

point, viz., that competition will be done away with when uniformity in rates is enforced. This also will fall to terrify, because the railroads now agree upon rates and stifle competition and the people would prefer a uniformly low rate, fixed by a commission, to a uniformly high rate, fixed by a combination between the railroads.

His suggestion that cities will not be able to extend trade territory under government regulation, is an admission that under the present system cities have entered into collusion with railroads to secure more favorable rates than other cities similarly situated.

In this way railroads have been able to build up one city and tear down another and their course in this respect has sometimes been determined by the pecuniary interest which the managers have had in the favored city.

The press dispatch which reports President Hughitt's interview says that the committee was divided, a majority favoring President Roosevelt's recommendation. It is not to be expected that the railroads will quietly submit to the curtailment of their, at present, unlimited power over traffic, but their opposition, if successful, will only hasten the consideration of the question of public ownership of railroads.

Reducing Southern Representation

The opposition of Booker Washington and T. Thomas Fortune, two of the most influential colored men in the country, to the reduction of southern representation is likely to put an end to the partisan scheme to increase the relative strength of the northern republican districts at the expense of the black men of the south, but the southern democrats might show up the selfish and hypocritical character of the measure by proposing a substitute. The republican plan abandons the southern negro but provides for enlarging the influence of northern republican districts—districts in which negroes are graciously permitted to vote for white republicans but are not allowed to hold any important offices themselves. The ostensible purpose of those back of the plan is to force the southern states to repeal their suffrage amendments, but suppose the southern people are willing to submit to a reduction in congressional representation in order to secure protection from black domination, then what? The negroes of the south would still be without a vote and the northern republicans would be the only gainers by the plan, and it would be to their political advantage not to pay any more attention to the southern blacks, for any enfranchisement of the blacks in the south would increase southern congressional strength and to that extent decrease the relative influence of the republican districts of the north. If the reduction measure is pushed the democrats might meet it by proposing the colonization, in the republican districts of the north, of any colored men who are displeased with the southern franchise amendments. For instance, the law could provide that any disfranchised negro might on application to some designated authority sell his property at an appraised value to the federal government and with the proceeds remove his family to some northern republican district, preferably to the city in which a republican congressman resides. This plan would be of real political value to the colored man because every black man going north would to that extent increase the representation of the north—the real object of the republicans—and at the same time secure to himself the privilege of voting—a privilege that the republican plan does not guarantee. The proposed substitute would distribute the race problem and enable the republicans of the north to understand the question. The republican plan not only leaves the southern negro voteless but it leaves the southern whites to educate the blacks and to bear the burden of their development, and while the southern whites carry this burden alone the partisan republicans would reduce their representation in congress in order to make republican national success more certain. The proposed substitute would give a vote to any disfranchised negro who wanted to move north and at the same time would make the party which is to be benefitted by his vote share the burden of his development.

It is not at all likely that the republicans would accept the substitute but their refusal to accept it would expose the shallowness of the pretensions of friendship made by republican politicians. There are not many republican congressmen who would favor establishing a colored colony in their districts. Their friendship does not go that far. If colored laborers were removed

from the south to the north their places would soon be filled by white laborers and this would still further tend to lessen the acuteness of the race question in the south.

The discussion of the proposition to reduce the southern representation will serve a useful purpose. It will not only demonstrate the partisanship of some of the republican leaders but it will also show that many republicans, as well as the democrats, in the north recognize the work which the south has been doing and appreciate the difficulties under which she labors. The negroes of the south have made great progress during the last forty years, and they have made that progress not by the aid of republican politicians but by the aid of their former masters.

A Lesson In Imperialism

Russia is furnishing the world a lesson in imperialism that ought not to be lost on the American advocates of the doctrine of "benevolent assimilation." The Czar in defending his refusal to permit the Russian people to have a voice in their own government says:

"In accordance with the revered will of our crowned predecessor and thinking unceasingly of the welfare of the realm intrusted to us by God, we regard it as our duty and the government's duty in conjunction with undeviating maintenance of the immutability of the fundamental laws of the empire to have untiring care for the country's needs, distinguishing all that is really in the interests of the Russian people from tendencies not seldom mistaken and influenced by transitory circumstances.

"When the need of this or that change is proved ripe, then we consider it necessary to meet it, even though the transformation to which this leads involves the introduction of essential innovations in explanation. We do not doubt that the realization of such an undertaking will meet with the sympathy of the well disposed section of our subjects, who see the true prosperity of the future in the support of civil tranquility and the uninterrupted satisfaction of the daily needs of the people."

Here we have the doctrine clearly stated, the government is to do the thinking and graciously looks after the welfare of the people and the "well-disposed" subjects will be content if there is an "uninterrupted satisfaction" of their daily needs. The "stand pat" or "let well enough alone" argument is also called into use. If one will compare an argument in favor of colonialism with the Czar's decree he will be astonished to see how similar they are.

Who would have thought ten years ago that American citizens would ever be defending a national policy with the logic of despots? And yet this is the necessary result of imperialism. There are but two sources of government—the people and force. A government resting upon the consent of the governed being the natural government can be defended by fair and honest argument, but a government resting on force can not be defended among civilized people without resort to the subterfuge of "Divine Rights." Every argument (not mercenary in its character) advanced in support of colonialism will be found to rest upon a supposed duty and yet those who voluntarily assume the performance of this kind of a duty always place such a high estimate upon their services that they pay themselves well at the expense of those whom they serve. For illustration compare the luxury of the Czar's household with the privations of the Russian peasant—or the comfort of the Philippine governor general with the frugal fare of the average Filipino. The "five per cent" can not be separated from this sort of philanthropy—in fact it is the foundation while "Divine Right" is the gaudy superstructure.

When Should Congress Convene?

The Federal Constitution provides that "Congress shall assemble at least once in every year" and that "such meetings shall be on the first Monday in December unless they shall by law appoint a different day." Experience has shown that the a post-election session of Congress is largely an irresponsible session. Many congressmen go out at the end of each term and the lobbyist can have more influence with one who is going out of congress or with one who has not the restraint of an election immediately before him than with a man who has his own record and his party's record to answer for at an early election.

There is an objection, too, to having the first

session of congress convene so long after the election. According to the existing law some thirteen months elapse after a congressional election before Congress convenes. An extraordinary session is necessary to give immediate effect to the decision of the people on an important question. As congress has power to fix the date for its convening it might wisely employ that power by fixing a day that would enable a new Congress to begin its legislative work soon after the election, say by March 4th. A recess might be taken during the summer months, but the second session should be adjourned at least ten days before the election so that the party in power could go to the country on a completed record. A special session could be convened a few days before the fourth of March following each presidential election to canvass the returns.

This is a reform within reach and there ought to be no delay in securing it.

Another Tribune

In its issue of August 18, the Commoner referred to an editorial said to be contained in the New York Tribune August 4, and entitled "Not the Time to Strike." A Colorado reader, writing to the Commoner, said that he had been unable to locate the article referred to and in reply it was stated in the Commoner that the editorial appeared in the Tribune in the neighborhood of the date referred to. The Commoner was in error on that point. It was the Chicago Tribune and not the New York Tribune in which the editorial appeared.

A Suggestion from Indiana

An Indiana democrat writes to say: "The Commoner should circulate in every voting precinct in the United States. Your special offer makes it possible for every busy man to aid in the effort to increase The Commoner's circulation. I have not much leisure and yet I have taken the time to dispose of a number of your special subscription cards. Out of seven men whom I asked to take The Commoner only one refused. I have already disposed of one 'lot of five' and intend to dispose of another before I abandon the good work. I think if every one who believes in the principles advocated by The Commoner would participate in the effort to give The Commoner a much larger circulation than it now has, the result would be advantageous to the democratic party and, of course, advantageous to public interests."

Many Commoner readers are taking advantage of the special subscription offer just as this Indiana democrat is doing. The increase of The Commoner's circulation means the widening of its sphere of influence and every one who believes with The Commoner is invited to lend a hand.

According to the terms of this subscription offer, cards, each good for one year's subscription to The Commoner, will be furnished in lots of five, at the rate of \$3 per lot. This places the yearly subscription rate at 60 cents.

Anyone ordering these cards may sell them for \$1.00 each, thus earning a commission of \$2.00 on each lot sold, or he may sell them at the cost price and find compensation in the fact that he has contributed to the educational campaign.

These cards may be paid for when ordered, or they may be ordered and remittance made after they have been sold.

The coupon is printed below for the convenience of those who desire to participate in the effort to increase The Commoner's circulation.

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