

welfare or it will win opprobrium by turning against the people.

It will become the tool of those special interests that have discredited the republican party or it will be the faithful servant of the people, whose interests it was created to protect and whose welfare it must seek to promote if it hopes to survive.

Attention is again called to the primary pledge printed on page eleven of this issue. Editors of democratic newspapers are urged to direct the attention of their readers to this plan and the practical assistance of every man who sympathizes with the principles for which the democratic party is presumed to stand is requested in behalf of this movement.

It is to be hoped that every subscriber to The Commoner will carefully read the extracts printed on pages five and seven of this issue. These letters show that their writers are not only in sympathy with The Commoner's efforts to keep the democratic party worthy of its name, but that they are determined to devote their energies in behalf of the cause.

Let no man imagine that this work of organization has been commenced too soon. Time flies very rapidly, and every minute, every hour and every day presents an important duty to the democrat who believes that his party should stand for the masses rather than for the classes.

Let no democrat underestimate the size of the task which has been assumed by those who have gone forth determined to do battle in defense of the rights of men. Those who arrogantly assume to themselves the impossible title of "trustees of God" have in the past on many occasions used their ill-gotten wealth for the purchase not only of public officials, but for the control of elections—and all in their selfish interests. They will not hesitate in the future to use money and every artifice that may be devised by the ingenious men whom they employ to retain the special privileges they now enjoy and to prevent any interference with those privileges.

Let every democrat devote himself to the effort to keep his party pure and to make it faithfully and thoroughly representative of public interests. Let him strive to place his party in a position where, even though it may not win success, every democrat may conscientiously say it deserves success.

A FEW QUESTIONS ANSWERED

A Texas reader submits the following questions which are answered, the answers following the questions.

1. Conceding that the government of the United States is one of the leading, in every way the strongest of the civilized governments of the world, with authority from its people to coin and issue money in sufficient quantities or volume to meet the demands upon it for debts due or coming due, can there by any reason or necessity for the issuance of interest bearing bonds in order to pay these debts?

As the value of a dollar depends upon the number of dollars, a large issue of paper money would naturally increase prices and reduce the value of a dollar. The main objection urged to paper money issued by the government is that its volume can be increased or decreased by law and that because of this fact the stability of the dollar is in danger. If, as the democrats contend, the government should exercise the right to issue whatever paper money we need instead of turning this power over to banking corporations, it would sometimes be possible to issue paper money instead of bonds, to the advantage of the people. It does not follow that, because a government can issue paper money, it should never issue bonds. Circumstances must determine which is the wisest course to pursue.

If paper money is to be issued it ought to be issued in such a way as to assist in maintaining the stability of the dollar—that is, the parity between money and property, and not in such a way as to disturb the stability of the dollar. At present the government is in the hands of those who not only oppose the issuance of more paper money by the government, but are trying to retire the paper money now in circulation. It must be remembered that the republican party, as now organized, opposes the issue of paper money by the government and favors the retirement of the paper money we have and the substitution of bank notes for it. The democratic party favors the issue of paper money by the government and would substitute government notes for bank notes, the government notes, according to the platforms of 1896 and 1900, to be redeemable in coin on demand, the government exercising the choice as to the coin.

The populist party is with the democratic party as to the right of the government to issue

paper money, but favors a paper money not redeemable in any other kind of money.

2. In case this government should fall short of ready cash to pay the expense of the building of the Panama canal, will there arise an unavoidable necessity for the issuance of bonds in order to get the money with which to do it?

If the government is in the hands of those who oppose the issue of paper money by the government, any extra demands for money exceeding the current revenues must be met by an issue of bonds, whether this extra demand is caused by the construction of the Panama canal or by a falling off in revenues.

3. If this government is as resourceful as it claims to be, and still owes millions of dollars of interest bearing bonds, why is it that the per capita circulation is not far in excess of what it is, and why is it that the current revenues of the government should not pay its current expenses?

The quantity of interest-bearing bonds has no direct connection with the per capita circulation or with the current revenues. Of course, the per capita circulation could be increased by issuing non-interest bearing paper in the redemption of interest bearing bonds, but that would not necessarily follow the endorsement of the doctrine of government paper, for the thing aimed at should be the maintenance of a sufficient volume of money, not the conversion of all interest-bearing obligations into paper money. The per capita circulation does not affect the question of deficit or surplus except insofar as it may make it easier for the people to pay taxes. The tax systems determine the quantity of taxes to be collected, and the quantity collected, together with the appropriations, determines whether there shall be a surplus or a deficit.

4. Conceding that the bonds sold to them by the government are still in the hands of the bondholders, and the money which they paid for them, is neither in the hands of the people, nor in the government treasury, can you explain where the money so derived, can be located?

When bonds are sold the bonds go into the hands of the bondholders (and are subject to transfer) and the money paid for them goes into the treasury of the government. This money can only be paid out as other moneys are paid out by the treasury. When bonds are issued, not to furnish money for current expenses or for some extra expenditure, but to redeem other kinds of money, there is liable to be an accumulation in the treasury. For instance, under the present ruling of the treasury the holders of greenbacks and treasury notes can present them and demand gold. The greenbacks and treasury notes are then held in the treasury in the place of the gold, and if the gold runs low the government issues bonds and buys more gold. This gold also goes into the treasury, and thus money is withdrawn from circulation and accumulated in the treasury.

WILLIAMS INDUSTRIAL COLLEGE

At Little Rock, Ark., there is located an industrial school for the education of colored boys and girls. The school is under the management of Rev. Rufus S. Stout and counts among its trustees such men as ex-Governor Dan W. Jones, Hon. A. B. Poe, and Col. Geo. Thornburg. The industrial departments embrace agriculture, horticulture, carpentering, cabinet-making, painting, tailoring, harness-making, dress-making, cooking, laundrying, tailoring and general domestic training. There is also a normal department, and teaching in music. The school is prepared to teach practical business methods, including bookkeeping, telegraphy and stenography. The college now occupies five buildings, three of which were built last year. The school has made a successful appeal to the generosity of those who are acquainted with its work and is becoming more and more efficient as a means of developing the colored children of that vicinity, but it needs more funds.

"Head, Heart and Hand" is the motto of the college, and it is proving its right to support. The Commoner takes pleasure in bringing it to the attention of its readers.

CONGRESSMAN SCUDDER'S VOTE

On another page will be found a letter from Congressman Scudder of New York, one of the six democrats who voted against the railroad rate bill as it passed the house. He encloses with the letter a bill of some length introduced by him on the 18th day of February. The editorial appeared in The Commoner on the 17th of February and the rate bill passed the house several days before that; it is not sufficient defense of his vote to introduce a bill of his own after the rate bill had passed the house and when his bill had no chance for

consideration. It will be noticed that in his letter he expressed fear that the Esch-Townsend bill, if enacted into law, "would centralize in an arm of a partisan government a power dangerous to the government and its institutions." This is an argument that has become quite familiar of late. The railroads defy the state governments whenever the latter attempt to do anything, and express great fear of centralization when the federal government attempts to do anything. There is danger of centralization, but it does not arise from the effort to restrain corporations engaged in interstate commerce. There is infinitely more danger in the proposition advanced by the railroads that railroads ought to be incorporated by the federal government.

Centralization does not come from restraining legislation nearly so much as from federal grants. If Mr. Scudder really favors the protection of the public from railroad extortion and discrimination, as his bill would indicate, he ought to have voted for the Esch-Townsend bill as the best thing obtainable under the circumstances, just as nearly all the rest of the democrats voted for that bill—not because they thought it perfect, but because it was the best bill they could hope for from a republican congress. The fact that only five other democrats joined Mr. Scudder in voting against the bill is proof that either they do not take the same view of railroad legislation as their democratic colleagues or that they differed from them in judgment as to the efficacy of the measure.

TOLSTOY ON GOVERNMENT

Count Tolstoy, the great Russian philosopher, has recently written a letter, widely published in this country, discussing the Russian government and making some statements which are broad enough to imply condemnation of all forms of government.

The editor of The Commoner has received some inquiries in regard to this letter. It has been asked whether Tolstoy in condemning our government with the Russian government suggests any substitute for government. In the first place, Tolstoy places emphasis upon the individual's regeneration. He contends that until the proper relation is established between one's self and his God he does not understand the purpose of life and therefore does not know how to conduct himself with reference to his own happiness or the happiness of others. In his essays he complains that scientists busy themselves with investigations regarding the age of the earth, the distance of the stars, and with the study of the various "ologies," neglecting the most important of all sciences, namely—how to live. His philosophy rests upon the doctrine that man, being a child of God and a brother of all the other children of God, must devote himself to the service of his fellows, and it must be admitted that a rivalry in the service of others presents an entirely different situation from a rivalry the object of which is to compel service to one's self. He argues that when the units are living according to the proper theory of life, the whole will be harmonious, and he believes that the regeneration of the units can be brought about not by force or violence but by the influence exerted by the example of those whose lives are built upon this ideal.

Convinced that his plan would regenerate the world, restore peace between man and man and substitute everywhere the gospel of service for pride and selfishness, he counts as of little value a government which, without purifying the spring simply attempts to filter enough of the water to make life endurable. Having lived under the dark shadow of Russian absolutism and despotism, he has seen only the mailed hand of government, and it is not strange that when he speaks of government he should have in mind the evils that flow from the rule of cruel, ambitious and mercenary monarchs. To confound a government as it sometimes is with a government as it should be, would be like confounding a conflagration with a fire in a stove. The one is disastrous, the other beneficial.

There is no doubt that even the best of governments will err, but with the progress of civilization governments ought to contain a less and less percentage of harmful ingredients and in increasing percentage of helpfulness. We have already seen a great change in the punishment of criminals. Formerly a large number of crimes were punished by death. Now the death penalty is reserved for two or three crimes only, and prisons have become reformatories rather than institutions for the infliction of vindictive punishment. Wars, while still distressingly frequent are destined to give place to arbitration, and then governments will cease to devote themselves to the taking of human life.