

sion for advocacy of a life tenure for Presidents of the United States; and the Republican Governor of New Jersey was an ideal person to make the suggestion. There is little likelihood that this plutocratic reform will be adopted, but such declarations are valuable as indicative of a certain longing in certain quarters.

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Autocracy in Mexico.

There is complaint of a coalition, through American business interests, between our Federal authorities and the Mexican government, for the purpose of suppressing political activity in opposition to President Diaz. Friends of Mexican Liberals now in American jails under peculiar circumstances (p. 122) make this charge without reserve, and circumstances lend color to their stories. One of their complaints is to the effect that the Mexican constitution—a liberal document—has been so completely subverted by President Diaz that opposition parties in politics are not tolerated, and that Diaz remains President not by virtue of votes but by virtue of the autocratic power he has usurped. This complaint is now borne out by an American witness in thorough sympathy with Diaz. We refer to Frederick Palmer, who in his letter in the Chicago Tribune of the 22d, has found Diaz to have about as much standing as an exemplar of republican institutions as the Ameer of Afghanistan. The execution of 30,000 men is reported by Mr. Palmer as standing to Diaz's account; and "such is his power that a score of malcontents may be shot without anybody except their neighbors being wiser." When this is considered, along with Mr. Palmer's further statement that Diaz has rightly judged that every American dollar that crosses the border becomes "his political partisan in Mexico with its influence on his side in Washington," one may well suspect that there is truth in the charge that the Mexican Liberals now in American jails may indeed be victims of that very influence.

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The Panama Canal Scandal.

Whatever may be the motives of the promoters of the Panama canal, their conduct in the face of serious charges of corruption is curious. President Roosevelt meets the charge in behalf of his family and friends with bare denials characteristically phrased. Newspapers are held to account, not at their places of publication, but by revolutionary proceedings at the seat of the central government. And when a member of Congress, Mr. Rainey of Illinois, makes a well-tempered and cir-

cumstantial exposure on the floor, he is assailed by the classical Burton with a flood of unclassical billingsgate. To the man up a tree it would seem that these accusations have struck home and hurt. Why so strenuous an opposition to a Congressional inquiry? If the charges be false, this would put them at rest if thoroughly made.

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The Steel Trust Merger.

After the report of its sub-committee on the steel trust merger, it makes little difference what the judiciary committee of the Senate may do, nor even the Senate itself. This report confirms with proof all that has been suspected about that merger, which President Roosevelt has been at so much pains to protect. The story is a simple one. The steel trust magnates—including the puissant J. Pierpont Morgan—wanted the property of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company. Its mines were necessary to perfect the trust's monopoly of mineral deposits. So the trust drove the owners of the coal and iron company's stock into a financial corner and took it away from them. In doing this, however, it ran the risk of getting into trouble over the anti-trust law. To avoid that embarrassment it laid the case before President Roosevelt in advance, explaining that in absorbing the Tennessee company it would be saving the country from financial ruin. This appealed strongly to the unsophisticated Mr. Roosevelt, especially as he had the assurances of the trust that it would really rather wash its hands of the whole business except for the patriotism of it. The trust was accordingly promised by the President that it should not be prosecuted under the anti-trust law, and the promise has been kept. But now, behold! It transpires that the trust got a great bargain in natural coal deposits, with a White House immunity bath thrown in.

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The Labor Market.

It was a piece of bitter irony, that of the Brooklyn clergyman who recently set up a slave-auction block in his church for the sale of men out of work. The men were masked—twenty-six of them all told—and bids were called for. Here was a young man of twenty-four, who had been vainly hunting for work for eight months. A baker bought him for \$10 a week to drive wagon, and three loaves of bread a day thrown in. And so the sale went on. The clergyman called it the most tragic thing he had ever known. It was a demonstration, both in the number of able and willing workers offering themselves for sale and in the