

bered 1,562 in 1912, according to the figures, and privately-owned plants numbered 3,659. In the ten-year period from 1902 to 1912 the publicly-owned plants had increased nearly 92 per cent, while the privately-owned plants had increased only a little over 30 per cent.

"Gas companies were owned by municipalities to the number of 119 in 1909, according to the figures given out. It is estimated that there has been an increase of about 100 publicly-owned gas plants in the last twelve years.

"The statistics as to publicly-owned electric street railway systems relate to Canadian and English cities. In Canada, Calgary, Edmonton, Port Arthur and Woodstock are mentioned. In Great Britain the number of cities owning street railways is given at 142. The figures for the other publicly-owned utilities in Great Britain are: Waterworks, 1,045; gas plants, 256; electric plants, 334."

ORGANIZE "PEOPLE'S MACHINES"

Organization of "people's machines" to combat the old political machines was advocated by Miss Margaret Wilson, daughter of President Wilson, in an address before a civic conference at Madison, Wis. Some of Miss Wilson's views, as reported in the press dispatches, follow:

"If we do not want officeholders whom we elect to be under obligations to political machines not of our making, we must make our own machines—machines of democracy—and demand their allegiance to the people.

"Conservation and organization of the forces of democracy is the great work the American people have before them.

"The school buildings, since they belong to us all and are natural centers, are obviously the places in which we can best concentrate these forces. Let us all unite in erecting the standards of democracy in the school buildings and then stand to them.

"Not only should the schoolhouse be provided free of charge for public meetings but a civic secretary should be furnished, just as secretaries are furnished meetings of city councils.

"It goes without saying that one of the most important parts of this great work of conserving and organizing the forces of democracy is the conservation and direction of the energies of our young people. For this purpose we must give them those wholesome pleasures that we all crave in our youth (otherwise they will dissipate their energies in unwholesome pleasures) and well-planned opportunities for self-expression, especially training preparatory to good citizenship.

"Let us see that the young people of every neighborhood obtain these opportunities in a clean place, with the companionship of those who love them—the schoolhouse social center."

GETTING THE RIGHT START

In writing of his experience as a member of a law firm in Atlanta President Wilson is reported to have said:

"We struggled along with indifferent success to attract attention and gain a little law practice. This is practically all there is to tell, because I made up my mind during the year I was in Atlanta that I could best accomplish the objects I had in view in life by returning to the teaching of law and politics."

Commenting on the above, the Chicago Herald says:

"If there were prophets in Atlanta at the time they probably overlooked Wilson or took a gloomy view of his future. Bright young lawyers who were succeeding may have failed to see him when they passed him on the street or given him a condescending nod, and all the devotees of success must have regarded him as a negligible quantity.

"Now he has so far surpassed them in the thing that they most admire that a revision of their estimates seems to be in order. But they may have been right, nevertheless, as to the promise of what he was doing. According to his own view he had started on the wrong road. The object he was seeking was not there.

"Perhaps there are struggling young lawyers today who have made the same mistake and who might profit by his example. Not that there is special encouragement for them in the thought that they may become president, but being sure

of your object and beginning right is half the battle. Life is strewn with the wrecks of those who have merely drifted along the wrong road."

AN OPTIMISTIC BUSINESS MAN

President Irving T. Bush, of the Bush Terminal company, whose connection with more than 200 big manufacturing firms in his South Brooklyn loft buildings gives him a splendid opportunity to keep in touch with business conditions generally throughout the country, views the future with an optimism that is as well founded as it is commendable. He is quoted as saying:

"A great deal depends upon crops and confidence. So far as crops are concerned, the Almighty seems to be a democrat this year; and we are at least passing out of a period of uncertainty. Whether we like the tariff or currency changes or not, we now know what they are, and will soon know who will direct the new banking machine. Present evidence points to able men. We will soon have a decision in the application for an advance in railroad rates. If the decision be favorable, some of our most pessimistic friends will lose their best argument. If unfavorable, the railroad officials can save the price of their hotel accommodations in Washington, and get busy handling the crops. We have a pretty definite idea what form the new trust legislation will take, and it does not seem very terrible to any but the "Get-rich-quick Wallingfords" of the nation. When these factors—tariff, currency, trust legislation, and railroad rates—have passed from the realm of uncertainty, we will have little left to worry us."

WHAT IS "BLACKMAIL"

Colonel Roosevelt's renewed denunciation of the proposal to pay Colombia "blackmail" leaves one wondering how he would define the sum of money which he himself proposed to pay her. This sum was \$2,500,000, as provided in the treaty which his own secretary of state, Mr. Root, negotiated, and which was ratified by the senate early in 1909, though it was never acted upon by the Colombian congress.

All this must have been with the knowledge and approval of President Roosevelt. Nor could he have been in ignorance of the admission by Secretary Root that Colombia had just claims on the United States. And the treaty which Mr. Roosevelt submitted to the senate spoke of the desire to "remove all obstacles to a good understanding." What were those obstacles? If the colonel had been out of office at the time, might not his eagle eye have detected in the mere reference to them an unspeakably humiliating apology. However that may be, it is impossible to draw a clear moral distinction between paying \$2,500,000 and paying \$25,000,000. If the latter is blackmail, the former smells of it. Blackmail is not a question of less or more.—New York Evening Post.

THE SHADES

"* * * Under oaks and poplars and elms, because shadow thereof is good." Hosea iv., 13.

This tree, which stands with arms outspread,

With leaves like fingers tremulous

To seize all coolness overhead

And softly waft it down to us.

This tree—it means a hundred years

Of rain and sun, of drought and dew

Before this shade which rests and cheers

Into today's perfection grew.

Some kindly one—forgotten now—

May thoughtfully have placed the seed,

Foreseeing that each reaching bough

Would satisfy a worn one's need.

Who'er he was, that unknown one,

Who set the seed, or sproutlet slim,

He knew not that he had begun

What stands a monument to him.

The trees—the kindly trees—that blaze

With spring's green flame or autumn's blush,

The sentry fires that line the ways

Into the woodland's peaceful hush—

Through all the years they slowly grow

Until they shield the flowered sod;

The trees—the kindly trees—they show

The patient thoroughness of God.

This tree, which stands with arms outspread,

Seems to pronounce, while standing thus,

A blessing, and to gently shed

A benediction over us.

The sunlight shuttles through the leaves

With threads of gold that flash and play,

Across the warp of shade it weaves

The mingled fabric of the day.

—W. D. Nesbit.

The Congressional Campaign

The importance of the outcome of this year's congressional elections can not be overestimated. The return of a democratic congress will mean a vote of confidence for the present administration and an opportunity to complete its program as outlined in the Baltimore platform. Failure to re-elect a democratic congress will be construed by the opposition as a protest against the important legislation which has already been passed, and a demand would be made by the special interests for its repeal.

The activity already displayed by the special interests both in and out of congress should be a warning to progressive democrats who think that there will be no aggressive opposition to democratic congressional candidates. There are indications on every hand that special efforts will be made to reverse the democratic majority in the next congress, and a failure of the people to rally to the support of the president by giving him a congress in harmony with his program would mean a set-back in the work of progressive reform.

The Commoner believes that the best interests of the country will be served by the carrying out of all the platform pledges made at Baltimore, and believes it the duty of democrats everywhere to get out and assist in the work of electing a democratic congress this fall. There is much work to be done among the voters in every district. Democratic members of congress will be prevented from giving proper attention to their own campaigns on account of congress remaining in session to complete the anti-trust program, and it is therefore all the more necessary for loyal democratic workers to do what they can to insure their re-election.

The Commoner intends to do its part in this work. Through its columns each month facts, figures and arguments will be presented to combat the misrepresentations of the opposition. Special attention will be paid to the presentation of matters that will be valuable to place in the hands of the voters; and a special low campaign rate made for the purpose of circulating The Commoner among the voters. Democrats everywhere are asked to join in this work.

In order to reach a larger number of voters during the congressional campaign and to enable congressional committees to use The Commoner as campaign literature, a special rate of four subscriptions until after the November election will be made for \$1.00, and additional campaign subscriptions will be supplied at 25 cents each. If you believe that The Commoner can be of help in electing a democrat to congress from your district, kindly fill out the coupon below for as many subscriptions as you feel able to place in your district, also ask your county and congressional committees to take up the work of placing The Commoner in the hands of the voters at our special congressional campaign rate of 25 cents each. Use the coupon below.

CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN COUPON

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