

the mails, then it is most important that it make no mistakes. But in my case the Inspector was, I am informed, a traveling salesman only recently elevated to the function of Post Office Inspector.

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Whatever the merits of this case may be, the fact that the Post Office will undertake in any case at all to act in the manner indicated, is a sign of danger to legitimate enterprises, and also to innocent investors in illegitimate ones. Passing by the question of the wisdom of laws allowing a postal censorship—regarding which we are of the same opinion as heretofore (vol. xii, p. 700),—and for the moment admitting their propriety, those laws are apparently abused in cases like this. On that assumption as to propriety, it would be proper to interfere when there isn't any mine, or there is a palpable misrepresentation such as would amount to larcenous fraud. But it would still be improper for the postal Department to pass judgment on the value of investments having a value. On the one hand, this policy might ruin legitimate promoters by official undervaluation; on the other, it might bunco a gullible public by official overvaluation. The old legal rule is a sound one, that misrepresentations of degrees of value where there is value are not fraudulent. As to degrees of value, the buyer must inform himself and take his own risks. For the Federal government to turn the Post Office into a sort of investment detective agency, ignoring that wholesome principle, is something that ought not to be tolerated.

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### A Monument to Horace Greeley.

In celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Horace Greeley, on the 3d of February next, the Horace Greeley Memorial Committee of the Chappaqua Historical Society are arranging for centennial exercises on Mr. Greeley's old farm at Chappaqua, where they purpose erecting a suitable memorial monument as soon as the necessary fund is assured. Contributions to this fund may be made to Jacob Erlich, treasurer, 40-46 West 20th street, New York.

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Horace Greeley is credited with the nomination of Lincoln, and he is entitled to credit for some of the greatest pioneering work of that anti-slavery time which threw Mr. Lincoln to the surface in national politics. With all his hostility to slavery Greeley held no personal bitterness toward its defenders; and as soon as the Civil War was over and slavery dead, he volunteered as a bondsman for the

imprisoned President of the Confederacy. He demanded freedom for all, but the blood of none. Having but little fortune and few of the honors that public office gives, and notwithstanding his vigor in fighting for his convictions, he was widely honored even in his own day. Public affection for him is bound to widen and deepen as his heroic service comes to be better known and understood. Such a monument as is proposed would be a fitting memorial to this man, and if it could be paid for with a shower of dollar contributions, as the committee hope, it would be all the more fitting. As a citizen of the world Horace Greeley knew no distinctions; as a citizen of his own country he knew no sections; as a journalist he knew no master but the truth as he saw it.

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### Taxation in Milwaukee.

Frank B. Schutz, the Tax Commissioner of Milwaukee, has made a report, required by law, in which he advises a wider departure from old methods than any tax official in the United States has yet officially recommended on a large scale. As summarized on the 18th by the Milwaukee Journal, an independent Republican daily paper, Commissioner Schutz makes these recommendations and arguments:

Tax only lands and corporation franchises, and exempt all improvements.

Have the city take the increments in land values which are made by the city's growth.

Land tax is certain and cannot be shifted.

Taxing land will not increase rents, according to economists.

Taxing land would not depreciate real estate.

Exempting improvements from taxation would bring many factories to the city.

Exempting buildings from taxes makes building on all vacant lots, as in Vancouver where the single tax is used.

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### God's Footstool.

When Walter Rauschenbusch spoke at the People's Sunday Evening Meeting at Rochester, N. Y., on the 15th, he said this, as he was reported by the Rochester Herald of the 16th:

*"I want to call your attention to this proposition: 'That no man can own outright any part of this earth, for God created the world for all men.' Therefore, any one who holds a piece of land should make an equivalent return to the community. In fact, he should pay as much for an empty lot as if it had buildings on it, for, otherwise we penalize property holders who improve their land by erecting on it houses in which poor people can live; that is, houses that are not built for big rental profits."*

Wouldn't it be wise for the Order of the Needle's Eye to offer a reward for proof of Mr. Rauschenbusch's error? Pretty dangerous doctrine, that of his—for the perpetuity of unearned fortunes.

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### PROGRESSIVE TARIFF REVISION.\*

General tariff revision in the United States has always been attended by graft and scandal. It has usually brought about the defeat of the party that has attempted it. Invariably it has ended in the adoption of iniquitous schedules, through the time-dishonored process of "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours."

Any effort by the incoming Democratic Congress to accomplish revision by wholesale—that is, by attempting to revise all the schedules in one measure—will result inevitably in a repetition of the disgraceful bargaining between sections and interests which has accompanied all tariff legislation of recent years. It will finally bring forth a measure containing few reductions, and which will satisfy nobody.

The method of tariff revision suggested by the progressive Republicans, and which President Taft, with great reluctance and only after a bitter experience of defeat at the polls, has adopted as his policy, affords the most rational method yet offered to secure an honest revision of the tariff.

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Of course if the Democratic party had the country educated up to the point where it would willingly abandon the tariff, both as means of protection and as a method of raising revenue, then a simple repeal of existing duties would suffice. But everybody knows that any revision which takes place now or in the immediate future will be a mere matter of degree—a simple alteration of the schedules. And any process of legislation that furnishes industries and interests an opportunity to trade votes stands condemned by the experience of years.

So long as we are to have a tariff at all, some effort should be made to make it as nearly scientific as possible. The writer is free to admit that he personally sees no moral difference between

scientific protection and scientific grand larceny; but a majority of the American people think differently, and the incoming Democratic Congress must deal with conditions and not with theories. For many years to come we are certain to have a tariff, and whether it be called a revenue or a protective tariff, it is bound to be more or less protective in its nature.

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The progressive Republicans have adopted the theory of a tariff based on the difference between cost of production at home and abroad. Free traders believe and most business men who are in the slightest degree connected with export trade know, that this difference—if ascertained even approximately, and it cannot be ascertained to the accuracy of a cent—will prove that in America, the land of relatively high wages, the average cost of production of most staple articles now bearing a heavy duty is cheaper than in Europe, the land of low wages. If this were not true the American manufacturers would not be underselling their foreign competitors in their own markets, and European countries would not be raising tariff walls against the United States.

It is probable that many progressive Republicans do not realize the tremendous blow which the report of an honestly constituted tariff commission would deal the protective system. The average Republican hasn't known much about the tariff question until within the last three or four years. Even now his knowledge, as a rule, is limited to the fact that he is being gouged; and he still believes that many industries would perish if the tariff wall were removed. The cold fact remains, however, that an honest and thorough investigation by a commission clothed with adequate powers would destroy every vestige of argument in favor of protection on most articles that are now heavily protected. No free trader ought to object to a plan which, if honestly worked out, would justify his own theories.

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It may be argued that a commission named by a Republican President would not make an honest report.

There is little warrant for such a suspicion. Governmental boards as a rule have reported facts. Men do not willingly stultify themselves by signing their names to self-evident falsehoods. The Interstate Commerce Commission, no matter by whom appointed, has usually sided with shippers in their controversies with the rail-

\*A signed editorial urging wholesale revision of the tariff by the Democratic party, appeared in *The Public* of January 6 (p. 6), the writer, Thomas Scanlon, being a well known Eastern free trader of the fundamental type. Mr. Scanlon's view is here met with a counter view by "D. K. L.," a favorite Western correspondent of *The Public*, who is also a free trader of the fundamental type. Both articles are from the same viewpoint of principle. Their difference in respect to party policy at a particular juncture adds to the value of each.—Editors *The Public*.