

THE JOURNAL

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WHERE PERSONAL PROPERTY IS NOT TAXED

As in several other classes of legislation and administration the British self-governing colonies in the Pacific have taken more advanced positions in respect to taxation than have we of the United States. The Minnesota tax commission refers briefly to the systems of taxation in vogue there, saying:

The best thought of the country seems to regard with favor such a policy, and it may be that within a brief period there is now contemplated, wisdom will require the adoption by the people of this state of such a policy or of one which shall embody its salient features.

In the event of the adoption of the commission's constitutional amendments, or others giving the legislature substantially the same latitude of action the adoption of the New Zealand or Australian systems will doubtless become a pressing question. Any conceivable departure from the present principle of taxation of all property must tend in part, at least, toward the systems of the south seas. A recent consular report supplies us with some interesting information about the New South Wales system and its workings. The report is made by Orlando H. Baker, United States consul at Sydney. Leaving out of consideration the very large revenue derived by the state from the sales and leases of public lands, the forms of the state revenues are customs, excise, license, land tax, income tax and stamp duties. There is no personal property tax. The land tax is levied on the value of the land as determined by what can be realized by sale. It yields the state only about a tenth of the total tax revenues.

Each municipal fixes its own rate of taxation within certain limits. The tax is assessed at 5 per cent on nine-tenths of the value fixed on unimproved land, and on the rent which the improvements should bring. If the property is unoccupied and the owner receives no rent he is assessed just the same. In Sydney at the present time the rate is 2 shillings per pound, which includes lighting. Water and sewerage rates are 7d (14 cents) on each pound. By this method, if the property must pay a rent of \$500 per annum it must pay a tax of \$50.

We have here then in practice the theory that personal property should not be taxed. Mr. Baker does not find that it has brought about the taxation millennium. For instance, the government establishes the rent a certain house ought to bring. The owner may search in vain for a tenant at that price and he may have to rent his house at a much lower rate or leave it empty, but the tax must be paid, nevertheless. Another instance of what Mr. Baker considers an injustice is in the land tax. The erection of improvements on neighboring property brings up the tax on a lot though the owner is deriving no more from it than formerly. The owner of the lot referred to may be living in a humble cottage on it. His income is no greater than before and his home is no finer, but his taxes are greater. But, of course, we have the same inequality in our present real estate tax.

Incomes in New South Wales above \$1,000 are taxed at the rate of 2.4 cents per dollar. Much the same system prevails in New Zealand. As bearing on the present discussion of the taxation of mortgages it is interesting to note that where a mortgage stands against the land, 12 cents on each pound, paid as interest, is deducted from the tax.

The census make no reference to ease of collection under the land tax and income tax systems as compared with the personal property tax system, but it may be taken for granted that there is no such vexation and irritation under the former as under the latter system, so much does deceit, lying and perjury.

The brief experience the people of Minnesota have had with an elective railway and warehouse commission is not such as cause them to oppose attempts to make it appointive again. The department con-

cluded to this commission is the most important field for executive action in the state government. It gives an ambitious and efficient governor an opportunity to do something, to have a program and carry it out, when the commission is controlled by him.

A GRIEVOUS BLOW

If the announced intention of Postmaster General Payne of retaining all fourth-class postmasters when their present terms expire, except as they may be removed for cause, is followed up by an executive order placing all of the members of this numerous official class on a classified service basis the national spoils system will receive its death blow. What is left of it will not give anything like the ramifications of personal interest that now exist in national politics. From what we know of the trouble these fourth-class offices cause to congressmen, who always nominate the men the president appoints, we think that they would gladly welcome a change that would relieve them of so much work that is without any benefit to their constituents at large.

With this sort of patronage, as well as other sorts, the practical handbooks quite offset the practical benefits to the postmaster in the long run. The postmasters, to be sure, form the nuclei of very excellent political machines, but opposed to them are the machines organized by the disappointed candidates, by those who are planning to succeed them and by all the personal enemies they have in each community. In the average village the average individual opinion of the congressman is based upon the individual opinion of the postmaster. Many a good congressman has been refused re-election because of some petty and disgusting fourth-class postoffice fight. With these offices on a permanent tenure basis public opinion of a congressman would be crystallized on matters having more bearing on his work at Washington than that of his attitude toward a village postoffice row.

The nation would be a great gainer if our congressmen and senators could be wholly spared the loss of time, distraction of attention and soreness of spirit caused to them by patronage disputes. Many congressmen are so absorbed in this sort of "statesmanship" that they never rise to the plane of an independent study of even the great questions that come before congress. The result is that legislation is the work of a few leaders who may be in error and may not be in touch with the people.

Now that the legislature has reached the stage of action in its consideration of taxation legislation it will do well to remember that there are parts of the tax commission's report that can be adopted with positive benefit to the state. It will be found that the opponents of any tax legislation, whatever, at this session of the legislature are often really the representatives of interests that would prefer to continue indefinitely the present system of taxation; that is to say, interests that under any sort of a system would have to bear a heavier burden of taxation than at present.

DEMOCRATIC POLICY

Congressman Wheeler's enterprise last week in giving the distracted democrats a suggestion for a new issue was of the kind characteristic of the loquacious Kentuckians. He seems to have put his foot into it, however, for while hurling a storm of vituperative nouns, adjectives, verbs and participles at the administration for showing the usual civilities to nations with whom we are at peace and upon friendly terms, he has aroused the ire of our citizens of German descent and birth, who naturally object to the characterization of Prince Henry of Hohenzollern as a "little Dutchman" and denouncing the government for slandering him any attention and reviling American citizens as guilty of "disgraceful funkyness" for approving the course of the government, which is the course taken in such cases by American administrations from Washington to the present time, including the democratic administration.

Possibly the leaders of the democratic party, whoever they may be, will not share the vituperative energy of Wheeler, for they may reflect that there are some Germans in the democratic party. The party, however, seems so distracted and confused over the subject of issues, that it is just stupid enough to back Wheeler. What an interesting spectacle will the democrats present going into the proximate congressional elections on Wheeler's "anti-funkyness" issue!

"Anti-funkyness" is an exaggeration of issues the democratic organs and orators are wangling over! Here is a group of organs, like the Philadelphia Record, back-seething the party to drop all other issues and concentrate all the party energy upon a fight for free trade in the most positive manner. Another group of democrats, represented by Bryan and his Comrades, distinctly call for the effectuation of the "settling" policy as to the Philippines, taking for their motto the incisive pronouncement of Senator Money, of Mississippi: "Let the Philippines go to the devil and take care of themselves!" Senator Ben Tillman, of South Carolina, who tries to pose as another Calhoun, but makes himself ridiculous by his vulgar buffoonery and slang-wrangery, shrieks: "My sympathies are with the Philippines!" but his scarcely disguised animus is his belief that his party can successfully launch the "anti-imperialist" issue with great success in 1904. Some benighted democratic editors, again, are trying to revive free silver, but it is generally conceded that they are meeting with very languid support. The corpse is too heavy to put in an erect posture. There is no battery strong enough in voltage to electrify it into a semblance of life.

On Saturday there will be a big meeting of democrats from all portions of the country in New York to celebrate the day and concurrently discover, if possible, "where they are at." All the old issues will probably come up. It would seem that there has come a great change over the southern democrats on the subject of the Philippines. Tillman is butting against a very positive conviction and sentiment in his section favorable to dropping the policy he advocates. The Atlanta Constitution, discussing the position of the "old wool-bat democracy" of the south says it knows their views and that "not a baker's dozen of them, within our knowledge, are opposed to the holding of the Philippine archipelago as the present indefeasible property of the United States." "The retention of the Philippines is a fixed fact and the democrats of the country who helped to make that fact stand by it." The Nashville American takes the same view, saying that

"throughout the south, in city, town and country, the prevailing and natural, though not universal opinion among the people, is that the United States will not and should not surrender their possession and ownership of the Philippines." The Memphis Commercial-Appeal takes the same position and adds that Senator Tillman "technically has no right to speak for the party." These newspapers have strong backing in the south and there are many others who take the same view. The Journal's anti-funkyness issue will be rapturously indorsed as party policy by the assembled democracy on Saturday. They will probably pick it up with a pair of tongs and throw it among the refuse in the nearest alley. They will have to decide apparently between the policies of free trade and "settling." Both are dangerous things for the democracy to handle.

We were not surprised to find the London Times referring to American "cabinet ministers," but when that paper's namesake in Minneapolis makes a similar error we begin to think that we are being Anglized rather than that England is being Americanized.

THE MORRIS COMPROMISE

It is worth while to consider what would be the effect of the Morris compromise Cuban measure upon Cuban sugar in the English market. At present that great market is the world's best sugar market, taking per capita consumption as the criterion. England gets almost if not all her sugar from the continental beet sugar factories at about \$7 per ton less than the price would be in a natural market, the \$7 being the amount of the bounty paid in Germany and other countries. But the English colonies have protested, with reason, that England should not allow her devotion to the free trade policy to enforce the ruin of the sugar-making industries. Somewhat tardily the British government has recognized the force of this argument and has determined to impose a duty on bounty-encouraged sugar. This duty will be taken if the bounty-giving nations do not agree to abolish the bounties.

If the countervailing duty is imposed Cuban sugar, as well as that from the British colonies, would have access to the English market on a profitable basis. But if the Morris compromise should be adopted the British might hold that the tariff rebate to be given the planters is Cuba would be denied free access to the English market along with the beet sugar nations. This is merely a suggestion from a lay source, but it may turn out that it is well worth taking into account.

A SUBSIDY FOR THE STEEL TRUST

Returning from Europe, where, as the autocrat of the world's great industrial organization, he was received with honor by monarchs, Charles M. Schwab, after saying that he had informed the Europeans that they had nothing to fear from American commercial invasion of their own territory, went on:

"What we are after is trade in the great common field, such as China and the orient generally. This we want and are going to get. In order that we may do so, however, we look to congress to make provision for our shipping. We will look after the manufacturing."

This is almost an impudent proposition. The steel trust wants congress to protect (subsidize) shipping so that the trust can conquer the oriental market. All Americans will delight in the trade conquests abroad of the United States Steel company, just as they take pleasure in any kind of an American victory, but if the sentiment of the people of the west is the sentiment of the whole people it will be a long time before they will be in favor of subsidizing the United States Steel company to help it get that business. If the steel company feels the need of American shipping to assist it in its designs on the Asian market, let it build its own ocean fleets. In an article in the current Comopolitan Lewis Nixon admits that American ships can now be operated at a profit though not so much of a profit as foreign ships. But with some profits, is there any reason why the steel colossal, intent upon expanding the demand for its output, cannot afford to build ships of its own without help from the national treasury?

Force of circumstances is already reviving American shipping. When it becomes necessary to American manufacturing prosperity to have a powerful American merchant marine it will be built with great rapidity. That time is at hand. Let us encourage the tendency with generous pay for naval service and with favorable navigation laws, but let us beware of taxing any more money from one citizen's pocket to put it in that of another.

RATE-MAKING AND POOLS

Judge Knapp, chairman of the interstate commerce commission, discusses, in the current issue of the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the subject of government ownership of railways as the ultimate substitute for the present tentative measures of government supervision and control of the rate-making power. He admits that it is somewhat in consonance with the spirit of American institutions for the government to undertake the ownership and management of the railroads of the country, but while it is a gigantic task, past facts accomplished justify the belief that even in this field the United States is equal to the work, and, even if it would through a million employees, clothe the government with a large accession of political power, perhaps partizan, yet the influence could be no worse than that exerted by the railroads, politically, under the existing conditions. The judge lays most stress upon the prompt removal of the evils of secret rebates and rate-cutting generally, but he does not think that the view that government ownership would secure lower rates of transportation than at present is justifiable; it is at least doubtful. He thinks the country will, in the event of failure of all measures looking to regulation to cure abuses and chronic evils, conclude to resort to public ownership as the ultimate remedy.

Government ownership is a term having an imposing sound, and it is not impossible that some time, and not near at hand, certainly, the gigantic task may be undertaken through the increasing power of public sentiment. There is no doubt that government regulation will be tried in every form before there is resort to the proposed ultimate remedy. The industrial commission, whose report in respect to rate-making supervision or control and railway pools has been published in full,

discusses these subjects, but arrives at very lame conclusions, for instead of suggesting positive prescriptions, for secret rebating and rate cutting removal, it states objections to each of its own conclusions and winds up with: "Some effective remedy for the intolerable conditions which prevail under the law to-day must certainly be provided." Just so, and the commission was expected to suggest some effective remedy. It states that the making of the courts the only safeguard for the interests of the public and the carriers is inadequate to correct abuses and the proposition of the Cullom bill that a railroad which makes a rate adjudged a violation of the law by the interstate commerce commission be compelled to modify it, with right of appeal to the courts, is treated as inadequate. With respect to pooling, the industrial commission would seem to adopt the conclusion of many recent jurists that the anti-pooling clause of the law of 1887 cannot reasonably be construed as prohibiting many of the traffic agreements which have been customary between carriers, and that the present practice of consolidating lines involves the process of stifling competition of all kinds in respect to rates or of facilities. When the Cullom committee, in 1885, were preparing the interstate commerce commission law, they concluded in their report that it was wiser to permit pooling agreements than to prohibit them and render the enforcement and maintenance of agreed rates impracticable. But this wise counsel was disregarded. Of the four of the interstate commerce law, only the Elkins bill provides for pooling under government supervision. Provision is made in all the bills for a judicial review by the circuit courts of the orders of the commission on rates and ultimate appeal by the parties to the federal supreme court. Either the Elkins or the Corliss bill should be enacted to test the efficacy of added powers for the interstate commerce commission, with and without a contract right to make pooling contracts under supervision, to the railway companies.

The Nebraska State Journal, who used to locate Minnesota on the shores of Hudson bay and complain of ten months' winter, has written to the Journal: "He says: 'After all, Minnesota is a pretty good state. The farmers of Rock county have on deposit almost a million dollars, and the entire population of the county is less than ten thousand. There is nothing that warms up a climate like \$10,000,000 in the bank.'"

THE NONPAREIL MAN

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AMUSEMENTS

Foyer Chat. The largest Sunday night audience that has ever gathered within the walls of the Metropolitan greeted "The Strollers" last night, to say that it was pleased is drawing it mildly, as there was one continuous roar of merriment during the evening. Pretty girls, brilliant costumes, spontaneous humor and rapidly changing scenes entered into an ensemble that is a constant delight to the eye and ear. A review of the production will be printed in this column to-morrow.

OTHER PEOPLE'S NOTIONS

Ireland Not Loyal. To the Editor of The Journal: In your issue of yesterday, under the caption of "Ireland is Loyal," a "manufacturer of Belfast" manufactures some remarkable statements for American consumption. When this Mr. Hazley of Belfast says, "Leave the politicians out of the question, and you will find that Ireland believes this war in South Africa to be a just one," it is the same as if a socialist should say, "Leave the democrats, republicans, populists and prohibitionists out of the question and you will find that all America believes in socialism."

Some Old Gems Recut.

There is a story told of an Irishman who moved to the States and had a coal and a friend and breaking his jaw. When the case came up in court the prisoner admitted his guilt. "I admit, then," said the judge, "that you threw the piece of coal that broke the man's jaw." "Yes, sir, yer honor," was the reply; "but in an expository tone, 'it was soft coal.'"

Editorial Displeased Her.

Allow me to quote from an editorial in Friday's Journal: "The present agitation over the 'anti-vaccination' question is merely an eruption of an incredulity that is always entertained by the minority of persons in regard to every theory accepted by the majority." This doubtless sounds very familiar to the old anti-slavery agitators, who, a half century or so ago, were in an apparently hopeless minority than are the anti-vaccinationists to-day. Yet behold what a great matter their little fire kindled. To be taunted with being in the minority has no sting when we remember that heroic struggle for the right which has been the history of the 'anti-vaccinationists' does not seem to me to be quite the proper term to apply to those who venture to oppose Health Commissioner Hall's vaccination question, which, as I know, no opposition to the vaccination of those persons who believe in its efficacy as a means of preventing smallpox. The opposition is against the rate of vaccination of those who feel that the remedy forced upon them is worse than the disease. There have been several deaths in the city of late resulting from the injection of vaccine into the human system the poisoned pus from a diseased cow. But we say, let those who prefer to take their chances to 'life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness' as a result of that process, each enjoy himself in his own way. All that we ask is the same privilege. 'To be or not to be' vaccinated 'is the question' which we claim every individual has the right to decide for himself. Compulsory vaccination is a blow to the rights of the individual, and it is that which we oppose. Dr. Hall may be led to the line with statistics which he claims prove the efficacy of vaccination; but if space could be had in the public press for the purpose, the anti-vaccinationists would prove the contrary. —L. J. Stephens.

A DEADLOCKED LEGISLATURE

The Nebraska State Journal. The governor of Colorado called an extra session of the legislature to give an express purpose of delivering a blow under the belt to the corporations. An advance guard of noisy agitators were at the capitol when the session began, with most drastic bills for introduction. But as time passed, the corporations are getting in their work and the probabilities of doing anything in the line marked out are rapidly disappearing. The legislature is in deadlock and the session will, it is expected, last its full time limit of three months, and adjourn fully in the session will, it is said, eat up a sum equal to the entire taxes paid in a year into the coffers of the state by the corporations.

More Than Enough.

The Post-Is there a poets' club in New York? The Critic—Plenty of them. Nearly every critic keeps one.

MINNESOTA POLITICS

The McGowan bill repealing the railroad and warehouse commission act looks like another desperate attempt to put the republican majority in the hole. A number of republican members are pledged to support just such a measure, coming from republican sources. Republican members in both houses had drawn bills restoring the old appointive commission, and repeating the present act. A strict construction of the act would shut such a bill, and it was being held back to await a favorable opportunity.

Now the measure comes forward from a democratic source, and it is to be given aid or comfort from republicans, and will be buried, no doubt, in the senate steering committee. It will put the majority in a difficult position, however.

One way in which the republican members likely to vote against the McGowan bill is to introduce a bill to amend the law abolishing the commission of three and create one appointive commissioner, to have sole responsibility for the action. This is favored by those who are tired of the inaction which results from a commission of three men with as many minds.

The sale of seats for "The Girl from Maxims" opened with a rush at the Metropolitan theatre last night. The production was very successful and the fare, which made quite a hit here last season.

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At the Curtain's Fall

By Homer Lynde

Copyright, 1902, by S. S. McClure Co. "Anything on for to-night, Stanley?" "Not that I know of, Birch," answered Harvey Stanley, looking up from his sample cases. He represented Bemis & Co. in the southeastern territory. "I was in last night and haven't had time to see anybody yet."

"Well," exclaimed Birch, lighting a fresh cigar, "I'll give you a box gratis, just as a sign of our regard. He had written to her, fresh from a meeting of the Implement Dealers' association, and we've got to entertain them to-night. I've orders to do the thing up right; no limit on the expense account." "Sure," mumbled Stanley without removing his blue pencil from his mouth. "Meet you at the Palace Hotel at dinner. What show?" "The Alcazar. Prettiest bunch of chorus girls in town, and, if the men wait for it, we'll get a few of them for the supper after-ward."

"All right," replied Stanley absently, checking up his order list. The overtime was on when Harvey Stanley stood in the rear of a box gratis, just as the guests of Bemis & Co. at the brilliant house. A popular musical comedy with a star of national reputation had called out a representative house—women in silks, laces, jewels and flowers and men in the smartest of evening suits. It was a goodly world, and Stanley was glad to be in it once more. The



Lightly tripping, gaily skipping. The line of girls swung perilously near the box, but she of the velvet eyes was watching the blondes with a keen interest. "Oh, if she slipped on that square turn. And in the back of the box a white-faced young man seemed to hear and over again:

"And instead of love's paradise they find—hell." The curtain fell for the last time. The orchestra burst into an inspiring march. Birch was chatting jocularly with his firm's guests. The manager of the house is a personal friend of mine, and I'm sure to be bringing half a dozen of the girls over to supper. You'll find them rather a jolly lot." The westerners accepted the suggestion with good nature. "I'll be glad to see you," said Stanley, jerking his head with the remark: "You're the chorus girls' troops, not that little peach on the end of the second row. She's got the eyes all right." Stanley started as if stung. He gripped the back of a chair and his face grew harshly. "If it's just the same, Birch, let me off the rest of the evening. I'm a bit done up. Perhaps it's grip, but I think I'd better get around to the office to-night."

He took hasty leave of the box party and hurried out into the cold night air. Body and brain seemed on fire. Around the corner he dashed and entered a taxicab. A doorkeeper held him back. Stanley thrust a bill into the man's hand. "I must see Miss Alden." She probably had not thought of the suggestion. He decided hastily and correctly. "She's a cousin of mine, and I've a message of importance. She must not leave the theater without my seeing her." He stood in the shadows of the wings. Birch's cynical words and the westerner's light jest intermingled in his tired brain. Presently the chorus girls trooped from their dressing-room. She was almost the last to leave, and she sprang aside nervously as he rested his hand on her arm. "Harvey, don't you remember me?" "Harvey! Harvey!" "Oh, the joy and back of it the pithos! The doorkeeper heard it and smiled grimly. He saved the evening, but he had done his duty, but then he had the tip. They were on the street now, a nice, dark, dismal street. "Oh, Harvey, why didn't you answer my letter?" "I never got it." He lied deliberately. He would justify his very soul now to make her happy, to undo the wrong he had done. How and what had she done in the last six months! He was afraid to learn.

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German Uniforms Not Welcome.

Feb. 17.—Trouble between members of the crew of the imperial German yacht Hohenzollern and members of the United Albatross Society, discovered the night of the 15th, during their wandering about fifteen of the sailors went into Terrace Garden, where the sons of the conquered French province were holding a ball. The incident of high spirits with nonsense about city life. And instead of love's paradise they find—hell."

Short-Circuiting the Nerves.

Dr. C. C. Carroll of the county medical society, has discovered a method of preventing bodily sensations of pain from reaching the brain, thus doing away with the necessity of anesthetics in surgery. The plan might be called "short-circuiting" the nerves. The discovery of the wave theory of electric transmission permitted the discovery of the possibility of short-circuiting a nerve. Dr. Carroll discovered the rate of operation along a nerve is 300,000 per second approximately. Marconi has found that wireless telegraphy requires 800,000 oscillations per second. "After I had computed the number of wave oscillations per second," said Dr. Carroll, "it became necessary to obtain an electric oscillator having the same wave capacity as the nerves. I had Mr. Tesla build me an electric oscillator capable of 300,000 oscillations. A practical application of the theory of short-circuiting a nerve would be to compress a glass electrode, V-shaped to fit under the skin, with the ends pressing against the skin. The electrode is also made with the nerve in motion, the nerve action is short-circuited, because the oscillations of the electric current are the same as those of the nerve current, and all the sensation is cut off from the brain."

Wages Fall Off.

From statistics just issued by the census bureau it appears that workmen employed in the Brooklyn manufacturing establishments are earning less per man than they were ten years ago, and, as every one knows, the cost of living is higher. In 1900 they were earning \$1.81 per man, and now they are earning \$1.51 per man. In 1900 they were earning \$1.81 per man, and now they are earning \$1.51 per man. In 1900 they were earning \$1.81 per man, and now they are earning \$1.51 per man.

Some Fine Collections.

The annual report of the American Museum of Natural History gives account of the acquisitions to the museum during the year and of the various scientific expeditions that were maintained. The Morgan gem collection, the Bennett mineral collection and a collection of 100 coins from the Philadelphia mint, all the gift of J. Pierpont Morgan; the Birgit collection of Indian baskets, purchased by George Foster Peabody; a collection of 100 objects, presented by A. C. James, a large collection of shells, donated by Frederick A. Conable; additions to the Hoffman collection of butterflies, by Dean Hoffman; and the gift of the Bennett collection of 5,000 birds—these were the more notable acquisitions. Morris K. Jesup, B. T. Hyde, E. F. Hyde, J. F. Lambert and William C. Whitney, have made it necessary for them to be seen; my crown is called content; a crown it is that seldom kings enjoy. —Shakspeare.

MY CROWN

My crown is in my heart, not on my head; Not deck'd with diamonds, and Indian steez; Not to be seen; my crown is called content; a crown it is that seldom kings enjoy. —Shakspeare.