

the nations that mean to do wrong will be about Mr. Roosevelt leaves unexplained. Let us apply his principles to the case of Japan, whose subjects are just now being unjustly treated in California. The President rightly condemns that treatment, and pleads for such an amendment of the Constitution as will enable the Federal Government to enforce the observation of treaties by recalcitrant States. We have no hesitation in predicting that, however much the anti-Japanese agitation in California may be condemned by other States, no such power will be given the Federal Government. What, then, should Japan do? Right, according to the President, is on her side. "A just war," says Mr. Roosevelt, "is in the long run far better for a nation's soul than the most prosperous peace obtained by acquiescence in wrong or injustice." On these lines Japan would be entitled, nay bound, failing the constitutional coercion of California by the Federal Government, in beginning a sanguinary struggle with the United States that would dislocate commerce and industry and paralyze civilization, her reward being the advantage of her national soul. It is a curious doctrine, but hardly to be described as ethical.

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"THE POWER OF THE PRESS."

Chicago Daily Socialist (Soc.), Dec. 13.—The facts which we are printing on the school question are known in every newspaper office in Chicago. Every newspaper in Chicago knows that the school fund has been looted, school property wasted and stolen, and the schools demoralized that capitalistic greed may be fed. Not one of the editors of these papers would deny these facts in private conversation. Yet there is not a single one of them that dares slip a word on the subject. It is not alone the Tribune, Record-Herald, Post, News and Chronicle that have joined the howling pack at the heels of the Teachers' Federation. Hearst's Chicago American is as silent as the rest. Once or twice it dared to feebly protest. Then the Merchants' Club took up the fight. These men are the heaviest advertisers in Chicago. Hearst closed up like a clam. He has not whispered since. He dare not. Yet this is just the sort of a story that he would like to exploit. The teachers are not Socialists. Not one of the members of the Board of Education is a member of the Socialist party, or votes the Socialist ticket so far as we know. Most of them are supporters of Hearst's policies. Yet Hearst has nothing to say. His muzzle is clamped down tight. It will stay clamped down as long as the State street stores have the key. This paper, on the other hand, is bitterly opposed to the political beliefs and tactics of the members of the school board and the officers of the Teachers' Federation. It has nothing to gain by supporting them. But at this moment, whatever their political beliefs, they are fighting the battles of the workers and of the school children of Chicago. They are fighting for the right of labor to organize in its own defense. They are battling against the capitalist mob that has so long controlled and exploited the schools of Chicago. When they took up this fight they loosed against themselves all the fiends of the capitalistic hell. Consciously or unconsciously they had stumbled upon the class struggle. They are on the workers' side in that struggle. Therefore every newspaper in Chicago save this one is closed to them. Therefore they are insulted when they appear as invited guests of the gentlemen of the Merchants' Club. Therefore they find themselves gagged in the churches of which they are members, while made-to-order resolutions are hurled at them from the pulpit. Therefore this paper is with them, and will be so long as they fight on the workers' side of the great class struggle.

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Eat at your table as you would eat at the table of the King.—Confucius.

IN CONGRESS

This report is an abstract of the Congressional Record, the official report of Congressional proceedings. It includes all matters of general interest, and closes with the last issue of the Record at hand upon going to press. Page references are to the pages of Vol. 41 of that publication.

Washington, Dec. 20.

Senate.

No decisive business of general interest was done on the 17th; but on the 18th the bill to investigate the industrial, social, moral, educational and physical condition of woman and child workers in the United States was passed (p. 513). Nothing of general interest was accomplished on the 19th. Mr. Foraker spoke on the 20th (p. 587) on the subject of the dismissal of the three companies of Negro troops from the army. On the same day the Senate adjourned to the 3d.

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House.

The House was in committee of the whole on the 17th on the Indian appropriation bill (p. 481); also on the 18th (p. 532). Nothing of general interest was accomplished on the 19th, and on the 20th (p. 623) adjournment was taken until the 3d.

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Record Notes.

President's message on the public land laws (p. 462).
President's message on Panama Canal (p. 464).

**RELATED THINGS
CONTRIBUTIONS AND REPRINT**

INDEED A KING.

For The Public.

The toiler is a king; he earns
The right to live, to toil and rest;
His is the strong, brown hand that turns
The wheel of progress to the West.

No man his tyrant, he may stand
Erect, and neither bow the knee
Nor play the sycophant; his hand
And brain and skill have made him free.

The master of a trade, he owes
No man a living, and the sting
Of charity he never knows—
The toiler is indeed a king!

HENRY COYLE.

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OYSTER BEDS AS NATURAL RESOURCES.

From the Philadelphia Record of Nov. 18, 1906.

A dim and confused perception of a natural principle has made most of Maryland oystermen indiscriminate enemies of almost any legislation intended to protect the oyster from destruction.

The lands of Maryland are owned; but the waters, with their immense richness in fish, oysters, crabs and other edible marine life, are free. Any able-bodied man, with even a leaky skiff at his command, can earn a living most of the year out of the Chesapeake and its tributaries, and that without asking

leave of any man, once he has paid the trifling license fee exacted of the small oysterman. Plainly enough, then, no able-bodied man of reasonable energy will hire himself to a farmer for much less than he can earn upon the free waters of the Chesapeake. Farms are often neglected because labor cannot be had to work the crops. The capitalists who own and operate oyster boats have to import some of the worst and most shiftless residents of city slums, because thousands of local laborers, black and white, are self-employing oystermen.

It is natural and proper that these self-employing oystermen should watch with suspicion all legislation for the protection of the oyster, lest it result in their being driven from the natural oyster beds and made the hired men of farmers ashore, or of those who own land under water and private oyster beds.

The new law, which was drawn with the view to enabling as large a number of persons as possible to avail themselves of riparian rights, is condemned by many of the self-employing oystermen, and the operation of it is being keenly watched.

Some such protective legislation is needed if the oyster industry is to be preserved, but if the effect shall be to drive many of the smaller oyster men out of employment there will be a strong movement for its repeal or amendment.

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RUSSIA'S LAND PROBLEM.

From an Editorial in the London Tribune of December 6, 1906.

More interesting than the dismal chronicles of repression and scandal are the measures which M. Stolypin is taking to transform the Russian land system.* Good or bad, they are certainly revolutionary, and Liberals of all shades are bound to protest against them, as the moderate "Party of Pacific Regeneration" did, because they are an autocratic exercise of legislative powers which ought to belong to the Douma. But, quite apart from the party politics of Russia, they have for all the world an immense sociological interest. They seem to destroy, or at least to doom, the oldest system of land tenure in Europe, that communal ownership which historians still study as the type and survival of an arrangement which once flourished in one form or another among so many primitive agricultural peoples.

In the Russian Mir the land is the common property of all the families of the village, who also pay their taxes in common, and claim by virtue of this obligation a patriarchal power over the movements of every member of the community. The fields are redistributed periodically, but while each family cultivates its own lot, it may neither be alienated nor transferred, and returns at the end of a term of years to the common stock. The advantages of the plan are obvious. The inequalities of soil and situation are shared fairly; no family can become landless and desperate; even a peasant who, with the consent of his village, has gone to work in a town, knows that his wife and his heirs retain their right, and remain members of a brotherhood which will respect it. The disadvantages are equally obvious. Since there is no fixity of tenure, the peas-

ant is tempted to do as little as possible for the soil, and to take the utmost out of it. The method of tillage has remained wasteful and primitive, and the Mir system undoubtedly plays a part second only to that of bad government in explaining the listlessness of the peasantry and the poverty of rural Russia.

It is easy to guess the political reasons which have induced M. Stolypin to attack the Mir system by allowing peasants to detach themselves from it and to claim their present lot or its equivalent as their permanent private property. He is afraid of socialism, and the Mir is a species of primitive communism. He is also fighting Liberalism, and hopes no doubt to create a class of peasant farmers who may become a conservative element. The liberated peasant, left alone with his inadequate plot of land to face the tax collector and the money lender, may sell out, and drift into the class of the landless and voteless laborers. He is thereby eliminated from politics. But the land remains, and must pass into the hands of someone, whose interest may perhaps lie in maintaining the status quo.

But is there no alternative to individual peasant ownership, with its danger of alienation, and this communal system with its wasteful tillage? The "Temps" tells the Russian Liberals that they ought to remember that the prosperity of France is founded on peasant proprietorship. It forgets that this replaced a bad system of dual ownership, and that the French peasants acquired not merely the poor land they had cultivated before the Revolution, but the rich land of which the church and the emigrant nobility were despoiled. There was no tradition of communal ownership in France, on which an even better scheme could have been grafted.

We, for our part, regret that Michael Davitt's views were not followed in Ireland; we rejoice no less that in its Scottish Land Bill our own government, while giving the crofters security of tenure on their allotments, has reserved the ownership of the land to the public. This method gives to the tiller the security which alone can develop private resource and energy. It also preserves the nation from the monopolist, prevents the growth by purchase of vast estates, and secures the land as a means of livelihood to the largest number of independent families. The Mir system could easily have been modified in this sense, and so evolved as to develop the habit of co-operation.

Let us hope that when at length, a free Douma meets it will have the power to save the precious tradition of common ownership and mutual aid, which made the Mir system one of the most hopeful germs for the creation of a free rural community.

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THE CREATOR OF WEALTH.

An Editorial from the Pittsburg Evening Leader of Dec. 15, 1906.

Andrew Carnegie clearly recognizes and points out the inequities of our present system of taxation, to which is due the accumulation of fortunes swollen to danger point and a distribution of wealth that has caused both political and commercial corruption in the life of the nation. But the remedy he pro-

*See The Public of December 1, page 824.