

THE BOLTING REPUBLICANS.

Mayor Gaynor's letter, read at the Dix meeting in New York before the election, referred to the great and happy increase in independent voting looked for in both parties, and spoke of those "intelligent Republicans who are not mere slaves to partisanship." The number of Republicans who did vote for Dix was undoubtedly large. Every test of the returns from up the State and on Long Island, as well as in this city, indicates that a great party revolt is astir. Its extent is without a parallel in the history of the Republican party. In 1884 there was, indeed, a conscience Republican vote that could not be brought to vote for Blaine. In that defection many men of great weight were included, and they displayed a fine moral courage in standing up against a storm of abuse and obloquy; but there was not the avalanche-like slipping away of Republican votes which we have witnessed in New York this year.

Of it, as a whole, it may be said truthfully that it is a wholesome and even inspiring demonstration. We hold this not merely because it accentuates the tendency to independent voting. That of itself is full of promise. Every fresh proof that there is a growing body of citizens who cannot be misled by party names, is an excellent thing not only for the commonwealth but for parties themselves. But in this particular case there is an added element. The motives of the disaffected Republicans were not personal, but patriotic. It seemed to them that the time had come for them to render to their country the very highest service within their power—and that was to record their solemn protest, in the most effective way open to them, against political doctrines which they regard as full of peril and a personality which they consider a menace.

In this sense, the present Republican bolt is of a piece with the long revolt of conscientious Democrats against the domination and perversion of their party by Bryan. Year after year the latter broke old political associations to vote for what they believed to be the highest good of the nation. That their attitude was patriotic in the truest meaning of the word, was all along admitted by Republicans themselves. But the turn of the latter has now come. They used to say, half-jokingly, that the

display of public spirit made by the anti-Bryan Democrats was impressive, and that Republicans would emulate it if the occasion ever arose, but that it never could arise since there was no possibility of the Republican party being captured by a demagogue or led away after false lights. Yet the danger thus laughed at has suddenly become vivid; and, to their credit be it said, thousands of intelligent Republicans have met it as they said they would.

Especially addressed to this class of bolting Republicans, a committee of Mr. Stimson's friends issued an appeal in which they asked, among other questions, "If you, regarding Roosevelt as an evil, are against Stimson on that account, in all candor is not your attitude an expression of personal dislike or hatred?" This was, to be sure, a trifle better than to call the bolters crooks, but the suggestion of personal motives was bound to be futile. In the great majority of instances at least, the Republicans in revolt against Roosevelt had no conceivable personal interest in the issue, except as their concerns are wrapped up with those of their fellow-citizens. They might, of course be mistaken in their determination, but they based it upon unselfish and public grounds. They dreaded, and dread, for their party and even more for their country, the effect of what would undoubtedly have been acclaimed as a Roosevelt victory in New York. To those who told them that their fears were imaginary, or, at any rate, premature—that they ought to have waited till 1912 before trying to settle its business—they were ready to reply in the words of Burke that "an early and provident fear is the mother of security."

Such a cleavage as that now going on in the Republican party has its immediate significance, but there is something in it that runs beyond the day and the occasion. This is the gratifying assurance it gives once more that we have secure resources not only against the excesses of party madness, but against the arts and the assaults of self-seeking agitators. When we see that the same sobriety and independence of partisan control which rebuffed Bryan and repulsed Hearst can be counted upon to oppose even Theodore Roosevelt, we certainly are able to face the political uncertainties of the future with a lighter heart.

THE BACKBONE OF SOCIALISM.

An interview with Mr. J. G. Phelps Stokes, recently printed in the *New York Times*, presented in juxtaposition two aspects of the Socialist situation, which, taken separately, are sufficiently familiar to everybody, but which are not so often thought of together. In the first place, in response to his interviewer's questions about the spread of Socialism in this country, he cited a number of striking facts bearing undeniable testimony to the growth of the movement not only as regards the number of its declared adherents, but as regards the penetration of Socialist doctrines, more or less unavowed and indeed more or less unconsciously held, into the magazine and newspaper literature of the day. And in the second place, he gave his own confession of faith—the statement of that doctrine which alone he regards as truly entitled to the name of Socialism, and which is, in a word, the embodiment of the simple and clean-cut dogma usually associated with the name of Karl Marx.

Now, we all know that there has been this great spread of the Socialist tendency, and we all know that the Socialism which is represented in it has a thousand forms, many of them bearing only the faintest resemblance to the "orthodox" Socialism of Marx. What we do not know, and what Mr. Stokes's fervent declaration of faith suggests as a question of keen interest, is the degree in which the original ferment still leavens the whole lump—the relative part which Marxian dogma still plays in the maintenance of the agitation and the determination of its spirit. And, while no clue to the answer to this question is directly furnished by anything in Mr. Stokes's statement, the very nature of it indicates what the true answer in all probability is.

The essence of the doctrine that Mr. Stokes lays down consists in the unqualified denial of the right of owners of capital, as such, to any share in the product of industry; and the ground of this denial is as simple and unqualified as is the denial itself. The people who draw interest and dividends rob the laborers of that portion of the product of their labor which goes to the making of these payments, without themselves having contributed anything toward the creation of that product. What the true Socialist must say to the present owners

of capital, when the time of his power shall arrive, is—according to Mr. Stokes's declaration—just what a rightful owner would be called upon to say to a robber who has too long held, by an alleged prescriptive right, that to which he had no claim in justice or equity: "We will forgive you for the wrongs which you have done to us; we will ask no recompense from you for all the robberies you have inflicted on us; but hereafter we will use the money capital which we ourselves provided, and the buildings and machinery which we ourselves have made, and the tracks which our own hands have laid."

Now, it is plain that this simple doctrine, preached with the ardor of conviction by scores of enthusiastic propagandists, has an immeasurable advantage over any more refined or more qualified form of socialistic teaching. Nothing is easier than to show that it rests upon the most palpable ignoring of an essential factor in the case; and, to the credit of intellectual Socialists be it said, it has been repudiated by what are now called the scientific Socialists of our time. But when it comes to the rank and file of the Socialist body, we may be sure that it is upon this simple gospel, and not upon any more recon-dite teaching, that they build their faith. And on the other hand, it is because this simple doctrine involves a fatal falsehood that upholders of the existing order are justified in their confidence in the power of that order to withstand the tide of Socialism.

In his elaborate analytical reply to Mr. Stokes's statement, Prof. Irving Fisher uses a happy phrase when he says that while in some specific cases it may be true that confiscation would be justified, this procedure must be based on something other than "the fiction that interest is robbery." To say that the owners of capital have contributed nothing to the creation of the product is equivalent to saying that to set aside for productive purposes a portion of what one has acquired, instead of consuming it all, is to render no service to production. This is so palpably untrue that it would be a waste of words to insist upon the matter. In order to carry on those processes of production which have so enormously increased the total product of man's labor, it was absolutely essential that some persons should refrain from consuming the

whole of what fell to their share, and should either themselves use, or permit others to use, the stored-up capital for purposes of future production.

Now, it is a perfectly tenable position that this service might be performed by some collectivist arrangement, and that such arrangement might be preferable to what has actually been done in the past. But so far from this proving that the individualist system of capital has been robbery, it proves almost the exact opposite. It is precisely because the existing system has demonstrated the indispensableness, and the enormous efficacy, of savings in the form of capital, that the collectivists assert the necessity of those savings being controlled and owned by the community as a whole. Not that the owners of capital have done no service, but that the service they have done is of such vital importance that hereafter it must be provided in a better way than in the past, is the true basis of collectivism. But when you get the thing on this basis you come down to the debatable question whether or not a better way can actually and practically be provided. The "fiction that interest is robbery" must then be wholly abandoned; and with that gone, the backbone of Socialism as an emotional crusade is broken.

THE UNIVERSAL RACES CONGRESS.

There is something attractive in the plan for a Universal Races Congress to be held in London next July. Its purpose is "to discuss in the light of modern knowledge and the modern conscience the general relations existing between the peoples of the West and those of the East, between so-called white and so-called colored people"; and, of course, the result hoped for is a friendlier feeling, a heartier coöperation, and a better understanding. What could be more natural, what more desirable, than such a give and take? Somehow or other, the colored men and the whites have got to arrive at a mutual basis of respect and good will, if the world is to develop in peace and without bitter hatreds and possibly even fearful calamities. Nothing to be thought of at present can contribute so much toward this end as a joint meeting at which the different points of view can be stated and the races of the East explain their aspirations and ideals. Without some direct touch, some such frank

expression on a basis of mutual friendliness and self-respect, the world at large will be entirely too ready to dismiss the whole subject with a glib "East is East and West is West."

Now even the dominant white races, which have been so sure they are of the Lord's anointed when it comes to showing those they deem their inferiors how to manage their affairs, have begun to feel some qualms of conscience and doubts as to their ability to regulate their conquered distant provinces. These have recently been expressed by no less a pro-consul than Lord Cromer himself. The difficulty seems to be that, while it is easy to rebuild wasted cities, to refinance a country, enlarge its crops, and to introduce modern sanitary and police methods, the beneficiaries decline to become or to remain content. Good government refuses to satisfy them, as is the case in Egypt to-day, and the reason is that it is not *their* government; they would rather be dirtier and more diseased and far less progressive, if only they could do things their own way and develop according to their own ideals. So it is that, whether the colonizers are English, French, Germans, or Americans, the dissatisfaction grows the longer the overlordship continues. Lord Cromer's own experience in Egypt is a perfect case in point.

One reason for this is that the so-called civilized nations approve, in their mental inflexibility, no methods which are not their own. The native of Dagupan must not only live in a clean house; he must wear clothes of American woolen or shoddy, cut in American style. If he refuses, there is no attempt whatever to study his own desires and ask him the whys and wherefores; he is simply set down as a heathen whose mental processes no one can understand. The fact that the races at their points of contact are usually at daggers drawn is still another reason why neutral ground should be chosen for an attempt at better understanding. But it is not only those who are being forcibly uplifted whom the congress will include. Japanese and Chinese, Turks and Haytians, are as well to be represented in the effort to smooth out racial misunderstandings and bickerings. How desirable this is even from the point of view of foreign offices and state departments is obvious if one stops to consider the political conditions in the Far