas men are given to remain as he was before he tried his scheme—some good, some bad, and the mass indifferent to matters which do not touch their personal interests."

Again and again THE SUN has maintained that the direct nominations agitation aimed not at the reform of institutions but at the metamorphosis of immutable human nature; that the abuses struck at were fundamental in man, not in any particular form of man made machinery. This view is expressed by Dr. LOWELL with the utmost clearness:

"Many good people stand against it [the direct nomination movement] in a noble spirit, but they do not understand its nature. They are in a political machine of any kind, when they are in fact conducting with great competency a little machine of their own in some society. They regard as abnormal in position a mode of conducting business which they adopt naturally in carrying on a club or even a reform movement."

No vagueness exists in Dr. LOWELL'S mind with reference to the direct primary itself. His views, an interesting reaffirmation of those of Dr. ELIOT, are worthy of the consideration of every citizen who is even pretending to think upon this pending question:

"The subject of direct primaries is a burning one at present. Public opinion on this question is in a strange state of chaos. The campaign for its adoption in New York is in full cry at the very time that in Boston it has been abolished as a failure. Substantially every one in Boston, including the leading politicians of both parties and reformers, agreed that either system was better than the method of direct primaries which had been tried for several years."

Comment upon statements so absolutely plain as Dr. LOWELL'S is unnecessary. Their purpose and their application are unmistakable. Even to the most ardent supporter of the Governor's project they offer no opportunity for the familiar distortion. It is for this reason, we presume, that the sentences we quoted last, those dealing specifically with direct primaries, were omitted from the news columns of the Evening Post in its report of the address. Once

presented to the readers of the Evening Post, in its own pages, the task of maintaining the false and preposterous presumption that only the wicked and the corrupt, the bosses and their allies, were against the direct primary idea would become impossible. This delectable bit of ostrich policy, we may suggest, serves to give a new point to much that Dr. LOWELL said.

Like Dr. ELIOT, Dr. LOWELL has made a valuable contribution to the discussion of a present problem in this State. Nor do we believe that all the efforts of the Evening Post to suppress the text of his address will much avail. Its readers will find elsewhere all that Dr. LOWELL said, precisely as he said it.

The Sugar Trust Indictments, the Stolen Letter and Mr. Root.

Our esteemed contemporary the Springfield Republican offers a conjectural explanation of the appearance of Senator ROOT'S name in connection with the attempt last summer to prevent the indictment of certain directors and officers of the sugar trust:

"The probability is that he was engaged simply in performing a friendly service requested of him by New York constituents in his profession, and that, in any case, whatever may have been the motive back of the request, there was no thought on his part of making his influence felt one way or the other in the matter."

The Republican's remarks refer to the mention of Mr. ROOT in a confidential letter from Mr. WICKERHAM to District Attorney WISE. The letter was copied or abstracted from the files of the Attorney-General's office, and published a few days ago by the Postmaster-General of Purloined Correspondence, Mr. WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST. Mr. WICKERHAM wrote to Mr. WISE on June 27, 1909:

"Senator Root has sent me the proof of a petition signed by BOWERS, MILBURN and GUTHRIE in support of their contention that the statute of limitations has run in favor of Messrs. PARSONS, KIMBLE and HANCOCK."

The Postmaster-General of Purloined Correspondence, on the strength of the stolen letter that has come into his official hands, has been inquiring in more or less violent language what Senator ROOT had to do with the case of the sugar trust directors and officers who were menaced with indictment at the time this letter was written by Mr. WICKERHAM and since then have been actually indicted. Other newspapers are discussing the incident. Was Mr. ROOT, it is asked, when he transmitted the petition to the Department of Justice practicing as a lawyer before that Department in criminal violation of the statute? If he was not acting as a lawyer, was he acting as a Senator, or as an errand boy, or as an influential politician friendly to the sugar trust? What part was he playing? Why was he mixing up with the case?

Without really knowing any more than the Springfield Republican does of the reasons for Mr. ROOT'S interest in the case, we are going to mention two circumstances that fortify our contemporary's theory:

First, it is the most natural thing in the world that the argument of Messrs. BOWERS, MILBURN and GUTHRIE as to the intervention of the statute of limitations should have been in Mr. ROOT'S hands for personal (not professional or official) inspection before it went to the Department of Justice. This implies no interest whatever on Mr. ROOT'S part in the fortunes of the sugar trust; only the highly creditable personal interest of old friendship in any question of law that concerned so vitally the welfare of his former employer, preceptor and senior office associate, Mr. JOHN E. PARSONS.

Secondly, to any mind not crazy with malice, the careless, casual way in which Mr. WICKERHAM mentions to Mr. WISE that he has sent him the proofs of the petition is sufficient evidence not only of the innocence of that purely incidental proceeding in the criminal sense, but also of the entire absence of ethical impropriety.

Ministerial Crisis in Turkey.

Turkey in following in the wake of the Occident, and in adopting a constitutional government is going through a regular Ministerial crisis, brought on by the parliamentary discussion of a question of Western interest, combinations of capital and the granting of franchises.

The question was forced upon the country through the attempted fusion of two lines of navigation on the Euphrates; one, a British concern, the Euphrates and Tigris Navigation Company, known better as the Lynch company, and the other a Turkish Government service known as the Hamadieli Company. The Government desired to obtain the withdrawal of the British flag from inland waters, but wished to avoid wounding British susceptibilities. If they threw the river open to native companies that applied for a concession they ran the risk of a masked control by foreign capitalists. At the same time the Lynch company, which was in a prosperous condition, refused to part with its interest and insisted upon running its steamer in the British flag. HILMI Pasha finally decided upon an amalgamation of the Lynch and Hamadieli companies.

The scheme, however, aroused the most violent opposition. Some of this was inspired by jealousy of the Cabinet Ministers, some by rival plans of Jewish financiers in which Zionist aspirations were supposed to play a part, and some by Arab fanatics who pretended to see in the fusion only an ingenious design of Great Britain to conquer Iraq. Protests were sent from Bagdad and violent attacks were made upon the Government by the opposition press and upon HILMI Pasha by the Young Turk party.

In the face of this opposition the Ministers desired a vote of confidence, and in bringing the matter before Parliament they wished to answer once for all the attacks that had been made upon them in connection with the affair. The Grand Vizier took the position that the Cabinet was within its rights, that it was not granting new concess-

sions, but merely ratifying those already in existence; that it was not authorizing a monopoly of trade on the Euphrates, but merely endeavoring to develop the country, and declared that if his explanation was not accepted he and his colleagues would resign.

That the Ministry was defeated in its contentions is interesting to further seekers of concessions in the Ottoman Empire, for in the course of the discussion the whole matter of granting concessions and developing resources was gone over. If the Ministers had obtained the vote of confidence, they intended to demand, not perhaps, a free hand in the granting of concessions, but a greater liberty of action in dealing with them than the Chamber was disposed to grant them. The plan was to divide economic concession into two classes, those which required the approval of the Chamber of Deputies and those which might be granted by the Government independent of the Chamber. The Committee of Union and Progress, which formed the chief front of the opposition, are evidently determined that they will surrender none of their presumed rights under the Constitution and will maintain the present status of Turkish concessions, which is that, whatever their nature, they will be granted only during the six months of the year in which Parliament is sitting.

Another effort is to be made to introduce into this city, and it is certain that if the game once becomes known here it would prove highly popular. It has a bad reputation only because of the association of its name with gambling in Havana, but no good reason has ever been given why it should not attract as a spectacle. It is not for amateurs, although a few Americans have mastered its rudiments. In its demands on strength, endurance and skill of the contestants it takes rank with any court game and it is continual excitement to spectators.

No one who has read the poem of the late EDWARD J. PHELPS upon Essex Junction, which touches a chord in the heart of every marooned traveler, will be surprised to hear that the Worcester airship was seen at the famed Junction on Monday evening—that is to say, "its lurid light thwarted the sky was seen." A man left over at Essex Junction and feeling remote and unfriended of the world always seems that way when he is in the night. There is, however, the testimony of old residents that it was not the searchlight of a mysterious airship that was seen, but the blazing evening star.

An Attack on the Christmas Stamp.

Some of the leaders in the woman suffrage movement announce their intention to publish and put on sale a letter stamp bearing the legend "Votes for Women."

This method of political warfare is a direct injury to the Red Cross Christmas stamp. It may indeed prove fatal.

Even the Red Cross stamp is objectionable on account of its tendency to mislead, perplex and annoy the officials of the post office. The cause for which it is issued is so praiseworthy, however, and concerns the public so generally that the postal authorities waived all objections to its use, and its sale has even been sanctioned in the corridors of the larger post offices.

About the prevention of tuberculosis there is no difference of opinion. In regard to woman suffrage there is no such unanimity.

If letter stamps can be used advising the recipients to advocate votes for women, why should not the great political parties be permitted to employ distinctive stamps for the literature which they send through the mails in every Presidential campaign? This sort of thing can be carried so far as to constitute a public nuisance, and now is the time to stop it.

With the single exception of the Red Cross Christmas stamp the Government should prohibit the use in the mails of any stamps resembling those issued and sold by the Post Office Department. Intolerable confusion and annoyance will result if agitators are allowed to simulate the Government postage stamps in aid of their particular propaganda. The Red Cross Christmas stamp we have always cordially approved; but it would be better never to have had it than to be burdened with the brood of imitations with which the country is now threatened.

If the Red Cross Christmas stamp is to be saved, all imitations of it must be prohibited.

The Kaiser and England.

There is nothing unlikely in the report that England and Germany have come to closer agreement, and that on the lines indicated by the London Standard—exchange of information regarding naval armaments, cooperation to a certain degree in Africa, and an understanding regarding their interests in Asia. The Kaiser in the last year or so has shown himself unusually ready to make reasonable concessions. In Germany and in England both, more and more discontent is manifest at providing the enormous cost of great battleships, whose models are superseded almost before they are launched, and whose merits, notwithstanding Santiago and Tushima, have never been demonstrated practically. With the requisite saving of face, full information concerning each other's plans may cut down needless building and expenditure in both countries.

The development of Africa has reached the point where agreement among the Powers that have partitioned the continent is necessary to prevent needless waste of money and to facilitate the white man's supremacy. The railroad from South Africa has reached the mines of the Congo Free State; the time is at hand when the several national lines from the coast into the interior will come close to each other, and great saving in time, labor and expense can be made by their joining or by their being allowed to cut across intervening foreign territory. In dealing with the natives it will be advantageous to the whites to act in harmony, as Germany has just found out in her Herero rebellion. For purposes of trade neither African boundaries should be no greater obstacles than those of Europe.

In Asia the differences between Germany and England are purely commercial, for Germany can in no way threaten India, and any idea of a German colony in Asia Minor is but a wild dream. The rivalry of the two countries has hitherto prevented an improvement that should have been made long ago, the connection of the Persian Gulf and India with the Mediterranean by railroad. Whether that is accomplished by German or by British capital or both, the building of the railroad will do more for the regeneration of the lands of the Ottoman Empire than the treasures of diplomacy which have been poured on it for a century. The plans for redeeming from the desert what once were the richest lands in the world should appeal more to Kaiser WILHELM and to practical British statesmen than the preservation of the diplomatic traditions about the Levant.

If the Kaiser is sincere in his desires for peace, as, in spite of the hysteria in portions of the British and German press, his conduct of late years has shown him to be, an understanding with England can only strengthen the guarantee

THE CORPORATION TAX.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Recently published forms and regulations prepared by the Treasury for enforcement of the corporation tax declare that they are to operate to the intent of the law without unnecessary and unreasonable interference with ordinary practices of incorporated business. The law is officially described as a revenue measure to be "liberally" interpreted in order to produce revenue. Heretofore the well settled rule of the courts has been that money cannot be taken from any one by taxation when interpretation of the law is doubtful, inasmuch as doubt is to be resolved in favor of the taxpayer. The Treasury Department says the real intent of the recent statute is to collect 1 per cent. on the net revenue, less \$5,000. of each liable corporation or association. That is plainly a tax on income; and if it is a tax on income from "real estate or invested property" it is unconstitutional as declared by the Supreme Court. Congress has, however, said that the recent tax is an excise "with respect to the carrying on or doing business." The contention by the Treasury will be that it is not a tax on income from "real estate or invested property," even although the tax will be laid on all income from all other sources received by the liable corporation or association. If the income shall come from "real estate or invested property" it would seem not to be taxable under the new law until the proposed amendment of the Constitution has been adopted.

One intent of the recent statute was, no doubt, to obtain revenue, but another intent is made apparent by the Treasury regulations, which was to make a national inquisition into the affairs of all corporations. A political purpose was put in a taxation envelope. That inquisition is made drastic and searching by the new rules. The prescribed formula of a return to be made by more than 400,000 corporations, big and little, insurance, transportation, mercantile and banking, will make a "public record" of the innermost affairs of each. None can escape the public record of paid up shares and all indebtedness; gross income of every sort; expenses of business; annual losses; taxes paid, and net yearly income. The president and treasurer of each association must swear to the fidelity of the return and that the declared net income is all that is by law taxable. Gross income is defined, and so are all permissible deductions therefrom to make taxable income. Manufacturers must disclose the cost of production; banking corporations must reveal net annual income; traders must disclose the excess of selling over purchasing prices, and transporters turn their affairs inside out.

It may be doubted whether the minute and comprehensive character of the new law is yet realized. Every association organized for profit and issuing certificates of shares, excepting those in which no private person is benefited by income derived from the business, must file a return before the first day of next March, and pay the tax on or before the thirtieth day of next June. If there shall be neglect to make the return 50 per cent. is to be added to the tax. If it shall be a false return the tax will be doubled. Each association must file its return on or before the first day of next June, and pay the tax on or before the thirtieth day of next June. If there shall be neglect to make the return 50 per cent. is to be added to the tax. If it shall be a false return the tax will be doubled. Each association must file its return on or before the first day of next June, and pay the tax on or before the thirtieth day of next June.

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LONDON'S POVERTY.

An Englishman Explains Why It Is So Squallid and Brutal. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: May an Englishman who is spending a few months in America say a word or two in reply to Mr. John Davis Flennor in Tuesday's SUN? The "submerged tenth" is brutally prominent in London. It stares at you with a repellent ugliness that is a word or two in reply to Mr. John Davis Flennor in Tuesday's SUN? The "submerged tenth" is brutally prominent in London. It stares at you with a repellent ugliness that is a word or two in reply to Mr. John Davis Flennor in Tuesday's SUN?

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MEXICO AGAIN.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: A kind of haze envelops our present relations with Mexico. It is true that this forbidding vapor did not descend upon the situation until very recently, although the alleged provocation of the existing friction developed as much as five months ago. But there is a curious coincidence in Mexico's hostilities to ex-President Zelaya of Nicaragua and the State Department's bristling demand for information about the prolonged imprisonment of James G. Cook, theoretically an American citizen but in fact a conductor on one of the Mexican railways for some time past.

Conductor Cook was thrown into prison at Guadalupe last August. One of the cars in a train of which he had charge had been looted. He was responsible and he was held for inquiry. In one sense, of course, train robbing in Mexico might be looked upon as a sort of native enthusiasm, perhaps, and Mr. Cook's responsibility ignored accordingly. That would have led inevitably to a protest against the laxity if not the connivance of the Mexican Government. The Mexican Government, however, is run on a different plan. Mr. Cook was arrested and imprisoned, and now our Government's solicitudes, stimulated obviously by the indignation of Gompers, Mitchell & Co., to whose stock Mr. Cook seems to belong, stretch out from Washington to Guadalupe with imperative requisitions of more or less energy.

Mr. Cook has been in the calaboose since August last. It is true that the State Department abandoned itself to no ecstasy of concern regarding him in September or October, nor yet in November. Only now, at the end of December and simultaneously with the news that the Mexican Government is endeavoring to release him, do we hear of these energetic measures in regard to the imprisoned Cook. The United States Ambassador to Mexico at the time, the Hon. David E. Thompson, evidently found nothing to be said in the case of Cook. The Hon. James G. Bailey, Chargé d'Affaires in the interval, is reported as saying that the Mexican authorities have acted within their rights under the laws of the country. There is something in this. It is easy, of course, to enter into the feelings of Mr. Gompers, who notoriously believes that his constituents and subscribers are always and everywhere immune from the burdens of an unjust law. It is not so easy, however, to enter into the feelings of Mr. Gompers, who notoriously believes that his constituents and subscribers are always and everywhere immune from the burdens of an unjust law.

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NEGRO MUSIC.

Is It Not to Be Found in the Melodies Heard at Revivals? To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I read with pleasure the article in THE SUN of December 26 on "A Negro Foot Washing." The evidence of purely negro music in a church service is a subject on which I have expressed my views as expressed in a recent editorial article. There is a body of music that is not only in its essence but altogether negro.

The point of the editorial refers to was directed against those songs of bastard origin like "The Swanee River" and "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," that people ignorant of the negro's past will persist in proclaiming as his. But there are many doubt that such well known songs as "Swanee River" and "The Swanee River" and "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," that people ignorant of the negro's past will persist in proclaiming as his. But there are many doubt that such well known songs as "Swanee River" and "The Swanee River" and "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," that people ignorant of the negro's past will persist in proclaiming as his.

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TWO DAYS IN KANSAS.

A Visitor Sees Much to Inform and Diverge Him. To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Kansas was very interesting and different as THE SUN'S main theme was observed, and I was constantly reminded of this during two recent days in the State, both crowded with varied information, sights and incidents. In the sleeping car I reached a cup of water, but they would not drop to drink. I turned perplexed to a young traveling man, remarking: "Good gracious, won't they even let you drink water in Kansas any more?" "Not on your life," he rejoined, "unless you have your own bottle."

But going out over the Santa Fe I found that Fred Harvey was still permitted to carry glasses, so my thirst was quenched. Nearly every one, however, carried an individual bottle, and I saw many a man with a canteen, at school. Thus does the "original package" in which Kansas has long had its vinous beverage from Kansas City progress to the "original drinking cup." But the law providing for the latter is certainly good legislation.

As for the prohibition law, it is now as much a part of the State as the fertility of her soil, but still after a quarter of a century it is not so generally observed. One of these was in progress in Topeka, where I stepped off the train and got a Daily Capital. There was a big story in it of Governor Ross's dinner to the members of the Topeka Club because he had resigned from the club. He had addressed a cup of water to the members having "original packages" in their own lockers