

SMITH EXPLAINS

(Continued from First Page.)

WHY COMMITTEE TRUMPED.

It is in every one of my colleagues on the District Committee to give them full credit for their spirit and for their securing this legislation for the people of Washington; but whoever thought—even the Times—of asserting for a single moment that from December until almost the closing hours of Congress I did not work early and late for the people, to secure this cross-town service, at so great a cost to the companies. When the bill was finally passed, many of the citizens' associations in Washington congratulated me as they did in the people's behalf, and I have also received many congratulations and thanks at the hands of the individual citizens. If this be true, is not the Times mistaken in saying that I had too decidedly toward the Electric Railway Companies? And in this connection I want to say that I have had no feeling against these corporations; for their officials always treated me with the greatest courtesy; but I was simply doing what I believed to be my duty in the interest of the citizens of Washington.

TOLD HIS POSITION.

Now, as to the Gas Bill. I am sure that Mr. Shaw, the manager of the Times (if I remember his name correctly), will recall that I went to the Times office at least on two different occasions, and told him frankly my position with reference to gas, which in substance was as follows:

"That I did not know what was a fair price—that I had felt for a year or more that possibly gas could be sold in Washington at a lower price than \$1; and that we might also reduce the candle power, and that, as soon as the all-important question of getting the Electric Railways to the union station was disposed of, I would be very glad, as a member of the Committee, to have hearings to determine a fair price for gas. I told Mr. Shaw at each of these interviews that, if that course was pursued, it would enable me and the other members of the Committee to cast such a vote as would enable us to look in the face the richest and humblest purchaser of gas, and say to them: 'I voted for such a price for gas, based upon a thorough investigation which we made.'"

GAME DURING FILIBUSTER PERIOD.

Later on, the two gentlemen referred to in the article Mr. Bemis, of Cleveland, Ohio, and Mr. Humphreys, of Morristown, New York, were brought before the Committee, one at the request of the Gas Company and one at the request of the Times; but the time which the Committee was able to give them did not exceed four hours. Think of so meager an investigation of so important a proposition; but nevertheless the Committee reported a 90-cent gas bill, retaining the 23 candle-power, at a time when we were struggling with the Democratic filibuster which had already defeated the House on the general District days, and had also delayed innumerable other bills, of importance not only to the District of Columbia, but to the country in general.

NO INSTRUCTIONS WERE NECESSARY.

The Times is mistaken when it says the Committee gave me any instructions. It was not necessary. Since I have been Chairman of the Committee the business on the calendar has always been disposed of as rapidly as possible, and had it not been for the filibuster and the remaining eight or nine bills on the Committee's docket, including the Gas Bill, would have been acted upon by the House.

DELAY OCCASIONED.

What further happened during the last three days of the session? Mr. Welliver, representing the Times, interviewed me in the east lobby, regarding the Gas Bill. I told him that I had waited on the Speaker many times in my room, and while he was waiting over the House, trying to get time to dispose of not only the Gas Bill, but of the entire District calendar; yet, by reason of the filibuster and other important legislation, not only myself but other members of the Committee were unable to secure time for the consideration of business on our calendar. Who does not remember what difficulty Mr. Olcott, a member of our Committee, had in getting the Child-Labor Bill disposed of, a bill in which I was very interested; and who does not know that he would not have succeeded had not John Sharpe Williams, the leader of the minority, consented to make no objection to the bill, so that it could be brought to the attention of the House.

PROMISED TO RETURN.

To return to the interview of Mr. Welliver. He insisted that he had influence with the Speaker, and could secure time sufficient to dispose of the Gas Bill. He knew that I told him to do so if he could. He further boasted that he could get John Sharpe Williams, the leader of the minority, not to object when unanimous consent was asked for consideration of the Gas Bill. He knows that he promised to return within two hours and see me, after his interview with Mr. Williams; yet I have never seen his face since. At that time, because, if he ever did see Mr. Williams, Mr. Williams doubtless told him, as he did me and others, that he should object. For the reason that the Gas Bill was too important, not only to the Gas Company but to the people, to be disposed of in a debate of 20 minutes on a side, as we were doing business at that time.

What else happened? In the very closing hours of the session I said to Mr. Olcott, a member of the Committee, and the author of the bill, who made the Committee Report on the bill: "If you know, you are in possession of this bill, or can get Mr. Williams to interpose no objection to unanimous consent, you are at perfect liberty to do so," and his instance I had this same conversation, at about the same time, with two Democratic members of the Committee—Mr. Murphy, of Wisconsin, and Mr. Sims, of Tennessee—all gentlemen of unquestioned character and reputation, and who, like every other member of the Committee, were loyal and devoted supporters of the interests of the citizens of Washington. But they all refused me; that, owing to conditions under which we were doing business in the House at that time, and the repeated refusals of Mr. Williams to grant unanimous consent, it would be useless to try it. If these things are true, as they are, why am I to be criticized? I was only one member of a Committee of 19, seven of whom were Democrats, and surely no member of that honorable Committee will say that I ever sought in any way or manner to dictate; but have only sought to try to get the legislation on the behalf of the District, in the earliest and best possible manner.

PROBABLE ACTION.

Doubtless the filibuster is over, and when Congress again convenes the District will have its regular days, and the whole District calendar, including the Gas Bill, will be disposed of—how, or in what manner, I am not prepared to say. But, assuming that it passes the House, on some form, I am not so sanguine as the Times is that it will so readily pass the Senate. After conference with several Senators, whose names I might mention, I am sure of one thing; and that is, that in order to pass until there has been a more thorough investigation made than has been made by the House Committee, where, in the hurry and stress of the work in the closing hours of Congress, only four hours were given to the consideration of the important legislation, although it is well known that in other cities of the Union, that have sought to make a reduction in gas rates, weeks and months have been spent in investigations at a cost of many thousands of dollars.

PREPARED FOR ATTACK.

On the 28th day of August last, three gentlemen called on me and stated that they had been informed that, later in the campaign, some Washington paper would make some reflections upon me. They did not know the name of the paper. I at once told them that doubtless it was the Washington Times; for, as I have before said, on several occasions, during the last session of Congress, I made some insinuations and threats toward some members of the Committee as to what they would do in this campaign. These gentlemen, after further informing me who my Democratic opponent was to be, further told me that they had been informed that the article, which was expected to appear, had been offered by the Times to the National Democratic Committee, but after reading the name, the Committee in Kansas told the Times that they had already done against Mr. Smith the Committee did not feel like squandering its money in that way. The query now is, who is furnishing the vast sum of money with which to send out the cartload of papers to 100,000 voters in the Sixth District, and pay the postage as well as other necessary expenses to accomplish their purpose? I think it will be easy to discover.

OPPOSED POWERFUL INTERESTS.

My efforts to secure a reduction in railway-mail pay, and also my contention that the Government should own the mail cars, and compel the railroad companies to haul them, thus saving annually many thousands of dollars, were well known to my constituents. My efforts to secure a reduction in both telegraph and express rates are also well known. When one considers how much this means to these various corporations, it will not be difficult to discover why they should not object to my compass my defeat in this campaign.

FAIR DEAL TO CORPORATIONS.

In this connection I want to say, as I have so often said in Congress and to my constituents, whatever efforts I have made in this direction have never been made with any desire to injure these corporations, for I have steadily maintained that we need great corporations and aggregations of capital; that they are entitled to fair and just treatment; that they should not be destroyed, but that they should be regulated by law.

SOME MISREPRESENTATIONS.

The Times article further states that I was well known to my constituents. So far in this campaign, I have spoken before the Taft and Sherman Club in the City of Flint, and in this article appeared I was scheduled to speak several times in the City of Lansing. In every campaign I have spoken in the words of the City of Detroit, as well as in my home city, Pontiac; and I expect to do so in this campaign. In fact, ever since I became a member of Congress, I have always been in the hands of the campaign committees, and have gone wherever they have directed.

NATIONAL ISSUES.

They also say that I do not talk upon National issues, but that I talk upon the railway-mail pay matter of National interest, as well as the ownership of mail cars on all the vast railway lines of this country? And was it not a matter of National interest to speak of the railway-mail pay matter of National interest, as well as the ownership of mail cars on all the vast railway lines of this country? And was it not a matter of National interest to speak of the railway-mail pay matter of National interest, as well as the ownership of mail cars on all the vast railway lines of this country? And was it not a matter of National interest to speak of the railway-mail pay matter of National interest, as well as the ownership of mail cars on all the vast railway lines of this country?

matter of National interest that we reduce express rates and telegraph rates, if possible, whereby in each instance thousands of dollars would be saved annually to the people of the country? And in this connection I want to say that we will take a long step in the right direction when we do away with telegraph franks, so that all alike will pay the same price for telegraphing.

RECORD AN OPEN BOOK.

My record in Congress for 12 years has been, and is now, an open book to my constituents. I have never cast a vote which I would not be glad to discuss with my constituents and give them an opportunity to ask me any question they choose.

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The climate is healthful, the air is dry and invigorating, and the percentage of sunny days is high. Outdoor work can be done almost every day in the year. Rainfall is ample and to raise the crops. Regular mail service has been established, the roads are good, rural telephone lines traverse the country, and automobiles are in common use. The deeds in this district sell for from \$10 to \$18 per acre. There are many instances this year where the crop equaled in value the cost of the land.

In Butte County, South Dakota, there is considerable government land open for homestead entry. Government land offices are maintained at Lemmon, Hettinger and Bowman, where filings and final proofs may be made. All of these towns are on the new line of the

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In Montana, the new railroad traverses good farming land. It has been demonstrated that big crops of grain may be raised. Along the Yellowstone and Musselshell rivers, the water is used for irrigation, and phenomenal yields of alfalfa, sugar beets, and grain, are always certain. In the Judith Basin near Lewistown, Montana, is one of the most remarkable sections to be found on the new line. Under natural rainfall, the famous bench lands produced this year an average of 35 bushels of hard wheat to the acre, and the price was 94 cents per bushel. The basin contains about 1500 square miles and is sparsely settled. Some government land still remains open for settlement. A government land office is maintained at Lewistown. In Fergus County, outside the Judith Basin, is one of the greatest stock countries in the world, and good ranches can be purchased at a reasonable figure.

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