

is produced is locally known as Anthracite and all over those nine counties the same horrible conditions exist. After giving the official figures of those classified as slate-pickers, door-boys, drivers and runners, he says: "In other words, a total of 24,023, or nearly one-sixth of all the employes of the anthracite coal mines are children." The condition among the girls who work in the silk and other mills is the same.

These conditions in those nine counties in Pennsylvania, and in some other parts of this republic, robs life of half of its pleasures to all those who have any of the milk of human kindness left in them, because it is impossible not to think about them. And how little can any of us do to relieve these little ones as long as Mammon is enthroned and to whose priests, the "captains of industry," the whole nation bows down and worships.

MOB LAW

A subscriber down at Dunbar, Neb., writes: "Wish you would write up an article in favor of mob law. I had a debate on this question last Friday and there was some mistake in the decision of the judges, so we are going to have it over again."

Sorry we can't oblige our esteemed subscriber—but he's surely on the wrong side. Mob law is simply a form of anarchy—or "no law," and that The Independent has been fighting for years. There is no valid defence of mob law—although it might in debate be skilfully defended by a smooth-talking debater. Resort to mob violence is a tacit confession that the government is unable to enforce its laws.

True there are numerous instances which at first glance would seem to justify mob law. If a secretary of the treasury can save congress the trouble of amending the national bank laws with respect to deposits of government money, or the postmaster general make postal regulations which congress never dreamed of making into law, why can't a dozen or twenty men take out and hang a criminal?

One wrong doesn't justify another. Besides, those who participate in a mob are more injured than the victim. It isn't the physical suffering of a negro rapist who is burnt at the stake, which we should consider—but the moral degradation brought upon those who participate in burning him. He ought to die—no one disputes that, except a few who denounce capital punishment; but his life should be taken only after he has had a fair trial. This he cannot have at the hands of a mob, because mobs are swayed by passion and not by reason.

If mob law is so efficacious for some things, why not adopt it for all government purposes and save the expensive machinery? Happy condition! No taxes to pay, no court houses to build, no officers to support. Every man would be a law unto himself until something outrageous enough occurred to cause a mob to collect; then justice would be done—and no more expense until the next time!

A SURPRISING FACT

During the past year The Independent has been burdened with unusual and exceptionally heavy expense on account of the construction of our new home, Liberty Building. It was possible only through the loyal support of our readers in all parts of the country. They responded generously and assisted in the sale of Liberty Building subscriptions in almost every locality. To all those who assisted, The Independent is deeply indebted. It is a surprising fact, however, that those who are delinquent for subscription have given but little attention to our requests for prompt payment under the circumstances. We have sent bills for subscription to those whose accounts are past due and a letter explaining the need of funds to settle outstanding balances

for materials used. Only a few seem to have taken the request seriously. Several thousand ignored the bill and letter entirely. We hope this reminder will be sufficient and that it will not be necessary to send another bill and letter to those who are delinquent.

NATIONAL ECONOMIC LEAGUE

Those college presidents, trust magnates and preachers who compose the "board of editorial associates" of the National Economic league (mention of which was made in The Independent of February 5) have given their first publication to an anxiously waiting public, hungry to feast on the crumbs swept from the table of plutocracy.

It is called, "Education, State Socialism and the Trust." Its author, one Freeman Otis Willey, lives in East Orange, in the trust manufacturing state of New Jersey, and even a cursory reading of his screed would indicate that he needs considerable "education" before he knows socialism, even if he should meet it on a New Jersey highway. For example, he points out the Missouri anti-department store law as a step in "state socialism."

The Independent will later review this maiden effort of the National Economic league to "educate" the American people on economic questions, but at present will content itself by quoting one paragraph from Mr. Willey's profound philosophy:

"Let it be borne in mind that every man buys as much as he sells. Therefore, what would it avail Havemeyer, for example, to get 10 per cent more for his sugar if he is obliged to pay 10 per cent more for everything he buys?"

Yes, what, indeed! A ten per cent increase in the price of a million tons of sugar would simply be used up in paying the ten per cent increase Mr. Havemeyer would pay for toothpicks, ice, neckties, porterhouse steak, anthracite, and kerosene. The proposition is so fundamental that the astonishing feature is that none of these great college presidents, trust magnates and preachers ever discovered it before! All hail the National Economic league and its educational campaign. Give us more Freeman Otis Willeys.

TRUST BUSTERS

That coal famine business has turned out just as The Independent said all the time, that is, there was no famine at all. The roads that bring bituminous coal to Chicago, as the official returns just published show, brought to that city during November, December and January, 82 per cent more coal than they did for those months the year before. The account for the roads bringing anthracite coal for those months for the two years is as follows:

	1901-2.	1902-3.
Anthracite, lbs.	29,847,000	7,460,000
Bituminous lbs.	73,228,300	26,740,000

The shortage in anthracite was a great deal more than made up by the increased shipment of bituminous coal. That the price of coal was more than doubled, that there was great suffering and many deaths among the poor on account of the extortionate price, is not denied, but the republican attorney general of the state of Illinois has come to the conclusion that there was no violation of the anti-trust act and has withdrawn the charge. The posing of federal and state republican attorneys as "trust busters" is somewhat ridiculous.

HANNA'S MORMON DEAL

The Mormon apostle, Smoot, started last week for Washington to file his credentials and to take his seat on the 4th of March if there is an extra session of the senate. In speaking of politics in Utah, the Denver News remarks:

"The choice of Reed Smoot for United States senator by the republicans of Utah recalls the changes of politics which have

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marked the history of that state. In 1895 the republicans carried it and elected their governor by 2,300 majority. The next year it went democratic by 33,000. In 1898 the democratic plurality in the state was 5,000, and in 1900 Utah went republican by 2,000, and in 1902 by 5,000. After March 4, 1903, the Utah representation in congress will be solidly republican, due to the deal between that party and the heads of the Mormon church."

The "deal" to which the News refers was made known to the readers of The Independent at the time it was made and all the details concerning it published in these columns. Nothing nastier ever occurred in American politics.

If the tales told in London and sometimes printed in the English newspapers are true, the most de-

spicable set of thieves in all the kingdom are the aristocrats who attend the court functions. They steal opera cloaks, wraps, diamonds, pearls and handkerchiefs from one another so frequently that it has become a national scandal.

The suggestion of Mr. Long that the opposition to plutocracy might be enrolled under the name, Common Party, is worth considering. In one sense there is nothing in a name; in another, there is very much. The name, people's party, is a disadvantage when it comes to designating one of its members. "I am a republican," says the member of the republican organization; but the member of the people's party is obliged to say, "I am a populist," a name first coined by plutocrats as a badge of discredit. "I am a commoner," would express much.