

to fix a 'maximum' rate, in accordance with the specific recommendation of President Roosevelt, the rate to be fixed shall be a reasonable one. It forbids the commission increasing any rate which has been fixed and published as such by any railroad. It authorizes the rate fixed by the commission to be reviewed by the courts only when it is shown that such rate does not enable the carrier to realize a fair profit on the capital actually invested in the road, or where the commission has exceeded its powers in fixing the rate, making it confiscatory. The rate, when fixed by the commission, is to become operative within thirty days and is not to be set aside except by order of the court of final resort. The bill makes no change either in the salary or number of the commission as at present constituted."

New York dispatches report that Senator Depew is ill and that for the first time in many years he requires the services of physicians.

Three French war ships are off the Venezuelan coast prepared to deliver the answer of France to President Castro's treatment of M. Taighey, the French representative at Caracas by a naval demonstration in Venezuelan waters. The situation is said to be very delicate. Castro is alleged even to have given offense to American representatives.

Luke E. Wright, now governor-general of the Philippines, has been named by the president as the first American ambassador to Japan. Judge Ida, now vice-governor of the Philippines, will be made governor-general, while General James F. Smith will take the place now held by Judge Ide.

Serious charges are made by Portoricans concerning the indifference of American officials in that island to the wishes of the people.

Federal Judge Munger at Omaha has decided the tax suit between the

state of Nebraska and the Burlington Railroad company in favor of the state. The railroad company will appeal to the United States supreme court.

The German government has placed a rush order for 20,000 freight cars at a cost of \$50,000,000.

Serious charges are made against members of the St. Louis police force, it being claimed that a system of graft has been maintained in that department.

Directors of Swift & Co. packers, report earnings for the past fiscal year at 12 per cent on \$35,000,000 capital stock. They have voted to increase the capital stock to \$50,000,000.

Attorney General Stead of Illinois has advised the state's attorney at Chicago to file suits against one thousand corporations that have not complied with the state anti-trust law which requires that corporations shall annually file affidavits that they are not connected with any trust or other illegal combination. Under the law every one of these corporations may be fined \$50 a day from October 30.

A dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald under date of Denver, January 4, says: "In behalf of a rough rider named Curtis Waggoner, President Roosevelt has written a letter to Governor McDonald asking that Waggoner's application for a pardon be investigated. Waggoner is serving a penitentiary sentence of two and one-half years for stealing a horse and buggy. A friend wrote to the president, describing Waggoner as the man who was known by the sobriquet 'Stick Tight' in the president's regiment. The result was prompt. The president's secretary wrote the request for the governor to investigate, but the president in his own chirography edited in 'Please have some one investigate.' Governor McDonald will comply immediately.

EDITORIALS BY COMMONER READERS

D. M. Hall, Washington, D. C.—Recently The Commoner printed an editorial entitled, "Are the People Powerless?" Charles W. Browne of Mica, Washington, made answer by saying that "under our present system of government the people are powerless unless our officials are men who are strong enough and great enough to use their means to protect the people."

But have we any officials which the people admit are not strong enough and great enough to protect the people? I think it safe to say that as a rule the officials are as strong and as great for any purpose of the people as the people are united in demanding. Mr. Browne closes by saying: "Roosevelt should not lose the opportunity of having his name written with that of Washington, Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln, in order to see it mentioned flatteringly by the press of today, that he may bask in the smiles of those who are rich and strong."

On the whole his explanation which depends upon the incongruous and absurd grouping of distinguished names, which stand for one thing with about as much harmony as do oil and water, reminds me of the way a certain devout person fluent in scripture quotations started in to say grace. Thus: "O Lord forgive us, poor sinners of which I am chief—and the one altogether lovely."

May I ask The Commoner as an exponent of democratic principles to tell its many readers, myself included, what an Abe Lincoln democrat is, and will it also point out how in any way the public career of Lincoln resembled that of Jefferson and Jackson?

F. P. Hilburn, Clio, Ark.—I have always been a political worker but unlike many I have never made any money out of it. I have been a constant reader of The Commoner since its inception and love and honor Mr. Bryan, Mr. W. M. Maupin and Mr. R. L. Metcalfe. I feel the patriotic thrill with Maupin and shed tears with Metcalfe. But I am a laborer. My friends are all laborers and feel the sting of industrial wrongs. "I am a democrat still" but not "very still." I am trying with tongue and pen to carry my democracy into the great industries of this country. I believe the only salvation for our country lies in the public ownership of all that man must have to live, and not only public ownership but democratic management.

My grandfather was a soldier in the war of 1812 and I have revered the names of all my illustrious countrymen from Washington to Bryan, but I have gone a step farther in my advancement along democratic lines. I am what is scornfully called a socialist, probably due to my environment, but I believe it is because I love my country more and parties less.

Yours for humanity and the dawn of a better day.

A GOOD JOKE

Harper's Weekly tells of a Baltimore physician who boarded a crowded car in Charles street. A woman was standing and a big German was sprawling over twice the seat area that was necessary to him. Indignantly the physician said to him: "See here! Why don't you move a little so that this tired woman may have a seat?"

For a moment the German looked dazed. Then a broad smile spread over his countenance as he answered: "Say, dot's a joke on you, all right! Dot's my wife!"

Former Secretary of the Treasury Lyman T. Gage, has given an interview in which he says that he agrees with Jacob Schiff that there is danger of a panic unless we have what he calls "currency reform."

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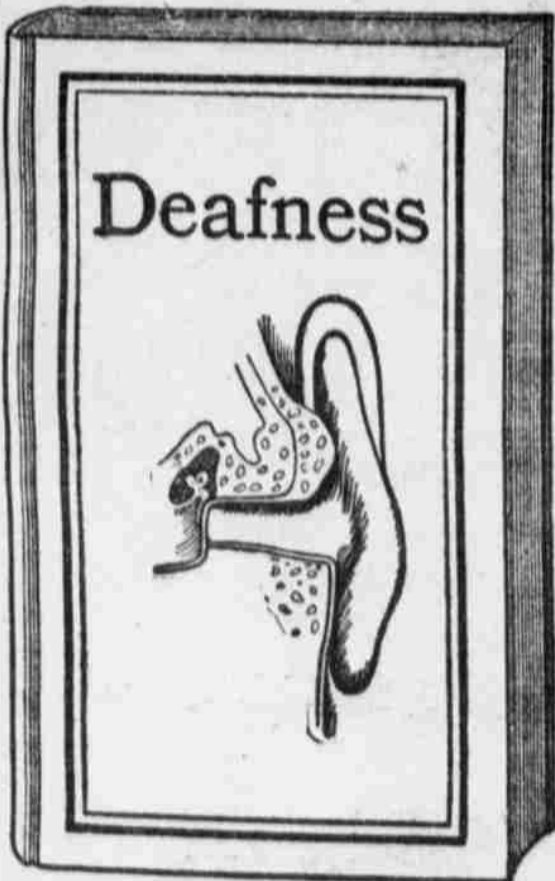
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