

statement that: "There was open competition and a very moderate price when the railroads bought their 1899 rails, and they bought with the greatest liberality; there was no competition and a very high price when the time came for buying their 1900 rails, and they bought most sparingly." That is to say: Industry thrives under competition and languishes under monopoly.

And what are we going to do about it? The position of the monopolist with regard to the question is fairly expressed in the characteristic imprecation: "The public be damned!" How would it answer for the public to see to it that the monopolists be taxed?

EDWARD HOWELL PUTNAM.

### EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Washington, D. C., Feb. 6.—Perhaps there is no subject so interesting in connection with the composition of the Democratic membership of the House as that of determining what has influenced their identification with the party. Of course, it is a truism to say that there are Democrats and Democrats, but this is not sufficiently descriptive. One of the most striking illustrations of the difficulty of apportioning some members as belonging to the plutocratic-Democrats or the democratic-Democrats is that of a gentleman now serving his fourth term and who has been mayor of a large Western city. Monday being District of Columbia day, there were a number of minor bills up for consideration, among them one to regulate Turkish bath establishments, with a provision for an annual license fee of \$25. Another made the docking of horses tails a crime and prohibited docked horses being brought into the District of Columbia. I asked this gentleman how he stood on the bill to license Turkish bath establishments. He said:

"Oh! I am in favor of that. They ought to pay a license just the same as any other business."

I replied: "True, just the same as any other business, but why any business? Have not people an inherent right to sell groceries and dry goods and to sell Turkish bath service?"

Later, I asked him his attitude towards the "docking bill." He said:

"Oh! I am against that! I don't think the government has a right to interfere with such things."

To this I replied: "Your attitude is to my mind most extraordinary! Here you are advocating interference with those things which are entirely proper and which every man has an inherent right to do, but when a measure is

proposed which says that people shall not be cruel, that they shall be prohibited from engaging in a cruel practice, you say it is an "invasion of their rights."

He confessed to not having regarded the matter from that standpoint before. Yet he is forceful, and I am convinced he is aggressively honest, and justly has the respect of every man in the House.

One of the curious episodes of the Fifty-eighth Congress happened on the 4th. A Democratic member desired to incorporate into the Record a letter addressed to him together with speeches delivered by another member some years previous. Not desiring to take up the time of the House by having them read from the clerk's desk he had arranged with the gentlemen controlling the time on both sides that he should have time to ask permission to insert these documents in the Record as an extension of remarks on the floor. Being recognized, he asked, without any preliminary remarks, for unanimous consent to so insert. A member at once said: "Mr. Chairman, that can't be done; the gentleman hasn't made any remarks."

"Oh! yes he has," replied the chairman; "he said: 'Mr. Chairman.'"

Thereupon the member who had said "Mr. Chairman," and nothing more, got the permission to "extend his remarks."

The only thing that prevented the reporters from making fun of the incident was the fact that a week before this member had made an extemporaneous speech of about 20 minutes' duration on the same subject. Otherwise they would undoubtedly have "guyed" him as the man whose speech consisted of the two words—"Mr. Chairman."

Perhaps no more ridiculous plea was ever advanced by a party leader than that of Congressman Dalzell, when, on behalf of the committee on rules, he brought in a resolution empowering the Resident Commissioner from Porto Rico, F. S. Degetau, to sit in the House with all the rights of a Delegate from a Territory. Upon Mr. Williams, of Mississippi, insisting that legislation should be enacted providing for the election of a delegate from Porto Rico, and conferring a Territorial government upon that island, Mr. Dalzell said that while such a measure would probably have the unanimous approval of the House, its defeat in the Senate was a foregone conclusion; that the Senate would almost certainly amend it out of all shape and substance as they had done in the last Congress.

To this Mr. Williams very properly replied: "You can't scare us with your bogey of an intractable Senate! The Senate is Republican, and the party is as much responsible for the

Senate as for the majority in this House."

Nevertheless the will of the people, as evidenced in the previous unanimous vote of the House is nullified. Yet we call the system that produces such a condition "popular" government.

ROBERT BAKER.

## NEWS

Week ending Thursday, Feb. 11.

The war cloud which has for several months been hanging over Russia and Japan (p. 646) has burst at last, and deadly hostilities have begun.

To understand the cause of this war we must go back to the war between Japan and China (vol. i, No. 1, p. 10; vol. iv, p. 711) in 1894-95. Coming out of that conflict triumphant, Japan demanded as one of the fruits of victory the cession by China to her of portions of the Liaotung peninsula (on the southern extremity whereof Port Arthur is situated), of which she had come into possession through the fortunes of war. China was helpless to object, but Russia interfered, and with the support of France and Germany forced Japan to relinquish possession. Japan accordingly withdrew in 1896. In 1898 she joined Russia in an agreement acknowledging Corea (which occupies a larger peninsula between Japan and the Liaotung peninsula, and which had been under Chinese suzerainty), as an independent power. But Japan has never abandoned her ambition to secure a foothold upon the Asiatic mainland, nor has Russia receded from her manifest policy of extensive dominion in northeastern China.

Pursuant to her policy Russia promptly sent a fleet to Port Arthur, and in accordance with concessions from the Chinese government a Russian military force took formal possession (vol. i, No. 1, p. 10) on the 28th of March, 1898. When the "Boxer" troubles broke out in China (vol. iv, p. 441), all the powers, including Russia and Japan, united for the ostensible purpose of restoring order. But Russia, on pretense of protecting her frontiers bordering upon Manchuria (of which the Liaotung