

to move the traffic along the different lines of a railroad company, as the requirements of the service may greatly and rapidly fluctuate from time to time. A large discretion in such cases must be left to the management of the road and the supervision of the state tribunal charged with that duty.

22—The provisions of the railroad commission law afford a remedy which appears to be adequate to enforce the performance of the duty of a railroad company as to furnishing sufficient motive power and cars and as to transporting freight; therefore mandamus is not always a necessary remedy in such cases. As the law does not afford another adequate remedy to enforce the duty of a railroad company to maintain its roadbed and track in a safe and efficient condition for the public service, such duty may be enforced by mandamus upon proper allegations.

23—The proceedings by mandamus can only be resorted to when there is no other adequate legal remedy to accomplish the purpose sought thereby.

24—When the court will not enforce the mandate of an alternative writ as it is framed, a peremptory writ will not issue thereon, since the writ must be enforced as a whole if at all.

25—An alternative writ of mandamus may be amended.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

J. A. Bent, Colorado Springs, Colo.—Senator Elkins' minority report shows interest rate under public ownership of railroads in Europe, as twice as high as United States private ownership. This is a lie covered up by including in the calculation all the freight roads handle for themselves fully one-fourth the entire tonnage; also on passenger rates, the poor pay more. The rich get cheap trans-continental tourist rates.

W. H. Willech, Maxbass, N. D.—I wonder how it would strike the republicans to see on the statute books of the nation, something like this: First—That all property that is taxed for less than its real taxable value shall pass into the government possession at its listed valuation. Second—That any person or persons manufacturing or selling foodstuff injurious to health to be imprisoned and punished as a capital offender, not to be released on bond or bail. Third—That all children to attend the public school from the age of six years till sixteen, or graduate from the public school. Fourth—Bribery should by all means be a capital crime. It is simply a betrayal of trust and any one that betrays that trust should die the death of Judas. A man of that type is like unto a snake; should be scorned and shunned by all; get the story of Montana that is a disgrace to any nation. Fifth—That all mortgaged property be exempt from taxation to the extent of the mortgage, said mortgage to be taxed. It looks reasonable that a person or persons that have money to lend are more able to pay tax than the borrower.

W. H. Allen, 700 Franklin avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.—The enclosed resolution on trade balances was introduced in the last congress by Congressman Calder at my request, but owing to the rush of business it failed of adoption. It will be brought up again in the next congress. However, if the press of the country would take up the matter and show the need of such an investigation the secretary of the treasury might be induced to begin it without waiting for authority from congress: Joint resolution, relating to the disappearance of our foreign trade balances. Resolved by the senate and house of representatives of the United States of America in congress assembled, that the secretary of the treasury be, and hereby is, authorized to appoint a commission of five persons whose duty it shall be to investigate and ascertain what disposition is made of the balances due this country in settlement of its yearly excess of exports of merchandise.

A. J. Sellers, San Angelo, Texas.—I beg to enclose you herewith a page from King's Financial Bulletin of issue of April 13, giving account of a meeting in which six prominent speakers discussed financial conditions. It is a little strange that these great educators should flatter themselves that the common people have either forgotten or like themselves do not want to remember that what Mr. Bryan advocated in 1896 and 1900 was more money, and that free silver coinage as advocated would bring the needed prosperity, or relieve rather the condition of prevailing hard times. While wholly unexpected to Mr. Bryan and all, the increase in gold production came and brought the results which these great, so-called financiers, at that time so much feared. You will note that Professor Johnson states

that, "wages increased not too rapidly, but just enough to keep the laborers content. Why, this is a period of tremendous prosperity."

S. T. Stewart, New Sharon, Ia.—I have heard it stated many times that farm implements and other American manufactured goods are sold in European countries for less than they are sold for at home and as you have traveled extensively and have had opportunity to know, will you please give us the facts of the case through the columns of The Commoner and oblige? (It is a fact that such goods are sold cheaper abroad than in America. Secretary Taft charged it with respect to Panama canal supplies, and many republican leaders have openly admitted it, seeking to justify it on the theory that such a course was necessary in building up the foreign market.)

E. L. Smith, Castleton, N. Y.—In regard to determining the value of railroads for the purpose of compensating the present owners under a system of government ownership it would seem to me to be one of the simplest things in the world to ascertain. In the town in which I reside, which is in Rensselaer county New York, a few years ago, the assessors made a slight raise in the assessment of the New York Central railroad which passes through this town. The assessors were met by a protest from the officials of the railroad company and at meetings which were held by the assessors the officials and experts of the railroad company gave testimony as to the cost of building a railroad which was according to the evidence furnished by the railroad company a great deal less than was generally supposed to be the case. Now I should suppose that there must be a great deal of evidence of a similar nature scattered all over the United States, possibly some in nearly every county which is crossed by a railroad and it would seem to me that the railroad companies could not have any ground for complaint if their estimates of the value of their property were accepted by the public, allowing for a proper rise or fall in the value of material since estimates were made.

A. F. Parker, Grangeville, Idaho.—The saying that the American people have proverbially short memories was never better illustrated than in the recent talk of certain democrats suggesting Roosevelt as a suitable nominee for the democratic nomination for president next year. It is not so very many years since Roosevelt went around the country declaring that "DEMOCRATS ARE COWARDS AT HOME AND TRAITORS ABROAD." I have watched the career of this gentleman pretty closely, but I have thus far seen nor heard nothing to indicate that he has revised his opinion of democrats or democracy. What the democrats of this country need and must have is a presidential candidate who, if elected, will enforce the criminal clause of the Sherman anti-trust act against the frenzied financial criminals who are daily and hourly violating the laws of our country without let or hindrance from the administration.

G. F. McMurchy, Vicksburg, Miss.—We frequently see figures on exports and imports showing the "balance" in favor of the United States. As a matter of fact are the figures representative of any "balance" in favor of the people of the United States? Do not the export figures represent the total and final sum of the product exported and include all the profits to labor contributed to its production, while the import figures simply represent the initial cost to the people of the United States? The sum total of cost to the people of the United States would be the final price paid by the consumer on imported stuff. For instance if England buys \$50,000,000 worth of raw cotton from the United States and sells the United States \$40,000,000 worth of cotton goods, is the United States \$10,000,000 better off than England by the deal? What constitutes a true "balance" of trade?

J. S. Woods, Kaufman, Texas.—I am now stronger for real democracy than ever at any time in my life. The fight for the reign of the common people in this government as against the public plunderers and for the preservation of individual manhood is greater than ever.

F. W. Foerster, Kansas City, Mo., 529 Colorado avenue.—Allow me to suggest that you, through the medium of The Commoner, enlighten the reading public somewhat as to the accomplishments of President Theodore Roosevelt and his administration. It is becoming disgusting to pick up a newspaper, magazine, etc., republican or democratic, and find glorified so-called acts in forcing public service corporations to respect the

rights of the "common herd." The principle is all right but why let the public be deceived as to the results that have been actually attained? Now take a few of the investigations and acts that have been made into laws under great noise and shouting off the hilltops. Where are the actual results? Where are the benefits?

The beef trust—Are stock raisers obtaining higher prices? Ask them. Has meat cheapened? Ask the public.

Standard Oil—Has oil and other products in that line cheapened? Ask the public. Have they discontinued sharp practices in order to drive out the small man? Ask the competitor.

The above applies to various investigations in other lines conducted by the present administration at a heavy expense to the public.

Railroad legislation—Has the new rate law equalized freight rates? Have rates been reduced to a reasonable basis? Ask the shipper and ask the public. They will tell you that in some instances rates have been advanced and that there is discrimination.

Now there is all this cheap agitation about reduced passenger rates. Ninety per cent of the public do not care whether the rate is two or five cents per mile. When they travel an excursion rate is most always available. What the public does want is better coaches, better service, better stations, better sanitary conditions at stations and in coaches, enforcing of laws for a better operator service (dispatching), more civil treatment by railroad employes and have trains on schedule time. None of the above is agitated by our present model administration. Thus it works right into the hands of the railroad companies who find it much cheaper in the long run to reduce fares and cut service than to provide good equipment and assure safety, comfort and right service to the public. Further, why are express and telegraph companies not molested? Why are they permitted to charge the public exorbitant rates? In fact, can you point out a single instance where the present administration has accomplished anything that is or will be of some benefit to the general public?

'VENGEANCE'

For the purpose of wrecking vengeance on the people, the railroads of the country are going to refuse to make extensions and improvements that would add greatly to the earning power of the roads. This is another proof that the old group of real railroad men has disappeared to make way for a bunch of men who think railroads were invented for the purpose of floating stock and bond issues.

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