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EDITORIAL

CONGRESSIONAL GLEANINGS— STATE RIGHTS.

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HOWEVER mysteriously complicated railroad financing may be, as dramatically exposed in the Insurgent Senator Dolliver's May 27 speech in the Senate, when he endeavored to amend the Court of Commerce bill—one thing, evidently not considered by himself, leaped forth clear as a pike, challenging attention; however seductive the allurements to follow the Senator through his startling presentation of the deep-dyed chicanery of our Railroad Robber Barons—even that truly fascinating subject is readily left aside by the attentive reader of that great speech, and a wholly different subject, unintentionally suggested by the speech, fetters his attention. It is the subject of State Rights.

It is impossible—whether following the Senator through the labyrinth of railroad “traffic agreements,” or “consolidation,” or fraudulent bond and stock issues—to free the mind's eye from the impression that the Senator was like a man walking and peeping about under the legs of a Colossus—of a Colossus, however, the safety of which depends, to a great extent, upon the shelter behind which it skulks. The Colossus is the Trust, the Railroad Trust in this instance; the shelter behind which it finds protection is State Rights.

At every turn of the Senator's speech it was noticeable that the State's Rights to legislate either parried some existing, or fortified the railroads against some apprehended Federal move. It was at every turn of the speech noticeable that, but for the State lines and the legislative rights within those lines, the railroads would be as exposed its an army on a plain, with no natural, and no opportunity for setting up artificial defences. Noticeable, moreover, at every turn of that powerful speech, was the experience that the circumstance of the State's Rights not being exercised uniformly was a source of added safety for the snake-like convolutions of the Trust

to defy, or elude pursuit. The picture was completed by the “providential” accident of the first one to answer Senator Dolliver being Senator Elkins, and of the first sentence in the Stalwart’s answer being to the effect that, much as he agreed with the speech of the Senator from Iowa, he disagreed with the proposed amendment—“the States can do most towards this end.”

Startling, instructive withal is the completeness of the transformation that has come over the institution of States Rights. Originally a source of anarchic democracy, against which Washington in his farewell address let fly many an arrow, States Rights now are put to the use of entrenchments for the autocracy of the Trust, or Top-Capital, that is, Centralized Capital.

Nor is the situation without its irony for Insurgentism, whose spokesman Senator Dolliver was on the occasion. Insurgentism, which hearkens back to the past so notably as to have justified the Democrats in Congress to invite the Insurgents to “come wholly over to Jefferson,”—Insurgentism is acquiring a deep fund of hatred for the State’s Rights, so deep as to be generally in favor of the “direct election of Senators,” a round about way by which the hope is entertained of undermining the practical workings of States Rights.

On the map it is traced—Insurgentism is playing a losing game. Whatever temporary successes Insurgentism may score, it is a force subservient to the force of Stalwartism. In the friction between the two, States Rights will go, but not before the mission of Stalwartism is accomplished—the unification of the productive powers of the land, ripe for the Industrial, or Socialist Republic to take over, and hold.

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