#### **FEBRUARY 23, 1912**

# The Commoner.

ings of the tariff caucus in Senator Aldrich's committee room.

A small group of embattled insurzents, led by La Follette, tore the mask of hyprocrisy from the faces of the burglar beneficiaries of Aldrich's tariff bill. They made it clear to the country that if the tariff were intrcate in detail, it was simple in principle, and that the complicated his railroad bill the president tried details frequently were contrived to to punish the progressive senators. conceal the program of over-protection.

As a corollary to his acquiescence in the enactment of a higher tariff than the Dingley law the president abandoned the income tax. In the campaign the president said that, "In my judgment an amendment to the constitution for the income tax is not necessary. I now believe that an income tax \* \* \* can and should be devised which under the decisions of the supreme court will conform to the constitution."

But in spite of the fact that the best constitutional lawyers in the senate, representing both parties, agreed upon an income tax amendment to the tariff bill which had the support of a majority of the senate, the president, at the behest of Boss Aldrich, repudiated the income tax institution by its best works," he to which he had committed himself said, "but the labor unions invariably in the campaign, and by executive are judged by their mistakes. pressure substituted the so-called corporation tax and urged the passage of an income tax amendment to the constitution before congress should consider the imposition of the tax.

During the summer of 1909 there began the Ballinger-Pinchot controversy, which resulted in the dismissal of Glavis and Pinchot from publie office, and which culminated in the discovery that President Taft had ordered the attorney general to antedate his opinion in the Glavis case so as to make it appear that it had been written weeks before Mr. Wickersham actually wrote it. This was a very "queer" thing for a president to do.

With unerring judgment, however, the public decided for Pinchet and forced the resignation of Ballinger.

When the president began to consider the railroad bill he called Senator Cummins to Washington, where the senator saw the first draft of the administration's bill. After that first conference at the White house the senator was not asked to come again. But presidents of railroads were called, and after a series of executive caucuses the bill emerged from the attorney general's office and was sent to congress, with orders that it should be passed without amendment!

The amendment which progressive bune. republicans forced into the bill provides that a railroad, before it may raise rates, must prove to the interstate commerce commission that the proposed increases are justified.

For their imprudence in amending

And then, after the primaries of 1910, and after the democrats had carried Maine that year for the first time in a generation. Charles D. Norton, now one of the vice presidents of one of the Morgan banks in New York, but then the president's secretary, wrote to a congressman in Iowa (who was then anonymous and still so remains) saying in effect that inasmuch as the people had indorsed the progressives Mr. Taft would give them back the patronage.

### JUSTICE TO TRADE UNIONISM

In a recent address John Mitchell declared with a good deal of truth that unionism is judged by its mistakes. "We judge every other human Violence in labor disputes, whether committed by union men, non-union men, or employers, should be visited by strong public condemnation. We forget, however, that more persons are killed in a single Fourth of July celebration than have been killed in all industrial disputes since the signing of the declaration of independence."

It is true the gravest faults of unions are spectacular, whereas the splendid work which has been done by these organizations and the whole system of trade unionism in bettering the conditions and even the character of wage earners does not advertise itself in sensational neadlines. The student of society, the historian, the thoughtful member of the wage earning class all know that with the development of trade unionism great strata of the social pyramid have been raised, which is to say that humanity owes a tremen- Tri-Weekly New York World dous debt to unionism, that the social structure is sounder and solider because of it, that civilization has been broadened and deepened by it. These larger facts get obscured by the errors to which every advance of the race is subject. We who believe in republican government did not repudiate it because there was a reign of terror. The brutality and the bad faith, the tyranny and the graft which have disfigured unionism were not invented by unionism and are not confined to it. The sweatshop, occupational disease, starvation wage exist in business. But do not condemn all business organization, much less all business men, on their account.

oly lawful; it made lawful the stiff- based on the faults of a few of its ing of competition between railroads. human instruments.-Chicago Tri-

#### A NEW LIST

Teacher-"How many zones has the earth?"

Pupil-"Five."

Teacher-"Correct. Name them." Pupil-"Temperate zone, intemperate, canal, horrid, and o."-Life.

#### REAL TROUBLE

"You say your jewels were stolen while the family was at dinner?" "No, no. This is an important robbery, officer. Our dinner was

stolen while we were putting on our jewels."-Louisville Courier-Journal.



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And when Senator Cummins saw the bill it was not the bill which had been shown to him when he first came to Washington many weeks before. As it came from the hands of the railroad presidents, and the office of the attorney general it provided:

(a) That one railroad might own a majority of the stock of another competing with it;

(b) That competing railroads. might pool (combine and divide) their receipts.

In short, it made railroad monop-



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The faults of unions are very like the faults of all new democracies. They are very like the faults of our great republic, and the chief cause, perhaps, in both cases is the ignorance or shirking of responsibility by the great, well meaning mass. We all let ourselves be misruled because we are too selfish in our private preoccupations to do our citizenship duty efficiently and persistently.

The business man who permits himself to be held up by predatory politics or condones it because he finds it in some respects profitable is in the same class as the union member who condones grafting or violence because he thinks it gets him higher wages. Both are bad citizens and assistants of their eventful injury.

But Mr. Mitchell is right in protesting against superficial condemnation of a great human movement

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