

SUBSIDIES. The proposed subsidy of ten millions of dollars a year to the men who will establish and own a line of American steamships which shall carry commodities and passengers across the Atlantic ocean suggests several questions.

Do not the navigation laws of the United States prevent the sailing of a foreign-built ship under the Stars and Stripes?

Does not the existing Dingley tariff put a duty of from forty per cent. to one hundred and twenty per cent. upon many or all of the woods, iron, steel, cordage, etc., which enter into the construction of a ship?

Do not the diabolism of the exclusive navigation law and the protective tariff make it impossible to have by purchase, or to construct, for competition on the high seas, an American Merchant Marine; and if both those restrictive laws were mitigated by amendment or entirely repealed would there be any need for or pretense even for the need of a ship subsidy?

At an early day here in Nebraska, in 1855, the first crop of corn was planted in the newly broken prairie. It came up beautifully under the forcing of sunshine, rain and this marvelously fertile soil. It was the first time in their black and glossy lives that the trans-Missouri crows had ever had civilized man set a table for them to eat from. The caw! caw! caw! of ravenous rejoicing resounded all over the few acres of corn as it came, dark, green, and lusciously attractive to the crow palate, from this new and untried land. The black gourmands began devouring the young plants with an appetite for sprouting corn only equaled by the Kentucky taste for the juice of old corn. The few planters in the county of Otoe, Nebraska agreed that the only way to get rid of the crows aforesaid and save the corn crop was to "subsidize" all the boys in the settlement to shoot crows. Thus a bounty of five cents was offered in the vicinity of Nebraska City for each scalp of a crow delivered at the log court house on or before November 1, 1855. By that date the shooting youth of this frontier settlement had deposited one hundred and ninety-three scalps as aforesaid provided and been paid therefor five cents apiece. The corn crop was saved. The people rejoiced, for each man who paid had possession of the corn protected. The next summer the same boys proposed a renewal of the "subsidy" on the same terms. Their proposition was gladly accepted. But by September 25th the crow scalps were piling up so high that it seemed the whole circulation of the settlement would be absorbed in paying five cents a head for them. An investi-

gating committee was appointed and it made solemn inquest as to how or why the crow family had increased so rapidly and matured so early in the season. And the committee found and reported that the aforesaid boys had robbed the nests of the aforesaid crows and hatched out the eggs under the domestic hen. Thus that subsidy made little rascals, like some promoters, out of guileless youth, wasted the hens' time, and swindled the general public. Ever since that time The Conservative has suspected subsidies in general, whether concealed under the euphemistic phrase of "a tariff for protection," "a tax on oleomargarine," or "a subsidy to establish an American Merchant Marine." Most subsidies make rascals of somebody, deceive everybody and really benefit nobody.

The butter makers, butter renovators and butter speculators found wholesome, edible oleomargarine a vigorous competitor in the markets of the United States. They scratched their scalps for a way to down competition in the smearing-of-bread business. They invented legislation under false pretenses. At a time—in Grover Cleveland's first administration—when the national treasury contained a surplus of more than two hundred millions of dollars, and when the inflow of revenue was like a torrent, the butter patriots secured the first anti-oleomargarine legislation upon the pretext of getting revenue and so put the first tax upon the only butter substitute in the market. It was obtaining enactment under a false pretence and as much a crime morally as getting goods or money in that way. The precedent pleaded was the ten per cent tax on the issue of bills to circulate as currency by State Banks. That burden on state banks of issue destroyed all of them and left the currency field a perfect monopoly as to paper currency—other than that issued by the general government—in the hands of the National Banks. Thus the statement of Chief Justice John Marshall that "the power to tax is the power to destroy" was demonstrated.

THE POWER TO TAX. The national bankers having annihilated their adversaries and competitors by legislation, the philanthropic butterers seek similar salvation, in the destruction of their rivals, also; by congressional enactment. The precedent in the bank case was bad and the butter case worse.

Where shall this misuse, this wicked abuse of the power to tax, end? Who is safe in his business? When shall rivals secure tax-imposing legislation with which to crush and ruin him?

How long before wool-growers shall

seek enactments to cripple by taxation, cotton growers?

How long before Congress is to be called upon to tax all cotton fabrics passing for and as substitutes for woolen goods?

How long before the castor bean and olive oil industries shall secure a tax on cotton seed oil? The power to tax can be used legitimately only for a public purpose!

SIMILAR. Jonathard R. Bryan, aged 54, a banker of Dixon,

Tenn., and a cousin of William Jennings Bryan, was married a few days ago to the widow of his son, Mrs. Eva C. Bryan, good looking and aged 23. The wedding took place at Cairo, this state.—Chicago Chronicle, Oct. 19th, 1901.

Racial tendencies are very marked. Mr. Bryan of Nebraska is married to "Free-Silver-at-16-to-1"—the widow of his presidential boom.

Kentucky has tried the scrub stock from the mountain ranges of that commonwealth long enough. Therefore there is anxiety that a thoroughbred be entered for the gubernatorial races in that state. Thus far Henry Watterson is the favorite. The Conservative knew both sire and dam of this charger and is therefore confident that as "a standard bred" he will honor his father and mother, when he is governor, as he does now by his great ability, courage, fortitude and the steadiness of a strong step, at a lightning pace, in the direction of the right goal every day of his editorial life.

BLATTERS AND BUILDERS. The commonwealth contains two distinct varieties of public men. They are builders and blatters. The former found farms and factories, establish industries and help to manage the material and mental development of their respective localities.

The latter, the blatters, find fault with the methods and labors of those who construct things, and advocate the general tearing down of whatever exists, socially or politically, without providing anything good in its stead.

The discontented—those who from misfortune, or from their own indolence, improvidence or incapacity have failed in life—are always the disciples of the gospel of blat and the apostles of blatters. In Nebraska the days of the builders are brightening and those of the blatters are clouding. People are getting tired of listening to incandescent denunciations of capital and capitalists in buildings, or in the shadow of buildings, which would never have been built except by the kind of citizens whom the blatters reprobate. Builders, not blatters, are public benefactors.