PENSIONS. An examination of the first appropriation bill ever enacted by Congress in 1789 called for a total government expenditure of $637,000 of which the sum of $91,000 was provided for payment of war pensions. Since then, the amount has progressively increased to $401 million, which does not include administrative or hospitalization expenses. Today, there are 596,750 veterans and 250,943 dependents on the rolls. Two dependents of soldiers of the war of 1812, 238 dependents of soldiers in the Mexican War receive an aggregate pension of $114,312. The Indian War pensions amount to 3 1/3 million, Civil War pensions total 40 2/3 million, Spanish War 115 million, peace time pensions total 12 3/4 million, World War pensions 1868 million, Emergency Officers pensions 35 million, and death compensation in behalf of veterans of the world war calls for 3 million. Four hundred million each year in pensions should be enough to frighten this and all other nations into the paths of peace. Even worse is the estimate of the Director of the U. S. Veterans Administration who believes that in the next ten years, the government will have to make provision for 10,000 additional beds in hospitals to care for an increase in mental cases. What tragedy?

CIVIL PENSIONS. In answer to a question as to how and why retired mail carriers and other civil service employees of the government receive a so-called pension at the end of 30 years service, the answer is that it is provided by an act of Congress passed in 1920. Under the provisions of this act, certain classes of government workers pay 3¾% of their salaries into a retirement fund each month. This fund is administered by the Civil Service Retirement Board. The Federal Government contributes an equal amount. This fund is loaned for governmental purposes and the interest earnings are added to the fund. Out of this fund retirement annuities are paid. Collections from employees amounts to 32½ million annually, interest earnings to 11 million annually. Today there are 51,206 annuitants on the rolls whose annual annuities range from $482 to $1166.

NOTE TO RAILROAD MEN. The Railroad Retirement Board estimates that there are 200,000 railroad men eligible for retirement under the provisions of the railroad retirement act. Of this number 130,000 are under 65; 50,000 between 65-70, 20,000 over 70. The work of the board has been delayed somewhat by a court decision which obligated the Board to dig necessary pension information out of railroad files. To date, 1268 railroad men are actually receiving pensions and several hundred more have been certified for pensions. The average of all pensions paid is $65.50 per month.

WHITE HOUSE. Few folks realize what a big and busy establishment the White House really is. Total cost of operating the Executive mansion including the President's salary is about $450,000 per year. In the President's office are 37 secretaries, clerks, stenographers and messengers. In addition a staff of 8 chauffeurs, footmen, washers and others are at constant command. For the mansion and grounds, another 56 persons such as clerks, gardeners, cooks, maids, butlers, etc., are necessary. The White House structure is valued at 2½ million and the grounds at $24 million. The laundry bill amounts to $6000. per year, the electric bill to $10,000, and the fuel bill to $4000. Those look like huge housekeeping items but it's a big and busy house.

HOME OWNERS LOAN. Shakespeare made much of the character of Shylock the money lender who, when a pound of flesh was due on a delinquent loan, insisted upon having his pound of flesh until Portia the fair attorney intervened and brought her knowledge of the law to the problem for a happy solution. 'Twas ever thus. Money is loaned. Some of it is not repaid. Then begins the grievous and bitter task of securing repayment by legal process. That is the unhappy prospect which today stares the Home Owners Loan Corporation in the face. It made more than a million loans. The average per loan was about $3000. There are large monthly payment per home owner is about $25.69, many of whom cannot pay. Loans are overdue. The proceeds of this became due to all the people of the nation because it came out of the Federal Treasury. Now comes the HOLC task of adjusting the loan or instituting a foreclosure suit. Up to the first day of December, 62,221 foreclosures aggregating 248 million dollars have been authorized and it is estimated that more than 160,901 such foreclosures will be authorized in the near future. There is something altogether tragic about a home foreclosure.

HOW GOES SOCIAL SECURITY. A recent report from the Social Security Board indicates that up to October 1936, 41 states had approved old age assistance laws on their books and that 974,383 people in those 41 states were receiving aggregate monthly pensions of 18 million dollars. The monthly average is $18.60 per person. Highest pensions are paid in California where the monthly average is $31.45. Lowest is in Mississippi with $3.59 per month. Monthly average for Illinois is $14.17. As of October, pensions were being paid to 66,926 persons in Illinois.

INAUGURAL BIBLE. Because of the wet weather, the President did not use the valuable Dutch Bible, which he prizes highly, in the inaugural ceremony. Both this year and four years ago, he placed his hand upon the same passage while taking the oath. You'll find it in the 13th chapter of I. Corinthians and it reads as follows: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass."
TRANPLANTED HERMITAGE. As the nation knows, President Roosevelt is a devoted admirer of Andrew Jackson. To give expression to that devotion, the Inaugural Committee deemed it fitting to build a replica of Andrew Jackson's home, the Hermitage at Nashville, Tennessee from which President Roosevelt might view the inaugural parade. The contractor did an excellent and substantial job. Then came the task of giving it the realistic and natural touch. Accordingly, wisteria vines were tacked over the walls and porch. Red paper roses were wired around in various places. A box hedge was set in front of the structure and finally two magnolia trees, planted in tubs were set on either side of the porch. Unfortunately, magnolias are not in bloom at this season of the year so Nature's proversity was remedied by wiring white paper flowers over the branches of the magnolias. Came inaugural morning. With it came a steady and continuous downpour. The red paper roses turned a ghastly pink. The magnolia blossoms instead of shedding their dainty fragrance upon the moist air, smelled of the glue used to put them together and so the weather man completely ruined the finest product of the contractors' usually fertile imagination.

INAUGURAL ADDRESSES. Little comparative information is available with respect to the various inaugural addresses of the last 147 years. It is a proper job for an analyst with much patience who can find time to study the form, the context, the structure of the various addresses. The longest inaugural address ever delivered was that of a President who occupied the White House for the shortest period. It was William Henry Harrison. He was President for only 30 days when death came. His address was five times longer than that of George Washington. Lincoln's second inaugural and by many conceded to be the greatest was also the shortest. It ends with the noble sentence beginning, "With malice toward none, with charity for all..." Andrew Johnson's inaugural address was written by George Bancroft the great historian. Jefferson's address is regarded as a masterpiece of form. Franklin Pierce and Grover Cleveland were the only Presidents to completely memorize their addresses. John Adams had the distinction of using the longest sentence. One third of his entire address consisted of a single sentence. Theodore Roosevelt's second address contained but 1000 words. Franklin D. Roosevelt's second required seventeen minutes.