

foreign creditors. In a note to the Venezuelan minister at Washington February 28, 1881, Mr. Everts, who was at that time secretary of state, indicated that this proposal would receive favorable consideration in case it should be found to be acceptable to all the creditor governments. Consideration of the subject was continued by the government of the United States after the change of administration when Mr. Blaine succeeded Mr. Everts as secretary of state. The chief difficulty in dealing with the matter arose out of the fact that France claimed a priority for her debt. With reference to this situation Mr. Blaine in an instruction to Mr. Noyes, American minister at Paris, July 23, 1881, said: "Without attempting to prescribe or dictate the president suggests that the United States will place an agent in Caracas authorized to receive such amount each month from the Venezuelan government as may be agreed to be paid, not less than the aggregate now paid, and distribute said amount pro rata to the several creditor nations. Should the Venezuelan government default for more than three months in the regular installments, then the agent placed there by the United States as acting trustee for the creditor nations shall be authorized to take charge of the custom houses at La Guayra and Puerto Cabello and reserve from the monthly receipts a sum sufficient to pay the stipulated amount with 10 per cent additional, handing to the Venezuelan government all the remainder obtained." This proposal failed, the French government declining to yield its claim of priority and arranging a settlement directly with Venezuela."

IT SEEMS to be generally agreed that the late republican congress was grossly extravagant. The New York World says: "All quibbling aside, the impressive fact remains that, with an actual deficit of about \$24,000,000 for the first eight months of the current fiscal year, congress has authorized a net increase in expenditures of \$37,306,539 for next year. The government's receipts this year have run slightly heavier than in 1904 and only \$9,000,000 less than in 1903, when a surplus of over \$30,000,000 had been accumulated by the end of the first week in March. Mr. Roosevelt has always shown a mind superior to the petty economies of administration. If congress had accepted his naval estimates the appropriations would have been \$15,000,000 heavier. As a matter of fact, the military appropriations for 1906 are nearly \$6,000,000 less than for 1905. But how does Mr. Roosevelt expect to make both ends meet? What are the financial prospects of his 'own administration?'"

WHILE Nebraska democrats have charged that the Nebraska legislature is controlled by the corporation lobby, many republicans have entered denials; but William Ernst, a republican from Johnson county, printed in the Lincoln Journal, a republican paper, on March 13, a letter in which he said: "I was elected to the legislature as a republican. I believe in President Roosevelt in the reforms he stands for. When I came to Lincoln I felt sure that certain needed bills could be passed without any trouble, especially bills for regulating railroad charges, telephones, the proper supervision of the building of county bridges and other measures which would be to the interest of all the people of the state. Living as I do in southeastern Nebraska, where thousands of bushels of fruit went to waste last fall because high railroad rates and slow service would not permit shipment to market, I was anxious to see some reasonable rate regulation bill enacted into law. It has taken me forty days to find out how helpless I was to do anything, as things are now in the Nebraska legislature. The members of this legislature are generally men of high character. They have aimed to do the right thing. Yet, in spite of this, I have seen nearly every trial to enact laws for the benefit of the people on subjects in which certain great private interests were concerned prevented from passing into law. I can explain this on no other ground than that the large number of cunning men who are employed to spend their time here in the interests of certain corporations have been able to hoodwink and confuse the members. The trouble seems to be that so many of the members who really desire to pass laws for the interest of the whole state are new to the ways of legislatures, while the men who are sent here and paid to manage us have had long experience. After forty days of the hardest work I have ever done in my life I begin to see how it is that these corporation lobbyists have been able to prevent the passage of the laws that the people demand. By flattery they win our confidence. With railroad passes and free tickets to the theater they put us under obligation to them. With devilish

cunning they work to keep members who want to do something apart from each other, and from coming to an understanding as to the things they ought to do for the people. They even go so far as to try to entice members into debauchery with wine and women in night orgies, where they compromise their character and tie their hands from future usefulness to their constituents. They encourage distrust among us. We have failed because we are unorganized. But it is not too late yet to change this. We may yet be able to give the state some needed legislation in spite of the opposition of the railroads, the bridge lobby and other interests that have allied themselves with these. I can not be satisfied without asking the members of both houses of the legislature who really want to have something to show for their winter's work when they go home to their constituents to make one more effort to stand together and pass some of the bills now under discussion which are in the interest of all the people."

H. AGER, chief lobbyist for the Burlington Railroad company, made public a statement in which he denies on behalf of himself and associates any responsibility for the charges of immorality as made by Representative Ernst. Mr. Ager does not dodge, however, on the pass question; he makes the following frank confession: "In regard to 'passes': Previous to the convention of the legislature, I (in accordance with the custom of many years), sent the members annual passes over our lines in the state, and on the personal solicitation of members have since given them a number of trip passes for the use of their families and friends, more than 90 per cent of the latter of whom were farmers desiring to visit the legislature. Without a single exception Mr. Ernst has drawn more heavily upon me for trip passes than any other member of the legislature. He has called for as many as eight at once, six of which I gave him, declining to give the other two on the ground that we ought to be permitted to sell some tickets at Graf, his home station; with the exception of the annual I sent him previous to the convening of the legislature, every pass he has received from me, has been at his own solicitation, he having come to my residence several times for that purpose; he has for himself an annual pass over our lines in this state, and is the best judge as to whether or not he has been, or is influenced by its possession on matters of railroad legislation; if not, is he not assuming a good deal in charging his fellow members with being more vulnerable in the matter of passes than himself? If he is, as an honorable man, he should have long ere this returned or destroyed his pass and have at least established a record for consistency."

REPLYING to Mr. Ager's statement with respect to the passes, Mr. Ernst says: "Mr. Ager says truthfully that he gave me an annual pass and trip passes for my large family to come and see me. I accepted those courtesies, expecting to give his road fair treatment, and did not think anything more was ever expected. However, as I have seemingly violated the spirit under which the pass was tendered, I will return the same to Mr. Ager. It shall not stand in the way of looking after the interest of my constituents."

THE COMMONER recently reproduced from the Bloomfield, Ind., Democrat, an article to which Martha P. Williams of Cascade, Mont., takes exceptions. Writing under date of February 25, Miss Williams, referring to the Democrat's article, said: "Since my return from a three-years' term of service as teacher in the islands, my regret and indignation have, more than a few times, been aroused over misleading and unjust newspaper articles dealing with the Filipinos. I have always been able to pardon the writers, for ignorance is not the greatest crime. Most of those who have sinned have done so innocently; and had the Democrat confined itself to the simple mis-statement the 'government' of the United States pays \$500 per year for educating each Filipino boy sent to American schools to be educated, I should have classed its editor as one of the great host of the uninformed. But when he proceeds to moralize, to appeal to 'the laboring men of this nation, who are struggling to educate their own sons and daughters, and at the same time helping to pay the expenses of educating those boys,' I think it is time to call a halt. While it is my personal opinion that our motto should be 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his need,' that is, in the language of our friends, the republicans, purely an academic theme. But let the Democrat make its appeal to prejudice and passion from a solid basis of fact. It is not

true that the United States government pays either for the schools in the Philippine islands or for the education of those hundred and more Filipino students in the United States. Upon what act of congress does the editor base his statement? When was such an appropriation made? If I have been laboring under a misapprehension I shall be only too glad to know the truth. This question of educating Filipinos in American schools was discussed while I was in the islands; what the exact terms were I do not recall; at one time it was proposed to take the revenues to be derived from a regulation of the opium trade; but at all events the money was to come from the insular treasury. It seems to me more than ungracious, it is unjust, after imposing an expensive system of government upon a people who pay for it themselves, and then to claim its best features. It is much to be regretted that the appeal is made to prejudice, and covertly, it is to be feared, to the all-too-easily-inflamed race prejudice of the American as against the Filipino. If we are to rule without the consent of the governed, then are we the more bound to be just despots—if there be such a paradox."

AN ASSOCIATED PRESS DISPATCH, under date of Manila, February 20, said: "The government has decided to redeem a number of certificates of indebtedness held by the United States issued for the purpose of establishing the new Philippine currency in 1903." A Huston, Tex., reader of The Commoner encloses a clipping containing the above dispatch and says: "Perhaps it would be a good idea to remind the government to redeem revenue stamped checks which were sold by the banks to merchants—and during the war—which were not all used up. I consider the government owes me \$3.58—and no doubt it owes many more merchants and others, just like me."

A NEW "EXPORT" MOVEMENT recently developed at the Chicago stock yards, according to the Tribune of that city. The Tribune says: "More of the employes whose presence might be desired when the federal grand jury begins its investigation of the beef trust next Monday are now out of town and reported to be sailing for Europe. The names of four who sailed hurriedly from St. Johns, New Brunswick, yesterday afternoon have been learned, according to report from St. John. They are: E. A. Allen, former secretary of the Hammond Packing company, now with the National Packing company; James Brennan, a department manager for Swift & Co.; G. D. Roberts, salesman for the Hammond company; F. A. Spink, traffic manager for the National Packing company. A telegram from St. John last night stated Mr. Allen was accompanied by his wife and two daughters. All sailed on the steamer Lake Erie after spending several days in St. John. "The boat will touch at Halifax." A number of other men are reported as missing, and with the possible exception of Mr. Roberts, all are wanted to testify at the coming investigation."

THE troubles between Messrs. Alexander and Hyde of the Equitable Life Assurance society were compromised March 14, when, at a meeting of the special committee, the following resolutions were adopted: "Resolved, at a meeting held today, to recommend to the board of directors that the charter of the society be forthwith amended so as to confer upon the policyholders the right to elect a majority of the board of directors; namely, twenty-eight out of fifty-two. Such action was taken with the express consent and approval of Mr. Hyde as the representative of the majority of the capital stock of the society. A meeting of the board of directors has been called for next Tuesday, March 21, 1905, when the committee will submit to the board the amended charter as prepared by counsel."

THE "Kah-Gyur" or Tibetan bible, according to a writer in the Kansas City Journal, consists of 108 volumes of 1000 pages each, containing 1083 separate books. This writer says: "Each of the volumes weighs ten pounds and forms a package 26 inches long, 8 inches broad and 8 inches deep. This bible requires a dozen yoke for its transport and the carved wooden blocks from which it is printed need rows of houses, like a city, for their storage. A tribe of Mongols paid 7,000 oxen for a copy of this Bible. In addition to the Bible there are 225 volumes of commentaries, which are necessary for its understanding. There is also a large collection of alleged revelations which supplement the Bible."