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For a woman to be wise and at the same time womanly, is to wield a tremendous influence, which may be felt for good in this time of confusion and strife.
-David Star Jordan.

UNACUSTOMED OMENS

New and strange omens are in the sky.
Members of the firm of J. P. Morgan & Co. have resigned as directors in about twenty railroad and industrial companies.
The resignations themselves are tremendously significant. Even more significant is a statement by Mr. Morgan relative to the resignation in which he says there is "an apparent change of public sentiment in regard to directorships."
The resignations are the first outward sign of the collapse of the secret money trust that has so long held sway over commerce, industry, transportation and banking. Testimony before the Pujo committee was that 180 men hold 746 directorships in 134 companies with a total capitalization of \$25,325,000,000.

It is through these interlocking directorates that the Morgan and Rockefeller groups of New York financiers exercised control over more than \$25,000,000,000. On the witness stand before the Pujo committee, George F. Baker, president of the First National bank of New York, testified that every enterprise of \$10,000,000 or upward in the past decade in this country has been floated by Morgan and his associates, and that the "floating of the securities carried control of the business." Mr. Baker also testified that this concentration of banking power would "if it should pass into bad hands, imperil the country."
Doubtless the new currency bill with the transfer of credit from Wall Street control to public control had much to do with the resignations. Doubtless a further factor was Woodrow Wilson's proposed legislation prohibiting interlocking directorates.
In any event, the action of the Morgans is a new and strange phenomenon. It is of kind with several other acts by big corporations within late weeks. Thus, five presidents of leading railroad companies have notified the Interstate Commerce Commission of their approval of national supervision of stock and bond issues.
Five big industrial corporations recently announced their purpose to consult the Washington government on the issue of what the latter would consider a proper obedience to the Sherman law. There was also the announcement, later denied, that the merger of the Western Union and American Telephone was to be unmerged.
Never before in the history of the country was there so many signs that Big Business realizes that there is a new order at the national capital and an order which plays no favorites and grants no special license to captains of industry to govern the government.

CHEAP LIVES

NEW YORK courts have approved settlements in nine suits for the loss of lives in the Asch factory fire. Administrators of the estates of nine victims have accepted cash at the rate of \$75 a head, and the courts permitted the acceptance of such a sum.
There is no pretense that \$75 is compensation for the loss of life. The owner of the building is fighting the charge of liability, and the casualty company which carries his insurance has been allowed to buy up these claims so that it need not carry a heavy reserve against the full liability.
Under a system of jurisprudence which imposes heavy handicaps on litigants without money the claimants have accepted \$75 each and abandoned their claims. Families of the victims were forced into these settlements simply because they have been tired out and they need not the necessary resources for carrying on endless litigation. They took what they could get and quit depending upon justice.
Whether liability for these nine deaths rested upon the building's owner is entirely beyond the question. Whatever his liability may be, it was switched to the casualty company, and that company has used its advantage in the courts to deprive the claimants of all their legal rights. It is poor law which permits the strong to thus beat down the weak.
Such incidents as these bring home to the public conscience what has been permitted in the name of law. The nine New York claimants were without the benefit of

RAILROAD FINANCING

SEVERAL of the larger railroads of the country have expressed willingness for the Interstate Commerce Commission to assume control of their financing operations. All the roads have not replied to the commission's inquiry as to their attitude on enlarged government control, but all that have replied favor the plan.
It is said that the railroads have been led to this by the enactment in many states of rigid public utility laws. These laws differ and they are proving confusing to the railroads. Adjoining states have ruled in different ways, and the railroads operating in such states have difficulty in complying with the requirements of each state and at the same time satisfying the demands of the federal commission.
This new attitude of the railroads is significant. They are attempting to get away from state control. The various state cases recently decided by the United States supreme court grew out of a concerted effort to find asylum in the federal government. The large insurance companies have been anxious to go under national supervision to escape some of the irritation to which various state laws subject them. But the insurance companies have failed

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The geological survey says the total output was further limited by a shortage of labor in the eastern states. The operators were unable to keep their mines working at full capacity, and the statement is made that except for a shortage of labor in the large coal producing states the total output would have been materially increased.
Figures showing coal production furnish reliable data as to industrial conditions throughout the country. For that reason the 1913 record is illuminating. In spite of lack of labor, notwithstanding the increased use of water power by American industries, coal production established a new record. The total coal production in 1900 was 269,684,000 tons, less than one half what it was in 1913.

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in this because insurance is not interstate commerce as defined by the courts.
The real significance of all this lies in the fact that railroads have come to the point of conceding the necessity of governmental supervision. They are now admitting that even in financing they should not be allowed to contract indebtedness against their properties which is not necessary in efficient operation. They are admitting that proceeds from stock and bond issues should be applied only to the road's actual needs.
It means that the railroads are accepting control of rates, which they are beginning to admit, must be based on the actual value of railroad property, rather than inflated values and the wildcat financing of the past.
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THE BRIBE CHARGES

THERE should be a rigid investigation of the charges of attempted bribery made by County Commissioner Hart.
The district attorney's office can employ its energies to no better purpose. It is action due Commissioner Hart himself. If efforts have been made to corrupt him, the facts should be exposed to the public view and suitable penalty be applied.
The probe is likewise due as a matter of justice to the engineers, over whom Commissioner Hart has cast a shadow by his indefinite charges. It is true that he has mentioned a few names as not affected by his accusations, but there are a number who are still under imputation.
Statements as to these charges have been printed in all the newspapers. They are public property, and are being discussed.
Commissioner Hart owes it to himself to cooperate in an inquiry into the facts. Such charges cannot be lightly made and as jauntily forgotten. No hint, much less a direct charge of bribery, should be allowed to pass unchallenged.
It is even more important for the engineers themselves to demand a full and rigid investigation. They owe it not only to themselves but to their profession. It is a character of profession that deserves to be shielded from odium and scandal.
But most of all, there should be an investigation on account of the great enterprise with which the charges are directly concerned.
At this very inception of the interstate bridge any alleged irregularity or any scandal should, for the future of the bridge operations, be dealt with promptly and effectively.

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more land for parks, playgrounds and other public uses, and the proposed law ought to pass. The initiative petitions ought to be signed.
Wisconsin eugenicists are much perturbed. A new marriage law went into effect with the new year. Lawyers declare it is useless and that marriages may be contracted without the aid of license, priest or physician. Physicians refuse to make examination for the \$2 fee prescribed. Long and with many turns is the road to reform.
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A FEW SMILES

"Alas!" confessed the prisoner. "In a moment of weakness I stole the plane."
"In a moment of weakness," exclaimed the judge. "Goodness! What would you have taken if you had yielded in a moment when you felt strong?"

When a traveling street fair recently left Albany, Ga., a local merchant was left with a supply of confetti in his hands.
As the fair was "plugging its last dollar," he had a thought of a friend there who was interested in one of the concessions and sent him the following telegram:
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SMALL CHANGE

Now the would-be candidates will get busy.
The New Year was enthusiastically welcomed.
But there's two—of both kinds—in even numbers, too.
It is better to do better than to resolve to do better.
It must be about time for Carranza and Villa to fall out.
Unfortunately, swearing; off increases the appetite.
A bad beginning of a year doesn't indicate a good ending.
Real winter is probably half over here; not so "back east."
Here's hoping all Oregon will grow as fast as Portland this year.
This is a fine month in which to buy 1914 Christmas presents.
Some crops were short in 1913, but not the amounts received for them.
It is never too late, nor too early, to make a sincerely good resolution.
Perhaps we shall soon see that many hens made a good New Year resolution.
To be a first rate bridge architect beats being an average lawyer or doctor.
Why not move to the Rogue River valley? Eggs 30 cents there; 45 cents here.
Thousands of Mexicans of Bulgaria are starving; one of the results of war.
If the "rebels" keep on winning victories, Haerta will soon be hitting out of Mexico.

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ESTIMATES made by the geological survey place the 1913 coal output in the United States at between 565,000,000 and 575,000,000 tons. It is an increase over the record breaking production of 1912 of 30,000,000 to 40,000,000 tons.
The coal mining industry lacked any spectacular features. The increase was normal and an index of general industrial activities in America. Of the total increase 4,500,000 tons was in the production of anthracite and the rest in the output of bituminous coal mines, showing that fully seven eighths of the excess production of coal was demanded by busier factories and other industrial plants.
There were a few labor disturbances affecting the coal mines in 1913, but they were local in extent and effect. Colorado's output during the last quarter of the year was reduced one half by labor disaffection, and in Ohio valley states mining was seriously interfered with by floods, reducing the output of that section 5,000,000 to 10,000,000 tons.
The geological survey says the total output was further limited by a shortage of labor in the eastern states. The operators were unable to keep their mines working at full capacity, and the statement is made that except for a shortage of labor in the large coal producing states the total output would have been materially increased.
Figures showing coal production furnish reliable data as to industrial conditions throughout the country. For that reason the 1913 record is illuminating. In spite of lack of labor, notwithstanding the increased use of water power by American industries, coal production established a new record. The total coal production in 1900 was 269,684,000 tons, less than one half what it was in 1913.

LETTERS FROM THE PEOPLE

(Communications sent to The Journal for publication in this department should be written in only one form, and should not exceed 300 words in length and must be accompanied by the name and address of the sender. If the writer and addressee do not have the same name published, he should so state.)
"Discussion is the greatest of all reforms. It rationalizes everything it touches. It rids the mind of its prejudices. It frees the soul from its fetters. It is the only way to liberate the human mind from its self-imposed shackles. It is the only way to bring the human race to a higher level of civilization." -Woodrow Wilson

WOMAN'S FASHIONS

IN A recent decision, an eastern judge declared that there is nothing immoral in the silk skirt. He also said that the women of today have only one idea in view—dressing in a manner that appeals to men.
This judge may be learned in the law. He may be profound in his knowledge of statutes, maxims and constitutional provisions. But he is an unskilled person in feminine psychology. Woman's least consideration about her clothes is the effect they may have upon a mere man. No figure of a person in bifurcated attire is on her vision when she is planning a new gown.
If it were the uncouth eyes of men only to be pleased there would be no sky pieces of several decks with flower garden and poultry yard adornments. If for men only, woman's dress wouldn't be a wilderness of furbeles and flummery today and a scarcity of material tomorrow, but a simple suit of appropriate color and modest pretensions.
The chief end of woman's dress is for its effect upon woman's own sex. On no other basis would all women bow to the tyranny of fashion. For no other reason would they make themselves ridiculous by chasing the absurd and often ludicrous exactions of a few Paris or New York modistes.
The direct purpose, the all-compelling animus of woman's clothes is to excite the admiration or the envy of other women. In his crass ignorance of the dressmaker's art, it is not necessary to spend a small fortune on a gown to impress the average man. In his ignorance, he is liable to think woman dressed at her best when she has on only a shirt waist and a duck skirt.
Of course, there are exceptions to all rules, and there are a few women who dress for husbandly approval—an approval however, rarely bought at the price of doing violence to the canons of a tyrannous and fantastic fashion.

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