

profit of the bank. It is now more than two years since Secretary Shaw pointed out that a continuation of the present national bank system would require a permanent national debt as a basis or some other basis for the notes, and this is the other basis. The scheme will be developed—after the election—as soon and as fast as the people will stand it.



HOW MUCH LONGER?

The Wall Street Journal says: "How much longer can the tariff question be sidetracked in congress? Here is Secretary Root loudly advocating a maximum and minimum tariff. Here is the president anxious to come to a satisfactory tariff agreement with Germany which shall give us the benefits of the most favored nation in commerce with that country. Here also is the 'stand pater' determined that nothing shall be done—not even for justice to the Philippines—which will tend in the least to disturb the present tariff. Here also are the American people face to face with the highest cost of living in the world. Perhaps President Roosevelt will finally force congress to act on the subject by a special session and a special message."

But does the Journal know where the president stands on this question? Is he a standpatter or a revisionist? If memory is not at fault Mr. Roosevelt has not selected a member of the cabinet from the ranks of tariff revisionists among the republicans; nor, as we recall it, are republicans of the Cummins stripe conspicuous among the men who are accepted as the representatives of Mr. Roosevelt in political circles.



COST OF LIVING

One of the arguments in behalf of the successful effort to increase the salaries of senators and representatives in congress, was that such increase was necessary in order to permit the members to meet the increased cost of living.

First Assistant Postmaster General Hitchcock recommended in his annual report that the salaries of the officials and clerks in the postoffices and salaries of letter carriers be increased to enable them to meet the increased expense of living. Mr. Hitchcock reiterated this recommendation before the house committee on postoffices and post roads; and on that occasion he estimated that it would require a five million dollar increase in order to raise these salaries to the living point.

The argument used in support of increased salaries for members of congress and the recommendation made by Mr. Hitchcock will provide interesting reading alongside reports from the government statisticians and republican editorials seeking to show that there has been no material increase in the cost of living.



NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT

The Swettenham-Davis incident at Kingston need not be a source of worry. Twenty years ago it might have caused a rupture between Uncle Sam and John Bull. But danger from such a source long since passed. Uncle Sam ignores it, not because he has a navy so big that he can afford to be magnanimous, nor because John Bull's navy is so big that Uncle Sam has to bite his finger and submit. The same is true of John Bull. Just plain, ordinary common sense solves the difficulty. And the battleships remain at anchor, and the muzzles of the thirteen-inch guns are still decorated with their tompons. And who can doubt that graver and more momentous questions of diplomacy could be settled just as quickly and just as well by exercising the same common sense instead of brandishing the "big stick" and calling for larger and larger naval and military appropriations?



WHY NOT REVISE?

The New York World asks: "Is Mr. Roosevelt sure that the first step in the direction of an 'adequate' ship subsidy does not lie in a revision of the Dingley schedules?"

Then the World directs Mr. Roosevelt's attention to the last report of Mr. Roosevelt's commissioner of navigation. "For example, there is printed on page 115 of that report a comparison of the prices of steel ship plates in the United States and Great Britain. In October, 1900, the price in the United States was \$24.64 a ton, as against \$38.88 in Great Britain. In April, 1901, the American price was fixed at \$35.84. With the exception of the six months from September, 1904, to February, 1905, inclusive, this price has been maintained without change. The British price during this period has fallen as low as \$26.15, and except for a period of three months in 1901 it has never equalled the American price. During most of the time there has been a difference of from

\$5 to \$8 a ton in favor of the English ship-builder, and the Steel Trust has successfully met British competition at these prices while paying the freight from Pittsburg."



DIRECT PRIMARY IN NEBRASKA

At the 1906 state conventions held in Nebraska both the democratic party and the republican party were pledged to a direct primary law. The democratic platform said:

"We will pass a comprehensive direct primary law for the whole state, in which party candidates for all offices shall be nominated by a direct vote of the people."

This pledge could not have been made more explicit and every democratic member elected upon it or every republican member elected upon a similar pledge is in honor bound to vote for a direct primary bill.

It has been urged by some republicans and democrats that the direct primary is impractical and members of both parties in the Nebraska legislature have been advised not to support this reform plan. The merits of the direct primary are not necessarily under consideration in the presence of the fact that both of the great political parties in Nebraska promised the people that a direct primary law would be enacted. If the plan was not practical it should not have been endorsed by the platform; if there are arguments to justify a democrat—or a republican either for that matter—in voting against the direct primary those arguments should have been presented before the state convention put the party and the party's representatives on record.

In The Commoner's opinion argument is on the side of the direct primary, which plan is a great improvement over the convention method of nominating. Conventions should be allowed for the framing of platforms and for the performing of any work which cannot be done by primary vote; but the more fully the control of the party can be kept in the hands of the rank and file the better. Authority comes from the people and the more directly and completely the people control the less danger there is of the thwarting of the wishes of the voters.



A "CRAFTY AND GRAFTY GAME"

The New York Journal of Commerce has no illusions on the "ship subsidy or subvention scheme." This great business paper describes the measure in this blunt way: "While some are no doubt honestly deluded with the idea that this scheme is for the benefit of the American merchant marine as a desirable national institution and for the upbuilding of an advantageous foreign trade to the profit of our industries, it is in fact a scheme for giving combinations of capital a bonus out of the public treasury by which they may profit but from which our foreign trade will derive no benefit whatever. Stripped of disguise and pretense it is sheer graft, and if the people cannot be made to realize it now they will learn it by experience in time, provided the schemers succeed in their purpose. It is to be hoped that the public, which has thus far looked on with apathy, will be aroused to an appreciation of what is going on and that there is intelligence, integrity, and courage enough among their representatives to defeat the crafty and grafty game."



THE WORLD DO MOVE

One has but to read the reports of the various legislatures now in session to find proof that the world really moves. Now comes the Nebraska legislature, overwhelmingly republican in both branches, and follows the example of the president in urging the enactment of an income tax law. Democratic voters who remember the frenzied attacks made upon the income tax plank of the 1896 democratic platform by republican orators and editors will be pardoned for rejoicing. It is a rare date on the calendar that is not marked by the adoption of some democratic policy by the republican managers.



CLOVERDALE'S EXPERIENCE

Students of municipal ownership will be interested in a letter written to The Commoner by Everett Robison, of Los Gatos, California. Mr. Robison says: "Knowing you are interested in municipal ownership, I thought possibly a little item of actual experience on the subject might be worth mentioning in The Commoner. Cloverdale, California, has demonstrated that municipal ownership pays. A year ago Cloverdale purchased and enlarged its water system. During the year the town erected a new sewer system throughout, paid for from receipts from the water works. January 1 a report of the year's business was pub-

lished, and it shows that after paying all expenses the town water works have made a net profit of \$3,000, beside giving the people a better service than was given by a private corporation. The residents of Cloverdale are jubilant over this splendid showing. What Cloverdale has done, other cities can do, and the above case only shows what an honest administration of municipal ownership can accomplish.



THE "EXCESSIVE" DEPARTMENT

Here is a good story that comes to The Commoner from an Illinois reader:

Frederick, an eleven year old lad asked: "Papa, what are the three branches of our government?" Not answering the lad directly, the father said: "Do you not know?"

Frederick acted as though he should have known and then said slowly: "The judicial, the legislative and the excessive."

In view of the charges made that Mr. Roosevelt has usurped powers that do not pertain to the office of president, it is not surprising that Frederick's father laughed right heartily when the lad innocently called the "executive" the "excessive" department of our government.



WHY NOT TRY THIS?

The Wall Street Journal claims that there is "a wide distribution of wealth in this country," but qualifies this statement with: "There is at the same time a most conspicuous and dangerous concentration of the control of wealth." The Journal also says that the inequality in the distribution of wealth is due "in many cases, although not in all, to special privileges and wrongful acts."

It must be admitted that the "dangerous concentration of the control of wealth" is considerably more conspicuous than the "wide distribution of wealth;" and even though the inequality is not in all cases due to special privileges it might be well to strike at such inequalities as are due to those privileges. Why not try it in a few cases?



IS IT POSSIBLE?

The Wall Street Journal says: "As is well known, there was a substantial increase in the money in circulation during the year, but there is a hint of the cause of the prolonged stringency in the money market in the fact that the increase in money in circulation was only 6.3 per cent. While larger than the percentage of increase in population, so that the per capita circulation was notably expanded, yet the percentage is much less than in the case of the railway earnings, the bank clearings, the speculative transactions, and the volume of trade."

Can it be possible that even though "there was a substantial increase in the money in circulation during the year" there is need for further increase? What has become of the 1896 argument that "we have money in abundance" and "what we need in money is quality, not quantity."



YET THEY "STOOD PAT"

President A. B. Stickney of the Chicago Great Western railroad says: "It is a notorious and undisputed fact that most of the great trade monopolies of this country are founded and sustained by the rebate in connection with the protective tariff, which has, in effect, taxed the people hundreds of millions of dollars, not to produce revenue for the government, but to enrich trade monopolies."



O THOU COMPASSIONATE

How deeply comforting the tender phrase,
Thy greater attribute seem merged in this—
Through all life's long and dark and weary maze,
Thou art Compassionate.

To God of Justice and of Power we turn
When wrong or devastating blow cuts deep;
And yet in daily struggle needs must yearn
For one Compassionate.

In limits of our souls we live, alone,
And e'en our nearest may not understand,
But all "the household jar within" is known
To thee, Compassionate.

Thou know'st the many sorrows of the day;
Wide longing, narrow opportunity—
We bring life's broken toys, as children may,
To one Compassionate.

We may have blundered grievously and long,
Darkened Thy world we might have made so
bright,
Still Thou dost heal the heartache and the wrong
O Thou Compassionate!
—May Ethelyn Bourne, in Overland Monthly.