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THE CIVIL-SERVICE AND CUBAN QUESTIONS.

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REMARKS

OF

HON. JERRY SIMPSON,  
OF KANSAS,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

January 11 and 20, 1898.

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WASHINGTON.

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Mr. W. A. Smith

The Civil Service.

SPEECH

OF

MR. JERRY SIMPSON,

OF KANSAS,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Tuesday, January 11, 1898.

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 4751) making appropriations for the legislative, executive, and judicial expenses of the Government for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1899, and for other purposes—

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are about to witness the closing scenes of this farce that has been continued before this audience for six days. I have been making an earnest endeavor to find out what all this discussion was about, anyway. I am informed that under the rules it will be impossible to get a vote on this measure now pending either to amend or repeal the law that these gentlemen complain of, and so it strikes me that there must have been some other motive or motives behind those that permitted this discussion to go on. I think, perhaps, in the first place, that there was a fear on the part of the political bosses who are managing affairs and controlling the Government now that if Congress were left to itself it might appropriate too much money and there might be a deficit, and they thought that it was safer for Congress to talk than to expend money.

Mr. QUIGG. Will the gentleman permit me to ask him a question?

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. I only have five minutes.

Mr. QUIGG. Your time will be extended.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. If you will get the extension, I will answer the question after I get the extension. [Laughter.]

Now, Mr. Chairman, there is another reason. There is a great army of office seekers knocking at the door for admission. Their Representatives here, to whom they look to secure office for them, must satisfy them in some way. So these speeches are made solely and entirely for home consumption and nothing else. [Laughter.] We witnessed here at the first opening of Congress after the holidays the very sudden appearance of the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GROSVENOR] upon the scene. The track was cleared, everything was side-tracked, and he was given the right of way and two hours to make a speech to use in the interest of Mr. HANNA out in Ohio.

A MEMBER. And he won out.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. That was the understanding. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GROSVENOR] no doubt told the boys

who worked in the Hanna trenches that this law was to be repealed and the door would be opened to them; and now, after the vote has been taken, and Mr. HANNA'S election is secure, I suppose we will be permitted to take a vote this evening. [Laughter.] I heard my honorable friend from New Hampshire, Mr. Salivator or Mr. SULLOWAY [laughter], yesterday make the charge that everyone who stood for civil-service reform was either a coward or a demagogue. Now, I have been looking into this matter a little, and I have taken up the case. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GROSVENOR] is a very eminent example to us as to who is the coward and who is the demagogue.

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GROSVENOR] here in this House claimed the right to differ from his party and his party's platform when a great principle is at stake. Then he goes out to Ohio and denounces everybody who makes an attempt to justify themselves when they differ from their party platform. You see it makes a difference where you are at. Now, we have this example of demagogism pure and simple; so if there are demagogues—there are some—on the other side of this question, certainly they have a monopoly or a majority on that question.

Now, I am for civil-service reform; for a more stringent law even than we have. I do not believe it would be safe in this country of ours to turn political parties loose with the reward of office as a bribe for political following. Should you do that, gentlemen, all principles at stake and that are advocated by parties will be obscured and the ever-increasing horde of pie hunters, who often hold the balance of power in the country, would go over to the party that would offer the greatest rewards of the spoils of office.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. Now I should like to have five minutes to answer the gentleman's question. [Laughter.]

Mr. LACEY. I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman have five minutes more, on condition that he will read the Populist platform on this question. That was the condition he imposed the other day. [Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Unanimous consent is asked that the time of the gentleman be extended five minutes. Is there objection?

Mr. LIVINGSTON. I have time, and I yield the gentleman ten minutes.

The CHAIRMAN. Unanimous consent is asked that the gentleman's time be extended five minutes. Is there objection? [After a pause.] The Chair hears none.

Mr. LACEY. I will ask the gentleman to allow me to read the Populist platform for him.

Mr. QUIGG. I want to ask the gentleman whether I understood him to say that we had not power to get any vote in regard to any proposition with reference to the civil service?

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. I have been informed that under the rules of this House, so far as this bill under consideration is concerned, no amendment can be offered, and the only vote to be taken will be on the passage of the bill.

Mr. QUIGG. But did the gentleman mean to imply thereby that when this bill is voted and passed upon that we can not have a separate vote on this law?

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. Oh, no; I presume that the gentlemen have the courage of their convictions, and will bring in a separate bill; and if they can get recognition from the Speaker, or a rule from the Committee on Rules, they could do so; but it

entirely rests with the Speaker, as he is the whole thing and runs the House. [Laughter and applause on the Democratic side.] Therefore I take it for granted that no such permission would be given, and these speeches are all for buncombe, to enable the boys to send them out to satisfy the voters at home.

Mr. QUIGG. But will the gentleman undertake to speak for the Speaker without having consulted the Speaker?

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. Yes, sir; as the Speaker never consults me. [Great laughter and applause.]

Mr. Chairman, I was about to explain my position on this civil-service law. The only fault I have to find with it is that those who are in power do not enforce the law.

It is well understood by gentlemen, and it is no use to try to fool one another. On the contrary, it is well known that there is no difficulty in getting people out under the civil-service law. You can get them out as freely as you want, but the trouble is you can not get the right fellow in. There is the difficulty. You can not get the man in that stood by you in the election; you can not reward and pay your political debts by putting a fellow in that fought for you in the campaign; you can not reward him at the Government's expense, and hence the objections of these gentlemen to the civil-service law. Now, if you can remove that, and the President in some way can remove that objection, you will hear no more fault found with the civil-service law.

Here is a case that came under my observation. Henry A. Robinson, chief of a division in the Agricultural Department, was a Bryan man. He would not bow his knee to the golden god, and he even went so far as to go home before the election and made some speeches for Mr. Bryan, and on election day voted for him. He was given prompt notice, as soon as my Republican friends went into office, that his resignation would be accepted on any day. He thought they meant what they said, and he resigned. On the other hand, a gentleman in the same division, a goldbug Democrat, who wrote the celebrated bulletin or pamphlet No. 3, of which the Republicans distributed 40,000 copies and considered the best argument on the gold side of the question that had been made, he held his place, and is getting \$1,800 a year.

A MEMBER. He is worth it.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. He is worth more than that to the goldbugs, no doubt.

If we were in the habit of seriously considering the bearing of all that happens in the administration of national affairs, it would be very difficult to secure from even the majority in this House a vote for an appropriation of money for the continuance of what is known as the Civil Service Commission. I am not a spoilsman, nor do I believe we shall ever return to the old system of spoils-mongering; but it is within the knowledge of every observing member of Congress that the present Administration has more than made a farce of the civil-service rules. There is not a Department under the Government where removals have not been made for merely partisan purposes, and in many cases without even the semblance of regard for the law.

It is an open secret that the political fortunes of a statesman seeking an election to a high position has caused the profligate use of Federal officials for the purpose of advancing the failing fortunes of a Presidential favorite. Nor are we forced to rely for information upon this topic on the statements of political opponents of the aspiring statesman. We hear the complaint from

men of his own party and standing with him for the great party of high taxes and low morality.

But there is little in all this that is worthy of comment. It has been so constantly the practice of Republicans in office as to occasion slight attention, even when following the bold declarations of the platform and of the Chief Executive's official utterance. He would be a very simple citizen who would look for the observance of the civil-service rules from a Republican Administration after the experience of the past. But in another direction we see evidences of progress toward an absolute despotism which should awaken every citizen to a sense of impending danger.

For years we have been accustomed so continually to the cry of "anarchy" during the excitements of political campaigns that we have ceased to note the progress being made in this direction by those who have raised this new cry after the old slogan of the bloody shirt lost its force. Nor do I expect that any words of mine will stem the tide or give pause to the men who act upon the assumption that they believe this country should be ruled by the elect and that they are the elect. And yet I want to utter this warning that it may stand of record when the people awake to the fact that their liberties have been destroyed while they slept. And I ask of the defenders of this Administration that they take note of the statements herein made and give such answer as may be possible.

We have in office a Secretary of the Treasury. That he is in some way accounted slightly better than his party is evidenced not only merely by the fact that he is hated by all the old wheel-horses of Republicanism, but also by that other fact that no one can answer for his partisanship nor foretell how long it will be before he will once more give vent to his feelings in the denunciation of "the hideous specter of the McKinley bill," under which terms he not long ago welcomed a gathered host in his chosen city. And, besides being so much better than his present party, Mr. Gage stands preeminently as the champion of the public faith and of "sound money." He is the banker whose wonderful wisdom is to enlighten the world upon finance. He is the great man from out of the West who has lived in so high an atmosphere that the odor of anarchy is not in his garments. Now, I want to call attention to a single action of this prodigy of statesmanship and ask if it be in accordance with law.

It is perfectly well understood that the United States Treasury is as full of barnacles as an old hulk that has never been scraped. It is an open secret that there are many incompetents employed in that Department, filling places that were "made for them" over twenty-five years ago, and that their services are not worth the ink with which their names are signed with wonderful regularity on the pay rolls. It is also well known that many employees of that Department have outlived all ability to render any service of value to the Government. As to that, we have the authority of the Secretary himself and of his subordinates, who have accepted the hints given as to a policy to be pursued regarding these barnacles.

It is openly stated by the Secretary that he proposes to establish a rule under which these useless employees may still hold their places and receive their pay regularly without doing the work required of them in the past and also without observing the plain commands of the statute. The Secretary decides that the pay of these persons shall be slightly reduced and then that they may be



in some manner excused from a strict performance of their duties. As it is stated by one of the Treasury officials in an authorized interview, "It will be perfectly understood that if these old and superannuated persons fail of arriving at their stations at the required hour, the timekeepers will make no note of it, and their pay will go on as ever.

Of course the Secretary understands that we have no private pension system in this country, and that his action is clearly contrary to law. He knows there is a special and very stringent statute governing the matter of which he makes such light and that he has no legal right to establish a private pension system contrary to law. He knows that the law says what shall be the hours of labor for Government employees and that it contains no provision under which any Department officer can make exceptions. But this knowledge has no terrors nor deterrent force for the great banker installed as the Secretary of the Treasury. He sees a chance to make a rule that is pleasing in his sight, and pays as little attention to the existing law as if he had always been a Republican and had never denounced McKinleyism and all its works. And in this the Secretary is consistent with the record of most statesmen who have budded of late as the exemplars of devotion to the public faith.

And in view of the action of the Secretary of the Treasury, what folly it is to vote large sums of money for the maintenance of a Civil Service Commission. The rule laid down by the Secretary of the Treasury does away entirely with all need for an expensive commission whose members have become so skilled in bowing the pregnant hinges of the knee that they stand as well with Democratic as with Republican spoilsmen. If there be any need of rules for the governance of Government employees, why waste money for a commission when we can apply to the great banker at the Treasury Department and let him tell us what to do and what to leave undone. There is but one term to apply to the action of the Secretary of the Treasury in this regard. It is nothing but dress-coat anarchy, and all the more dangerous and contemptible because of the false pretense of its author. If there had been a law authorizing the thing the Secretary has done, there would have been no necessity for his order in the premises. And if there be a law directly prohibiting the practice initiated by the Secretary of the Treasury, then he should be brought before the bar for his conduct.

And there is another gentleman who has recently laid down his robes of office and stepped from the hidden to the actual service of the national bankers. It is well known that there are certain well-defined statutes regulating the affairs of the national banks. It is also equally well known that upon some points the law leaves the Comptroller of the Currency no discretion. For instance, the law makes certain penalties for the taking of deposits after the bank is known to have been insolvent. The statute makes certain very strict rules regarding the loaning of the funds of the banks to persons acting as officials or on the boards of directors. And yet the late Comptroller of the Currency published over his own signature a statement that he had for many months known of the violation of the statutes by the officials of a national bank, and had screened them because of the fact that an election was at hand, and because he believed that by so doing he might save the consequences of a big bank failure at a critical time.

Now, I do not care to discuss here whether or not the late Comp-

troller was as great a financier as he believed himself to be. But I do want to call attention to the simple fact that in the case of that Philadelphia bank he annulled a law of Congress and protected criminals in the violation of its clear provisions. It is not a matter for me to consider here whether or not Mr. Eckels, during his term of office, was able to save one or many banks by exercising a discretion denied to him by the statute. All that needs be attended to now is the simple and uncontradicted fact that he violated the law himself and connived at its violation by others, and of both these statements we have his own boastful confession. And we are forced in this case to a similar conclusion as in the case of the anarchistic Secretary of the Treasury. If Mr. Eckels is to be allowed thus to be a law unto himself, why should we waste time in seeking to frame laws amending our financial system?

We have still a Comptroller of the Currency. He has been anointed, as was Mr. Eckels, by an appointment to office. He has his course to run, and he will probably hold office during some exciting campaigns in which the friends of "sound money" will have to stand together. I want, therefore, to call attention to the fact that in the past the laws have been violated by the Comptroller of the Currency and that gentleman has gone to his haven in the bank parlor of his masters, reaping thereby the regulation reward of the unjust steward. If it was right to send Mr. Fish, of the late firm of Grant & Ward, to Sing Sing prison because of an improper use of the funds of the Marine Bank, then it was criminal for Mr. Singerly to do the same, and it was a piece of gross malfeasance for Mr. Eckels to screen him in the act.

But though all these things be made as clear as the noonday sun, there will be no action taken by the law officers of this Administration, who will carefully husband their powers until they can find some poor wretch who has dared to refuse to work for a railroad wrecker at starvation wages, and then every arm of the law will be outstretched for his punishment. And we shall continue to read the Declaration of Independence and glory over a flag that has been defended by bankers against the assaults of illy clothed anarchists.

There are a good many examples in history where republics have gone down on account of the spoils system. No more striking example, perhaps, than that of the French Republic that grew out of the French Revolution. When Napoleon took charge of the army in Italy, starved, half-clothed, and poorly armed—when they had crossed the Alps and looked down on the valley of Italy, he said to them:

In that valley lies everything that you need—wealth, fame, honor. It is yours for the taking, and on your return from this expedition every one of you shall have wherewithal to purchase 6 acres of land.

The Republic had rejected all attacks of royalty, and held out its hand to the people. It had extended the knowledge of the rights of man, even as far as Russia, and made despots tremble in their own palaces. Under the watchword of equality and fraternity, they had brought hope to the dethroned humanity the world over. But as soon as these people learned, as they did later on when Napoleon invaded their country, that they were coming not to establish a freer and better government, but to plunder and rob them of the accumulations of their labor, then the reaction set in against the revolution until finally it culminated in the overthrow of Napoleon at Waterloo.

We might perhaps draw a parallel with the history of the Republican party coming into power under Lincoln, with a grand motto of human rights inscribed upon its banner. It made great progress in lifting this Republic to a higher plane of civilization by the destruction of chattel slavery. But in a few years it fell a prey to huckstering, trafficking politicians who were willing for the sake of office to barter away the rights of the people. As far back as Grant's second Administration we had the whisky-trust scandal. Garfield fell a victim to the bullet fired by a "pie-hunting" office seeker. Under Harrison the McKinley bill was framed and formulated in a committee room whose doors were always open to the manufacturing interests. Blanks were left lying on the table accessible to those robbers to make out their own schedules, so that the Republican party would have an excuse for "frying the fat" out of them for campaign purposes.

In the last campaign we saw that the unanimous support of the banking interests of the country went solidly to the Republican party because they had assurances that they should dictate the financial policy of the Government, and they are now clamoring through their agent, Mr. Gage, for the fulfillment of the contract.

We saw the railroad corporations of the country carrying a million and a half or two million of political "rooters" to Canton, in many cases free of charge. Of course it was understood that the railroad interests would be protected should McKinley be landed in the White House. And so now the Republican party, in order to fulfill its promises to this horde of office seekers, is seeking to wipe out of existence the last barrier erected between them and the Treasury of the United States.

After having repudiated every other plank in their platform (except that on the tariff) they are now trying to wipe out that on the civil-service reform, and this is the party that after having violated every pledge it has made to the people is now crying out for an honest dollar.

I am not of those, however, that believe that civil service (no matter how rigid) will prevent corruption in politics or in the Government service, or check or limit the mad rush of those struggling to hold a position under the Government.

I believe there is something underlying all this—something that the politicians have not discovered; and if one stops to reason upon the matter, he will readily conclude that it must be caused by the fact that men are denied opportunities to employ themselves—denied opportunities to engage in legitimate employment, and that those opportunities are narrowing every year, and the number of those that are struggling for places and jobs constantly on the increase: and so it must be until we have a race of statesmen who have the wisdom and ability to find out the underlying cause of this evil and apply the remedy by so framing our Government and its laws as to destroy the monopoly of land and other public utilities; and when you have abolished these evils, men will not struggle with one another and hound from morn to night their representatives in Congress and Senate and in the Departments for the privilege of eking out a narrow and precarious and miserable existence in Government employ.

I am a believer, of course, in civil-service reform. I would carry it even further than its application to Federal offices. I believe it ought to be carried into the different States of the Union: that the merit system ought to be put in practice in the States as well as the nation. I believe that out of this spoils sys-

tem has come the political boss. I believe the country would have been spared the late disgraceful scenes at Columbus, Ohio, if they had had the merit system in that State.

In every State of this Union we are producing the political bosses who get control of the party machinery and are enabled thereby to deal out to the party followers the patronage of the State and pay their political debts out of the taxpayers of the Commonwealth. These are the things that have come to threaten and are threatening the destruction of a republican form of government on this continent, and unless the remedy is applied, and that speedily, we will be face to face with conditions that will border closely on the anarchy that reigned in the early days of the French Revolution.

Of course we do not expect anything along this line to come from the Republican party. I am one of those who believe that its days of usefulness have passed, that it has gone over and is to-day wholly in the control of the selfish interests of the country, the great corporations, those who wish to control its lawmaking power so as to rob the people. It is not the party of Lincoln, Chase, Grant, and Garfield any longer. They are but poor imitators of those great men who direct its course to-day.

Largely they are soulless corporations, hypocrites, who but masquerade in the grave clothes of their illustrious predecessors. A new force politically must be called into being, must get control, and apply these remedies, if the Republic is to be saved.

## The Cuban Question.

### SPEECH

OF

HON. JERRY SIMPSON,

OF KANSAS,

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

*Thursday, January 20, 1898.*

The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 6449) making appropriations for the diplomatic and consular service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1899—

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: For the second time in this Congress I am under great obligations to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HITT] for granting me time when I was unable to get it from the other side of the House; and I want to extend to him my sincere thanks for his courtesy.

Mr. Chairman, I am not lying awake at night over the condition of Cuba. I have been fortunately situated, not alone in this Congress but during every term that I have served, in occupying a position somewhat between the two great political parties of the country. I have watched the political play of those two parties on this question, and I notice that when the Cleveland Democrats—I make this distinction in speaking of the Democratic party—when the Cleveland Democrats were in power and had the opportunity to recognize the belligerency of Cuba, they hesitated to do so.

Why? Simply because Mr. Cleveland and his Administration and his Cabinet were the agents, as I believe, to a certain extent of the bond-holding interests of the country, and the \$400,000,000 of bonds that Spain has issued to carry on the Cuban war were the one great factor, or a great factor at least, in this contest about Cuba. It was my opinion then, and is now, that the Republican party will follow in the same line of action. In fact, they have inherited the policy that has come down to them from the Democrats when they were in power.

Mr. DINSMORE. Will the gentleman from Kansas allow me a suggestion?

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. Yes, sir.

Mr. DINSMORE. The gentleman started out by expressing his obligations to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HITT] for the privilege of speaking when he could not get an opportunity from this side. I merely want to remind my friend that I went to him voluntarily and proposed to try and arrange that he should have some time, but he said he hoped to get it from the other side.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. Well, I will say that the gentleman from Mississippi [Mr. WILLIAMS], a member of the committee,

offered me time yesterday, but I was not ready to occupy it and he gave it to the gentleman from New York [Mr. CUMMINGS]. To-day, when I wanted it, I was of course unable to get it from that side; and the gentleman from Illinois very kindly gave me time from the other side, for which I am, as I said, under great obligations to him.

I was about to say, Mr. Chairman, that in my opinion the bond-holding interest is to-day one of the great factors in this contest over Cuba. That bond-holding interest controls the action and policy of this Government as much as it did when Mr. Cleveland was in the White House; and no action will be taken on this subject until that bond-holding interest is guaranteed that whatever form of government may be set up in Cuba, the payment of those \$400,000,000 of bonds will be secured.

The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GROSVENOR] said at the extraordinary session, when this question was up, that in good time the Republican party would give the watchword, and the party would march in step and time to that keynote when it was given. Now, I want to make the prediction that that keynote will never be sounded, and the word will never be given until the bond-holding interest of the country and of the world gives its consent, and that consent will never be given until the payment of the bonds is guaranteed, because the revenues of Cuba are what the bond-holders must depend on for payment, if they look to Spain.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I am more concerned about the condition and prosperity of our own people than I am about the people of Cuba, as much as I sympathize with them in their troubles. We ought to pass laws here which are for the good of our own countrymen. We have been endeavoring to pass a law restricting immigration. We go so far as to put in an educational qualification for foreign immigrants, and not to admit to our shore as a resident a person who can not read or write.

Now, if we should recognize the belligerency of Cuba, and should become involved in a war with Spain, we would not only have the expense and the horrors of a war, but at the same time we would admit to citizenship and to naturalization the inhabitants of Cuba, and thereby gain a large number of very undesirable citizens as a part of our population. As I said before, however, I am more concerned about the condition of my own country, and that condition should attract our attention.

You say that people are starving in Cuba; that they are suffering on account of privations and want and the condition of war that prevails. But if people are starving in Cuba, they are starving and suffering in this country also. Our own people demand legislation to relieve them from the conditions which surround them.

I know that when the Republican party came into power they proposed to cure all the evils under which we suffered; and the very first thing they did was to present a bill here and have it passed, one of the important results of which bill we were assured was to raise revenues "and to promote the industries of the country." Has it accomplished either? I contend that it has done neither the one nor the other. The revenues of the Government to-day are less, every month, than the expenditures. They are nearly \$10,000,000 below the expenditures for the last month.

Every day of the year there is an average of a quarter of a million of dollars less going into the Treasury than is being paid out.

As a "revenue getter" this bill is the most monumental failure which has been constructed in modern times. The amount of the indebtedness is steadily increasing, while the revenues are steadily diminishing.

Now, let us see for a moment about the effect of the bill in promoting the industries of the country. I quote from the Washington Evening Star of January 17 an article which I commend to the members of this body, and, in passing, I will say this is a Republican paper, always has been since I have known anything of it, and the most radical and ultra of its kind. Here is the article:

**MILL HANDS STRIKE—OPERATIVES IN NEW ENGLAND COTTON FACTORIES RESIST REDUCTION—COMPLETE TIE-UP AT NEW BEDFORD—TROUBLE SPREADS TO BIDDEFORD AND LEWISTON (ME.) MILLS—FIFTEEN THOUSAND OUT.**

NEW BEDFORD, MASS., *January 17.*

A shut down the most complete in the history of the cotton mills of New Bedford began this morning. Not a spindle was turning nor a loom in motion in the factories of the cloth corporations an hour after the usual time of beginning work.

Between forty and fifty operatives went into Bristol mill and twenty-five or thirty into the Whitman, but aside from these no mill made any show of running, and these two soon shut down. Nine corporations operating eighteen mills, in which upward of 9,000 hands are employed, are involved in the strike. The cut down is uniform all over the city—10 per cent. The total pay roll of these corporations is estimated at \$70,000 weekly.

**THE STRIKE AT BIDDEFORD, ME.**

BIDDEFORD, ME., *January 17.*

Every department of the Pepperell and Laconia mills, in this city, and all the departments of the York mills in Saco, with the exception of the carding and mule spinning rooms, shut down to-day as a result of the decision of the operatives to resist a 10 per cent reduction in wages, which was to go into effect to-day.

The Dressers' Union, who are the leaders in the strike movement, had a meeting at 6:30 o'clock for the purpose of keeping the members away from the mill gates, and although most of the other operatives went into their rooms as usual, they came out again almost immediately, the gates, which are usually locked after 7 o'clock, being opened to allow them to leave the mills. At 8 o'clock every department of the Pepperell and Laconia mills was shut down and 3,500 operatives and 200,000 spindles were idle.

At the York mills, in Saco, the weavers followed the example of the operatives on the Biddeford side of the river and remained out, and were followed by the slashers and ring spinners. It was then expected that others would come out and that the York mills would also be compelled to close. The cut at these mills is said to average 12 per cent. There are 1,500 operatives and 51,204 spindles. The management of the mills refuse to say what their policy will be regarding the action of the operatives.

**ANDROSCOGGIN MILL SHUT DOWN.**

LEWISTON, ME., *January 17.*

The operatives of all the mills here except those of the Androscoggin went to work as usual to-day under a reduction in wages of from 10 to 11 per cent. At the Androscoggin mill only 7 out of 400 weavers went to work. The reduction went into effect at the mills of the Continent and Androscoggin, Hill, Barber, and Bates corporations and at the Lewiston bleachery and dye works. The total weekly pay roll of these companies has been \$43,000, about 5,750 operatives are employed, and the number of spindles aggregates 279,000.

And this "Lewiston" that is referred to here is the home of the framer of this bill. Here is the condition of affairs in his own county, in his own district, and his own town, and this is the result of a bill which promotes the industries of the American people.

The article goes on and refers to other points, as follows:

**STRIKE EXPECTED AT WOONSOCKET.**

WOONSOCKET, R. I., *January 17.*

The 2,300 people employed in the Social, Globe, and Nourse mills of the Social Manufacturing Company and the Clinton mill, in this city, went to work at reductions of wages averaging. it is stated at the offices of the mills,

about 10 per cent. The cut has been accepted without any concerted movement toward a strike, but there are murmurings and protests in a number of instances, and fears are felt that trouble may yet arise.

#### CUT ACCEPTED AT WORCESTER.

WORCESTER, MASS., *January 17, 1898.*

A reduction in wages of about 10 per cent went into effect to-day at the Linwood Cotton Mills and Whitinsville Cotton Mills in Northbridge, the Uxbridge Cotton Mills at North Uxbridge, and the Saundersville Cotton Mills at Saundersville, Grafton.

All are owned by Whitin Bros., of Whitinsville. About 62,000 spindles are running, and 1,000 hands employed. The Fisherville Manufacturing Company also cut wages about 10 per cent, where about 450 hands are at work.

The operatives at all of these mills have quietly submitted to the cut down, and went to work as usual to-day. The mills are among the best in the Blackstone Valley and make fine and fancy goods. The weavers have been making from \$8 to \$12 per week, with an average of \$9. Under the new schedule the average will be about \$8 per week.

Now, if this bill is to promote the industries of the country—if it was ever going to accomplish that end—it seems to me that it has had a sufficient time to develop efficacy in that direction. It ought to have done so certainly in the New England States, if nowhere else. That it has not done so is evident. Here is another little article to which I ask your attention:

#### 25,000 IDLE BRICKLAYERS AND MASONS.

PEORIA, ILL., *January 16, 1898.*

The convention of the Bricklayers and Masons' International Union is getting down to business, now that the committees are completing their work. The total membership is reported at 56,396, of whom but 31,630 are employed. For beneficial purposes \$280,515 had been expended, and there is \$83,376 in the treasury. The establishment of a national home for indigent members is favored.

This shows that 50 per cent of the bricklayers of the country are out of work.

But that is not all. I hold in my hand a copy of a paper published in my own State, which quotes an article from the Springfield Republican which is worthy of consideration. I commend it to our friends who claimed so much prosperity for this new law:

A New Haven shopgirl describes "prosperity" in the Springfield (Mass.) Republican as follows: "Within three years my weekly wages in a dry-goods store have been cut from \$8 to \$3, and my case is one of many. The wages paid to female help in the stores of this city have fallen steadily since this year opened, until at last they are so small they will not buy sufficient food." This girl has also to support her mother, pay rent, feed and clothe two persons on \$3 a week. She inquires: "If it is a fact that prosperity is returning, why are wages steadily reduced?" And finally she asks: "On this Thanksgiving eve I plead for a rescue from this misery. With all the money spent in this city isn't there profit enough to at least keep body and soul together?"

Now, while gentlemen are pleading so eloquently on this floor for the suffering citizens of Cuba, and telling us of the distress prevailing there, is there no word to be spoken in defense of our own citizens who are also suffering? I think there is ample opportunity to display American statesmanship in regard to the enactment of laws which will give our own people a better Government and better condition, instead of devoting so much time to the Island of Cuba.

I can readily understand why parties while out of power are aggressive and all of that, and would take advantage of such things and put into their platforms planks such as the Republicans have put into theirs, and on which they are standing to-day. The gentlemen who form the platform are always adroit enough to frame them so as to catch the "suckers" on election day. [Laughter.] But they always leave a hole big enough—in this case it



did not require a very big one—for the Republican party to get out of the obligations it had promised to the people.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I am one of those who believe that a party should adhere to its obligations and promises made to the people, and upon which it was elected. I do not think a party ought to go before the country on a platform calculated to deceive the people for the purpose of catching voters, and therefore I think the Republican party should be held to a strict account and responsibility, requiring it to fulfill all of the obligations made in the campaign through its platform.

Therefore, if an opportunity was offered, I for one would vote with the Republicans to help them fulfill their pledges in regard to Cuba. But they are not going to give us an opportunity. I pointed out in the extra session that one man directed the course of this House. We are no longer a legislative and representative body. No measure can pass this House without the consent of the Speaker. As I said before, he is the whole thing. He is Congress, and Representatives of great districts of the United States come here and find themselves powerless to make any motion or present or call up any bill looking to the interest and welfare of their section of the country without the consent of the Speaker.

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. Mr. Chairman, I ask permission to have printed in the RECORD a clipping from the Washington Star, containing a statement of the condition of labor in these different States.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Kansas asks unanimous consent to print certain clippings in the RECORD. Is there objection?

There was no objection.

Mr. LEWIS of Washington. Mr. Chairman, I ask the gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. DINSMORE] if he can not give the gentleman from Kansas five minutes more? I should be very grateful for that favor myself.

Mr. DINSMORE. I can not give it without depriving some gentleman to whom it is promised. I ask unanimous consent that the time be extended, however, in order that the gentleman from Kansas may have five minutes. I ask unanimous consent that the vote may be taken at five minutes after 4 instead of at 4 o'clock.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. Mr. Chairman, in view of the fact that the chairman of the committee wants to get his bill through to-night, I will not further encroach upon the courtesy or good nature of the House.

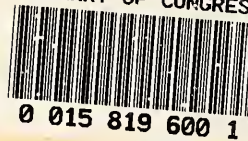
Mr. DINSMORE. I will yield five minutes more to the gentleman from Kansas if he wishes to proceed.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. I do not care to proceed now. I am obliged to the gentleman from Arkansas for his courtesy.

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Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. I am not surprised that the gentleman from Maine, having got hold of a hot wire, should have made the labored explanation as to why the bill that was intended to promote industry has not promoted industry. I have only three minutes and I have not time to answer all his argument. He dwelt long upon the argument that the reduction of wages in Maine was due to the fact that wages were cheaper down in the Southern States.

Now, the gentleman ought to know, and undoubtedly does know,



that cheap labor is the dearest thing in the world. James G. Blaine, of sacred Republican memory, proved that fact some years ago in his report upon the manufactories of Europe, where he says that goods produced by cheap labor are produced at great cost. The true explanation why the New England cotton manufacturers can not manufacture as cheap as those in the South is this: In New England there is a large population which has become more extensive, and the landlord can and does extract from the laborer a larger proportion of his wages in payment for rent, and the New England manufacturers are unable to pay the wages to compete with the Southern States, where land is more plentiful and rents are lower.

Now, in Denver, Colo.—in a State where they pay the highest wages of any State in the Union—the Overland Cotton Mill to-day is sending its goods to Massachusetts and competing with the goods of all parts of the United States. So the only way in which the gentleman from Maine can fortify his position is by the suggestion that we must have a protective tariff in favor of New England against the Southern States. That will carry the protective-tariff policy out to its legitimate conclusion, each State protecting itself against the others, each county protecting itself against other counties, and finally, following out the gentleman's line of policy, we shall have each township, I presume, protecting itself against the competition of other townships. [Applause.]

The CHAIRMAN. The time of the gentleman from Kansas has expired.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. I hope the gentleman will give me two minutes more.

Mr. DINSMORE. I can not possibly do so.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. I have a little extract I should like to read.

Several MEMBERS. Put it in the RECORD.

Mr. SIMPSON of Kansas. I ask leave to put this extract in the RECORD.