Post, the proprietor, has been deprived of mail addressed to her under the name of Helen Wilmans, her maiden name, and the name by which she is known widely as a writer. A prosecution in court on the charges on which she was denied her mail collapsed completely; but now everybody connected with her paper, including herself under her married name, has been put upon the postmaster general's index of postal outlawry. Her statement of the fact in Freedom is as follows:

Without any cause that I know of, except willful and undisguised malice, there has been another fraud order pronounced on me that covers not only my mail, but that of C. F. Burgman, C. C. Post, Mrs. C. C. Post, Helen W. Post and Freedom. This virtually cuts me off completely from all my subscribers and from every one of my private correspondents. C. C. Post is now in Essex, N. C., and can get his letters there; but I cannot get a letter from him, no matter how urgent it might be; no, not even if he were dying and desired my help. Nor can I take his letters out of the Seabreeze office, though his highest interests depended on it.

Nothing can justify or excuse that kind of persecution. Though these people were the veriest criminals, tried, proved and convicted as such, it would be an unwarrantable act of highhanded oppression for the postal authorities to outlaw their mail. Think of a wife being prohibited from receiving her husband's letters! This matter cuts deeper than into the rights of the persons in question. If their personal mail can be stopped in that autocratic fashion, without trial or accusation, upon the mere ipse dixit of a postal clerk at Washington, anybody's can be. If their paper can be meddled with in this way by refusal to deliver remittances from subscribers, anybody's can be. This is not a question of particular persons; it is a question of legal rights. The Congressman who will make it his business next winter to close up the postal censorship will earn a right to public approval. Meantime, victims of this species of persecution owe it not only to their own rights but to public rights generally, to bring the matter into court by actions for damages against local postmasters for every letter or paper withheld.

In a letter to the New York Nation of the 9th Edwin Burritt Smith, the Chicago lawyer, reads a much needed lesson in democracy to those intellectual snobs who think that only they and the classes they recognize as superior ought to vote. A Chicago correspondent in a previous issue of the Nation had complained about the debasement of the suffrage, reporting with sympathy a conversation in a drug store at South Chicago while the recent judicial election in Cook county, Ill., was in progress, the conversation being between the owner of the store, a real estate man, a railroad agent, a bookkeeper and a physician. These toploftical citizens declined to go three blocks to vote to fill 14 judicial posts because they feared their votes would be swamped by the votes of a gang of Poles, Hungarians, etc., that can't speak English and don't understand our system of government, etc. Now it happened that in the very ward in which these politically indolent, but aristocratically critical citizens lived, the "lower classes" discriminated with marked intelligence in casting their vote on that very day. Mr. Smith was able, therefore, to give local point to his communication to the Nation, which he closed in these words:

The vote of the Eighth ward is significant. In this ward is situated South Chicago. Here reside Mr. Morse's choice representatives of "the better classes," who regarded themselves above voting with the plain but intelligent men, of many nationalities, who man the steel works and other great industrial plants in that industrial section of the city. The ward is Republican on national issues. Yet Judge Tuley received 60 per cent. and Judge Haney but 40 per cent. of the vote cast. In view of this splendid response by a "lot of cattle" in South Chicago to public-spirited leadership, Mr. Morse's illustration should cause the friends of good government elsewhere no serious uneasiness about the "debasement of the suffrage" here. We shall no doubt continue to have among us those who shrink from mingling with plain people even at the polls. While others lead a successful struggle to maintain representative government, they will quietly long for a restricted suffrage which is as impossible as it is undesirable. The truth is, that we have no reserve of intelligence or of virtue upon which to fall back or rely. The cure for the ills of democratic government is not to be found in less, but in more democracy.

To the impoverished observer of this era of unparalleled prosperity for the prosperous the fact will be interesting that the net earnings of the steel trust for the six months ending June 30, 1903, were $61,568,235. This is about 4½ per cent. (at the rate of 9 per cent. per annum) on the total capitalization of the trust, water and all. That is truly a prosperous figure. But it is at the rate of about 30 per cent. per annum on that part of the capitalization which isn't water, which is prosperity indeed. The farmers who have helped to make these profits by paying high prices, and the workingmen who have done it by taking low wages, are cordially invited to rise up and cheer.

MAY LOGIC PREVAIL.

The student, whose earnest desire is to examine and judge the progress of civilization from an optimistic standpoint, is, not unfrequently, tempted by the absurdity and ignorance which he sees displayed by his fellow men, to relinquish his aspiration and become a misanthrope. Of all these discouraging examples that have so tried him nothing, at least of late years, has been more dispiriting than the rumored reply that the Russian government may send to our President should the American protest against the Kishineff massacre be delivered.

The possibility that the barbarians can be so childish, in their desperation to ward off our just renunciation of their crimes, as to attempt to draw a parallel between their fiendish work in Kishineff and our labor of uplifting and enlightenment in the Philippines, is enough to make the most hopeful man plunge into the slough of pessimism and cry from its depths that understanding has no substance.

For what, indeed, is there of semblance between these two features of history? The Russian, in a fit of fanatical rage and hatred, attacked his next door neighbors to exterminate them; the American calmly and regretfully filled a few graves with strangers. Industrious, nonresisting to law and harmless were the creatures on which the minion of the Czar wreaked his vengeance; the destined slayees of the American were too indolent to work, they refused to obey the laws of liberty, and they were so far from being harmless that it was necessary to put them out of the way to prevent their giving the water cure to unprotected visitors from the savior country. The victims of the cruel Muscovite were assaulted with knives, sticks, stones, hammers, and even brutal fists; the American used the humane bullet, the untorturing projectile, and the leisurely acting weapon that precludes all pangs of dyspepsia. The crimes of the Russian were sacrilegious, for he preyed upon the chosen people of God; the American was guiltless of such desecration for his work was done among people to whom the holy scriptures do not even allude. The Russian would be ashamed and would refuse to acknowledge the real incentive to his deplorable acts; but the American stands in the full, bright light of publicity and tells, with pardonable candor, of benevolent assimilation.

But may it be that these glaring incongruities, in spite of the unpleasant rumor, are not being foolishly considered as subjects of reconciliation by the children of the Czar? May it be that, even now, the court apologists are drafting a reply to the American protest which will admit the guilt of the Bear, and will, with true humility, acknowledge repentance and promise a reformation for the future? May these apologists be fair-minded enough to go further, and thank us for the tangible interest we have taken in the internal affairs of their country, and beg from us a continuance of our good offices? Then we can rejoice, and be thankful that a long friendly nation has not turned on us in a spirit of unwelcome and unfounded criticism.

G. T. EVANS.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Corowa, N. S. W., Australia, June 12. —The Federal parliament opened on May 26th. The governor-general's speech promises a great deal of legislation, mostly unnecessary, but fortunately there will not be time for half of it this session, as the parliament expires in January.

The reference to Mr. Chamberlain's latest somersault, preferential trade, is very lukewarm. Practically the ministry says it believes in the policy, but has no time to introduce it. The protectionist idea of preferential trade here is to leave the duties alone as regards British goods, but to raise them against foreign products. The ministry knows it would be useless to attempt to pass such a measure, even in the house of representatives. Mr. Deakin, the federal attorney general, has cabled to England warm approval of Chamberlain's proposal, but apparently he was speaking for himself only.

The presnt Barton tariff here is in very great disfavor with all merchants, not only on account of the high duties, but because of the way it is administered by Mr. Kingston, the commissioner of customs. Kingston is the most rabid protectionist in the ministry, and he appears to try to hamper importers in every possible way. If any goods are wrongly described in an invoice, as often happens in drapery, etc., the importer is criminally prosecuted, although it may be shown that he was not trying to defraud the customs.

An attempt is now being made to organize a reform league in New South Wales, similar to the Kyabram league in Victoria.

ERNEST BRAY.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, July 16.

A further step was taken on the 10th in connection with the Chicago traction question (p. 195). Judge Grosscup formally advised the receivers as to their course. He gave this advice not in his judicial capacity after a hearing in behalf of all interests, but as the judicial conservator of the property in the hands of the receivers and after an ex parte hearing.

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Judge Grosscup declares, in his letter of advice, that it is not his purpose to announce any final judgment on the questions involved. He also declines the suggestion that he compel the city of Chicago to intervene in the receivership proceedings to test the validity of the 99-year franchise, though he intimates that this procedure might be proper and practicable. His object, as he states it, is to give such instructions to the receivers as will in his judgment "adequately conserve the property rights of the companies, while requiring them to fulfill their obligations to the public." Judge Grosscup then outlines the history of the street car system of Chicago substantially as recited more at large in these columns two weeks ago (p. 195), and concludes as to the constitutional objections to the 99-year franchise that they "do not merit space for statement, much less for discussion." Regarding the circumstances under which the franchise was granted, he says:

> The legislative grants, whatever their origin, are the existing law of the land. They constitute the contract between the people of the State and the railway companies. They measure the rights and the obligations of both. They have been the accepted basis for tens of thousands of transactions by people who never heard of the legislature of 1865. To set them aside now, either covertly or openly, or to deprive them of their full meaning and effect, would be a judicial invasion of contract and a breach of public faith as reprehensible as the repudiation of some undoubted but unpopular public debt. There is no way left, then, to approach the interpretation of these grants other than as one would approach any plainly written contract between disputing parties.

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Having thus laid the foundation for his opinion and advice, Judge Grosscup builds the superstructure as follows (what he describes as "the legislative grants" being the act of 1859 and the amendatory act of 1865, known as the 99-year franchise):

> The legislative grants, taken together, look to the installation of a railway system in the city of Chicago, and to that end grant to the railway companies for the period of ninety-nine years the right to occupy certain streets, leaving to the city, by contract with the companies, the manner and conditions of such occupancy. Thus, when the companies entered into ocupancy under these grants the underlying right of their occupancy was from the State, the manner of its exercise only being governed by the ordinances of the city. The State was the grantor, the city the supervisor. Now, while the power of the city over the exercise of the grant thus obtained from the State was made ample, it remained, and remains, a subservient power. Its function is to promote the uses of the grant; it cannot be made a means to defeat the grant, for