

tributing to the sum of human knowledge and happiness. The farmer who adds something to his own purse by an improvement in breed, or plant or method of culture adds something to the world's wealth as well as to his own.

It has been too much the custom to advise studious and ambitious boys to go into the professions, but the tide should turn. We need educated boys upon the farm and it will be a glad day when we recognize that there is dignity in all useful labor and that the possibilities of the farm are infinite.

If the country boy longs for the excitement of the city let him compare the pale-faced, narrow chested clerks as they stream forth from boarding houses and flats with the vigorous, sun-browned sons of the open field and he will be able to estimate the penalty which a mistaken pride has to pay for wearing "good clothes" and having clean hands all the time. Our agricultural colleges are doing a great work in setting higher farm ideals before the farmer boys and these institutions will be worth many times what they cost if they teach the young men of the country what splendid opportunities the farm furnishes for a healthful life, spent amid the most wholesome surroundings, dedicated to a large service and capable of returning a sufficient reward.

ELECTING SENATORS

The Milwaukee Sentinel complains because "the trial and conviction of Senator Mitchell has, as was to be expected, been seized upon by advocates of the proposition to elect United States senators by popular vote as an argument in favor of their schemes."

The Sentinel states the case this way: "Mitchell, Burton and Dietrich proved unworthy of the trust reposed in them. Ergo, the method of electing senators is wrong." The Sentinel says that this does not fit in with the "graft" revelations that are now being made in all parts of the country, and that "from San Francisco to New York it has been discovered that public officers elected by the people also have been false to their trust." The Sentinel says it is no surprise that among ninety men in the United States senate "here and there may be found one who puts pecuniary profit above personal honor and uses his position to advance his own fortunes."

It is, of course, deplorable that men who have been elected to the United States senate have laid themselves open to the charges preferred against Mitchell, Burton, Dietrich and Depew. But while these individual breaches of conduct are to be condemned, advocates of the proposition to elect United States senators by popular vote do not rely upon these instances for their argument.

When United States senators are chosen by great corporations it is not surprising that it develops that these men are as ready to indulge in petty speculation as they are to assist the corporations, through whose influence they were elected, to oppress the people. But time was when it would have been regarded as a very grave situation when even four out of the ninety members of the United States senate are arraigned on charges affecting their personal integrity. But, as The Commoner has said before, while the conduct of the Burtons, the Mitchells and the Dietrichs are disgusting they are minor offenses compared with those which Depew and other senators are constantly committing.

It has been repeatedly charged, and it is generally believed, that many of the members of the United States senate serve as the special champions of great corporations rather than as the representatives of the people. The plan of electing senators by the legislature has given to the corporations, in most instances, the power of selection, and they have not hesitated to use that power. It is true that the people will make mistakes in the selection of public officials, but the man who accepts a public office at the hands of a corporation having no moral right to bestow the office may be depended upon to ignore the public interests and to serve his corporation master.

Mitchell and Burton both owed their elections to corporation favor. Depew's senatorship was secured for him by his railroad employers. When Dietrich was elected two senators were chosen from Nebraska, and these senatorships were divided between rival corporation factions, one faction taking Mr. Millard and the other Mr. Dietrich. Had the people had a voice it is well understood in Nebraska that neither Dietrich nor Millard would have been mentioned for the place.

The senatorial elections of last winter show the unwisdom of the present plan. In two in-

stances—that of La Follette in Wisconsin and Warner in Missouri the corporations did not win. But other legislatures elected to the senate men who were confessedly under obligations to the railroads. The most influential man in the senate, Aldrich, of Rhode Island, has shown himself to be considerably more interested in upholding the special interests of the Rockefellers than in advancing the public welfare.

The man who argues that the people are likely to make mistakes in the selection of their public officials—and who objects to bringing the government nearer and nearer to the people must be prepared to confess that popular government is a failure. The responsibility must be placed with the people. Then they will have the power to correct their errors, and their anxiety to protect themselves will prompt them to act intelligently and to profit by any mistakes they may have made.

BLACK IS NOT WHITE

The Financial Age says: "The bureau of labor has just completed an exhaustive investigation into the cost of living, based on retail prices, and is now preparing a report on the subject, which will be made public late in August. While the data have not been fully compiled, and all the comparisons have not been made, the present indications are that the figures will show that there has been a slight decline in retail prices for staple food products during the last year. This apparently substantiates the bulletin issued by the bureau just before the last election, which showed that there was a decrease in the cost of living. It may be remembered that the figures of that bulletin were ridiculed as it was contended that they were prepared for political purposes."

It is not at all surprising that any report to be issued by the bureau of labor at the present time will "substantiate the bulletin issued by the bureau just before the last election." There are other elections.

But reports which undertake to show that there has been a decrease in the cost of living will obtain but small respect at the hands of people who do not need statistical reports to inform them upon a subject with which they are entirely familiar.

If the average man is tempted to rely upon the reports referred to by the Financial Age he can learn something to his advantage by applying to the average housewife.

It is safe to say that any bulletin pretending to show that the cost of living has decreased will be "ridiculed" for whatever purpose such a bulletin may have been prepared.

REPUBLICAN TARIFF REFORMERS

The Ohio State Journal, one of the oldest and ablest of the republican papers of Ohio, has joined the ranks of the tariff reformers.

In a recent editorial the Journal says: "The Boston Transcript, speaking of Congressman Lawrence of that state, says 'he is on record in favor of tariff revision and yet is a good protectionist.' Revision and protection are not incompatible terms. The New York Tribune, 'founded by Horace Greeley,' strongly advocates revision. The Dingley act was passed eight years ago, and the country has outgrown it. Senator Hopkins, who was on the ways and means committee of the house, which reported the bill, says that it was well understood that the Dingley duties were made higher than they should have been, because it was expected that reciprocity treaties would reduce them. The New York Tribune sustains this view by declaring that 'the law was faulty from the beginning.' With such authorities testifying to the inherent faults of the act, the persistency in opposing a revision on some items, is unfriendly to the cause of protection itself. Revision does not call for one step backward. It only insists upon carrying out the principle upon which the Dingley bill was enacted, viz., that some of the duties were fixed high in order to reduce them in the attainment of reciprocity. That reciprocity did not materialize, in the way anticipated, does not lessen the duty contemplated by the framers of the law. They fixed some rates high in order to reduce them. That was eight years ago. All hope that congress, at the coming session, will enact the proper revision, and thus fulfill the purpose of the law, and sustain the views of President Roosevelt."

This is a blow from the shoulder and from Ohio. It is too much to expect that the tariff barons will surrender the advantage which the Dingley bill gave them, but it is encouraging to

know that an increasing number of republicans are becoming restive under the yoke of the protected interests.

FEEDING THE DISEASE

It is reported that the secretary of agriculture is thinking of raising the salaries of the crop report officials in order to remove the temptation to sell information. The attempt is likely to feed the disease rather than cure it. Men are apt to increase their living expenses as their salaries are increased and a man who in office accustoms himself to an expenditure which he can not afford out of office is tempted to make money on the side in order to provide against loss of position. Experience shows that dishonesty is as common (if not more common) among well paid officials as among the poorly paid. The Equitable grafters for instance were well paid—so well paid that they seem to have lost all sense of proportion between service and compensation. The secretary of the treasury does not receive any more than the secretary of state although the former handles hundreds of millions while the latter handles scarcely any money. Must we raise Secretary Shaw's salary? What we need is a higher standard of official conscience, not higher salaries, and, incidentally, it may be remarked that it will be hard to make officials regard office as a public trust so long as manufacturers, railroad magnates and financiers are allowed to use the government as a private asset in business.

If the instrumentalities of government are used to enrich favored interests we must not be surprised if administrative officials become lax in dealing with the public. Special privileges granted by legislation breed dishonesty in the executive departments.

THE VOTE TELLS THE STORY

The Democratic Majority Rule League of Illinois has issued a statement showing "what gavel rule in the Illinois democratic state convention did to the party in 1904." In this statement the official vote of Illinois in 1900 and 1904 is employed in the telling of the story.

For instance in 1900 the republican candidate received in Illinois 597,985 votes; the democratic candidate received 503,061; republican plurality 94,924.

The republican vote in 1904 was 632,645; the democratic vote was 327,606; republican plurality 305,039.

The total vote in 1900 was 1,131,894; the total vote in 1904 was 1,076,499; net loss 55,395.

The republican gain in 1904 over the republican vote of 1900 was 34,660; that was normal.

The democratic loss in 1904 over 1900 amounted to 175,455; that was abnormal.

In 1900 the democrats elected ninety-one members of the general assembly; in 1904 they elected sixty-seven members; net loss, twenty-four.

In 1900 the democrats elected eleven members of congress; in 1904 they elected one member of congress; net loss, ten.

In 1900 the democrats carried forty-three counties; in 1904 they carried seventeen counties; net loss, twenty-six.

In 1900 these seventeen counties carried by the democrats gave a democratic plurality of 13,002; in 1904 these seventeen counties gave a democratic plurality of 3,540; net loss, 9,462.

Comment is unnecessary. In the language used by the Democratic Majority Rule League of Illinois "the official vote of Illinois in 1900 and 1904 tells the story."

WILL MR. ROOSEVELT STAND FIRM?

It has been announced that President Roosevelt will call an extra session for November 11 and the Railway World says that the semi-official dispatches announcing that an extra session will be held indicate "a striking change in the administration's attitude toward the problem of railroad regulation." The World says that Mr. Roosevelt's sentiments in this respect seem to have been modified of late and predicts that in his message the president will content himself with a reference to rebates and discrimination. That is exactly what the railroad's literary bureau has contented for. It is to be hoped that the president will stand firm and will insist upon enlarging the power of the interstate commerce commission. By his own declaration on that subject he won great popularity. "A striking change in the administration's attitude toward the problem of railroad regulation" would be disappointing to many who believe that "words are good when backed with deeds—and only so."