Rule of the Big Stick Arouses Much Hostility

(Special Washington Correspondence of The Argus.)

The growing insistence of the president upon his right to dominate legislation and particularly upon his unqualified and unhampered power over the United States army and navy has been pretty vigorously discussed in the senate of late.

It is a matter of notoriety that there are in existence three letters from the president to United States senators bearing partly upon the Brownsville incident, partly upon the singular case of Colonel Stewart of the coast artillery, who has been sent into exile in Arizona. In these letters the president notifies his senatorial correspondents that if the senate passes Mr. Foraker's bill for the reinstatement of the troops dismissed on account of the Brownsville incident he will veto the bill. If congress passes it over his veto, he will refuse to pay attention to it. He holds that his power over the army and the navy as commander in chief is superior to that of congress. Beyond conceding congress the power of making the necessary appropriations for the support of the armed service of the United States he gives the legislative branch of the government no authority in the premises.

The story was current about the capital a day or two ago that in explaining his position on the subject to a visitor Mr. Roosevelt pointed out that King Edward VII. was commander in chief of the British armed forces and that parliament could not interfere with his direction of them. The president is said to have wound up his remarks with the statement, "In this respect I am like the king of England." One of the senators to whom this remark was repeated said explosively: "We all wish he were more like the king of England. King Edward addresses parliament once at each session with a very brief speech prepared by his ministers. He does not bombard the legislative branch every two or three days with messages covering everything from race suicide and spelling reform to battleships and forest reserves. With the title of king, Edward VII. seems to repose some confidence in the ability of the English people to govern themselves and to select members of parliament who may be trusted to carry out the popular will. While he is in charge nominally of the army and navy, he has not, so far as I know, put a doctor in command of the army or a surgeon in command of a navy vessel. While Edward is content to be a king in name and influence the government only by quiet and personal suggestions, Mr. Roosevelt seems desirous of being not merely king, but emperor in fact, with the big stick for a scepter."

There is more of this sort of talk about the capital than most people would imagine. The growing autocracy of the administration has produced an undercurrent of hostility to Roosevelt and his immediate circle that every now and then breaks out into open protest. This feeling has not been lessened by the remark of Admiral Evans, the naval pet of the administration, at San Francisco recently, that what "this nation needs is more battleships and fewer statesmen." Some of the statesmen remember that the president threatened to veto their public building bill unless given his full programme of four battleships, and they think Evans took his cue from this. "There'll be fewer statesmen," said one Republican representative in melancholy tones, "at least fewer Republican statesmen, in the next congress if the man in the White House and his satellites hold to their present attitude."

The Stewart Case.

This is one of the most curious mysteries of government today. Colonel William F. Stewart is colonel in the coast artillery service. Suddenly he is detached from his command and ordered to an abandoned military post in the middle of Arizona, twenty-six miles from a village or habitation, thousands of miles from the coast or any artillery, and is given command of exactly one private, who accompanies him to attend to his comforts. What Colonel Stewart's crime has been nobody knows! He has been as silent as a sphinx so far as any public statement is concerned. He did appeal to the war department and was informed that if he would voluntarily retire his retirement would be accepted, but if he refused to retire he must remain in exile. Having nearly four more years to serve before the age of involuntary retirement, he declined that proposition. Some friends interesting themselves in his case, he was transferred from the Arizona desert to another abandoned post near St. Augustine, Fla., but had not unpacked his goods and chattels there before he was peremptorily sent back. All of this has been done to this man, who has spent his lifetime in the service of the United States and is a veteran of two wars, without one word of explanation. He has not been court martialed nor even been granted a court of inquiry. What the high crimes and misdemeanors are for which he is condemned to solitude in the sagebrush unless willing to retire from the army nobody knows.

The discharge from the army of three companies of soldiers without trial and the apparent persecution of Colonel Stewart are incidents which would not be likely to make the service popular if Mr. Roosevelt were much longer to continue to be commander in chief.

The Closing Days of Congress.

With an overwhelming majority in the senate and the house and with continued and noisy protestations of devotion to the president's programme, congress has thus far passed through the house only two of the multitude of bills which he has urged. The second one, that involving child labor in the District of Columbia, passed only with the aid of Democratic votes. Nothing yet has come of the recommendations for free wood pulp and print paper, for the amendment to the anti-trust law, for publicity of campaign contributions or any of a half dozen necessary laws for the government of the District of Columbia.

The editor of a weekly newspaper of national reputation sitting in the press gallery with me the other day and watching the perfect discipline with which Speaker Cannon, Leader Payne, Dalzell, Hepburn and Tawney worked together to prevent anything of really national importance from being brought to a vote on the floor said:

"I can't understand the theory on which these men are working. Here the entire Associated Press and the American Newspaper Publishers' association have united in a demand that wood pulp and print paper be put on the free list, yet all they can get out of this congress is the appointment of a commission obviously intended to carry the subject over until next winter and which is conducting the investigation in such a way as to make it perfectly apparent to all who attend the hearings that the cards are stacked against the publishers. The newspaper owners are threatening reprisals. In this present house there are thirty-five Republicans sitting whose districts are so close that a change of a thousand votes from the Republican to the Democratic side would retire each one of them.

"The Democratic minority has put itself on record as a unit for free pulp. A petition asking that the bill be called up has been signed by every Democrat in the house. Only one Republican dared sign it against the speaker's opposition. What will the press of the country do? The moral sentiment of the country is a unit in favor of the national publicity law, yet the speaker and his cabal will not allow it to be voted on in the house. If the Republican party is to go before the nation on the record of Roosevelt, the immediate answer is that the Republican congress has repudiated him by refusing to accept his recommendations. If the record of congress is to be the issue, it is one of impotence and dereliction of duty. One almost thinks that that gang down there whom we all know at heart are hostile to the president and to Taft are systematically plotting treachery for the overthrow of both."

The Singular Senator From Arkansas.

If Senator Jeff Davis desired to attract attention irrespective of what sort of attention it might be, he could have hardly done better than he did with his speech a week ago in the senate. This paragraph, addressed to Rockefeller and Morgan, affords a fair example of its general tone:

Let the scavengers of plutocracy howl. Miserable travesties upon noble manhood, postgraduates in all arts of slander or defamation, I challenge the subsidized press. Go, damnable imps of pelf and greed! I defy your taunts! Tear to fragments my political career if it comport with your execrable will. Stifle and distort my every utterance. Not satisfied, if such be your brutal frenzy, lash my poor form into insensibility. Then, if it be your further pleasure, gnaw from my stiffening bones every vestige of quivering flesh. Howl in wretched bestiality through my own innocent blood as it drips from your fiendish visages.

This is, of course, balderdash. Yet, however foolish may be his ranting in the senate, there is a shrewd side to Davis' character which has enabled him to hold his own in his state. I heard a story of a clever trick he played on an opponent for the nomination for governor. His rival was a member of an old Arkansas family, a tall, stately, dignified man. In the joint debates which they conducted throughout the state he was carrying every audience with him. Davis saw that something must be done. Just before one of his biggest meetings he let the rumor be circulated that if Judge —— attacked him on the stage again as he had been doing he (Davis) would take physical vengeance upon him. The judge's friends became perturbed. They went to him and told him that he must go to the next meeting armed. "But I never carried weapons," protested the judge. Still they insisted and finally persuaded him to slip a pistol into his hip pocket. In the midst of his speech Davis, who was then governor, turned dramatically to his rival and, declaring himself to be an officer of the law and one who reverenced and obeyed the law, demanded to know whether even then the gentleman confronting him was not violating the law by carrying a deadly weapon. The judge could not lie, could not defend himself, and, with a passionate appeal to all his hearers to maintain at all times the sanctity of the law, the Hon. Jeff Davis won that meeting for his own.

The Democratic Race.

It is becoming perfectly apparent that Mr. Bryan's strength in the convention will result in his nomination on the first ballot. There has been talk of opposition to him in Louisiana and rumors of exceeding activity on the part of the Johnson forces in Alabama and in Virginia, but the opposition in Louisiana does not appear when sought for, and the boomers' activity has thus far resulted in nothing.

Washington, D. C. WILLIS J. ABBOT.

The Helping Hand.

A blind newsman stood in the early evening on the curb at Forty-second street and Third avenue. The papers he sought were at a depot on the opposite side of the avenue. He stood silent. Presently a young man slipped out of an idle group near by, took the blind man by the arm, piloted him across the car tracks, left him and passed on. Neither said a word.

Having obtained his papers, the blind man turned again to the curb, standing patiently. A woman, bareheaded and evidently a tenement dweller near by, walked up the avenue, paused, stepped aside, took the newsman by the arm, conducted him back across the avenue and resumed her errand. Neither spoke.

It's just a way they have over there on the east side.—New York Globe.

A Rule For Dramatists.

A dramatist must never keep a secret from his audience, although this is one of the favorite devices of the novelist. Let us suppose for a moment that the spectators were not let into the secret of Hero's pretty plot in "Much Ado," to bring Beatrice and Benedick together. Suppose that, like the heroine and the hero, they were led to believe that each was truly in love with the other. The inevitable revelation of this error would produce a shock of surprise that would utterly scatter their attention, and while they were busy making over their former conception of the situation they would have no eyes nor ears for what was going on upon the stage. In a novel the true character of a hypocrite is often hidden until the book is nearly through; then when the revelation comes the reader has plenty of time to think back and see how deftly he has been deceived. But in a play a rogue must be known to be a rogue at his first entrance. The other characters in the play may be kept in the dark until the last act, but the audience must know the secret all the time. In fact, any situation which shows a character suffering from a lack of such knowledge as the audience holds secure always produces a telling effect upon the stage. The spectators are aware of Iago's villainy and know of Desdemona's innocence. The play would not be nearly so strong if, like Othello, they were kept ignorant of the truth.—North American Review.

Apostrophe to a Champion Cow.

Hail, O champion nurser of the human race! Hail, O quiet chewer of nutritious cud! Blessed be peace and open air, beasts and sunlight, and especially blessed be thy cow; of her we sing. Hail, Pauline; number 48,426—if that name you love, O butter champion of the world! Think of giving 104.4 pounds of milk in a single day and also at a high average of fat!

I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self contained.
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition.
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins.
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God.
Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of owning things.
Not one kneels to another nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago.
Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth.

Would the pen of Homer were our own, for we have no taste to celebrate the feats of admirals and presidents, prizefighters and millionaires and would fain do justice to the cow, for she by her own unaided might can support thirty babies on this earth.—Collier's Weekly.

A Sermon In Rhyme.

An English sporting parson who wished to shorten the Sunday morning's service, so that he might join some kindred spirits delivered the briefest and meatiest sermon on record. "Dearly beloved," he said, "the subject of our discourse this morning is 'Life.' I shall divide it into three parts and a conclusion—first, man's ingress to the world; second, man's progress through the world; third, man's egress from the world, and, to conclude, man's life after departure:

"Man's ingress to life is naked and bare.
Man's progress through life is trouble and care.
Man's egress from life is nobody knows where.
If we do well here, we will do well there.
I could tell you no more if I preached a whole year."

—Boston Post.

Satisfied.

"Please, sir," piped the tiny customer, whose head scarcely reached the counter, "father wants some oak varnish."

"How much does your father want, my little man?" asked the shopman.

"Father said you was to fill this," said the little fellow, handing over a half gallon can.

It was duly filled and handed over.

"Father will pay you on Saturday," said the recipient casually.

And then the face of the shopman grew dark.

"We don't give credit here," he said. "Gimme back the can!"

Meekly the little lad handed back the can, which was emptied and handed back to him, with a scowl.

"Thank you, sir," he said. "Father said you'd be sure to leave enough round the sides for him to finish the job he wants to do, and I think you 'ave, sir."—London Scraps.

Most Important Work.

A reporter recently took a journey of considerable length for the purpose of interviewing a rising literary light as to his next novel. On reaching the house he discovered the author seated in his garden engaged in earnest conversation with a little boy who had a large towel pinned around his neck. The author received his visitor cordially, but seemed rather absentminded.

"Are you willing to tell me a little about your next important work?" asked the reporter.

The literary man clicked a pair of shears and patted the boy on the shoulder.

"We were just talking about it as you came up," he said. "Willie thinks I ought to do it with a bowl, but I think I can do it without. What would you advise? You see his mother has always cut it before, but she's away just now!"—Home Magazine.

The Power of Advertising.

The power of advertising is told by a manager of the toilet department of a large New York department store. "We have six different makes of one toilet article," he said, "and they are so near alike in quality that even experts can't tell the difference between them, yet we sell as much of one as we do of all the others together, just because the manufacturer is everlastingly advertising it. The other five sell in proportion to the amount of advertising given to them. If there is any difference in quality it is in favor of the poorest seller."—New York Herald.

No Deadheads.

Mandy was a young colored girl fresh from the cotton fields of the south. One afternoon she came to her northern mistress and handed her a visiting card. "De lady wha' gib me dis is in de pa'lor," she explained. "Dey's annoder lady on de do'step."

"Gracious, Mandy," exclaimed the mistress, "why didn't you ask both of them to come in?"

"Kase, ma'am," grinned the girl, "de one on de do'step done forgit her ticket."—Argonaut.

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