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PROGRESS OF TRUST LEGISLATION

Democrats everywhere are deeply interested in the outcome of the anti-trust bills now pending before congress. These bills, introduced immediately following the delivery of President Wilson's message on trusts before the joint session of congress, January 20, embody the vital features of the administration's program in the treatment of this question. In another part of The Commoner will be found an article on "Trust Legislation," by Henry D. Clayton, chairman of the house judiciary committee, which fully explains the nature and scope of these bills.

The democratic position on the trust question is founded on the conviction that "private monopoly is indefensible and intolerable." The whole purpose of the proposed trust legislation is to write that conviction into laws that will make it possible to end the rule of monopolistic power in the United States, and to forever free the legitimate business interests of the country from the restraints of unlawful combinations and monopolies. The passage of these bills is looked forward to as one of the great accomplishments of the present administration.

FRAUDULENT STOCK EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS

A number of bills to prevent the use of the mails, the telegraph and the telephone in the furtherance of fraudulent and harmful transactions on stock exchanges have been introduced in congress. Among these is senate file No. 3895, by Senator R. L. Owen of Oklahoma, which contains provisions that are aimed at the elimination of the evils and abuses of the stock exchange system, and which, it is believed, will fully protect the interests of the producers and the public. Senator Owen comments on his bill in a forceful article on another page of this issue.

IN SHADOWLAND

Ex-Senator Foraker of Ohio is the groundhog of the republican party. He came out of his retirement long enough the other day to see the shadow of President Wilson's forward march and then predicted a "long winter" for this country. Ex-Senator Foraker, it will be recalled, was a mighty power in the days when the political boss grew round shouldered carrying the burdens of the corporations.

George W. Wickersham, who was attorney general for the Taft administration, told the academy of political and social science the other week that the Sherman law meets every requirement of present conditions as to trusts and unfair competition. Mr. Wickersham says the president means well, but he disapproves of the legislative measures Mr. Wilson has sponsored. Evidence of the president's wisdom seems to keep piling up all the time.

It was charged before the steel trust hearing the other day that the United States Steel corporation and its subsidiaries receive rebates through their ownership of ore carrying roads. Well, at any rate it sounds reasonable enough.

The First Quarter

A crushing blow has fallen upon the prophets of disaster who have for a generation been predicting wholesale ruin if the republican party was driven from power in the nation. And yet a year has passed since the executive, the senate and the house at Washington—all three—became democratic. The president has been in a position to recommend what he would and he has had a senate and house ready to cooperate with him. All of the departments of the federal government are administered by democrats. The affairs of the nation, foreign and domestic, are in the hands of those who believe in the democracy of Jefferson and Jackson, and the country not only lives but prospers. There has been no panic, there have been no wars abroad and no disturbances at home. Could refutation of republican fears and realization of democratic hopes be more complete?

The democratic party is not only victorious but harmonious, while the republican party is still separated in two warring factions, each blaming the other for the party defeat.

The president enters upon his second year with a record of achievement of which the party may well be proud and with more wide-spread approval of his acts than any other president has enjoyed in recent years. It will be a long while before any political opponent will again have the audacity to question the intelligence, the ability or the character of democratic leadership.

Not only the national government but the states as well have imbibed the progressive spirit and the people and their democratic governors and democratic legislatures are reforming abuses that had grown up under republican rule, and adopting measures and methods that make the several governments still more responsive to the will of the people.

The first quarter is past and all is well.

W. J. BRYAN.

GET TOGETHER

The democrats in Illinois who are opposed to turning the party over to the special interests should recognize the importance of getting together on a candidate for United States senator. Roger Sullivan may be expected to marshal under his banner every element interested in the misuse of government. There will be no division in their ranks; knowing that they constitute a minority, they will be held together by the instinct of self-preservation.

There will not only be no division among the favor-seeking forces, but these forces will exert themselves to divide the opposition by the stimulating of ambitions and by giving false encouragement to those whose vanity can be played upon. Those who desire to see the great state of Illinois worthily represented in the United States senate should confer and select the man most available and put the entire progressive democracy of the state of Illinois behind him. No man's ambition should have weight in making the selection, and no man fit for this high honor will allow his aspirations to be considered. Devotion to a cause is shown by willingness to sacrifice for it and not by the desire to profit by it or through it. While it is entirely proper for any man to offer himself for an office, his choice should depend, not upon his wishes but upon the strength which he is able to lend to the cause which he represents. Now is the time for men to exhibit the virtue of "preferring one another" rather than assert their own claims. The future will have many honors to award to members of our party if Illinois is brought into the democratic column. Those who make personal sacrifices now will lay up merit and be more eligible in the future. Let no unseemly scramble rob the party of its great opportunity. The progressive democrats of Illinois should get together and give the nation a man whose heart is with the people and who has the courage to be their champion.

W. J. BRYAN.

THE HIGH COST OF LIVING

Addressing the American Economic association at Minneapolis, Dean A. W. Small, of the University of Chicago, pointed out some of the causes which he believed contributed to the present high cost of living. He said: "Our inquiry into the central problems of our time, will amount to nothing until the leaders of our thought and action consent to a policy of candid and thorough inquiry as to whether there is something radically mistaken in the capitalistic system itself. Now, when we are paying for today's dinner we are paying also for dinners served and paid for long ago and we are also paying installments on other dinners that will be served generations hence. Yet we marvel at the growing size of the bill. We are still paying interest on \$441,000,000 of national debt incurred before 1865. Interest payments already have equaled the original loans twice over. Through continuance of the annual interest payments which do not reduce the principal we are now discharging these loans a third time. Americans for the next fifty years will be paying interest for portions of the Panama canal and at that time will have repaid the

original borrowings but the principal and interest still will be just as much due as if no payments had been made. Improvements of railroad terminals completed or projected in various cities are bonded for \$100,000,000. The interest will be a permanent charge upon the earnings. It will press down upon wages and lift demands for higher rates. Our industries will repay these loans over and over again to the children and the children's children of the original lenders." Dean Small pointed out what he described as "functional fallacies that radically ignore social efficiency. The fallacy of treating capital as if it were an active agent and of crediting income to the personal representative of capital irrespective of their actual services. The fallacy of incorporating the fallacious capitalistic principle, thus promoting the local person to immortality. The fallacy of a system of inheritance which assigns the powers and privileges of incorporated capital to sentimentally designated individuals. This creates hereditary economic sovereignty, which must eventually become more intolerable than the hereditary political sovereignties overthrown by revolution."

COUNTRY VS. CITY LIFE

The chances of attaining old age are much greater if we live much of our life in the fresh country air, according to a bulletin of the American Medical association. "Statistics go to show," says Dr. Dezzo of Budapest, "that the fourth generation of the town dweller is unknown; but enough is currently reported to make the conclusion inevitable that the sine qua non of longevity is a certain amount of time spent in the country. The city child is subject to a number of disturbing conditions other than mere absence of creature comforts, which undermine the constitution by throwing too heavy a burden on the sense organs, through which exhaustion of the central nervous system follows; among these conditions are noises, a perpetual round of hurry, and unending sequences of incidents exhausting the attention, to which are super-added the physical discomforts of vitiated air and effluvia from human beings and waste organic products, besides offensive gases and infection-laden dust. To attain old age we have to relieve ourselves from worry, strains and anxieties, withdraw periodically from the whirl of effortful existence, modify our diet, omit the use of stimulants and narcotics, and spend reasonably long periods of time under pleasant conditions in practical retirement. Above all amusement should be simplified and accepted rather than sought after. Only vegetable and semi-animal foods should be eaten."

The New York savings banks show an increase in deposits of over \$50,000,000 during the past year; a million a week increase in bankable wealth in one state during the first year of the democratic administration is not a bad showing.

Some men like to make themselves conspicuous by their oddities. William Williams wrote to the New York World the other day demanding that the United States immediately recognize Huerta and "thus put an end to the revolution."