

than the estimated capital invested in all manufacturing enterprises, including saw-mills, carpenter-shops, and printing-offices of the humblest description, fifteen years ago. During the past year many of the trusts have failed to hold their own in the security market, and the springing up of new concerns to compete with the trusts is to the speculators the most serious, but to the general public the most hopeful, side of the situation. To consumers these new competing concerns promise, at least temporarily, a great reduction in prices, though the new competition may in turn be followed by a new combination which will try to pay interest on a still larger amount of invested capital. Already the high prices which the combinations have attempted to maintain have brought into existence a vast number of new competing concerns which are not needed at all to produce the commodities, but are merely created to enable their promoters to share in the extraordinary profits which the trusts are receiving. In the end a large part of the plants, new or old, must lie idle, and the capital invested in them be wasted.



Army Promotions The list of sixteen promotions sent to the Senate by the President almost immediately after the passing of the Army Bill contains many and important changes. Naturally, the promotions are not received by the army men and the public with absolutely equal approbation, but the advancement in most cases is well deserved. General Miles, at present senior Major-General "commanding the army," becomes Lieutenant-General; one wishes that the new law defined more clearly the powers and responsibilities of the ranking officer of the army, so that the present unsatisfactory relations of the nominal head of the army to the War Department might no longer give rise to anomalous conditions. The title of Major-General is conferred on Brigadier-General Young, Brigadier-General MacArthur, and Colonel Chaffee. All of these officers have done notable service in Cuba, the Philippines, or China, and the only criticism made is that two brigadier-generals in the regular line of promotion are passed over; to which it is replied that this "jumping" of one officer over

another is inevitable under the present law if special services are to be recognized. It is interesting to note that General Chaffee has risen by sheer merit, courage, and persistence from the grade of private soldier to that of major-general. Twelve new brigadier-generals are made—Generals Bates, Hall, Wheaton, Hughes, Schwan, Sumner, Randall, Davis, Hughes, Kobbé, Wood, Grant, and Bell. Several of these appointments are criticised by many army men on the ground already given, and in at least two cases, those of General Grant and Captain Bell, it is urged that the service has not exceeded in quality and distinction that of other men who have been passed over. With General Wood it has been said that the promotion from the rank of assistant surgeon (the regular army rank still held by General Wood) to that of major-general is practically an appointment from civil life, and that his acknowledged services in Cuba have been political, civil, and administrative rather than military. This seems to us rather a fine distinction. When a man has deserved as well of his country as has General Wood, his reward may well be an exceptional one; moreover, General Wood has accomplished remarkable results, not as a civilian, but by and through the military organization, and has demonstrated beyond cavil the efficiency of the army, not merely as a fighting machine, but as an administrative power.



Eightfold Postal Rates Threatened Congressman Loud, of California, who year after year has been defeated in his efforts to impose higher postal rates on periodicals, this year introduced a supposed "codification" of existing laws which threatens higher rates on periodicals than were ever proposed in his defeated bills. The "codification" bill is of course a long one, containing, in fact, 221 pages, and it passed the House without being subjected to careful scrutiny, because Mr. Loud stated that it made the fewest possible changes in the existing law, and no change whatever in the "law relating to second-class mail matter." The bill went to the Senate, and might quickly have passed that body upon the same understanding had not Mr. James L. Cowles and Mr. Edmund F. Merriam

called the attention of a few newspaper publishers to sections increasing the rates upon weekly newspapers published in cities having letter-carrier delivery. Section 150 of the proposed law contains the following provision:

... the rate of postage on newspapers and periodicals not exceeding two ounces in weight, when the same are deposited in a letter-carrier office for delivery by its carriers, shall be uniform at one cent each, and periodicals weighing more than two ounces shall be subject, when delivered by such carriers, to a postage of two cents each; and these rates shall be fully prepaid by stamps affixed.

This would mean that hereafter each copy of *The Outlook* delivered in New York City must pay two cents postage instead of one-quarter of one cent, as under the present law. In other words, it would add nearly a dollar a year to the cost of supplying the paper to each of *The Outlook's* city subscribers, and several thousand dollars to its yearly postage bill.



Manifest Extortion

It is difficult to know how to characterize the proposed change, especially when embodied in a bill supposed to contain no changes whatever of this character. We trust that Mr. Loud will be able to offer some explanation. As we have stated in the past, we agree with Mr. Loud that a great deal of printed matter is now being carried by the Post-Office Department to distant points at a loss to the Government. The proposal to double or even quadruple the rates upon periodicals carried more than a thousand miles would not compel their publishers to pay more than the transportation costs the Government under the present contract with the railroads, and it would prevent the publishers of advertising schemes from sending their documents to distant points through the mails, when they should be sent by freight. But the proposal to make eight times as great as now the rate upon newspapers delivered in the city of publication, and not handled by railroads at all, is as irrational a bit of extortion as could easily be contrived. Mr. James L. Cowles, who has made a careful examination of the Post-Office reports of the past, informs us that previous to 1891 the practice prevailed of counting all the pieces of mail matter handled in the letter delivery service, and

that the average cost of this service was found to be less than a quarter of a cent apiece. In New York City, he says, the cost of delivering all the letters, papers, and packages received was but one-fifth of a cent apiece, and the whole cost of the delivery service was less than the postage received from *local matter alone* by over two million dollars a year. When, therefore, the present rates on local matter are such as to yield the Government a profit, the proposal to multiply these rates by eight, and charge newspapers a dollar a year for service that costs little more than ten cents a year, constitutes a preposterous exaction. We trust that the weekly newspapers throughout the country will call the attention of their Senators to the change proposed, and that Mr. Loud's codification bill will be subjected to a critical examination before it is again considered by either house of Congress.



Columbus Street Railway Concessions

The long conflict in the city Council of Columbus, Ohio, over the renewal of the franchise of the local street railway company for twenty-five years has resulted in a substantial reduction in fares. Under the new ordinance granted last week the cash fare will remain, as now, five cents, but hereafter seven tickets, instead of six as at present, must be sold for a quarter, and these tickets are to be good from early morning until midnight, and entitle their possessors to transfers upon all the lines of the company. This concession, according to the calculation of the "*Ohio State Journal*," brings an immediate saving of \$125,000 a year to the people of the city, or about five dollars per family. The new charter contains also a provision that when the gross earnings of the company reach \$1,750,000 a year—or about double their present amount—eight tickets shall be sold for a quarter, which will bring twelve years hence a further saving of five dollars a year for each family. The only grossly unsatisfactory feature of the new ordinance is that it does not require the street railway company to waive its claim to a perpetual franchise upon some of the streets. It is true that the validity of this claim is doubtful, and that some of the Councilmen who opposed requiring the