

THE WASHINGTON HERALD
Published Every Morning in the Year by THE WASHINGTON HERALD COMPANY.
174 FIFTEENTH STREET NORTHWEST.
Entered as second-class matter, October 5, 1906, at the post-office at Washington, D. C., under act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

SCOTT C. BONE, Editor.
Telephone Main 3900. (Private Branch Exchange.)
Subscription Rates by Carrier or Mail:
Daily and Sunday, 30 cents per month; \$3.00 per year.
Daily, without Sunday, 20 cents per month; \$2.00 per year.

SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 1908.

Washington's Disgrace.

The City of Washington, Capital of the United States, is about to be disgraced again. It disgraces itself semi-annually, in the spring and autumn, by giving itself over to an orgie of gambling—public gambling—at the race track.

This occurs in the very shadow of the Capitol and the White House. It is contumacious, if not approved, by people in power. It is conducted under attractive auspices. Smart society on certain days turns out en masse and gives fashionable, if not exclusive, patronage to the gambling events.

Men and women of high and humble station fall victims to the betting contagion and lose their money to a crowd of common blacklegs from New York, who, in polite racing parlance, are called bookmakers.

It is estimated that no less than half a million dollars is yearly diverted by the racing meetings from the channels of trade into the pockets of these New York gamblers and the wealthy race-track owners.

But this is not all. Petty defalcations innumerable are part of the history of each racing meeting. Crime increases. Misery and hardship ensue. Suffering is carried into countless homes. A blight comes upon the community that is felt for months after. The ill effects are barely gone until the blight comes again.

And the shame of it all is that no united, vigorous, determined efforts on the part of Congress or the District authorities have ever been put forth to stop this orgie of public gambling—to prevent the Capital of the Nation from thus twice a year being disgraced and placed in so unenviable a position in the eyes of the world.

Nothing is more hurtful to the business interests of Washington, yet the Board of Trade and the Chamber of Commerce, so alert in other directions, have taken no stand against these racing meetings.

Nothing is more productive of misery and crime, yet the police authorities, who move so zealously against the policy writers—petty gamblers—apparently become impotent when confronted by the bookmakers and their powerful allies from New York.

Nothing is more harmful to the morals and the good name of the fair Capital, yet even the President of the United States, who lives here and stands always for law and order and right living, has been too busy with governmental affairs to issue an order for the suppression of the evil, which would mean its suppression forthwith.

A law was enacted some years ago, intended to stop bookmaking in the District of Columbia. On one technicality or another that law, whose purpose was clear, has since been undergoing a test, and this procedure apparently is to continue indefinitely, while the gambling goes on with the complacent indulgence of those in power. New and more stringent legislation is impending, but even if it is enacted into law the same farcical proceedings that have brought the present statute into contempt may naturally be expected unless the pressure of public opinion—or an order from the White House—forces drastic action by the authorities.

What is going to be done about it? What are the authorities doing, or going to do? Is this spring meeting, now scheduled, with its attendant evils, to be permitted?

Is Washington, the Capital of the Nation, again to give itself over to an orgie of gambling and disgrace itself anew? We await the answer.

Republican society note: Among those present were William Howard Taft and some others.

A Naval Reserve? The Navy Department has taken a proper position in the case of those retired officers of the naval establishment who have been on active duty and who now desire to be promoted. In many instances these officers were retired some time ago, and the officers of equal rank at that time have naturally gone ahead of the retired officers. To promote these officers on the retired list correspondingly would seem to be manifestly unjust to the officers who have remained on the active list and who have not been able to avoid sea service, which is the arduous, if not hazardous, part of naval duty.

The Navy Department is declining to lead its approval to those bills which seek to afford this form of relief and benefit to retired naval officers. It is observable that this is a step in the direction of the establishment of a reserve list of commissioned naval officers, the members of which shall be entitled to promotion, and the duties of which members shall be restricted to the agreeable task known to the service as shore duty.

It has always seemed to the civilian observer inconsistent that naval officers—or, for that matter, officers of the army and Marine Corps—should be retired for any sort of disability and then be called upon for active service. Of course, in the navy the shortage of commissioned officers in recent years has made it necessary to employ these retired officers, but their employment is fixed by statute

to a limited period, and it has been made known that the policy of the administration is to employ as few of these retired officers as possible. A retired officer on active duty gets the full pay and allowances of his grade, and that would seem to be sufficient, unless there is to be established a reserve list which shall provide promotion for its members in the same proportion which exists on the naval active list. There should be a resistance of any such plan.

The probable reason all the candidates for Senator in South Carolina never get a vote on the same ballot is because there are not enough legislators to go around.

Mr. Bryan's Latest Platform.

No one can say that the Bryan platform adopted at Omaha is indefinite or meaningless. It proposes a formidable programme of reform legislation, and in this respect contrasts strongly with the Taft platform, which seems to indicate a sentiment among many Republicans that it would be well to rest on the laurels of the Roosevelt administration. Mr. Bryan heads a forward Democratic movement, and so his platform is constructive to a degree unusual in party pronouncements. It announces definite ends, and specifies, in some instances rather minutely, the means by which those ends should be attained. It takes up the Roosevelt policies where the administration will be compelled to leave them off, and carries them forward to logical conclusions. In this regard it appears to us to have the advantage of the Ohio platform.

Mr. Bryan's views are so well known that it was not to be expected that any novelties would appear in the Nebraska platform. The captious will notice that it is silent on public ownership of railroads and the initiative and referendum. But these omissions are more than made up by the comprehensiveness of the plans relating to trust and railroad legislation. The first of these brings forward Mr. Bryan's familiar license plan for the regulation of trusts, the limitation of their products, and the requirement of uniformity in prices and conditions of sale. As to railroads, Mr. Bryan would reduce their rates where possible, prevent overcapitalization, and authorize a physical valuation. The platform opposes both the Fowler and Aldrich financial measures, urging the issue of a government currency directly to the banks. It goes somewhat further than Mr. Taft would in curbing the abuse of the injunction, but otherwise is not more outspoken for so-called labor legislation than the Ohio platform. The tariff plank is plainly for a reduction of duties to a revenue basis.

Finally, it is not a calamity platform. There is no attempt in it to make political capital out of the panic and the resulting industrial depression, no viewing with alarm any of the tendencies shown by the Roosevelt administration. We think it will make a strong appeal to the radical sentiment which has supported Mr. Roosevelt, especially if, as the Ohio platform seems to foreshadow, the Republican party will endeavor to appear once more as the party of conservatism.

"It is hard to realize, but not so many years ago the old hands were pool-playing Roosevelt as a 'tyro in politics,'" says the Milwaukee Sentinel. Now they look upon him as something in the nature of a typhoon in politics.

How the Tariff Helped the Paper Trust.

A searchlight was thrown on the relations between trusts and the tariff by Representative Gilbert M. Hitchcock, the militant publisher of the Omaha World-Herald, in a brief speech on the paper combination delivered in the House on Wednesday. Mr. Hitchcock proved by documentary evidence that the Committee on Ways and Means was warned in 1886 that an increase in the paper duty would result in the formation of a trust. Yet the committee increased the duty over 20 per cent by the familiar trick of changing it from an ad valorem to a specific duty, thus concealing the nature of the transaction. Within six months after the passage of the Dingley bill, the very men who had appeared before the committee in advocacy of an increase in duty formed the International Paper Company, with a capitalization of \$51,000,000, two-thirds of which was water. Under the shelter of the tariff, the price of print paper was increased from \$1.25 a hundred pounds to \$2 and \$2.50 a hundred.

Mr. Hitchcock's quotations from the report of the hearings before the Ways and Means Committee show conclusively that the committee had ample warning of the consequences of an increase in the paper duty. John Norris, then publisher of the New York World, advised the committee formally that the paper manufacturers were about to form a combination for the purpose of raising the price of their product in order to derive an additional profit of five or six millions out of their investment. At that moment the combination had obtained control of all the available water power and most of the available spruce timber. What they needed to carry out their plans was protection from the possible competition of Canadian forests and water powers. Mr. Norris told the committee plainly that if the additional duty were imposed it would mean the creation of a paper trust and an increase in the price of paper. He told them also, and this is right to the point, that the removal of the duty on print paper would prevent the formation of the combination and would simply make impossible," said Mr. Norris, any combination in so far as it attempted to raise the price of paper. It would be an automatic check upon any monopoly.

The Republican members of the Ways and Means Committee were well aware of all these facts. They were even told the names of the men who were forming the paper trust, and these same men, or some of them, appeared before the committee to urge an increase of the duty. Yet, knowing that their action would encourage the formation of a trust which would capitalize its monopoly power and its tariff protection and levy contributions on the newspapers of the country, the Ways and Means Committee granted the trust promoters the increased duty asked for. Mr. Hitchcock has made out a clear case as to this particular item in the tariff schedules, but it is only a sample of many others equally flagrant; and to quote Mr. Hitchcock, "publishers have no greater grievances or equities than other victims of other tariff-protected trusts." And the very men who were responsible in 1887 for legislation that made the formation of the paper and innumerable other trusts are the men who will undertake the revision of the tariff next year if their party is returned to power. Nothing short of a revolution in public sentiment will change their opinions, their methods, or their theory of tariff legislation.

A Hit for Every Head.

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REAL SELF-SACRIFICE.

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W. H. Taft will let his brother do it.

John D. Rockefeller will give up any idea of paying that tax.

Secretary Cretzlow will give up sending messages to Congress.

Secretary Cortwell will give up sending money to Wall Street.

The Hon. John Barrett will give up the idea of wearing a toupee.

The Hon. C. W. Fairbanks will give up quarreling with everybody.

And all of them will be mighty glad when Lent is over.

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