

thority. The ex-president bases his opinion on the theory that no line can be drawn between the natural person and the corporation. While it is true that some of the courts have confused this line it is, nevertheless, a very clear and distinct line. The natural person has natural and inalienable rights while the corporation has only those rights which are conferred upon it by law. Man was created to carry out a Divine decree, the corporation was created as a money making institution. It is only fair that the natural persons in one state shall stand upon an equal footing with the natural persons of another state, but there is neither reason nor logic in the position that a state can create corporate giants and then without properly controlling them demand that they be given all the rights and immunities of natural persons IN ADDITION TO THE SPECIAL RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES CONFERRED BY LAW.

The whole object of an incorporation law is to grant to the corporation certain rights and privileges which the individual does not enjoy; if the corporation is to have these and then have all the rights and immunities of the natural person, the man-made corporation will be placed on a higher plane than the God-made man. If the insurance companies begin a systematic crusade against state control they will develop a sentiment in favor of state insurance just as the railroad managers, by resisting state regulation, create a sentiment in favor of government ownership. Mr. Cleveland's position is both undignified and undemocratic.

#### ◆◆◆◆ "THE PUBLIC'S" ANNIVERSARY

The Public, Chicago, edited by Louis F. Post, has just entered upon the tenth year of its usefulness. The Public is one of the very best journals published in the interest of reforms that appeal to the better elements of American citizenship. Mr. Post is one of the best informed men in America on public questions, and his style of writing is clear, forceful and concise. The Public has been doing a splendid work in educating the people along higher lines, and The Commoner wishes for it many added years of usefulness. In announcing its new volume the Public says: "While remembering that tolerance, sanity and patience are conditions of progress, the Public will not forget that without liberty progress is impossible and that 'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.'"

#### ◆◆◆◆ IN TEXAS

The Houston Post usually a very well informed paper, finds fault with Mr. Bryan's statement that the value of the railroads should be ascertained and finds insuperable difficulties in the way. And yet Texas is one of the few states which has solved this problem, the railroad commission having ascertained the value of the railroads of Texas.

The Post says: "If it should be determined in Texas that the railroads should earn sufficient money to pay all operating expenses and four per cent interest on the real value of the property, then in all likelihood the commission would have to make a substantial increase in existing rates." According to the state railroad commission of Texas, the railroads of that state made considerably more than four per cent on the actual value of the roads.

#### ◆◆◆◆ JUST THAT LONG

The New York Evening Post, republican, asks: "How long are the trusts to enjoy their present license to pick our pockets?"

Just so long as the people keep in power a party which derives its campaign funds from the trusts.

#### ◆◆◆◆ "REGULATION"

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat says: "Colonel Bryan will observe that it is federal regulation and not government ownership that is to settle the railroad question."

But the regulation that regulates will not come from a party whose campaigns are financed by the railroad magnates.

#### ◆◆◆◆ GRAFT

In Arkansas a former state senator is serving a penitentiary sentence and doing work with the other convicts as a punishment for graft. However humiliating it may be to have a state official in the chain gang it speaks well for democratic Arkansas that she administers punishment to the guilty without regard to position in society or politics. Leniency is more often shown to those standing high in public esteem than to those who are obscure, but as a rule the lowly are more deserving of sympathy. Those who are prominent have usually had greater advantages and are hedged about with influences which strengthen and support. Those, on the other hand, who are reared in the slums or who live upon the ragged

edge of society and have a struggle for existence—these are less fortified against temptation. If those sin most who sin against the light then those deserve the severest punishment who add to their crimes the betrayal of public confidence. Investigations show that graft is wide-spread. Legislators sell their votes, county commissioners traffic in contracts, city councils barter away valuable franchises and school trustees collect commissions on supplies—not all of course, but enough violate their oath of office to call for vigorous enforcement of the criminal law and the cultivation of a public opinion which will compel honesty in public servants. Arkansas is doing her part in the enforcement of the law and her example ought to be followed; the ministers and editors should do their part in cultivating public opinion.

#### ◆◆◆◆ WASHINGTON LETTER

Washington, D. C., April 23, 1907.

It is one thing to earn a dollar, sometimes a hard thing. It is quite as material a thing to find out what that dollar is going to buy. Today, according to the figures collated, it will buy almost as much, not quite, as fifty-five cents would in 1896. The two commercial agencies of Dun and Bradstreet make a point of studying the increased cost of living in this country. They also pay some attention to the enormous increase in salary of the heads of corporations, trusts and general public utility corporations. But on the point of the increase in the cost of living we find according to Dun:

"The price fixed for commodities at wholesale December 1, 1906 was 49 per cent higher than on July 1, 1896."

It will be remembered that 1896 was a lean year for men who worked for wages. But lean as it was, are there any following the same trade who think their wages have been increased 49 per cent since, as according to this wholly partisan commercial agency, their living expenses have been?

Bradstreet's tables show also an increase of 50 per cent over the prices of ten years ago. The editor of Moody's Magazine, after a careful investigation of wages and prices, concludes that the increase in the cost of living has been 40 per cent in ten years, and that wages have risen only half as much.

Is this prosperity? Is it prosperity to earn possibly fifteen per cent more and to have to pay out fifty per cent more for living? Do these figures justify the statement made long ago in an official book issued by the republican national committee that wages rose more than prices. They do not. Wages rose for a time, now are stationary, and in some instances are decreasing. Prices go up and up. What! is this prosperity? Is it for the people, or the plutocracy?

The debated question of railroad regulation versus railroad ownership by the people had a new chapter added to it when Senator Cullom of Illinois said, "If I could have my way and there was a law to do it, I would put Harriman in the penitentiary for his work in the Alton deal, and keep him there long enough to make him pay the full penalty for looting the road, and bringing about conditions for which the bondholders will have to suffer."

Thus a senator of the United States. This is what Harriman is reported to have said and I think reported authoritatively: "If Senator Cullom said that he could not have been sober."

It is late now to go over the Harriman record in high finance. To tell the story of the way in which he used the funds of the Equitable Assurance company to finance his deal would be to thrash over old straw. To recall again the perfectly composed manner in which he said to the interstate commerce commission that he had bonded a railroad that was never built, and sold the bonds to a confiding public would simply be to repeat a matter of common notoriety.

But when a senator of the United States declares with perfect frankness that the man who does an action of that sort should be put in the penitentiary, that opinion should carry some weight.

Senator Cullom is not young either in years, or in public service. In years he has passed the scriptural limit of three score and ten with a good margin on the other side. In public service he has been a man of prominence locally from 1865 to 1873 and since then has been a distinguished figure nationally. That his views do not agree with those of the democratic party does not detract from the dignity of his position. And that a railroad manager and stock gambler should answer Senator Cullom's criticism of his action by saying that the senator could not have been sober indicates the growing insolence of the railroad oligarchy.

Secretary Taft has never been a candidate for office before the people. His first office was an appointive one in Ohio in 1881—when he was 24 years old. He has held public office ever since with the exception of four years between 1896 and 1900. It was a curious fact that until President McKinley, whose antagonism to Foraker was notorious, appointed him president of the Philippine commission, all of his public honors had been conferred upon him either by direct appointment, or the influence of Foraker, now his rival.

Who were President Roosevelt's friends in the United States senate? Senator Lodge is generally regarded as the president's henchman. Spooner, Knox, Allison, Burrows, Carter, Dolliver, Gallinger, and Heyburn and many others were in the presidential retinue. When the railway rate bill was being considered how did these men vote on the various proposed amendments to that measure? It was by their efforts and votes that the Bailey and Culberson amendments forbidding unlimited injunctions against the rate orders of the interstate commerce commission were defeated. By their efforts and votes Senator LaFollette's three proposals; first, to determine the valuation of the railroads as a basis of rate making; second, to increase the legal liabilities of railroads for injuries to their employes; and third, to prevent a judge having stock in and privileges from railroads, from issuing an injunction against the rate schedules of the commission, were all killed. During the assassination of these measures the president practically stood by and saw the murder committed. A word from him might have saved these amendments. As proof of what the president could have done, had he been so inclined, take the history of Senator LaFollette's railway hours bill. This measure seemed destined to the fate of the other proposals of Senator LaFollette. The president's friends as usual were belligerent. Suddenly public pressure was brought to bear, through the efforts of the railroad employes. The administration wavered. A conference was arranged between the president and Senator LaFollette. The word was given and the president's friends allowed the bill, at the eleventh hour, to become law. If this could be done why could not the other measures have been saved? A true radical in the White House, with control over Lodge, Spooner, and Knox might have done much.

Conservatism? Who today is personally most popular in the United States among the men in public office? I say it with thorough understanding of what it means. He is the head of the party which I in a small way oppose. There is no public official in all the land who is so popular as Theodore Roosevelt. And why? Because he is conservative? Because he is safe and sane? Because he has the approval of the great financial interests? Answer these questions for yourself. It is not necessary for me to answer them. I may say that he has made the public believe rightly or wrongly that he stands for radicalism and so has won popularity. As a matter of fact he stands for a halfway position. But going even the brief way that he has, he is now in a position to dominate his party and to be idolized by a great number of its voters.

The tariff question will purposely be made an issue of the next national campaign. While every reason for its revision has existed for some years that exists now, the republicans will hold off the question of tariff revision in the 60th congress just as they blocked it in the 59th congress, so that they can go before the country in the next campaign with the battlecry, "Let the tariff be revised by its friends." Tariff revision is to be purposely delayed for political purposes.

In the meantime it might be well to consider some of the things our high tariff has accomplished:

A duty of 75 cents a ton on coal made possible the Anthracite Coal Trust, with its advanced prices.

The Boot and Shoe combine was materially strengthened by a duty of 25 per cent on boots and shoes.

The tariff on brooms was raised 40 per cent and the prices were raised accordingly.

The duty on pearl buttons was raised nearly 400 per cent, and the Button Trust has had its own way since.

The tariff on cartridges was increased 45 per cent and since November, 1890, they have been sold at prices nearly 100 per cent higher than in 1888. They are, however, sold to foreigners about 40 per cent cheaper than to Americans.

The Harrow and the Harvester Trusts both sell to foreigners cheaper than to Americans, and are both protected by high tariffs.

Prohibitive duties on white lead have made it possible for the Lead Combine to sell abroad at