

CURRENT TOPICS

MANY YEARS AGO Ellhu Root, as a member of the New York Constitutional convention urged the adoption of an anti-corrupt practice amendment to the state constitution. Referring to this amendment a writer in the Chicago Record-Herald says that it went far beyond any statute since enacted. This writer adds: "It prohibited the direct or indirect use by any corporation of its money or property in aid of any political organization or any candidate for public office. The amendment was not adopted, solely because it was the consensus of opinion in the convention that the legislature already possessed the necessary power to deal with the problem. The argument, however, which Mr. Root made on that occasion has certainly lost none of its force and impressiveness with the flight of time."

IN HIS ARGUMENT before New York's Constitutional convention Ellhu Root, referring to his proposed amendment, said: "The idea is to prevent the great railroad companies, the great insurance companies, the great telephone companies, the great aggregations of wealth from using their corporate funds directly or indirectly to send members of the legislature to these halls in order to vote for the protection and advancement of their interests as against those of the public. It strikes at a constantly growing evil which has done more to shake the confidence of the plain people of small means of this country in our political institutions than any other practice which has ever obtained since the foundation of our government."

REFERRING TO Mr. Root's remarks the Record-Herald says: "The inquiry into the political-contribution phase of the insurance investigation has not been concluded, but enough has been disclosed to demonstrate the imperative necessity of state and national corrupt practice legislation of the most genuine and effective description. Publicity for all contributions and transactions of political committees and candidates is absolutely essential. Mr. Roosevelt will do well to read the remarks of his present secretary of state, as made before New York's Constitutional convention before the president concludes the paragraph in his annual message to congress referring to campaign contributions by corporation chiefs."

ONE OF THE MOST radical changes in the civil service regulations in recent years was promulgated by President Roosevelt October 17. The text of the order follows: "When the president or head of an executive department is satisfied that an officer or employe in the classified service is inefficient or incapable and that the public service will be materially improved by his removal, such removal will be made without hearing, but the cause of removal shall be stated in writing and filed. When misconduct is committed in the view and presence of the president or head of an executive department, removal may be made similarly and without notice."

REFERRING TO Mr. Roosevelt's latest civil service order, the Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Globe Democrat says: "Although two or three specific cases in the federal service were the immediate cause of the president's order, it is certain that the new rule will be rather broadly applied and the effect in several branches of the government promises to be of a sweeping character. It will be possible under the amended regulations for the president or member of his cabinet to remove a superannuated under-official or clerk at his pleasure, so long as the person concerned is, in the opinion of the executive officer inefficient in the performance of his duties. There will be no opportunity for the removed clerk or employe to make a defense. Summary action may also be taken in a multitude of other cases, the broad term "inefficiency" only having to be shown to the satisfaction of the president or a member of his cabinet, who is at the head of the department in which the clerk is employed. In cases of misconduct the removing officer is not required even to file a statement with the civil service commission. The new rule will make it a simple matter to get rid of clerks who, either from inefficiency or misconduct, are

deemed a detriment to the federal service. It is pretty well understood that Mr. Root, secretary of state, had a good deal to do with the promulgation of the amended rule, and it is expected that this is the first step toward the reorganization of the state department service, both at home and abroad. It will be possible for Mr. Root, by means of this rule, to bring about a thorough reorganization of the consular service, and it is probable that some changes in the personnel of the service will be made in the near future."

UNITED STATES CONSUL LIEFELD, of Freiburg, Germany, has made an interesting report describing municipal ownership in a German city. Freiburg has a population of 70,000. According to Consul Liefeld's report, the city railroads, the gas, electric light, water, theatre, slaughter house, pawnshop, savings bank, cemetery, etc, even building lots, forests and vineyards, and a daily newspaper, are all controlled by the city. The garbage is disposed of by the city. The receipts in this department for 1904 amounted to \$12,744. The expenses for management were \$9,400. There were other expenses for new purchases, repairs, extra horses and help, but this department turned over to the city treasury \$517. The receipts for the poor amounted to \$58,008, including charity funds. The disbursement amounted to \$57,004, leaving a surplus of \$964. The total receipts from electricity were \$85,451; disbursements, \$82,000; surplus, \$3,478; For illuminating gas the total receipts were \$302,009 and the disbursements \$298,428. The cemetery is owned by the city. Funeral processions take place only at the cemetery. Receipts, \$33,849, of which \$13,440 was turned over to the city treasury in 1904.

CONSUL LIEFELD reports that Freiburg's receipts from city invalid insurance are mainly derived from the tax of \$11.52 per year for every servant in a family. This amounted for the year in Freiburg alone to \$14,932. The tax is collected by imperial law in the whole German empire. In case of sickness the help are attended free; in case of necessity they are treated free at the hospitals.

THE CONSUL FURTHER SHOWS that receipts of the municipal pawnshop were \$30,516; expenditures, \$30,295; surplus, \$221. Buildings owned by the city are rented by the military administration. The payment into the city treasury from these buildings amounted to \$65,892. The city orchestra plays at operas and plays four or five times each week for seven months of the year. From May to September concerts are given at the city park. At the opera house the regular price of admission varies from 9½ cents to 83 cents, with a reduction for season tickets. At the summer concerts admission varies from 7 to 14½ cents (Sunday afternoon free.) The orchestra in winter gives six symphonic concerts. The surplus amounted to \$288, the expenditures having been \$23,480 (salary for first conductor, \$1,190; second conductor, \$714; one concert master, \$500; one harpist, \$452; and forty other musicians, \$15,227, etc.)

THE PENSION FUND for Freiburg officials, teachers, widows and orphans showed receipts and expenditures each amounting to \$11,552, but the city contributed \$2,288. The sewage of Freiburg is conducted to "Rieselfelder," a few miles away, which are under cultivation. Among the receipts were \$12,666 from agricultural products; milk, \$11,829; manure, \$1,973; sale of cattle, \$11,300, etc. Among the expenditures were: Fodder, \$15,084; purchase of cattle, \$12,518; wages, \$5,469. The value of these fields was estimated on December 31, 1904, at \$214,432. According to law all larger animals can be slaughtered only at the slaughter house and special fees are collected, which in 1904 amounted to \$23,074. The total receipts amounted to \$44,798. The net receipts were: To the city treasury, \$4,211; to the reserve fund, \$2,550. The total receipts of the theatre amounted to \$89,837, of which the treasury paid \$32,606. The theatre is not made self-supporting, but is considered a necessary element for educating the people. The

city would as soon think of managing its schools at a profit as to manage a theatre at a profit.

FREIBURG COLLECTS duties on food articles. The net amount from the "Octrol" in 1904 being \$71,000. The consul further shows that there is a "Volkskueche," or people's kitchen, the receipts of which during 1904 amounted to \$27,816. A large share of the amount was for little things, viz.: Buns, at .007 cent each; soup, at 14 cents a bowl; coffee, at 1.7 cents per cup; supper, at 4.8 and 5.9 cents; dinner, at 5.9 and 7.1 cents. The water department paid to the employes \$5,366 and into the city treasury \$71,315. The schools of Freiburg are not wholly free, but the moneys paid by the pupils are not sufficient to pay expenses. The city savings bank had in the year 1890 13,802 deositors, with deposits amounting at the close of that year to \$2,838,022; at the close of 1900 there were 19,781 depositors and deposits amounting to \$4,546,473. On December 31, 1904, there were 23,826 depositors, with deposits amounting to \$6,319,851.

COMMONER'S SPECIAL OFFER

Subscriptions have been sent to The Commoner by those who have taken advantage of the special subscription offer in number as follows: Isaac P. Calhoun, Kent, Wash., 9; Tom Allen, Yorktown, Ind., 6; Judge H. D. Miller, Camden Point, Mo., 6; W. M. Acker, Fayette, Ohio, 7; Frank W. Abbott, M. D., Sterling, Mich., 6; B. A. Fletcher, Caldwell, Kans., 6; Dan Van Lone, Gloversville, N. Y., 7; Samuel Bortell, Forest City, Ill., 6; D. P. Castor, Maple Falls, Wash., 6; James P. Slocum, Jobs Corners, Pa., 6; W. M. Lee, Hollidays Cove, W. Va., 7; D. Roach, Findlay, Ohio, 6; Adolph Schug, Geneva, Ind., 6.

The following subscribers have each sent five yearly subscriptions: W. W. McLaurin, Cedar Hill, Texas; J. R. Churchill, Lima, Ohio; P. O. French, Sumner, Ill.; C. C. Homer, Bucksport, Me.; B. F. Disney, Madison, Kans.; L. Barnes, Gage, Texas; Thomas McKinnon, Antelope, Calif.; Wm. B. Sayre, Red Creek, N. Y.; J. W. Walker, Atchison, Kans.; J. E. Hutto, Texola, Okla.; S. F. Waterfield, Felicity, Ohio; G. W. Merritt, N. Baltimore, O.; Geo. Lamont, Rock Island, Ill.; Thomas Rinear, Vernon, Ind.

Everyone who approves of the work The Commoner is doing is invited to co-operate along the lines of this special subscription offer. According to the terms of this 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.

Any one ordering these cards may sell them for \$1 each, thus earning a commission of \$2 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. A coupon is printed below for the convenience of those who desire to participate in this effort to increase The Commoner's circulation:

THE COMMONER'S SPECIAL OFFER

Application for Subscription Cards

5	Publisher Commoner: I am interested in increasing The Commoner's circulation, and desire you to send me a supply of subscription cards. I agree to use my utmost endeavor to sell the cards, and will remit for them at the rate of 60 cents each, when sold.	
10		
15		
20		
25		
50		
75		
100		
NAME.....		
BOX, OR STREET NO.....		
P. O..... STATE.....		
Indicate the number of cards wanted by marking X opposite one of the numbers printed on end of this blank.		

If you believe the paper is doing a work that merits encouragement, fill out the above coupon and mail it to THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.