

A few industries that have not been captured by the trusts and in which the rational laws of trade are still preserved, are the ones in which the great advancement has been made. It is hardly possible to Morganize the poultry business and the way it has gone forward in the last few years is astonishing. In Missouri during the last fiscal year the sum derived from the sale of poultry and eggs ran \$17,000 ahead of all the other products of the state combined. The advancement in the live stock industry is almost as wonderful. Go out onto the ranges and notice, not only the increasing number of cattle, but the quality as well. Everywhere we find the shorthorns, the white faces and other improved breeds, where the long-horned, long-legged Texas steers used to roam. Combinations and destruction of competition have retarded progress and not advanced it. The whole trust business is wrong in principle and defective in results.

There has a blight fallen on the towns in Nebraska almost equal to that which followed the "object lesson" which the bankers gave us in 1893. No cars. The merchants are doing no business. The streets are deserted and a pall of gloom hangs over everything. A republican farmer was standing on a corner looking occasionally toward two wagons loaded with shelled corn. The sky was a steel gray, frost filled the air and a chill wind was blowing. At last he said: "I don't care a d—n who holds the offices. I want cars." That shows great signs of progress.

The bill to prevent rebates on the railroads was prepared by Steve Elkins. Any man who knows anything of the character or history of the said Elkins will have no fear that rebates will be abolished under any bill that Steve would draw up. A more perfect scoundrel never held office than Steve Elkins. He is one of those kind of men that the trusts and railroads put in office for they know that he will never fail to stand by their interests. They have the "drop on him," so to speak, and he dare not do anything contrary to their orders.

Any man of common sense knows that if the railroads of the United States, even under the present system of private ownership, were in the hands of five hundred corporations, the managers of which were intent on getting all the business possible, instead of being under the control of two gangs of Wall street grabbers, that there would be no such condition as now exists. There would be no dozen roads refusing to haul freight. There would be cars enough to ship the crops. There would be agents soliciting trade instead of brutal orders to refuse it. That is what the Morganizing of the railroads has done for the people. We will have more of it in the future.

The basis of the international postal union is that all mail matter received from any foreign country shall be delivered without further charge to the recipients in the country to which it is directed. The country from which the matter is sent keeps all the money paid for postage, so there are no international accounts to settle and no bookkeeping to be done. It is a fair arrangement to all parties. A law should be passed applying this same principle to telegraphs and telephones in the United States. A carrier of news has no more right to refuse to transfer it to another line than a railroad has to refuse to transfer freight to other lines. The principle involved is exactly the same. Some democrat or populist should introduce such a bill in the present legislature.

A request for sample copy of The Independent came the other day written on the blank side of a half sheet of a circular sent out by some "school" of personal magnetism, printed in imitation of typewriter work. "I will teach you," says the vice president and general manager, "how to secretly influence and direct the minds of others, without their knowledge of the fact. I will assist you in reaching the highest pinnacle of success, when it is possible to attain," etc., and all for a few paltry dollars. It is doubtful whether the drug habit—bad as it is—is as insidious as the nonsense taught by these fakirs.

Very often The Independent is urged to take up some reform for the betterment of the human race entirely outside its field. In many of these, the editor is personally interested. Scientific charity is one. A decrease of the drug habit is another. Sanitation and preventive medicine is still another. Prison reform—but it would take up too much space to enumerate

them all. Mr. Houghton, of Baltimore, asks The Independent to make a feature of preventive methods and sanitation which he thinks is far more effective than serums and the knife. It is a fact that the advances made in the public health, notwithstanding all the discoveries that the doctors have made in biology and bacteriology, have been accomplished by enforcing sanitary laws. It is certainly better to prevent the breeding of typhoid and diphtheria germs than to try to kill them with anti-toxins and serums after they have invaded the human body. Some wonderful things have been done along these lines. New Orleans and Havana were each transformed from pest holes into healthy cities, the first by General Butler and the second by United States army surgeons, in a very short space of time, and it was done, not by the use of serums, drugs or the surgeon's knife, but by sanitation. Put The Independent down as a sanitarian. It believes in sanity in medicine as well as in politics.

Mr. W. C. Starkey, in his reply to an article in this paper, says: "The editor who penned that article seems to suppose that every 'stay-at-home' voter knows what a good man Mr. Thompson is and his reasoning is about as logical as that of the drunken soldier, while the truth is that Mr. Thompson was measured by his own party's rule." The editor did not suppose any such thing. On the contrary, he expressly stated that he disagreed with Mr. Hand on that point and said that the cause of the "stay-at-home" vote was that the voters were not informed of the facts. Then Mr. Starkey remarks that there are "good men" who are republicans and good men who are democrats. That has nothing to do with the question. This editor knows a man who proclaimed himself a monopolist, who has backed up every corporation steal in the state for 30 years, who was an advocate of slavery and a defender of the Mormon polygamists, but who is generous, kind-hearted to all whom he meets and in social life one of the most lovable of men. He is a "good man," but his political principles are so at variance with the public welfare that it would hardly do to elect him to an office where he would have influence upon public affairs. W. H. Thompson, while a "good man," has the right political principles. To refuse to vote for a "good man" who advocates the right political principles simply because he is a democrat, even a drunken soldier would comprehend was not the height of statesmanship or patriotism. To vote against a man calling himself a democrat because a party of that name in a former generation defended slavery, or because a president elected by that party turned traitor has no more common sense about it than to vote for the trusts and railroads because Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves.

Since railroads have come under the control of a very few men and the management of thousands of miles has been concentrated in one office, they have not only made less net earnings, but such confusion exists that a great national calamity portends. Besides that, the accidents are becoming so numerous that the danger of death in traveling on these "merged" lines has greatly increased. There seems to be chaos in the transportation business. When a dozen railroads send out notices at once refusing to receive anything but perishable freight, live stock and coal, as they did last week, it is a threat to business of such magnitude that it gives cause for alarm. Their attempt to concentrate business under one man that has taxed the energies of a dozen of the most capable, has resulted in disaster. The increasing of the weight of trains has overtaxed locomotives and men and these men are unable to run trains on schedule time. Trusts, whether in railroads or great industries, means in the end ruin to business and indescribable suffering for the people. Down with the trusts.

The Moore brothers and a few others are forming a trust to get hold of the Brazil coal fields in Indiana. The plan includes water, preferred and common stock, after the approved fashion. It will be a sort of a trust that will make the people shiver, not only in the winter time, but whenever they think of it. This is "the Rock Island crowd" and it duplicates in the bituminous field the performances of the anthracite coal barons. According to Attorney General Knox the government "can't do anything" to stop it. So it seems that tribute to the coal barons has only begun.

Congressman Lessler charged that an attempt had been made to bribe

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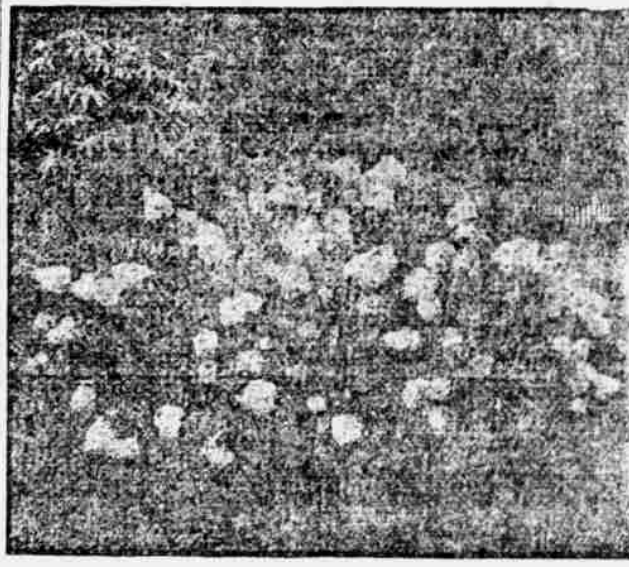
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him. A committee appointed to investigate the matter reported that the charge was true. All the plutocratic dailies are disgusted with Lessler and are pouring out the vials of their wrath upon him. They haven't a word to say against the man who attempted to bribe him. When the dailies think that there was a man who would not take money for his vote, they get scared for fear that the example may be catching and then what would become of their pets, the trusts.

Under trust conditions among the railroads, the life or death of city, town or business man is decreed by the men who control the means of transportation. A change in rates will transfer business from one town to another, decrease the value of real

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estate in one and advance it in the other, or by rebates one firm may become rich while the other is driven into bankruptcy. In that way, those who control railroads may enrich all their uncles, their cousins and their aunts by giving them a little information concerning where to invest. Such power as that should never be given to any set of men. The railroads should be owned by the government. All efforts to "regulate" rates have proved complete failures.