

interesting as a novel and far more helpful than most novels.

Elisha Gray was born in 1835 and died in 1901. He was a farmer's son and was left fatherless at fourteen. He worked at various forms of manual labor until he got a chance to go to college, entering Oberlin at twenty-two. His rise shows what a boy can do with ambition and perseverance. One of the virtues of his writings is that he presents scientific truth without materialistic coloring. His study of nature did not lead him to forget nature's God. The investigations of science ought to increase rather than diminish reverence for the Creator, for each new discovery proves more clearly the wisdom and power of the great Designer. The patterns that He has set invite limitless effort. The soap bubble presents a combination of colors that the artist has thus far failed to match; a pint of water holds a latent energy which no giant can boast; the trembling leaf contains a laboratory more complete than the chemist has been able to construct; the tiniest seed that falls to the ground possesses a potency that man has not yet fathomed. Working in the midst of mysteries and dumb in the presence of the daily miracle of life we are constantly gathering evidence of the loving kindness of the Infinite Intelligence who has so bountifully provided for the supplying of every human need.

RAILROAD RATES AND PRICES

The Railway World says: "One reason for the failure to work up a public demand for wholesale reductions in rates is the conviction that freight charges enter very little into the prices of commodities in ordinary consumption."

In order to sustain its point the Railway World quotes from a statistician in one of the departments at Washington. This statistician attempts to show the relation between freight rates and prices of a number of articles in common use. He says that while the freight charges, using the 1,000-mile haul from Chicago to New York as a basis, have been practically stationary in the eight years 1897 to 1905, prices of goods have advanced in some cases fifty per cent.

The Railway World makes a synopsis of this statistician's showing in this form:

On wheat, for illustration, the rate in 1897 was \$0.1275, and in 1905 about the same, \$0.114, yet the price advanced from \$.7437 to \$1.08 per bushel. The freight rate on a barrel of flour advanced in eight years from 27 to 30 cents, while the price advanced from \$2.90 to \$4.00. The rate on Licon was held steadily at 30 cents, the price advanced from \$4.50 to \$7.12 per hundredweight. On butter, the rate per pound was unchanged, at \$.0065; the wholesale price was raised from 14 to 21 cents. On eggs and beans likewise the rates were unchanged, standing at \$.014 for the former, per dozen, and at \$.16 for the latter, measured by the bushel; yet the price of eggs advanced from 11½ to 20 cents, and of beans from \$.90 to \$2.10. On sugar, per pound, the freight rate was \$.0025 in 1897 and \$.003 in 1905; the price was \$.03 in 1897 and \$.375 in the present year. Coffee enjoyed the same rates as sugar, and the price was raised from \$.0737 to \$.085 per pound. On cotton goods, per yard, the rate was unchanged at \$.0069; the price advanced from \$.65 to \$.0787, wholesale. On men's shoes the price moved in the contrary direction, the rate standing in both years at \$.0112 per pair, and the retail price declining from \$4.00 to \$3.50.

It will be observed that in every instance but one cited by the Railway World prices advanced, and it is difficult to see how those citations sustain the World's claim that freight charges do not seriously affect the prices to the consumer. The advance in these prices was abnormal and in most instances brought about through the trust system. The decline in the price of men's shoes is due, perhaps, to the fact that certain manufacturers have made a specialty in advertising a "\$3.00 shoe" and a "\$3.50 shoe."

Anyone at all familiar with business understands that freight rates are given large consideration when the price which the consumer must pay is fixed. The principle against which the Railway World contends is so well understood that it is hardly necessary to present proof in its support. It may not be out of place, however, to refer to a book recently published by "The World Railway Publishing Company." This book was written by Marshall M. Kirkman and is said to form one of the series of volumes comprised in the revised and enlarged edition of "The Science of Railways." While asserting that "The rates of railways are governed by the

same laws that fix the price of other necessities of life," and that "we can no more change them arbitrarily than we can the price of fish or flour," Mr. Kirkman says: "The rates charged by carriers affect the cost of everything we use. They appeal especially to the producer and the consumer. Each sees that the amount is added to the cost."

The Railway World is mistaken if it really believes that there is no public demand for reform in the matter of railroad regulation. Mr. Roosevelt's promise that he would insist upon an enlargement of the powers of the interstate commerce commission to the end that that body have the authority to fix rates has proved to be the most popular declaration the president has yet made. Whenever republican conventions have been called upon to nominate candidates for office, since Mr. Roosevelt made that announcement, particular pains have been taken by republican leaders to point with pride to Mr. Roosevelt's position in the hope of winning favor for their candidate.

The railroad managers have through their literary bureaus undertaken to create a fictitious sentiment, and they have sought to close the ears of members of congress to the real sentiment. But the fact remains that there exists a strong and determined public sentiment in favor of genuine regulation of freight rates. Some who favor this plan believe that it will yet be necessary to resort to government ownership, although they are willing to try the less radical method of government regulation; and many who oppose government ownership are strongly in favor of regulation. If, however, the railroad managers show that they are powerful enough to prevent regulation they may find, at an early day, many of the latter class joining forces with those who favor government ownership.

It is difficult to understand why those who so vigorously oppose government ownership are unwilling to yield an inch when they ought to know that if they remain obstinate they may be required to yield considerably more.

SOCIAL DISTINCTIONS AT YALE

Dean Wright of the Yale academic department in his report to President Hadley complains that one of the worse evils at Yale is the segregation of rich students in expensive dormitories. He says: "Perhaps the most serious evil connected with this segregation of the well-to-do students is that it is bringing together, especially in the sophomore year, those who aim to form the society set, whose chief purpose in college is popularity and social recognition, and to whom for this reason the claims of scholarship become secondary." He adds that fathers sometimes ask for these expensive quarters and give as a reason that they do not want their sons to be at a social disadvantage. The protest submitted by Dean Wright is a healthy sign.

Snobbishness ought not to be tolerated in our colleges and it is more apt to make this appearance in the large colleges than in the small ones. It is even dangerous to have rooms of different prices. It is better to have all rooms rented at the same price and let the best rooms go as a reward of merit to the best, the higher classes selecting first.

There is evidence of a revival of democratic spirit and it seems to have struck Yale. May the tide continue to rise until aristocracy will be eliminated from our institutions of learning.

A GROWING SENTIMENT

The growing public sentiment in favor of the abolition of the pass system finds reflection these days on the editorial pages of many daily newspapers.

The Chicago News in an editorial entitled "To Save the Government Money" says: "An inquiry inspired by Secretary Jonaparte's recent action in returning passes offered him by certain railroad companies discloses that other cabinet officials accept such favors but never solicit them. They act on the theory, it is reported, that practically all their traveling is on government business and that they save the government money by using the passes sent them." That is to say, these officials, according to the explanation offered, feel that the United States government can better afford to have its cabinet officers place themselves under obligations to the railroads than to pay a few thousand dollars annually for their fares while traveling on public business. If it is really for this reason that they accept passes the fact only makes the evil more obnoxious. The United States government is not a mendicant. The American people are scarcely likely to tolerate the suggestion that

it properly can play the role of one humbly taking favors from private corporations. Even if the pass-takers confined the use of their privileges strictly to errands of official business, moreover—and the present explanation implies that they do not—they still must feel the sense of being personally under obligations. The man and the official cannot be completely dissociated."

The Chicago Tribune in an editorial entitled "Prefer Passes to Office" says: "The strict enforcement of Wisconsin's law prohibiting all public officials from riding on railway passes has started an epidemic of resignations. Some of the officials who have resigned are railway men who get transportation favors for themselves and their families because of the nature of their employment and who quit their public positions rather than give up privileges which they receive as private citizens. Others of the resigners apparently accepted office mainly to get favors from the railways and lost their desire to serve the public along with their passes. The Wisconsin anti-pass law is a good one, and the resignation contagion should cause no relaxation in its enforcement. A few public officials, such as railway employes, are given passes for reasons unconnected with their public positions, but usually passes are given to public officials for no purpose but that of genteel bribery. Those who get them are expected to give value received at the expense of their constituents, and they generally do. Otherwise the railways would have quit giving free transportation years ago. The railway pass has probably done as much to corrupt American public life as any one instrumentality. It is not so palpable and gross a form of bribery as money, and many public men have accepted passes who would have turned away indignant and angry if they had been offered the equivalent in cash. Having accepted passes they have naturally felt under obligations to those who gave them. Feeling under obligations to the givers and being imperceptibly biased in their favor, they have drifted along until they have become willing servants. The people of Wisconsin can get men to serve them in public positions without free railway transportation as one of their perquisites. In attempting to suppress the pass evil they are setting a good example before the people of other states."

It is a good sign when newspapers of the standing of the News and the Tribune denounce the pass system. The News is eminently correct when it says that the government cannot afford to have its cabinet officers place themselves under obligations to the railroads, and the Tribune does not err when it denounces the pass as a bribe.

If any one doubts that those who receive passes are expected to give value received at the expense of their constituents, he may learn something to his advantage by reading a letter—referred to in a recent number of The Commoner—written by the president of an eastern railroad and sent to members of congress who had voted for the Esch-Townsend bill. These public officers were frankly told by this railroad president that they would get no more free passes because they had failed to prove themselves worthy of the favor.

NO DISCRETION

In the November, 1895, number of the Cosmopolitan an article from the pen of Theodore Roosevelt was printed. In that article Mr. Roosevelt discussed the proposition that the New York police be taken out of politics. Among other things Mr. Roosevelt said "It is a lamentable thing when the people and the public officials alike grow to think that laws should only be enforced as far as the officers of the law think that public opinion demands their enforcement. It is such a belief that inevitably leads to lynching, white capping, and kindred forms of outrage. An officer to whom is confined the carrying out of the laws has no such discretion."

Again he said "Some years ago a then noted politician stated that the Golden Rule and the Decalogue had no place in practical politics, and that the purification of politics was but an iridescent dream. The base cynicism of such an utterance endears it to the knave and the fool, and under one or the other of these categories we must place every man who does not condemn it."

The anti-rebate law provides for the prosecution of "persons" as well as corporations, yet in his ruling in the Morton-Santa Fe case Mr. Roosevelt undertook to say just how far the law should be enforced; he undertook to exercise discretion in the carrying out of the laws; and his action in that case had the effect of persuading some who had learned to place confidence in him that "the purification of politics is but an iridescent dream."