

THE COAL BARONS' STEALINGS.

This cold snap is a good time for consumers, who in Kansas City will only patronize the would be newspaper monopolists, to reflect on one of the meanest monopolies in existence—the anthracite coal monopoly. Anthracite coal is selling in Kansas City at \$10.25 and coke at \$7. This is in ton order. If a person was fortunate enough to own a hard coal stove when times were good, which he must feel now, he has to buy in smaller quantities and pay a higher price.

These are all extortionate prices. The legitimate price of coal, under anything like natural conditions, should not be more than \$6 or \$6.25 per ton. All above that is sheer robbery and it is practiced solely by virtue of the monopoly held by the Reading conspirators.

The story of that monopoly is the story of a great crime accomplished by means of a multitude of smaller crimes.

The men who have made the monopoly have in the first place ruined the fine property of the Reading company, burdening it with hundreds of millions of debt and, in effect, robbing the stock holders of their possessions. The manipulators of the conspiracy have got rich in the process.

Again they have accomplished their purpose by shameless bribery and corruption. They have repeatedly bought legislators like sheep.

Their conspiracy has been a double one. It has organized extortion from the coal consumers upon an enormous scale and it has oppressed a vast laboring population to a degree unmatched in the history of capital's dealings with labor. While it has been making the consumer pay extortionate prices for coal, it has reduced the miners in its employ from a thrifty, prosperous body of industrious men to poverty-stricken wretches whose condition is very much worse than that of bond slaves anywhere and whose liberty is less. Those men have practically but one employer, and that employer gives them work for less than half the days in the year at the lowest wages that starved immigrants from the most oppressed parts of Europe can be forced to accept in lieu of absolute starvation.

The whole story is one of organized crime by a gang of highly "respectable" rich men. And the worst feature of it is the persistent neglect and refusal of the law officers of the government to break up the gang by enforcing the anti-trust law against it. Under the law, according to no less authority than Judge Edmunds, the attorney general can and should seize and confiscate every ton of coal the conspirators carry out of Pennsylvania and send every one of the conspirators to jail.

It is because of the attorney general's neglect to do this that the robbery of

make his pretty cousin queen of the feast.

Then the mother gave way, and the pretty cousin became not only queen of the feast, but queen of Francis Joseph's heart and empress of Austria. He danced exclusively with her all the evening, which naturally aroused a good deal of attention. During the evening he took her to a table, on which lay a huge album containing pictures of the various national costumes of the eighteen states of Austria. The emperor turned over the pages, and then said gently: "They are my subjects; say one word and you shall reign over them." The princess, who had already known the emperor from childhood, instead of making an answer, simply placed her hand in his. Next day the whole imperial family assembled in the little parish church of Ischl, and the betrothal of the emperor of Austria with the Princess Elizabeth of Bavaria was celebrated with all due solemnity.

THE LITTLE STEAMBOAT.

Lincoln's Neat Method of Crushing the Opposing Counsel.

Once during the argument in a lawsuit, in which Lincoln represented one party, the lawyer on the other side was a good deal of a glib talker, but not reckoned as deeply profound or much of a thinker. He would say anything to a jury that happened to enter his head. Lincoln, in his address to the jury, referring to this, said: "My friend on the other side is all right, or would be all right, were it not for the peculiarity I am about to chronicle. His habit—of which you have witnessed a very painful specimen in his argument to you in this case—of reckless assertion and statements without grounds, need not be imputed to him as a moral fault or as telling of a moral blemish. He can't help it. For reasons which, gentlemen of the jury, you and I have not time to study here, as deplorable as they are surprising, the oratory of the gentleman completely suspends all action of his mind. The moment he begins to talk, his mental operations cease. I never knew but one thing which compared with my friend in this particular. That was a small steamboat. Back in the days when I performed my part as a keel boatman, I made the acquaintance of a trifling little steamboat which used to bustle and puff and wheeze about in the Sangamon river. It had a five-foot boiler and a seven-foot whistle, and every time it whistled it stopped."

A SERIOUS FALL.

But He Was Warned Not to Take a Tumble Again.

