

the Hawaiian Islands, for example, would no longer travel at the expense of other letters, but would bear high rates of postage. A bond of the Nation's unity would be broken. If rates were determined according to service, there would be no reason for making the Post Office an institution of the Government. Every question concerning the Post Office should be simply a variation of the one single question, What will best serve the welfare of the whole people?

### The Third Ring

**I**N the Washington circus the third ring is occupied by the combatants in the naval fight, Congress being on the one side and the Navy Department and its friends on the other.

Congress has never treated the Navy with the intelligence that the subject requires. This is not strange, since an understanding of naval affairs in detail requires a training which Representatives and Senators have not received. Except when frightened into some spasm, Congress has usually been frugal and sometimes stingy in making appropriations for the Navy. But what is worse, Congress has tried to substitute its judgment on technical matters for the judgment of men who know more about such matters than Congress can ever know. On the other hand, of course Naval men are apt to want more money for the Navy than it needs. Every specialist believes that his own specialty is the most important thing in the whole Government. If he did not believe that, or something like it, he would not be a good specialist. Congress, of course, cannot be governed by the enthusiasm of all specialists. It is the right of Congress to determine the naval policy of the country—whether we shall have a Navy, and, if so, how big a one; it would be a bad day for the Nation if the naval or military policy of the United States passed out of civilian hands; but, having decided upon the policy, Congress ought to trust the judgment of those who know most about the means of carrying it out. All naval authorities of any consequence, we believe, agree that our Navy is ill-balanced.

It is reported that in this controversy the President, guided by Secretary Hughes, has sided against the Navy Department and the naval experts. We do not believe it, and will not without better evidence than the reports of newspaper correspondents. It may be true

that the President has made it clear that he wants no action that would look like the renewal of a Navy-building race in classes of ships outside of the Naval Treaty; but the President cannot have changed his mind since he made it clear in his Annual Message that he believed in maintaining the Treaty ratio; and he cannot believe that without believing that the capital ships authorized in that Treaty should be supported by auxiliaries sufficient to make them effective.

On one aspect of our naval policy we comment in an editorial on another page.

### The Business of Being a Farmer

**T**HE first posthumous report of a Cabinet member in recent years is in the hands of the President. It is the annual report of Secretary of Agriculture Henry C. Wallace, who died during the last days of October. The letter of transmittal, signed by the Acting Secretary, who was Mr. Wallace's Assistant Secretary, Howard M. Gore, serves as a reminder that the hand of death has lain heavily upon the Administration at Washington during the past four years.

This can be said of the report of Secretary Wallace, now dead, as it would have been said in these columns if he had lived—that it is marked by complete candor. There is in it nothing of pretense, nothing of promise beyond the likelihood of performance, no undue laudation of achievements, no concealment of unpleasant facts. This last work of Secretary Wallace, done with ample data before him and in the spirit of frankness that characterized him, appears to leave little room for doubt that the farms of America have been hard hit in the past few years. He says:

"Actual farm operators, after paying interest on borrowed capital and rent on rented farms, may earn approximately 2 per cent on their own capital investment in the crop year 1924. This compares with a loss of 3.1 per cent in 1920, a loss of 1.4 per cent in 1921, and a profit of 1.5 per cent and 1.4 per cent in 1922 and 1923." We should like to see a comparison of these figures with the average earnings of industry during the same period.

The Secretary's figures show a gradual improvement through the four years, though the margin of earnings in 1924 is still pitifully small. And, to make sure that the measure of improvement is not overstated, Secretary Wallace says:

"These returns are made, however, on a capital valuation that has been scaled down. Thus the real gain is not as large as the apparent gain." Secretary Wallace maintained to the day of his death the truth of the assertion he had so often made, that the hard state of the farmers was not due to unwise investments and poor business judgment.

During the three years and seven months of his incumbency of the Secretaryship Mr. Wallace never offered any remedy for agricultural ills; he offers none in the message made public after his death. He knew, perhaps better than any one else in official life in Washington, that a panacea was not possible. He did, however, favor export marketing legislation and other measures which went beyond the views of the Administration as a whole.

The agricultural situation, as the report makes clear, shows an improvement which may be expected to continue. It is made equally clear by the report, however, that this improvement has as yet reached only a part of the various classes of farmers. But it may reasonably be expected finally to reach the classes who have not yet felt any relief; and the task of finding means of relief, now in the hands of the President's Commission, may be easier than it was during the three years and more when Secretary Wallace tried to perform it alone.

### In Memory of Woodrow Wilson

**T**HE United States, on Monday, December 15, paid tribute to the memory of Woodrow Wilson. In some sort, effort was made to appraise and to express his achievements, his services, his motives, his influence in the world.

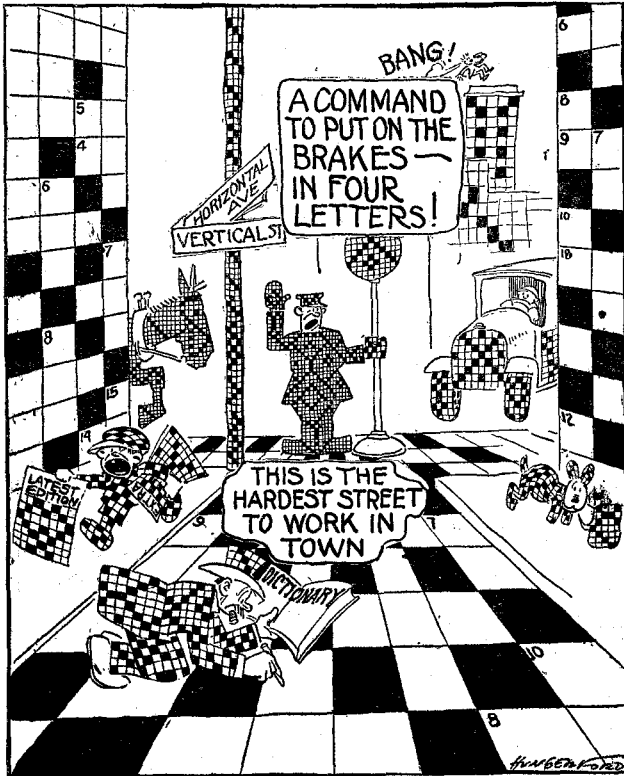
Though in his actual person somewhat aloof from the manifestation of affection, Woodrow Wilson inspired love which, in many of his admirers, amounted almost to idolatry. On the other side, his personality was such that he aroused antagonisms which sometimes manifested themselves in hatred, occasionally in petty spitefulness. Of this kind of man no expression at this time, or even in decades to come, will meet universal acceptance.

Yet the scene was, for all that, none the less impressive, the importance and the value of it none the less real. It brought back to the minds of many men of commanding position in American life

# I'll cross it though it blast me

(Hamlet, Act I, Scene 1)

*Hungerford in the Pittsburgh Sun*



**The cross-word puzzle epidemic**

From Mrs. A. C. Cummins, Duquesne, Pennsylvania

*Reid in the Wilkes-Barre (Pa.) Record*

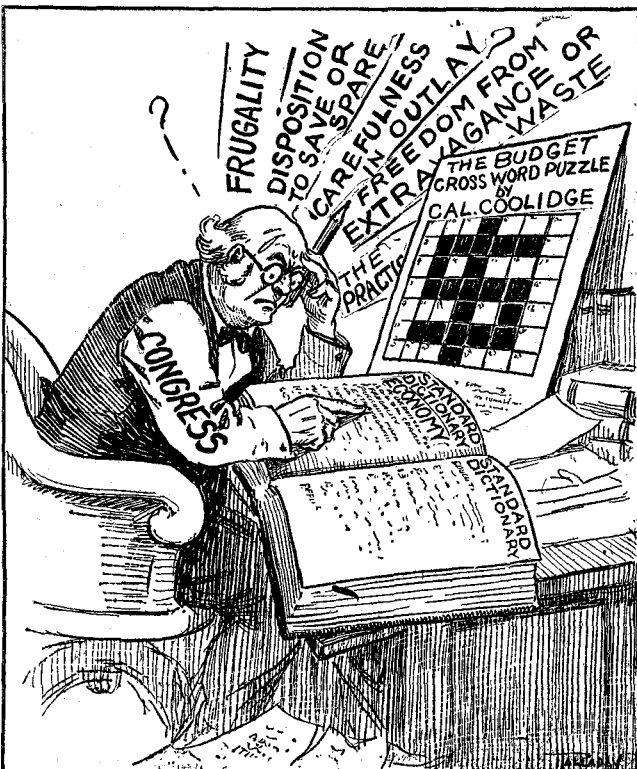


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**Sure a tough one**

From Arthur N. Rinehimer, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

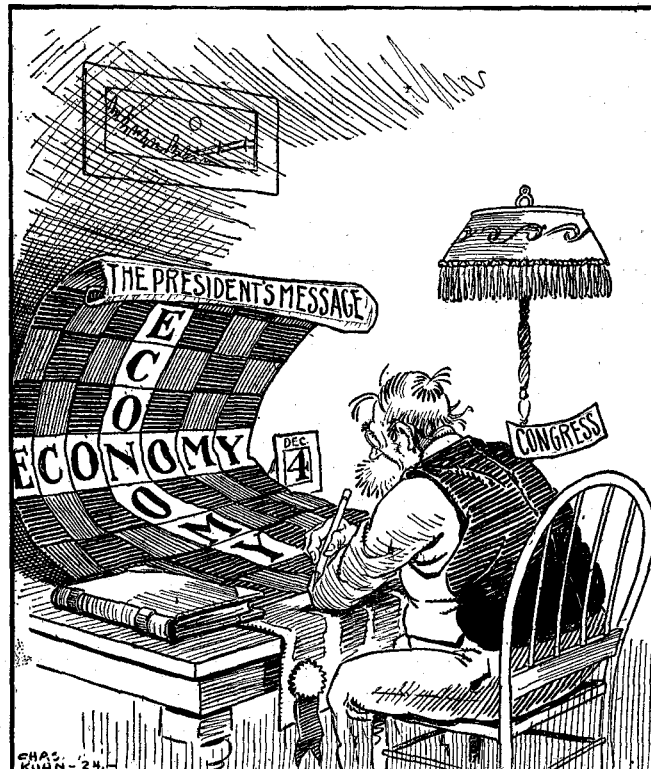
*Halladay in the Providence Journal*



**Hard for him to solve**

From Harriet R. Northup, Providence, Rhode Island

*Kuhn in the Indianapolis News*



**There's no puzzle about it**

From H. Fosdick, Indianapolis, Indiana