

gated to give cannot be correctly defined as an exercise of force. If railroad corporations are on the road to bankruptcy it is a road on which they have voluntarily entered. If they did so in the expectation that the government would help them out they gambled on an assumption that may be wrong.

S. D.

John Z. White for Public Utilities Board.

The Chicago Inter-Ocean protests against the suggestion that Governor Dunne appoint John Z. White to the newly-created Public Utilities Board of Illinois. That was to be expected. The Inter-Ocean represents all legalized predatory interests, including franchise monopolies. So Mr. White is not to its taste. It prefers men who are not likely to interfere with what frenzied finance requires. It does not want anyone whose knowledge of fundamental principles enables him to distinguish wrong from right. It dislikes to consider the possibility of a member of the board able and willing to correctly analyze specious pleas in behalf of privilege. If additional evidence were needed of Mr. White's fitness for the place the Inter-Ocean furnishes it. But its evidence is superfluous. John Z. White has for many years been before the public and his thorough knowledge of all that an efficient member of the board ought to know has long been demonstrated. What Franklin K. Lane was to the Interstate Commerce Commission John Z. White would be to the Public Utilities Board of Illinois. While regulation by boards remains the policy of dealing with franchise monopolies the appointment of men like White should be everywhere urged.

S. D.

Trusts and Privilege.

An object lesson is furnished by the sudden surrender of the Telegraph-Telephone combination. A suit under the Sherman law has for some time been pending against it, which certainly could have been fought in the courts for years. Appearances indicated that the combination was ready to fight. Then suddenly Postmaster General Burleson recommended that all wire lines be made public property. That was hitting the combination in a vital spot. That was an attack on its privilege. Two days later its surrender was announced. There may be no positive proof that the surrender was forced by Mr. Burleson's recommendation and Congressman Lewis's resolution to put it in effect, but appearances indicate that it was. It is interesting furthermore to note

that the President has since been able to say that other combines will voluntarily dissolve also. It looks as though they feared lest anti-trust effort might actually be directed against underlying privileges of other monopolies than the wire lines.

Of course, the dissolution of the telegraph and telephone combine is but a barren victory. Telephone and telegraph are both natural monopolies. They occupy fields in which such competition is impossible as exists—say—in the retail grocery business. There is no public gain in their dissolution. Neither is there any public gain in compulsory dissolution of trusts of any kind. Competition to be beneficial, must be voluntary and be the result of natural business conditions. It can not be forced. When government confers privileges on some the unprivileged can not compete with them, while the privileged ones will not compete with each other even though there be no formal combination. For this reason alone all efforts to force dissolution through litigation or through criminal proceedings can not restore competition. Neither can dissolution when it has no other object than to ward off some action that the combine fears. Nothing short of complete abolition of privilege can settle the monopoly question.

S. D.

Out of the Whirlwind.

Ella Flagg Young has returned to the superintendency of schools in Chicago. Impelled by an avalanche of public censure Mayor Harrison bestirred himself and succeeded in effecting her prompt re-instatement. The stormy two weeks' period of Mrs. Young's exile has blown the fog away from several carefully enveloped men and affairs, and sharpened the political and educational vision of many Chicago citizens. There is left from the occurrence ample food for deliberation, much matter for counsel that shall lead to a more determined and vigilant defense of the true democracy in education which Mrs. Young champions.

A. L. G.

A YEAR OF PROGRESS.

Time, philosophically considered, may have no beginning and no end, but for purposes of comparison it has become customary to reckon the changes in human affairs by years, decades and centuries. Looking back over the year just closed, the question arises: Has there been progress or retrogression. To the pessimist, who sees only what remains to do, and forgets all that has been