

Senator Mitchell, of Oregon, was convicted of receiving money for legal services rendered before the departments, and Senator Depew was shown to have drawn a complimentary salary from the Equitable and to have voted for a doubtful loan to a corporation in which he was interested. All these are now in disgrace and "none so poor as to do them reverence," and yet their crimes are not so great as the crimes of some who still stand high. Both Burton and Mitchell violated the law—a very necessary and salutary law—but how many were injured by their acts? Few at most. Mr. Depew's offenses are rank and disgusting, but the sins for which he is now being lashed by public opinion are minor offenses compared with those which he and other senators are constantly committing.

Mr. Depew was for years the lobbyist of the New York Central railroad and was finally made senator by the railroad influence. Outside of the senate and inside of the senate he has been the servile tool of the corporations. He has never been in a position to decide any question from the standpoint of the people. The facts have been known to all and yet he could move in polite society, sit in the directorate of Yale and pose as a moralist. But the moment he is found guilty of petty pilfering he falls like Lucifer. The evil he has been doing as lobbyist and corporate representative in the senate is immeasurably greater than the evil he has done as a director of the Equitable, but it was not so regarded by the public. Nor does Depew stand alone. Aldrich, Platt, et al., are much more dangerous to the public than either Burton or Mitchell for their subserviency to the corporations affects all the people.

The conscience of the nation was shocked because Addicks tried to buy a senatorship for himself and yet that conscience is but slightly disturbed when railroads and trusts buy seats for their paid representatives. Burton and Mitchell deserve the punishment that they now seem likely to receive, but the day of rejoicing will not come until the senate is rid of its big grafters as well as its little ones, and the best way to purify the senate is to make that body elective.

When the voters have a chance to speak directly upon the question they will retire the eminent attorneys who now draw salaries from the public for representing the railroads, express companies and trusts in the United States senate.

THE MAN BEHIND THE OCTOPUS

The New York Post recently printed an editorial entitled "The Man Behind the Octopus." The Commoner has had occasion heretofore to refer to that editorial, but attention is again directed to it because of its present day importance. The Post demanded the enforcement of the criminal clause of the Sherman anti-trust law against all violators of that law. It demanded to know why the men connected with the Northern Securities company had not been fined and imprisoned, and it added:

Until the law smites in their persons a few of these gentlemen who sustain our churches, adorn our clubs and promote our philanthropies the talk of controlling the trusts as such is the wildest unreason or the most patent hypocrisy. Nobly likes to be imprisoned. The most formidable deterrent lies at our hand, and we are too easy-going to use it; and until a fearless enforcement of the present laws sends a few pillars of society behind the bars, all executive excursions and alarms against the trusts will recall that king of France whose twenty thousand men came down the hill and passed into nursery mythology.

Those who criticize Mr. Roosevelt because his ruling in the Morton-Santa Fe case tends to absolve individuals from prosecution while confining proceedings to the corporation, must not forget that that ruling is in line with the clearly defined policy of the republican party as expressed through its representatives in congress.

The interstate commerce law as it existed prior to February, 1903, provided for fine and imprisonment. The Elkins law, by which the old law was amended, provided that in all convictions for violations of that law, whether committed before or after the passage of the Elkins law "no penalty shall be imposed on the guilty party other than the fine prescribed by law, imprisonment wherever now prescribed as part of the penalty being hereby absolved."

Mr. Foraker in the senate undertook to amend the Sherman anti-trust law on similar lines. He introduced what was known as the Foraker bill. The bill did not pass, but it was a companion piece

for the Elkins bill. The Foraker bill sought to repeal the criminal clause of the Sherman anti-trust law and declared "that nothing in the act to regulate commerce approved February 4, 1887, or in the act to protect trade and commerce against unlawful restraints and monopolies, approved July 2, 1890, or in any act amendatory of either of said acts * * * shall hereafter authorize imprisonment or forfeiture of property as punishment for any violation of such acts, except for perjury or contempt of court."

THE STRIKE'S LESSON

The lesson taught by the Chicago teamster's strike ought not to be lost on the public. After months of idleness on the part of the men, loss on the part of the employers, expense on the part of the city and annoyance to the people at large, the men decide to go back to work. Surely no one can believe that the present situation should be continued. Arbitration is the only remedy. The employers can not be trusted to arbitrarily fix the terms and conditions on which labor is to be employed; neither can the employes be trusted to determine arbitrarily the terms and conditions upon which business shall be done. Both are likely to take a one sided view. In a prolonged contest between labor and capital the latter has the advantage because the wage earners have so little laid up that their necessities drive them to accept at last terms which they believe unjust.

The interests of the laboring men and the interests of the public demand the substitution of arbitration for the clumsy and expensive strike system and the employers ought to consent to it. An impartial body would in nearly every case reach a decision acceptable to all and thus avert a test of endurance. It is not necessary that the finding be binding on the parties. If there is compulsory submission of the questions in dispute public opinion can be relied upon to enforce the findings. Every state should have a law establishing a permanent board with power to investigate any case at the request of either side. In fact, society has so much interest in the establishment of justice that the board should be authorized to act on its own initiative even if both parties prefer to fight it out between themselves. So long as the investigation is for the guidance of public opinion and not binding upon the parties, neither party can object to an investigation. In order to insure fairness the permanent board should contain two temporary members for each investigation—one recommended by each side.

Such a system would go far toward preventing strikes by removing the cause of disagreement.

No position taken by the democratic party has ever been more completely vindicated than the position taken in favor of arbitration, and this position taken in 1896 was reiterated in 1900 and 1904. The demand for arbitration ought to be renewed in 1908 and be given even greater emphasis.

FADS AND FANCIES

New York society is stirred because some of its members have been led into the buying of an expensive book because their names would appear in it. Some paid five hundred, some fifteen hundred, some twenty-five hundred, one person as high as ten thousand. In some cases the persons were threatened, it is said, with unpleasant notoriety if they did not subscribe, but in most cases it was simply a tax on vanity.

While in this case the tax was high the system did not differ much from that employed in many enterprises of less magnitude. Did you ever look through the various publications known as the "Great men of — state" or "History of — county?"

As a rule the pictures and sketches are paid for on exactly the same principle. The argument is: "The book would not be complete without your picture." "Your neighbors will expect to see a sketch of your life in here," etc. A good answer to make is the one that Cato made when asked why no monuments had been erected to him: "I would rather have men ask why no monuments have been erected to me than to have them ask why monuments had been erected in my honor."

ASKING QUESTIONS

A Chicago university professor has been discharged because in asking Mr. Rockefeller for a donation he promised that no questions would

be asked. Mr. Rockefeller is hard to please. He objects to having questions asked, and he objects to the promise not to ask questions.

This Chicago university professor would have done well had he followed the plan adopted by the commissioner of education. Under the auspices of the interior department a government publication was issued in which Mr. Rockefeller was given unstinted praise. It is not at all likely that Mr. Harris will lose his position because he distributes this tribute; nor is it probable that Mr. Harris' O. K. of an educational institution's application for funds would be entirely ignored by the patriotic chief of the world's greatest monopoly.

DEMOCRATIC LITERATURE

S. J. Weller of Dundee, Ky., writing to The Commoner under date of July 20, encloses his primary pledge, and says: "I regard your primary pledge plan as being essential in the effort to accomplish reform. But I regard the circulation of such Democratic literature as The Commoner of more importance. If every voter could be brought to read such literature he would attend the primaries without signing the pledge. Let every voter go to work and see if we cannot give The Commoner the largest circulation of any paper in the world. I am sure it merits such a circulation, and I will see what I can do in the way of obtaining subscribers."

Co-operating on the lines of the special subscription offer H. A. W. Skeen, Big Stone Gap, Va., sends 18 new subscribers to The Commoner; M. A. Hoyt, Carroll, Ia., sends 10; H. J. Huber, East St. Louis, Ill., sends 7; and McCall Bros., Carnegie, Okla., sends 17. Others send new subscribers in numbers as follows: Silas Grimes, Smithville, Ind., 12; B. T. Williams, Finley, I. T., 5; H. L. McLaurin, McColl, S. C., 5; J. E. McClanahan, Riverton, La., 7; Peter Pifer, Jenera, Ohio, 5; Dr. Carter, Indianapolis, Ind., 6; W. D. Hockaday, Granite, Okla., 5; Joshua Draper, Oxford, Ala., 5; W. A. Taylor, Murray, Idaho, 5; J. D. Leclair, Uniontown, Pa., 6; James Church, Farmersville, Tex., 3; W. S. Evans, Princeton, Ill., 5; J. C. Davis, Livonia, Mo., 6; A. P. Harman, Neal, Kans., 5; George Coyner, Waynesboro, Va., 6; J. T. Duke, Galesburg, Ill., 6; W. M. Hamilton, Waynesburg, Mo., 6; M. A. Hoyt, Carroll, Iowa, 10; N. E. Weaver, Fort Wayne, Ind., 5; H. J. Huver, East St. Louis, Ill., 7.

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