

laws for the control of railroads, the Little Congressmen greeted it with a great guffaw. But when they heard from their constituents, they stopped using passes. It is time that Congress eschewed the spoilsman's ways, and fell into step with progress. Some plan similar to that of the English budget should be adopted. Congress must necessarily determine the methods of raising revenue, but the details of its expenditure should be in the hands of experts directly in charge of the work. Until the river and harbor improvements are put in charge of the commerce department it will be hard to keep the Little Congressmen out of the pork barrel.

s. c.

ciently and at a lower price by private agencies than the government now furnishes it. But such private mail service is unfairly prohibited under heavy penalties. In leaving the express companies free to compete with it in carrying of parcels the government is unusually fair—not only to the express companies, but to shippers and consumers of merchandise. It is setting an example of a policy that should prevail throughout the mail service and throughout the business world. There would be little cause for complaint concerning unfairness on the part of government, if it were as liberal with all as it is with the express companies and allied railroad corporations.

s. d.

### A Meritorious Resolution.

Congressman Bartholdt of Missouri has introduced a joint resolution for an amendment to the Federal Constitution which ought to pass. The amendment limits the power of Congress to declare war so that it may only be exercised "to repel invasion or under circumstances calling for measures of self-defense." The present Congress is not a sufficiently progressive body to adopt the resolution. But some day a similar measure will be passed and the people of that day will wonder why the opportunity to do so was not grasped by the Congress of 1914.

s. d.

### Minimum Regulations.

Complaint was heard when the minimum wage law was proposed that it would be the means of preventing many persons from getting any work at all; for if employers were compelled to pay wages now received by the more efficient they would not employ less efficient labor. A similar hardship came with the employes' pension movement. Employers discharged the aged workers, in order that they might start with young workers. Again it occurs in the crusade for pure food. Many articles that may not be up to the chemical and hygienic standard, yet are used by the poor, have been prohibited; and the cost of living has thereby been materially raised. It all goes to show the universality of the law of competition. When dealers are allowed to market inferior articles they make no greater profit than those handling superior goods; for any temporary gain would be quickly dissipated by others entering the same business. If the five cent pound loaf of bread that has been gradually reduced to twelve ounces to meet the advancing cost of materials and labor, be restored by law to sixteen ounces, either the price must be advanced, or cheaper materials will be used. Dealers are now making a slender commercial profit, and any increase in the cost must be compensated for by an advance in price, or in some kind of saving. In the effort to cheapen goods recourse has been had to agents that are on the border line. Some authorities condemn, others endorse them; but while this may be interesting as an academic discussion, the cost of living hinges on the decision. Pure food has always been available for those who could pay for it; those who could not afford the real used the imitation. The real effect of the pure food legislation will be the elimination of the poor's imitation luxuries. To prohibit imitation straw-

### Express Companies and the Parcel Post.

"The parcel post ruined or crippled the express companies without any compensation to them." So says the Big Four railroad in a plea for more pay for carrying the mails. How much compensation was paid by railroad companies to the owners of stage coaches displaced by them? None, of course. None was due. The railroads were able to render more efficient service than the stage coaches. The payment of tribute by an efficient worker to an inefficient one for displacing him would be a ridiculously unjust requirement. The parcel post has injured the express companies only to the extent that it offers more efficient service. If the express companies should find a way to become more efficient than the parcel post, and were thus to take business from it, they would not think of offering compensation to the government.

As a matter of fact the government is much fairer to the express companies than it is to those who try to compete with it in branches of the mail service other than the parcel post. Mail service could be furnished in many places more effi-

berry jam and glucose honey does not mean the introduction of real strawberry jam and real honey to the poor man's table, but that he will have none at all. This is not to condemn pure food legislation, but merely to call attention to the fact that it is impossible to get something for nothing. Let us by all means have the purest and best of foods, but let us not imagine that this is to solve the high cost of living.

s. c.



### Setting a Bad Example.

Persons who have given hostages are supposed to act discreetly lest they be forfeited; but some of our captains of industry seem to be unmindful of their hazard. No other citizens are so entirely dependent for safety and well-being on the maintenance of law, yet they oftentimes fail themselves to observe even its forms. A common news item is that of a subpoena or warrant for some rich man who is dodging service by hiding. Not so long ago William Rockefeller escaped service in this way. At another time he escaped on the plea of ill health. His brother John is now trying to dodge the Cleveland tax gatherers by keeping out of Ohio. This is most unfortunate. It tends to bring the law under suspicion, and to furnish the I. W. W's, and various physical force advocates, with ammunition. Ordinary men know that no such technical hiding would avail them in escaping the long arm of the law. Mr. Rockefeller is an extraordinary man, and it would be hard to conceive of one more vulnerable; if he wishes others to obey the law he should set them an example. Surely the law that guards the murderer taken red-handed in the act can be trusted by a man who thinks his personal property assessment too high.

s. c.



### Superfluous Questions.

Among the questions put to the witnesses who appeared before the Commission on Industrial Relations at its Chicago sessions were two that would seem to be self-evident. Is there unrest in the labor world? And, Why? The answers to the first were unanimous. The second received nearly as many answers as there were witnesses. Is there unrest among the passengers of a sinking ship, or in the audience of a burning theater? And why? Science has multiplied the power of labor in the production of wealth many fold; yet the most optimistic defenders of things-as-they-are have been unable to demonstrate that wages have risen as fast as the cost of living. And men seriously ask each other the question, Is there un-

rest in the labor world? With an ever-increasing product per man, and a constantly decreasing relative share to the producer this question is asked and answered without a smile, or even so much as the batting of an eye!



And is not the answer to the everlasting "Why" just as obvious? If a new overseer on a cotton plantation should double the crop, without bettering the living conditions of the hands that made the crop, would it be necessary to ask why there was unrest among the slaves? Speculation might be indulged in as to how the trouble is to be remedied, but how can there be any question as to the fact? In spite of the great variety of responses to the Commission's question, is not the remedy as obvious as the trouble? If two free men engage in brick-making will they not divide the tale of brick satisfactorily between them? Should either feel himself aggrieved he will withdraw from the partnership. But suppose the men are not free. Suppose one man owns the other man; the master can then divide the brick as he pleases. Or, suppose one man, instead of owning the other man, owns the bed of clay from which the brick are made. Cannot the clay-owner make the same terms as the man-owner? And is not the same remedy obvious? Brick-making is typical of all wealth production. Man fashions clay into the form of a brick. All wealth is but the materials of the earth fashioned into desired forms. And just as the man who owns the claybed can control brick-making, so can the men who own the earth control wealth production. We have abolished man-owning in this country; are we going to leave earth-owning unrestricted?

s. c.



### Extravagance and Thrift.

A writer in the Chicago Herald of July 27, to show the need of thrift in the United States, says:

We spend \$8,400,000 a year for cigarets. We drank 70,000,000 gallons of whiskey last year. We chew up over \$25,000,000 worth of chewing gum annually (one concern spends \$2,000,000 a year advertising its gum.) Last year the American people paid out \$90,000,000 for candy. These figures and many more like them are the measure of what is largely popular extravagance.

Now thrift is so desirable a thing and extravagant waste so reprehensible a practice that it is a pity to see earnest writers on that important subject overlooking the most glaring examples of waste, and neglecting to urge economy where it is most needed. All of the items mentioned above