

affairs of government, not even in municipal affairs, and, until they thoroughly understand the handling of small affairs, they certainly are not fitted to undertake larger ones. In other words, let us begin from the bottom and build on a secure foundation rather than start at the top to remodel the whole fabric of civil government. The present methods are, from our standpoint, intolerable. A vast amount of work has to be done in all the towns to make them habitable and healthy. The present condition of affairs demands in the most imperative terms strong local control of local affairs, with, of course, the whole system under the firm but broad and liberal supervision of a central authority. The best results will be obtained if to those responsible for the control, development and re-establishment of the different sections there be given wide discretion and they be left unhampered as far as possible by petty and arbitrary restraints. If one man cannot be trusted to act with honesty, good sense and judgment, another should be found who can be. The educational, judicial, and administrative systems of the island should be promptly assimilated and harmonized.

A people still hungry, living in ruined towns, devoid of hospitals, school buildings and systems of water supply, with an interior country desolated by the war, untraversed by roads, in fact thrown back into an almost primeval condition, are not in condition to have suddenly inflicted upon them the enormous expense and unnecessary burden of supporting the officials and

offices of a completely developed and progressive country.

All these things will come in time, but if they are rushed upon a people thoroughly unaccustomed to handling themselves and to controlling their own affairs, the most disastrous results are sure to follow. We must thoroughly build the foundation. Free and independent people are not the result of any number of orders or proclamations, but they are the result of hard work and experience and a profound respect for law. And such conditions are produced by and rest on a good school system, a prompt and effective system of judicial procedure, and a thorough and careful administration of municipal affairs.

A military supervision must necessarily exist for some time. This supervision should be very liberal, and every effort should be made to assist and support rather than suppress and supplant civil procedure, but it must be strong enough to suppress and remove corrupt officials and check promptly corrupt and inefficient methods of procedure.

A great success is possible here. The people are anxious to shake off the burden of the old laws, and of the purchased concessions and monopolies, with their manifold corruptions. They look to America for reforms, not for a continuation of the old conditions. All want good schools, reforms in the courts, public works—in short they want to advance.

There is a wonderful opening here for energy and enterprise. Very little has been done. Everything is in the future.

SANTIAGO, CUBA

## Railroad Slums.

By Josiah Flynt.

To the average person the word "slum" means a congested quarter in one of our large cities, where people are closely packed together, and where poverty, suffering, drunkenness and crime are the most characteristic features of the life. In nearly all American cities of the first rank districts of this description are to be found, and they are an eyesore to the general public and a cause of great concern to philanthropists and policemen; but they are not the only slums in the country, and, in my humble opinion, they are also not the worst. It is, furthermore, to be remarked concerning them that there is nothing typically American about them, except in a few minor and

external details. London, Paris and Berlin have colonies of poor people, vagabonds and criminals very similar to those in New York, Chicago and San Francisco, and altho New York carries off the palm for the most densely populated poor quarter known, the actual environment is not very different from like quarters in all places of a truly metropolitan character.

There are slums in the United States, however, which are distinctly American in origin and arrangement, and which no other country in the world is troubled with. I refer to the tramp "hang-outs" and camps situated on almost all of the trunk railroad lines in this country, and to the vagrant and criminal rabble which infests them. All countries are plagued with wandering bands of beggars and thieves, but ours is the only one whose railroads are overrun by professional out-of-work gangs of "hold-up-men," and a constantly increasing army of hoboes. In Europe it would be utterly impossible for such a state of affairs to exist, and European railroad men as well as European vagrants find nothing in our railroad life more surprising than the fact that it exists in the United States.

It seems to me high time that public attention should be directed toward the slums on our railroads. They are not like the bewildering slums of the cities, where the most that can be done is frequently merely to alleviate the suffering a little, and where even the most enthusiastic reformers realize the improbability of ever being able to overhaul them entirely. On the railroads, on the contrary, the obvious thing to do is to utterly wipe out the slums, to clean up every property on which they are found, and the purpose of this short paper is to indicate their present significance and to make plain the necessity of doing away with them *en bloc*. The railroad companies are really the public, and if the public becomes interested in this matter the companies cannot afford to disregard it. The railroad slums have developed with the tramp class. Some one has said that since the Civil War America has evolved both her millionaires and her tramps, and it is certainly true that the hoboes have come among us during the last thirty years. They have been traveling on

the railroads for the last twenty years, and to-day they have camps and "hang-outs" on nearly all the trunk lines in the country. The significance of these camps and "hang-outs" is that they afford a refuge for as lawless a collection of ne'er-do-wells and criminals as can be found anywhere, and that on account of them it is possible for a tramp and a thief to roam at will throughout the land and have a stopping place where the police cannot bother him, and whence he can start out on his plundering raids. They are lodging houses, intelligence offices and railroad stations in one, and they may also be called outcasts' clubs. Any one can be "put up" at them, and the tramp spends his days wandering from one to the other. They are lodging houses mainly in summer because at this time of the year tramps, professional out-of-works and wandering criminals often find it more comfortable to sleep out-of-doors than in, and the "hang-out," particularly if a little cabin made of railroad ties constitutes a part of it, quite suffices for their purpose. At some "hang-outs" in the East I have seen as many as seventy-five professional vagrants and thieves sitting around the fire, and on a number of railroads there are often five and six camps to a division. As intelligence offices they are invaluable to men who have to keep up to date concerning the latest happenings in the outcast world, and to know about the movements of the police and the public in general. The great majority of American criminal offenders, in the open at least, know how to read, and see the newspapers regularly, but if it was impossible for them to get the newspapers they could secure all the news that is necessary in their business at their railroad camps. It is one of the most remarkable things in outcast life that the people in it can gather and distribute "news" as rapidly as they do, and I can only think of the methods of signaling by fires on hill tops, popular among certain Indians, when listening to them at their "hang-outs." A newcomer arrives, for instance, and tho he has but a minute to spare ere his train is due, he contributes something to the day's budget of news, be it only in regard to a house where he has been well fed. If it is a popular camp, so

many travelers drop in during the day that, by night, one who has remained at the camp since morning has learned practically everything of real importance that has taken place in the tramp world during twenty-four hours. I once remained an entire day at a favorite camp in Illinois to see just how much I could pick up in the way of news, and by night I had heard of interesting happenings that had taken place only a few days before as far away as San Francisco, and they were of such a nature that news of them could not possibly have reached me through other channels. Some tramp had started from 'Frisco with the news, and had passed it on to others going further east than he had intended to go, and in due course it reached the tramps in question.

As "depots," it is easy to see how important the railroad "hang-out" is. It is usually situated near the watering tank, or a steep grade, where freight trains go slow, and the trespassers can board them. There are a few vagabonds in the United States who take to the public turnpikes on their travels, but the great army of them ride in what they call "side-door Pullmans" (box-cars), and their camps are the places where they wait for trains.

The life that goes on at these camps is what justifies me in describing them as slums, and much of it is so revolting that it cannot be referred to here. There is no city slum, however, where I have seen or heard of anything worse than may be seen and heard at the tramps' railroad "hang-outs," and I know of no slum more deserving of the policeman's vigilance and the reformer's attention. From morning till night it is one continuous coming and going of an outlawed class of people, and they are transported free of charge by the railroad companies wherever they desire to go. Every spring the cities disgorge them upon the country at large, and they remake afresh their miniature slums from Maine to California. There is not a State in the Union which is not liable to a visitation from them, and in all the States they have notorious gathering places. In other words, even the country in the United States is not free of the vile influence of a class of people ordinarily supposed to be found mainly in large cities, and if for no

other reason the public is justified in asking that the railroad companies drive this class off their properties. Every provincial town and not a few villages have little Whitechapels at their back doors in the shape of tramp camps, and there may be seen at these camps all the revolting things which make the congested quarters of the large cities the shunned places that they are.

This deplorable state of affairs is already answerable for not a little harm done to our civilization. It has familiarized the boys of the country with a criminal environment, for one thing, and I doubt whether there is another country in the world where provincial youngsters have the intimate knowledge of tramps and "crooks" that American lads can, and often do, boast of. Between New York and Chicago, merely to take this section of the country, there is hardly a town on any of the railroads connecting these two cities where the majority of the young men and boys have not at least an amateurish acquaintance with tramp life, and where not a few of the young people can talk as glibly about the tramp's business, and know how to travel after his methods, almost as well as the full-fledged roadster. Indeed, it was recently said to me by a man who has spent twenty years of his life in the police department of one of the railroads that out of every five youngsters who gather around the tramps at their camps, three are sure, sooner or later, to run away from home and try tramping on their own hook, and one is almost certain never to return to his home.

These are facts which the public ought to seriously consider, and until they do and take action accordingly the railroad slums will continue to increase. At present they are worst in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Iowa, Wisconsin, Colorado, Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi, but, as I have said, they are to be found all over the country. There is one railroad system on which they are no longer allowed either to travel or collect with impunity, and this same property was once one of the most tramp-ridden lines in the United States. I refer to Pennsylvania lines west of Pittsburg, which includes the two roads known as the "Fort Wayne" and "Pan Handle." These lines, thanks to

the determination of the general manager to have them so, have at last been "cleaned up," as the tramp says, and they are no longer avenues of crime or highways of trespassers. The reform has been achieved through a well organized and carefully superintended police force which the general manager of the property has secured. The roads which he manages are to-day recognized by vagabonds as the hardest in the United States for a "deadhead" to get over, and they have been practically deserted by professional roadsters.

What one railroad company can do others can do also, and I have taken special notice of the railroad referred to so that if a community should deem it worth while to ask a railroad corporation to take up the matter, it will be able to point to a property on which the "cleaning-up" process proved beneficial to the railroad as well as to the public which it serves. The time has come in this country when it is opportune to rub off some of the rough edges of our civilization, and the railroad slum is distinctly one of the roughest. There is more to be said in regard to the subject than could be attempted in a paper of this character, but I hope that enough has been said to point out the necessity of taking it up seriously and soon.

It is impossible that the slums on the rail-

roads can ever become permanent if the public is determined that they shall be done away with, but the longer they are allowed to exist the more harm they will do, and they have already done more than can ever be made good. One of the most satisfactory facts in connection with an attack upon them is that there is no need for any one to be troubled with pricks of conscience about dispossessing a pauper class. A great many of the people who now live in them will settle in the cities when driven off the railroads, but they are already a recognized factor in city life in winter, and their presence in summer will not materially affect the cities. Meanwhile, however, they must not be confused with the people in the congested quarters of the large towns who must be housed somewhere, no matter who they are or what they do. It is this which makes it so difficult to carry out any sweeping reforms in a city's purlieus. The railroad slums, however, present no such difficulties, and the solution of the problem they bring up is not difficult to discover. The only thing to do is to prohibit them by law and to carry out the law through police agencies, and in the one instance where this remedy has been used it has proven eminently successful.

NEW YORK CITY.

## The Arbitration Proposals at The Hague.

By Theodore S. Woolsey,

PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AT YALE UNIVERSITY.

It is decidedly premature to venture any conclusive opinion as to the outcome of the Congress at The Hague; nevertheless THE INDEPENDENT wishes brief comment on the American scheme for an arbitration system, there presented. Before touching upon this, may I be permitted a few words in regard to the Congress as a whole? Why was it called? What results will follow it?

It is interesting in this connection to call to mind the various more or less similar movements which have been called into being by the Russian reigning house during

this century. There was the Holy Alliance, after the events of 1815, formed by the rulers of Russia, Austria, Prussia, and a little later, France. "This famous league, at its inception," writes President Woolsey, "appears to have had no definite object in view. It was a measure into which the other sovereigns entered in order to gratify the Emperor Alexander, whose romantic mind, then under the influence of Madame Krudener, contemplated a golden age, in which the intercourse of nations should be controlled by Christian principles." But in spite of fine