

ceeds that Presidential candidate in weight by forty pounds.

Mr. Taft says: "No man can win the next election who does not favor changes in the tariff. * * * Sentiment is growing in favor of a revision of the tariff in the republican party, and in the near future members of the party doubtless will be able to agree upon a reasonable plan." As a result of this stirring declaration Mr. Taft is heralded as a tariff revisionist, and within twenty-four hours several newspapers have in cartoons depicted him in most heroic attitudes as hauling up the flag of tariff revision, while such unhappy "standpatters" as Fairbanks, Cannon, Foraker and Shaw are delineated in the background in attitudes expressing terror and despair.

As a matter of fact there never has been a time when prospective candidates for the republican presidential nomination were not in favor of "just and wise revision of the tariff schedules." Even Mr. McKinley, staunchest of the protectionists, admitted that some revision was necessary. Mr. Roosevelt, who is now described as having forced this declaration upon Taft, has been a nominal low tariff man all his life. But curiously enough as quick as these statesmen who cater to the tariff revision sentiment get into office they find that the time for revision has not yet arrived. Mr. Roosevelt has been president for nearly two terms, and notwithstanding his long academic advocacy of tariff revision not only failed to accomplish anything in that direction, but has never even urged it. In Mr. McKinley's brief second term he was content to say that the tariff should be revised, but only by its friends. Naturally its revision thus far has been to make it higher.

The interesting feature, however, of Secretary Taft's utterance is that it indicates that the president, who is so strenuously pushing him for the succession, recognizes the growing strength of the tariff revision sentiment. An inspired article in a local paper devoted to Roosevelt and Rooseveltism contains this paragraph:

"If Speaker Cannon, Senator Knox and Vice President Fairbanks wish to be known as chiefs of the standpatters in the next convention, and stand for high protection in the republican party, they are welcome to all the strength it will bring them, for all the secretary of war cares. He is for revision, and cares not who knows it; and evidently he believes it is the winning card in the game he is now playing under the brilliant coaching of President Roosevelt. There is a distinct sentiment looking to tariff reform in New England. The northwestern and western states, where the farmers are struggling against the oppression of the protected lumber and other trusts, likewise are clamoring for relief of some sort."

It seems reasonable, however, that the voters of the country will inquire of the devoted followers of Taft, and even of his brilliant coach, why nothing has been done in the so-called Roosevelt congress just adjourned and nothing is promised from the Sixtieth congress, which will meet next winter and in which the republicans are almost equally dominant.

WILLIS J. ABBOTT.

Letters From the People

E. D. O., Wallace, W. Va.—Will someone please answer? The last Easter Sunday closed on the last second of the last minute of the last hour of the first day of the last week of last March. In what year did this occur before?

J. S. Hungate, Foss, Okla.—The principles for which W. J. Bryan has so ably contended, appear to grow in favor among the people. This is gratifying to democrats who scorn any political advantage which is obtained at the cost of vital theories of government. Yet the monstrous disadvantages under which we labor would be depressing were it not that we are sustained by a faith in the intelligence and patriotism of Americans, justified by past history.

J. L. G., Greenville, O.—The enclosed consular report should be published far and wide. It is a vindication of silver as a money metal, demonetized and legislated against by nearly the whole world, the commercial necessities of the people of all countries, are causing competition for silver, for coinage as money. There is not enough gold and silver combined for the monetary needs of the world. The demonitization of silver was merely the criminal use of legislation to upset prices. In the Orient where the wages average possibly ten cents gold per day it is readily to be understood that a Hindoo laborer,

for instance, has a very slight chance of obtaining a five dollar gold piece and if he does it would be of no use to him until he had it changed into small silver pieces. It is said paper money will not circulate among those people. Consul General Michael says "this increase may be ascribed to the activity of trade." The probabilities are that the activities of trade can be ascribed to the great increase in the circulating medium. If the Wall Street so-called financiers will leave the money of the country alone, and congress will defeat asset currency and no reduction is made in the circulating medium under the Aldrich law the people will take care of prosperity, but this law was passed for a sinister purpose. It is well for all students of the money question to keep well out of debt as the nine million dollar reduction per month is undoubtedly intended to be used to make the people consent to the wild cat currency scheme. What a fall for the advocates of sound money! A report from Consul General Michael states that India has been importing large amounts of silver. He says: "In 1905 the total amount sent to India for circulation was \$37,500,000 and for 1906 up to September 27, the amount was \$62,500,000. This increase may be ascribed to the activity of trade. It is worthy of note that India absorbed about one-half of the 1905 total production of silver. She used more silver than the United States produced, nearly 59,000,000 ounces. When it is considered that India takes half of the total output, which is 170,000,000 ounces, and that 60,000,000 ounces are used in the arts, it is not surprising that the remainder of 25,000,000 ounces for the monetary supply of the world has nearly doubled in price within a comparatively short space of time. India will continue to require more and more silver as the trade increases, and if the needs of China and other silver-using countries also increase their demand, where will the increase in price of silver stop? India produces no silver and must depend on the mines of other countries for this metal, and the fact that she absorbs so large a portion of the total output makes her an important factor in any consideration of the future of silver."

G. B. H., Sewell, N. J.—The mysterious "alchemy" of republican politics is indeed hard to solve. In the late presidential election, according to republican editors, there were no "trusts;" they were only beneficent combinations formed for the benefit of the consumer, by reducing prices, etc. Abolish the tariff on oils, tin, etc., and you will do more to "bust" the trusts than all other legislation combined. Since the turpentine trust (Standard Oil) was fined \$30,000 the price of turpentine has been advanced to 77 cents per gallon, the highest price ever recorded in this country. The result is many manufacturers are using cheap substitutes and the consumer is being cheated in the quality of the goods. The walls behind which the trusts are barricading themselves by virtue of the high tariff will crumble very soon, when the tariff is taken off and I know many dealers in hardware and other lines who have been forced to that belief recently.

A Commoner Reader, Wilksburg, Pa.—In response to the proposal of John J. in your issue of the 8th inst. that Commoner readers form an association, I wish to say that I am heartily in favor of this idea. I am convinced that much good could be accomplished by the united action of such a company of thinkers as this would bring together in any community, as the aim of such an association would be to co-operate for the preservation of popular government and the bringing of it nearer to the people. In order to test the feasibility of bringing these good people together I wish to suggest that those who are favorable to such an idea so express themselves in a letter addressed Commoner Reader, Box 305, Pittsburg, Pa. Commoner readers throughout the state of Pennsylvania can be brought together if they will write to the same address. As fast as names are received the parties will be communicated with and arrangements made for a meeting so that officers can be chosen.

Charles F. Fenwick, Greenwood, Texas.—As I am young in forming political truths, I have a theory I wish you to pass judgment upon. It is regarding the present banking system. At present the different states have rates of interest laws ranging from 6 per cent to 10 per cent. Could not, by government control of these banks, the rate of interest be reduced by floating bonds. Our government gets face value plus a premium, at a low rate of interest on all bonds issued. At a small rate of interest our government could

capitalize any bank. Then loan the money at a sufficient rate above the rate paid on the money borrowed to in a given time pay the loan plus bank clerk hire, etc. For instance, where now borrowers pay 12 per cent to 15 per cent sometimes in Texas 18 per cent by government control could get the same money from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. I wish you would consider this if worth considering. Please insert in The Commoner so fair minded people can think over it.

F. S. Keysmith, Washington, D. C.—The claim made by the railroads as recently stated in the press, that the laws of certain southern states passed with a view of expediting the delivery of freight within their borders are in conflict with the constitution of the United States in interfering with the interstate commerce because, the railroads in complying with these laws have to neglect the moving of interstate commerce and likewise that rates on intrastate traffic have been made so low in some states that the rates on interstate freight will have to be advanced to make up for the losses, are propositions too absurd to deserve serious consideration. It is a well settled rule of law that a person in the exercise of a lawful right can not cause injury to another, being what the law calls *damnum absque de injuria*, which translated is damage without injury. If this be so of persons it is most certainly so of a state legislating within its own borders for the reasonable protection of its citizens, especially when, as in the present case, the cause of such damage would in all probability, if the true situation were known, be attributable directly to the selfish wrongdoings of the parties complainant instead of any inherent evil in such laws. Such a doctrine as the railroads would wish to establish is contrary to all the settled principles of jurisprudence from the remotest times and is no less than another attempt on the part of a body of men, who have succeeded by their intrigues in stifling the life of trade and killing competition for their own private gain, to now, for the same benefit, throttle the legislature and jurisprudence of the country. The beautiful lines of the late Hon. John Hay, secretary of state, may well, in this present crisis, be the prayer of the people:

Thy will! It bids the weak be strong; it bids the strong be just;
No lips to fawn, no hand to beg, no brow to seek the dust.
Whenever man oppresses men beneath the liberal sun,
Oh! Lord, be there! Thine arm made bare,
Thy righteous will be done."

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