

the hope that it would was apparently the motive back of it.

S. D.

A Bogus Anti-Monopolist.

Senator Reed of Missouri seems the most inconsistent of all Senators who joined in denunciation of Thomas D. Jones. Jones' connection with the Zinc Trust was one of the objections offered, and of this trust the opponents of Jones said that it "owns practically all the known zinc ore in the United States." If that statement is true then this trust must own practically all of the extensive zinc bearing lands in Missouri. In 1912 a constitutional amendment was submitted to Missouri voters that would have struck at this monopoly in an effective way. Where was Senator Reed when that amendment was pending? Why, with all the rest of Missouri's prominent Democratic politicians, denouncing it, urging the voters to kill it, and endorsing all the barefaced misrepresentations brought forward to deceive the people concerning its object and effect. Having done what he could to perpetuate monopoly in Missouri, he joins in denouncing an individual, who had no voice in the matter, for his connection with a monopoly. Reed is a fine example of something that a sincere opponent of monopoly does not resemble.

S. D.

The Right to Be Heard.

Senate Democrats, who refused Roosevelt's request to be heard on the proposed Columbian treaty, may be good politicians, but are very poor statesmen. Excuse themselves as they may, the conclusion can not be avoided that they were afraid. What is worse, they were afraid without good cause. Roosevelt's action in the Columbia matter was inexcusable. His explanation, boiled down, is that the end justified the means, and that is about all that he would have offered to the committee in defense. Practical politicians, with "no use for theories," are unable to realize the weakness of such a plea and were therefore afraid to meet it. As a result the public will be misled into the belief that Roosevelt's argument being quite unanswerable the Senate Democrats suppressed it. If the Senate Democrats had been real democrats the Colonel would have been invited to state his views as soon as he let his wish to do so be known. He would also have had some democratic principles presented to him for consideration of which he in common with most Senate Democrats is still ignorant. But since this course was not pursued he is in a position to construe the committee's

refusal to hear him, as a virtual admission of the correctness of his position. So-called practical politicians, perhaps even Senate Democrats, will some day learn that cowardice does not pay.

S. D.

Too Much Pork.

The rally round the pork barrel this year seems to have been a little bit too enthusiastic. Dispatches from Washington indicate that the opposition to the passage of the River and Harbor bill is likely to prove effective, unless some means can be found to placate the three or four Senators who are ready to filibuster during the remainder of the session. A great outcry is made every time the River and Harbor bill comes up in any Congress, but in reality it is typical of all the work of the Little Congressmen. Their only way of demonstrating their ability as legislators at Washington is to bring home some of the "pork." The first duty of the Little Congressman is to secure a few political appointments for constituents who will make trouble for him if not appointed. Next, he must secure appropriations of absurdly large amounts for building post offices in his district. And finally, he must secure appropriations for dredging harbors, if his district boasts a hamlet on the coast; or dredging or canalizing a river, if so much as a creek meanders across his district; or draining swamp-lands or irrigating arid lands. If all these fail, he enters into a log-rolling campaign to pension the widows and minor children of the third generation of the veterans of the Seminole war. His only interest in national legislation is to discover the most effective way to block it until his petty wants have been satisfied.

Is it not time that the labor-efficiency experts turned their attention to Congress, and to the several branches of the Federal government? In what shop or factory can such incompetency, wastefulness, and general inefficiency be found? The Supreme Court plumes itself when a decision has been rendered within two years of the beginning of the suit, the Executive departments are filled with men and women imperfectly organized, and employed upon useless work, and Congress falls in with any extravagance that promises a little patronage to its members. The evil will continue as long as the voters elect pork-barrel politicians, and tolerate the spoliation of the community for the sake of a few place hunters. A wholesome public opinion is what is needed. When Robert Baker made his public protest against the use of railroad passes by men who were making

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-