

carriers to file reports. Finally, a special Commission is created to investigate questions pertaining to the issuance of railway securities. If those readers of The Outlook who are particularly interested in this act will compare these provisions with the outline of the bill as originally introduced, which was given in The Outlook for March 12, they will see that the modifications made during enactment are perhaps as significant as are the originally proposed additions to the present law. These additions and modifications bear witness to the influence of a comparatively small but an earnest body of progressive Republicans in both branches of Congress.

**POSTAL SAVINGS,
STATEHOOD,
AND CONSERVATION**

By enacting a Postal Savings Bank Law, Congress has responded to a demand that has been virtually continuous, and has been expressed with increasing effectiveness, for over a generation. By this law Congress has created a Board of Trustees consisting of the Postmaster-General, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Attorney-General. This Board is authorized to select post-offices to serve as depositories for savings. In any such depository office, any person over ten years of age may open an account; but no person can have more than one such account. One dollar or multiples of a dollar may be deposited by any one person up to one hundred dollars in any calendar month. No account shall exceed five hundred dollars. Smaller amounts may be saved by the purchase of special ten-cent stamps which will be accepted for deposit as they reach any multiple of ten stamps. A depositor receives interest at two per cent, or, if he wishes, may surrender his deposit in sums of twenty dollars, forty dollars, sixty dollars, eighty dollars, a hundred dollars, or five hundred dollars, and receive for it Government bonds of equivalent value bearing two and a half per cent interest. Such moneys as the trustees deposit are to be placed in State or National banks and guaranteed by prescribed securities. Our readers must not be disappointed if, the next time they go to a post-office, the postmaster or his clerk should decline to receive a proffered

deposit. No post-office is made a postal savings bank by virtue of this act. The Board of Trustees are to determine what offices shall receive savings deposits. The postal savings bank system of the United States will necessarily be of slow growth. With regard to the admission of Arizona and New Mexico, little need be said except that Congress has required of these two Territories compliance with certain restrictive conditions. As soon as these Territories become States, however, they will be able to escape from virtually all restrictions, except those placed on all the States by the Federal Constitution, if public sentiment within the States is strong enough to bring about changes in the State Constitution. In other words, all that Congress can do is to put these States on what it regards as the right road. As in the case of Oklahoma, however, Congress cannot prevent them from making each a road for itself. Among the most important measures which we have already mentioned we have purposely not included the Land Withdrawal Bill. This is a measure to insure the safety of those public lands which by executive order may have already been or may in the future be withdrawn from entry. Its value lies chiefly in the fact that it states clearly that to be legal which the Administration has been inclined to regard as illegal without such law. It is the one survival of that large group of conservation bills which were introduced for the purpose of establishing more firmly the conservation policy of the Federal Government.

**THE PORTO RICAN
BILL**

The Porto Rican Bill as it has passed the House appears to us in two respects a movement in the wrong direction. The House has struck out the clause providing for a *quasi* naturalization of such Porto Ricans as desire to become citizens of the United States, and has substituted a clause declaring all citizens of Porto Rico to be citizens of the United States; and it has taken all heads of departments out of the Porto Rican Senate and provided that all Senators shall be residents of and property-holders in Porto Rico. All heads of departments and eight of the thirteen Senators are to be appointed by the President. Two argu-

ments for the amendment substituting collective citizenship for individual citizenship by naturalization were adduced: one that it would be more pleasing to the Porto Ricans, the other that it had been pledged by the Republican party. Neither argument appears to us conclusive, neither of them is the argument of a statesman. And no serious consideration was given in the debate to the three serious objections to collective citizenship: (1) That it may have the effect to deprive Porto Rico of a chief source of its present income—the Federal taxes, which are now paid into the insular treasury; (2) that it requires of those who are members of an alien people, though not aliens in the eye of the law, no oath of allegiance to the United States; (3) that it tends to put Porto Rico in the way of becoming a State of the Union, which is desirable neither for Porto Rico nor the United States. There is more to be said for taking the heads of departments out of the Senate, but, in our judgment, conformity to the English precedent is better adapted in this respect to Porto Rican conditions than conformity to the American precedent; and putting Porto Ricans and Americans together in the same legislative house has decided advantages in promoting better acquaintance and a spirit of co-operation.

THE GOVERNMENT AND HEALTH

In the pressure of so many important measures before Congress, no adequate consideration was given to the proposal to bring about what President Taft last year said would be "the economy of the union of all health agencies of the National Government in one bureau or department." It may be added that there would not only be economy of money and effort, but economy of life, in such a union. Senator Owen's bill proposed a separate Department of Health, but this is not the essential thing. What is needed, whether through bureau or department, is, first, the consolidation of existing bureaus relating to health now working under separate departments, and, second, a sensible extension of the health work of the United States Government, which now looks more closely after the lives of hogs than of men. The movement has been opposed by some rather

mysterious agencies which have spent large sums in advertisements and circulars, all of which convey the totally wrong impression that the legislation asked would control the practice of medicine or restrict medical freedom. Every citizen ought to know that the Federal Government has no power to do this. The flaunting headline "Do You Want the 'Doctors' Trust' to be Able to Force its Opinions on You?" is a patent absurdity. What is proposed is to unite all National efforts for the purpose of fighting diseases by preventing the pollution of inter-State streams (thereby reducing death by typhoid), by preventing the adulteration of foods, by preventing the importation of bubonic plague and yellow fever, by studying the causes of disease, by favoring uniform legislation as to sanitation and local health laws, by investigating health conditions, and by disseminating information. Senator Owen has characterized the opposition by saying: "It is obviously artificial; it is perfectly apparent that somebody is spending a very large amount of money on this sudden propaganda; it can hardly be doubted that somebody, in gross error, is advising the 'homœopaths,' the 'osteopaths,' the 'eclectics,' that their right to practice medicine is about to be invaded by the Federal Government." Professor Irving Fisher in a recent article points out that in the past cities have concealed the existence of yellow fever and bubonic plague through commercial fears, and that the same opposition is made as regards the fight against the hook-worm disease in the South to-day. When President Taft, in a speech at Chicago, spoke of health-conservation, the applause and interest were such as to excite his surprise. It is merely a truism to say that there is an immense and perfectly proper field for the Nation to occupy in health-conservation. The matter will surely come before Congress again, and when the people fully understand it they will insist on legislation in some form for united and systematic effort.

GOVERNOR HUGHES AND THE SPECIAL SESSION

Having called the Legislature of New York in extraordinary session, Governor Hughes laid before it last week his recommenda-