

# The President and the Trusts

Providence, R. I., Aug. 23.—In his address here today President Roosevelt spoke in part as follows:

"We are passing through a period of great material prosperity and such a period is as sure as adversity itself to bring mutterings of discontent. At a time when most men prosper somewhat it always happens that a few men prosper greatly and it is as true now as it was when the tower of Siloam fell upon all who were under it, that good fortune does not come only to the just, nor bad fortune only to the unjust. When the weather is good for crops it is also good for weeds. Moreover, not only do the wicked flourish when the times are such that most men flourish, but what is worse, the spirit of envy and jealousy and hatred springs up in the breasts of those who, though they may be doing fairly well themselves, yet see others, who are no more deserving, doing far better.

"Wise laws and fearless and upright administration of the laws can give the opportunity for such prosperity as that we see about us. But this is all that they can do. When the conditions have been created which make prosperity possible, then each individual man must achieve it for himself, by his own thrift, intelligence, energy, industry and resolute purpose. If when people wax fat they kick, as they have been prone to do since the days of Jeshurun, they will speedily destroy their own prosperity. If they go into wild speculation and lose their heads, they have lost that which no legislation can supply, and the business world will suffer in consequence. If in a spirit of sullen envy they insist upon pulling down those who have profited most by the years of fatness, they will bury themselves in the crash of the common disaster.

"It is difficult to make our material condition better by the best laws, but it is easy enough by bad laws to throw the whole nation into an abyss of misery.

"One of the dangers of the tremendous industrial growth of the last generation has been the very great increase in large private, and especially in large corporate fortunes.

"We may like this or not, just as we please, but it is a fact, nevertheless, and as far as we can see it is an inevitable result of the working of various causes, prominent among which has been the immense importance steam and electricity have assumed in modern life.

"It is not true that the poor have grown poorer, but some of the rich have grown so very much richer that where multitudes of men are herded together in a limited space, the contrast strikes the onlooker as more violent than formerly. On the whole, our people earn more and live better than ever before, and the progress of which we are so proud could not have taken place had it not been for the great upbuilding of industrial centers, such as our commercial and manufacturing cities. But together with the good there has come a measure of evil. Life is not so simple as it was, and surely both for the individual and the community the simple life is normally the healthy life. There is not in the cities the same sense of common underlying brotherhood which there is still in country localities, and the lines of social cleavage are far more clearly marked.

"For some of the evils which have attended upon the good changed conditions we can at present see no complete remedy.

"Much of the complaint against combinations is entirely unwarranted. Under present conditions it is as nec-

essary to have corporations in the business world, as it is to have organization among wage-workers. But we have a right to ask in each case that they shall do good and not harm. Exactly as labor organizations, when managed intelligently and in a spirit of justice and fair play are of great service, not only to wage-workers, but to the whole community, as the history of many labor organizations has conclusively shown, so wealth, not merely individual, but corporate, when used aright, is not merely a benefit to the community as a whole, but indispensable to the upbuilding of the country the conditions, which at the present the country has grown not only to accept, but to demand as normal. This is so obvious that it seems trite even to state it, and yet if we are to judge from arguments advanced against, and attacks made upon, wealth as such, it is a fact worth keeping in hand.

"A great fortune, if not used aright, makes its possessor in a peculiar sense a menace to the community as a whole just as a great intellect does if it is unaccompanied by developed conscience by character. But obviously, this no more affords for condemning wealth than it does for condemning intellect. Every man of power by the fact of that power is capable of doing damage to his neighbors, but we cannot afford to discourage the development of such men merely because it is possible they may use their power to wrong ends. If we did so we should leave our history a blank, for we should have no great statesmen, soldiers or merchants, no great men of arts, of letters or of science. Doubtless on the average the most useful man to his fellow citizens is apt to be given what the psalmist prayed for, neither poverty nor riches, but the great captain of industry, the man of wealth, who alone or in combination with his fellows, drives through our great business enterprises, is a factor without which this country could not possibly maintain its present industrial position in the world. Good, not harm, normally comes from the piling up of wealth through business enterprises. Probably the most serious harm resulting to us, the people of moderate means, is when we harm ourselves by letting the dark and evil vices of envy and hatred toward our fellows eat into our natures.

"Still there is other harm of a more evident kind, and such harm it is our clear duty to try to eradicate if possible and in any event to minimize. The corporations containing some tendency to monopoly, which we have grown to speak of rather loosely as trusts, are the creatures of the state, and the state not only has the right to control them, but is in duty bound to control them wherever the need for such control is shown. There is clearly a need of supervision—need to exercise the power of regulation on the part of the representatives of the public, wherever, as in our own country at the present time, business corporations become so very strong both for beneficent work and for work that is not always beneficent. It is idle to say that there is no need for such supervision. A sufficient warrant for it is to be found over and over again in any of the various evils resulting from the present system, or rather lack of system.

"There is in our country a peculiar difficulty in the way of exercising such supervision and control because of the peculiar vision of governmental power. When the industrial conditions were simple, very little control was needed and no trouble was caused by the doubt as to where it was lodged

under the constitution. Now the conditions are complicated, and we find it difficult to frame national legislation which shall be adequate, while as a matter of practical experience state action has proved entirely insufficient and in all human probability cannot or will not be made sufficient to meet the needs of the case. Some of our states have laws—laws which it would be well indeed to have enacted by the national legislature. But the wide difference of these laws have the uncertainty of the power to enforce, which results in insufficient control. I believe that the nation must assume this power of control by legislation, and if it becomes evident that the constitution will not permit needed legislation, then by constitutional amendment.

"The immediate need in dealing with trusts is to place them under the real, not nominal, control of some sovereign, to which, as its creature, the trusts shall own allegiance, and in whose courts the sovereign's orders may with certainty be enforced. This is not the case with the ordinary so-called 'trust' today, for the trust is a large state corporation, doing business in other states also, and often with a tendency to monopoly. Such a trust is an artificial creature, not wholly responsible to or controllable by any legislature, nor wholly subject to the jurisdiction of any one court. Some governmental sovereign must be given full power over these artificial corporate beings. In my judgment this sovereign must be the national government. When it has been given full power, then this full power can be used to control any evil influence, exactly as the government is now using the power conferred upon it, under the Sherman anti-trust law. Even when the full power has been conferred it would be highly undesirable to attempt too much or to begin by stringent legislation. The mechanism of modern business is as delicate and complicated as it is vast, and nothing would be more productive of evil to all of us, and especially to those least well off in this world's goods, than ignorant meddling with this mechanism, and above all, if the meddling was done in a spirit of class or sectional rancor. It is desirable that this power should be possessed by the nation, but it is quite as desirable that the power should be exercised with moderation and self-restraint. The first exercise of that power should be the securing of publicity among all great corporations doing an interstate business. The publicity, though non-inquisitorial, should be real and thorough as to all important facts with which the public has concern."

## The Humor of It.

It is suggested by the Springfield (Mass.) Republican that a barbed wire fence be built along the international boundary line in Northern Montana to aid the customs officers in patrolling the border and enforcing the tariff laws. As it is now, cattle particularly cause trouble. They are worth about 20 per cent more on this side of the line than the other, and seem to know it, for it is said they have a way of drifting in this direction when human beings are not visible to the eye of guardians against smuggling. But it is found that if the fence is built at the joint expense of the two governments it will be much cheaper to have Canada furnish the wire, even though it comes from the states. This is because the steel trusts are selling wire to outside countries at lower prices than are charged to home consumers. A fence constructed on those terms would be a fine illustration of how

the trusts are working to undo the home market while the government is engaged in fencing it in.—San Francisco Star.

## Congressional Appropriations.

Thomas P. Cleaves and James C. Courts, chief clerks respectively of the committees on appropriations of the senate and house, have prepared the volume containing statements of appropriations, new offices, etc., as required by law, which directs that these figures be compiled and published at the close of each session of congress. The grand total as shown by these summaries is \$800,624,496.55, detailed by bills as follows:

Agricultural .....	\$ 5,208,960.00
Army .....	91,730,136.41
Diplomatic .....	1,957,925.69
Dist. of Columbia .....	8,544,469.97
Fortifications .....	7,298,955.00
Indian .....	8,986,028.10
Legislative .....	25,396,681.50
Military academy .....	2,627,324.42
Naval .....	78,856,363.13
Pension .....	139,842,230.00
Postoffice .....	138,416,598.75
River and harbor .....	26,771,442.00
Sundry civil .....	60,163,359.13
Deficiencies .....	28,050,007.32
Miscellaneous .....	2,772,795.13
Isthmian canal act .....	50,130,000.00
Permanent appro .....	123,921,220.00

Total .....

\$800,624,496.55  
In addition to the specific appropriations made, contracts are authorized to be entered into for certain public works requiring future appropriations by congress in the aggregate sum of \$262,711,465. These contracts include \$21,069,500 for additional ships for the navy and for permanent improvements of the increased facilities at certain navy yards; \$15,943,850 for additions to old public buildings and the construction of new public buildings in various cities of the country; \$33,326,186 for improvement of river and harbors; \$3,500,000 for reconstruction of old and erection of new buildings at the military academy at West Point, and \$180,000,000 for the construction of an isthmian canal.

A comparison of the total appropriations at the last session of congress with those of the preceding or short session of the Fifty-sixth congress for 1903 shows an increase of \$70,285,920.56. In this amount are included increased appropriations for the department of agriculture, \$626,540; for the diplomatic, district of Columbia, legislative, executive and judicial and naval service, \$1,706,981.74; for the military academy \$1,854,670.74; for the postal service, \$14,633,910; for the whole of the river and harbor act, none having been passed at the preceding session, \$26,771,442; for deficiencies, \$12,132,560.38, and for the isthmian canal, \$50,130,000. On the other hand there appear reductions of \$24,003,912.69 for the army, \$65,056 for fortifications, \$761,442.99 for the Indian service, \$5,403,000 under requirements for pensions, \$1,632,549.08 by the sundry civil act, \$5,267,223.54 by miscellaneous acts, and \$437,000 under permanent appropriations which cover interest on the public debt, making a net increase as stated of \$70,285,920.56.—Washington Correspondence Chicago Record-Herald.

## Oak and Squash.

The Chicago Inter-Ocean says that when the late President Barrows of Oberlin college was asked by a student if he could not take less than the regular four years' course Dr. Barrows looked the applicant over thoughtfully and replied:

"Why, certainly, my lad. A short course if you like, but my advice to you is to take the longest course possible. The length of time you wish to devote to study rests with you entirely, and should depend on what you intend to become. Just remember that when God wants to make an oak he takes a hundred years, but when he wants a squash he takes six months."