

## THE CORRUPTION FUND.

As a further and additional reason for selling a Cabinet place to Mr. Wanamaker, it is now stated that he was the organizer of an "advisory committee" of business men who raised and had the handling of all the money, to the exclusion of the wicked Quay, who was not allowed to touch it. "The able, adroit, and experienced politicians of the Committee of course brought the resources of their skill into play," the *Philadelphia Press* says, "but they did it through legitimate channels." The "business men," too, whom Wanamaker called around him, "doubled their subscriptions," we learn from another source, "when they found the project in the hands of business men instead of politicians. When men bemoan the use of money," adds the *Press*, "which has become inseparable from our elections, though the amount is exaggerated, let them remember and rejoice at the movement which brings the most trusted and responsible business representatives to guide it in proper directions." We have no doubt that this "Advisory Committee of Business Men" will hereafter be a regular appendage of the National Committee.

What all this means is simply that the men who wish to buy places under a new Administration for cash mean hereafter to deal directly with the President, and not as heretofore through an intermediary. Previous to this late canvass the Chairmen of the National Committees secured the large subscriptions as best they could, in a quiet, not to say underhand, way. Their amounts and the source from which they came were not made public, and all the subscriber got for his money was a sort of shamefaced and vague understanding that when the good places came to be distributed, he should not be forgotten. The reason of this was simply that it is only since the war that the idea has sprung up that a subscription in money gave a man a "mortgage" on the Administration, to use Dr. Parkhurst's phrase. In the older days it was assumed as a matter of course, and as something due to his character, that a man who gave money to a campaign fund gave it from love of the cause, and looked for nothing personal in return. Any other construction he would have treated as an insult. After awhile, however, as money became more necessary, managers began to promise, and subscribers began to expect, something in return for the money, but did not wish to have it known. This vague arrangement, however, has not worked satisfactorily. It left the incoming President in ignorance of his indebtedness, and consequently led to his disappointing some of the large donors in ways which made them positively, but secretly, furious. They did not dare to air their wrongs in the newspapers, because the press had not yet recognized the venality of offices, and because they had nothing to show in the way of a contract; so they took their satisfaction in private cursing and denunciation of the Administration, and in vowing not to be fooled again in the same way.

In the appointment of the "Advisory Committee," composed of leading subscribers who put up their money in open daylight, and are in formal and visible communication with the candidate, and who make no secret that they expect value for their checks, another and very important step towards the plutocratic system has been taken. It will hereafter be a settled practice to take one member of the Cabinet, at least, from the Committee. Of course he will usually be, as in Wanamaker's case, the Chairman. And, we may be sure, the Committee will not long be content with one place. Before very long they will demand more, and rich men will try to get into the Committee, and have their donations noised abroad, as the sure way to a "Cabinet position." There is no road in politics so well-known, in fact, as that on which our Government is now travelling; it is worn with the footsteps of many nations in all ages. Wanamaker is really one of the most familiar figures in history. He has stood behind a dozen thrones, and overthrown half a dozen republics.

The *New York Times*, in supporting the suggestion that the use of money at the late election should be investigated by Congress, thinks it necessary to guard against the suggestion that the inquiry might be made the basis of an impeachment of Gen. Harrison's title to the Presidency. There can be no danger of anything of the sort. The materials for any such contest must be furnished by some State or States, as the law exists at present; it cannot be created by anything a committee of the House of Representatives could discover. Votes which come in from any State without dispute or challenge, will have to be counted, and there is no sign or prospect, or indeed a possibility, of any such dispute arising in any State that Gen. Harrison has carried. He has been lawfully elected, even if he owes his majorities to corrupt voting. There has nowhere been any question raised of fraudulent registering or counting, or of any culpability on the part of returning officers. All that is charged against the Republican managers may, we presume, be charged against the Democratic managers also. It may as well be admitted, if only for the purposes of the inquiry, that, with larger means at their disposal, the latter would not have left Quay and Wanamaker so much to boast of; but to be entirely candid it must also be said that an inquiry would not be as damaging to the Democrats as to the Republicans. A well-known legal saw says that when two parties are equally to blame, the one who has got hold of the thing in dispute is the best off as regards legal right; but this rule does not hold good when the time comes to apportion moral responsibility. The victor then gets the larger share of blame. The man who profits most by a wrong is the one who has the worst standing in the court of morals, even when he has many confederates or partisans.

What the inquiry is needed for is, not to raise any dispute, or contest any claim, or introduce any disturbance whatever into the

devolution of the Presidency, but to inform the public judgment touching the evil to be dealt with. The public attention is now turned to it, and there is a strong and growing disposition to deal with it, which, however, needs to be fortified by evidence of some more positive sort than is to be found in newspaper charges or the reports of individuals. As long as there is no official, sworn testimony on the subject, tens of thousands will evade the formation of any opinion about it, or giving any aid in obtaining remedial legislation. We saw during the canvass how easy it was, even for clergymen and other professional moralists, to shut their eyes to the Republican forgeries as long as the proofs of them were only to be found in the newspapers. The very same plea will avail others now in shutting their eyes to the prevalence of vote-buying. But get a few managers on the witness-stand under oath, and all the vagueness and uncertainty which now surrounds the subject would vanish in a few hours.

The *Crédit-Mobilier* investigation is a fair example of what an inquiry of this sort may do in throwing light on dark subjects. When it was begun, we feel sure very few people indeed supposed anything serious would come of it. Before it had gone on many days it had ruined two or three members of Congress, including the Vice-President, and terribly smirched the reputation of several others. The Blaine investigation, the Sharp investigation, and the Croton Aqueduct investigation are all examples of the great public value of the inquisitorial powers of the Legislature. The more partisan and unreliable the press becomes, the more valuable these powers are.

How unreliable, when party interests are involved, the press is considered by a great many intelligent men, may be gathered from the account given of it by the Rev. Dr. Parkhurst in his sermon on electoral corruption on Thanksgiving Day. It is true that all the knowledge most people have of public matters they learn from the daily press, but it is clearly not this kind of knowledge that makes them very indignant or rouses them to action. For this something more substantial is necessary, and it is the Legislature only that can supply it. The attention of ministers, if we may judge from Bishop Cox's and Dr. Parkhurst's remarks, has at last been called to the subject. It is needless to say that a very large proportion of the men who supply the money for electoral corruption are either members or attendants at Christian churches, and are, or are desirous of being thought, amenable to religious influences. We must help the ministers to get at the consciences of these men, or whatever it is that does duty as their consciences; and the only way to help them is to supply them with ammunition which the sinners cannot pooh-pooh as "newspaper charges."

## THE SENATE TARIFF BILL.

THE changed position of parties has given fresh importance to the Senate Tariff Bill. It is reasonable to expect that the complexion

of any measure which passes that body will give color to the entire policy of the Republican party during the next four years. At all events, it will be the best evidence attainable of the view which leading Republicans take of their victory in the recent election. The resolution of the Senate Committee to call up their bill and press it to a passage, to the exclusion of all other general legislation, is therefore highly commendable. We may infer from this action that the leaders of the party hold themselves bound by their promises during the campaign to revise the tariff and reduce the revenue, and that they would consider it dangerous to delay such action.

The fact of most importance, we might say of overshadowing importance, is the condition of the Treasury surplus. It is imperative that this should be cut down to the measure of an economical administration. All parties are agreed upon this point. The question *how* it shall be done is the great issue of the day. The views of the Senate Committee were stated in their report on the 4th of October. Their plan, we may remind our readers, consisted of two principal measures, viz., a large reduction of the duties on sugar, and a repeal of the internal-revenue tax on tobacco, the tax on cigars being reduced but not altogether repealed. The reduction of revenue proposed by them was substantially as follows:

From sugar.....	\$27,759,783
From tobacco.....	24,371,460
Additions to free list.....	6,428,095
Alcohol used in the arts.....	7,000,000
	\$65,559,338

Of this total sum, upwards of \$52,000,000 comes from the two items of sugar and tobacco.

The Senate bill is a protective measure (except in the item of sugar) of a very glaring and offensive description. It increases the duty on wool one cent per pound, and this proposed increase comes at a time when the prices of wool are rising in all the markets of the world. A reaction has come in the market for this staple, following upon a long period of depression. During the period of low prices there was a great slaughtering of sheep both here and abroad. In some important districts the price obtainable was not sufficient to pay for shearing and transportation. The supply was therefore reduced in obedience to a natural law, and now the turn has come. Woollen-manufacturers are complaining bitterly that they cannot get back the money they are required to pay out for materials and labor. And at this crisis in their affairs it is proposed to add 10 per cent. to the cost of imported wool by statute, while natural causes have advanced it nearly 30 per cent. It is believed by good judges that an advance of 40 per cent. would shut up a large number of woollen-mills that have maintained a struggling existence under the present duties on wool. We look to see the Senate Committee abandon the proposed increase of tax on wool, more especially since the chief wool-growing States showed a lessened Republican vote in the recent election.

The reduction of duties on sugar is a step

in the direction of free trade, forced by the necessity of getting rid of a lump sum of the surplus. Naturally a protectionist committee would look to see where the largest reduction could be made with the least amount of squealing. The sugar-planters and the Sugar Trust are numerically a small congregation. On the other hand, the revenue from sugar is about one-half of all the collections under the tariff. We showed in a recent article that the Senate bill reduces the protection to the Sugar Trust more than the Mills bill does. The *Albany Argus* has criticised our showing, upon the ground that we have taken the wrong standard for purposes of comparison. We took for a standard 96 degrees polariscope test, the comparison resulting as follows:

	Raw. (96 deg.)	Refined.	Protection.
Present duty.....	\$2 24	\$3 50	\$1 26
Mills bill.....	1 82.2	2 80	0 97.8
Senate bill.....	1 12	2 00	0 88

The *Argus* says that the standard of comparison should have been 92 degrees, because that was nearer the average of all importations for the last fiscal year. The total importation for the year was 2,781,159,645 pounds. Of this amount 1,312,655,232 pounds were at or above 95 degrees. There is considerable variation between different years as to this point, but if we take the standard suggested by the *Argus*, the comparison will stand thus:

	Raw (92 deg.)	Refined.	Protection.
Present duty.....	\$2 08	\$3 50	\$1 42
Mills bill.....	1 69.4	2 80	1 10.6
Senate bill.....	1 04	2 00	90

The *Argus* admits that so far as sugar alone is concerned, the Senate bill reduces the protection to the Trust more than the Mills bill does, but contends that there is another clause in the Senate bill which nullifies all this, makes the matter worse for the public, and "guarantees the Sugar Trust all its raw material free of duty." This is the clause which puts molasses of the lowest grade on the free list. This molasses is not used by refiners directly, but is bought by them from boilers, who are protected, under the tariff as it now stands, at the rate of about 88-100 of a cent per pound of sugar produced by boiling. Under the Mills bill they would have about 82-100 and under the Senate bill about 84-100. All this will be amply discussed when the bill comes up for consideration.

It is commonly believed that no bill will be passed by both houses at this session. Although the obstacles in the way are very considerable, we do not look upon the case as hopeless. A bill embracing the sugar and tobacco clauses and the Senate free list might pass with some slight modifications; but we should think it highly improbable that the House would consent to augmentation of any protective duties at this time, or any further robbing of Peter to pay Paul.

## THE CHURCHES AND THE CITY.

THERE has been a Conference sitting at Chickering Hall which began on Monday evening, and continued during the next two days, in obedience to a call signed by many of the prominent clergymen and church-goers in the city. The fact which has called them together is this:

"The population of New York city has for years been steadily and rapidly increasing, while at the same time the number of churches has been relatively decreasing. In 1840 there was one Protestant church to every 2,000 people; in 1880 one to 3,000; in 1887 one to 4,000."

Every one will interpret this fact in a different way. That it means something by no means pleasant or hopeful, however, every one will agree. The churches contain a very large proportion of the wealth, intelligence, public spirit, and right-mindedness of the community. They are, if not the only, the chief organizations we have, whose direct aim is to exert, in the highest sense, a civilizing influence. If they are not multiplying in proportion to population, therefore, it means that the forces of barbarism are in some degree gaining on us.

It would appear from the call to the Conference that the churches are at last beginning to understand that they have ceased, or are rapidly ceasing, to be a purifying and aggressive power, and that something needs to be done about it; in other words, that if they mean to hold their own as moral and religious agencies, they must, once for all, cease to be what too many of the Protestant churches are, pleasant and fashionable Sunday clubs, where wearied business men have their intellectual palates tickled once a week with music, good society, and soothing reflections on life, and death, and judgment. Some of them have tried, with much outlay and labor, to do their duty towards the city poor and ignorant by establishing missions and outlying chapels; and so forth, and some of the subjects set down for addresses at the Conference seemed to indicate a conviction that what is needed is a further extension of this system of missionary effort. We may instance the following as being suggestive of such effort, namely, on "The Bohemian Element," "The Italian Element," "The Colored Element," "Our Duty to the Foreign Population."

One of the things we hope from the Conference is a great clearing of both the clerical and lay mind on this subject. The poor, and ignorant, and barbarous, and anarchical, and indifferent of this city, or of any other, are not what they were fifty or one hundred years ago. They cannot be any longer won, or persuaded, or raised, by simple preaching, or even by almsgiving. They have become too knowing or too cunning for that. They are envious and suspicious of the rich and well-to-do, and they are tired of the old gospel of contentment when delivered by people who have all the comforts this world can give. Nothing touches them nowadays but the spectacle of self-sacrifice. Therefore no impression, or very little impression, can be made on them by churches which worship in fashionable quarters, on \$100,000 lots, in \$500,000