

vault, and with a free mind swear that they haven't it. For all they know the vault was robbed over night. The like devices by which the sensitive save their consciences for the perjury are infinite. But the sensitive are in the minority. The hardier majority just swear their way through it and have it over with. The art of tax-dodging has developed to a point where the man who tells the assessor the truth must pay anywhere from five to twenty times his just proportion of taxes. Everybody is acquainted with the system, but we appear satisfied with it, for nothing worth mentioning is done to change it."

THE POPULATION of Oklahoma, according to William E. Curtis, who writes for the Chicago Record-Herald, is now estimated as being between 700,000 and 750,000. Commenting upon this statement the Record-Herald says: "Ordinary methods of calculating the probable rate of growth are of little service because the country has held out such remarkable attractions for immigrants. There is very little waste land, and what occurred during the decade 1890-1900 was an unprecedented change from a wilderness to a fully equipped modern community having a density of population above the average in the west. The area is less than that of any of the states admitted since 1820, except West Virginia. The population in 1900 was greater than that of any one of those states at the time of its admission to the union. We might make some interesting comparisons in this connection with some of the older states, whose meager beginnings are forgotten because of their antiquity, but, considering the growth of the whole country and the radical changes in the conditions of life, perhaps figures nearer our own time would be thought more significant. We give, therefore, the area and population of the states admitted since 1889 as they appear from the federal census of 1900, with Oklahoma's added:

	Area, Sq. Miles.	Population.
Idaho	84,800	161,772
Montana	146,080	243,329
North Dakota	70,795	319,146
South Dakota	77,650	401,570
Utah	84,970	276,749
Washington	69,180	518,103
Wyoming	97,890	92,531
Oklahoma	39,030	398,331

ACCORDING to a writer in the Saturday Evening Post, it costs more to feed the bugs of this country than it does to support the government. This writer places the entire national spoiliations at less than \$700,000,000 a year, and say that that is the minimum annual tax imposed by insects upon the people of the United States. According to this authority farm products, which represent a value of about \$5,000,000,000 per annum, suffer a shrinkage of at least five hundred millions every year by the depredations of insects, and to this enormous sum must be added the cost of the damage of stored food-stuffs, of injury to forests and lumber, etc. The losses caused by insects in this country during an average year are reckoned by experts of the department of agriculture as follows: Cereals, \$200,000,000; hay and forage, \$53,000,000; cotton, \$50,000,000; tobacco, \$5,300,000; truck crops \$53,000,000; sugars, \$5,000,000; fruits, \$27,000,000; forests and forest products, \$111,000,000; miscellaneous crops, \$5,800,000; animal products, \$175,000,000; products in storage, \$100,000,000. Total, \$785,100,000.

THE "HONORS" are distributed among the insect kingdom by the department of agriculture, and the statement showing the minimum annual damage done by fourteen of the most destructive insects as follows: Grasshopper, \$50,000,000; chinch bug, \$60,000,000; Hessian fly, \$40,000,000; Corn root worm, \$20,000,000; corn ear worm, \$20,000,000; cotton boll weevil, \$20,000,000; cotton boll worm, \$12,000,000; cotton leaf worm, \$8,000,000; codling moth of apple, \$20,000,000; potato bug, \$8,000,000; grain weevil, \$10,000,000; Army worms, \$15,000,000; cabbage worm, \$5,000,000; San Jose scale, \$10,000,000. Total, \$298,000,000.

THE POST writer says that a considerable item to be included in the annual insect tax is the cost of protection against the bugs which attack the house and food supplies, clothing and carpets, and adds: "Screening against mosquitoes and flies and protection from roaches, clothes-moths and various small parasites, with and without wings, are a charge on every domestic establishment. If the sums expended for defense against such pests were tabulated for the whole country, the annual total would be at

least \$50,000,000, and possibly would be double that amount. Thus, and in view of other considerations, it is believed that the yearly loss of over \$700,000,000 credited to injurious insects in the United States is much below the actual fact. It is a frightful tax upon the people, and the problem of lessening it is the most important that is presented to the economic entomologist."

A READER of The Commoner asks if it is true that a man named Smiley was indicted, tried and convicted by the federal authorities in Kansas on the charge of violating the Sherman anti-trust law. E. J. Smiley is secretary of the Kansas Grain Dealers' association, and he was tried and convicted for having violated the anti-trust law of the state of Kansas. The newspaper reports have conveyed the impression that Smiley was convicted under federal law.

A DISTINGUISHED citizen of Kansas to whom The Commoner referred the question makes this statement "Several years ago, Smiley was convicted of said offense in the district court of one of the western counties of this state. Smiley appealed to the supreme court of this state, assailing the constitutionality of the state statute. The supreme court of this state overruled his contention, held the statute constitutional, and affirmed the judgment and sentence of the court below. Smiley prosecuted a writ of error from the supreme court of the state to the supreme court of the United States, upon the ground that the state court violated rights guaranteed to him by the constitution of the United States. The supreme court of the United States affirmed the decision of the supreme court of this state, sustained the conviction of Smiley, and, consequently, Smiley is compelled to serve out his sentence. The newspaper clipping is misleading, in so far as it refers to ninety days sentence by the supreme court of the United States. The sentence was originally imposed by the state district court, and the supreme court of the United States simply sustained the action of the district and supreme courts of this state. Though the last court in which the case was heard was the supreme court of the United States, yet the offense of which Smiley was convicted and for which he was punished, was an offense against the state law of Kansas. The decision of the supreme court of this state was made by Chief Justice Doster, who was elected by the democrats and populists of Kansas. Judge Pollock, our present federal judge, then a member of the supreme bench, dissented. The case will be found in volume 65 of the Kansas reports at page 240, and has, of course, also been published as decided by the supreme court of the United States in some recent number of the supreme court reporter."

MARTIN M. FOSS, writing in Pearson's Magazine, makes some interesting disclosures with respect to "the bucket-shops of the book world." Mr. Foss says: "There were 8,291 books published in the United States last year, of which 1,320 were new editions, leaving a total of 6,971 new books. Of this number perhaps 6,000 were put forth with the hope of a general and remunerative sale. Of the published books that are never read, the still-births of authorship, there is another class of which no statistics are available, yet it is amazingly large. It includes two classes, those books published by the so-called 'cooperative publishers' or 'authors' publishers,' and those issued by the authors themselves. The 'cooperative publishers' issue books at the author's expense, in fact, reaping all of the profit. However they are styled, they play upon the faith of authorship with flattery, trickery, and deceit, often capped by downright fraud such as few branches of business can match. They are the 'bucket shops' of the book world."

THE DISHEARTENING experiences of the woman novelist are described by Mr. Foss. He shows how manuscript is sent first to one publishing house and then another until it finally falls into the hands of the "Sharpington Press." Then the ambitious novelist receives a letter as follows: "Dear Madam: We have read with the keenest interest your novel, Hortense's Revenge, and we hasten to express our enjoyment of it. Surely you have done an admirable piece of work here, strong in plot, clever in character-drawing and of breathless interest. We feel confident of this book, and our head editor especially predicts a brilliant success for it. Unless we err in our judgment, it will be one of the hits of the season. We should be most happy to issue your book on our usual terms—the author to pay half of the expense of manufacturing and marketing

the book and to receive one-half the profit. Other publishing houses pay the author but ten per cent of the retail price as royalty."

FEW RESIST this temptation, according to Mr. Foss. In most cases the money is deposited for "half the cost of manufacturing and marketing the book." Mr. Foss explains: "In the first place, only one book in fifteen out of all that are published pays a day laborer's wages. In the second place, the cooperative press charges from \$500 to \$600, depending upon its judgment of the amount that can be procured. To manufacture an edition of five hundred or a thousand books, including the setting up of the type, the electrotype plates, the binder's dies, paper, printing and binding, costs perhaps \$400, made as such books are made. If the author has 'ideas' as to how the book should be ornamented and illustrated the price jumps in a double ratio. So much for the manufacturing. When the publisher has finished his work he has a neat profit of from \$100 to \$200, and often much more. But 'marketing!' Ah! that is the magic word behind which the publisher baffles the timid and dodge; the insistent. A few copies are sent to the press, perhaps a few are placed on consignment with friendly booksellers, advertisements are inserted in a little magazine which such houses issue for just this purpose and which has no general circulation—and that is all."

THE authors can rarely prove anything, even if they try, and as Mr. Foss says, "very few authors will try." He explains: "To bring action in the courts will be to reveal the manner in which they found a publisher. If the book had sold by hundreds of thousands—ah! that would only show that their faith and judgment were superior to those of the publisher. That would be a glorious triumph! It is quite another story to go into court in an endeavor to prove that only two hundred and fifty copies had been printed. When a man has posed for months before admiring friends and proud relatives as an author, he prefers oblivion. It is indicative of the character of many of the men who enter this sort of business that they are frequently caught by the law in more ambitious thefts. Clever criminals usually fail because they tire of the small, safe deals. Cooperative publishers have wrecked their concerns by individually plundering the treasury. These are recorded facts. The unrecorded facts can be found only in the ashes of hearts that glowed with faith; in the lines of faces that have lost hope and in homes that have been reduced to discomforts. The masterpieces which journeyed with eternal hope are in the scavenger's pots."

WHAT IS KNOWN as "The Acre Club" has been organized in a neighborhood twenty miles southeast of Muskogee, in the Cherokee Nation. A reader of The Commoner writes: "Farmers in this community under the leadership of Campbell Russell, have organized the Acre club. This club is composed of the most progressive farmers in this section and each member agrees, on joining, to cultivate one acre in some useful farm crop, adapted to that locality. This acre is to have especial care. It is to be made to produce, as near as possible, a perfect crop. A written account must be kept of date and manner of preparing land, planting and cultivating crop, and all expenses connected with the same. When the crop is ready to harvest, each member of the club is invited to come and bring his wife and spend the day. The men gather the crop, measure or weigh the same, and learn just what the acre actually does produce. After dinner the report of the farmer raising this particular acre is received. All members learn, not only just what the production is, but the cost of the same. An opportunity is then given for all who wish to criticize the report, and suggest where improvements might have been made in the production of the crop. The membership of this particular club is limited to twenty members, not because there are not enough suitable crops to go around (each member on joining must select some crop not already on the list); but because it is believed that a larger membership would be difficult to handle at times. There is no limit, however, to the number of clubs that may be organized, nor any patent on the idea. Incidentally the club has seen fit to offer a nice piece of silverware as a premium to the lady who provides the best and most appropriate dinner. This to be awarded on a ballot vote at the end of the year, vote to be secret, so that each man can vote entirely according to the dictates of his own stomach. We can not allow the men much credit for this, as there is evidently a selfish motive behind this premium."