

serviceable to the community in keeping land or mines idle than in using them, and should not be rewarded for being useless by reducing his taxes.

There are thousands of acres of rich coal lands held out of use in Pennsylvania, which are valued at \$25,000 or \$30,000 per acre; but because their owners keep them in useless idleness they are assessed at less than a thousandth part of their value,—some of them as low as \$3 per acre. Not what these acres produce now, but what they are worth for use as appraised in the open market is the value for which they should be taxed. Every other taxpayer is defrauded by this under assessment; and the amount of wealth production, and the demand for capital and the demand for labor are thereby greatly reduced.

The value for use of all the properties and privileges of the United States Steel company, according to their own estimate, is \$1,300,000,000. An assessment of 3 per cent. on this valuation would turn \$39,000,000 into the public treasury annually. The Northern Securities Company was capitalized at \$400,000,000; the Amalgamated Copper Company at \$155,000,000; Bay State Gas Company at \$100,000,000; Standard Oil Company at \$70,000,000. These capitalizations were the estimates of the several companies of the value of their properties and privileges. The total capitalization of 287 trusts amounts to \$5,803,281,600. This total, after deducting their actual wealth, which ought not to be taxed, would form the basis for estimating the natural revenues which belong to the community, and should be paid in annual taxation.

If all these uncollected revenues were paid in annually not a dollar of our present taxes would be required, and millions of dollars would be available for a hundred useful purposes in the community. It would require only a part of these revenues to meet all present public expenditures.

These uncollected natural revenues of the nation are not wealth which has been made by the owners of the land and miners and monopolies; they are simply the annual values of the privileges in possession of which the government protects the owners. These

valuable services rendered by the government are now paid for out of the general taxation of the country, by those who have no share in the benefits. The present methods of raising public revenue, which leave these benefits in the hands of those who have not created them, necessitating resort to taxation of capital and labor and wealth, are the source of public corruption, and ever must be the cause of nearly all the poverty and misery and crime which afflict and disgrace the nation. No mind can conceive the injury inflicted on the material and moral interests of mankind by our plundering methods of raising revenue; nor the moral elevation and material advancement and universal prosperity and happiness which would result from a system which placed the incidence of taxation on the privileges instead of the properties and industries of citizens.

SAMUEL BRAZIER

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

WASHINGTON.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 10.—Demoralized is probably not too strong a term to describe the condition of the Democratic party, so far as its representatives in Congress are concerned. Not merely is there a listlessness and lack of earnestness in the performance of their Congressional duties, but something like two score have not even come to Washington, although the House has been in session all the week; while not a third of those who are in the city are regular in attendance. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the legislative, judicial and executive appropriation bill, carrying appropriations of nearly thirty millions, was rushed through in two days, nor that most of the criticisms of the bill came from Republicans.

There is good ground for the criticism of Champ Clark and others, that it is unfair to members to have such a bill called up for action before members have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with its provisions and study the different items for which appropriations are made. Certainly the rules should be amended to provide that all appropriation bills should be printed and be on members' desks three days before being called up.

It is needless to say that this should apply to all bills. It should be a further rule that if a bill is not called up within a week of the time it is reported to the House, then a further three-day notice must be given before it can be considered. As it is now, those who desire to oppose a bill may be on the lookout for weeks, expecting it to

be called up by the member interested, and after they are tired out with an apparently needless watching, someday, during their temporary absence, the bill may be taken from the calendar and passed.

Even with the most diligent attention bills would sneak through, and my experience leads me to believe that legislation of a general character, calling for bridges over navigable streams, for grants to individuals, or to railroads or other corporations, should not be acted upon by the House until they have been approved by an affirmative vote of the locality—town or county—affected and where the property is located. As it is, bill after bill is log-rolled through, containing grants of valuable privileges, as to which no one in the House has probably any knowledge except the member introducing it there, and not always even he.

Two resolutions were introduced by me on the first day of the session, in re the Steel Rail association—the steel rail pool—reciting the existence of that combination to limit production and boost prices. One directed the Secretary of the Treasury to suspend the collection of the tax of \$7.84 a ton on steel rails until the United States Steel corporation and the other companies which constitute the pool, produce conclusive evidence that they pay more to their employes for the labor in producing a ton of steel rails than is paid by English steel rail manufacturers; the other called for a report from the attorney general as to what steps he had taken to criminally prosecute those who have formed this combination in restraint of trade. The first was referred to the ways and means, the second to the judiciary, committee.

The latter has already performed its duty to the Steel Trust by voting to report the resolution to the House with the recommendation that it lie upon the table. The ostensible ground for this action being that the facts recited in my resolution are mere rumor. As I said in a brief speech later in the day, the steel rail pool is the most substantial rumor in the country! It is so strenuous, so strong, so powerful, that it can (and does) take the American people by the throat and exact a tribute of some thirty millions a year. As I also pointed out on the floor, while the existence of this combination is known of all men, while it meets regularly, and regularly gives out a statement of the results of its "deliberations" to the press, yet the Department of Commerce and Labor (called into being for the express purpose of supplying the public demand for information as to the trusts) has apparently never heard of it, nor will a single Republican member of Congress publicly admit that he knows of any such combination.

What disposition will be made of the resolution to suspend the \$7.84 a ton tax which the ways and means committee is carefully guarding is not difficult to prognosticate. It will meet with equally short shrift. It will also be made to lie on the table, if it is not consigned to the waste-basket; for that committee will never face the proposition contained in the resolution, that as the theory of protection is to equalize the labor cost to American manufacturers, as compared with those of Europe, the burden of proof that manufacturers here pay more for the labor in a given article is on them; especially when Charles M. Schwab declared that steel rails cannot be made in English mills for less than \$19 a ton, while they are being made in Pittsburg for \$12 a ton.

Most of the Southern members will now confess privately that they bought a gold brick when they fell in with the Parker "sentiment," a sentiment most diligently cultivated among them by the agents of the little band of monopolists who foisted him upon the party. Their present condition of mind is like that of a national committeeman of one of the large Southern States whom I conversed with at St. Louis while the vote was being called on the motion to approve the Parker telegram. Though an entire stranger, his action in opposition to certain schemes of franchise exploitation in his own city had won favorable attention, so I made myself known to him. He then said: "Mr. Baker, I feel as though I had been buncoed! This is the first time I have had any dealings with that New York crowd (Sheehan, Belmont, McCarren, et al.) and it will be the last." And so Southern members of Congress will privately admit that they and the party have been "buncoed." As is quite natural under the circumstances these men almost without exception regard Bryan as again the leader of the party.

That my efforts at the last session to attract favorable attention to the question of municipal ownership did not entirely fall upon stony ground is shown in the following incident: A leading Republican, Cooper, of Wisconsin, whom I had never spoken to, came over to me yesterday and said: "I thought of you yesterday while reading the report of the American consul at Hull, England, on municipal ownership there; he is most enthusiastic and declares it has been an entire success."

I would suggest that readers of The Public write their Congressman for copies of that report. (It is Consular Report No. 2127, issued by the Department of Commerce and Labor December 9, Walter C. Hamm, consul.) They will not only thus obtain valuable information on municipal operation of public utilities in England, but such

letters will be evidence to members of Congress of the rapid growth of the demand in this country for governmental ownership of the railroads, telegraphs and telephones, as well as for municipal ownership of public utilities in our cities.

The fight which Congressman Charles B. Landis and myself made at the last session on the public carriage scandal here has borne fruit. Hereafter, under a provision of the appropriation bill just passed, public carriages (with certain limited exceptions) must have the name of the department to which they belong conspicuously painted thereon. This will prevent third, fourth, tenth and seventieth deputies, assistant and deputy assistant chief clerks from using public carriages (and public servants to drive them) to maintain their social "prestige."

In discussing the District of Columbia tax bill during the last session I called attention to the fearful rate of mortality among the children of the slums in Washington, showing that nearly 50 per cent. die before they are one year old—charging it up to land speculation and vicious taxation here. While comparing that part of the President's message which treats of the subject, and urges that the money to improve these conditions could be had by stopping the building of streets, etc., "for purposes largely speculative, in outlying parts," with my speech of April 18 last, Gen. Grosvenor came over and asked: "What are you up to now? Some deviltry, I'll bet!" On being told, he said: "That's the worst attack on the message yet made."

The older Republican members do not regard the overwhelming majority they will have in the Fifty-ninth Congress with unalloyed pleasure. At a caucus of the Pennsylvania delegation this week to urge united support for a large Delaware river appropriation it was suggested that action be deferred until the next Congress. "Oh, no," said Mr. Adams, of Philadelphia, "Pennsylvania's delegation of 29 Republicans amounts to something in this House, but we won't cut any figure in a Congress with 140 majority."

But that will be the least of the troubles of the Pennsylvania delegation in the next Congress, I imagine. With the tariff revision sentiment growing rapidly it will be a life and death struggle with them to maintain against Western Republicans, the steel and other schedules through which Pennsylvania monopolists lay the rest of the country under tribute.

ROBERT BAKER.

Even in wearing a shoe it is necessary to put your whole sole in it.—Philadelphia Record.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, Dec. 15.

Complete returns of the Presidential election (p. 567) have been collected by the New York Times, which published the result on the 12th. All are official except those of four counties in Michigan and one in Tennessee, which are estimated.

The aggregate vote of 1904, by parties and in comparison with the vote of 1900, is as follows:

	1900.	1904.
Republican	7,207,923	7,620,561
Democratic	6,358,133	5,094,091
Prohibition	208,914	248,411
Socialist	87,814	382,857
Socialist Labor	39,739	33,519
People's	50,373	124,381
Continental		530
Scattering	7,757	
Total	13,960,653	13,514,650
Decrease		446,003
Rep. plurality	849,790	2,526,470
Rep. gain		412,638
Dem. loss		1,264,042

The vote for Roosevelt (Rep.) and Parker (Dem.), in 1894 and in comparison with that for McKinley (Rep.) and Bryan (Dem.) in 1900, is as follows:

	1900.		1904.	
	KcK.	Bry.	Roose.	Park.
Alabama	55,512	97,131	22,472	79,357
Arkansas	44,800	81,142	46,860	64,424
Cal.	164,755	124,985	205,226	89,404
Colo.	93,072	122,733	134,687	100,106
Conn.	102,567	73,997	112,069	72,909
Deia.	22,529	18,858	23,714	19,380
Florida	7,314	28,007	8,314	27,046
Georgia	35,035	81,700	24,003	83,472
Idaho	26,997	29,414	47,783	18,480
Indiana	597,985	603,061	632,645	327,906
Iowa	326,063	309,384	368,289	274,345
Iowa	307,785	299,179	307,907	149,141
Kansas	185,955	162,901	210,593	84,306
Kentucky	227,128	235,103	206,277	217,170
Louis'na.	14,233	53,671	5,265	47,708
Maine	65,435	36,822	64,437	57,636
Mary'nd.	136,212	122,271	109,497	109,446
Mass.	238,866	156,997	257,822	165,746
Mich.	316,269	211,685	362,846	137,015
Minn.	190,461	112,901	214,978	68,631
Miss.	5,753	51,706	3,147	63,280
Missouri.	314,092	351,922	321,447	295,847
Mont.	25,373	37,146	34,932	21,773
Nebr'ska.	121,835	114,013	138,553	52,950
Nevada	3,849	6,347	6,951	3,611
N. Hamp.	54,803	35,489	55,307	33,513
N. Jersey	221,707	164,808	245,164	164,866
N. York.	821,992	678,386	859,460	683,872
N. Caro.	133,081	157,752	82,442	124,121
N. Dako'a	35,891	20,519	52,658	14,296
Ohio	543,918	474,882	600,065	344,574
Oregon	46,526	33,385	60,455	17,521
Penn.	712,665	424,232	840,949	335,430
R. Island.	33,784	19,812	41,005	24,329
S. Caro.	3,579	47,236	2,271	52,565
S. Dakota	54,530	39,544	72,083	22,002
Tenn.	121,194	144,751	105,478	131,705
Texas	121,173	267,337	50,308	167,290
Utah	47,139	45,006	62,444	33,413
V'rмонт.	42,568	12,549	40,459	9,777
Virginia.	115,865	146,080	46,450	80,638
Wash.	57,456	44,833	100,898	28,015
W. Vir.	119,829	98,807	132,048	100,850
Wis.	265,866	159,285	280,164	124,107
Wyom'g.	14,482	10,164	20,489	8,890
Total	7,207,923	6,358,133	7,620,561	5,094,091
Plo	849,790		2,526,470	

The votes for minor parties in 1904, by States and in comparison