

The Commoner.

erature. Ferrer was not tried for being an anarchist or for teaching anarchy. He was tried and condemned for overt acts in connection with the Barcelona insurrection, in which 138 persons were murdered by the insurgents. He was not tried by the civil courts but by military tribunal because under the law of Spain where a state of insurrection is formally declared to exist the civil courts are automatically closed and the military courts take their place. This may not be right law, according to our ideas, but it is the law of Spain. King Alfonso had no opportunity to pardon Ferrer. He could not legally do so under the Spanish constitution without the approval of the responsible minister. This approval, and the papers, Premier Maura saw fit to withhold. Mr. Maura did with the king what Mr. Stanton did with President Johnson in the case of Mrs. Surratt. The only difference was that Mr. Maura did not exceed his constitutional powers in so doing, while Mr. Stanton exercised an arbitrary discretion. In view of these facts how silly do those Americans look, who, though neither socialists nor anarchists, persist in praising as a martyr a professed atheist, whose rule of life was 'No government! No God! Down with these humbugs!'

THE ST. LOUIS Censor gives the American people something worth thinking about when it says: "Trust-Uncle" Joe is a mere figurehead—nothing more than acting chairman for the interests, who inaugurated the system and made the rules under which the interests allow the house to act. He is not in the least indispensable to the system; but the error has gone out that he is, that he is responsible for this vicious and destructive system which renders the house powerless before that privilege which plunders the country. When Reed devised the system, he made it self perpetuating and most automatic. The real feat was to set up his system and silence the house in the beginning. Since then it has been easy. Given arbitrary power, with a bludgeon in one hand and a bunch of rewards in the other, the game is exactly like the tariff. Every attempt to reform it makes it worse. With a speaker with power in the first place to make any certain member the most favored and influential representative of the session, or reduce him to absolute nothingness without the power to say a half dozen words during the session, as the speaker will, it is easy to understand whence comes the authority to continue such a vicious system. As Cannon is but the figurehead of the system, would it not be a stroke of good politics for the interests to wish his defeat, or if not that, to remain passive? It would allay agitation and divert public attention from a government rotten with wrong. The word would go out that Cannonism was crushed, and it would take the public, in its stupid complacency, a year or two to find out that the interests had placed another man in Cannon's place, and that the system had gone right on without a hobble."

EVEN THE New York Sun objects to Senator Aldrich's proposed central bank. Following is an editorial printed in a recent issue of the Sun: "The Sun will always oppose a central bank of issue. Such a bank is intended by the monetary commission. The policy of that body as now formally disclosed by Senator Aldrich points to no other consummation. It is our conviction that a central bank of issue bearing the same relation to the money of this country that the banks of France and of England bear to the money of those countries would prove a national evil. This country is traditionally and temperamentally unsuited to such an institution. If Mr. Aldrich and his associates by their united genius can fashion a central bank whose functions and powers shall be purely automatic and mechanical, well and good. But such a bank with us is impossible. We have developed no class in America from which we could create or recruit the administration and control of such an institution, while to isolate it from our political life is hopeless. We wish it were otherwise. It is a national misfortune that we can not create a bank of issue, regulation and control like the Bank of England. But it is a misfortune to which we are habituated and which is an accepted condition of our economic existence. It might be possible in time, but that time is remote. The temperament, the political genius and the geography of our country assure us that the creation of such an institution would lead inevitably to disaster graver and more far reaching than that which our recurrent panics and

speculative convulsions entail. They constitute an evil, but it is a negligible evil compared with the sinister possibilities of another Bank of the United States. In a country of vast wealth where there is not a dollar of money for which a dollar's worth of gold can not be had there must, from the operation of natural forces, presently develop a system or a habit whereby the minimum of the physical mobility of actual money shall be combined with the maximum of stability and liquidity of credit. That end can be attained, and in our belief will be attained, without the injection of any federal dogma of any kind."

have no doubt, in view of the facts and of the policy of the administration as declared by President Taft in his speech at Spokane, Wash., on September 28, that our request will be granted. There is a limit, however, beyond which such delay can not go. Should congress fail to act at the coming session, it is possible that the opportunity to obtain adequate legislation for the coal lands still in possession of the United States will be lost. We therefore appeal to the American people to bring the urgent needs of the situation to the attention of their representatives in congress in order that comprehensive legislation on the matter may be enacted at the next session of congress."

CONCERNING the much talked of British budget a writer in the Chicago Tribune says: "A misapprehension of the intent and of the provisions of the British budget not unnaturally follows the attempts of Americans to analyze and comprehend this great financial measure, to which the term 'socialistic' has been attached by the privileged class whose privilege it hits. If the abuses which Lloyd-George is endeavoring to correct existed in the United States and were the endeavors of correction so moderate and temperate as his, Americans would start a revolution. The budget is condemned as socialistic because it seeks to extend the application of the old age pension system and because it seeks a revision of the land tax. Through old age pensions Great Britain is striving to find a remedy which Germany has found more effectively in industrial insurance. In the increasing poverty of the English people the British statesmen find an alarming danger to the national life, growing with every year, and Americans who may be startled by the magnitude of the fund which it is proposed to devote to the relief of the impoverished profitably may consider the fact that the United States government annually pays in pensions to the veterans of the civil war a sum far in excess of that which is contemplated in the extension of the British system. The land tax is socialistic in the opinion of the great land owners of England who, with the brewers—also hit by an increased tax—and the connections of both, rule in the house of lords. If it were to be proposed as a remedy for a kindred ill in America it would be rejected with paving stones. If one man owned all of downtown Chicago, and if three men owned New York south of Forty-second street, and if these holdings and others like them were subject to a tax which had not been revised since Cromwell's time, which was a tax merely in name, and which operated to make land ownership a weight bearing down on the prosperity and development of the country, Americans would not waste time listening to an opposition which called the proposed remedy socialistic. If 90 per cent of the land in America were owned by less than 10,000 persons something more than the land tax provisions of the Lloyd-George budget would be used to restore ownership to the people."

ON JULY 12, 1908, the St. Louis Republic published its centennial issue, that paper having been established in 1808. Soon thereafter the Republic took an active part in the formation of a Century Club of American Newspapers, composed of weekly and daily journals that are 100 years old or older. A booklet just published by the Republic describes the eighty-two papers that are members of the club. There are fifty-five dailies and twenty-seven weeklies, twenty-two of which are published in New England, thirty-eight in the middle Atlantic states, nine in Ohio, one in Indiana, eleven south of Mason and Dixon's line, and one—the Republic—west of the Mississippi river. Pennsylvania has thirteen members of the club, and the two oldest, the Philadelphia North American and Saturday Evening Post, each founded in 1728. Then follow the Charleston News and Courier, founded in 1732; the Annapolis Gazette, founded in 1745; the Portsmouth Chronicle, founded in 1756, and the Newport Mercury, founded in 1758, each more than 150 years old. The German language is represented by two newspapers in the club, the Newmarket Shenandoah Valley, published originally in German as Der Virginische Volksberichter und Newmarket Wochenschrift, founded in 1807, and the Lancaster Volksfreund und Beobachter, established in 1808."

A REMARKABLE case of the development of criminal instinct is that of Earl Bullock, seventeen years of age. His home was in Lawrence, Kan. On October 11 Bullock was arrested at Eudora, Kan., on the charge of having robbed a second-hand store. The deputy sheriff had taken Bullock into the Eudora bank. While there Bullock drew two revolvers and forced the deputy sheriff and Cashier Wilson into the bank vault. He then snatched about \$1,000 and fled. That night Policeman Prindle went to Bullock's home and called him to come out and surrender. Bullock replied with a rain of bullets and Prindle was killed. Bullock then made his escape. The authorities were unable to locate him, but it later developed that he began life in a fashionable hotel at Jacksonville, Fla., under an assumed name. There he became acquainted with William McKay, a fifteen-year-old boy, holding out to McKay "the beauties" of a robber life. Bullock persuaded the boy to accompany him and on November 12 they returned to Eudora for the purpose of robbing the same bank which Bullock had robbed on November 11. Bullock and McKay entered the Eudora bank. Fred Star, the cashier of another bank happened to be in the Eudora bank and Bullock shot him through the jaw. Snatching money amounting to, perhaps, \$800, Bullock and McKay fled followed by a posse of citizens. McKay surrendered but Bullock wrenched the revolvers from his faltering partner's hands and ran, returning the fire of his pursuers. Finally being surrounded he put the pistol to his own head and fired. The wounded lad was taken to a hospital where he died a few hours later.

THE KANSAS COMMONER

The Kansas Commoner, published at Wichita, has been purchased by Mr. M. B. Murphy, late of Malone, N. Y. Mr. Murphy is a thorough-going newspaper man and a faithful democrat. In his salutatory Mr. Murphy said:

"The present editor proposes to make the Commoner the exponent of pure democracy as advocated by its acknowledged leader, William Jennings Bryan, and invites the public to read the Commoner for further information along these lines. With the abiding faith that the new enterprise will redound to the credit and welfare of democracy, both in state and nation, permit me to subscribe myself."