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DESERET EVENING NEWS

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SALT LAKE CITY, - FEB. 4, 1908.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

The special message of the President recently sent to Congress is one that should be read carefully. It is full of significance. It deals with the relations that should exist between capital and labor, and kindred subjects, and defines clearly the position of the government.

He arraigns, for instance, the great corporations that are indifferent to the rights of the public. He warns against the grosser forms of gambling in securities. "There is," he says, "no moral difference between gambling at cards or in lotteries or on the racetrack and gambling in the stock market. One method is just as pernicious to the body politic as the other in kind and in degree the evil worked is far greater, but it is a far more difficult subject with which to deal."

Of special importance is the denial of the President of the charge that the government caused the panic. He says:

"I do not for a moment believe that the actions of this administration have brought on business distress. So far as this is due to local and not world-wide causes and to the action of particular individuals, it is due to the speculative folly and flagrant dishonesty of a few men of great wealth, who seek to shield themselves from the effects of their own wrong-doing by ascribing its results to the action of those who have sought to put a stop to the wrong doing."

Among other important topics treated on is the responsibility of employers to employees. The President recommends the enactment upon terms which will meet the objections of the Supreme court, of a law which will provide for the compensation of employees injured while in the government service and also a law which will ultimately make the same principles applicable to all private employers. He also calls attention to the importance of guarding against the abuse of the writ of injunction in labor cases. He says:

"I cannot too urgently recommend that Congress give consideration to the subject. If some way of regulating the abuses is not found, the feeling of indignation among large numbers of our citizens will tend to grow so extreme as to produce a revolt against the whole use of the process of injunction."

The President, who is in a position to know, is firmly convinced that there is now need of the patriotism that was shown by the American people in the gravest crisis of the day. But he is also convinced that the day will come when greed and trickery and cunning shall be trampled under foot by those who fight for the righteousness that exulteth a nation. "This is the burden of the special message of President Roosevelt to the American people."

RAILROAD HORRORS.

What is the real trouble at Layton, where so many victims of railroad accidents have been slaughtered within the past few months? Will the straightening out of the line at that point make it safer, or are the horrors that have occurred there due to causes for which there seem to be no remedy?

Railroad accidents are too frequent in this country. There is a record of 5,000 deaths and 76,286 injured for the last year. This indicates a condition that calls for the attention of the managers of the great lines of transportation. Railroad travel should be made as safe in this country as in any other country in the world.

Not long ago a writer in the Atlantic Monthly pointed out that in nearly every case of fatal railroad accidents, some employee of the road is to blame. He contends, in his article, that if the rules of the road were strictly obeyed, there would be few accidents. But, somehow, many railroad men, though responsible for the lives and property placed under their care, take chances, instead of obeying the rules. He gives some illustrations of this negligence, and adds that many train conductors believe they have a right to exercise their own judgment, regardless of the rules. They are too independent to bow to authority, and so they take chances, and, sooner or later, find themselves in a wreck that obedience might have prevented.

This is probably true. If so, the remedy is the training of the men to conform to the rules, with military punctuality. Every railroad accident should be thoroughly investigated and the responsibility placed where it belongs. Criminal neglect ought not to go unrebuked. Safety devices and the framing of rules are good, but the training of the men to obedience is equally important.

WHAT CAUSED THE PANIC?

Good European critics of American financial affairs say that the panic of 1907 was not chargeable to the currency system, and that no currency system in the world could have stood up against such a raid on bank deposits as occurred throughout this country last October.

But what caused the American people to raid the banks and hoard their money? They may be impulsive, excitable, and hysterical, as some have claimed, but are not the French people still more so? And yet nothing like our last panic occurs in France.

Here the practice of hoarding money, at the first indication of an approaching panic, has been directly encouraged by the experience the people have had in previous panics. In 1893 the banks refused money to the

depositors for as long as four or five weeks. In 1907 the small merchants remembering this, laid in their supply of cash before the banks stopped cash payments.

The facts are that in the last case the banks for nine successive weeks in the largest cities refused to pay cash to the owners thereof—the depositors who had left it with them for safe-keeping—and compelled them to accept, in lieu of cash, certified checks on perfectly solvent banks to be sure, but checks that were sold at a discount in amounts running into untold millions. These checks, then, were not so good as cash. In spite of all assurances many of them were discounted. And finally wage-earners were compelled to receive the same makeshift currency, which was not exchangeable for real money in the city of its issue and not receivable for payments in any other locality.

Why did all this happen in a time of peace, prosperity, and great industrial activity in "safe and sane" America, which claims the title of the financial center of the world? We have our opinion about it, which is briefly told.

The practice of redepositing bank reserves in the banks of other cities is the main cause of it. This practice, of course, diminishes the safeguard against deposits in the smaller cities, and entangles the banks of East and West in such a way that if the Eastern banks ever totter, the whole system is endangered.

There were 6,544 national banks doing business last autumn. Of these 6,179 were known as "country banks"—those that may deposit with other banks three-fifths of the 15 per cent reserves which by law they are required to hold. The record now shows that these banks had deposited last fall \$429,000,000, in the banks of other cities more or less distant and that they kept on hand only \$201,000,990 to meet the demands of depositors.

In the bank of England, which likewise holds the reserves of other banks, the law requires a reserve of 40 per cent or over; and it makes no loans to stock exchange operators as many of our larger eastern banks are said to do.

The remedy seems to be more prudence in lending out money and high reserves to be held under a new banking law.

THE THAW VERDICT.

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"Just as Americans have over-elaborated the machinery of politics until democracy is bound and helpless in its toils, so they have magnified the technicalities of the law until justice is thrown into the back-ground and lost sight of. In a criminal case in the United States it is the judge on the bench, and not the prisoner in his dock, who is really on trial. The counsel on both sides polish up a thousand little points of pleading and practice and evidence and fire them off at the judge, who has to decide upon them off-hand. If he falls into a single error, no matter how trivial or how far removed from the question of the guilt or innocence of the accused, the appellate court will order a new trial of the case almost automatically."

The writer maintains that any American criminal who is able to hire a competent attorney stands a much better chance of acquittal than of conviction, and this regardless of his guilt. Cases like the Thaw trial, and others of recent date, give rise to such criticism.

PROTEST AGAINST MILITARISM.

Senator Hale of Maine, who is chairman of the Senate committee on naval affairs, is said to have received a protest, signed by 23 ministers, against the "needless and hazardous enlargement of our navy." The protestants desire that this country take the lead among the peace-makers of the world.

There is no probability that Congress will take any notice of this protest, but the increasing military burdens certainly call for the serious consideration of the nation's representatives. This country is now asked to pay over a million dollars a day for military purposes. This sounds almost fabulous. Congressman Tawney has pointed out that this estimate already received call for the enormous amount of \$406,011,216, and that at a time when our balance sheet may show a deficit of one hundred millions in the year 1908-1909. Says Mr. Tawney:

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THE THAW VERDICT.

The second Thaw trial has ended in the acquittal of the slayer of White on the ground of insanity. No one seriously believes that Thaw was any more insane when the act was committed than murderers generally are, who plan to take the life of a fellow-being. But the verdict of the jury makes him irresponsible at that particular moment. The character of the victim, we presume, was the chief consideration.

Undoubtedly White was no better than Thaw and scores of other men of that class. Undoubtedly he deserved his fate, but no misdeeds of which he may have been guilty justified Thaw in assuming the role of avenging angel. When a private citizen usurps the authority reserved for the courts and the officers of the law, he becomes a criminal himself. It would have been better had the jury found him guilty and recommended him to mercy on account of the moral depravity of his victim, than to pronounce the killing of White the act of an insane person. In the courts a spade should be called a spade, lest confusion as to what is right and wrong be sown broadcast.

Our criminal procedure has recently been criticised by an English critic as follows:

"Just as Americans have over-elaborated the machinery of politics until democracy is bound and helpless in its toils, so they have magnified the technicalities of the law until justice is thrown into the back-ground and lost sight of. In a criminal case in the United States it is the judge on the bench, and not the prisoner in his dock, who is really on trial. The counsel on both sides polish up a thousand little points of pleading and practice and evidence and fire them off at the judge, who has to decide upon them off-hand. If he falls into a single error, no matter how trivial or how far removed from the question of the guilt or innocence of the accused, the appellate court will order a new trial of the case almost automatically."

PROTEST AGAINST MILITARISM.

Senator Hale of Maine, who is chairman of the Senate committee on naval affairs, is said to have received a protest, signed by 23 ministers, against the "needless and hazardous enlargement of our navy." The protestants desire that this country take the lead among the peace-makers of the world.

There is no probability that Congress will take any notice of this protest, but the increasing military burdens certainly call for the serious consideration of the nation's representatives. This country is now asked to pay over a million dollars a day for military purposes. This sounds almost fabulous. Congressman Tawney has pointed out that this estimate already received call for the enormous amount of \$406,011,216, and that at a time when our balance sheet may show a deficit of one hundred millions in the year 1908-1909. Says Mr. Tawney:

"This stupendous sum of \$406,011,216 is asked for simply for the military side of the government, and is larger than appropriations for the entire expense of the government for any fiscal year since the Civil war down to 1890, and not appreciably less than appropriations for any fiscal year prior to 1897, for the Spanish-American war."

The estimates include the pension list, but not the twenty-one millions paid out for the maintenance of the war and navy departments, nor the forty million dollars asked for new battleships. The question is pertinent: If it costs more than a million dollars a day to maintain the small military force we now have, and the present navy, what would the expense be if our army were to be increased to the size of that of Germany, or France, and the naval program of our admirals adopted by Congress? Could we afford it, or would it mean ruin and destitution to those who,

JUST FOR FUN.

He'll Find Out.

"Yes," said the bachelor, "a fellow may think he's having a high old time at night, but something will surely tell him next morning that he simply made a fool of himself."

"Yes," replied the married man, "or somebody."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

The Obliging Lamp.

"I noticed," remarked the piano stool to the parlor lamp, "that you started to smoke last night when Miss Yerner was entertaining Mr. Thimble."

"Yes," replied the lamp, "I saw she was just waiting for an excuse to turn me down."—Philadelphia Press.

Perfectly Proper.

"The airs of her! the idea of her talking about her family plate!"

"That's right. They've got a plate that was used by every member of the family at one time or another."—Philadelphia Press.

Literary Handshakes.