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The republican dailies are telling wonderful stories about the abolishment of passes under the Elkins bill, but on a recent train the editor of The Independent saw more passes flashed on the conductor than he ever saw on one passenger car in all his life before.

Silver went up nine points within three days after the passage of the bill to appoint a commission to go to Europe and get an agreement to fix a ratio between silver and gold. It is now hovering around the 50-cent mark. The Independent predicted that about three months ago.

It takes just fifty-one votes to pass a bill in the Nebraska house of representatives and the railroads never buy more than the exact number needed. Just that number was needed to exempt the railroads from paying their just share of taxes and they lined up. Baldwin didn't need any more, therefore he did not buy them.

Coffee in New York for 51-2 cents a pound: Out here the ordinary grade is 25 cents a pound and the better varieties from 15 to 20 cents higher. To the farmer who has to buy coffee and sell corn it seems that—well some ten thousand or more of them who read The Independent in this state know how it seems without being told.

The dailies late of late been filling their columns with articles telling young men how to "succeed." Columns are written about "success." From what The Independent can gather from all this writing the conclusion must follow that the worst failure in all the history of making is that of a man called Jesus of Nazareth. He never made a million dollars. Worst of all, he never tried to.

Nearly all the idols worshipped by the heathen are made in Christian lands and are manufactured by men professing to be Christians. The principal places where they are made are Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania, Birmingham, in England, and several factories in Germany. Of all the hypocrites that reside on the face of the earth, Christian nations can furnish the most numerous and best specimens.

A Chicago court spent a week or two trying to find twelve men who did not know that there had been a coal famine or that coal had raised in price to act as a jury to try the members of the coal trust. When it at last succeeded, the operators come in to court and confessed that they had entered into a formal agreement among themselves to fix prices and restrict the output of fuel, but protested that they had not done it with criminal intent and that the combination was not illegal.

WHO KNOWS

The editor of The Independent has received many inquiries about the car famine. The public knows that for weeks it was impossible to get cars, but just at present the sidings all over the state are crowded with "empties" and trains of empties as long as can be handled on the sidings go scooting over the state in every direction. Where were these cars six weeks and two months ago?

In investigating this subject, information has been obtained from correspondents in Chicago and New York, from bankers, elevator men, merchants and others in this state, and this is what those men say, some giving one thing as the cause and some another, the first is from New York.

The thirteen men who rule this country through the power of accumulated capital, of which The Independent spoke a while ago, got together in New York and having come to the conclusion that there was danger of a panic on account of the stringency in the money market, determined to cut down the amount of business being transacted in the country and limit it to such a volume that there would be no strain on the New York banks. New regulations were issued to railroad employes, one of which was that no freight should be started out from any chief point of shipment until there was a full train to haul from each place. No empties were to be sent west. Cars were to be held until they were loaded with merchandise for the spring trade. Way cars that became empty, were to be shunted out on side tracks and left. Whenever one car became nearly empty, the train men were required to transfer the goods to another car and leave the empty. That is, no empty cars were to be hauled anywhere. That, it was thought, would not only accomplish the desired object of restricting trade, but be a great money maker for the roads. That is one explanation sent to The Independent. Here is another:

The roads were gradually increasing the work that trainmen were required to do without any increase in their pay. The man who had fired one of the old engines and could do it without overwork was put on one of the big moguls where the work was more than doubled on account of the size of the engine and the increase in the tonnage hauled. He got no extra pay for this increase of work. The length and weight of the trains was greatly increased and the work of every trainman was largely augmented. Against this condition of affairs the men at last rebelled. They refused to perform the service required of them. They side-tracked loaded cars here and there, without any record being made, until they had reduced the length of the trains so that they could handle them. In other cases they made no attempt to keep up the schedule time and trains for weeks were hours and sometimes days behind time. It is said that stock trains from Wyoming and other cattle ranges have sometimes been 96 hours behind time at Omaha. Suits have been begun against the railroads for immense sums in damages caused by loss in handling live stock.

A distinguished banker says to The Independent that the chief cause was the inefficiency of the management resulting from combining the roads into great systems reaching across the continent and making it an utter impossibility to efficiently manage them from one office.

Again it is said that there was a slight, actual and unavoidable cause for the shortage of cars. That came about on account of the coal strike. No coal was hauled during the summer months and a larger amount of cars than usual were of necessity used for that purpose.

Whatever view one takes of this matter of shortage, there is but one statement from all concerning the dis-

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asters that have resulted. The business of every city and town in the west has been cut down. It affects the banks, the merchants and the farmers and the losses have run up into the millions. Farmers could not meet their obligations. Merchants could not pay the drafts drawn upon them banks had to greatly extend credits one direction and cut them off in another and work all sorts of schemes to prevent general disaster. It shows to what a condition of slavery the whole American people have been reduced to the great railroad masters. The people are, under present conditions, just as helpless as an old African slave on a southern plantation before the war. They will so continue as long as the public highways of commerce are owned by private parties and not by the people.

JUDGES AND TRUSTS

When the editor of The Independent said several weeks ago that the prosecution of the Chicago coal trust was a fake affair and that the prominent republicans who organized it and produced a fuel famine in that city which the board of health declared resulted in hundreds of deaths, would never be convicted, he was not playing the role of prophet at all. He was simply using a little common sense. Any one who knows anything about the republican party, who sustains it, in whose interest it is kept in power, would have no trouble in coming to the conclusion that a republican attorney general elected by the money contributed by the trusts would never enter into a prosecution that would send the men to the penitentiary who elected him to office. The partners in this coal infamy came into court and plead guilty to forming a combination in restraint of trade, to restrict production and force the people to pay an exorbitant price for coal, but the judge took the case away from the jury and discharged the accused, on the ground that although they were guilty, they could not be punished because the Illinois anti-trust law covered the same ground as the Sherman anti-trust act and therefore was null and void. When stripped of its technical phraseology that is the exact meaning of the judicial decision. In cases having a political bearing, the judges never run contrary to the party in power. Especially is that so

if they are elected for long terms or are appointed for life.

The republicans who look for any check to be put upon the greed of trusts because of recent legislation are doomed to disappointment. Even if that legislation was of an effective kind, it would produce no result. The truth, however, is that it was not intended to affect the trusts in any way, but was applied as a dose of soothing syrup for the people. No matter what legislation is put upon the statute books against the trusts, it will have no effect as long as the republican party is in power. The courts of this country follow in their decisions the desires of the party in power. The judges will always find some way to let the trusts escape. None of them will have a more difficult feat to accomplish than this Chicago judge who ordered the release of these murderers of the Chicago coal trust.

Frank B. Noyes' idea of how the volume of money is increased or decreased is shown in the following paragraph of the Record-Herald. He says: "Addicks is reported to have spent \$250,000 trying to get himself elected senator. Without Addicks the per capita circulation would be considerably smaller. It's an ill wind that blows good to nobody." Has Addicks a little mint of his own where he coins the money that he spends in politics? If Addicks has really added \$250,000 to the amount of money in circulation in the United States he is not as bad as represented.

The eastern papers are just beginning to learn that reorganizing W. J. Bryan out of the democratic party, is not so easy a thing, even in the eastern states, as might be. Several New York papers are publishing protests from the rank and file. The New York World, among others, printed the following: "After reading a recent editorial arraignment of Mr. Bryan in the World, I feel it incumbent on me to inform you that a recent and reliable canvass of the voters of this community reveals the fact that not one democrat who voted the ticket in 1896 and 1900 will vote for a bolter in 1904. Nearly all of them say they would rather vote for a republican than for Hill or Parker or any other bolter. Allen Smith, Lost Creek, Md., Feb. 21."