

ica. If American registry is extended to foreign ships without limit, we shall soon have a merchant marine. But the Senate hesitates to pass the bill that went through the House. The Senate seems to have an incorrigible habit of hesitating when a meritorious measure is up for consideration. Meanwhile suggestions pour in to relieve our predicament. And like the attempt of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn to get the imprisoned "nigger" out of the smoke-house, in which all plans are considered, except the obvious one of taking him out through the door, our lawmakers are determined to give us anything but free ships. A leading Chicago banker—and the bankers cannot be accused of neglecting their part in making the laws of this country—proposes that the Federal government appropriate \$100,000,000 to buy ships to take the place of those driven out by hostile cruisers.



Aside from the general proposition that it would be better to invest that amount of money in merchantmen rather than in men-o'-war, the question arises: Why invest that amount of the people's money, when private capital stands ready to supply the need? If, after all restrictions have been removed, private companies do not enter the field, it will be time enough for the Federal government to take action. But how does it come that this noted banker has gone into the Socialist camp? It is not so very long ago that a great outcry was raised by the bankers because the Federal government proposed to open postal savings banks. When it was suggested that the government establish savings banks at points where there were no private ones, or where the super-timid had no faith in the commercial savings banks, the idea was condemned in banking circles as socialistic. As Tom and Huck, instead of considering plans for tunnelling under the smokehouse walls, or breaking through the roof, could have liberated the prisoner by opening the door, so Congress, if it will, can restore the American flag to the high seas by removing the restrictions that drove it off. And in restoring the flag to its rightful place, let it be over free men. Once more, Gentlemen of Congress, please pass the Seamen's bill. s. c.



Blind Protectionists.

Protectionists are not predicting that the European war will bring us prosperity. Why not? Is not the war restricting imports even as a protective tariff would do? Don't protectionists recognize their own doctrine? s. d.

Money to Burn.

A common objection to the various plans for bettering social conditions and making the world more habitable is lack of money. Is it proposed to give the children better education, the answer is, no money. Should there be better roads, no money; old age pensions, no money; more parks, playgrounds, gymnasiums, libraries and museums, no money. But scarcely had the first shot been fired in the present war than the nations involved appropriated a billion dollars each to be offered up on the altars of patriotism. s. c.



How to Meet the Deficit.

Prospective loss of revenue due to decrease of imports resulting from the European war, has brought forth the inexcusable suggestion of a stamp tax to make up the deficit. Is there not enough statesmanship in Washington to see the needlessness and harm of new taxes on business? The deficit gives Congress an opportunity to help industry and to take measures to counteract the increasing cost of living. The request of the meat dealers of the United States that Congress help in opening unused lands for stockraising can be met by levying a land value tax. This will not only end the deficit but will force unused lands into use. That would be far better than burdening industry with a stamp tax.



Possibly there may be some doubt as to the constitutionality of such a measure. The power assumed by the Supreme court to nullify acts of Congress makes more or less doubtful the constitutionality of every measure that the court has not passed upon. Congress should give the public interest the benefit of the doubt, and let the Supreme court take the responsibility, if it so desires, of blocking a beneficial measure, and embarrassing the government. Ordinarily there is not enough courage in Congress to make such a course thinkable. But the present necessity should drive congressmen to it. s. d.



Meat Prices and Land Monopoly.

The connection between land monopoly and scarcity of meat, is noted by the butchers of the United States in resolutions adopted by their National Conference at Chicago on August 5. Their resolutions demand that the federal government acquire land for stock raisers to use and that it assist them in improving it. Congress and State legislatures can do better than that. They can legislate