

## The Commoner.

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ing goods from New York to the Isthmus in government steamers and across the Isthmus on the Panama railroad. The division of the rate was on a basis of 50 per cent prior to Mr. Dickinson's advent as secretary of war.

### TROUBLE IN CABINET

Washington dispatch to the Chicago Record-Herald: As might have been expected, the latest developments in the Ballinger-Pinchot controversy, especially the involvement of Secretary of Agriculture Wilson in it, have started fresh rumors of friction in the cabinet. One of the rumors puts Secretary Wilson on the list for early resignation, but according to the best information to be gleaned around the White House this particular report is without foundation. Thus far President Taft has shown no disposition to doubt the integrity of his secretary of the interior as a result of the testimony taken before the congressional investigating committee, and he sees nothing in yesterday's developments, including the testimony of his secretary of agriculture, to cause him to lose any degree of confidence in the latter official.

### EMBARRASSING, OF COURSE

Mr. Pinchot testifies that Secretary Wilson practically approved of Mr. Pinchot's action in writing his famous letter to Senator Dolliver. Secretary Wilson vigorously denies the charge and asks whether it is reasonable to believe he would authorize an attack upon the president. Of course it is all very embarrassing, particularly when Mr. Wilson is a member of the president's cabinet and at the same time an intimate personal friend of Mr. Pinchot. It is not, however, of the highest importance. The question "Why does Mr. Taft retain Mr. Ballinger in his cabinet?" is far more important than the Wilson-Pinchot controversy.

### WHY NOT NOW?

Senator Aldrich says that he could run the government on three hundred millions a year less than it now costs. Well, why does he not make the reduction? He is "running" the government now.

All new and renewal subscribers to The Commoner during the month of March will receive a year's subscription to the national farm paper, the American Homestead, without additional charge. Give your friends an opportunity to join you in accepting this offer.

### A FAKE POSTAL SAVINGS BILL

Washington dispatch to the Chicago Tribune (republican): "It is asserted on excellent authority that congress is prepared to pass a postal savings bank bill which will not be constitutional, in the hope that it will be knocked out at an early date by the supreme court. Such a determination rests not with the men who have, up to this time, been favorable to the postal savings legislation, but with the new supporters who have been swung into line by the demands of the president that such a law be passed. This latter element includes, first of all, Senator Aldrich and those associates of his in the senate who are known to be thoroughly opposed to the postal savings bank as a part of the country's financial structure. Aldrich has given the president assurances that the postal savings bank bill will be passed, and it is known now that this legislation will be enacted at no distant date. \* \* \* The situation as to the postal savings bank is therefore, that the controlling forces will unite in passing a bad bill, instead of settling down to an honest effort to enact a good measure that will hold water in the courts and insure a permanent institution of savings in connection with the federal post-office machinery."

### POSTAL SAVINGS BANK BILL PASSED

The senate passed the postal savings bank bill March 5 by a vote of 50 to 22. The Associated Press report says:

All the negative votes were cast by democrats, even Mr. McEnery, who had voted with the republicans throughout the consideration of the bill, in the end joining his own party. Senator Chamberlain of Oregon, was the only democrat who stood with the republicans in favor of the bill.

As it goes to the house, the bill authorizes the various money order postoffices to accept sums of one dollar or more from depositors, and to deposit these sums in the local banks, where the money is to remain unless withdrawn by the president in case of war or other exigency. In case of this withdrawal the funds are to be invested in government securities, but with the proviso that such securities shall not draw less than 2 1/4 per cent interest. The control of the funds is vested in a board of trustees composed of the postmaster general, the secretary of the treasury and the attorney general. The aggregate balance allowed to any depositor is \$500 and no person is permitted to deposit more than \$10 in any one month. The government is required to pay 2 per cent interest and must exact not less than 2 1/4 per cent from the banks, the extra quarter of one per cent being required for the payment of expenses and losses. It is calculated that such a law would bring much money out of hiding and result in a fund ranging all the way from \$500,000,000 to \$1,000,000,000.

Beginning at 11:45 o'clock today, the senate's session continued until 4:50 p. m. and practically all of the time was devoted to the consideration of amendments.

Almost immediately after it began the first vote was taken. This was on the Cummins amendment to the Smoot provision, upon which yesterday's debate waged so fiercely.

The Smoot amendment looked to the authorization of the withdrawal from local banks of the postal funds in case of war or other exigency, and Mr. Cummins sought to modify it by making it apply to war as the only exigency justifying withdrawals. The Cummins provision went down under a vote of forty nays as against eighteen ayes, the affirmative vote being cast by the insurgent republicans and half a dozen democrats, with the single exception of Senator McCumber, a stalwart republican.

Later in the day and after considerable debate the Smoot amendment was adopted, after it had been amended by the insertion of an amendment, introduced by Senator Borah, directing that the funds withdrawn should not be invested in government securities carrying less than 2 1/4 per cent interest, the rate required from the banks.

As adopted, the amendment in the shape of a proviso, reads:

"When in the judgment of the president, war or any other exigency involving the credit of the government so requires, the board of trustees may withdraw all or any part of said funds from the banks and invest the same in bonds or other securities of the United States.

"Provided, That no part of said funds shall in any event be invested in bonds or other securities bearing interest at less than 2 1/4 per centum per annum."

Two other important amendments were agreed to today. One of these was suggested by Sen-

ator Bailey and would permit the withdrawal of postal funds deposits by the original depositor "upon demand," and the other by Senator Gallinger, specifically including savings banks and trust companies doing a banking business, among the banking institutions permitted to accept the deposits of postal funds.

The insurgent republicans were much elated over the acceptance of the Borah modification. They contend that it will have the effect of reducing to a minimum the government securities in which the postal funds may be invested, and prevent the national banks from using the funds to relieve themselves of a class of securities which are not popular with them. On the other hand it was contended, especially by Senator Bacon, that the Borah provision would never be accepted by the house, and therefore, will not be a portion of it when the bill becomes a law.

Mr. Carter, in charge of the bill, made no objection to the Borah amendment. He simply remarked that it was fair to require the government to pay the same interest required of the bank and that there was no reason for opposing. The provision was agreed to, 49 to 11. The republicans voting against it were Messrs. Brandegee, Bulkeley, Burnham, Burton, Kean and Wetmore, and the democrats, Messrs. Bankhead, Money, Paynter, Rayner and Smith.

The opposing republicans made no explanation of their attitude, but Mr. Money, speaking for the democrats, based his opposition upon the theory that an amendment, constitutional in itself, could not render valid a bill which in itself was in contravention of the constitution.

Several amendments were voted down, the most important being one offered by Mr. Owen of Oklahoma, which was intended as a substitute for the whole bill and which provided for the establishment of a fund to guarantee national bank deposits along the lines of the state bank guarantee plan of Oklahoma. Mr. Owen spoke in support of his provision, again holding up the Oklahoma plan as a model of banking legislation.

The sharpest discussion of the day arose over Mr. Gallinger's amendment, including savings banks and trust companies in the specific terms of the bill. It was bitterly opposed by Mr. Heyburn and in less degree by Mr. Bailey. Mr. Heyburn went so far as to declare that if this provision should be retained the bill would be repudiated by the people.

Mr. Gallinger contended that to include uncertain state banks and exclude the most stable banks of the country would be inconsistent.

Another amendment looking to a change of phraseology called out a bitter assault by Mr. Heyburn. It provided that no interest should be computed on fractions of a dollar. It was adopted after extended debate.

A number of democratic senators, including Messrs. Gore, Stone and Bacon spoke in general opposition to the measure. The three mentioned saw in the bill the forerunner of a great central bank and regarded the legislation as unconstitutional.

### THE EVENING PRAYER

In the twilight of my days,  
In the evening of the years,  
Life unto my saddened gaze  
Seems a vision veiled in tears.  
All the knowledge fades away  
That I vainly thought to keep;  
As a little child I pray:  
Now I lay me down to sleep.  
I have wandered far from Thee  
Since that childish prayer I said,  
And the lips that taught it me  
Have been gathered to the dead;  
Yet her face I seem to see  
When the evening shadows creep,  
And again, as at her knee,  
Pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep!  
Softly fades the lingering light:  
Lo! the last beam leaves the skies;  
And I watch, amid the night,  
For the evening star to rise.  
Far beyond the bounds of space  
I may drift ere day shall break:  
Let me see my mother's face  
If I die before I wake!  
Darker grows the gathering gloom,  
While my soul its vigils keeps  
With the memories that loom  
Up from Life's unsounded deeps.  
When upon a sunless strand  
I shall hear the surges break.  
Ere I near the Nameless Land,  
Pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take!  
—Marie Conway Oemler, in  
The Independent.