

to expenditures is not so disproportionate. These are the kind of custom houses Mr. Shaw would abolish. Evidently he is not as good a protectionist as he is supposed to be. The principal object of customs houses is not to get revenue. That is only incidental. The principal object is to keep foreign goods out of the country, so that our exports may exceed our imports and a "favorable balance" of trade be thereby maintained. It is in this manner that protectionists save American markets for American producers. Now, a custom house that costs \$350 for every dollar it collects on imports may be serving that purpose as well as any of the others. In fact, if no custom house was able to collect more than one dollar in duties for every \$350 necessarily expended to maintain it, the principal purpose of the protective tariff would be served better than it is now served. Mr. Shaw's reasons for abolishing the kind of custom houses he indicates are utterly invalid—from the protection point of view.

The committee on education and labor, of the Federal Senate, is doubtless in receipt of a large mail just now, burdened with a varied assortment of objections to the eight-hour bill (House bill No. 3076) which has passed the House and is about to be considered by the Senate. It may be useful, therefore, for the committee to know that the objections are inspired by the National Association of Manufacturers, a trade union of employers who are opposed to trade unions among workmen. This organization recently sent out a confidential circular, enumerating 32 objections to the bill; and with the circular it enclosed a letter requesting the recipient to write the Senate committee urging an unfavorable report upon the bill, giving at least two objections—not copying them verbatim from the circular, however, but elaborating them. In this way it is evidently hoped to secure the appearance of "spontaneous" expressions of disapproval which in fact are

perfunctory and made in response to the call of the employers' union. Such expressions have their value, but it is important that the facts about them be known, so that they may not pass in the Senate for more than their value.

Under the title of "The Menace to Economic Independence," the Independent of December 4 has a striking editorial contribution to this subject, which the ruthless march of events is forcing upon public attention more and more. "It seems certain," says the writer, "that before long it will be impossible for any man on his own account to engage in even so simple a business as selling smoking tobacco and cigars, retailing cut flowers, selling newspapers, or even peanuts and bananas on the street corner. Every man who is not a multi-millionaire will be a millionaire's man, dependent upon the good will of a superior for his daily bread. Could there be a more melancholy outcome of our great American attempt to build up a civilization in which every man might be independent and self-respecting?" The editor sees the danger at either end: There will be a great extension of trade union methods. "We shall see," he predicts, "innumerable unions within the salaried class, each striving to bar out competition . . . to maintain a rigorous monopoly of the job." There are many indications that this prediction will come true; for the fact at present is that the so-called salaried classes, including mainly clerks and teachers, are the most dependent and servile portion of any community. We use the latter epithet in no spirit of offense, but rather of pity. Tied to their job, and without the feeling of strength that comes to some extent from organization, they are absolutely helpless, and have only one door of freedom, that is, to quit and sink into one of Ghent's lower strata. In many communities you will find that the wage-earners, to use a distinction that is easily understood, are clearly more

independent personally than the salaried-earners. Among the latter one can see far more cringing and a far more manifest bearing of subservience. If you want to see tremulous homage, be present when the superintendent, or the president of a school board comes into a group of teachers. Then see them "process" to the platform, and hear them lead the young voices in singing "Sweet land of liberty," or "The land of the free and the home of the brave!" If any, even a temporary, spirit of independence could come to them and others of the salaried classes from any kind of union, it might be welcomed as a temporary release, even if it should lead to the charge of trying to monopolize the job. But the important work at present is to get the American people to come to a consciousness of the situation of dependence into which all but a very few are being rapidly corralled.

Wall street is in bad plight. Its affairs are on the brink of collapse, and the United States treasury refuses it further help. This refusal is encouraging, but the reason calls for special wonder. Further help is withheld not for the good reason that the government has no business to dabble in Wall street speculations, but for the bad one that the previous aid extended has not lessened the demand for more aid, and that there seems to be no end. "The best posted men in the treasury," writes "Raymond" to the Chicago Tribune (Republican), for which he is the Washington special correspondent—

say the government has simply been pouring money into a rat hole, and there is not the slightest prospect of being able to supply funds enough to meet the extraordinary demands of Wall street any longer. Every dollar which could be spared from the United States treasury has been loaned to the banks without interest, and in a few cases without any too good security. In addition to this the ordinary interest payments have been anticipated for a long time to come. The secretary of the treasury has gone to the danger line in the matter of purchasing bonds, and has submitted to rank extortion and paid extraordinary premiums merely that the government should do