

form. It was natural for mistakes to be made in the Baltimore convention, not only on account of the heat and excitement of that memorable occasion, but also because there were many there who were Democratic only in name. The Bryan resolution and the Wilson nomination were its chief merits. . . . Why should ship-owners enjoy a special privilege in the use of the property of the whole people? Why should we discriminate against the people of another country, and then call ourselves Democrats? Swat the fly of privilege at every turn, and do it quick. The best reason for following Wilson is that he leads wisely and right. Why waste so much time over every little job you have to do? We cannot do it as manufacturers, we must observe the laws of progress and efficiency or go bankrupt. If you were all like the President, and your consideration of public questions were derived from the simple fundamental principles above referred to, your conclusions could be reached with less delay and less cost to the people you represent. . . . The power to tax us while you waste time over petty questions that are self-evidently right or wrong is the only excuse or reason for delay in the case of questions such as the one now before you.

Mr. Devine's reply is to the point and the position he assumes is the only one that can be assumed by a thorough advocate of true democracy.

S. D.



### Public Service Corporations Not Starving.

In the New York Evening Post of April 6 occurs the following, under the heading of "Public Utilities": "Compilations of earnings of 75 public service companies for the year 1913 show an increase of 10.4 per cent in gross earnings and an increase of 9.8 per cent in net after taxes." The figures for 1913 are gross earnings, \$91,361,574; expenses and taxes, \$50,628,730; net earnings, \$40,732,844. A correspondent in Columbus, Ohio, commenting on these figures calls attention to the fact that the steam roads now telling hard luck stories to the Interstate Commerce Commission are operating under the same business conditions. Whether the management of the steam roads is less efficient than that of these other public service corporations, or whether the hard luck stories leave something important untold, is a matter that needs satisfactory explanation before any rate increase can be justified.

S. D.



### Reckoning Day.

One of the grotesque, and in some respects, pathetic, features of the railway problem, as the managers stand, hat in hand, begging the Interstate Commerce Commission for permission to raise freight rates, lies in the fact that the men who brought the roads to this pass have made off

with their swag and left the present managers holding the bag. Vanderbilt, Gould, Huntington, Harriman, and a long list of daring adventurers, withdrew their hundreds of millions, and left in their place beautifully printed stocks and bonds upon which present-day managers are expected to pay dividends and interest. How fortunate for those men that the Constitution prohibits *ex post facto* laws!



But the present holders of railroad securities have been most liberally treated, as compared with the general public during the earlier days of railroad construction. Men are still living who can recall the appearance of the persuasive-mannered gentry who talked railroad until farmers, village merchants, and everybody with a few dollars in savings became so enthusiastic over the building of a road that they were willing to subscribe to the stock; and those who lacked ready money gave mortgages on their farms and homes in pledge. And then, when the last dollar had been wrung from the people, the company would go into bankruptcy, be sold for a song to a new company composed of the members of the old one, and go ahead with the road without the burden of its former indebtedness. The present holders are threatened with a falling of their stocks. Those earlier holders were not only threatened, but visited, with annihilation. Stocks have gone down in former days, but there was always the expectation that they would rise again; it is the present decline without that hope that unnerves the holders. Should the general public appear unmoved in the presence of this near-tragedy, let it be remembered that this same general public has among the relics handed down from a former generation, a great quantity of paper indicative of the frenzied finance that led to the present dilemma. The feeling of the public toward these embarrassed financiers is not unlike that of a slave for his impoverished master. There may be promptings to sympathy for misfortune, but they are held in check by the memory of past wrongs; and should the relief now sought be denied, the present holders may derive some consolation in contemplating the workings of the inexorable law of cause and effect.

S. C.



### Poverty a Cause of Extravagance.

When Frances Willard, the great temperance advocate, said that poverty caused drunkenness as well as drunkenness caused poverty, she brought herself within the pale of the safe and sane. The

same thought has been suggested by recent sociological investigations. The apparent improvidence of the poor is not entirely due to ignorance, or lack of forethought. Many of those in the lower strata of wage earners are so circumstanced that only the stoic or the miser could lay by anything from their scanty earnings. To do so would require a monotony of existence intolerably dull and stifling. The workhouse would be no worse, and death would be preferable. But these people have their little rivalries and ambitions; and the more hopeless the gratification of their desires, the more reckless they become in seeking satisfaction. Hence, the wedding that exhausts in a day the savings of a year; and the funeral that lays a crushing burden of debt upon the living. This consuming desire to outdo the neighbors in social events is the sole remaining spark of manhood that has survived the crushing weight of our modern economic condition. And it proclaims even under these untoward circumstances the persistence of individuality, in spite of man's bungling. If these victims of poverty were content to go on year in and year out, with no more diversion than a horse in a tread-mill, then, indeed, would their plight be hopeless. The daring to waste indicates a capacity to take advantage of wider opportunities when they shall be provided. s. c.



### The Lesson of the Copper Strike.

The copper strike in Michigan was, as are all strikes, an effort of workers to overcome a heavy handicap placed upon them by law. The handicap has proven too strong. It always does. Even had the operators granted all demands and enforced a closed shop, the benefit of the victory being restricted to members of the organization would not have proven a solution of labor troubles. The weight of the handicap would eventually have broken the union's strength. Sooner or later the power conferred through private monopoly of natural resources together with the need of laborers outside of the union would have proven too much for the union to contend against. Perhaps the former strikers now understand that however serviceable organization may be as a weapon of defense under existing unfair conditions, it can not bring permanent industrial peace together with social justice. To secure that monopoly of natural resources must be destroyed. If that lesson has been learned the suffering and sacrifices of the long struggle have not been in vain.

s. D.

### An American "Cat-and-Mouse" Act.

The history of "Mother" Jones' illegal imprisonment shows the possibility of "cat-and-mouse" proceedings in this country, without authority of law. A person may be arrested without warrant as "Mother" Jones was and held incommunicado. Her friends may apply for a writ of habeas corpus as did the friends of "Mother" Jones. After enough red tape has been unwound to bring consideration of the case close to the Supreme Court, she can be released, which will give the court a legal excuse for refusing to pass upon the case, and for neglect to render a decision that would prevent similar outrages in the future. Then the victim can be arrested again, and proceedings for release must be begun afresh. All this is possible in Colorado anyway, unless the Supreme Court happens to consider Constitutional rights of citizens more important than technicalities or precedents. In that case it will pass on the legality of "Mother" Jones' imprisonment, regardless of her release.

s. D.



### A Righteous Decision.

Credit is due the Supreme Court of New Jersey for reversing the conviction of Alexander Scott, editor of the Paterson Weekly Issue, who was convicted last June, for referring to the local police as "cossacks," "strike breakers" and "brass buttoned anarchists." The conviction was ostensibly under an outrageous law enacted during the excitement following McKinley's assassination. But even the meaning of this law had to be distorted to make an appearance of bringing Scott's case within it. Had the Supreme Court upheld the conviction, freedom of the press in New Jersey would have been at an end. It is deplorable that rights of this kind must depend on the chance of a proper decision by a Supreme Court. But in this case the result has been what it should be, and the court has done well.

s. D.



### Correcting Nature.

What a chaotic state of affairs this old world would be in were it not for the guidance and assistance of those public spirited individuals who are ready and willing to supply the deficiencies and correct the mistakes of Nature! A "radical thinker" suggests, in order to correct the present tendency of the native American to give way before the more prolific immigrant, that the "Federal government take steps to regulate the number of births among the lower classes." This is a proposition of vast possibilities. By such restraining