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Contents:

Table listing various articles such as 'The Corliss Steam Engine', 'How a Fish Swims', 'Prof. Morse's Official Report upon the Telegraphy of the French Exposition', etc.

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF REVENUE ---TINKERING THE INCOME TAX.

Protectionists, in what we regard the true meaning of that term, we do not greatly sympathize with a certain class who, styling themselves Protectionists, are purely and simply Prohibitionists.

The report bears upon its face the stamp of two things rarely combined in public office—great ability and honesty.

Conceding all this, we still must take exceptions to some of the views entertained by Commissioner Wells, and as we cannot find space to review all the points discussed in his report, we shall, in the present article, only touch upon the opinions of the Commissioner in regard to the income tax.

It is the opinion of the Commissioner, as well as that of the President, that the income-tax law, which expires in 1870 by its own limitation, should be re-enacted.

It will be unpopular, because, from its very nature, the burden it imposes will be, as it has been, more unequally distributed than any other the people are called upon to bear.

The amount collected, and the number from which it is collected, show this tax to be, in the main, a tax on small incomes. The Commissioner remarks that only about a million of the population are interested in its removal, while thirty-eight and one half millions are interested in its continuance.

The proposed modification of the law, reducing the tax to three per cent and at the same time reducing the amount of exemption for rent would increase the burden, and tax a great many small incomes now exempt.

Something might be said upon the manner in which this tax has been collected. There is no doubt that much odium has attached to the law from the way it has been administered.

One of the last but not the least of the charges of arbitrary and unjust action which might be enumerated, is the decision of Commissioner Delano in regard to those people known under the general title of communists, including the Snakers, Oneida Communists, Rappites, etc., which refuses to grant to the individuals of such associations the one thousand dollars exemption allowed to all other taxable individuals under the existing law.

Whatever motive may have prompted this decision, it is illegal and unjust, and we do not wonder that the large number of peaceful and patriotic citizens composing these bodies feel greatly aggrieved by it.

The law is opposed to the spirit of our institutions; the public are disgusted with it and detest it. Commissioner Wells favors a reduction of taxation; why not then remove the most repulsive feature of our internal revenue system?

THE USE OF EYES.

A young friend of ours, about to commence a nautical career, was requested to call upon an "old salt" just previous to the sailing of the vessel in which the young aspirant was about to make his first trip to Hong Kong.

The eyes are, perhaps, the avenues through which more information, in regard to external things, is gained than any other of the organs of special sense; but a very little observation will convince a careful student of human nature that most people are, to a certain extent, blind.

The horse dealer sees well, when he examines a horse. All the points of the animal, good, bad, or indifferent, come under review. An incipient spavin, or splint does not escape his questioning glance.

"With eyes that hardly serve at most To guard their master 'gainst a post."

And he is by no means an isolated case of this kind of blindness. It may be found in all professions and trades—not even the journalist being an exception, though the full use of eyes is, to him, it would seem, if not an absolute necessity, at least something essential to highest success.

This want of power to see originates in the want of proper discipline. Men are born, if not totally blind, like puppies, yet, with eyes that, like all the other organs and faculties, need to be perfected by education.

We presume a large proportion of our readers may convict themselves of this mental blindness, by the simple experiment of looking closely at all the natural objects presented to their notice during a single hour of their existence.

Herein lies the main difference between the man with a full stored mind, and the man of little knowledge. Knowledge of natural things is mainly obtained by seeing.

This habit will make a man of small natural ability a match for the careless observer possessing far greater talent, and it makes the man of fine talents great.

THE METRIC SYSTEM.

Our subscribers have a feeling of annoyance when, as occasionally happens, they see in our journal dimensions and weights expressed in the French metric system.

Notwithstanding, however, we thus, out of consideration for American readers, reduce, for the most part, the French notation to the English system, when we find it necessary to refer to European experiments and discoveries, we sometimes find ourselves obliged to retain it or accept the alternative of inaccuracy in recording current facts.

As the metric system has been almost universally adopted now into the notation of experimental science, although in commercial transactions it has not been used to any extent outside of France, we, and all other journals of a technical character, will undoubtedly be compelled to use it more in the future than hitherto.

Enterprising and far-seeing publishers of school text-books are also adding, in new editions of works involving their use, tables of French weights and measures.

THE GROWTH OF MONOPOLIES.

To the careful observer of current events, nothing in the whole category of results growing out of our peculiar system of Government seems more portentous, than the singular willingness on the part of the people to create gigantic monopolies by special enactment.

If these monopolies were confined to branches of business disconnected from such daily necessities as by their frequent occurrence make the public abjectly dependent upon the sources which supply them, their effects would be less grievous; but it is precisely in the supply of these daily necessities that the most giant monopolies exist, and have obtained the most unrestricted privileges; and it is such monopolies that now in the opinion of some of the most able thinkers of the age, absolutely threaten the liberty of the people.

The most formidable of these monopolies are, at present, railroad, express, telegraph, and gas companies.

In a recent article we have shown how little, as a rule, the public safety and convenience is regarded by railway corporations. Telegraph companies have hitherto laid themselves open to criticism chiefly on the score of high tariffs, but as the transaction of business, and the demands of commerce will necessarily increase public dependence on this means of intercommunication, the possibilities for encroachment upon public rights will also increase.

The official inquiries into the management of these companies last winter, instituted by the New York Legislature, while, as we predicted, they resulted in no relief to consumers, showed in the clearest light, and on the testimony of their officers, that the privileges granted to these corporations were such as the public can never safely grant to any individual or association of individuals.

The World, in a recent article reviewing the status of the