

THE JEFFERSON IDEA.

How It Differs From Roosevelt's "Progressive Tax."

THEORIES OF TWO MEN COMPARED

Founder of Democratic Party Opposed All Laws Tending to Create Monopolies—The President's Plan Means Confiscation of Property and Destruction of Natural Rights.

The president's recent utterance regarding what he calls a "progressive tax" on large fortunes has created a sensation. A tax is a sum of money levied and assessed at a certain rate on the persons or property of citizens by the government for public uses. The president didn't propose to levy a sum of money at a certain rate, but to provide that no person should take by devise or descent more than "a certain amount" and that the excess of any fortune over that particular amount should be taken by the government. Such a taking of private property would not, however, be taxation, but confiscation. Congress could not in the exercise of the taxing power limit the extent of a man's possessions. It cannot deprive any man of the natural right to acquire and dispose of property. It cannot tax a man for the purpose of limiting the size of his estate or the amount he shall will or bequeath to this person or that.

The president said that he favored "a progressive tax on all fortunes (not on all incomes) beyond a certain amount, either given in life or bequeathed upon death, to any individual (saying nothing of corporations)—a tax so framed as to put it out of the power of the owner of those enormous fortunes to hand over more than a certain amount to any one individual."

A man who didn't know what a tax is might think that the president really meant to tax great fortunes and exempt small ones. But the whole proposition is a mischievous fallacy. A progressive tax which takes all above a certain amount becomes confiscation as to all above that amount. The president's proposition, then, is to fix a limit to private fortunes and to confiscate, not to tax, all of such fortunes above that limit. Now, if the federal government, which he was representing when he made the proposition, could do what he suggested, then there would be no need for taxation at all. It could fix the limit at, say, \$1,000,000 for the time being and strip Carnegie, Rockefeller, Morgan, Schiff, the Vanderbilts, the Goulds and the Astors as a preliminary measure. That would enable it to abolish tariff and internal revenue taxes, postage, etc. And as soon as the administration had spent the proceeds of the first general confiscation the limit of private fortunes might be reduced to \$100,000, then to \$10,000, to \$5,000, to \$1,000 and finally to 50 cents. This, we insist, is the president's theory.

Jefferson, the founder of the Democratic party, expressed the view that large fortunes are dangerous to the community in which they exist, but he never dreamed of confiscation. His idea was to abolish all laws which tended to create monopolies and perpetuities, to annul privileges. We can get his idea more clearly by quoting his own words. He said:

I proposed to abolish the law of primogeniture. . . . I also obtained leave to bring in a bill declaring tenants in tail to hold their lands in fee simple. . . . The transmission of vast properties from generation to generation in the same name had raised up a distinct set of families, who, being privileged by law in the perpetuation of their wealth, were thus formed into a patrician order. . . . To annul this privilege and instead of an aristocracy of wealth, of more harm than benefit to society, to make an opening for an aristocracy of virtue and talent, which nature has wisely provided for the direction of the interests of society, was deemed essential to a well ordered republic. To effect it no violence was necessary, no deprivation of natural right, but, rather, an enlargement of it by a repeal of the law. — Jefferson's Works, Vol. 1, p. 26.

The laws of entail and primogeniture were abolished at the Revolution in accordance with this view. But rich men are now reaching the same results produced by those laws and evading the statutes which repealed them by means of putting their property in trust for long periods for the use of particular persons or by means of wills. The federal government cannot reach the situation except by imposing a graduated income tax.

Men have a natural right, superior to any legal right, to all the property they can honestly acquire, and no government can destroy that right without destroying its own foundations. The president's speech, however, incites a violation of that natural right, and to the extent that it does so it is the insane cry of an anarchist.

Congress and Reform.

Speaker Cannon a few weeks ago was certain that congress would adjourn at an early date, and "the boys" would go home, mend their political fences by pointing to what they had accomplished and be triumphantly re-elected. But the speaker is now more pessimistic and evidently feels that "the boys" are not on an easy street, for he says: "I see no prospect of a very early adjournment. We'll be here some time yet." And what makes the voters disgusted is that the Republican majority has not put a law on the statute books with a vestige of reform in it up to date, and this is the party that boasts of "doing things."

TRUSTS AND SUBSIDIES.

Republican System Which Protects the Few and Plunders the Many.

Secretary Shaw, with his vague ideas of economics, often makes most extraordinary statements. Through reading the protection literature prepared by the Protective Tariff League he has registered in his partisan mind that "the government has granted either protection or aid to every industry which is now being prosecuted by our people and every industry that can appropriately be prosecuted, international shipping alone excepted." That statement was made in a speech to the Eastern Commercial Teachers' association, and if they were not a lot of clowns how they must have laughed in their sleeves at the Shaw protection philosophy! It is true the Republican party has protected the trusts and aided the manufacturers, but the people pay the bills, and their industry is made less remunerative by the protection the tariff gives the trusts. The greatly increased cost of living since the Dingley tariff bill was enacted has virtually decreased wages over one-third and reduced stationary incomes by a like percentage, yet Secretary Shaw would add to their burdens still another tax to subsidize the steamship trust.

The policy of the protectionists is to indirectly foster with the protective tariff or directly subsidize the few who dwell in palaces at Newport out of the hard earned money of the many who labor and pay the taxes. The southern planter has no protection for his cotton, neither has the northern farmer for his cereals, for both must sell at the world's prices in open competition with all countries that likewise have a surplus to dispose of. But all this great agricultural class must pay the increased price for what they buy which the fostering tariff allows the trusts and combines to charge. The storekeeper, the commercial traveler and the clerk do not find profits or salaries advanced in proportion to the increased cost of living, for they are all paying their share of the tariff tax to the trusts, to whom Secretary Shaw so jealously reminds us "the government has granted either protection or aid."

The trust and corporation barons would make serfs of the workmen they employ, and only through organization have the workmen been able to protect themselves and remain free men. Republican policies and Republican laws have given them no aid or comfort, for under the protective system everything they buy has increased in a much greater ratio than the wages they receive.

This, then, is the policy lauded by Secretary Shaw and the Republican politicians. To protect and subsidize the powerful and rich by taxing the farmer, the tradesman, the artisan and the laborer. Promises have been made by Republican conventions and politicians to revise the tariff, and similar promises are being formulated to again fool the people, but as long as the protected interests dominate the Republican party there can be no real tariff reform, as the stand patters will never consent to cut off the campaign contributions from the protected trust barons. Those who feel the pinch of high trust prices should think of these matters when they vote next fall for those who are to represent them.

Muck Rake and Whitewash Brush.

Any sort of rake may become a muck rake when muck has accumulated to such an extent that the health and safety of the community require its removal. It is the use to which it is put that makes it what it is. Theoretically the greatest muck rake in this country is Charles E. Hughes, whose work in cleaning out the life insurance muck beds is almost as famous as that of Hercules in cleaning the Augean stables. All honor to him for his work! He did not try to besmirch the characters of dead men, as Roosevelt did in his book. Next to Hughes, the most useful muck rakes in the country are those men, like Tillman, who expose and condemn moral nastiness and rottenness in public life, even in the White House. The journals which expose corruption and fraud are doing the best possible work. It is the man with the whitewash brush and not the man with the rake who is the dangerous factor in public affairs and who deserves a place in the pillory.

Partisan Politics.

The partisan persistence of the Republican managers in refusing to agree on the bill to admit Oklahoma is entirely opposed to public opinion on this question. The senate, for once at least, is actually in agreement with the Democrats that justice be done to nearly 1,000,000 citizens who have made their homes in Oklahoma and Indian Territory. The question of the admission of Arizona and New Mexico as one state has been very properly left by the senate amendment to the vote of the people, but to this the Republican majority of the house refuses to agree. When these stand pat members are asking for indorsement next fall the voters should give them a dose of their own medicine and refuse to re-elect those who would not trust the people.

Roosevelt's Plan.

President Roosevelt evidently thinks the Democrats will elect a majority of the next congress, for he is said to have decided to call a special session after March 4 for the purpose of revising the tariff. He knows as well as any one that if the Republicans should again have a majority of congress it would be useless to call a special session, for the stand patters would be in control.

In New Garb.

The Republican bosses, who have been somewhat staggered by the Jolt the people have lately given them, are appearing in the garb of reformers so as to get their feet in the trough again.

THE COMING STRUGGLE

Individual Rights Versus Community of Interests.

WHITHER ARE WE DRIFTING?

Republican Doctrine of Centralized Government Leads to Socialism, Democratic Party the Only Bulwark of a Free People Against Dangers That Threaten.

The eventual struggle in this country will be between individualism and socialism, and the Republican party, with its persistent efforts for centralization, is to blame for the growth of the socialist propaganda. The Democracy has always stood for the freedom of the individual and home rule and opposed to the paternalistic and Hamiltonian theory that the federal government must be all powerful. The constitutional provision that all rights not granted by the states to the general government are reserved to the states and the people is the fundamental doctrine of the Democratic party. Jefferson, the apostle of the Democrats, declared this, and no true Democrat has ever gainsaid it.

Mr. Bryan, who has been accused by the Republicans of socialism, shows by his conservative views in his article entitled, "Individualism versus Socialism," in the Century Magazine for April, his own and the Democratic position. In that article he says: "Much of the strength developed by socialism is due to the fact that Socialists advocate certain reforms which individualists also advocate. Municipal ownership of monopolies, for instance, is advocated by individualists because it is practically impossible to have more than one water system in a city, and by the latter on the general ground that government should own all the means of production and distribution."

Mr. Bryan remarks that the sentiment for municipal lighting plants is not yet so strong, and the sentiment in favor of public telephones and street car lines is still less pronounced; but the same general principles apply to them, and individualists, without accepting the creed of socialism, can advocate the extension of municipal ownership to them." He further shows plainly the evils to the individual citizen of socialism when he says: "If the government operates all the factories, all the farms and all the stores, there must be superintendents as well as workmen; there must be different kinds of employment, some more pleasant, some less pleasant," and he asks: "Is it likely that any set of men can distribute the work or fix the compensation to the satisfaction of all, or even to the satisfaction of a majority of the people?"

How great, therefore, is the gulf between the Democracy and the Socialists, who believe in concentrating all power in the central government, whereas the Democrats stand for the utmost freedom of the individual citizen without infringement upon the rights of others.

The trend of Republicanism is to rush to congress for a cure for political evils; to overlook, and even aid, executive usurpation over the representatives of the people; to favor trusts and corporations who in return have furnished money to corruptly keep their friends in power. The Democratic doctrine is exactly opposite and is expressed by "Equal rights to all and special privileges to none." Without the Democratic party, which alone offers all classes equal rights, there would be a certain hurrying of the unthinking to the extreme of appropriating all the means of production and distribution by the national government, so that ultimately there would be no incentive for individual effort. The confiscation of the property of those who, by saving or superior ability, had secured a competence would follow the appropriation of the property of those who had amassed millions.

The Democrats are striving to curb and control by equitable laws the trusts, the corporations and individuals who are monopolists, so that the humblest citizen shall have equal opportunity with them, and the first step in that direction is to abolish the special privileges that the Republican party has granted its favorites.

Tobacco Monopoly.

The tobacco trust reports its profits at \$2,907,589 more than last year. The surplus, after deducting \$9,588,500 for bonds purchased and \$8,048,480 for dividends on American Tobacco stocks, was \$25,985,961. This trust is protected by the tariff and aims to monopolize the whole business of tobacco manufacturing and has been fostered in so doing by special rebates from the railroads, which have helped it to wipe out competitors. There has been but little effort made by the administration to curb this trust, which may perhaps be accounted for by its liberal subscription to campaign funds of the Republican party.

Must Be Settled Right.

The tariff question will never down until it is settled to the advantage of the American people instead of, as now, for the benefit of trusts and corporations. It was President Garfield, who was a tariff reformer, that said, "Unsettled questions have no pity for the repose of nations," and if he were alive today he would doubtless add, "Or for those Republicans who for selfish and sordid reasons are stand patters."

His Hands Full.

The president's attempt to ride the bucking senate is a more exciting experience than his trying to break that bucking broncho in the Bad Lands.

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Clothing Ignited.

A most shocking death occurred near Josie last Friday evening. Miss Josie, the nine-year-old daughter of Mrs. Henrietta Stuart, used kerosene in starting a fire Friday afternoon and the fire caught her clothing, burning her so badly that she died Friday night. Burial took place Saturday at Pleasant Union Holiness church. The heart broken mother has the sympathy of the community in her sorrow. —Siler City Grit.

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A new pipe organ has just been constructed in the Centenary Methodist church at New Bern. The instrument cost \$5,000 and was the gift of Mrs. J. A. Meadow.

Why take a dozen things to cure that cough? Kennedy's Laxative Honey and Tar allays the congestion, stops that tickling, drives the cold out through your bowels. Sold by Standard Drug Company and Asheboro Drug Company.

Sam Barnhardt, son of J. H. Barnhardt, aged 15 years, committed suicide at his home at Cool Springs, Cabarrus county, last week by shooting himself with a shot gun. The cause of his rash act is not known.

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