

ent forms is to be obtained from that condition, then they will prefer that the government shall own the great corporations.

While in the Lawson view relief cannot be looked for either in the courts or at the ballot box, the president of the United States is also helpless. Mr. Lawson says:

I hate to say it but Roosevelt is as helpless in "the system's" net as a bull in a balloon. Like Gulliver in Lilliputia, he is bound by a thousand threads—congress, senate, partisan interest and gratitude and all the tangible influences which the great money power can weave around any individual. How brave and quick the president is to do. A wrong is called to his attention. A law must needs be passed—the rebate evil must be curbed, and he sends a message to congress demanding instant action. What happens? Congress temporizes; the senate snubs him; "the system" snickers.

What a striking picture Mr. Lawson has drawn! "The System" which he now assails not only dominates stock markets and controls prices but it is strong enough to command perjured testimony, to frame the verdicts of juries and to write the opinions of judges; it is strong enough to control national elections; and if, perchance, the president should be inclined to make an effort to give the people relief, the president himself is "as helpless in 'The System's' net as a bull in a balloon!" Senators, congressmen and judges act under "The System's" control and so thoroughly established has that "System" become that whenever a president concludes to act in the public interests he is snubbed by the senate and laughed at by the representatives of this great and growing power!

Does any intelligent man, accepting the description given by Mr. Lawson, imagine for a moment that the people are helpless once they become thoroughly aroused to the evils confronting them? Mr. Lawson's description of the helplessness of the president and of the people is nothing new in the history of our own government or that of other nations. It is not in the least surprising that the enormous power which "the system" has built up has persuaded some that the people are utterly helpless in its presence. But if every one were to make that confession then there would be general agreement that popular government is a failure and we would rapidly drift toward monarchy.

Americans remember that Andrew Jackson was confronted with a similar situation. Nicholas Biddle declared that through the national bank he had the power to make and unmake congressmen, to build and destroy presidents. Jackson replied that if that were true he had more power than any one man ought to have in this country; and it was then that Jackson said that if Biddle's bank charter came before him "by the Eternal I'll veto it!" He began his war against Biddle and his bank and we all know that the result was the overthrow of that great financier and the institution which he so autocratically controlled. Another result was that Jackson lives in the American heart today as one who demonstrated, for his time and for all time, that no influence assailing the public interests is sufficiently powerful to withstand the onslaught of a determined president who acts in behalf of the people.

Benton in reviewing Jackson's work said that a Cicero overthrew Cataline and saved Rome, and Jackson overthrew the bank conspiracy and saved America. Can it be possible that in this day the money power is omnipotent and the American people must surrender to it? Can it be possible that the people of what we are pleased to call "the greatest republic on earth" can not afford to measure strength with the great monopolists who arrogantly assume to control the domain of politics, the judgments of courts, the votes of congressmen as well as the field of industry?

The power of the president under such conditions is not demonstrated by one who from the stump wages a campaign against the lawlessness of corporation chiefs and then from the White House throws the protecting arm of the administration around a conspicuous offender simply because he stands high in the councils of the dominant party. The president's power was better demonstrated by the man who, being taunted with the influence of "The System" in his day proved himself not "a weakling" and showed that he was a president who could act as well as speak.

THE PANAMA FARCE

These who have familiarized themselves with all the obtainable facts concerning the Panama

canal are not at all surprised at the conditions that obtain in the canal zone. From the moment the men interested in the welfare of the trans-continental railroads succeeded in switching to the Panama route no well informed man has entertained the idea that the canal would be constructed within any reasonable time. To obtain a canal was not the purpose of the men responsible for the abandonment of the Nicaragua route and the selection of the Panama route after the latter had been discredited by the best engineers and by the lamentable failure of DeLesseps. On the contrary, there is plenty of evidence to convince the careful observer that a canal connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans was just what they did not want.

One peculiar feature of the canal work certainly has been noted by the general public—the appointment of civil engineers who hold high position with the railroads most interested in delaying the work, to be chief engineers of the canal. The more one thinks of this the more significant it becomes. Another peculiar feature is that none of the consulting engineers of any considerable reputation advocated the Panama route, while all declared the Nicaragua route feasible. But just as it seemed that something definite would be accomplished and the canal built across Nicaragua, up jump men who have always opposed the isthmian canal and suddenly become wonderfully interested proponents of the Panama route.

Climatic conditions, geographical conditions, political conditions and red tape conditions combine against the Panama canal, the first two of which would not apply to the Nicaragua route, and the last two of which would not interfere long if a determined stand were taken by public officials who were not under the influence of the trans-continental railroads. The men who secured the selection of the Panama route at the last moment worked their scheme well. They hindered the completion of a canal while appearing to be great advocates of a canal, and they pulled from the fire the trans-continental railroad chestnuts with the hands of the public—hands long used to digging deep down into their owners' pockets to bring up exorbitant freight charges levied by the trans-continental railroads.

"CRUDE AND BUNGLING"

Emil H. Neumer, a clerk employed by the Equitable Life Assurance society, was on July 12 sentenced to prison for complicity in the robbery of a policy from the Equitable company's vaults. Compared with the offenses charged against the influential men connected with the Equitable, Neumer's wrongdoing hardly reaches the grade of petit larceny.

Doubtless Justice Foster who passed sentence upon Neumer had this idea in mind, for in addressing the convicted man Justice Foster said:

Your methods were very crude and bungling. If you had, instead of collusion with an outsider, colluded with an insider, and thereby had your salary raised to \$50,000, and then divided with other men, the result would not have been more hurtful to policyholders, but possibly you would not have been at the bar of justice.

It will occur to a great many people that it is hardly a "square deal" when the Equitable clerk who engaged in wrong-doing on a small scale is required to go to prison while his superiors who were charged with the theft of thousands of dollars and a variety of frauds against the helpless policy holders of the Equitable are permitted to go scott free.

A FRAUD ORDER

The postoffice department has issued a fraud order against a St. Louis institution and it was placed in the hands of a receiver. It is announced that the depositors will be paid in full, but that the stockholders are likely to lose about \$600,000.

The bank may have been started in good faith but the fact that its chief not only failed to subscribe one-half of the stock, as he advertised he would, but borrowed for various personal enterprises a large part of the money paid in for stock is a serious reflection upon either his intelligence or his honesty. Over-borrowing from one's own bank is the fruitful source of most of the bank failures and one's moral sense is blunt indeed who does not recognize the impropriety, not to say criminality, of making a personal use of trust funds.

But aside from the question of embezzlement or mismanagement there is a serious objection to a bank run on the principle adopted by the

St. Louis bank. Stockholders scattered all over the country can not watch the bank officials; they must act through directors and as they usually give their proxies to the chief officer of the bank he selects the directors who are to watch him and it is almost certain that the absent stockholders will be defrauded. The bank ought to be a local institution, with local stockholders, local directors and local depositors. There is enough risk in owning stock in a bank which one can watch; no one but a gambler should risk holding stock in a bank which he can not watch. In the case of a bank the depositor is safer than the stockholder for the depositor must get all before the stockholder gets anything, but even a depositor should keep his money in a home bank if possible.

There is room in every community for a bank furnishing absolute security—a bank which would loan only on government, state, county, city or precinct bonds of established validity. Such a bank could not pay much interest on deposits, but it could at least return the principal and thus relieve the depositor of risk.

COERCING CONGRESSMEN

The Chicago Record-Herald reports that "scores of eastern congressmen and several United States senators, who have enjoyed the hospitality of the railroads for so long a time that they have come to believe it their inherited right, will have to pay fare on their summer vacation trips this year." It then explains that one of the most important eastern railroads has refused all requests for free transportation which have come from the senators and congressmen who were either in favor of the Esch-Townsend bill or were lukewarm in their advocacy of the railroad side of the legislation, and the Record-Herald adds that it is understood that other eastern roads are taking similar action. This is good news. If all the railroads would shut off the giving of passes to legislators, state and national, it would be easier to secure remediable legislation. The pass is a very demoralizing thing. It not only inclines the recipient to favor the railroad in legislative matters, but the carrying of the pass subjects him to calls from friends and constituents, who, knowing that he has a pass himself, insist that he shall obtain passes for them. In this way, the pass grows until the legislator is so obligated to the railroads that it becomes hard to refuse their requests. While the railroads always regard the pass as a foundation for an obligation to be paid in some way, they are generally slow to admit that it is given with the purpose of influencing legislation. The action of a railroad in withholding passes from those who vote for a rate bill is equivalent to a declaration that the pass is intended as a bribe. When the senators and members no longer ride on passes, we may have legislation reducing the amount paid to the railroads for the carrying of mails.

INCOMPLETE EDUCATION

Professor William James of Harvard university in a recent address said: "There is not a public abuse on the whole eastern coast which does not receive the enthusiastic approval of some Harvard graduate." And he added: "Fifty years ago, the schools were supposed to free us from crimes and unhappiness, but we do not indulge in such sanguine hopes to any such extent today. Though education frees us from the more brutal forms of crime, it is true that education itself has put even meaner forms of crime in our way. The intellect is a servant of our passions and sometimes education only makes the person more adroit in carrying out these impulses."

President Roosevelt in his speech at Harvard brought substantially the same indictment against the well-educated lawyers. Unpleasant as it may be, the truth of these statements must be admitted. If our schools train men and then leave them to prey upon society, we are going to find a decreasing interest in education. What we need just now is to cultivate a moral purpose in our students which will make them employ their talent and their training for the benefit of society rather than against it. In other words, ethical development must accompany intellectual development or our country will find itself at the mercy of a lot of well-educated criminals trained at public expense for public harm. And it is just this ethical training that is likely to be neglected by a college which asks for an endowment from the trust magnate and the market speculator. As long as our colleges are looking to the big criminals for endowments, the professors can not take the position they ought to on sociological and economic questions.