

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from page 7.)

tries, so that the worst tends to drag down the better. For this reason, it would be well for the nation at least to endeavor to secure comprehensive information as to the conditions of labor of children in the different states. Such investigation and publication by the national government would tend toward the securing of approximately uniform legislation of the proper character among the several states."

Corporations

On the subject of corporations, the president says: "When we come to deal with great corporations the need for the government to act directly is far greater than in the case of labor, because great corporations can become such only by engaging in interstate commerce, and interstate commerce is peculiarly the field of the general government. It is an absurdity to expect to eliminate the abuses of great corporations by state action. It is difficult to be patient with an argument that such matters should be left to the states, because more than one state pursues the policy of creating on easy terms corporations which are never operated within that state at all, but in other states whose laws they ignore. The national government alone can deal adequately with these great corporations. To try to deal with them in an intemperate, destructive or demagogic spirit would, in all probability, mean that nothing whatever would be accomplished, and, with absolute certainty, that if any thing were accomplished it would be of a harmful nature. The American people need to continue to show the very qualities that they have shown—that is, moderation, good sense, the earnest desire to avoid doing any damage, and yet the quiet determination to proceed, step by step, without halt and without hurry, in eliminating or at least in minimizing whatever of mischief or of evil there is to interstate commerce in the conduct of great corporations. They are acting in no spirit of hostility to wealth, either individual or cor-

porate. They are not against the rich man any more than against the poor man. On the contrary, they are friendly alike toward the rich man and toward the poor man, provided only that each acts in a spirit of justice and decency toward his fellows. Great corporations are necessary, and only men of great and singular mental power can manage such corporations successfully, and such men must have great rewards.

"But these corporations should be managed with due regard to the interest of the public as a whole. Where this can be done under the present laws it must be done. Where these laws come short others should be enacted to supplement them.

"Yet we must never forget the determining factor in every kind of work, of head or hand, must be the man's own good sense courage and kindness. More important than any legislation is the gradual growth of a feeling of responsibility and forbearance among capitalists and wage-workers alike; a feeling of respect on the part of each man for the rights of others; a feeling of broad community of interest, not merely of capitalists among themselves, and of wage-workers among themselves, but of capitalists and wage-workers in their relation to each other, and of both in their relations to their fellows who with them make up the body politic. There are many captains of industry, many labor leaders, who realize this."

Rebates

Referring to railroad rebates, the president says: "We must strive to keep the highways of commerce open to all on equal terms; and to do this it is necessary to put a complete stop to all rebates. Whether the shipper or the railroad is to blame makes no difference; the rebate must be stopped, the abuses of the private car and private terminal-track and side-track systems must be stopped, and the legislation of the fifty-eighth congress which declares it to be unlawful for any person or corporation to offer, grant, give, solicit, accept, or receive any rebate, concession, or discrimination in respect of the transportation of any property in interstate or foreign commerce whereby such property shall by any device whatever be transported at a less rate than that named in the tariffs published by the carrier must be enforced. For some time after the enactment of the act to regulate commerce it remained a mooted question whether that act conferred upon the interstate commerce commission the power, after it had found a challenged rate to be unreasonable, to declare what thereafter should, prima facie, be the reasonable maximum rate for the transportation in dispute. The supreme court finally resolved that question in the negative, so that as the law now stands the commission simply possess the bare power to denounce a particular rate as unreasonable.

"While I am of the opinion that at present it would be undesirable if it were not impracticable, finally to clothe the commission with general authority to fix railroad rates, I do believe that, as a fair security to shippers, the commission should be vested with the power, where a given rate has been challenged and after full hearing found to be unreasonable, to decide, subject to judicial review, what shall be a reasonable rate to take its place; the ruling of the commission to take effect immediately, and to obtain unless and until it is reversed by the court of review. The government must in increasing degree supervise and regulate the workings of the railways engaged in interstate commerce, and such increased supervision is the only alter-

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Is the World Growing Better?

By Henry van Dyke

There are few men who would not be presuming in answering this question. Henry van Dyke, preacher, educator, humanitarian, man of letters, treats this question clearly, frankly, truly, in the December number of Everybody's Magazine.

As back numbers of Everybody's Magazine are out of print, the previous chapters of Mr. Lawson's "Frenzied Finance"—contained in the numbers from July to November inclusive—are republished in a pamphlet, at 25 cents a copy. This pamphlet (eighty pages) will be sent free to any new subscriber to Everybody's Magazine who requests it and who sends one dollar for a year's subscription beginning with the December number. Address The Ridgway-Thayer Company, Union Square, New York City.

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native to an increase of the present evils on the one hand or a still more radical policy on the other. In my judgment the most important legislative act now needed as regards the regulation of corporations is this act to confer on the interstate commerce commission the power to revise rates and regulations, the revised rates to at once go into effect, and to stay in effect unless and until the court of review reverses it.

"Steamship companies engaged in interstate commerce and protected in our coastwise trade, should be held to a strict observance of the interstate commerce act."

The president here sets forth in detail a number of recommendations in furtherance of his plan to improve the city of Washington and laws governing the District of Columbia. He then presents a brief chapter on irrigation in which he cordially approves the irrigation law. Then he devotes a brief chapter to the Indians, recommending the appointment of a field assistant to the commissioner of Indian affairs.

Currency

On the currency question the president says: "The attention of the congress should be especially given to the currency question, and that the standing committees on the matter in the two houses charged with the duty, take up the matter of our currency and see whether it is not possible to secure an agreement in the business world for bettering the system; the committees should consider the question of the retirement of the greenbacks and the problem of securing in our currency such elasticity as is consistent with safety. Every silver dollar should be made by law redeemable in gold at the option of the holder."

Immigration and Naturalization

Here the president devotes a chapter to immigration, saying that the United States can not have "too many immigrants of the right kind, it makes no difference from what country they

come;" but he adds that "the citizenship of this country should not be debased," and he recommends not only a strict enforcement of the immigration laws, but material improvement in the naturalization laws, and systematic efforts to prevent fraudulent naturalization. On this point he says:

"There should be a comprehensive revision of the naturalization laws. The courts having power to naturalize should be definitely named by national authority; the testimony upon which naturalization may be conferred should be definitely prescribed; publication of impending naturalization applications should be required in advance of their hearing in court; the form and wording of all certificates issued should be required to make returns to the secretary of state at stated periods of all naturalizations conferred.

"Not only are the laws relating to naturalization now defective, but those relating to citizenship of the United States ought also to be made the subject of scientific inquiry with a view to probable further legislation. By what acts expatriation may be assumed to have been accomplished, how long an American citizen may reside abroad and receive the protection of our passport, whether any degree of protection should be extended to one who has made the declaration of intention to become a citizen of the United States but has not secured naturalization, are questions of serious import, involving personal rights and often producing friction between this government and foreign governments. Yet upon these questions our laws are silent. I recommend that an examination be made into the subjects of citizenship, expatriation and protection of Americans abroad, with a view to appropriate legislation."

The Law's Delays

An interesting chapter in the message relates to the law's delays. On this point the president says: "No subject is better worthy the attention of