

THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS

The President has declared that to reserve the public domain for the benefit of the public requires Congressional legislation; and he has laid before Congress certain special acts which he recommends it to adopt for that purpose. But the passage of these bills alone is not sufficient. The country must have assurance that the Department which is intrusted with the execution of these laws is honest and efficient. Conservation of our National resources requires both wise legislation and efficient administration.

I. Every man is to be presumed innocent until he is proved guilty. General charges, however specific in newspapers and magazines, are not proof. This presumption in the case of the Interior Department is strengthened by the unquestionable fact that some of the charges against it have already been proved groundless. This presumption is further strengthened by the fact that some of the charges have been considered by the President and pronounced unfounded. Nevertheless, justice to Mr. Ballinger no less than justice to the public demands that they be subjected to a searching and impartial investigation. Such an investigation can be provided only by Congress, which has power to compel attendance of witnesses and production of papers. It is promised by Congress. The personnel of the committee appointed to conduct it gives the country assurance that nothing will be wanting to make it searching and impartial, animated neither by a purpose to convict nor to acquit, but by a purpose only to ascertain the whole truth. This both Mr. Ballinger and the country have demanded; this they both have a right to expect.

II. The call of the President for such legislation as is necessary to preserve for the benefit of the public the public resources, and to bring the great corporations under Government regulation and control, is not merely the President's call. It is the call of the country. The Republican platform for 1908 was sufficiently explicit on this subject, one would think, to be comprehended by the most strenuous Congressional opponent of National legislation

for National conservation. That platform said:

We repeat the demand for internal development and for the conservation of our natural resources contained in previous platforms, the enforcement of which Mr. Roosevelt has vainly sought from a reluctant party, and to that end we insist upon the preservation, protection, and replacement of needed forests, the preservation of the public domain for home-seekers, the protection of the National resources in timber, coal, iron, and oil against monopolistic control, the development of our waterways for navigation and every other useful purpose, including the irrigation of arid lands, the reclamation of swamp lands, the clarification of streams, the development of water power, and the preservation of electric power generated by this natural force from the control of monopoly; and, to such end, we urge the exercise of all powers, National, State, and municipal, both separately and in co-operation.

On this platform and to carry out this policy the Republican Administration and the Republican Congress were elected. No man has a right to call himself a Republican who is in Congress and is not working loyally for this end. He may think what he likes about the House rules and Mr. Cannon; he may be a regular or an insurgent; he may think what he likes about the Pinchot-Ballinger controversy; he may be a Pinchot man or a Ballinger man; but he is not a Republican unless he is in favor of whatever legislation may be necessary for "the preservation, protection, and replacement of needed forests, the preservation of the public domain for home-seekers, the protection of the National resources in timber, coal, iron, and oil against monopolistic control, the development of our waterways, . . . the development of water power, and the preservation of electric power generated by this natural force from the control of monopoly." It was to carry out this policy that the President and the Congress were elected. For a Republican Congressman to hinder or thwart this policy of National conservation is for a trustee to be false to the trust which he has been appointed to administer. For him to be indifferent and apathetic is for a trustee to be indifferent and apathetic in the duty which he has undertaken to discharge and in the care of interests which have been intrusted to him.

This is not saying that Congress is bound to pass the specific bills which have

been drafted by Secretary Ballinger and Attorney-General Wickersham. It is not saying that the special measures proposed for carrying out this general policy of National conservation are the best possible measures. They may be too drastic. They may be inadequate. There are questions which the Congress has a right to consider, a duty to consider with an open mind. But no Republican Congressman has a right to consider with an open mind whether any measures for the protection of the public domain for the public welfare ought to be adopted. He was elected for the purpose of passing such measures. This is what he was sent to Congress for. And if he does not approve the measures which the President has proposed, he is under obligation to his constituents to propose better measures in their place.

Whatever may be the merits of the so-called Pinchot-Ballinger controversy, on this subject of National conservation the two men are at one. The measures submitted by the President are the measures of Mr. Ballinger. "What I have said," says the President in his special Message, "is really an epitome of the recommendations of the Secretary of the Interior in respect to the future conservation of the public domain, in his present annual report." These recommendations of specific measures for carrying out the policy to which the Republican Administration and the Republican Congress are pledged, indorsed by the President, are also indorsed by Mr. Pinchot. Speaking from the same platform on which the President had just spoken last week, Mr. Pinchot said to the National Civic Federation: "Now is the time for all good men to come to the help of the conservation movement, without regard to party or prejudice or any personal consideration whatever. . . . The great principles we have been working for may be written in our laws now. For the second time the President of the United States has indorsed these principles in a Message to Congress. Specific bills have been prepared embodying the recommendations of the Message. The President urges that the measures that he recommends shall be taken up and disposed of promptly, without awaiting the investigation which has

been determined upon. I echo his desire."

The desire of Mr. Pinchot is the demand of the country. It is the most immediate and the most pressing duty of the Republican Congress.



POSTAL SAVINGS BANKS

Mr. John Harsen Rhoades, a trustee of the Greenwich Savings Bank in New York City, one of the strongest institutions of its kind in the country, discusses on another page the question of Postal Savings Banks. He recognizes the need, as every reasonable man must, of some definite action which shall promote the habit of saving among people of small income; but he opposes the establishment of Postal Savings Banks for two reasons: First, because the United States Government cannot properly invest the enormous sum which would be committed to its care in the form of savings. Second, because the most effective way to deal with the people's savings is to enlarge and extend the system of benevolent savings banks. We take issue with him on both these grounds.

Is there any hope that by private initiative or independent State action the present system of savings banks, which is now totally inadequate to the needs of the people, can be extended to meet those needs? The history of the savings bank clearly answers this question in the negative. While many commercial banks, private and public, receive deposits and pay interest thereon as a part of their business, there are only actually a little over six hundred genuine savings banks in the entire United States. By a genuine savings bank we mean one which is established by law, not to make a profit for its owners, but for the sole benevolent purpose of receiving, guarding, and paying interest on the savings of industry. Of the six hundred and odd banks existing purely for saving, and for no other purpose, eighty-eight are in Connecticut, two in Delaware, fifty-one in Maine, one hundred and eighty-four in Massachusetts, seven in Minnesota, fifty-five in New Hampshire, twenty-five in New Jersey, one hundred and thirty-eight in New York, ten in Pennsylvania, sixteen