

The tired woman smiles and goes to her work. The head of the firm rings. She hurries into her employer's private office.

"My good Mrs. Doktor, you're looking so pale and tired out again! But I've so often told you not to work so much outside of office hours, it injures your health and your services. To say nothing of the fact that it's really not pleasant to see before one, a face so worn out and so evidently discontented! But you must understand that, don't you?"

* * *

STATE AND MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP IN SWEDEN.

III. THE POSTAL SERVICE.

For The Public.

It seems to have been universally recognized that the operation of the postal service is a proper governmental function. All over the world the governments of the civilized nations have assumed the duty of carrying written messages between individuals. This has become such a self-evident proposition that one hardly ever imagines the postal service turned over into private hands and managed and operated as a private monopoly. But in fact it is no more appropriate that the postal service should be administered and operated by the government than it is that the telegraphs and the telephones of the country should be owned and operated in this way. Postal service, telegraphs and telephones are nothing but different means to the same end, and they are all of the same monopolistic nature, the monopoly prohibiting their successful operation as competitive businesses. Whether the message transmitted is written or spoken does not change the nature of the service, and no one who admits that the government assumes a proper function in conducting its postal service can logically or sincerely assert that the government is going beyond its proper territory by taking charge of the telegraph and the telephone service of a country.

If we now consider to what extent the postal service properly ought to transmit articles by mail, we will have to ask ourselves whether there is any reasonable cause why the government should only transmit very small packages. Why should not the mail service be open for any kind of packages the public would be willing to pay suitable rates for?

If the postal service was restricted to messages only, an objection could be raised to carrying packages. But as the postal department in all countries does always handle any kind of matter up to a certain limit in weight, it is not very evident why an objection should be raised to its handling any goods wanted to be so forwarded. In short, why should not the postal department by the institution of a parcels post handle the larger portion of the transportation now usually turned over to the express companies, and for which exorbitant rates are charged?

There are of course some objections, but they can be easily overcome. It would perhaps not be well if the mail service would be required to regularly handle trunks and heavy boxes. But such matter would seldom be transmitted by mail on account of the rates being necessarily comparatively high.

In Sweden, the postal system which we here propose to compare in some particulars with the pos-

tal system of this country, the parcel post has proved to be an institution of the greatest advantage, and of great convenience to the public. The rates are very low for all packages below 11 pounds in weight, but for heavier packages the rate is proportionately higher, thus preventing them from transmission by mail, not by prohibition, but on account of economical considerations to the sender. This is a very well devised rate-regulation, for while it prevents heavier matter from being usually transmitted by mail, it permits such transmission in emergency cases.

The postal department in Sweden is a very old institution, dating back as it does to 1636, when the first regular mail routes were established by the administration. During such a long period it is evident that the department has had ample time to develop itself, and it has solved many a "problem" which in this country is still considered as unsolved. If we make a comparison between the rates charged here and there, and also a comparison between the services rendered, we may see more clearly wherein we could improve upon our own postal service, and make it not only self-supporting, but more useful to the public also.

However, before entering upon any direct comparison of rates let us take into consideration a few facts which are necessary for an impartial judgment. In the first place Sweden is at an advantage in an economical comparison of the paying qualities of its postal department because of not being such an extensive country, and thus not necessitating such distant transportation of its mail. It is true that Norway and Denmark are in such co-operation with Sweden that the same rates are uniform all over the Scandinavian countries; but even that does not create any distances in any direction of more than about 1,250 miles. On the other hand it must be remembered that Sweden and Norway are comparatively sparse in population, and that the business per capita carried on in the United States is so enormously much greater that the postal department in the United States is facing a far more inviting business proposition. It has often been asserted here that because of the constant deficit in the postal department's finances, it is a fair proof that government operation of public utilities is not advantageous or practical. Even if we had not the records of Europe to turn to, where the postal service in every country of any consequence is a paying business, the reasons put forth are worthless, inasmuch as the postal service in this country has never had a fair show. It has been expected to turn into private pockets in form of compensation for mail transfer by railroads such enormous sums that there was no possibility of making both ends meet.

But, after having given due credit both to the smaller size of the European country with which we are making our comparison, and also to the advantage possessed by the United States in form of greater business per capita, if we now return to our original comparison of rates charged in the United States and in Sweden we will find the conditions as follows:

1. Letter Rates.

	U. S.	Sweden.
½ ounce	2 cents	2.7 cents
4½ ounces	10 cents	5.4 cents
9 ounces	18 cents	8 cents

For local letters the rate is one-half the one stated, in Sweden.

2. Domestic Papers and Periodicals.

	U. S.	Sweden.
7 ounces	2 cents	1.1 cents
For local transmission the rate is one-half the one stated, in Sweden.		

3. General Parcel Post.

	U. S.	Sweden.
2.2 pounds	36 cents	8 cents
6.6 pounds	Not admitted	13.5 cents
11 pounds	Not admitted	20 cents

And for heavier packages 4 cents extra for each additional 1.1 pounds.

Registration fee is 8 cents in the United States and 4 cents in Sweden. Special delivery is 10 cents in this country, compared with 5.5 cents in Sweden.

4. Postal Money Orders.

	U. S.	Sweden.
For \$7	8 cents	4 cents
For \$27	12 cents	8 cents
For \$67	25 cents	9.5 cents
For \$100	30 cents	11 cents
For \$135	45 cents*	11 cents

The above comparisons show fairly well that in but one case, the case of simple letter rate, the rates are higher in Sweden than in this country; otherwise the rates are always lower, and in some cases so much lower that no reference either to lower wages paid or shorter distances for transmission, can explain the difference. There are a number of special features connected with the Swedish postal service which only to a small degree increase the work of the department, but which offer great convenience to the public for a very small fee. In the first place we may mention insurance of valuable matter transferred by mail. Any letter or package may be insured against loss, and the value of the enclosed matter, as stated by the sender, will be paid over to him in case of non-delivery. Such insurance makes transmission by mail of any matter of value absolutely safe. The rates charged are as follows:

8 cents for value up to.....	\$135
13.5 cents for value up to.....	270
For values larger than \$270 the rates are proportional so as to amount to 28 cents for \$1,000, \$1.73 for \$10,000, \$4.73 for \$50,000.	

Another feature which has proven to greatly stimulate smaller business transactions by mail, is the C. O. D. system of the postal department. Any matter of value can be transmitted by the mails; the post-office of the addressee collects the value required, and upon notice that such value has been collected the postoffice from which the package or letter was sent will pay its value over to the sender.

Subscription on all domestic and a great number of foreign newspapers and periodicals can be done directly in the postoffice, and in fact this is practically the only method for subscription of papers ever used. The price paid includes the rate for transmission of the paper or periodical by the mails, and the post-office pays over to the paper only the subscription rate. The paper turns over to the postoffice so many copies of each issue for each different post-station, and the final distribution of the paper is done by the post-station where the subscription was received. This system, it is claimed, has proven to lessen, not to increase, the work necessary in the distribution of the papers in the mails, and in case of non-delivery all complaints can be made directly at the post-office where the subscription was received, thus adding to the convenience of the subscriber. There is

*Sent in two money orders in U. S.

Announcements

MEETINGS, LECTURES, DEBATES, ETC.

Chicago—Brand's Hall, Clark and Erie Streets, Sunday, May 13, 2 p. m. A meeting under the auspices of the Chicago Federation of Labor, to protest against the kidnapping at Denver of the officers of the Western Federation of Miners.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—Fourth Unitarian Church, Church Ave. and East 18th St., Flatbush, Sunday, May 13, 8 p. m. Lecture: "The Single Tax—the Panacea," by H. B. Maurer.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—Fourth Unitarian Church, Church Ave. and East 18th St., Flatbush, Sunday, May 20, 8 p. m. Debate: "Socialism vs The Single Tax," between Courtney Lemon for Socialism and James R. Brown for the Single Tax.

Society for Ethical Culture Free Lecture Course

Sunday Mornings at 11 o'clock,
Steinway Hall, 17 E. Van Buren St., Chicago

An important series of lectures upon English leaders, representatives of moral and social progress, is now being given by Professor Charles Zeublin of the University of Chicago.

SUBJECTS:

May 14. Thomas Hill Green.

The Single Tax Review

is a 64 page quarterly magazine which is a record of Single Tax progress throughout the world. It is indispensable to every one who wishes to keep in touch with the steady advance, under various names and in various phases, which the economic philosophy of Henry George is making in this country and elsewhere. Contributions by all the leaders of the movement appear in its pages.

Price \$1.00 a year, or ten subscriptions for \$5.00. For every two new subscriptions a cloth bound copy of Progress and Poverty (the Doubleday-Page \$1.00 edition) will be mailed to any address.

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no commission charged by the postoffice for thus acting as agent, beyond the regular rate for the transmission of the paper.

In connection with the postal department are conducted the postal savings banks. The administration for the regular postal service and that of the postal savings banks are separated, but each postoffice acts as bank as well, accepting deposits and paying out deposited money when required. The money can be deposited at any postoffice in the country and withdrawn at any other postoffice. But a few days' notice is required when withdrawing at a place where the depositor is not known, so as to permit a comparison of the signature with the record signature filed at the central bureau. The postal savings bank was organized in 1884, and the government guarantees the deposits. However, the subject of postal savings banks is in itself large enough to be given particular consideration, and will be returned to in a later issue.

There is, however, another issue just now before the people of this country, which it may be proper to mention in connection with the postal service. The Swedish government has never vested in the postal department any autocratic power of censorship, and has never found it necessary to do so. The only matter which can be confiscated in the mails arbitrarily by the postal officials is postal cards with drawings or pictures considered to be obscene. But any printed matter, whether in the form of books or periodicals, has to be referred to the judicial authority for confiscation if considered unfit for circulation. A jury is then appointed, a certain number of its members by the prosecutor, a certain number by the offender, and an equal number by the judicial tribunal where the case is to be tried; and the jury then pronounces upon the question whether or no the matter was unfit for circulation.

In regard to the use of the mails for fraudulent business, the postal authorities are out of the question altogether. If a man is known to conduct a business of this character it is the proper function of the police authorities to interfere, not the postal authorities. In fact it is very difficult to understand why it has been regarded as a proper function of the postal department in this country to act as a kind of autocratic prosecutor and judge in criminal matters. For if the fraud committed is not a crime in the eyes of the law, what objection would there be to the transmission by mail of its correspondence? And if it be a crime, why should not the police authorities act instead of the postal authorities. The postal department's true function is to carry and distribute mail, not to censure and withhold. Let each department of our government conduct only such business as is within its proper territory.

Once more returning to a comparison between the financial results of the postal departments as conducted in Sweden and in the United States, it may be well to point out that in spite of the lower rates of the former country the postal service yielded a net income of 7.7 per cent of its gross income in 1899, and that it has always been not only self-supporting, but has also turned over large sums to the treasury of the state. The failure of the postal department in this country to do the same must be charged to several causes, the most important of which is the unduly high charges paid to the railroads

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A Letter from Jack London

Glen Ellen, Cal., Apr. 28, 1906.

Dear Comrade Kerr:—

At last, after being thrown out of gear by the earthquake, I am getting around to dropping a line about Mr. Moore's **THE UNIVERSAL KINSHIP**.

I do not know of any book dealing with Evolution that I have read with such keen interest. Mr. Moore has a broad grasp and shows masterly knowledge of the subject. And withal the interest never flags. The book reads like a novel. One is constantly keyed up and expectant. Mr. Moore is to be congratulated upon the magnificent way in which he has made alive the dull, heavy processes of the big books.

And then, there is his style. He uses splendid, virile English and shows a fine appreciation of the values of words. He uses always the right word.

Yours for the Revolution,

JACK LONDON.

The Universal Kinship. By J. Howard Moore. International Library of Social Science, Volume 3. Cloth, 331 pages, \$1.00. Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Company, 264 East Kinzie street.

for transportation. If we would improve upon our postal service we can do so only by recognizing the true nature of our express service and railroad monopoly.

ERIK OBERG.

* * *

FREE TRADE POETRY IN 1847.

Lines Cut from a Newspaper and Quoted at an English Banquet in October, 1847, by Mr. William Crawshaw, "the Celebrated Ironmaster." Reprinted Here from the Times of Hereford, England.

If God's free bounty bids the globe produce
More than enough for all its creatures' use,
Shall man monopolize the free supply?
See brutes well fed while human beings die!
Forbid it, heaven! While earth's prolific fields
For man and beast alike abundance yield,
Free as the winds, and changeless as the sea
Should intercourse between all nations be.
Wherever land is found, or oceans roll,
Or man exists from Indus to the Pole,
Then would unfettered industry be paid
In the rich wealth its own free hands had made;
Then would mankind fulfil high heaven's decree,
And earth with fruitfulness replenished be.
Then would war's blood-red banner soon be furled
And peace and plenty reign throughout the world;
While freighted fleets would traverse every sea,
And commerce wing her way unchecked and free,
Island be linked to island, main to main,
Binding all Nature fast in love's harmonious chain.

* * *

"No," said the authoress, with a sweet, haunting smile, "my ideals are too high to permit me to marry, unless it were, perchance, to advertise my books!"—Life.

* * *

Rector: I'm glad to see you are such a constant attendant at church, Patrick.

Patrick: Oh, I enj'ys it, sorr. I sits me down and lays me legs up and thinks o' nothin'.—Life.

* * *

"Mister Jedge," called out the colored witness, after he had been on the stand a full hour, "kin I say one word, suh?"

"Yes," replied the judge. "What is it?"

"Hit's des dis, suh: Ef you'll des make de lawyers set down en keep still two minutes, en gimme a livin' chance, I'll whirl in en tell de truth!"—Atlanta Constitution.

BOOKS

DEMOCRACY IN HISTORY.

A History of the United States and Its People, from the Earliest Records to the Present Time. By Elroy McKendree Avery. In 15 volumes. Volume II. Published by The Burrows Brothers Company, Cleveland.

The primary object of this unique history, the first volume of which was reviewed in these columns about a year ago (vol. viii, p. 110), is to make an accurate record of the birth, growth and maturity of the American Republic which will be generally read. Whether this result will be attained remains yet to

Religion and Politics

By Rev. ALGERNON SIDNEY CRAPSEY

Rector of
St. Andrew's Protestant Episcopal Church
of Rochester, N. Y.

The author's thesis is as follows: "There are in Christendom two institutions, the church and the state, which, from the beginning of Christian history, have borne a varying relation to each other. It is to this constantly varying relation of the church to the state that I now invite your attention, not as a matter for mere academic discussion, but as of vital interest to our social, our political, and our religious life."

The book stands the test of the scholars. It proves the author conversant with the history of the church and intensely interested in the economic problems of the day. It is a little epitome of the Christian church from Jesus to the present time, where he finds "a commercialized church in the commercialized state."—*Unity, Chicago*.

Dr. Crapsey strikes a higher note. His complaint is concerned about the alliance of Christianity with the very institutions against which its founder rebelled, and the substance of his cry is, Back to Jesus! "The Kingdom of God, which Jesus lived and died to establish, was to be all that the Roman empire was not—a kingdom of peace instead of war, a kingdom of righteousness instead of injustice, of mercy instead of cruelty." But the churches of to-day, do they stand for peace, for justice, for mercy? Do they not stand rather essentially for those conditions for which the Roman empire stood. "We are at the beginning," says Dr. Crapsey—"we are at the beginning, not at the end, of the Christian era."—*The Public*.

A discussion of society as politically and ecclesiastically organized, from the point of view of the religion of Christ as conceived by the author. * * * It is suggestive in certain places, and it bears witness to at least one minister's zeal for social righteousness.—*The Outlook*.

12mo, cloth, 326 pages, \$1.25 (postage 9 cents)

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