

ROOSEVELT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from first page.)

Keep order is a primary duty, and in time of disorder and violence all other questions sink into abeyance until order has been restored. In the District of Columbia and in the territories the federal law covers the entire field of government, but the labor question is only acute in populous centers of commerce, manufactures or mining. Nevertheless, both in the enactment and the enforcement of law, the federal government within its restricted sphere should set an example to the state governments, especially in a matter so vital as this affecting labor. I believe that under modern industrial conditions it is often necessary, and even where not necessary it is yet often wise, that there should be organization of labor in order better to secure the rights of the individual wage-worker. All encouragement should be given to any such organization, so long as it is conducted with a due and decent regard for the rights of others. There are in this country some labor unions which have habitually, and other labor unions which have often been among the most effective agents in working for good citizenship and for uplifting the condition of those whose welfare should be closest to our hearts. But when any labor union seeks improper ends or seeks to achieve proper ends by improper means, all good citizens, and more especially all honorable public servants, must oppose the wrongdoing as resolutely as they would oppose the wrongdoing of any great corporation. Of course any violence, brutality or corruption should not for one moment be tolerated. Wage-workers have an entire right to organize, and by all peaceful and honorable means to endeavor to persuade their fellows to join with them in organizations. They have a legal right, which, according to circumstances, may or not be a moral right, to refuse to work in company with men who decline to join their organizations. They have under no circumstances the right to commit violence upon those, whether capitalists or wage-workers, who refuse to support their organizations or who side with those with whom they are at odds, for mob rule is intolerable in any form.

Employer's Liability Law.

The wage-workers are peculiarly entitled to the protection and the encouragement of the law. From the very nature of their occupation railroad men, for instance, are liable to be maimed in doing the legitimate work of their profession unless the railroad companies are required by law to make ample provision for their safety. The administration has been zealous in enforcing the existing law for this purpose. That law should be amended and strengthened. Wherever the national government has power there should be a stringent employer's liability law, which should apply to the government itself where the government is an employer of labor.

In my message to the fifty-seventh congress at its second session, I urged the passage of an employer's liability law for the District of Columbia. I now renew that recommendation, and further recommend that the congress appoint a commission to make a comprehensive study of employer's liability with the view of extending the provisions of a great and constitutional law to all employments within the scope of federal power.

Medals of Honor.

The government has recognized heroism upon the water, and bestows medals of honor upon those persons who by extreme and heroic daring have endangered their lives in saving or endeavoring to save lives from the perils of the sea in the waters over which the United States has jurisdiction, or upon an American vessel. This recognition should be extended to cover cases of conspicuous bravery and self-sacrifice in the saving of life in private employments under the jurisdiction of the United States, and particularly in the land commerce of the nation.

Prevention of Railroad Accidents.

The ever-increasing casualty list upon our railroads is a matter of grave public concern, and urgently calls for action by the congress. In the matter of speed and comfort of railway travel our railroads give at least as good service as those of any other nation, and there is no reason why this service should not also be as safe as human ingenuity can make it. Many of our leading roads have been foremost in the adoption of the most approved safeguards for the protection of travelers and employes, yet the list of clearly avoidable accidents continues unduly large. The passage of a law requiring the adoption of a block signal system has been proposed to the congress. I earnestly concur in that recommendation, and would also point out to the congress the urgent need of legislation in the interest of the public safety, limiting the hours of labor for railroad employes in train service upon railroads engaged in interstate commerce, and providing that only trained

and experienced persons be employed in positions of responsibility connected with the operation of trains. Of course nothing can prevent accidents caused by human weakness or misconduct, and there should be drastic punishment for any railroad employe, whether officer or man, who, by the issuance of wrong orders or by disobedience of orders, causes disaster. The law of 1901 requiring interstate railroads to make monthly reports of all accidents to passengers and employes on duty should also be amended so as to empower the government to make a personal investigation, through proper officers, of all accidents involving loss of life which seem to require investigation, with a requirement that the results of such investigation be made public.

The safety-appliance law, as amended by act of March 2, 1903, has proved beneficial to railway employes, and in order that its provisions may be properly carried out, the force of inspectors provided for by appropriation should be largely increased. This service is analogous to the steamboat inspection service, and deals with even more important interests. It has passed the experimental stage and demonstrated its utility, and should receive generous recognition by the congress.

Unions of Government Employes.

There is no objection to employes of the government forming or belonging to unions, but the government can neither discriminate for nor discriminate against non-union men who are in its employment or who seek to be employed under it. Moreover, it is a very grave impropriety for government employes to band themselves together for the purpose of extorting improperly high salaries from the government. Especially is this true of those within the classified service. The letter carriers, both municipal and rural, are as a whole an excellent body of public servants. They should be amply paid, but their payment must be obtained by arguing their claims fairly and honorably before the congress, and not by banding together for the defeat of those congressmen who refuse to give promises which they cannot in conscience give. The administration has already taken steps to prevent and punish abuses of this nature, but it will be wise for the congress to supplement this action by legislation.

Bureau of Labor.

Much can be done by the government in labor matters merely by giving publicity to certain conditions. The bureau of labor has done excellent work of this kind in many different directions. I shall shortly lay before you in a special message the full report of the investigation of the bureau of labor into the Colorado mining strike, as this is a strike in which certain very evil forces, which are more or less at work everywhere under the conditions of modern industrialism, became startlingly prominent. It is greatly to be wished that the department of commerce and labor, through the labor bureau, should compile and arrange for the congress a list of the labor laws of the various states, and should be given the means to investigate and report to the congress upon the labor conditions in the manufacturing and mining regions throughout the country, both as to wages, as to hours of labor, as to the labor of women and children, and as to the effect in the various labor centers of immigration from abroad. In this investigation especial attention should be paid to the conditions of child labor and child labor legislation in the several states. Such an investigation must necessarily take into account many of the problems with which this question of child labor is connected. These problems can be actually met, in most cases, only by the states themselves, but the lack of proper legislation in one state in such a matter as child labor often renders it excessively difficult to establish protective restriction upon the work in another state having the same industries, so that the worst tends to drag down the better. For this reason it would be well for the nation at least to endeavor to secure comprehensive information as to the conditions of labor of children in the different states. Such an investigation and publication by the national government would tend toward the securing of approximately uniform legislation of the proper character among the several states.

Corporations.

When we come to deal with great corporations the need for the government to act directly is far greater than in the case of labor, because great corporations can become such only by engaging in interstate commerce, and interstate commerce is peculiarly the field of the general government. It is an absurdity to expect to eliminate the abuses in great corporations by state action. It is difficult to be patient with an argument that such matters should be left to the states, because more than one state pursues the policy of creating on easy terms corporations which are never operated within the state at all, but in other states whose

laws they ignore. The national government alone can deal adequately with these great corporations. To try to deal with them in an intemperate, destructive or demagogic spirit would, in all probability, mean that nothing whatever would be accomplished, and, with absolute certainty, that if anything were accomplished it would be of a harmful nature. The American people need to continue to show the very qualities that they have shown—that is, moderation, good sense, the earnest desire to avoid doing any damage, and yet the quiet determination to proceed, step by step, without halt and without hurry, in eliminating, or at least in minimizing whatever of mischief or of evil there is to interstate commerce in the conduct of great corporations. They are acting in no spirit of hostility to wealth, either individual or corporate. They are not against the rich man any more than against the poor. On the contrary, they are friendly alike toward rich man and toward poor man, provided only that each acts in a spirit of justice and decency toward his fellows. Great corporations are necessary, and only men of great and singular mental power can manage such corporations successfully, and such men must have great rewards. But these corporations should be managed with due regard to the interest of the public as a whole. Where this can be done under the present laws it must be done. Where these laws come short others should be enacted to supplement them.

Yet we must never forget the determining factor in every kind of work, of head or hand, must be the man's own good sense, courage and kindness. More important than any legislation is the gradual growth of a feeling of responsibility and forbearance among capitalists and wage-workers alike; a feeling of respect on the part of each man for the rights of others; a feeling of broad community of interest, not merely of capitalists among themselves and of wage-workers among themselves, but of capitalists and wage-workers in their relations to each other, and of both in their relations to their fellows who with them make up the body politic. There are many captains of industry, many labor leaders, who realize this. A recent speech by the president of one of our great railroad systems to the employes of that system contains sound common sense. It runs in part as follows:

"It is my belief we can better serve each other, better understand the man as well as his business, when meeting face to face, exchanging views and realizing from personal contact we serve but one interest, that of mutual prosperity."

"Serious misunderstandings cannot occur where personal good will exists and opportunity for personal explanation is present."

"In my early business life I had experience with men of affairs of a character to make me desire to avoid creating a like feeling of resentment to myself and the interests in my charge should fortune ever place me in authority, and I am solicitous of a measure of confidence on the part of the public and our employes that I shall hope may be warranted by the fairness and good fellowship I intend shall prevail in our relationship."

"But do not feel I am disposed to grant unreasonable requests, spend the money of our company unnecessarily or without value received, nor expect the days of mistakes are disappearing, or that cause for complaint will not continually occur, simply to correct such abuses as may be discovered, to better conditions as fast as reasonably may be expected, constantly striving, with varying success, for that improvement we all desire, to convince you there is a force at work in the right direction, all the time making progress—is the disposition with which I have come among you asking your good will and encouragement."

"The day has gone by when a corporation can be handled successfully in defiance of the public will, even though that will be unreasonable and wrong. A public may be led, but not driven, and I prefer to go with it and shape or modify, in a measure, its opinion, rather than be swept from my bearings, with loss to myself and the interests in my charge."

"Violent prejudice exists towards corporate activity and capital today, much of it founded in reason, more in apprehension, and a large measure is due to the personal traits of arbitrary, unreasonable, incompetent and offensive men in positions of authority. The accomplishment of results by indirection, the endeavor to thwart the intention, if not the expressed letter of the law (the will of the people), a disregard of the rights of others, a disposition to withhold what is due, to force by main strength or inactivity a result not justified, depending upon the weakness of the claimant and his indisposition to become involved in litigation, has created a sentiment harmful in the extreme and a disposition to consider anything fair that gives gain to the individual at the expense of the company."

"If corporations are to continue to

do the world's work, as they are best fitted to, these qualities in their representatives that have resulted in the present prejudice against them must be relegated to the background. The corporations must come out into the open and see and be seen. They must take the public into their confidence and ask for what they want and no more, and be prepared to explain satisfactorily what advantage will accrue to the public if they are given their desires, for they are permitted to exist not that they make money solely, but that they may effectively serve those from whom they derive their power.

"Publicity and not secrecy will win hereafter, and laws be construed by their intent and not by their letter, otherwise public utilities will be owned and operated by the public which created them, even though the service be less efficient and the result less satisfactory from a financial standpoint."

Bureau of Corporations.

The bureau of corporations has made careful preliminary investigation of many important corporations. It will make a special report on the beef industry.

The policy of the bureau is to accomplish the purposes of its creation by co-operation, not antagonism; by making constructive legislation, not destructive prosecution, the immediate object of its inquiries; by conservative investigation of law and fact, and by refusal to issue incomplete and hence necessarily inaccurate reports. Its policy being thus one of an open inquiry into and not an attack upon business, the bureau has been able to gain not only the confidence, but, better still, the co-operation of men engaged in legitimate business.

The bureau offers to the congress the means of getting at the cost of production of our various great staples of commerce. Of necessity the careful investigation of special corporations will afford the commissioner knowledge of certain business facts, the publication of which might be an improper infringement of private rights. The method of making public the results of these investigations affords, under the law, a means for the protection of private rights. The congress will have all facts except such as would give to another corporation information which would injure the legitimate business of a competitor and destroy the incentive for individual superiority and thrift.

The bureau has also made exhaustive examinations into the legal condition under which corporate business is carried on in the various states, into all judicial decisions on the subject, and into the various systems of corporate taxation in use. I call special attention to the report of the chief of the bureau, and I earnestly ask that the congress carefully consider the report and recommendations of the commissioner on this subject.

Insurance.

The business of insurance vitally affects the great mass of the people of the United States, and is national and not local in its application. It involves a multitude of transactions among the people of the different states and between American companies and foreign governments. I urge that the congress carefully consider whether the power of the bureau of corporations cannot constitutionally be extended to cover interstate transactions in insurance.

Rebates.

Above all else we must strive to keep the highways of commerce open to all on equal terms, and to do this it is necessary to put a complete stop to all rebates. Whether the shipper or the railroad is to blame makes no difference; the rebate must be stopped, the abuses of the private car and private terminal track and sidetrack systems must be stopped, and the legislation of the fifty-eighth congress, which declares it to be unlawful for any person or corporation to offer, grant, give, solicit, accept or receive any rebate, concession or discrimination in respect of the transportation of any property in interstate or foreign commerce whereby such property shall by any device whatever be transported at a less rate than that named in the tariffs published by the carrier, must be enforced. For some time after the enactment of the act to regulate commerce it remained a moot question whether that act conferred upon the interstate commerce commission the power, after it had found a challenged rate to be unreasonable, to declare what thereafter should, prima facie, be the reasonable maximum rate for the transportation in dispute. The supreme court finally resolved that question in the negative, so that is the law now stands the commission simply possesses the bare power to denounce a particular rate as unreasonable. While I am of the opinion that at present it would be undesirable, if it were not impracticable, finally to clothe the commission with general authority to fix railroad rates, I do not believe that, as a fair security to shippers, the commission should be vested with the power, where a given rate has been challenged and after full hearing found to be unreasonable, to decide, subject to judicial review, what shall

be a reasonable rate to take its place, the ruling of the congress to take effect immediately, and to obtain unless and until it is reversed by the court of review. The government must in increasing degree supervise and regulate the workings of the railways engaged in interstate commerce, and such increased supervision is the only alternative to an increase of the present evils on the one hand or a still more radical policy on the other. In my judgment the most important legislative act now needed as regards the regulation of corporations is this act to confer on the interstate commerce commission the power to revise rates and regulations, the revised rate to at once go into effect and to stay in effect unless and until the court of review reverses it.

Steamship companies engaged in interstate commerce and protected in our coastwise trade should be held to a strict observance of the interstate commerce act.

City of Washington.

In pursuing the set plan to make the city of Washington an example to other American municipalities several points should be kept in mind by the legislators. In the first place the people of this country should clearly understand that no amount of industrial prosperity, and above all no leadership in international industrial competition, can in any way atone for the sapping of the vitality of those who are usually spoken of as the working classes. The farmers, the mechanics, the skilled and unskilled laborers, the small shopkeepers, make up the bulk of the population of any country, and upon their well-being, generation after generation, the well-being of the country and the race depends. Rapid development in wealth and industrial leadership is a good thing, but only if it goes hand in hand with improvement, and not deterioration, physical and moral. The overcrowding of cities and the darning of country districts are unhealthy and even dangerous symptoms in our modern life. We should not permit overcrowding in cities. In certain European cities it is provided by law that the population of towns shall not be allowed to exceed a very limited density for a given area, so that the increase in density must be continually pushed back into a broad zone around the center of town, this zone having great avenues or parks within it. The death rate statistics show a terrible increase in mortality, and especially in infant mortality, in overcrowded tenements. The poorest families in tenement houses live in one room, and it appears that in these one-room tenements the average death rate for a number of given cities at home and abroad is about twice what it is in a two-room tenement, four times what it is in a three-room tenement and eight times what it is in a tenement consisting of four rooms or over. These figures vary somewhat for different cities, but they approximate in each city those given above, and in all cases the increase of mortality, and especially of infant mortality, with the decrease in the number of rooms used by the family and with the consequent overcrowding is startling. The slum exacts a heavy total of death from those who dwell therein, and this is the case not merely in the great crowded slums of high buildings in New York and Chicago, but in the alley slums of Washington. In Washington people cannot afford to ignore the harm that this causes. No Christian and civilized community can afford to show a happy-go-lucky lack of concern for the youth of today, for, if so, the community will have to pay a terrible penalty of financial burden and social degradation in the tomorrow. There should be severe child labor and factory inspection laws. It is very desirable that married women should not work in factories. The prime duty of the man is to work, to be the breadwinner; the prime duty of the woman is to be the mother, the housewife. All questions of tariff and finance sink into utter insignificance when compared with the tremendous, the vital importance of trying to shape conditions so that these two duties of the man and of the woman can be fulfilled under reasonably favorable circumstances. If a race does not have plenty of children, or if the children do not grow up, or if when they grow up they are unhealthy in body and stunted or vicious in mind, then that race is decadent, and no heaping up of wealth, no splendor of momentary material prosperity, can avail in any degree as offsets.

The congress has the same power of legislation for the District of Columbia which the state legislatures have for the various states. The problems incident to our highly complex modern industrial civilization, with its manifold and perplexing tendencies both for good and for evil, are far less sharply accentuated in the city of Washington than in most other cities. For this very reason it is easier to deal with the various phases of these problems in Washington, and the District of Columbia government should be a model for the other municipal governments of the nation in all such matters as supervision of the housing of the poor, the

creation of small parks in the districts inhabited by the poor, in laws affecting labor, in laws providing for the taking care of the children, in truancy laws and in providing schools. In the vital matter of taking care of children, much advantage could be gained by a careful study of what has been accomplished in such states as Illinois and Colorado by the juvenile courts. The work of the juvenile courts is really a work of character building. It is now generally recognized that young boys and young girls who do wrong should not be treated as criminals, not even necessarily as needing reformation, but as needing to have their characters formed, and for the end to have them tested and developed by a system of probation. Much admirable work has been done in many of our commonwealths by earnest men and women who have made a special study of the needs of those classes of children which furnish the greatest number of juvenile offenders, and therefore the greatest number of adult offenders, and by their aid and by profiting by the experiences of the different states and cities in these matters, it would be easy to provide a good code for the district of Columbia.

Several considerations suggest the need of a systematic investigation into and improvement of housing conditions in Washington. The hidden residential alleys are breeding grounds of vice and disease and should be opened into minor streets. For a number of years influential citizens have joined with the district commissioners in the vain endeavor to secure laws permitting the condemnation of insanitary dwellings. The local death rates, especially from preventable diseases, are so unduly high as to suggest that the exceptional wholesomeness of Washington's better sections is offset by bad conditions in her poorer neighborhoods. A special commission on housing and health conditions in the national capital would not only bring about the reformation of existing evils, but would also formulate an appropriate building code to protect the city from mammoth brick tenements and other evils which threaten to develop here as they have in other cities. That the nation's capital should be made a model for other municipalities is an ideal which appeals to all patriotic citizens everywhere, and such a special commission might set up and organize the city's future development in lines of civic service just as Major L'Enfant and the recent park commission planned the arrangement of her streets and parks.

It is mortifying to remember that Washington has no compulsory school attendance law and that careful inquiries indicate the habitual absence from school of some 20 per cent of all children between the ages of 8 and 14. It must be evident to all who consider the problems of neglected child life or the benefits of compulsory education in other cities that one of the most urgent needs of the national capital is a law requiring the school attendance of all children, this law to be enforced by attendance agents directed by the board of education. Public playgrounds are necessary means for the development of wholesome citizenship in modern cities. It is important that the work inaugurated here through voluntary efforts should be taken up and extended through congressional appropriation of funds sufficient to equip and maintain numerous convenient small play grounds upon land which can be secured without purchase or rental. It is also desirable that small vacant places be purchased and reserved as small park play grounds in densely settled sections of the city which now have no public open spaces, and are destined soon to be built up solidly. All these needs should be met immediately. To meet them would entail expenses, but a corresponding saving could be made by stopping the building of streets and leveling of ground for purposes largely speculative in outlying parts of the city. There are certain offenders, whose criminality takes the shape of brutality towards the weak, who need a special type of punishment. The wife-beater, for example, is inadequately punished by imprisonment, for imprisonment may often mean nothing to him, while it may cause hunger and want to the wife and children who have been the victims of his brutality. Probably some form of corporal punishment would be the most adequate way of meeting this kind of crime.

Agriculture.

The department of agriculture has grown into an educational institution with a faculty of 2000 specialists making researches into all the sciences of production. The congress appropriates, directly and indirectly, \$6,000,000 annually to carry on this work. It reaches every state and territory in the union and the islands of the sea lately come under our flag. Co-operation is had with the state experiment stations and with many other institutions and individuals. The world is carefully searched for new varieties of grains, fruits, grasses, vegetables, trees and shrubs suitable to various localities in our country, and marked benefit to our