

posing the Baltimore and Ohio company. He should follow it up on the floor of the House by exposing his fellow Congressmen who accept the railroad bribes. Progress in the fight against special privileges is impeded from all directions by this species of bribery alone. The time has come when the exposure should be merciless. No one should be allowed to escape. The weak excuse that inasmuch as the railroads give out passes anyhow, there is no harm in taking one, should receive no consideration. It should be understood and constantly emphasized that pass bribery is corrupt, even if it is petty and mean, and that railroad officials who give passes or public officials who take passes are contaminated with corruption. When a legislator votes, or a tax official assesses, or a delegate acts in a party convention, or a judge decides, the people have a right to know that he is wholly free from railroad influences and railroad obligations. They do not know it now. On the contrary, from presidents to judges, from congressmen to convention delegates, a public suspicion is naturally aroused as to the impartiality of all official action favorable to railroads by officials who take railroad favors.

If President Roosevelt is still bent upon "shackling cunning," when it accomplishes its nefarious objects by forming trusts, he will find that the constitutional objection to his plans which he feared, have been recently removed. This has been done by the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Champion against Ames. The case is reported in full by the Lawyers' Cooperative Publishing Co., of Rochester, N. Y.

Champion had been charged with sending lottery tickets by express from one State to another, contrary to an act of Congress forbidding inter-State commerce in lottery tickets. He brought the question of the constitutionality of that act before the Supreme Court, and in February,

1903, that supreme tribunal decided (5 to 4) that the act is constitutional. The principle of the decision, as stated by Mr. Justice Harlan, is so broad (and that was necessary, if the constitutionality of the act was to be sustained) as to recognize in Congress full power to prohibit inter-State commerce in any kind of merchandise which is not expressly protected by the Constitution. The clause for securing freedom of the press would probably nullify any act of Congress aiming to prohibit inter-State commerce in newspapers, pamphlets, books, and the like. But there is no clause to prevent prohibition or other regulation of inter-State commerce in steel or coal.

Justice Harlan's language on this point, in writing the prevailing opinion, is quite explicit, "The power of Congress to regulate commerce among the States," he says, "although plenary, cannot be deemed to be arbitrary, since it is subject to such limitations or restrictions as are prescribed by the Constitution." He then proceeds to argue that, therefore this power—

may not be exercised so as to infringe rights secured or protected by that instrument. It would not be difficult to imagine legislation that would be justly liable to such an objection as that stated, and be hostile to the objects for the accomplishment of which Congress was invested with the general power to regulate commerce among the several States. . . . But if what Congress does is within the limits of its power, and is simply unwise or injurious, the remedy is in the discretion of Congress.

Thus the way is broadly opened for prohibiting by mere act of Congress any transmission from one State to another of any merchandise whatever, the commerce in which is not protected from hostile legislation by affirmative provisions of the Constitution. Not only may inter-State commerce in lottery tickets, fraudulent merchandise, and intoxicating beverages, be prohibited by Congress, but so may such commerce in the products of trusts. The question, therefore, of trust suppression by the

national government, is now "up to" the legislative branch, of which President Roosevelt is adviser, and a "trust-shackling" message is in order.

STRENUOUS CIVILIZATION.

That splendid organ of militant Christianity, the Outlook, of New York, had the other week a convincing argument in defense of the armies and navies of civilization and the uses to which they have in recent years been put. These armaments, says the Outlook, are the house wreckers of civilization, its simile being suggested by a sign advertising the firm engaged in tearing down a building opposite the editorial sanctum. They tear down the old and useless and unsanitary structures of the world, clear the ground of rubbish, and make an open field for the house builders who follow them. The regrettable incidents that accompany their work are but the dust and dirt and temporary inconvenience caused by the process of demolition. These are not to be weighed against the advantages of the new and ornamental structures that will soon rise on the sites of what perhaps were eyesores or rookeries.

Such, in substance, is the argument, which is bolstered by the examples of France in Madagascar, England in the Transvaal, and America in Porto Rico and the Philippines, where, the wrecking process having been nearly or quite accomplished, the Outlook sees foundations laid for noble monuments to civilization and religion.

What a pity that all weak-brained sentimentalists and idealists and doctrinaires cannot read the Outlook and profit by its wisdom? Could they thus be cured of their mental obliquity they would cease to mouth their futile shibboleths of inherent rights and political freedom. For why should not a native government be destroyed to open the way for business enterprise and religious propaganda? Why scruple to decimate one generation to benefit the next? From evil will come forth good. On this field of carnage will rise a

church; on that road where prisoners of war were shot and tortured will run a trolley line; in yonder wood where boys of ten were hunted down will spring up a schoolhouse; and on the site of many a ruined village tenement houses with accommodation for a score of families each, and factories where the children can be employed, will supplant the primitive cabins that the hand of war in blessing smote.

There is, however, one thing lacking to the Outlook's thesis. It should follow up its brilliant analogy between the tearing down of a building and the conquest of a nation by insisting that military methods be applied to the reconstruction of our cities. At present this process of rebuilding is a very slow and expensive one. Before a structure can be destroyed its owner must consent and be compensated for his property. This absurd provision of our laws simply paralyzes all well-considered and far-reaching improvement. How easily it could be altered!

Let there be organized in every city an army of house wreckers of whom the mayor shall be commander-in-chief. Let war be declared on all mean and shabby buildings, and let all owners and occupiers of such buildings be called upon in the name of civilization and Christianity to surrender and turn their domiciles over to the army for destruction. There would be resistance at first, but well drilled regiments and Gatling guns would make short work of it. Those who defended their dwellings would be shot down or dynamited up. Their personal possessions would be seized to help defray the cost of the army. Prisoners would be compelled to aid in the work of demolition. Women and children, if they escaped the bombardment, would be sent to the charitable institutions of the city.

Following this destructive army, just as in the case of national conquest, would come another one—an army of construction. Captains of industry, to whom the confiscated sites would be apportioned freely, would rear fine structures on every street, and from every quarter of the town the capable and energetic would

pour in to occupy them. In a few months' time whole slums could be wiped out, old fashioned architecture everywhere be forced to give place to new, and a city such as artists and poets have dreamed of rise on the ruins of a backward and chaotic town.

What an opening for deeds of municipal heroism! Imagine, for instance, a company of rough-riding house wreckers charging up the stoop of a resisting dwelling, at their head a future mayor, waving a strenuous arm above his head as he shouts, "Give them hell, boys!" or adding to the glorious carnage by planting "bullets with unerring aim in the backs of fleeing inmates. And think of the triumphant consummation when, the battle a thing of the past and a marble structure lifting a proud front where weather-beaten boards had affronted the eye, bishops and religious editors dedicate the building to civilization and unveil tablets to those of the assaulting army who fell that it might rise.

To be sure, effeminate and impracticable souls might grieve over those who had fallen in defense of their roof-trees and their household gods or become homeless wanderers in the city's outskirts. But a businesslike and unsentimental administration would entertain no such weakling's sorrow. The dead insurgents could bury their dead; and as to the living vagrants, those who would surrender unconditionally could receive employment as servants in the new buildings. The others—wilful ladrones—would be treated with the severity that would be their due. W.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, July 30.

The political reform conference called by J. A. Edgerton, secretary of the national committee of the Peoples party (p. 232), met at Denver on the 27th and remained in session two days. Mr. Edgerton was made permanent chairman, and W. N. Allen of Nebraska, a former United States senator from that state, is reported to have delivered the key note speech. The first important business done was the selection of a committee to

undertake the work of organizing into a new party the various reform elements of the country. This committee was composed of Senator Allen, J. S. Felter, J. M. Mallett, Dr. R. H. Reemelin, A. Poynter, and Frank W. Owens. It recommended an address which, as reported by the Associated Press, is as follows:

The manifest unrest which everywhere appears in the nation demonstrates the dissatisfaction of the American people with the present management of government, and argues the necessity of the reform forces coming together in united action at the ballot box to obtain proper legislation whereby the right of the people to self-government may be had for themselves and their posterity. Therefore we, the Populists of the United States, having this day at the city of Denver united forces with the distinct understanding that all past differences as to policy shall be and now are permanently settled, and experience having demonstrated the futility of any attempt to secure the enactment of our truth either through the Republican or the Democratic party, we believe the time is now at hand when the United People's party should declare itself emphatically opposed to any affiliation with either of these parties and unqualifiedly in favor of national political action. Our fundamental principles are known to all Populists, and are nowhere better stated than in that immortal document enunciated at Omaha, July 4, 1892. However, for the benefit of the uninformed, we declare our unyielding adherence to the demand for (a) a money, whether stamped on gold, silver or paper, to be coined and issued exclusively by the government and made a full legal tender for all debts, both public and private; (b) a system of transportation and the transmission of intelligence owned by the public and operated by the government at the cost of service; (c) land for use rather than for speculation, and abolition of alien ownership of land; (d) American ships for American foreign commerce, without a cent of subsidy. And as an open door for all economic reforms we urge the rule of the people through the optional referendum and initiative and the recall of derelict officials. Confident in the justice of the principles here set forth, firmly confident that their triumph in government would be for the best interests of the people, we call upon the patriotic citizens of this country to join with us in bringing about their enactment into law. With these principles firmly established, equal justice would prevail, special privileges would be eliminated, and ours would be, as patriots everywhere desire, a government of the people, for the people, by the people.

This address was adopted by the conference, and approved by the party to