New York Tribune.

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The Public and the Income Tax.

Nearly every city in the country reports a rush to file income-tax returns. Each Collector of Internal Revenue has been instructed to keep secret the total number of returns made in his district, but semi-official figures given out before the lid was clamped down Saturday night indicate that the Treasury Department's estimate of probable income-tax payers will be exceeded.

Predictions that an income tax would be widely resented and dodged in this country have not been verified. The public as a whole has accepted the law cheerfully. The extreme bitterness manifested against this form of taxation in Great Britain and on the Continent of Europe has been lacking here. There are many reasons for the absence of grumbling and ill-will. Our ordinary rate is very moderate compared with the rates in force abroad. We have an exemption on income up to $3,000 for an unmarried person and up to $4,000 for a married person. That lets out nearly all those likely to be at all pinched in living resources by the payment of an income tax.

In Europe the exemption runs well below $1,000. In Austria, for instance, it is only $320. The rate of tax abroad is also much higher than ours. In Austria a person with an income of $1,250 would have to pay $23.91. Here there would be no tax at all. On an income of $6,250 the tax here would be $22.50, while in Austria it would be $215—nearly ten times as much. Germany only last year laid a 5 per cent tax on capital in addition to the regular tax on income. We have no burden of direct taxation at all comparable to that borne by other nations with smaller resources and lower earning power.

There has been much complaint here about the bungling drafting and administration of the income tax law. The Treasury Department has confused itself and everybody else by its unintelligible and conflicting instructions. Reports from all parts of the country make the proportion of erroneous returns anywhere between 30 and 80 per cent. These are the grosser errors which appear on the face of the sheet. But so far as meeting the intention of the law or even the Treasury Department's final revised conception of that intention, probably 99½ per cent of the individual returns must be classified as erroneous.

The public has had a right to complain of the crudity with which the law has been applied to income arising in 1913. Yet tens of thousands of taxpayers have put themselves to much trouble and inconvenience studying out the puzzles of the statute and of the Treasury instructions. They have done this in good faith and in a genuine spirit of co-operation with the government. We are inclined to think that the vast majority have made out their returns conscientiously, and that the bulk of those who have dodged or falsified belong to the relatively small class of the habitually dishonest. It will encourage faith in the soundness of our Americanism if it is discovered that the public—or that part of it which pays the new tax—has willingly and patriotically responded to its obligations. That is just what ought to be expected under our free and democratic form of government.

A Proposal to End Discipline.

Of the Walker-Griffin bills giving to civil service employes in the competitive class the right to a formal trial before removal and to a review of that trial by the courts Secretary Belcher of the Civil Service Reform Association says:

> If these bills were to become law, it is safe to say that it would be next to impossible to maintain in the public service even an approach to businesslike efficiency. The bills would put on the head of a department the burden of proving according to rules of court procedure against even a clerical employe specific facts showing incompetence, misconduct or insubordination. As every one knows, there are many cases in which it would be impossible to get rid of a generally inefficient employe, one who is a shirk or who merely keeps up the appearance of faithful work, under such a system.

These bills, in practical effect, merely extend to all classified civil service employes the special privilege which the New York City police enjoy. Though some friends of civil service reform, like "The New York Times," defend this privilege in the case of the police, Secretary Belcher is right in denouncing it as certain if adopted to make the position of head of a department "truly pitiable."

The Walker-Griffin bills should be beaten. The privilege of a court review upon dismissal should be taken away from the police. The "System" should be ended, not made universal.

The Test Case of William Henkel.

President Wilson's willingness to recognize and reward efficiency in office will soon be put to a peculiar test. The term of William Henkel, United States Marshal for the Southern District of New York, has expired, and, as every one knows who has ever set foot in the federal court here, Mr. Henkel is the flawless personification of what a United States marshal ought to be. The convicted criminal who hears Henkel cry to the court attendants, "Take him out!" gets his first real hint of what reparation to the offended majesty of justice means.

No other marshal ever stood forward so impressively as an embodiment of the law's grip on evildoers. In his sixteen years of service no prisoner ever escaped from his custody. In fact, few prisoners have ever attempted liberties with his system. Federal judges from the other districts and circuits who have sat here have expressed unbounded admiration at his complete mastery of his official duties. Henkel is omnipresent, and no emergency has ever got the better of him. Most marshals are in continual warfare with the auditing officers at Washington over their accounts, but in sixteen years Washington has held up Henkel for only one voucher—and that for less than 50 cents. If he stays in office long enough he feels that he will surely get even that slight discrepancy straightened out.

Every judge now living who has seen Henkel in action wants him retained for life. There is no other marshal in his class. Will the administration turn him out and throw his place into the patronage jackpot? If it does the outraged ghost of efficiency will camp for many nights on the bed posts of the President and the Attorney General.

Let the Accused Testify.

The common sense reform of a clumsy obstacle to justice is before the Legislature in a bill introduced by Senator McClelland and Assemblyman Walker. This bill ends the code rule which is supposed to enable a defendant to remain off the stand without damage to his case. It cuts out the clause which now provides that a refusal to testify shall not create any presumption against the defendant.

We say "supposed" to give this generous protection advisedly. For in a large majority of cases a jury, being human, draws its own conclusions, no matter how strongly the court urges the code provision upon it. The whole business is a fine illustration of how far our trials have travelled from the ordinary usages of life. The humane attempt of the code is utterly opposed to all human practice and experience. In real life every one knows that an innocent man is eager to tell his story. Yet our law endeavors to nullify this universal truth—with what failure every observer of juries can testify.

The reform proposed is to-day law in Ohio, Iowa and New Jersey, and should certainly become law here. The damage to defendants would be trifling. And the gain for a simple, straightforward administration of justice would be very great.

Investigate the Prizefight Commission.

It is to be hoped the Assembly graft hunters will find that it fits in with their programme to investigate the State Athletic Commission, as it is reported they may do. This body has not been a success. It has pleased neither the sincere advocates of clean boxing nor the element of the public which can see no reason for putting professional pugilism under the sheltering wing of the state.

Ugly rumors of scandal have always been attached to the concern from the time some politicians and their pugilist friends put New York State into partnership with the prizefight promoters. The law creating the commission was almost repealed a couple of years ago; it was saved only by a Tammany Senate. It is a farce. The joke is now on New York State; it is time to turn it on the prizefight clubs.

The Government and Unemployment.

The I. W. W., with its raids on churches and on "labor temples," is merely exploiting the unemployed. But it is well that attention is called to unemployment as it exists to-day. The recent conference on unemployment in this city attracted little public notice, although unemployment is worse now, or has been recently, than at any other time since the panic.

Changed conditions give unemployment a new aspect. It is more of a public matter than it ever was, not merely because society has a keener sense of responsibility for failures in economic adjustment than ever before, but because government regulation of industries has made the government partly responsible for wages and opportunities of employment.

This situation has been brought home to the public in the various applications of railroad employes for higher wages. It was up to the government to permit the railroads to earn money enough to pay their workmen living wages. Responsibility for some of the present lack of employment is equally up to the government. Figures such as those in the Pennsylvania Railroad Company's report are typical. With lessening net earnings in the face of increasing gross the railroads cannot expand. They are not now affording the employment to labor that they would be if the Interstate Commerce Commission had pursued a more liberal course toward them. Their retrenchment affects dependent industries and has its influence upon the whole state of business to-day.

With the policy that it has toward business the government cannot long wash its hands of responsibility for unemployment. Before another period of depression like the present one comes an intelligent policy regarding unemployment will have to be worked out. Those who are out of work because the government is disciplining the railroads or the trusts, cutting the tariff or bidding business mark time while it works out new statutes for its regulation, whatever justification may exist for the government's action, should not be left to the exploitation of the I. W. W. When the government laid its hand upon the industries of the country it assumed a new responsibility toward the labor that is dependent upon them.

Baseball in British Eyes.

The London sporting critics who saw the Giants play the White Sox seem to agree that from the British point of view baseball is "monotonous." That is only natural. The Britisher on the cricket field has been taught to think that scoring runs is the soul of the game. He likes to see a batsman knock out three or four "centuries" of runs and be carried on the record as "not out" after a two or three days' lingering at the wicket. That is variety, not monotony, in his eyes. Even the rabidest New York fan who should see the Giants make ten or fifteen runs in one inning with nobody out would hoot the opposition, call the game a farce and a "hippodrome" and want to get his money back at the box office.

It's all in the point of view. Cricket is the sport of the leisurely. It is the best of form to stop a cricket match for luncheon or for tea, and to quit for the day long before the sunset gun booms. The American wants a quick, snappy contest, with a definite result in sight. Baseball measures up to his habits of thought and action, just as cricket fits in with British customs and traditions.

Cricket has had a fair trial in this country and has never become acclimated. It stood much higher in popular favor thirty or forty years ago than it does now, having formerly developed much strength as a sport in and about Philadelphia. It is too slow-going for this generation. Baseball has never had a trial in England. Perhaps if it should have it would work its way into favor. Even in England the old leisurely manner is going out. Time is getting more precious, and those whose leisure is diminishing may find the quick, condensed, exhilarating action of the baseball diamond more and more to their liking. Baseball, too, may be domesticated when Great Britain buckles down to a real programme of Efficiency and Economy.

What a wise old groundhog it was, to be sure!

The Conning Tower

"On Such a Night——"

I love to sing of the winter thing
In a rugged manner and bold:
I like to spill of the bracing chill
And chant of the tingling cold.

I love to write of the stormy night,
And the rage of the sleet and hail;
I'm fain to tell of the snowy spell,
And speak of the winds that wail.

I love to spiel of the way I feel
As the terrible storm destroys
The sturdy ship (in the manner of Kip-
Ling, Newbolt or Alfred Noyes).

I love to sing of the winter thing,
In a vigorous, yearnful pome—
But gosh! how I fear the walk from here
To the subway bound for home!

Dimly we begin to sense why the March hare was mad.

Ah, well! These little precipitations do lay the dust, don't they.

And there's another bright side. The storm raised Ned with the telegraph wires and there wasn't a baseball rumor that came out of the West last night.

Old winter sad, in snow yclad,
Is making a doleful din;
But let him howl till he crack his jowl,
We will not let him in.

Let him push at the door,—at the chimney roar,
And rattle the window-pane.
Let him at us spy with his icicle eye,
But he shall not entrance gain.

Thus Thomas Noel, about seventy years ago. If Poet Noel had lived in a New York apartment house in 1914 he might have sung less bravely. One of the windows in our demesne blew in yesterday afternoon, and he—winter—gained entrance, willy-nilly. The esteemed superintendent (slang for janitor), informed of the disaster, refused to act, saying he wasn't going to be nobody's dog. He, by the way, is one reason the Socialist Party doesn't grow faster.

While nothing is so indefensible as a shattered resolution, we cry you mercy what time we splinter one long enough to whisper that Anna R. Vogel is the world's champion live-bird shot.

AND, SINCE THAT RESOLUTION IS DECIMATED——

[From the City Record, February 28th.]

Automobile Engineman Joseph P. Haste, Division of Apparatus, Brooklyn and Queens, for reckless driving; charges dismissed.

Simeon Ford's little daughter, aged nine, has drawn six pictures which appear in the current "Vanity Fair," and her father has written verses to elucidate them. The rhymes are bad and the feet halting, and our advice to young Miss Ford is to get another collaborator—one who doesn't link "stream" with "green" preferred.

"It's not a mongrel song," ecstacizes the publisher of "The Ragtime Dream." "For instance, the refrain is made up of 'take-offs' on seven of the already popular song hits of the day." Some day, perhaps, that publisher will issue a mongrel lyric. Until that millennial morning, however, you are not going to know what one is.

If you ever had, have or expect to have a headache we should advise you to read a piece called "I Cure a Headache," by Henry Wallace Phillips, in "Harper's Weekly" for February 28.

REVEALING THE SOURCE.

Now is the winter of our discontent [Shakespeare]. Is the influence of the Fourth Estate [Burke] to become a proverb and a byword [I Kings vi 7]? The freedom of the press has never been denied to us [Joseph Anderson] since the brave days of old [Macaulay] when burning Sapho loved and sung [Byron].

Whither are we drifting [New York Times]? Out of the night that covers [Henley] us, we know not what course others may take [P. Henry] and across what trail [Grantland Rice] the whips and scorns of time [Shakespeare] may urge our innumerable caravan [Bryant]. But any one who says we will not dare to do our duty as we understand it [Lincoln], lies [T. Roosevelt].

"There is censorship and there is censorship," says the Evening Post. Not to add nonsensorship.

Our notion of soft-heartedness is to feel sorry for the income-tax clerks in Charley Anderson's office, who, because the office kept open until six o'clock Saturday evening, were deprived of their half-holiday.

About 87,200 income-tax schedules have been filed in New York, a large number of them, we imagine, to the bone.

"'Julien'" hazards the revered, since one cannot break a habit, "Evening Mail," "might well be called a one-man opera were it not for the extraordinary impersonations of Miss Farrar." And, as Tommie writes, "Louise" might be termed a one-woman opera were it not for the conspicuous artistry of Mr. Dalmores.

Our Own Travelogues.

Sir: This is a large town, in places. Come on over.

ROBERT H. DAVIS.

Paris, Fr.

COWARD!

I've never feared a feminist,
I hope I'll never dread one;
But this plain fact should not be missed:
I'd rather dread than wed one!

JACK.

Owing to the difficulties of transportation yesterday the animal train was seventeen hours late, so the publication of the Whale's typograph is postponed until to-morrow.

The jobless want food, clothing and raiment, and we should like to see them get them. But we should like better to see them get jobs.

Add list of injured: SYSTEM, SURFACE CAR, New York. Frost-bitten, compound fracture and internal injuries. Taken to hospital. May recover.

Ch'rup! This, remember, is the world's greatest summer resort.

Keep on the shady side of the street.

F. P. A.

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

THE PEOPLE'S COLUMN

An Open Forum for Public Debate.

THE BECKER TRIAL.

Justice Goff's Conduct Approved and the Tactics of Counsel Described.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I as a lawyer, beg to differ with "A Lawyer" who writes you as per Saturday edition in defence of the Court of Appeals in the Becker case.

There was scarcely a lawyer in New York during the course of the strenuous and exciting trial of this important police officer who did not think him guilty of being the instigator of Rosenthal's bold and brutal murder. Every circumstance pointed to it, and pointed to nobody else. The only fear was that the jury might disagree, for Mr. McIntyre, the defendant's counsel, was one of the ablest and most experienced members of the criminal bar, and fought desperately for many days to break and weaken the evidence of the prosecution. This was his sole defence, as the record of the trial shows, and the astute and tireless counsel did his utmost to accomplish it; and Judge Goff was patient and impartial in the main in permitting the counsel the widest latitude, although it was often apparent that there were studied and deliberate attempts made to drag the case along and tire court and jury into listlessness and doubt. Judge Goff was an experienced and able criminal lawyer and trial judge, and knew well what was needed in the case, and it is gravely unfortunate that his action and conduct should be impugned and set aside by judges of the Court of Appeals, not one of whom probably ever tried a murder case in his life.

It is a sad and serious commentary on the course of justice and one that does not redound to the credit of our highest court, and entirely justifies the strictures of The Tribune. ALSO A LAWYER.

New York, Feb. 28, 1914.

A CRITIC OF MR. FETHERSTON

The Past Is Held No Excuse for the Present Failure to Clean the Streets.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I spoke, wrote, canvassed, watched and in other ways worked for the success of the fusion ticket last fall because I believed that it would give the city a safe, efficient and economical administration. Under the same circumstances I would work just as hard for the same ticket.

But it is by no means encouraging to find an important arm of the administration in a condition of almost complete prostration as a result of the recent heavy snows. It is now about ten days since the blizzard struck the town and the streets continue to present a most unlovely picture of confusion. The sidewalks are icy and dangerous. Hundreds of pedestrians slip and fall each day, bruising and temporarily maiming themselves.

Grocers are unable to make prompt deliveries, garbage collectors are obliged to leave the reeking filth on the sidewalks, and should an alarm of fire be sounded from some of the congested side streets thousands of helpless citizens would be at the mercy of the combined agencies of frost and flame.

It would seem that a city like New York, with its vast resources in men, money and machinery, ought to rise to a situation of this character. Mr. Fetherston tells us that his administration has succeeded in removing more snow in a given time than former administrations were able to carry away. These figures, while perhaps proving that his predecessors were more impotent than himself in dealing with the situation, bear melancholy testimony to the fact that New York is either unable or unwilling to evolve a practical scheme for meeting such emergencies as have recently arisen.

It is said that 300,000 men are out of employment in this city. If this is true the men to do the work ought to be available. It is not conceivable that a city whose business men are losing millions of dollars a day because of the condition of the streets would withhold the necessary money for this purpose.

I write as a friend of the administration, not as its enemy. A. D. FAIRBAIRN.

No. 2079 Daly avenue, The Bronx, Feb. 24, 1914.

THE ROOSEVELT RECALL

It Would Not Apply to the Becker Case, a Reader Points Out.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Your correspondent, George Mooney, seems to think that the Progressive proposal for the review of decisions by the people would apply in the Becker case. In this he is altogether mistaken. I quote from Colonel Roosevelt's speech at Carnegie Hall in 1912:

"So that no man may misunderstand me, let me recapitulate:

"(1) I am not proposing anything in connection with the Supreme Court of the United States or with the federal Constitution.

"(2) I am not proposing anything in connection with ordinary suits, civil or criminal, as between individuals.

"(3) I am not speaking of the recall of judges.

"(4) I am proposing merely that in a certain class of cases involving the police power, when a state court has set aside as unconstitutional a law passed by the legislature for the general welfare, the question of the validity of the law—which should depend, as Justice Holmes so well phrases it, upon the prevailing morality or preponderant opinion—be submitted for final determination to a vote of the people, taken after due time for consideration."

It is a duty which every partisan owes to himself and to his party to understand the principles of the party. If Mr. Mooney is a Progressive his ignorance of this principle of his party is deplorable. If he wishes a clear exposition of the recall of decisions I would suggest that he read Judge Ransom's book, "Majority Rule and the Judiciary."

JOHN FRANCIS CURRAN.

New York, Feb. 27, 1914.

THE SERVANT PROBLEM

Disadvantages of Housework Are Declared To Be Few.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I see that a Miss Marie Costello has in your paper of February 25 replied to my letter on "unemployed women," published by you in an earlier issue.

I should like to inform Miss Costello that while I am not likely to have the experience that she suggests I have lived in the country, both in summer and winter, and know its disadvantages, and that it seldom has trolley cars, theatres, moving pictures or other amusements. I have also heard of inconsiderate mistresses and uncomfortable rooms for maids, but I have never heard of any one in service being forced to work sixteen hours in a day.

My contention still is that it is mistaken kindness for charitable ladies to "make work" for able-bodied women who can easily find plenty if they will forego the pleasures of city life for a time, or accept moderate wages within its limits.

EMILY D. MOREWOOD.

No. 156 West 76th street, New York, Feb. 17, 1914.

SUICIDE AND THE SUBWAY

A Danger Line Should Be Made to Keep Passengers Back.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: Your correspondent's remarks headed "Suicide and the Subway" in Wednesday's Tribune are distinctly praiseworthy.

This form of self-destruction has got to be a mania, becoming overcommon and terrifying, and should surely be crushed in its incipient state. I would supplement his original suggestions by making the two feet of white danger line compulsory. Permanent signs to read: "No person is allowed to step over the white danger lines until train is standing in front of them. Ghards and passengers may guide people firmly back, with the company's assent, when they break the rule of standing beyond the white danger line. Persistency in this most dangerous practice will subject the offenders to arrest." WILLIAM CUNNINGHAM.

No. 253 West 99th street, New York, Feb. 26, 1914.

Two Uplifters.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: I note that in a report of the meeting of the "Democratic party in New York" held last night at the Hotel McAlpin Mr. J. Aspinwall Hodge appeared as one of the leaders of the organization and made a ringing speech about advancing the cause and benefiting collectively as well as individually the Democratic voters. If he should persevere in his leadership and keynote sounding it is fair to guess that he will soon bring his client and associate in litigation, Mr. Clarence H. Venner, along with him. Where could two names be found so likely to consolidate the banking interests as these: J. Aspinwall Hodge and Clarence H. Venner? NEW YORKER.

New York, Feb. 27, 1914.

A SERIOUS MISTAKE.

From The New York Herald.

The public will be impressed greatly by the calm and conservative editorial which we copy from The New-York Tribune on the decision of Judge Hand that one of its editors and one of its reporters shall pay a fine of $500 each and holding over them a threat of imprisonment if they do not go before the next grand jury or some subsequent one and purge themselves of contempt.

The "contempt" in this case is the refusal of the editor and the reporter to divulge the source of their information relating to news about smuggling which the customs officials assert was printed prematurely.

The Tribune boldly and bluntly declares that the Treasury Department has a grievance against it for making another publication which dealt with very close connections between Treasury officials and solvent and insolvent financial institutions in the District of Columbia.

The accusation which The Tribune makes against the Treasury Department is a thousand times more serious than its publication of the trivial items about smuggling. It is now time for Judge Hand to have the federal grand jury look into that.

We fancy that all the official, judicial and legal power of the United States will fail to establish the rule that a newspaper editor or reporter shall be coerced on the whim of a government official into telling a grand jury or any one else the source of information which he has received in the strictest confidence under pledge that the source shall not be disclosed. That is something we are quite sure that the New Freedom cannot accomplish.