

The Public

Seventh Year.

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1904.

Number 327.

LOUIS F. POST, Editor.

Entered at the Chicago, Ill., Post Office as second-class matter.

For terms and all other particulars of publication, see last page.

At the convention of the Pennsylvania Bar Association last week, Woodrow Wilson, president of Princeton university, said a very good and timely thing about the legal profession. He characterized it as having fallen to the grade of a mere "bread and butter pursuit." This may be pessimistic, but it is true. Lawyers have as a rule ceased to be the professional men they once were. They have become mere confidential clerks. A corporation wants something done; no matter what, so long as they want it; and their expert legal clerks are expected to do it—by hook or by crook, through city councils, legislatures, Congress and the courts, just as their experts in other departments are expected to accomplish results in those departments. Financial results, not even-handed justice, is the goal of the lawyer to-day. He who gets these results, no matter how (provided he escapes the penitentiary and disbarment) is the successful lawyer; he who does not or will not, may eke out a livelihood with miscellaneous practice, but he can expect no more.

It was a scathing criticism of our public morality which Jacob H. Plain, of Aurora, Ill., a defaulting bank cashier, made when he said to a Chicago Tribune correspondent on the 3d:

I simply did what half your successful cashiers in Chicago have done. In my case the result was disaster; in their case it is success. Everything depends on the turn of the cards. Look at the case of one very prominent banker. Ten years ago he hadn't enough money to pay a hotel bill; to-day he is a mil-

lionaire. Do you think he saved it out of his salary?

The bitterness of this accusation is in its substantial truthfulness. Mr. Plain was highly respected. He was pointed to as an example for the young. True, it was not known that he was then already a defaulter. But if his criminal operations had proved successful, he would still have been held up as an example. His secret "borrowing," all paid back with "scrupulous honesty," and perhaps with interest, would have been regarded as an interesting episode in a remarkably successful career. But he failed. His "borrowings" cannot be returned. He is consequently a criminal and no longer an example to the young. But analyze it all, and why is he no longer an example? Is it because he embezzled, or because his speculations failed? When men like John D. Rockefeller are held up as examples, and fortunes like the Gould fortune are given certificates of good character, it can hardly be said that the misguided Plain would not have been admired as an exemplar of success had his speculations succeeded, even if the fact of his embezzlement had leaked out.

More light is thrown by the coroner's jury at Victor, Colorado, upon the character of the riot there a few days ago and the responsibility for the killing (pp. 145, 156), than that body probably intended. They say that an armed body of miners had assembled and "were appointed special policemen for the city of Victor, and, while the act of deputizing said men gave them temporarily a color of office, the said men congregated and armed themselves for an unlawful purpose." What that "unlawful purpose" may have been this mine-owners' jury do not explain. But the circumstances to

which they allude are well known. A mine owners' mob had assembled in the streets. It was addressed by the secretary of the Mine Owners' association, who urged indiscriminate hangings at lampposts, etc. Soon afterward there was shooting, but by whom no one knows, and the jury only professes to "believe." Now if it is true that under these circumstances the civil authorities were deputizing special policemen, they were performing their sworn duty; and when a coroner's jury holds those deputies responsible for the homicides of that riot, because, and only because, they were duly appointed special deputies and were arming—ostensibly, and so far as appears, actually—to preserve the peace in regular and lawful form, it still further exposes the lawless character of the lynch law government at Victor which the military are supporting. By their own unguarded confession they have indicted the legal posse comitatus.

The animus of this jury is made more manifest by its indictment of Moyer for "aiding, abetting, inciting," etc. At the time of the riot Moyer was in military custody at Telluride, miles and miles away from Victor, and for months had been in such custody there, and in such close custody that his friends could not communicate with him and even the local courts could not reach him. When these circumstances are considered the able dissenting opinion of Judge Steele, of the Supreme Court, who holds that the court ought to maintain the efficacy of the writ of habeas corpus, commands attention, even if it is but as the voice of one sane judge crying out in a wilderness of judicial insanity.

It would appear that the whole performance in Colorado for which