

proudest on the seas, has all but disappeared from foreign ports. Greedy American shipbuilders made common cause with grasping manufacturers to prevent American shipmasters from buying ships abroad. And when American ships took out foreign registry during our Civil War to escape capture, a complacent Congress forbade their return to American registry. Thus was one of our greatest industries deliberately legislated out of existence in the name of protection. But a new era dawns. Europe is at war, and we are at peace. Foreign ships will seek American registry, as ours sought foreign protection. Commercial bodies already are calling upon Congress to open the door and let them in. Will Congress heed this appeal? Will it have the wit to undo the blunder of the war-mad Congress that riveted the shackles on the American merchant marine in the '60's? There are already large amounts of American capital invested in foreign shipping, but our stupid navigation laws compel the use of foreign flags. The repeal of these laws will bring it under our own flag. Congress is confronted with two obvious duties: The repeal of our antiquated navigation laws, and the passage of the Seamen's bill. s. c.



Destroying American Industries.

Once more comes the hoary joke about the balance of trade and the tariff. A well known American writer makes the solemn statement that, "Every shipload of products brought into the country means one shipload less to be manufactured here. Of course that means less work for our workers; dull business and a dull labor market always accompany each other." It is unnecessary to repeat the obvious answer to such a fallacy, but it may be of interest to note some of the curious dilemmas into which the "balance of trade" economists find themselves. We are prosperous, according to these Alice-in-Wonderland economists, in proportion as we export more than we import. Reference to the Statistical Abstract of the United States discloses the fact that the exports of merchandise from the United States during the half century ending 1912, exceeded the imports of merchandise by the amount of \$8,831,000,000. This indicates prosperity; for, according to the topsyturvy economists, this immense value of goods came back to us in gold. Unfortunately for that theory, though, the same authority shows that \$419,000,000 more gold was sent out of the country than was brought in. Possibly it was paid for in silver. No, we sent away during that time \$809,000,000 more silver than we brought back.

How long must it take people to learn that all trade is conducted for profit? Every legitimate, voluntary trade involves a mutual increase in wealth. Each receives more than he gives, else he would not trade. All complete trade, too, consists of exchanging goods for goods, or service for service. Money figures only as a convenient form of bookkeeping. The enormous excess of exports over imports, so far from denoting prosperity, mark our adversity. During our early days of development large investments were made by foreigners in our lands, and in industries closely related to land, such as the franchise monopolies. Each dollar then invested has grown with the increase of population and the industry of the people to represent now many dollars. Our statistics of imports showed one dollar as coming into the country. The same statistics show that dollar multiplied many times going out of the country. The excess of exports over imports measures the tribute we are paying to foreign investors. Ireland's trade with England shows an excess of exports over imports. India's trade tells the same story. All prosperous colonies make this showing. That is what they are for. That is the condition our imperialists seek to establish between our dependencies and the United States. Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines will all export more than they import. Yet, men go on declaring the earth is flat, and the moon is made of green cheese. Is it any wonder that there are men who think the more you take from a man's back the heavier the load is? s. c.



Imprisonment for Debt.

When Chicagoans read a few mornings ago that one of their fellow citizens had been imprisoned for debt they rubbed their eyes, wondering whether they had somehow slipped back into the eighteenth century. But when they turned to the Illinois Bill of Rights, Article II, Section 12, and read: "No person shall be imprisoned for debt, unless upon refusal to deliver up his estate for the benefit of his creditors in such manner as shall be prescribed by law, or in cases where there is strong presumption of fraud," matters began to grow interesting. First, a man was charged by a grocer with owing a bill of \$57. The charge was denied, but the man was convicted and ordered by the court to pay it. The man, still declaring he did not owe it, was threatened with jail. Whereupon he vowed he would stay in prison the remainder of his life before he would pay it. And to jail he went. An attorney became interested, and sought to liberate the prisoner by habeas corpus proceed-

ings. But the judge appealed to denied the plea for lack of jurisdiction. The Appellate Court, which the judge said had jurisdiction, was on a vacation; so the prisoner remained in jail until a benevolent citizen paid the \$57, and secured his release.



Again do we see the mills of the gods groaning and creaking as they grind their miserly grist. To begin with, here was a grocer who, without consulting anybody, sold for profit some goods to a customer whom he chose. According to his story the customer refused to pay, and the grocer brought to bear the law of the State. The State put the offender in jail, but charged his board to the grocer. And had not an outsider interfered there would have been an interesting contest as to which would have surrendered first, the man who gave up his liberty or the grocer who paid three dollars a week for his board. According to the Bill of Rights, a debtor can be jailed only for fraud, that is, for dishonesty. But why should the victim of dishonesty pay the board of the man who wronged him? The victim of a porchlimber, or footpad, is not called upon by the State to pay his board while in prison. Why the distinction? It looks very much as though Illinois had retained the old English law of imprisonment for debt, but had tried to hide the cruel thing under the cloak of fraud. It is much to be regretted that this man was not allowed to lie in jail till a decent public sentiment was aroused to wipe out the barbarous relic.

S. C.



Injustice and the Courts.

Increasing instead of diminishing seems the number of cases casting doubt on the fairness of courts and other branches of government. In California, Richard Ford and Herman Suhr are serving life sentences for a crime which no evidence shows that they committed. It was only through a ruling similar to the one, which in 1887 sent four innocent men to the gallows in Chicago, that they have been found guilty. In New Jersey, Fred S. Boyd and Patrick Quinlan are under sentence to the penitentiary, nominally for "incitement to riot," but in fact for exercising their constitutional right of free speech to express sentiments disagreeable to powerful interests. In New York, Bouck White is serving a sentence inflicted by a prejudiced magistrate, nominally for an unintentional violation of law which harmed no one. In Texas a strenuous effort to raise a sufficient defense fund seems all that can save from the gallows Rangel and Cline, who, in resisting an illegal

and murderous attack, killed a sheriff. These are not all of the recent cases of the same kind. The victims, in every case, are advocates of unpopular ideas. Sometimes their actions have been such as to deserve censure or condemnation. But that does not justify judges or prosecuting attorneys in distorting into violation of law what was nothing of the kind. It certainly does not justify the rail-roading of men to prison or the gallows. When persons charged with crime can only hope to be saved from unjust punishment, through raising of defense funds, and strenuous public protests, then it is clear that many courts are not being conducted as they should.

S. D.



A Double Action Amendment.

In initiating a constitutional amendment to limit local tax rates to one per cent, the Ohio State Board of Commerce proclaimed through its secretary, O. K. Shimansky, that it would make the single tax impossible since "with a one per cent tax limit a single tax will not produce revenue enough to support the government." Later, in answer to a statement by Daniel Kiefer that it would also prevent municipal ownership, Mr. Shimansky contradicted himself, declaring, "The people by vote can increase the tax levy or the indebtedness without limit." So according to Mr. Shimansky the proposed amendment limits the tax rate to one per cent, and at the same time allows it to be raised without limit. Believing single tax to be unpopular, Mr. Shimansky appeals to ignorant prejudice against it in behalf of an amendment designed to block municipal ownership. But knowing municipal ownership to be popular he tries to reassure the friends of that measure with a very different statement. Ohio voters had better beware of a measure alleged to be capable of accomplishing two such contradictory results.

S. D.



When Is It to Be.

Government ownership was predicted by the railroad corporations in case of refusal of their request for a general five per cent increase in freight rates. The Interstate Commerce Commission has only granted about one-third of what was asked. Now won't the roads denied an increase kindly set the date for institution of government ownership?

S. D.



The Land Question an Issue in Texas.

Eloquent testimony to the almost revolutionary significance of the result of the Texas primary has