

one or two tenants to demoralize and discommode all the rest of the tenants by their own disregard of the laws of decency. Rather singularly, the sickness and death-rate are reported to be below the average. It is doubtless true that the blame for the condition of things often rests as much upon individual families as upon the corporations, and not least upon the city's health officials, but this does not weaken Mr. Hale's main point as to the responsibility of the churches. It simply broadens the scope of the work that is needed. The Fall River ministers have been looking into the matter since Mr. Hale's article appeared, and it is understood that a rejoinder is to be published by one of their number. We print on another page a defense of the condition of the mill tenements from a citizen of Fall River.

The Tenement-House Committee, of which Mr. Gilder, of the "Century," is Chairman, held an interesting session on Friday of last week respecting tenement-house fires. A map had been prepared showing the location of all the fires in this city during the year ending in June. In the well-to-do and middle-class districts the dots marking fires were singularly few; but in the most crowded tenement-house district—the Russian Jewish district—the map was fairly black with them. The witnesses examined agreed that the chief causes of these fires, and especially of the deaths resulting from them—which average one every two or three weeks—were defective flues, direct connection between the main hallways and the cellars (where so many fires originate), transoms between rooms and hallways (so that those escaping are suffocated by the smoke), the ignorance of the tenants regarding fire-alarms, and, finally, the reckless use of kerosene. For the prevention of defective flues a better and a larger force of building inspectors was demanded—a force also which could not be suspected of bribery to waive necessary requirements. To secure a safer construction of cellarways and partitions a modification of the law was urged. To lessen the ignorance of the tenants regarding the sounding of the alarm no suggestion was made, though the Chief of the Fire Department testified that for the most part the alarms are not given until the flames attract the attention of policemen or other passers-by. General ignorance is not to be got rid of at a blow by any amount of law or any number of fire-alarm boxes. A teaching force in the schools wide awake to the practical needs of the scholars, and perhaps the increased responsibility of landlords' agents to explain such matters to all their tenants, seem to furnish the only means of curing this evil. As to the fires which come from the use of kerosene—more than five hundred a year out of twenty-five hundred—one witness testified to the general conviction of insurance men that these fires are in large measure incendiary, and urged that the law make it a misdemeanor for any tenant to leave a kerosene stove or lamp burning in his apartment when he takes his entire family away. At first blush the recommendation seems drastic, but those familiar with tenement life are convinced that, if something cannot be done to prevent the over-insurance of household goods, some drastic measure must be adopted to prevent the astonishing repetition of kerosene fires in apartments from which the occupants (and the more valuable goods) are temporarily absent. Whatever comes of the investigations of the Committee, its formation is indicative of the new spirit of concern for the safety of the poor.

This year's National Convention of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union—of the religious aspects of which

we give some account on another page—brings out even more prominently than heretofore the disposition of the aggressive temperance organizations to make their reform a part of the movement felt throughout Christendom to better the condition of the working classes. For some time past the speeches of Miss Willard and Lady Henry Somerset have been as saturated with Christian Socialism as the platforms of Western Prohibitionists have been with a temperate form of Populism. Miss Willard, in her annual address at Cleveland last week, stated her attitude toward temperance and labor reform in these explicit terms:

"The principle of the living wage has been established, a living wage being the sum necessary to maintain an average man with an average family in an average state of civilized comfort, and should be the basis of that 'cost of production' beyond which lies the 'margin' on which capital depends. . . . Protestantism has forged forward toward prohibition. The Pope's representative in this country has indorsed the right of any Bishop to exclude from the sacraments those who belong to the liquor-dealers' camp. Prohibition by law, by politics, by woman's ballot, is the watchword of the temperance army in all nations. I have not turned Populist, though I hope that Populists and Prohibitionists may be agreed and walk together before long."

For the organizing of the working classes to better the condition of the rank and file of the people Miss Willard expressed the fullest sympathy, and declared her belief that the labor organizations could be relied upon to secure their ends by the peaceful methods of arbitration and the ballot. In some directions—other than temperance and social purity—Miss Willard went even further in her recommendations than the Populists or the trades-unionists. Particularly severe was she in condemning the great newspapers for publishing only such things as the corporations and their stockholders desired to have published. If this labor-reform spirit in the head of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union extends among its membership in the same way that her zeal for woman's suffrage and prohibition have extended, a labor and temperance reform alliance is next to inevitable.

The "maximum rate" law of Nebraska, which is substantially the act passed by the Legislature of that State four years ago and vetoed by the Democratic Governor, and then in its present form passed by the Legislature two years ago and signed by the Republican Governor, has now been overthrown by a decision of Judge Brewer, who holds that the rates proposed were not reasonable. The principle upon which Judge Brewer nullifies the act of the Legislature is substantially contained in the following paragraph, quoted from the Omaha "World-Herald's" condensation of his decision:

"The whole trend of government legislation has been to promote and not to discourage investments in railway transportation lines, until now \$10,000,000,000 are invested in them. That may be too much money, but that is not now before the Court. Whether the public prefers, instead of buying these roads, to regulate their rates, is another question. The Legislature cannot take away the value of a road without paying for it. While the Union Pacific was given \$16,000 a mile subsidy, and can be replaced for \$20,000 a mile, it is bonded for \$70,000 a mile. It would not be just to make rates on a basis of \$20,000 a mile and deprive the lien holders of their interests."

The reasoning is the same as that upon which Judge Brewer rendered his well-known decision against the Iowa freight law. No matter, he held, what the natural value of railroad property may be (as measured by original cost or cost of replacement) the Legislature cannot regulate rates so as to prevent the payment of interest on the bonds, though it may reduce at its discretion the dividends on the stock.

Fortunately, no writer on railroads has followed Judge Brewer's reasoning. If a road costs \$10,000,000, and is

bonded for \$5,000,000 and stocked for \$5,000,000, no Legislature (it is generally agreed) has a right to reduce rates so as to prevent a fair rate of interest on the money the stockholders invested. If, however, as is so common outside of New England, a road costs \$10,000,000 and is bonded for \$20,000,000, the bondholders have no right to interest on the \$10,000,000 not invested. The public ought to pay interest only on the actual value of the property, and ought to treat with greater consideration rather than less those roads which are capitalized at their cost than those which have issued watered securities. It is, moreover, worth noticing that Judge Brewer is in error in his statement of facts. His capitalization of the railroads of the country at ten billions includes all the stocks and bonds issued by one road and held by another. The total amount issued to investors is but seven and a half billions, and the market price of these securities (to say nothing of the amount originally invested in them) hardly exceeds five billions. This, however, is a minor matter. The important question is, Will the Supreme Court uphold Judge Brewer's reasoning in behalf of vested interests, or will it again repudiate it as squarely as it did in the famous case in which he decided that distillers must be compensated whenever the Legislature prohibits their traffic as a public injury? We sincerely hope that the appeal to the Supreme Court will be speedily taken.

The French campaign in Madagascar has entered upon its second stage. Diplomatic efforts to secure a concession of the French demands have failed, and the employment of force is the inevitable next step. Five men-of-war left France at the end of last month bound for Madagascar with the special function of protecting the landing of the expeditionary force when it arrives; but before the expeditionary force can be sent out, the French Chambers must put a financial foundation under the enterprise, and the Government has asked the Chambers for a credit of 65,000,000 francs for the purpose of prosecuting the campaign in Madagascar, and, if the credit is granted, 15,000 troops will be sent at once to the island. There are, however, several possibilities of delay. The French Chambers are more critical of credits for expeditions of this kind than they were before France had suffered so severely in her various efforts to sustain a vigorous foreign policy. Moreover, the sickly season has begun, and will not end until March. It will take about three weeks to make the voyage from the French ports to the island, and it is not probable that any expeditionary force will be sent out before the end of January. There is a great difference of opinion as to the military strength of the Malagasy Government. The army has been reported as numbering 70,000 well-drilled and well-armed men; it has also been reported as containing less than 25,000; and some well-informed travelers declare that it practically does not exist. But whatever may be the actual strength of the army in Madagascar, there is no doubt about the sagacity and resources of the people of the island, nor about the obstacles which will be thrown in the path of the French invaders when they finally arrive.

Battle has been fairly joined in England between the two parties over the question of a revision of the authority and organization of the House of Lords by the speeches of the Prime Minister and Lord Salisbury. Lord Rosebery had declared that the veto power must be taken from the House of Lords. This is the question, he said, on which the next election will be fought, and this is the question also which the Ministry will raise in the House of Commons at the forthcoming session, in the

most direct fashion. Lord Salisbury, in the speech at Edinburgh which was accepted as the counter-statement of the Conservatives, goes a long way toward conceding the justice of the reform which Lord Rosebery announces as henceforth not only a definite, but the foremost, article in the Liberal programme. Readers of *The Outlook* who have read Mr. Kidd's "Social Evolution" have not forgotten the striking manner in which he brings out the fact that a privileged class often finds its position crumbling under its feet simply by the expansive power of political and moral growth. Lord Salisbury's speech shows that the old Tory position with regard to the House of Lords is already untenable. He does not attempt to defend the House as at present organized. "I do not mean for a moment to say," he declares, "that the Constitution could last if a considerable majority of the people were distinctly and steadily against it." In other words, Lord Salisbury concedes that if a majority of the nation demand the passage of a measure, the House of Lords cannot veto it. Such a veto would be, by the admission of the leader of the Conservatives, a violation of the spirit of the English Constitution. The sole ground on which he appears to have planted himself is the already familiar defense of the veto of the Home Rule Bill, that a majority for the bill was secured by the Irish vote, and that it commands only a minority of the English vote. Of the theory underlying this discrimination the London "Speaker" says that it is the old Hottentot theory. It is certainly a very unstable position for the defense of the House of Lords as now constituted. It seems to have escaped Lord Salisbury's attention that there were other bills passed by an English majority in the House of Commons which were vetoed by the House of Lords. It is clear that the Upper House is fast coming to the day of reckoning which awaits all institutions organized on the hereditary principle. Criticism of the Upper House has long been heard from politicians out of office, but it is quite another thing when the Prime Minister definitely and emphatically declares that the day for action has arrived.

GENERAL NEWS.—A correspondent of the London "Standard" sends that paper a most horribly circumstantial account of recent massacres of Armenians by the Turks as a result of a refusal to pay taxes on the ground that the Kurdish raids had reduced the Armenians to absolute poverty; it is alleged that over 6,000 men, women, and children were killed; the story is almost too atrocious in some of its details to seem possible, though there is little doubt that it has some ground; we shall recur to the subject when the actual facts are certainly known.—Southern Italy has suffered greatly from earthquakes the past week; several towns have had many buildings destroyed, and there has been considerable loss of life.—Cable dispatches say that the steamer *Stjernen*, with Captain Wiggins, the Arctic navigator, and his party on board, has been wrecked on the south end of Nova Zembla, but without loss of life.—A statue of Thorwaldsen, the great Danish sculptor, was unveiled in this city last Sunday.—The next annual meeting of the American Missionary Association will be held in Detroit, Mich., October 22-24, 1895.—The "Cook gang" of marauders in the Indian Territory is being hunted down; they have terrorized several towns for a long time.—The burial of the late Czar, Alexander III., took place at the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, St. Petersburg, on Monday. It is described as the most magnificent funeral ceremony of modern times. The marriage of the new Czar, Nicholas II., to the Princess Alix will take place, it is reported, on November 26.