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A POPULIST MEASURE

Senator Marion Butler's Bill For Establishing Postal Savings Banks.

POPS SHOULD SUPPORT HIM

Some of Its Advantages Over the Chicago Record Bill.

What to Do With the Deposits.

The question of postal savings banks is attracting wide attention, but the people's party is the only one that has ever declared for this great reform in its platform, and in congress no one but populists have ever made any serious effort to push such a measure. There is a movement on foot among republicans to introduce a postal savings bank bill of their own next session and try to put it through and get the credit for the same. Not only this, but their purpose is to get up a bill that will not be objectionable to the banks, and one which will therefore be of the least possible service to the people.

Senator Marion Butler, populist senator from North Carolina, has a bill pending in congress that every populist in the United States can support heartily. He intends to push the bill vigorously, and he should have the support of the entire populist press of the country, in order that he may prevent its being side tracked for an inferior bill.

The populist party is the only one that has ever declared for postal savings banks in its platform, and populists are the only ones who have ever made any serious efforts in congress to push a bill establishing the same. A number of bills have been introduced in congress. Most of these bills are drawn carelessly and evidence very little knowledge of the subject. Some of them seem to be drawn in the interest of the banks. These bills have all, no doubt, been prepared by congressmen who lived in districts where there was a strong sentiment for postal savings banks. They have simply introduced bills to be printed and distributed among their constituents to help them to be re-elected. It is evident that there has been no serious or determined effort to pass any of these bills. It is noticeable that very few bills have been introduced by senators.

Senator Butler has given a great deal of thought and study to this question. In his investigation of the subject he has found that many of the reports which our consuls have sent in from foreign countries on this subject have not been suppressed, or at least they have not been published in the consular reports by the state department. He introduced a resolution in the senate and passed it, calling upon the secretary of state to send all of the unpublished consular reports on postal savings banks and postal telegraphs to the senate. In response to this resolution the state department sent a few reports and stated that the others had either been misplaced or referred to the post office department. He then introduced and passed through the senate a resolution directing the postmaster-general to send to the senate all such unpublished reports. In response he sent a few and stated that the others had been misplaced.

Senator Butler collected this matter together and had it published as a senate document (154 55th cong.), entitled "Postal Savings Banks in Foreign Countries." Copies can be secured by addressing congressmen.

Nearly all of the reports contained in the senate document referred to are from two or three to eight or ten years old, or more. It seems that recently consuls have not been sending in reports on postal savings banks and postal telegraphs, either because they have noticed that the state department did not print them, or because they have been directly instructed not to send them in. So in order to get the latest and fullest information possible concerning the nature and operation of postal savings banks and postal telegraphs in all foreign countries, Mr. Butler introduced and passed through the senate a resolution instructing the secretary of state to send out a circular to our diplomatic representatives abroad requesting them to send in at once full and accurate reports, not only of the nature and practical operation of postal savings banks in the government to which they are accredited, but also of postal telegraphs and postal savings banks.

The senator is killing two birds with one stone. That is, he is securing information at the same time: one a postal savings bank bill as soon as the postal savings bank bill is discussed. The information prepared from the different consuls will be laid before the senate when it convenes in December. Senator Butler will have it published as a senate document. Senator Butler's bill was also by resolution referred to the postmaster-general, and he will make a report to the senate recommending any amendments he may deem necessary. This will also be published as a senate document.

In an interview concerning the postal savings bank bill proposed by the Chicago Record and its advantages as compared with the bill which he had introduced Senator Butler said: "The Record bill is imperfect and unsatisfactory in many particulars but I fear that the

republicans will not even favor a bill as good as that one." Comparing the two bills he said:

1st. The Chicago Record bill allows only an interest of two per centum on deposits. England pays two and one-half per cent and Canada pays three. There is certainly no reason why our government should not pay at least two and one-half per cent, and this is the moderate and very low rate which my bill calls for.

2d. The Record bill requires at least one dollar to be deposited before an account can be opened, and then provides that no subsequent deposits shall be received that are less in amount than one dollar. This is clearly too high. One of the chief purposes of establishing postal savings banks is to make it easy and convenient for persons of small means to deposit, and further to encourage them to deposit by offering to take very small deposits. It is the dimes that go for drinks, etc., when left in the pockets of the great masses of the people that should go into the savings banks to accumulate for the benefit of their families. Therefore, I have provided in my bill that only fifty cents shall be required to open an account, and that after that deposits of as low as ten cents may be received. I also provide for "savings stamps" of the denomination of one cent and up so that children will be encouraged to buy the one-cent savings stamps and paste them on cards until they reach ten cents in amount.

3d. The Record bill also limits the amount of deposits which any one can make in a year to three hundred dollars. This is lower than the average in other countries. Surely there is no reason why the total amount limit should not be at least five hundred dollars, if not more. I see no reason why it should not be put as high as one thousand dollars, though following the average in other countries I have put the limit at five hundred dollars in my bill. But the principal difference between the two bills is the disposition to be made of postal savings bank funds. Of course the banks will be very anxious to get hold of these funds at a very low rate of interest so that they could make money by simply loaning it out again at a high rate of interest; and, besides, it would discourage people from depositing in savings banks if they thought they were simply accumulating a fund to be speculated on by the banks. The Record bill leaves this matter almost entirely to the discretion of the secretary of the treasury. It, however, provides that he can invest these funds in government bonds if he sees fit or in state and municipal bonds; but it further provides that if he should invest in municipal or county bonds that the state must guarantee the principal and interest of the bonds, and if the state does not or defaults in the payment of the interest on such municipal bonds that the postmaster-general shall no longer allow deposits to be received in said state, and that those who make deposits shall not draw interest on their deposits until the state pays such interest. While this is bungling and unnecessary, yet at the same time it would be a gross injustice to an individual for what his state might or might not do. In the place of this Senator Butler's bill provides that any individual who has had one hundred dollars or more to his credit for six months may instruct the postmaster-general to purchase for him limited United States bonds at their market value and deliver to him in lieu of such deposits. It is now difficult for an individual to buy a government bond. This would make the government the agent of each individual to purchase them for him without any commission. Mr. Butler's bill further provides (and this is very important) that an individual having to his credit ten dollars or more for three months may call upon the postmaster-general to have a postal savings bank bond, bearing the rate of interest, two and four-tenths per cent, to be issued to him in lieu of his deposit. The purpose for making the rate of interest two and four-tenths per cent was to make the interest on a ten dollar bond easily computed by the month. It would make the interest two cents per month, which the most ignorant individual could compute for himself without pencil or paper. It also provides that the secretary of the treasury can invest any of the funds not used as indicated above in state bonds and government bonds provided they can be purchased so as to make a profit for the postal savings bank system, and also allows him to deposit any surplus with banks provided they will pay as much as three and one-half per cent interest, which few, if any banks, will do. It is hardly possible, however, that the secretary of the treasury would ever have an opportunity to use these options, for every individual would either buy a government bond or have a special postal savings bank bond issued to him as fast as his deposits accumulated sufficiently, provided he was able to live without drawing out his money.

You will see at a glance the purpose and far-reaching result of this provision. It would mean in a few years the transfer of the whole national debt into the hands of the people. Instead of a few large capitalists holding the government bonds there would be thousands and millions of laboring men and individuals of small means holding the government securities. This is as it should be. This is the condition of affairs in France today. This would not only make the individuals holding these bonds better citizens, and remove the influence of the bond holders from trying to corrupt our government, but it would absolutely make it impossible for a future mass of bonds to be made by anybody but to the people themselves at popular sales. In fact, unless in case of war the government would never have to issue any more bonds, for there would be sufficient postal savings bank funds to meet all emergencies.

The republicans are determined to pass a bill because they see it is popular; but they will make a desperate effort to pass a bill with as few advantages in it to the people and as many advantages to the banks as possible. There are two reasons why the republicans have suddenly become loud advocates of postal savings banks. First, they see that their tariff and gold standard will not restore prosperity and that it will be absolutely necessary for them to take up and pass some reform measure which our party has been advocating in order to hold their voters in line and prevent the populists from making big inroads into their ranks, and this is about the only measure that we advocate that they dare take up. Second, they were to a certain extent successful in the last campaign in getting depositors in savings banks in certain localities to vote with them for the gold standard on the plea that if we had the free coinage of silver that every depositor in savings banks would be paid back in fifty cent dollars. They think that if they could get the people all over the country to deposit in savings banks that they could make this false plea still more effective in the future. Therefore, they want to have a chance to say to the voter that we, the republicans party, have fixed a way for you to deposit your money for safe keeping so that if national banks break you will not lose your money. They will also use this same argument to break the force of the populist argument against national banks. They will also claim that they have not only fixed a safe way for the deposits, but that they are determined that the silver cranks shall not reduce the value of the savings by debasing the currency. Populist papers should keep this before the people: If the republican party in congress passes a postal savings bank bill it will be because the populist party has compelled them to do so.

HAWAII WILL BE ANNEXED.

Bankers and Bondholders Oppose the Annexation of Cuba.

EXTRAVAGANCE IN THE SENATE

Ten Sentenced to Death.

THE COMING SESSION.

Congress Will Be Asked to Pass Upon Many Interesting Problems.

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPHS.

Other Populist Measures that Will Receive Much Discussion.

BLACKLISTED MAN GETS DAMAGE

Jury Gave an Ex-railroad Conductor a Judgment Against the Railroad for \$21,666

THE BOYCOTT UNLAWFUL.

A Decision From the United States Court of Appeals.

ARROYO'S MURDERERS GIVEN THE EXTREME PENALTY.

RE-FINDING THE GREENBACK.

Mr. Bryan in his St. Louis Speech Points Out the Objections.

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Because it is the national bank that wants the money that the people now save by using the greenback. Why opposed to retiring the greenback? Because we are opposed to farming out to individuals the functions of government. We are opposed to picking out the bankers as the favorite sons and giving them a coat of many colors to the detriment of the people.

"I wonder if you have all examined this question until you understand the real secret of this demand? The president of a New York national bank gave testimony before a committee of congress; that testimony is a matter of record. He declared himself in favor of retiring the greenback and treasury notes with a 3 per cent gold bond. He thought the bond would float at par, and then he said if the government would allow the national banks to issue up to par all the bonds and take the tax off circulation, he thought the issue of bank notes would be sufficiently large so that the national banks would issue their notes to take the place of the greenbacks and treasury notes retired.

"Now that is the calm and deliberate statement of a president of a national bank. I want to analyze it and see what it means. The retirement of \$500,000,000 of greenbacks and treasury notes, with an issue of 3 per cent, gold bonds would mean that the people would tax themselves \$15,000,000 a year to pay the interest on the bonds before they came due, and then tax themselves \$50,000,000 to pay the bonds when they became due. Then the banks would take those bonds, deposit them, issue notes at par and be relieved of any tax on circulation. What does it mean? If the bonds float at par it means that a bank can organize with \$100,000 capital, buy \$100,000 worth of bonds, issue \$100,000 worth of notes on them, and then have back in notes the exact amount paid for the bonds; so that the bank would have nothing invested, but would draw interest at \$3,000 a year, and that beats any investment in any enterprise I know of, even with confidence restored.

EXTRAVAGANCE IN THE SENATE

Congressman Bell of Colorado will Demand an Investigation.

The deficit in the revenues of the nation is causing considerable alarm. It has occurred to Congressman Bell, populist from Colorado, that one way to relieve the treasury would be to spend less money. He expects to investigate the extravagance being practiced in every department of the government. One of his lines of investigation will be the unbounded expenditures of the United States senate. The financial reports of the senate are so juggled that common, every day citizens would not dream of the lavish waste of public funds smothered in a beautiful row of statistical tables. "The senate," said Mr. Bell, "is a body for which I have a great deal of regard and it is not considered proper form for a member of one branch of the law-making power to criticize the other. I am convinced, however, that the senate needs a raking over. How many people in the United States know that members of the senate have their shoes blacked at public expense? How many outside of the charmed circle, know that senators are attended by barbers paid out of the United States treasury and are furnished with costly refreshing drinks all the year round at public expense. The exorbitant expense of burial committees when a brother senator is laid to his rest is better known. Some of the bills are astounding. Senatorial committees go out on a junketing tour, in special cars stocked to the ceiling with the rarest liquors—all to be paid for by the suffering American citizen. Isn't it about time somebody was making a kick?"

Mr. Bell says that one of the features of senatorial extravagance which struck him with special force is the license given the herds of employes to help themselves to the palatable refreshments.

TEN SENTENCED TO DEATH.

Arroyo's Murderers Given the Extreme Penalty.

The great trial of Arroyo's murderers in the City of Mexico is over, terminating with the sentence of death pronounced on ten of the police officials and policemen concerned in the butchery of the helpless wretch whose audacious attempt on the life of the president caused so profound a sensation in that country. The jury was out over seven hours. When the verdict was returned the prisoners stood up and the grandeur presented arms during the deliverance.

The court room was crowded to the utmost capacity, for the closing scenes of the trial were most dramatic. Villavieja and Labrera took the verdict coolly, as in fact did all the prisoners. Arroyo was sentenced to seven months imprisonment, and Cuellar, who bought the knives at the order of his master, the late Inspector General Velazquez, and also Bravo, were acquitted and set free.

The condemned men do not yet seem to regret in their pathetic position. Their lawyers entered an appeal in each case. Public opinion sustains the verdict.

The total valuation of all real and personal property in the city of Omaha, as assessed by Tax Commissioner Backitt, is \$33,000,000. On this valuation the tax levy for the year 1898 made by the city council next February will be close to 2 1/2 mills.

THE COMING SESSION.

Congress Will Be Asked to Pass Upon Many Interesting Problems.

GOVERNMENT TELEGRAPHS.

Other Populist Measures that Will Receive Much Discussion.

The Government Printing Office.

There will be many interesting bills introduced and discussed at the coming session of congress which convenes one week from Monday. Probably the first and the one which may be expected to receive the most favorable consideration will be the postal savings bank bill. This measure is important and its passage would be of considerable benefit to the common people. It is a populist measure and has been advocated by the populist party since its organization. There will be many other measures of greater importance than the bill for postal savings banks that will not receive favorable consideration. Their passage will be opposed by a stronger and better organized lobby. One of these measures is the one that provides for the government ownership and operation of a telegraph system in connection with the post office department. The telegraph system of the country is controlled by the Goulds at the present time. They have spent thousands of dollars fighting this measure in the past and it will come up to other them again. They maintain a powerful lobby at Washington to keep track of the government ownership movement. It is estimated that they spend not less than half a million dollars every year through this lobby. The telegraph business has been very profitable and this is why the owners of the system guard its preservation so carefully.

The Twentieth Century says that the success which the advocates of the measure will have is providential, but it is good to know that the government ownership bill is to be fought for valiantly by the populists in both houses. It will not pass but the talk about it will attract the attention of the people to the subject and in this way be productive of a great deal of good. The republican party will content itself with the passage of some compromise measure establishing postal savings banks. It will not go far in the reform business. It will aim to go far enough to enable it to elect the next congress, and no farther.

There will be another measure for the establishment of a government armor plate factory. Its establishment does not concern any great number of people, but it is in line with the highest progress to have the government make for itself all it can make, and let private enterprise get along the best way it can. That is the way they do things in England and in other countries where there is still some pretense of sense in the administration of public affairs. The government armor plate bill has many advocates, and while its fate is not one of great importance, it may be hoped that the advocates of the bill will take advantage of this opportunity to let a little truth regarding Andrew Carnegie's corruption leak out. When the government printing office is contemplated, the wonder is that government ownership or operation is not insisted upon in all things. The government printing office at Washington is the finest in the world. Its work is of the very best, and the results it attains are without an equal in any department of the art preservative. There is something just a trifle amusing in the clamor of the civil service reformers on the subject of examinations for positions in this printing office. They talk about managing the establishment as though it were a private business, but every printer knows that no civil service examinations are necessary to get a position in a private printing office. Every printer also knows that positions in a printing office are, as a rule, anything but permanent, and the man in a job to-day is likely as not to be out of it to-morrow. The Washington office, all things considered, is much better managed than is the best private office in the country, and, while there are doubtless abuses, those abuses are no greater than seem inseparable from the printing trade generally.

The advocates of government ownership of the railroads report progress, but that is all they are able to report. The subject of government ownership has on more than one occasion forced itself upon the people this autumn, and when congress is in session, there ought to be a rigid inquiry into the details of the Pacific railway swindle. This is as far as it will be possible to go in the direction of government railroad ownership now. The railway owners have the government by the throat, figuratively and literally, and we must be content, perhaps to wait.

There is one bill the people would like to see passed and that is for the establishment of free bridge service throughout the country. The corporations ought not to be allowed to put up bridges and then charge fares to cross them. The Brooklyn bridge ought to have been built by the United States government in the first place. There would have been no danger of its absorption by the corporations. Now the great bridge has been turned over to the street railway combine with the probable outcome that the structure will become a public nuisance. The great tunnel under the Hudson ought to be pushed to completion by the government at Washington and not by the capitalist combination at London. The tunnel is a very important strategic work and in a country like Germany the ruler would never be such a fool as to allow it to pass under the control of a foreigner. But over here we let a large party of Englishmen own and operate the most important artificial means of communication and transportation in the land. If the national government would take over this enterprise it could easily complete it in a year's time, and then it could charge a small fare or toll that would reimburse it before long for its whole outlay. But the government is not in that kind of business. It is too much engaged in turning the people's money over to the bankers and in aiding the monopolists to have any time for a work of public benefit. But all this will change some day. The prospect for genuine reform when congress meets a year later is much brighter.

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BLACKLISTED MAN GETS DAMAGE

Jury Gave an Ex-railroad Conductor a Judgment Against the Railroad for \$21,666

A very important case for railroad employees and railroad corporations has been decided in Chicago.

Fred R. Ketcham, a blacklisted freight train conductor, a friend of Eugene V. Debs, and a former member of the American Railway Union, was awarded a verdict for \$21,666.33 damages against the Chicago and Northwestern railway. He averred he was put on the blacklist of every railroad in the country.

THE BOYCOTT UNLAWFUL.

A Decision From the United States Court of Appeals.

The United States circuit court of appeals handed down a decision at St. Louis last Saturday declaring the boycott placed by Coopers' Union No. 18 and endorsed by the trades assembly, against the Oxley Stavo Company, illegal and permanently enjoining them from pushing the same. The decision was rendered by Judges Thayer and Sanborn, Judge Caldwell dissenting.

The boycott was declared January 18, 1896, and the coverage company immediately applied to Judge Foster, at Topeka, for a temporary injunction restraining the trades assembly from pushing the boycott, which was granted. At the hearing in Topeka in February the injunction was made permanent. The assembly immediately filed notice of appeal to the United States circuit court of appeals, and their attorney went to St. Paul in August to argue the case, but the coverage company had continued until December 1, last December it was argued in St. Louis, and the decision has just been handed down.

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