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QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

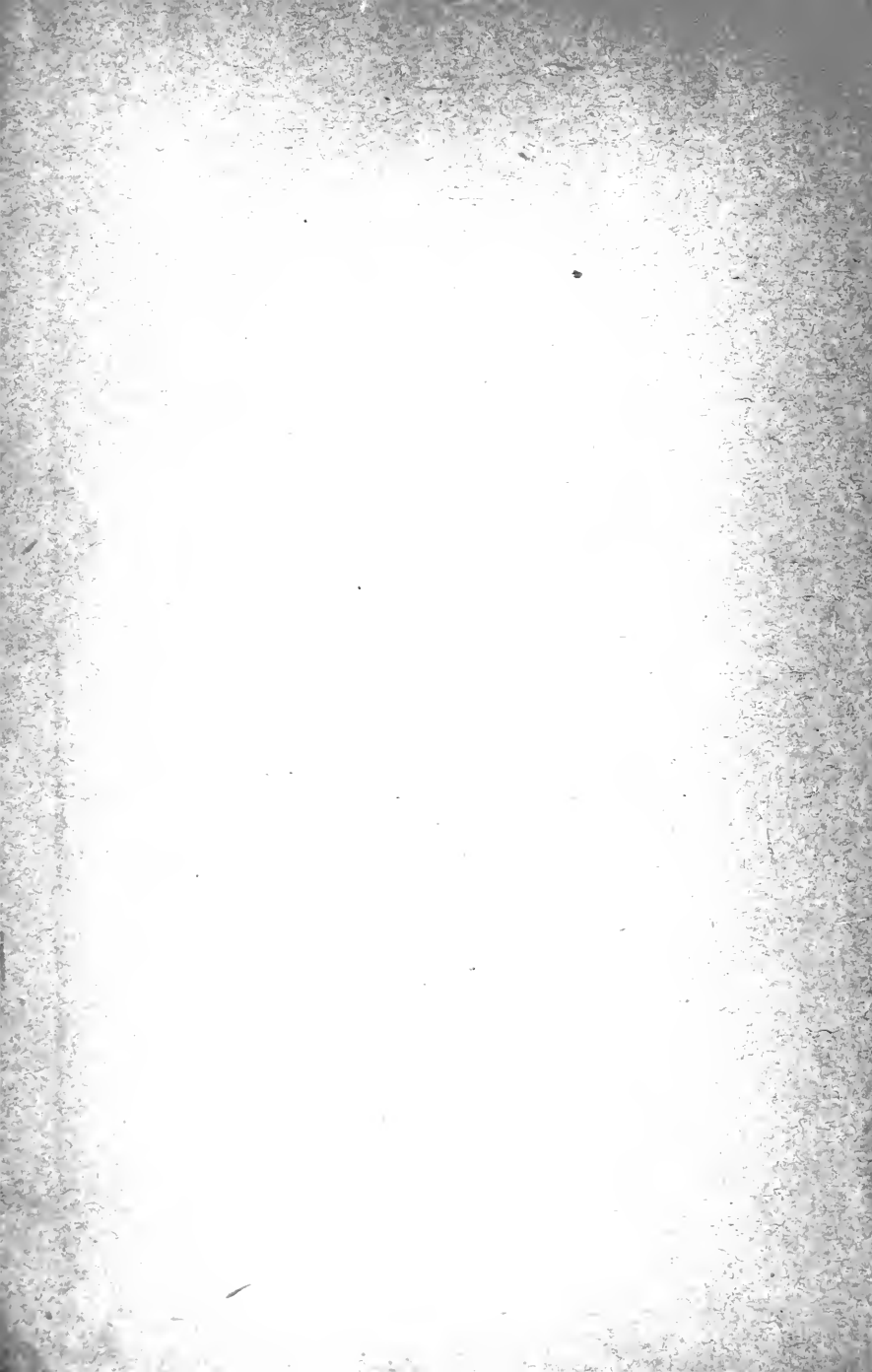
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QUESTIONS OF THE DAY SERIES.—No. LXII.

AMERICAN FARMS

THEIR CONDITION AND FUTURE

BY

J. R. ELLIOTT

“ Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay ;
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;
A breath can make them, as a breath hath made ;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.”

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

NEW YORK & LONDON
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
The Knickerbocker Press

1890

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THE AUTHOR
GRATEFULLY DEDICATES THIS
VOLUME TO

HIS WIFE

WHOSE SYMPATHIES, SENTIMENTS, AND COUNSELS HAVE BEEN
AN INVALUABLE AID AND INCENTIVE IN THE
WORK OF ITS PREPARATION

422007



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“ Feel for the wrongs to universal ken
Daily exposed, woe that unshrouded lies ;
And seek the sufferer in his darkest den,
Whether conducted to the spot by sighs
And moanings, or he dwells (as if the wren
Taught him concealment) hidden from all eyes
In silence and in the awful modesties
Of sorrow ;—feel for all, as, brother Men ;
Rest not in hope want’s icy chain to thaw
By casual boons and formal charities ;
Learn to be just, just through impartial law ;
Far as ye may, erect and equalize ;
And, what ye cannot reach by statute, draw
Each from his fountain of self-sacrifice ! ”

—WORDSWORTH.

ERRATUM.

Read 50 per cent. instead of 100 per cent. on page 95,
line 25, and page 96, line 2.



AMERICAN FARMS.

INTRODUCTORY.

It is not necessary to recount the many experiences, the various mental evolutions, which have carried me on to a resistless desire to solve one of the most, if not the most important problem of the day—to wit: “What is the trouble on the old farms? Why is a disease taking hold of agriculture in America?”

I do not here allude to any technical question of agriculture, but to a burning economic and social difficulty which, it would appear, has been gradually creeping upon this new world for many years.

As I attempt to note my thoughts on this matter, I find myself among the best of farms, in ———. I have been familiar with their history for many years. Their changes, on the one hand, and their lack of changes, on the other, have impressed me most seriously.

The grandsires of the present occupiers were the real pioneers in the settlement of this district. They prospered; settled their sons round them in comfortable homes. The fathers of the present generation also prospered in a high degree; though from this point

of observation, it can be plainly seen that a change had set in. The building of highways among their lands had ceased, the farms had not been subdivided for the purpose of increasing their number, though the majority of these lands are forest, or but half cultivated.

The majority of the sons—brothers to the present occupiers—have drifted away into other occupations; many, it is true, to make complete failures in the race for wealth; while others have gained high positions in the professions, or have become rich and influential.

On this strip of fine agricultural land, the farm population has actually decreased in the last forty years.¹ During the twenty years, 1849-69, the number of new dwellings erected was greater by 40 per cent. than during the twenty years which followed. Moreover, much finer buildings were erected during the first-named period than in the latter, while they were paid for quite as fully.

Recently (June, 1889), I had occasion to travel by highway through some sixty miles of the best agricultural districts of this fine country. In this journey I passed not less than six hundred farms, and throughout the whole of it I observed not a single farm-house in course of construction. But I did notice on the route one very fine new residence being finished for the occupancy of a government official, and another under extensive repairs for the purpose of lodging summer boarders from the cities, and also the foundation being laid for a custom-house, the cost of which is to be six times the requirements of the port in which it is to be located.

¹ In this comparison are included young men and young women furthering the interests of agriculture, and farm laborers.

A large number of abandoned houses, however, were observed ; the farms connected being, probably, in some way passed over to the care of a neighboring husbandman.

With the assistance of a gentleman well informed as to the financial standing of the farmers of this section of the county, we gather data ; and arrive at the conclusion that not less than 25 per cent. of the farms are in the grip of the usurer. This, it would seem, is a growing evil. During the twelve months, ending 31st July, 1889, there were 30 per cent. more mortgages given, in this county, than releases granted. At this rate of increase, in less than fifteen years, 50 per cent. of the farms will be under mortgage.

Dairying, once a leading industry, has decreased fully 50 per cent. in the last score of years. And it would require an outlay of large proportions to dot these old hill-side pastures over again with the milk herds of twenty-five years ago.

The value of farm lands has seldom been lower during the last thirty years than now ; notwithstanding the fact that this is an important part of the much-famed apple region of ———, which has lately come into prominence.

The average \$5,000 invested in farming (not including the dwellings), at the present estimated value of farms, will give to the farm proprietor about \$750 per year gross income, including value of amount consumed by his family. Out of this, at least \$250 must be paid by the average farmer for labor (including board), and at least another \$150 for direct taxes, insurance, fertilizers, and renewal of machinery, wagons, and harness, etc. : leaving \$350 for the farmer. A good farm laborer will

get for the year about \$250, including board at 20 cents per day. This estimate would throw the farmer \$200 behind the laborer in the way of income ; if he charges his business with the \$300 interest, which his capital is entitled to. If he charges his time and that of his family at the rate received by the laborer ; he will have nothing for his capital. In any case, the laborer, without a cent invested in the business, will be able to save as much, perhaps more, at the end of each year, than the farmer, with all his capital. What is the matter ? Is the laborer getting too much ? Perhaps not ; not in proportion to the share of the national income received by many others about him. But why this anomalous condition in reference to agriculture ?

The average farm proprietor of this community is as fine a type of man as the average in any city or country in North America,—frugal, industrious, intelligent, quick of wit, and ambitious beyond the average man.

The conclusion from a large number of schedules of farmers' incomes, furnished by farmers themselves, strengthens our suspicion that something is wrong ; that in this community of fine farms, and intelligent farmers, the majority of them are supporting families, paying taxes, and forming the fund for the rainy day, out of an average annual income of less than \$350. We have for some time entertained the opinion that thousands of our land proprietors, on less fruitful lands, are, in this fair country, forced to meet the necessities of life for their families, and pay the demands made upon them by society, out of less than \$250 per year. We wonder if to such it is not necessary that Providence deal kindly ; that illness be infrequent, and of short duration ; and that frugality of the strictest character, be practised !

But on extending the scope of our inquiries, we find this is a matter for serious consideration ; not only for this district, but for others, and for other parts of America. We want to know if it is world-wide in its character ; if it is an old problem, with a new face ; if it is a normal condition ; if agriculture is not first in importance to national welfare ; if it should not in this era of extended division of labor give to its votaries the maximum of wealth and comforts in return for faithful toil : for when was there a period in which the productive forces were doing more toward increasing national wealth ? When was there a time of greater boasting of material progress, and its attendant results in the grandeur of civilization ?

If the condition is abnormal, where is the remedy ?
If there is no remedy, what of the future ?

To this end I humbly contribute the result of energies of pen and brain, of head and heart, discarding all party feeling, selfish prejudice, or unworthy motives.

One of America's gifted sons asks :

“ For what avail the plough or sail,
Or land or life, if freedom fail ? ”

We ask : What avail to bridge our oceans with floating palaces, to span our continents with the most magnificent rail trains, to stud our land with smoking chimneys—the product of the industries they represent reaching the grandest proportions,—to pile up national wealth away beyond all precedent, if for all this, or with all this, the sons of the pioneers who hewed down the primeval forests, and brought the lands under subjection to the influence and service of civilization, are to be-

come paupers in the midst of an abundance, or to see their lands pass over to the control of avaricious capital? No! we feel impelled to search out the dangers and the causes, and, if possible, to do something to arrest them.

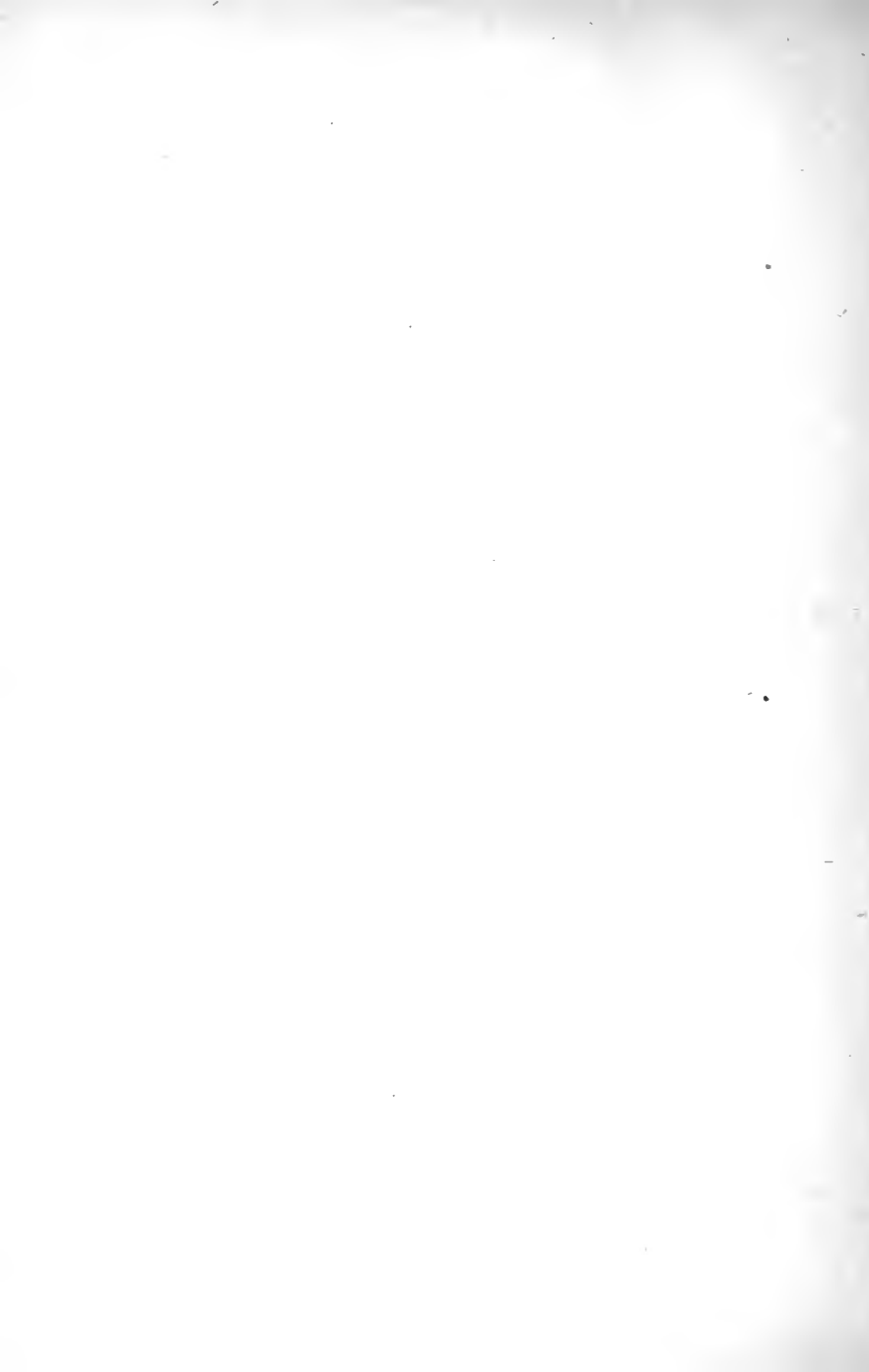
BOOK I.

IMPORTANCE AND POSSIBILITIES OF AGRICULTURE.

“ Give fools their gold, and knaves their power,
Let fortune's bubbles rise or fall,
Who sows a field, or trains a flower,
Or plants a tree, is more than all.

“ For he who blesses most is blest,
And God and man shall own his worth,
Who toils to leave, as his bequest,
An added beauty to the earth.”

—WHITTIER.



CHAPTER I.

WHAT IS THE REAL IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE?

THAT the progress of America during the century which now draws to a close has been of unprecedented greatness, as compared with the past or present progress of the other nations of the world, is a generally accepted belief. The idea prevails that America is "built up." This feeling finds expression every day in the utterances of its people, and in most quarters.

That this development on our continent has been marvellous, is not to be questioned. However, to approximate a correct estimate of the real worth of this expansion and greatness, and of the principal factors in its accomplishment, various considerations are involved. Account has to be made, not only of its political standing among the nations, but of the power and vigor of its institutions, and its conditions for the existence and promotion of peace, contentment, morality, and stability among its people. A country's "strength is in its men, and in their unity and virtue."¹ In these are the essentials of a development which may be true and enduring, a progress which may be verifiable.

To the question, to what great industry are we most indebted for what may be true and abiding for good in our development? I have no hesitancy in answering:

¹ John Ruskin

it is husbandry. If this be correct, this country cannot afford to estimate agriculture at a low value.

And now, as men's minds are turned to a greater consideration of the position of the rural classes than at any former period in the history of America, the questions arise: has Ceres lost her power? does nature decide that agriculture shall not be the first of industries? Not by any means.

The real importance of agriculture in framing the groundwork of a true national prosperity is very great; and should not be undervalued, especially by farmers themselves. Such undervaluation on the part of those immediately interested has worked mischief, and must continue to do so.

A review of history will remind the peruser of the fact that, with the nations of antiquity, and even until a very recent period, agriculture was generally considered first as a medium in the creation of wealth, first in respectability, and first in securing peace and happiness to society.

Though the literature of Greece gave too little space to the praise of this most worthy occupation, the glimpse that may be had of the position of these matters among the Grecians of the Heroic Age, tends to the conclusion, that agriculture, with them, occupied a prominent place in their attention and estimation. It points to the probability that the tiller of the soil was, in political affairs of the time, inferior to none. However little there may be on which to base an absolute decision as regards this, the occupation was evidently highly respected and esteemed by those who have borne to us the little knowledge to be had of the sentiments and conditions of the time.

When Homer draws his picture on the shield which he causes Vulcan to forge for Achilles, he mingles feasts, dancing, and luxury, with contentions and bloodshed in his city scenes ; while rural life is represented by "soft fallowfields, rich glebes," "industrious ploughmen," "fields of deep corn," "diligent reapers and delighted masters," banquets in preparation for the toilers, observances of religious rites, scenes representing the union of industry, comfort, sanctity, peace, and pleasure ; a mingling of what is truest in nature and in life ; rites portraying a confiding faith in Nature's God, the All Father.

That great man, Aristotle, the economist as well as philosopher and logician, reckoned agriculture as the chief source of national wealth. Modern political economy, as taught by the best writers, more correctly gives to all industries a value in proportion to the utility of the articles they produce ; but the prevailing thought and custom of the day goes farther than this, and finds its exercise in practically belittling agriculture.

The ancient Romans, as all are aware, looked upon this favorite occupation with a sort of "devotional respect." Reproducing from Von Schlegel's "Philosophy of History," we have the following passage, comprehensive and frequently quoted : "They (the Romans) were exceedingly covetous of gain, or rather of land, for it was from land, and in the production of the soil, that their principal and almost only wealth consisted. They were a thoroughly agricultural people, and it was only at a late period that commerce, trades, and arts were introduced among them, and even then, they occupied but a subordinate place." When at length the majority of the Roman people lost their hold upon the best of occupa-

tions, there still remained a goodly number of the noblest and truest citizens who continued to hold to the once universal custom—attachment to the cultivation of the soil. Many it seems shared the sentiments of Cato—“a pursuit in which a wise man’s life should be spent.”

The ancient Egyptians also gave the greatest attention to agriculture, and carried it up to a high state of perfection. Writers claim that their paintings and inscriptions lead to the conclusion that an advanced stage of civilization also accompanied this love of and pride in this choicest of occupations.

With the other nations of antiquity, the Israelites were also remarkable for the high proficiency to which they carried agricultural pursuits. In the “*Encyclopædia Britannica*” will be found the following concise passage, relative to the importance of agriculture with the early Israelites: “The sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt trained them for the more purely agricultural life that awaited them on their return to take possession of Canaan. Nearly the whole population were virtually husbandmen. Upon their entrance into Canaan, they found the country occupied by a dense population possessed of walled cities and innumerable villages, masters of great accumulated wealth, and subsisting on the produce of their highly cultivated soil, which abounded with vineyards and olive-yards. It was so rich in grain that the invading army, numbering 601,730 able-bodied men, with their wives and children, and a mixed multitude of camp followers, found ‘old corn’ in the land sufficient to maintain them from the day that they passed the Jordan.”

Sully’s saying, “tillage and pasture are the two breasts of the state,” is just as true to-day as when the expression was first used; and the ancient belief, that

“no other labor is at once so good for mind and body, and so worthy of freemen, as agriculture,” was one that might well be revived at the present day.

It is something more than mere poetic fancy which designates “the golden age” the days when kings, and priests, and philosophers were husbandmen. The days when love for the occupation, and veneration for sacred customs pertaining thereto, combined in producing a happy people, in making “the soil perpetual,” in causing the land to “flow with milk and honey.” They were the days of national longevity, for agricultural nations were the longest lived, and became the most eminently accomplished, and the most wealthy in the truest sense.

Whatever may be the political economy of the statesmen of modern times, the most eminent teachers of this science have continued to uphold the wisdom of the ancients in their ascribing to agriculture supremacy among national industries.

Quesney, the French political economist of the eighteenth century, urged that “the sovereign and the nation should never lose sight of the fact that the earth is the unique source of riches, and that it is agriculture which multiplies them.” J. B. Say, another French economist of a later time, taught that “it is the acme of skill to turn the powers of nature to best account, and the height of madness to contend against them, which is, in fact, wasting part of our strength in destroying those powers she designed for our use.”

Professor De Laveleye, in his “Elements of Political Economy,” a work recently published, earnestly maintains the sovereign worth of agriculture. “At the present time,” says he, “attention and encouragement are exclusively given to manufacturing. If it be more im-

portant to make men healthy and happy than to incessantly increase production, it is agriculture that deserves every advantage. Other industries are productive, since they increase the utility of things by rendering them fit for our use, but the farmer sets at work not only physical and chemical, but also vital forces, and thus multiplies commodities. He sows one grain of corn and reaps twenty; this year he has a couple of sheep, in a few years he will have a flock. Agriculture is the first of industries, because it is the foundation of all others. These can only increase the number of persons they employ if the farms supply them with more food."

It would be unwise to ignore the counsel of this distinguished authority of our own time, having the interests of no party or class to serve, and pursuing his investigations in the centre of the great manufacturing enterprises of Europe.

Three years ago, in one of our journals, the author published his views on this point in the following words: "If we desire our people to avoid sameness or singleness of occupation, and corresponding degradation of faculties, surely we should not change farm for factory life. If it be for the possession of a great variety of comforts and pleasures for our use as consumers, undoubtedly that occupation which we are best prepared to develop, that is indigenous to the country, that will yield the largest quantity of that measure which has in its power the command of all wealth; while no occupation offers a greater multiplicity of interesting subjects for study and experiment than agriculture."

Deeper and more extended study has not changed our opinion of this view of the merits of the occupation of husbandry, but it has impressed us even more with its importance.

What opportunities it should offer for the practical application of a broad education, useful and entertaining to the intelligent being ; an education embracing the physical sciences, geology, chemistry, botany, and vegetable physiology, as well as the historical and classical branches ; the cultivation of a refinement which finds expression in taste, order, and beauty, in the arrangement of trees for fruit, protection, or ornament, as well as of the field and garden plots ; an intellectual culture which has quite as much a place in the bringing into being of the crop of corn, potatoes, or grains, as an elaborate education for the clergyman or the lawyer ; a culture which should lead the possessor, above all others, to most profitable admiration of the wondrous works of the Great Creator !

Turning our attention to the rural economy of the British Isles, we find its history bearing most conclusive testimony to the transcendent importance given in the past by Britons to agriculture, in its economic, its social, and its national bearings. Since the days of the Great Charter love for rural life has been a national characteristic with the English people, while a large proportion of English statesmen have had their chief care in legislating for the interests of the country. Even to-day, 31 per cent. of the Parliament of Great Britain is, in some way, connected with the landed interests. We may well claim that with few other nations has the seat of economic, social, and political power been longer retained in the country ; notwithstanding the vexed problems which have, for centuries, surrounded her land-holding system.

England's sovereigns, with few exceptions, have also shared with the people this attachment for country, taking the greatest interest in rural pursuits, while the nobility—the temporal lords—have always prided them-

selves on being a rural aristocracy. Moreover, English literature, in a marked degree, displays this peculiar national trait, England's poets—Milton, Cowper, Spenser, Gray, Shakespeare, Thomson, and Wordsworth—have lauded in song the delights of rural life.

In the early years of the American Republic, the advancement of agriculture was the first care of most American statesmen, and many of them, such as Webster, Clay, and Adams, found the peaceful pursuits of the farm a wholesome change from the abstracting cares of statesmanship. Thomas Jefferson invented the hill-side plow. The first President Harrison and Abraham Lincoln were familiar with log-cabin life in their early days.

Washington, however, who was inaugurated first President of the United States just one hundred years ago this year (April 20, 1889), was, far above his compeers, the great friend of American agriculture. This great man, who led the armies of the Revolution, who was twice President, who "was by general consent the father of his country," was more a farmer than soldier or politician. In fact, husbandry was to him an occupation of the highest order, and it seems to have been only the imperative demands of his country which drew him away from his rural pursuits to the military or political arena.

Immediately after the war of the Revolution, Washington retired to his estates in Virginia. About this time, in a letter to Lafayette, he remarks: "I am become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac, and under the shadow of my own vine and fig-tree, free from the bustle of camp, and the busy scenes of public life. I am solacing myself with these tranquil enjoyments, of which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame; the states-

man, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe were insufficient for us all; and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince, in hopes of catching a gracious smile, can have little conception. I have not only retired from all public enjoyments, but I am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life with a heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers."

During the eight years of which Washington held the office of President, he took every means to impress upon the minds of his government and his people, the importance of fostering agriculture by public patronage. To Sir John Sinclair, an English gentleman, he writes, under date July 20, 1794: "I know of no pursuit in which more real and important service can be rendered to any country than by improving its agriculture." In his last message to Congress he refers to agriculture and its importance to civilization in the following terms: "It will not be doubted that with reference either to individual or national welfare, agriculture is of primary importance. In proportion as nations advance in population and other circumstances of maturity, this truth becomes more apparent, and renders the cultivation of the soil more and more an object of public patronage." With Washington, successful agriculture meant national life, virility, and power.

Beyond all this, agriculture as a promoter of peace is of vast importance to the human family. For while the

strife, both of an international character and between classes and communities, has, as a rule, been most intense for the lion's share in production and through exchange, the farmer—naturally supplying his own wants in a large degree, or in the centre of an industrial system of self-contained independence—desires the privileges of peace. Agriculturists, the world over, have a common cause in securing the inestimable benefits of industrial, commercial, and international peace. Then De Laveleye is not far wrong in claiming that "real civilization dates from the time when man first entrusted a grain of corn to the soil."

With the agriculturist, too, we may look for social security; for who can be more desirous of preserving the institutions of the country from revolutionary shocks, than those who have property in land with all its valued associations?

In a word, the agriculturists should be valued as the temperate, the physical, the mental, the religious, the moral, the social, as well as the best economic support to our civilization. See Book VII.

If we study the statistics of the United States we find that they furnish most conclusive evidence of the vast importance of the farm industries of America. Diminished as they may seem to be in relative importance, the capital invested in agriculture exceeds the capital employed in any other line of production. Agriculture builds the railways of America, or they are built in anticipation of the farmers paying for them; it supports directly the largest industrial class; it settles the principal part of the foreign account for two hundred and thirty millions of crude articles of manufacture purchased in other countries—to say nothing of the manufactured.

The same may be said of the nation's annual debt of nearly a million of dollars to foreign ships for carrying her imports and exports to and from the country ; also of the million dollars yearly accruing to foreign capital invested in the country.

In Canada, as in the United States, the farmers are really at the back of the railways ; they give the largest part of the employment received by her small shipping ; send to foreign customers over fifty per cent. of her total exports, without which it would be difficult for the interest on the public debt to be paid, and the profits on foreign capital invested in the country to be settled.¹

The importance of agriculture, as viewed by the early writers of sacred history, is of too much moment to be left unnoticed. They claim that it was in the garden of Eden that man commenced his labors. "Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every thing that is pleasant to the sight and good for food," and also "in the midst of the garden" was the "tree of life," and the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." Man in the image of God, perfect in all essentials, was put "into the

¹ That the "Trade and Navigation Returns" do not show a very large *balance of trade* against Canada is owing to the fact that she borrows from abroad much faster than the interest on her foreign debt is paid. For, eventually, all borrowed capital must come into the country in the shape of material. Consequently, it may be very far from the fact to state that the production of any articles "would sweep away the balance of trade against her." That the change has not already taken place in a marked degree is because she is still running in debt. The farms must pay these debts, or the interest on these debts, through exports. The policy of the country has stopped the export of manufactured goods. In 1878 she exported manufactured goods to the value of \$4,715,776. In 1886, only \$3,306,587. (This latter amount was increased slightly in 1888.)

garden of Eden, to dress it and keep it." The first trust, then, given to man, was as an agriculturist, yet, in the very presence of the knowledge with which gods are endowed.

After the Fall, and when the injunction went forth to all the human family, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," we have the first glimpse of a primitive political economy, in the division of labor between Cain, the agriculturist, and Abel, the cattle-farmer. Farther on, a greater division was made between the sons of Lamech,—Jabal, Jubal, and Tubal-Cain. In this division cattle-farming and agriculture stood first; the second was the harp and organ, which represents music, language, literature, and the fine arts, whose special offices are to cultivate and refine the higher faculties of man.

In political economy, agriculture should stand first, it being a prime necessity. "It sets at work the organic forces for the multiplication of both vegetable and animal life," without which man's existence would be impossible. To attain the high and noble destiny of man, the refining and humanizing influences of the immaterial, as represented by Jabal, are also necessary, as are the class represented by Tubal-Cain, or those who deal with the products of agriculture and the extracts from the earth, turning them into new forms of utility.

With our desire not to ignore the fact that evidences are presented on every hand to show that nature is requiring more and more aid to supply the increasing numbers of the human family with a subsistence, calling into play an ever-increasing variety of faculties for purposes of invention and fabrication, we see no reason why this cannot be realized and met by the agriculturist on his own ground, and, in a sense, independent of other

classes. New conditions should find the farmer expanding his higher faculties to meet them in the prosecution of his own labors; exercising not only acquisitions which a liberal education should give, but also of that valuable instruction preserved in tradition only—a science “transmitted in fragments from father to son,” from neighbor to neighbor, an evolution without record.

Taking societies in the aggregate, it is from the farmer's surplus that other occupations become possible. When they take more than this, they are trenching upon the farmer's capital and estates, and if continued it must be but a matter of time when a crisis of vast proportions must be the result. It is after the necessities of life are satisfied that opportunities arise for new forms of production and consumption.

The enjoyment of civilized life requires the full and uninterrupted development of all the great divisions of labor consistent with justice and safety; we cannot dispense with either. But it is in rural life, surrounded by nature, that the highest and grandest application of the results of all progress for the development of man is possible.

To sum it all up, we have science, our own observation, and the histories of civilizations which have come and gone, all loudly protesting against a decline of agriculture.

CHAPTER II.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF AGRICULTURE.

NOTWITHSTANDING the fact that the old farms of the world are in many instances showing signs of exhaustion, and that the doctrine of Malthus is still held by very many, we are of the belief that the possibilities of agriculture are immense. Under the ideal guidance that would seem possible, no branch of material development suggests to the mind greater chances for grand results.

Did the reader, who may happen to be a farmer, ever think of what a paradise could be made of the acres around his dwelling? What subjects for study and development of intellect could be the possession of his family and society! And did he ever undertake to make a calculation of what might be raised on his farm by the proper mixing of soils and the application of fertilizers, or how exceedingly few the acres which are yielding even a trifle of their possibilities?

Mr. Edward Atkinson, in his "Distribution of Products," states that the average crop of wheat in the United States and Canada would give one person in every twenty of the population of the globe a barrel of flour in each year, with enough to spare for seed. The land capable of producing wheat is not occupied to any thing like one twentieth of its extent. We can raise grain enough on a small part of the territory of the

United States to feed the world. United States Consul-General Way reports that "Russia, under favorable conditions, could supply the world with wheat." India could probably do the same, and the Argentine Republic would not fall far behind.

A single State, properly fertilized, is capable of bearing vegetables to feed the population of the whole Union. And there is enough fertilizer in Boston harbor to meet this requirement for very many years. There are States in the West equal to the task of supplying meat for the whole people of North America if the lands were properly treated. The little Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia has sufficient apple-orchard area, with trees in bearing and properly fertilized, to produce sufficient apples to glut the markets of Great Britain and New England. The fertilizer lies in the Annapolis basin. California could be made to supply this whole continent with most fruits.

There can be no exhaustion of the soil if properly treated. There can be no destruction of matter in the consumption of the products of the farm, but there may be displacement. By intelligent guidance their forces may be continually augmented for the increase of both animal and vegetable life. If the proper returns are made to the soil, the demands of man upon it can never exhaust it.

It is the order of nature that the surface of the globe be more and more adapted to the support of vegetable and animal life. The results of decomposition of rocks, and the breathing of gases from beneath the crust of the earth and from our broad oceans, are being taken up continually by plant life through its leaves and roots; to decay and become soil, or to go into animal matter; all

animal life to find its highest end in man ; and the consumption of man to return again to the soil. But a man, whose demand upon the soil once required an average of eight hundred acres to supply him with sufficient food, may now be better supplied with the products of a single acre. Through the intelligent guidance of man, what then may be the possibilities of the productive capacity of land ?

That man has abused all these favorable natural conditions is patent to those who study the subject. The abuse is proved in the success which has attended, in all cases, proper care to return to the land its due. We have now about one and one half billions of people sustained on the surface of the globe. What, in the correct evolution of the productive powers of the earth, is there to prevent its sustaining one hundred times as many ? With these numbers so many times increased, not a particle of matter would be destroyed any more than now.

As the question refers to America, deduction from scientific argument gives the following result : " In England the density of population is about 389 persons per square mile ; but England is in some measure the workshop of the world, and supports, by her foreign trade, a greater population than the soil can nourish. In France the density of population is about 177 ; in Germany it varies from 100 to 200. On these grounds we may assume that the number of persons which a square mile can properly sustain, without generating the pressure of a redundant population, is 150 at the latitude of 50,^o and 26 is the number which expresses the productiveness of this parallel. Then taking, for the sake of simplicity, 35 as the index of the productiveness of the useful soil be-

yond 30° in America, and 85 as that of the country within the parallel of 30° on each side of the equator, we have about 4,000,000 square miles, each capable of supporting 490 persons. It follows that, if the natural resources of America were fully developed, it would afford sustenance to 3,600,000,000 of inhabitants, a number nearly three times as great as the entire mass of human beings now existing upon the globe.”¹

But, after all, the theory of Malthus, that moral restraint must be exercised for the prevention of famines, only teaches that men must suffer when their supply of food does not increase with the increase of their number. The moral standard required is, moreover, movable, and it is quite as likely to become a social condition, under favorable circumstances of food supply, as when the supply is low. With a true progress man's desires take higher forms ; they seek expression in the exercise of his better faculties ; not as a beast, he must live ; his is an archetype of a grand and noble purpose. Where the national supply of food has dropped too low to give the people a comfortable subsistence, it has always resulted from a congested state, brought about through the sway of a false condition in social organizations. Society is convulsed because of some men's inability to gain the bread which their associates believe their requirements demand. These convulsions are becoming not far removed from civil war.

And : “ What is man, the animal who builds cities, and excavates docks, and lays wires under the ocean, and drives ships over it ? Is he not a land animal, whose very body is composed of land ? What are his productions but the bringing forth of land materials drawn from

¹ “ Encyclopædia Britannica,” vol. i., p. 717.

land, by moving, combining, separating them so as to satisfy his designs? Look in every direction; see land half used, or not used at all. Why should there be any scarcity of work? Why should men, willing to work, suffer and strain for the want of the things that work produces, while land, the natural source and means of all production, is so abundant? There is no reason in the nature of things."¹

We may well ask what are the possibilities of agriculture, or to what extent may the earth, when properly treated, be fruitful and multiply for the satisfaction of man, when the science which may be brought to her aid is studied, and its teachings followed? when mankind looks upon it as it should, as the greatest of all the sciences, or the science of which others are only a part?

To this end—namely, that lands “be fruitful,” and man prosper—it is necessary that every agricultural community be a centre of interest to society in general; that society seek the agriculturist, and not that the agriculturist seek society; that the city seek the country, not the country the city. If he (the agriculturist) prospers, they will come to him. Make drafts upon him of all sorts, to be consumed away from his land, and his products must go abroad in any case to satisfy this demand; he will have nothing to spend on society at home.

With a numerous and prosperous land-holding class, production will be large and competition natural, and monopoly in agriculture will not be thought of. Numerous country towns are far more desirable for the indirect benefit of agriculture than the growth of a few though wealthy cities. Between the former and the agriculturists, there is much more likely to be a real com-

¹ Henry George in the *North American Review*, October, 1889.

munity of interests than with the latter. That such towns may grow and prosper, it is required that the industry of agriculture be first prosperous, as a base of general industrial power. Agriculture must be treated as the leading industry—not of secondary importance.

It is not, then, a correct political economy which determines that manufacturing leads husbandry, as the protectionists would have it ; nor that trade should lead, as many free traders desire ; but that agriculture be the first, the only true condition.

Mr. Henry C. Carey was correct when he advocated the theory : “That man may cease to be enslaved, and that agriculture may become a science, it is indispensable that there be a division of employments ; that his faculties be stimulated to activity ; that the power of association arise ; that the market for his products be brought to the neighborhood of the land ; that the utility of all the things yielded by it, whether in the form of food or vegetable fibre, coal, ore, lime, or marl be thus increased ; that its owner be thereby freed from the enormous taxation to which he is subjected because of the extending necessity for effecting changes of place ; that he be freed, too, from the extraordinary waste of human power, physical and mental, that always attends the absence of diversity in the modes of employment ; and that the powers of the land be increased by means of the constant repayment to it of the manure yielded by the consumption of its products.”¹

¹Carey was, however, far from correct in his claim that even the extreme measures which he advocated could bring about the freedom and community of interests which he desired, the very opposite being the evident experience of America, as she has approached them.



BOOK II.

A FAR-REACHING DISORDER.

Rome, in the days of Servius, presented to view a numerous body of small proprietors, cultivating the land they owned. Later, we find palaces owned by Scipios and Pompeys—the land having become consolidated, and the free proprietors having disappeared. Fixed property declined in value, while slaves increased in number, and bankers in wealth and power.—HENRY C. CAREY.

CHAPTER I.

TROUBLES OF THE AGRICULTURISTS OF ANCIENT TIMES.

IN a former chapter we suggested a desire to make the inquiry as to whether we have set about a solution of an old difficulty. A careful survey of the histories of the nations of antiquity, such as that of Israel, Greece, and Rome, will convince the student that the agrarian question and trouble to land properties has been an extremely old subject of national, as well as individual, concern.

The husbandmen of Israel had their days of glory, when the whole land of Palestine, to use the description of one of England's great writers, was "a magnified copy of our finest ideal of landscape gardening," "laughingly beautiful," "sumptuously rich," "lavishly varied." But we find that, though with its mountain-clad vineyards, its olive groves, its palm plantations, its orchards of dates, its pomp of fruit, and with its boundless store to its votaries, yielding its "thirty to one hundred-fold," it finally failed to be the land of prosperous, happy homes for intelligent men.

The hills of Benjamin and Judah, with once a "teeming population" of husbandmen, are now the home of wild beasts; fertile Esdraelon and luxuriant Carmel are inhabited by a few unintelligent beings; and the highlands of Galilee, "with no appearance of life except the

occasional goatherd on the hill-side, or the gathering of the women at the wells."¹ The old farms of Palestine have been all abandoned, and the sons of the fathers and founders of so much that we prize wander about in the world, bereft of social or political influence anywhere.

As to the Grecian Republic, its history teems with accounts of vexatious changes and disturbances on account of land difficulties. Plutarch, in his "Lives," speaks frequently of the disorders of the state, which he attributes to agrarian troubles. Lycurgus, with a power that seems marvellous to us, upsets the whole of the land titles, in order to give back to thousands a share in the soil.

A few hundred years later and the country is plunged in civil war over these land troubles. Agis and Cleomenes meet death through an attempt to grapple with these difficulties :—landed property in the hands of "the few," "and the rest of the people poor and miserable." Poor and miserable was evidently the correct description of the peasantry of the Grecian Republic as it approached its many social and political crises.

A hint only seems necessary to remind the intelligent reader that most disastrous misfortunes overtook the rural citizens of the Roman Republic and Empire, before their overthrow. Roman gods and goddesses were unequal to the task of saving the small landed proprietors from destruction ; for it amounted to that.

The land-holders must have been very numerous at one time, especially at the period when seven acres constituted the limit of the extent of the individual estate. The vast majority of these, with their posterity, not only had their grievous difficulties to contend against, but were finally dispossessed of their properties. "Ex-

¹ Dr. Cunningham Geikie.

tensive parks," controlled by the favored few, took the place of the once very numerous peasantry. The free Roman citizen disappeared from the old farms, and the cultivation of the soil was given over to the "slave gangs." Tiberius Gracchus, who undertook to grapple with the trouble, said of his unfortunate fellow-citizens : "They are called 'masters of the world,' and have not a foot of ground in their possession ; without homes, without any fixed abode, they wander from place to place with their wives and children."

It is not required to pursue this farther, to show that we have not entered upon the solution of an altogether new problem, or a problem which has not a counterpart in some important particulars, at least, with the fallen civilizations.

CHAPTER II.

THE DIFFICULTY FAR-REACHING TO-DAY.

WHERE is the country at the present time which has not to face serious questions in relation to agriculture? Taking a hasty glance at the chief countries of Europe, such as Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, and Great Britain, we find not one of them whose thinking men do not see in this matter (as it concerns themselves) cause for reflection.

Rural Italy has of late years been experiencing a crisis in agriculture. The condition became so serious that a government commission was set at work about ten years ago to investigate the matter. Their labors covered a term of seven years, and the final report appeared in 1885. The substance of the report was to the effect that the peasantry of Italy are "poor and miserable, leading a life of wretched existence, to which emigration alone offers a recourse"; that "nearly 150,000 Italians quit the country every year"; that "half the children, die, under seven years, in the Marches"; that "families live together sometimes to the number of forty"; that "in the mountain districts the whole family live in one smoky room, with their pigs, their goats, and their chickens." This is certainly a gloomy picture of the condition of modern rural Italy, the garden of Europe.

Like Italy, France has made these matters a subject

of parliamentary inquiry, and it is found that the agricultural class are in a very unhappy condition. The Institute National of Paris reported some time ago, that in parts of France peasants are living like beasts. Of eight millions of land proprietors, three millions are now looked upon as subjects of charity.

As to Germany, one government commission after another has been issued to look into the state of agricultural troubles. They find that in many parts of the empire, farm mortgages are eating up the peasants' little properties, that the condition is any thing but satisfactory; and many schemes are proposed to alleviate their distresses.

These matters in Belgium have also become a subject of parliamentary notice. In every province in the land a government representative has been stationed to render the farmers assistance, but still the trouble goes on. In Russia, not only are the peasants' properties in very many cases loaded with debt, but the owners themselves actually mortgaged for many years in advance. As to Great Britain, her land troubles are a subject of every-day conversation. We all know that efforts toward their solution consume a very large portion of the time of the British statesman. This glance over Europe will suffice to remind us that we are dealing with a difficulty of large proportions.

CHAPTER III.

THE AMERICAN FARMER'S WANING ECONOMIC POWER.

Most students of social science will admit that in all stages in the growth of nations and of society, the individuals or the classes which have had the largest share in the general wealth have possessed immense advantages over those less abundantly supplied. Such possessions have truly given them the "power of position" to command men as well as things. The early farmers of America could well boast of being the wealth producers, as well as the wealth controllers of the Western world; a power of position which could reasonably defy oppression from the hands of others.

I am aware that the aggregate apparent wealth of the agricultural and pastoral classes has increased in the last fifty years, and that the average farmer may be in a sense better conditioned than he was half a century ago; but so is the ordinary citizen, in a sense, better off than the foremost citizen of primitive times. Even the average pauper of to-day is, in a sense, better circumstanced, than the most successful of the earliest pioneers in material progress. As much could be said, perhaps, for the slave of the Roman Empire in her palmy days, as compared with the free savage of an earlier period. At any stage of development, however, the successful ones, or

those who have made the greatest progress in gathering wealth, have secured the power of position over their contemporaries—the power to dictate terms. This has been a rule, with few if any exceptions, all the way up.

The typical American farmer once held such control of the national purse strings ; even in the year 1850, the farmers of the United States could boast of possessing 60 per cent. of the capital power of the Union. It is not easy to give a sufficiently high estimate to this relative power, secured and maintained as it was by individual effort. It undoubtedly secured for its possessors a commanding influence in political and social affairs, while fostering a most desirable spirit of independence.

This power, however, which was really on the wane in 1850, though 60 per cent. of the total, sank to 53 per cent. in 1860. This decline of relative wealth has continued until the present day. In 1880, it had gone down to 40 per cent. and it is probably not more than 35 per cent. to-day.

Further than this, I say, the farmer's power is declining, absolutely as well as relatively. In 1860 there were 2,044,077 farms in the United States ; in 1880, 4,008,907. In 1860 the total value of farm property was \$7,980,493,063, or an average of \$3,904 per farm ; in 1880 the value of the total value was \$12,104,001, or an average of \$3,019 per farm. Up to 1860 the farmers held their ground, or rather increased the value of their possessions, but from that date to 1880 the shrinkage has been equivalent to \$885 per farm, and we have every reason for supposing that this decline is still going on.

In 1870 the property of the farmers of the six New England States was valued at \$707,942,439 ; in 1880 it had fallen to \$671,846,058. Is this not a serious change

—a change that demands searching inquiry? Have we not in it a question quite equal to the vexed question between labor and capital, the unequal distribution of land? Or, are they not parts of one great question?

But, let us review the opinions held thirty years ago, as to the relative importance of agriculture in some of the New England States. Our eye rests upon a volume of the *New England Farmer* for the year 1854, and from an editorial we extract the following emphatic passage:

“In the year 1850, the improved land of the State (Massachusetts) amounted to 2,133,436 acres, and the cash value of the farms was \$109,076,347; the implements and machinery were worth \$3,209,584; the value of the live-stock was \$9,649,710; and the value of rye and Indian corn of that year was \$2,857,732; to say nothing of hay, fruit, root crops, which would be as much more. These sums find the farmer investing capital and producing crops in a single year to the amount of *one hundred and twenty-seven millions six hundred and fifty-one thousand one hundred and five dollars.*”

“The other principal industrial pursuits gave, for the same period, in the cotton and woollen manufacture, in pig-iron, castings, wrought-iron, malt and spirituous liquors, and tanneries, an aggregate of *eighty millions three hundred thousand nine hundred and fifty-four dollars*, leaving a balance of forty-seven millions three hundred and fifty-one dollars in favor of the industry of farming.”

In this State, the value of the productions of Indian corn, wheat, and rye has fallen from \$2,750,000 in 1854 to \$1,750,000 in 1887. The value of live-stock has risen from \$9,649,710 in 1850 to only \$12,957,004, or an average yearly increase of \$89,386: not quite one per cent. per year.

In 1865 the pounds of beef slaughtered were 70,000,000; in 1885, only 10,000,000. The potato crop in 1845 amounted to 4,767,000 bushels; in 1885 it was reduced to 3,584,000 bushels.

In 1845 the production of wool reached the fine figure of 1,015,000 pounds; in 1885 the insignificant amount of 255,000 pounds.

Most startling, however, is the fact that, while the total value of property rose from \$573,343,286 in 1850 to \$2,795,000,000 in 1880, the value of farm property only rose from \$121,935,641 in 1850 to \$164,288,956 in 1880. That is to say, while the valuation of the property of the people of the whole State increased by 171 per cent. in thirty years, the per capita valuation of the farmers' property increased by only 30 per cent.; the value of farm land declining \$5,929,142 in the ten years 1875-'85.

As in Massachusetts, the production of grain in New Hampshire has declined. In 1853 it amounted, in wheat, Indian corn, rye, buckwheat, and oats, to 2,988,982 bushels; but in 1880, to only 2,665,912 bushels.

In 1853 the production of potatoes was 4,304,916 bushels, in 1880, 3,358,828; of hay, 598,854 tons in 1853, in 1880, 583,665 tons; of cheese, 3,196,663 pounds in 1853, in 1880, 807,076 pounds.

The value of live-stock for this State was \$8,871,901 in 1853, and only \$9,812,064 in 1880—an increase of only a fraction over 10 per cent. in twenty-seven years. The production of fruit has no doubt much increased, but with this exception and the slight increase in live-stock and that of butter, the falling off has been alarmingly large in every line.

¹ This decline was from \$116,629,849 to \$110,700,707.

It is admitted now, on all sides, that farm industry is not progressing in New England; rather, fast losing ground. We have found, however, that not long since the foremost public men of New England thought otherwise. Not only were they satisfied with the progress of their time, but were sanguine believers in a prosperous future for the farmers of their several States.

The following, a portion of Governor Fairbanks' address to the General Assembly of Vermont, in session December, 1860, takes the same view :

“ From an abstract of the seventh United States census, it appears that in 1850 there were in this State 2,600,409 acres of improved land,—a quantity exceeding that of any other New England State; and that our agricultural products of that year exceeded in quantity those of any of the same States in the articles of live-stock, butter, cheese, wool, wheat, oats, potatoes, hay and a variety of other crops.

“ The value of live-stock, as shown by that census, was \$12,643,228, and the aggregate of farm productions for that year shows a valuation, including live-stock, of about \$25,000,000, being nearly equal to \$80 for each individual of our population.

“ The well-known industry of our citizens engaged in agricultural pursuits and the capabilities of our soil, have been made available for increasing the amount of these products under the stimulus of augmented prices consequent upon the opening of railway communication with the markets. It may therefore be assumed that this department of industry has not only maintained its relative importance, but that it has during the intervening years, since the above data, experienced a constant and healthful growth and increase. Still it is conceived

that it is capable of far greater development and a much more abundant increase.

“Vermont is essentially an agricultural state. The great body of its citizens are engaged in agricultural pursuits. The salubriousness of its soil and the variety of its physical structure adapt it to the cultivation of the most essential and profitable crops and to the successful prosecution of sheep and cattle husbandry. Other important interests exist, and are successfully prosecuted; but it is to this essentially that we are to look for the most marked and healthy growth of the state in wealth and prosperity.”

The following is an extract from the message of Governor Martin to the legislature of New Hampshire in 1853: “Agriculture is our leading interest, and, although our state is more mountainous than any of our neighboring states, yet we can justly boast of large quantities of luxuriant intervale; our uplands are productive, and afford a pasturage unrivalled in excellence. Nowhere can the necessaries, conveniences, and comforts of life be found combined in greater abundance. Our lands, improved and under tillage, number 2,251,448 acres; value of farms, \$55,245,997; farming implements and machinery, \$2,314,125; live-stock, \$8,871,901; orchard products, \$248,563; domestic manufactures, \$393,455. We raise an average crop of 185,658 bushels of wheat, 183,117 bushels of rye, 1,573,970 bushels of Indian corn, 973,381 bushels of oats, 70,856 bushels of buckwheat, 4,304,919 bushels of potatoes, and we produced 1,108,476 pounds of wool, 6,977 pounds of butter, 3,196,663 pounds of cheese, 1,294,863 pounds of maple sugar, 598,854 tons of hay. Let the young farmers of this state estimate the foregoing products of the farm and

dairy at fair average prices, and see what a fine aggregate of values they will have as the result, bearing in mind the while, that he who most increases the productiveness of the earth is the greatest benefactor of his race." He followed this by claiming that, although all classes in the State were thriving and prosperous, the remark was especially applicable to the department of agriculture.

It is important for us to note that agriculture had the lead in this portion of America at that time, and that the first government functionaries thought it destined to experience a still higher measure of success in the future. They saw nothing for the farmers to fear, but a great deal to give them courage.

The decadence of the agricultural interests of New Hampshire and Vermont is now the object of official investigation. Mr. B. Valentine, Commissioner of Agriculture for Vermont, finds that good areas of tillable land can be bought in his State at prices approximating those of Western lands. Two-hundred-acre farms, with "fair buildings," good orchards, and plenty of timber, are being sold for less than \$1,000. In some counties large tracts of land, of fair quality, can be bought for three or four dollars per acre. Town-Clerk Fuller, of Vershire, Vermont, says: "We have many abandoned farms in different parts of our towns, with good buildings on them, that could be bought for five dollars or less per acre. All this land was once occupied by thrifty and prosperous farmers."

In 45 agricultural towns in Connecticut the decrease of wealth in the eleven years 1865-76 amounted to \$1,893, 172; between 1876 and 1886 the decrease ran up to \$2,741,520. Out of 603 farmers interviewed, 378 show a yearly loss. As we travel away from New Eng-

land to more western lands, we meet the same cry—the decline of agriculture. The report on the financial affairs of the farmers of Nebraska (1887–88) shows that of 215 farmers, over 50 per cent. stated that they were losing money.

Under the head of “Mortgaged Farms” we will deal further with the relative condition of the Western farmer. But, while touching the subject, we may say that the relative capital power of the Western farmer is waning, as is that of the Eastern, though not so apparent in its rapidity.

From an article on “Commercial Union,” to be found in Mr. Goldwin Smith’s “Hand-Book of Reciprocity,” written by Mr. Thomas Shaw, Secretary of the Permanent Central Farmer’s Institute, Hamilton, Ontario, we extract the following: “In 1882 the farmers of Ontario were worth \$882,624,610, in 1886 they were worth \$989,497,911. The advance of these four years has been \$106,873,301, or an advance on the average capital invested for the four years, \$948,302,805, or .028 per cent. The manufacturers of the Dominion made an advance of 42 per cent., less the running expenses, exclusive of wages, in the years of 1880 and 1881.”

The Bulletin from the Bureau of Industries for Ontario published in August, 1889, reports the value of farm property to have increased during the past year from \$981,368,094 to \$982,210,664, an increase of about one tenth per cent.; probably not more than the increase in the amount of farm mortgages.

The Worthy Master of the Dominion Grange, in an address at Toronto, in the autumn of 1886, contended that the wealthy amongst the farmers were comparatively few, and that “as matters exist the farmer can never

cope with the overwhelming odds that are pitted against him."

Said the *St. John Sun* (Conservative) in its editorial of July 24, 1888: "In the Eastern Provinces of Canada the natural hay land holds its own in value; but arable land, except in particular localities, is not increasing in price; while in districts remote from railway connection there is an undoubted decline in values. In those parts of Ontario where the farmers have given their attention largely to raising grain for export, agricultural lands are said not to be increasing in price." This admission is important, as it comes from a source not likely to make it if there were not the best of grounds for such conclusions.

Thus we find in various ways the power of position is passing from the agriculturists of America.

CHAPTER IV.

FARM MORTGAGES.

PROBABLY no better proof of the loss of the farmer's relative capital power is required than in his growing dependence for his capital on the successful men of other occupations. And it certainly is an unquestionable indication of coming disaster, if this demand for aid by the farmer be growing faster than the increase in the value of his possessions. Fifty years ago farm mortgages were rare in America ; to-day they are the rule in many localities ; and everywhere they threaten to defy the farmer's efforts to contend with the load they create.

It is claimed of New England¹ that at least 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. of the farms are mortgaged to the capitalists. Few undertake to deny this startling declaration. In fact, it is generally admitted. But, while some see in this growing evil in the New England farmer's financial condition, the result of a malady which extends its destructive influence over the whole continent, others find a cause wholly in the unequal competition of the Western rival. The grounds for the latter contention, though in a certain sense of great importance, are not enough, since serious troubles are overtaking the Western competitor.

¹ In Connecticut, out of 603 farms recently visited by an investigation, 241, or 34 per cent., valued at \$1,008,350, were mortgaged to the extent of \$451,109.

The New York State Agent reported about eighteen months ago that "there are large numbers of farms that were purchased ten years ago and mortgaged, which would not now sell for more than the face of the mortgages, owing to the depreciation of the farm lands, which on an average is 33 per cent. in ten years. Probably one third of the farms in the State would not sell for more than the cost of the buildings and other improvements, owing to this shrinkage. . . . Thirty per cent. of the farms in the State are mortgaged, ranging from 2 per cent. of their value to 100 per cent. ; average, $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. of estimated value. These securities are held by retired or more successful farmers, merchants, savings-banks, and insurance companies."

While the State agent claimed that "still a large proportion of the farmers of New York are prosperous, one cannot but be startled by a report from an official source, that the farm lands of the leading State in the Union—a State having advantages superior to most others—had declined in value 33 per cent. in ten years, and that one third of the farms in the State would not sell for more than the cost of the buildings and other improvements, owing to the shrinkage." The State of New York contains within its limits some of the largest centres of production and consumption in America, and it also contains as good land as is to be found anywhere. Then why should not the tillers of this soil prosper ?

The State of Ohio has, according to official reports, an assessed valuation of real estate amounting to \$1,220,262,525, on which are 291,000 mortgages, forming a total indebtedness of \$330,999,205, much of which is, however, upon other than farm lands.

Mr. Heath, Commissioner of Labor Statistics of Michigan, has recently reported on the mortgage in-

debtedness of the farmers of his State. He stated that he has reports from 90,803 farms, or 58 per cent. of all the farms in the State. The assessed valuation of all farms reported is \$194,854,663, upon which there is a mortgage indebtedness of \$37,456,272, or a little more than 19 per cent. of the total assessed valuation, and nearly 47 per cent. on that of the farms mortgaged. The assessed valuation of the farms in the State is \$335,378,025, upon which the estimated mortgage indebtedness is \$64,392,580, with an annual interest charge of \$4,636,265 on farms alone.

The opinion of the Labor Commissioner of Michigan, that the mortgages upon the farms of that State operate "as a mammoth sponge" upon the labor of the owners, is the growing feeling of the majority of farmers all over America—the older parts at least. The farms of Michigan surround the great iron industries of the West. The State now contains large centres of population, and its lands are fertile and productive, and yet the farmers are evidently on the downward track.

Says a Southern journal: "Think of it! In as prosperous a State as Michigan 47 per cent., or nearly half, of the farms are mortgaged. In Georgia, if one would take the trouble to examine the clerks' offices in the different counties, a condition of affairs equally bad, perhaps worse, would be brought to light."

The Bureau of Labor Statistics for the State of Illinois has issued reports which show that the farm lands of the State have mortgages upon them to the amount of \$123,733,098, not including Cook County.

As to Nebraska, official reports do not indicate a happy condition of affairs in that State in reference to this matter. The reports of 1887-88 deal with 215 farmers scattered all over the State. An analysis of

these reports shows that, of the 215 farms, 113 are mortgaged.

Seventy-five per cent. of farms of Dakota are mortgaged for an aggregate amount of \$50,000,000.¹

The New York *Times* of December 27, 1886, contained a long article from Mr. Frank Wilkeson on the condition of the farmers of Kansas. He said: "It is a financial impossibility in this era of agricultural competitive warfare for a farmer of average intelligence and skill who tills a farm of 100 acres of land, except corn land, to lift a mortgage of say \$1,000, with money earned by growing staple crops. . . . I can safely say that nine tenths of all the uplands lying west of the ninety-seventh meridian are really small grain lands, which are

¹ According to the report of the Commissioner of Labor Statistics for Illinois, "the mortgage indebtedness of farmers for borrowed money has increased twenty-three per cent. since 1880 in this State, *twice the increase in the value of farm lands.*" Twenty-five counties are reported to have increased their value of farm lands, twenty-three have decreased, and in sixteen the values have remained the same.

"It is now twenty years at least that farming has been going rapidly downward. Farms bought in the war era have been selling almost everywhere in the East for *one half to one third* of their cost. Farms in New England, and some in the Middle States, are frequently sold for less than the buildings cost which are upon them. This is really no exaggeration. Sales of this sort, and where the depreciation in value has wiped out the owner's equity in them, have been for years a matter of notorious knowledge in almost every Eastern community. Within a year, in a healthy and fertile county not sixty miles from New York, a farm having on it two mortgages—a first mortgage of \$3,000 and a second mortgage of \$2,000—was sold under foreclosure for the sum represented by the first mortgage only. The holder of the second one did not think it worth while to be present, or to have a representative present at the sale, to bid the single dollar which would have saved, or made a show of saving, his investment."

JOEL BENTON, in *Popular Science Monthly*, Nov., 1889.

utterly unfit to produce corn, excepting in excessively wet seasons."

The picture given of life on Saturday in a Kansas town is certainly a startling one: "It matters not how dull the town has been during the week, on Saturday the streets are crowded with people; on that day chattels are sold to satisfy the overdue mortgages. At present these sales are numerous in the West, outside of the corn belt, and a very large portion of these do not realize sufficient to pay the mortgages. Teams, wagons, or horned stock, which six months ago were considered ample security for a loan of from \$100 to \$150, frequently fetch at public auction 25 per cent. less than the price of the mortgage."

So important has the question of increased mortgage indebtedness become, that the Cleveland Administration thought itself justified in appropriating \$250,000 for collecting the statistics relating thereto.

"Mr. Henry M. McDonald, President of the Traders' Bank, Pierre, Dakota, estimates that the volume of Western-mortgage business, confined chiefly to Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Dakota, has reached the sum of \$150,000,000 yearly. It may exceed his figures. That it is of great magnitude is evident from the fact that in all Eastern cities (and in most of the towns and villages) are located numbers of agents who make a living from the commissions paid them for securing loans. Boston numbers more than fifty agencies of farm-mortgage companies. It is computed that Philadelphia alone negotiates yearly more than \$15,000,000 on Western loans. Kansas and Nebraska have 134 incorporated mortgage companies. The companies organized under the laws of other States, but operating in these two States, in-

crease the number at least 200. In this reckoning no account is taken of firms and individuals, although a large amount of money is directly invested by lenders of this class."¹

One feature of importance to be observed in this mortgage business, is the fact that the chief part of the power to put in bonds the lands of America comes not from the country, but from the city; while the country is gaining no equivalent power over city interests of any kind.

As to the oppressive nature of the Western farm mortgages the *Chicago Times* says: "The syndicates that loan money at from one to three per cent. per month are mainly made up of Scotch, English, and New England capitalists, who have their agents throughout the South and West. These mortgages are falling due, and soon an immense number of Southern and Western farms will be in the hands of foreign mortgageors. . . . The territories are covered with mortgages on new farms not yet patented. In some of them the law has permitted outrageous interest, so that the farm-mortgage business has grown into immense proportions. In many districts half of the settlers borrow money at high interest to pay the small price required by the government in proving up. This is leading to widespread disaster. The object of the pre-emption law is perverted. Eastern and foreign capitalists get the land with such improvements as the settler has put upon it. The settler loses all by reason of the exorbitant interest he is compelled to pay."

There are those who would fain establish the idea that these growing financial embarrassments upon the farms of

¹ W. F. Mappin in *Political Science Quarterly*, September, 1889.

America are "an evidence of thrift rather than the contrary." Borrowed capital has, no doubt, enabled many Western farmers to push their enterprises with a success which they, probably, would not have attained without it. But the payment of the interest on Western farms, with wheat at 80 cents per bushel, is quite a different matter, as compared with the time when this cereal commanded a price 30 per cent. higher. It was a different matter when the lands yielded an average of 30 bushels of corn to the acre, as compared with 20 bushels now—when heavy outlays for fertilizers are required to secure a crop.

Farm mortgage is a comparatively new disease with the agriculturists of America. Fifty years ago, the farmer who was obliged to put a mortgage on his farm was considered next to insolvent, and its clearance was thought highly improbable. They are so numerous now that their increase is hardly noticed by the rural communities. But I believe that at the present day not more than 50 per cent. of mortgaged farms are released, except by change of ownership.

Before us is the address of Mr. R. Wilkie, the Worthy Master of the Dominion Grange Patrons of Husbandry, delivered at a session of the Order in Toronto, November, 1886. From this high authority we learn that a large proportion of the lands of the Dominion are, like the United States farms, becoming hopelessly incumbered. He said: "Doubtless a very large amount of capital is invested in farming; but much of it belongs to capitalists, and is only loaned on the land—a very large proportion of which is under mortgage much greater than most people suppose, and much of it is hopelessly sunk . . . The only hope that still re-

mains in many cases is that the land may be sold for something more than the amount of encumbrance. If any one doubts this, let him turn to the number of advertisements of farms for sale. The newspapers are full of them. And hundreds of land agents throughout the country are furnishing long lists free to any expectant purchaser. The owners of these lands are not men who are retiring on their fortunes, nor are they men who desire to engage in other pursuits. A large proportion of them are men who are selling to save the little which still remains, there being no longer any hope of saving the farm."

From what can be gathered from other sources, the picture drawn by the Worthy Master is not overdrawn as regards Ontario. The lowest estimate puts the mortgage indebtedness upon the farms of this province at \$58,000,000. The *Montreal Journal of Commerce* recently stated that, "as the possibility of the mortgages ever being paid off is so remote, the interest may fairly be looked upon as a fixed annual charge."

We may well ask: "Who are to own the farms of America?"

CHAPTER V.

THE CAPITALISTS GAINING THE LAND—THE TYPICAL AMERICAN FARM.

THE definition of an American farm, as given by Webster, is : "A portion or tract of land consisting usually of grass land, meadow, pasture, tillage, and woodland, cultivated by one man, and usually owned by him in fee." His definition of a farm in Great Britain is as follows : "A tract of land leased on rent reserved ; ground let to a tenant on condition of his paying a certain sum, annually or otherwise, for the use of it."

As a rule, the typical American farm was, and is, worked by the owner and his family, with sometimes the assistance of hired help for a large portion of the year, but frequently without any help beyond the family, and an extra gang for the haying season. He was and is virtually landlord, capitalist, and laborer. His lands do not support an idle aristocracy ; he was and is independent of the usurer, and he depends in the main upon his own industry, the sweat of his own brow, for the part that man must do to fill his granaries, or for the power to satisfy the wants of himself and family.

First, then, the typical American farmer, with his grass-land, meadow, pasture, tillage, and woodland, chiefly depending for its care and cultivation upon his own exertions, was and is what is now called a *small* farmer.

Second, the typical American farmer was and is, usually, an owner.

In order to show the present tendencies towards large estates, we will divide the large from the small at 100 acres, and compare those above and below at different periods, say 1860 with 1880. In the year 1860, of the 2,044,077 land-holdings in the United States, 1,387,614, or 67 per cent. were of the classes 100 acres and under. In Canada, the census of 1881 found the lands in holdings of 100 acres and under, to the extent of 71 per cent. of the total. From this we draw the conclusion that farms of 100 acres and less have been the rule. Such have been the typical farms.

Such farmers providing their own capital, both for the ownership of their lands and the prosecution of their business, and depending chiefly upon their own labors, needed no extensive areas. Indeed large areas would be an intolerable encumbrance to the owners, as the fencing of even a 200-acre farm would be a severe tax on their time. It is true that in many cases, such as those which formed the estates of Virginia, the original grants were large blocks of land, but in those early days when such grants were made, they were not taken for speculative purposes, as now, or for carrying on a wholesale competition in agriculture. And when a community did really get down to the cultivation of the soil, or to general farming, it was on small plots or town lots that the farmers' labors were prosecuted, and each farmer was a proprietor.

We have stated already that in 1860, 67 per cent. of the land-holdings were of the classes occupying 100 acres and under. The census of 1880, however, showed that a rapid change had been made during the decade

in reversing this condition ; of 4,008,907 holdings, only 2,208,374 were of the classes named ; of the classes between ten and one hundred acres there were 2,069,133, or 51 per cent., while those over 100 acres had risen to 1,800,533.¹

Still more important does this rapid change appear, when we compare each class by their acres. Then we begin to realize something of the real magnitude of the change. So far as we can gather from the census reports in 1860, not more than 30 per cent. of the farm lands were held by owners of over 100 acres ; in 1880, not less than 75 per cent. was in the hands of this class. In 1860, the acres in possession of holders of above 500 acres were (taking the lowest limit of average) not over 4 per cent. of the total ; in 1880, not less than 12 per cent.

It may be contended that all these movements toward increase in the average size of land-holdings are taking place only in the West, where foreigners have absorbed so much of the land that the old States are holding to their normal conditions. Even if this were the case, it would not do much to disprove the statement that the typical American farm was disappearing ; but what are the facts even in this case ? We select three of the most prominent of the farming States of New England, for the purpose of comparison—Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont. These old States contained, in 1860, 94,723 holders of land of 100 acres and under ; in 1880, only 73,892 ; whereas, of holdings of upwards of 100 acres, there was an increase of 34,435, or from 23,412 to 57,847.

In the foregoing calculation all holdings below ten acres are included. In 1880 they amounted to about 5

¹ It must be remembered that but for the subdivision of plantations in the South, since 1860, the total change in the comparative decrease of small holdings would appear far more conspicuously.

per cent. of the total for these States. They probably represent the number of holdings occupied by other classes than tillers of the soil. But ten acres and under have, in many cases, supported families. We are brought face to face with the startling fact that 20,821 of the typical farms of these States during the twenty years, 1860-80, had either been abandoned to the wilds altogether, or become attached to the large estates. No doubt the transformation has been in both directions. If in either, however, the changed condition is one for serious thought.

One of America's most famous economists¹ states that between 1875 and 1885 the woodland of Massachusetts increased 49.64 per cent. In this State the tacking-on must have been very considerable, as the number of holdings above 500 acres had increased in the twenty years—1860-80—by 254, while the cultivated land had fallen from 2,133,436 to 2,128,311 acres.

In the State of Maine the holdings of over 100 acres were only 9 per cent. of the total in 1860; in 1880 they were 39 per cent. In 1860 there were only 2 holders of estates exceeding 1,000 acres; in 1880 there were 116.

Using the lowest limit of the census figures, we find that there were 64,550 acres of the lands of Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont in the hands of holders of upwards of 500 acres in the year 1860, but in 1880 these acres had swollen to 856,000. Using the medium figures for the 10- to 50-acre holdings, there were in the neighborhood of 1,624,485 acres of farm lands in these small divisions in 1860, but in 1880 only 1,009,750.

With such figures as these, culled from official sources, who can deny that the lands of New England, and, in

¹ Hon. David A. Wells.

fact, of the whole United States, are not rapidly assuming a shape other than that represented by the typical American farmer?

It is well known that the Wall Street capitalists are becoming owners of vast tracts of Western lands, and that Boston capitalists are getting a mortgage grip upon the New England farms, while British capital is fast coming to the position of controlling more land in America than at home. Restricted in the United States, it turns its attention to Canada.

Aliens may have absorbed the new lands of Western States, but how are we to account for the rapid absorption of the small properties by the large in the East?

A like condition is developing in Canada. The great Northwest is falling into the hands of the moneyed classes. In Manitoba 44 per cent. of the land-holdings in 1880 were of the classes above 500 acres; in the territories 58 per cent. were upwards of 500 acres in area. Sir Lester Key now manages for a \$2,000,000 syndicate 1,200,000 acres of Canadian lands.

By reckoning the 1,000-acre classes, we have gained but a slight insight into the real condition of affairs, but we see enough to exemplify one important phase of the nature of the question under discussion.

CHAPTER VI.

RENTED FARMS.

THROUGH the United States census of 1880 an effort was made to ascertain the tenure of American farms, with the following result: It was found that out of a total of 4,008,907 farms and plantations, 1,024,601 were rented for money or worked on shares. This went to show that, at that time, slightly over 25 per cent. of all the farms of the United States were not owned by the occupiers.

In studying the census report still further, it will be found that of the 2,208,374 holdings of less than 100 acres, 730,702, or 33 per cent., were not owned by the occupiers. But of the holdings of from 500 to 1,000 acres, 87 per cent. were owned by the occupiers; and the holdings of above 1,000 acres were thus owned to the extent of 90 per cent. of the total. It is true, the largest proportion of rented farms is in the South, where the land has been rented to the negroes since their liberation, and it is true also that the largest proportion of small holdings are tenanted.

The census statistics, however, teach us that at the date of their formation 7 per cent. of the farms of New England were occupied by tenants, or one in about every fourteen, and of New York 16 per cent., or one in about every seven. Farther west, on the rich and productive

lands of Ohio, 20 per cent. of the farms were rented, or one in every five.

In Canada a fraction less than $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the lands were rented in 1880, or one in about every eight—owners and occupiers numbering 403,491, and tenants as occupiers, 57,245.

In the Maritime Provinces one in every fourteen farms was occupied by tenants, and in Ontario one in every six.

In addition to the discovery recently made by the New York State assessors, that, in fourteen counties visited farm land is declining in value while city property is increasing, sufficient information was gained on the question of rented farms to warrant the State assessor in forming the opinion that, "in a few years there will be few left but tenant farmers."

When we consider that about 25 per cent. of the small farms of the United States are already in the hands of capitalists, and the occupiers are mere tenants, and that this condition is on the increase, and add to this that capitalists have mortgages on at least 20 per cent. of the remainder, and further, that small farms are disappearing, we may well say that the typical industry of rural America is fast becoming a thing of the past.

CHAPTER VII.

ABANDONED FARMS.

ONE who has been familiar with the past history of the farm-homes of a country, who has known of the struggles and triumphs of the early possessors of these properties, cannot but be saddened when he sees them, one after another, abandoned ; the lands to become the pasture domain of more successful estates, or to be entirely given over to the public common. To be a witness to the industry, the planning, and the achievements in moulding, in fashioning, and in subduing these spots to the tastes and requirements of the occupiers, and then to see them at last entirely surrendered to the wilderness, is surely an impressive picture, even to the most indifferent mind. Such an observer cannot but ask the question : “ Is this not an evidence of coming national decay ? ”

Large tracts of country—away from the towns and cities—in the old States and Provinces of America are thus being transformed ; and not only are these manifestations of failure on the part of our old farms to hold their own against the conditions of the times confined to the old States, but are rapidly extending over the continent.

The New England farms have been the first, however, to succumb. There are several reasons for this, though

none of them give any assurance that the disease is not to become general among the typical farms of America.

Through the *Boston Advertiser*, a rather conservative journal, we have the following graphic picture of the desolation which already reigns over portions of Massachusetts, once the settlements of happy and prosperous farmers :

“ Throughout the State of Massachusetts, away from the cities and from the large towns, may be met, besides oral reports, traces of farms once yielding a support to their occupants, but now abandoned. The signs of former tenancy are to be found in conditions varying from the indications of recent occupancy to those of a generation or longer ago. Sometimes the dwelling-house has a look of neatness, in its white paint and green blinds, not yet yielding much to the weather. The barns, wagon sheds, corn-cribs, and other out-buildings will be blackened, of course, from exposure of their unpainted surface, but yet have in them wear and utility. But the stillness of a solitude haunts the place, and the sign, affixed to a tree, ‘For Sale,’ stirs in the practical observer the suspicious question, Why? He glances over the undulating fields, where now the grass is growing thinly, and thence back to the stone wall, so carefully laid as to suggest that at some inspection by a committee of an agricultural fair, it must have won a prize. What labor the reddened and wearied hands must have expended here, and yet the sons have not stayed to reap any profit from the father’s toil!

“ Again, the house is not so trim. The storms of several decades have worn the paint away. The clapboards are darkening in the weather. The mortar has crumbled from between the bricks in the chimneys, so that you

see the light of the sky through the crevices. Some of the panes in the windows are broken. The front door hangs ajar. The winds sigh through the empty woodshed. The out-buildings, first to go, are falling in. Acres of land once cultivated lie around. The sign announcing the place as being for sale is broken and hanging by a single nail, and the words are almost untraceable.

“Another scene will represent a ruin. The roof has tumbled in. The charming prospect of hill and dale and wood and setting sun is now never more to be shut out from the front door, where once the busy housewife may have sometimes glanced, for the door is swung far back and gaping on the scene, and no one is there to push it to. At some time or other the barn fell down, and the boards and timbers are rotting from the repeated dryings and wettings. It is a scene of desolation. The suggestiveness of former tenancy imparts to it a melancholy, such as a mere old cellar or the traces of a stone underpinning do not have. These, too, may be found sometimes in the midst of lonely woods, where the trees have grown up in the fields formerly ploughed and sowed, so that the owner is already counting on their value at some lone saw-mill. But where the remnant of a frame is standing, it suggests the farmer’s hopes, the housewife’s counsels, the ploughboy’s whistle, once known here, and now gone forever.

“Large areas are now offered for sale. The prices asked for the land are low compared with the prices asked for land in the places where the population is growing.”

If any State of New England can be said to have made verifiable progress in the past, it is Massachusetts; and

yet the foregoing is the report with which a leading journal furnishes its readers. The article further states :

“Take the farmers of Franklin County. It has been estimated that their average surplus of profit above expense does not exceed \$75 a year. In some localities in that county, a farmer, who, at seventy-five, has accumulated \$3,000 or \$4,000, is thought to have attained to the greatest measure of success.

“But many have found themselves unequal to the struggle between the expenses and the profits. Not, indeed, the large proportion of the farmers of the preceding generation, but the sons, who, though laborious and well-meaning, have not had the discipline that comes from originating an enterprise, but have depended upon their father’s training and instruction. In the unequal battle they have given up and fled from the field.”

The cause assigned for the abandoned farms of New England¹ is one that is given by many—the competition of the Western farms has been too severe, and in the unequal contest the New England competitor has been obliged to give up and flee to other parts.

The Hon. David A. Wells says : “A few years ago the inhabitants of Ludlow, formerly a most prosperous town in Windsor County, Vermont, memorialized the legislature to the effect that there were twelve deserted farms within the town limits, and asked permission to guarantee to any persons who would lease and work them exemption from taxation, local and State, for a considerable term of years.” He also states : “All over New England, farms in abundance can now be purchased for less than the cost of the improvements upon

¹ Official reports state that in six towns in Massachusetts the unoccupied dwellings number from ten to forty-five.

them,—yes, for less than the cost of the construction of their stone walls.”¹

A writer in the *Grange Homes*, of Boston, mentions seeing farms sold in Vermont for less than the cost of the buildings upon them. He pertinently suggests the query : The fathers among the hills were poor ; but they cleared away the forests, raised and educated families, and built homes. Why do the buildings now sell for less than they are worth, with one or two hundred acres of land thrown in to make the trade ?” Yes, why are these lands being abandoned ? Why are the farmers becoming mere tenants ? Why are mortgages settling down on the old farms of America ? Why is the wealth of farmers all over the land so little increased, when the aggregate wealth is growing so rapidly ? Why is such a large proportion of the agricultural class of the world groaning under the trouble of procuring the necessities of civilized life ? Why all this, while agriculture stands at the base of all material development ?

¹ The catalogue of the abandoned farms of New Hampshire contains particulars of 352 of these, referring to which the State Commissioner says, that “in most instances these farms have not been abandoned because the soil has become exhausted, or from the lack of natural fertility, but from various causes appearing in the social and economic history of the State.”

On August 11, 1889, the New York *Tribune* had an article on the decline of the farming industries of Vermont, in which it said : “Good lands are offered for sale as low as \$3 an acre, and it is said that it will be necessary to make \$5 an acre the maximum price for settlers, if the new Vermont boomers expect to compete with Western lands. It may, as a vivid notion of the extent to which the depopulating process has gone on, be said, that no difficulty was encountered in finding abandoned farms in one locality to furnish contiguous farms for the first proposed colony of fifty families. In fact, four such localities were found.”

BOOK III.

AGRICULTURE'S STRUGGLE.

Man becomes more free as the prices of rude products and finished commodities approximate.—HENRY C. CAREY.

The whole question of freedom or slavery for man is therefore embraced in that of competition.—HENRY C. CAREY.

CHAPTER I.

THE FARMER'S COTEMPORARIES.

It is necessary to keep the fact well in view, that there are those cotemporary with the farmer who are prospering, or who are gathering to themselves wealth and the various powers which abundance yields.

In a former chapter it was shown that relatively the other great classes in the aggregate were leaving the farmer far behind in the race for wealth, but nothing was done to show the position of other special industries.

Some industries in America, like that of agriculture, are in a depressed, if not a ruinous, condition. Shipping is prosperous in some countries, but going to ruin in America. This is admitted on all sides, and will require little verification.

Manufacturing stands out prominently as of the utmost importance in almost every dissertation on the industrial progress of America. It certainly occupies a large place in giving employment to labor, in the production of wealth, and to development of various kinds.

Its real magnitude, as well as the importance which the prevailing thought and political policies of the time evidently tender it, as compared with their treatment of agriculture, makes its consideration one of great moment in the discussion we have entered upon.

By the United States census reports of 1880 we find that the capital engaged in mining, mechanics, manufacturing, and in the production of petroleum in the Union, amounted to \$2,790,000,000, employing 22 per cent. of the industrial population, or 3,838,112 persons, who threw on the market that year a production valued at \$5,679,854,599. It is estimated, that of this amount, \$3,394,000,000 went into it in the shape of raw material, which would leave \$2,285,854,599 to represent the net production for the year, or \$595 for each person engaged. Employed in agricultural pursuits were 7,670,493 individuals, or 44 per cent. of the total industrial population, with a capital of \$12,602,000,000, whose products—not including increase in value of farm stock—amounted to only \$2,213,402,564.

A more comprehensive estimate made by Mr. J. R. Dodge, Statistician of the Department of Agriculture, gave \$3,600,000,000 as the total value of the products of agriculture for the census year ; which amount includes an allowance of \$1,000,000,000 for home consumption, giving \$473 for each. The farmers' outlay for seeds and other articles consumed in procuring a crop (to say nothing of taxes, insurance, etc.), would average not much less than \$100, leaving the average farmers of America (including farm laborers) a net income \$220 less than the average manufacturer. It is claimed that farmers have been paying as high wages to labor as have been paid by manufacturers, and especially is this the case when compared with the wages paid by the great cotton and iron industries. Then the farmer, with his farm, his capital, and his labor, is receiving a share in the national income reduced in exchange value to very small proportions compared with the manufacturer. Thus we

find that though the farmers are by far the most important class in numbers, they are of very much less importance in regard to the exchange value of their productions.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie states that "in manufacturing, the annual product of each operative has advanced in value from \$1,100 in 1850 to \$2,015 in 1880."¹ The increase to agriculture shows really no advance compared with this.

From a computation of that reliable statistician Mr. M. G. Mulhall, we find that the per capita valuation of the wealth of the United States, exclusive of agricultural wealth, rose from \$250 in 1860 to \$502 in 1880, or an increase of slightly over 100 per cent. Surely this does not seem much like decadence.

On the other hand, the value of the agricultural wealth only increased by 22.5 per cent., or from \$280 to \$343 per inhabitant in the twenty years.

Looking to the State of Massachusetts, of which the serious decadence of agriculture is admitted or confirmed by "official documents," we find that from the year 1860 to 1880, the per capita valuation of property in this State rose from \$662 to \$1,568. Here we find agriculture, in close proximity to largest consuming markets for the productions of agriculture, absolutely falling behind, while others are rapidly advancing.

At this very time (1889), when so much is said about the decay of the farm interests of this State, reports come to us of enormous profits to many other industrial enterprises within its borders during the past year (1888). I will name those of one city, Fall River, in the cotton manufacturing industry.

Four mills, with a capital of \$2,500,000, declared earnings of \$663,000, or 26 per cent. upon their capital.

¹ "Triumphant Democracy."

The Amoskeag Cotton Company is reported to have cleared in the past year (1888) \$425,000. It paid a dividend of 25 per cent., and put 4 per cent. by for surplus.

Many branches of commerce and manufacturing in this old State are, no doubt suffering from a lop-sided trade, owing to the restrictive character of the fiscal policy of the Union, but capital, even in this State, is gathering more and more power.

In the Empire State, agricultural property declines ; but here we find that the average wealth of some classes must be increasing at a very rapid rate. The per capita valuation of property in this State was only \$475 in 1860 ; but in 1888 it had risen to \$1,499. In 1890 it will not be less than \$2,000.

Going farther, to the State of Ohio, of which it has been said one half of the whole assessed value of the farm lands is covered by mortgages, the per capita valuation of property rose from \$510 in 1860 to \$1,032 in 1880.

In the city of Cleveland, of this State, is the great Rolling-Mill Company, owned by the three Chisholms, of which Mr. Erastus Wiman remarked in his speech at Dufferin Lake in Ontario in July of 1887 : " The products of this firm last year reached the enormous sum of \$12,000,000. These are some of the items which comprise this aggregate :

100,000 tons of steel rails.....	\$3,600,000
150,000 tons of pig-iron.....	3,000,000
50,000 tons merchants' steel boiler-plate and sheets.....	2,750,000
40,000 tons wire.....	2,400,000

“With an increased output and an advance in the prices their business this year will probably reach the high figure of \$15,000,000, a sum equal to the whole earnings of the Grand Trunk Railway, a corporation of 40,000 shareholders, and at least 50 per cent. more than the whole earnings of the whole Canada Pacific Railway, to which you (in Canada) have donated \$100,000,000. All this was the growth of a little more than twenty years. . . . Think of the business of this one firm of American-Canadians nearly equalling the aggregate earnings of your two great systems of railways, whose combined capital reaches away up beyond \$300,000,000.”

Going south, to the State of Pennsylvania, where the greatest iron and coal industries of the Union are located, the farmers are not making any headway toward increasing their stores of wealth. At the same time the aggregate wealth of this State is increasing with wonderful rapidity. In 1860 the whole wealth of Pennsylvania was estimated at \$1,416,510,818. Not a paltry amount by any means, but small compared with the wealth of 1880—\$5,393,000,000; rising from a per capita valuation of \$487 in 1860 to \$1,259 in 1880.

Here we find among other successful enterprises the famed Edgar Thompson Works, of whose proprietor—Mr. Andrew Carnegie,—Mr. Wiman at Dufferin Lake, made this remark: “A little over twenty years ago, they (Andrew Carnegie and brother) went into the iron business. One of the two brothers recently died, and the other, Andrew Carnegie, now employs more than 7,000 men, and his business will this year very nearly equal the combined earnings of both your combined Grand Trunk and Canadian Pacific Railway systems.”

Certainly “times” cannot bear hard on one who can

boast of a yearly net income of \$1,250,000, and who, besides supporting an establishment in America, has his castle in Scotland for a summer retreat.

The Standard Oil monopoly, which started not many years ago with a capital of \$1,500,000, and is now said to be declaring dividends on \$90,000,000, has made this vast fortune, and the fine dividends which it has paid to its lucky stockholders, out of the control of an article almost wholly consumed by the rural populations.

This concern is now able to dictate State and national legislation and the management of most important railway systems. It is absorbing the oil lands of Ohio, and will soon have the whole oil business of North America under its own management. This great monopoly has evidently been able to bear up against troubles of all kinds.

As to Michigan, of which official reports prove the serious nature of the troubles under which its farmers labor, the per capita value of property rose from \$343 in 1860, to \$837 in 1880. Of the iron industries of this State Mr. Wiman says :

“ Recall the isolation, the barrenness of Canadian iron regions, and contrast them with the activity of the upper peninsula of Michigan, whose total money value of output in 1883 was over \$24,000,000 ! Listen to the story of one or two mines as told in the following extract from a report on the Gogebic region, Michigan, a State just next door to Canada :

“ ‘ The Menominee Mining Company was organized ten years ago on the modest capital of \$100,000, which, notwithstanding the extent of its operations, which cover the working of six mines, has never been increased. The company has already paid to its stockholders \$6,500,000. So great is the appreciation of its shares,

that a single one has sold as high as \$6,750 upon a par of \$100! The total output of its mines for the seven years up to 1883 was 1,569,929 tons. Take, for example, a stockholder in the Republic Company who bought his shares when they were at their lowest, and held them. He may have purchased the original stock at \$12, on a par of \$25, and possibly lower. From that point it rose to \$325. Then the capital was increased from \$500,000 to \$2,400,000, and the stock rose as high as \$67, or \$335 a share for the whole stock. This profit does not take into account the enormous dividends that were being paid in the meantime, frequently more than 100 per cent. The stock of the Cleveland Company has sold as low as \$6 or \$7. From these figures it advanced to about \$250. The company made an increase of capital similar to the Republic's, and its new shares sold as high as \$40 and as low as \$14; its present price is about \$20. But aside from the fluctuations of market the steady holders of Cleveland have enjoyed much larger returns than they could get out of any other security. During the last six years this company has paid two dividends of 80 per cent. and one of 120 per cent. The Lake Superior Company is another mine that has made its stockholders rich. The capital of the company, originally half a million, was increased to \$1,500,000. The quotation of the new stock has ranged from \$33 to \$80. The old sold as high as \$400, we believe. The Lake Superior is one of the big dividend payers, and the steady holders have been unable to get Aladdin's lamp out of their minds!'"

The Calumet Hecla Copper Company, started a few years ago with a capital of \$1,200,000, has paid dividends amounting to \$20,000,000, and still holds a property valued at \$29,000,000.

The *Iron Age*, of New York, a well-informed authority, in its issue of August 4, 1887, gave some information of the doings of one huge enterprise. It said: "An establishment which can show gross earnings amounting to over \$14,000,000 in twelve months as the result of manufacturing operations exclusively, is certainly entitled to be called great. This is the showing made to the stockholders of the North Chicago Rolling-Mill Company at their annual meeting, which was held in Chicago on the 25th ult."

We are aware that figures are given to show that the money made in great enterprises does not, as a rule, stay by the families of those who engage in them; but the fact remains that every year a larger proportion of the national income finds its way to this class than ever before; while it finds a larger proportion of the farmers facing financial ruin than ever before.

Manufactures may not always pay large dividends, especially when forced into existence where not required, or in localities not suited to their development, or when they have been outdone by new rivals with superior advantages. The question for the farmer's consideration is: Are not these losses, of whatever nature they may be, frequently thrown on the farmer; and are not these manufacturers, whether they succeed or fail, given a chance to enjoy large incomes and the luxuries of life for at least a time, while the farmer must be satisfied with a narrow income and the satisfaction of only the most ordinary wants? Situated in one of the principal towns of New England is a large manufactory, producing an article used almost wholly by the farmers, which pays only a trifling interest to the shareholders. Yet by having a controlling interest, one family has been en-

abled to draw in salaries from the concern at times the fine sum of \$100,000 annually. Such cases are not at all infrequent under the present *régime*.

Of millionaire concerns, New York boasts of having its hundreds, and Montreal its fifties. The Senate of the United States has its twenty millionaires. How many of these are farmers?

Mr. Thomas G. Shearman, the publicist and statistician, states in *The Forum*, for November, 1889, that there are seventy persons in the United States whose average wealth is over \$37,500,000, amounting in the aggregate to \$2,700,000,000. The wealth of J. J. Astor is estimated at \$150,000,000; Gould, Stanford, Rockefeller and two Vanderbilts are rated at \$100,000,000 each; two at \$70,000,000 each, seven at \$40,000,000 each. Then there are four at \$35,000,000, thirteen at \$30,000,000, ten at \$25,000,000, four at \$22,500,000, fifteen at \$20,000,000, while there are fifty others who are worth \$10,000,000, each. These are probably overestimated, but enough is known to establish the fact that the wealth of the United States in the hands of some 250,000 of its people is enormous, whereas the average farmer's wealth is less than it was twenty years ago.

However, in order to reduce this comparison to the most severe test, we must show the position of the proprietor farmer as compared with the ordinary wage earner. Mr. Edward Atkinson's¹ elaborate statistics go to show that the average wages of the laboring class in the United States is about \$400 a year, and of the total of the agricultural class \$419. He states that "the average farmer can be assumed to earn but a moderate sum above that of the farm laborer."

¹ "Distribution of Products."

I have averaged the farmer's income at \$473; and I place the wage earner's income at not less than \$350, \$50 less than Mr. Atkinson, in order to be within safe bounds. Out of the \$473, the farmer must meet cost of production, wear of machinery, loss of stock, pay insurance, and pay taxes; all of which would amount to not less than an average of \$173. This would leave the farmer \$300 for living, savings, and interest on his investment.

The average farmer's property in the United States, according to census statistics, is \$3,019 value. I contend that at least \$2,000 of this should be subject to a charge of interest at the rate of 6 per cent. in our calculation. This will leave the farmer \$180 for support of family and savings, or \$170 less than the wage earner.¹

"The farm does not pay if it merely affords a living and prevents the accumulation of debt. It may do more than this—it may even decrease debt and add to the value of stock and improvements—and yet not pay. It being assumed that the labor and superintendence of the owner is equal in value to the support of the family, then the net accumulations of the year must be equal to the legal interest upon the whole capital invested, or the farm does not pay. This is a simple method of farm book-keeping, and will always answer the question; yet too many farmers will shrink from applying the test."²

¹ It is well to note that official reports, now coming in, go to show that the price of labor is gradually increasing, while the returns to agriculture are diminishing. While the wealth of the agriculturists decreased by \$890 per farm, the per capita increase of the property of the Union was \$566, though the increase in number of those who entered occupations other than agricultural, owning nothing, was quite as great as those who had swelled the numbers of the agriculturists.

² *American Agriculturist*, September, 1889.

The Hon. Geo. B. Loring gives some statistics recently in the *North American Review*¹ to prove the prosperity of agriculture. I propose analyzing those referring to this question as it relates to Massachusetts, which he assures his readers "is a good illustration of the type of American agriculture which increases year by year, and which affords constant labor, and consequently good returns to the farmer." Mr. Loring says that the aggregate value of the agricultural products of the State is \$47,756,033 ; that the total agricultural property of the State is valued at \$215,230,550 ; that his estimate gives to each person employed in farming about \$620 annually, out of which must come the expense of producing and selling the product—the total wages paid annually being \$6,390,252.

If we assume that the average farm proprietor of Massachusetts is receiving \$700 (an outside figure), and out of which deduct \$200 for insurance, taxes, repairs, loss of stock, seeds, and fertilizers, we have \$500 left. Out of this \$500 we have to take, at least, \$150 for wages. This would leave \$350 for the farmer, the return of an ordinary wage earner, with not a cent for interest on his investment. If the farmer charge this interest, say \$150, he would have only \$200 for his family to live upon.

In the paragraph wherein Mr. Loring refers to the above matter, he states that the income of the manufacturing operatives in Massachusetts averages \$364. He has this without a cent risked in the business which employs him. Surely if the laborers of America have cause to make loud and bitter complaints of the inequality under which they labor, the farm proprietors have much more.

¹ March, 1889.

CHAPTER II.

COMPETITION.

TAKING a wide survey of the subject, we can consistently say that a severe competition from even the most distant producing countries is springing up to claim the farmer's serious attention. The wheat fields of the great American prairies have to contend for the markets of the United Kingdom, not only against India and the continent of Europe, but the Argentine Republic is becoming a formidable rival. India is devoting each new year more than formerly to the production of this great staple. The fourteen thousand miles of railway now constructed in that country tap some of the finest wheat lands of the world, and with plenty of cheap labor to work them.

Competition all around, and the low rates of transportation over the railways of America as well as in other countries, have brought down the price of wheat in the London market, during the last ten years, lower than ever before. During the past five years the average price at Mark Lane has been thirty-five shillings per quarter ; during the decade 1860-70 it averaged fifty-one shillings ; in 1868, sixty-three shillings.

The cattle and meat exports are also not without rivals. Australia and South America are expanding this trade remarkably. Meats are now sent to the mar-

kets of Great Britain in steamers with vast refrigerators in which these meats are safely carried. One establishment on the Plata River is equipped with the necessary facilities for preparing and shipping five hundred carcasses yearly.

Australia takes the lead in exports of mutton, and is likely still to do so, because of its great natural advantages and its shipping facilities.

The fiscal policy of the United States has made it easy for such European countries as France and Germany to find plausible excuse for shutting out American food products. The pork industries, in an especial manner, have suffered from this retaliation.

Even for the products of the dairy, England is not by any means dependent upon the farmers of America. Danish and Irish butter are now preferred in that country.

In fact, England is not so absolutely dependent upon outside countries as many suppose. She has large areas uncultivated, which, were they cultivated, would increase her food supply very much.

It is possible that with her lands all carefully cultivated, the present yield might be doubled, an amount which would more than feed the people. In 1880, according to Sir James Caird, a most reliable authority, her consumption of corn and vegetable products was of the value of £386,637,500, of which her own soil contributed £260,737,500.

These economic facts, apparent to the observing citizen, are of great practical importance to the food exporter. They evidently point to the conclusion that competition is likely to be even more severe in the future than in the past, and should be met by the

American agriculturists if they would have their productions find customers in foreign marts. No possible home policy can shut off this competition.

Neither is the outlook at home any more cheering. The small or least favored grain producers, who have been unable to change their labors to other directions, are being borne down by the overwhelming odds pitted against them. The majority of the great "bonanza farms," from which the severe competition comes, have, in many cases, cost the owners comparatively but a trifle, while little outlay is required for fertilizers. Furthermore, the most effective machinery to be procured is being employed to turn these unequalled natural resources into food products.

Of this, says a noted American economist¹: "A huge abundance therefore ensues from the least amount of human labor. On some of the fattest land of the West, the measure of the product of one man, working the best machinery with a pair of horses, has reached *one hundred tons* of corn in a single season. The aim of some of the great 'bonanza farms' of Dakota has been to apply machinery so effectually that the cultivation of one full section, or six hundred and forty acres, shall represent one year's work of only one man. This has not yet been reached, but so far as the production of the grain of wheat is concerned, one man's work will now give one thousand persons enough for a barrel of flour a year, which is the average ration."

On the great farms of the West ploughing is performed by immense double-gang ploughs—too expensive and ponderous for use on the small farms. Each plough is drawn by four horses, the ploughman riding

¹ Mr. Edward Atkinson.

upon it as it moves along, cutting two furrows of fourteen inches wide. When it is considered that not infrequently four of these four-horse teams, one after the other, are seen in the same field, cutting furrows miles in length, an idea is gained of what is being done in the West by machinery and a very limited amount of human labor. One man, who does the harrowing, drives four horses attached to a gang of four harrows, covering a width of twenty-four feet. The seed is sown by broadcast seeders, planting seed over a width of sixteen feet, and drawn by four horses. To gather the harvest self-binding reapers, drawn by three horses, are also managed by one man.

Of the great reapers one farm in Dakota operates sixty-five. It is said that "Dr. Glen's forty-five thousand acres of wheat in California in 1880 were gathered by machines, each of which cut, threshed, winnowed, and bagged, sixty acres of wheat in a day."

The threshing and cleaning are mostly done by steam power in the field, and the grain is frequently hauled in bulk to the railway stations to be deposited in elevators or warehouses.

Mr. Dalrymple's hundred square miles of wheat are cultivated and gathered with machines and a troop of four hundred farm servants. Mr. Andrew Carnegie, in referring to this in his "Triumphant Democracy," gives his opinion that it would require five thousand men in the ordinary way of the East to accomplish the same result.

As conditions exist it seems practically impossible for small farmers to compete with farming conducted on such a stupendous scale as that on the great farms of the West.

At *home*, the broad ranches of Texas, Kansas, and

other States of the West, are providing the meat markets of the old States of the East, even to the Pine Tree State and the Maritime Provinces.

The numerous railways traversing the continent have brought the vast prairies practically alongside the Eastern consumers. In 1865, it cost from three to four cents a ton per mile, to convey freight to the Atlantic seaboard. It is now done for three fourths of a cent.

“Cornelius Vanderbilt consolidated and perfected the railroad service in such a way that a year’s supply of meat and bread can be moved one thousand miles, from the Western prairies to the Eastern workshops, at the measure of the cost of a single day’s wages of the mechanic or artisan in Massachusetts,—that is to say, if the mechanic or artisan of the East will give up one holiday in a year, he removes one thousand miles of distance between himself and the main source of his supply of necessary food.”¹

¹ Edward Atkinson, “Distribution of Products,” p. 38.

The following is from the Halifax *Morning Herald*, Saturday, November 23, 1889, entitled “Impoverished Farmers”:

“In recent issues the *Herald* has called attention to a great body of evidence furnished by state and municipal reports, newspaper articles, public addresses, etc., all of which serve to show that the farmers of the United States, both in New England and in the States farther west, are, relatively speaking, in a most deplorable condition. Large numbers of deserted farms are in vain offered for sale in New England, while others, which were a few years ago in excellent condition and free of debt, are now placed under the hammer of the auctioneer to pay the mortgages that have been placed upon them. In the West the farmers are endeavoring as best they can to bear up under their almost overwhelming burden of indebtedness, living largely on their capital-outlay, hoping against hope for better times in the near future. The *Bankers’ Magazine* for November, in ‘A Review of Finance and Business,’ shows very clearly that the improv-

HOME MARKET.

Compare the position of the different localities in America, as regards the production of grain and live-stock fifty years ago, with the present, and it will be found that, at that time, the farmers had the advantage of a home market, while to-day no locality can boast of being practically a home market. During the past half-century the increase of the town and city populations of Massachusetts has been upwards of 100 per cent., and the increase of the aggregate wealth over 200 per cent., while during the same period the increase in the production of live-stock has been but a trifle, and an actual decline of over 36 per cent. has come about in the production of grain.

erished condition of United States farmers is due to a limited demand for their products, and in a consequent decline of prices which does not return him sufficient to pay for his seed and labor. We quote :

“ ‘ Instead of keeping up her early purchases of our new crop, which were quite free in August, to bridge over the gap between her (*i. e.*, England) old and new crops, she has taken less and less as we have gone into the new-crop year. Not only this, but it has been in the face of steadily declining prices under an unusually heavy movement of the crop, which has been necessitated by the impoverished condition of American farmers. This has been true, not only of wheat, but of every thing the farmer has raised, until prices have reached a point in remote sections which hardly pay for hauling his crops to market after being harvested. This is especially true of corn, oats, and potatoes in the far West, where much of the crops still lie on the ground unhooused, as farmers are too poor to buy the lumber to crib their grain. Potatoes, which rotted so badly in the East, owing to the wet autumn, seemed to have escaped in the West, where they have been selling by the car-load at 20 cents a bushel delivered in Chicago. Oats are selling there at 17 to 18 cents ; corn, 30 to 31 cents. How much is left the unfortunate farmer, after paying even the reduced rates of transportation the railways were com-

THE FRUIT PROBLEM.

As the great grain fields of the West have poured their products into every market at home, the small grain areas of the past have been converted into orchards and vegetable plots; and now there is not only excessive production in cereals, but also in all other field productions. Only a few months ago (June, 1888), fifteen to twenty thousand crates of fruit and vegetables, "in good condition," were destroyed in New York Harbor to relieve an overstocked market. Large portions of the South, such as the country around Norfolk, Virginia, have recently become devoted to fruit and vegetable culture for Northern consumption. This production will, do doubt, be vastly increased in the near future, if the new cotton-picking machines, now under contemplation, drive the negroes from the industry of cotton-picking, which has given so many of them employment in the past.

pelled to make in order to get the farmers to move their crops at all, can easily be figured. He is not getting enough to pay for his seed and his labor, and the result is seen in the wholesale default in interest, not only on farm mortgages, but on farm implements and livestock, which are being foreclosed, and the producers of our abundant harvests are left homeless and penniless in an unusually large number of cases to face the inclemency of the winter. As a consequence there is more or less uprising of the farming communities of the far West against the demands of the Eastern loan companies, which have not only kept up the old rates of interest, but in some cases have increased them. Cases have come to public notice where 5 per cent. per month is charged upon cattle mortgages. Between the exporters, who refuse to take their crops, except of corn, even at these ruinous prices, and the Eastern and local money-lenders, the farmers of the country are being ground between the upper and neither millstone, instead of their harvests, which are too abundant to house and too cheap to market, "

It certainly seems that in scarcely any line has there been a more rapid increase of competition than in that of fruit-raising. In 1859 the value of the production of the orchards of the United States was \$19,991,885 ; in 1879 it rose to \$50,876,154, or an increase of 154 per cent. Mr. Loring now estimates, that by adding all the fruits sold in small cities and villages, and those consumed on the farms enumerated, "the annual value of the fruits of the United States would not fall much below \$200,000,000."

It must also be remembered that at no former period in the history of America has there been a more rapid increase in the area of new orchards than during the last ten years.

In Canada, in recent years, pomology has become the most popular science of husbandry. Investments in fruit culture are made by both the practical farmer, the theorist, and the speculator. And now, as with their contemporaries, the orchardists of Canada have to deal with the question of competition in a way not dreamed of twenty years ago, except, perhaps, by the very observing publicist or economist. In 1871 the crop of apples in Ontario was estimated at 2,000,000 of bushels ; seventeen years later, 1888, at 20,000,000 of bushels, an increase of over 900 per cent., though the population of the Dominion had not increased 30 per cent.

The apple production of the Annapolis valley in the year 1871 was estimated at 45,000 barrels ; in 1888, at 300,000 barrels,—an increase of 566 per cent. In 1871, 80 per cent. of the standard varieties were marketed at home ; at present 50 per cent. of the yield would glut the home market even in a "short-crop" season. It is generally estimated that when the young orchards already planted get into bearing—or ten years hence—the production of the valley will be over a million of barrels, or

sufficient to supply a population greater than the whole of the Maritime Provinces would contain, seventy-five years hence, at the present rate of increase.

It seems evident that, to carry on this industry as the orchardists of America have set out, foreign markets, and especially the markets of Great Britain, must be secured in the face of competition growing sharper year by year.

Australia all at once threatens to become a formidable competitor for the spring markets of London. It is a mistake to suppose that this new rival is at a disadvantage as regards freights ; for the odds are the other way. The commerce carried on between Australia and Great Britain is seven times as much per capita to Australia as that between America and Great Britain is to America.

Apple producers and shippers cannot dictate the prices, neither at home nor abroad ; while the foreign market decides the prices which may be obtained in the home market. In former times, a local short crop meant high prices in the home market. It was purely a local question. Now, in many cases in the northeastern part of America, the production in most years being greater than consumption, the prices must be fixed in the open markets of the world.

This (1889) is called an unusually " short apple-crop year " everywhere, and yet prices are not sufficiently high in our domestic markets to make the returns of the average tree any thing like what it would have been twenty years ago under similar circumstances as to its yield.

COMPETITION BETWEEN THE UPPER AND LOWER PROVINCES.

Ontario and the Western provinces, with their immense tracts of fertile prairie lands, and their railway system opening these lands up to cultivators even faster than

they can be induced to occupy them, are unequalled for competitive farming. The production of cereals is increasing by leaps and bounds, and the lands of the older provinces are rapidly giving up the contest in this branch of husbandry.

Manitoba now bids fair to become the banner potato-producing province. The Canada Pacific Railway's reports state that the yield, per acre, runs up from 300 to 800 bushels. The Maritime Provinces, which have hitherto borne the palm in the production of this tuber, fall far behind in their yield per acre, 200 bushels now being considered a good average crop. The surplus yield of potatoes in Manitoba, in 1888, was estimated at two millions of bushels.

In 1864, twenty-five years ago, the Upper Provinces sent to Nova Scotia beef, pork, hams, butter, lard, and cheese to the trifling amount of \$8,269. This was at a time when trade was perfectly free of tariff restrictions. Since the operation of the railways between these provinces, the shipments of farm produce from the Upper Provinces to Nova Scotia have developed to about \$100,000 yearly.¹ According to Mr. A. C. Fairweather, an authority on this subject, \$105,000 in cheese, cured meats, and butter alone, were sent from the Upper to the Maritime Provinces in 1884.

THE BIG FISH CONSUME THE LITTLE.

The principle of the big fish consuming the little is well exemplified in many of the anomalies connected with the subject of the present competition in husbandry. Some great central interests get all the advantages in regard to freights, and others get other favors. The fruit region of Nova Scotia is eight hundred miles nearer to

¹ Including grain and flour, about \$2,500,000.

London than the fruit districts of Ontario ; but it costs more to put apples into the London market from the former than from the latter. These centralizing influences gain more strength every day.

But perhaps the most trying feature of our development is the competition growing up between individual operators, the big and the little. How is the small orchardist to live, who, for instance, is depending chiefly upon his crop of two hundred barrels of apples, in competing with the capitalist merchant, lawyer, or banker, as great orchardists, who are satisfied with a small interest on their investments.

There are orchards in America which now turn out from twenty-five to forty thousand bushels of apples. Three hundred acres is the average of a fair-sized orchard in some parts of the United States, and there are orchards in Canada coming into bearing, which are expected soon to turn out their five to ten thousand barrels annually.

The small farmers, in competing with their bonanza competitors, must support families and provide them with the necessaries of life through the whole year. The large capitalist operator needs to the amount produced, but a fraction of hired help, and needs it but a short period in each year.

But this is not all. The odds are entirely in favor of the large operator every time an article is purchased for use upon the farm. Special rates are always for the capitalist's benefit in the commercial world. Thus, we are forced to the conviction, that unlimited competition, bearing on the typical American farmer, is a condition which should be regarded as one of utmost significance.

Every advantage gained in cost of production by the farmer, in the way of improved implements of husbandry, in transportation, or through abundant harvests, etc., becomes, not mediately, but immediately, fused through society, for *its* benefit. On the other hand, though the cost of fabrication is being continually lessened, its prices greatly lowered to consumers, and the comparative capacity for its expansion vastly increased, these benefits do not become entirely or immediately fused through society, but sufficient margin remains in the hands of the producers of such fabrications to unduly enrich them. How this advantage is secured to the latter, will be shown in chapters which follow.

CHAPTER III.

BETWEEN THE UPPER AND NETHER MILLSTONES.

WHATEVER be the cause of the troubles to agriculture, the query, as to why contemporaneous industries are not also in the same case, must now be met.

It is not the result of an unavoidable evolution in the conditions of society which must close in upon the agriculturists sooner or later everywhere, and in all ages, to overthrow them.

No, the condition is not natural, it is most decidedly abnormal. The world is governed in its customs, in its sentiments, in its politics, and in its laws, by a false political economy. We magnify the importance of nearly every thing but agriculture, and it is made to bear all kinds of loads that other industries may develop and be made prosperous, until agriculture is crushed beneath the weight; and government by unjust laws is the chief medium through which this evil is brought about.

The weight of a ponderous governmental machinery as an outcome of endless law-making, and the granting of privileges to all others at the expense of agriculture, have put the farmers of America between the upper and nether millstones. On the upper stone is the crushing weight of a vicious system of taxation—the usurer, the monopolist, and combines of all kinds pressing upon it,

while the nether stone stands firm. The first is governed by artificial laws ; the other by natural laws, though natural laws sadly imposed upon ; one by impositions, injustices, and duplicity, the other by the stern logic of facts.

The price of the farmer's productions is, as we have seen in a former chapter, governed by a world-wide competition, being neither protected by national boundaries nor by special combinations. This is the natural, the normal condition. On the other hand, the prices which the farmer is obliged to pay for the productions and the services of others are inflated, through the result of artificial barriers, against all competition from production outside the limits of the nation, and by combinations within. This is the unnatural, the abnormal condition.

With such as the manufacturer, the conditions are exactly reversed. As producers, the results of their labors are inflated in exchange value by protection ; whereas, as consumers of farm produce, they have but to pay competition prices. The system of extreme indirect taxation, as operated in America, gives the great manufacturing industries the power to relieve themselves, however much they may be pressed upon. This is done by forcing unnatural terms upon such as the farmer.

Whatever the extortion which one manufacturer may practise upon another in the price he demands for his productions, that other finds relief through an equivalent exaction in return ; but the farmer is victimized by both, and he does not, or cannot, retaliate.

The trades combine one against another, and both against the farmer ; and he does not, or cannot, retaliate.

Government, in its combination with capital, uses its power against such as the farmer ; and nothing is done, or can be done, by retaliation.

It is these unnatural conditions which are a chief cause of the relative decline of the farmer's share in the national income ; which are causing the rapid increase of our tenanted and mortgaged farms ; which make the manufacturers and other combiners wealthy, and the farmers comparatively poor ; which cause the fierceness of competition to appear so much more severe in agriculture than in other occupations ; which do much to dishearten our rural denizens and make them appear unequal to the struggle of life ; which deprive our best citizens of the pleasurable enjoyment and profiting consumption of their just and natural share in the results of the progress of the age.

American shipping engaged in foreign trade is governed by natural laws, the normal condition, on the one hand, and, like agriculture, is crushed by vicious artificial laws on the other, and is being exterminated. When these obstacles were taken from this industry by England's free-trade policy, English shipping received new life.

From doing but 26 per cent. of the world's ocean carrying-trade at the time of the removal of duties, she now does over 50 per cent. Whereas, in the United States, burdens have been laid upon shipping until United States ships have been pretty nearly driven from the seas. Thirty-five years ago the United States had five million tons of ships sailing the oceans ; they now have less than one million¹.

¹ It is frequently contended that it is England's superior advantages for building iron steamships that gives her the chance to control the world's carrying-trade. We ask : Did she build all the ships she owned during the first twenty-five years after the repeal of obstructions to ship-building and ship-owning ? Why cannot America buy, sail, and repair English ships, as England has done in the past with American, and prospered by so doing ?

While natural conditions show the immense importance of these great mediums of wealth and general well-being, artificial conditions throttle them.

Others are empowered to dictate prices to the farmer, but who ever thinks of *him* taking the advantages which others may take,—for instance, pile up his grain from season to season, until he can sell at his own price? Does he store away, in times of abundance, his butter, his cheese, etc., knowing that government will help him out, at whatever price he and his neighbors decide to ask? Can the farmers—as an able writer suggests—meet at hotels, and over their wine and cigars agree as to what the price of their productions shall be, and the public be obliged to submit to it?

The manufacturer may run one engine or more, or may shut down as many days in the week as he likes. Legislation is made to insure him against loss, and the consumers of his productions are obliged to furnish the means.

We are governed by a political economy which takes from the one class upon which our greatest prosperity depends, that another may be empowered to crush it; national policies, which are based on laws, the actions of which are to victimize the worthy, for the promotion of that which in its effects is unworthy; which erects a tower, to finally overthrow the whole structure.

CHAPTER IV.

PROTECTION A DEADLY ENEMY TO THE FARMERS OF AMERICA.

IN fair New England, among the great manufacturers, pampered and protected for generations ; on the broad prairies of the West ; down the valley of the Mississippi, unequalled for its fertility ; in favored Ontario, and in the provinces by the sea, the farmers have a common cause in resisting the great foes which threaten their annihilation. To this end, it is absolutely necessary that their foes be well known, and that their modes of operation be clearly understood.

It is perfectly familiar to the tariff student, that almost every thing the farmers require as consumers is taxed in America to near the utmost limit. But many protectionists maintain that the prices of goods are not higher on account of indirect taxes levied on them. This latter claim is, of course, denied by the state socialist laborer, who contends that the Manchester free-trade theories threaten to bring about a competition that would reduce the price of goods and the price of labor to a shadow.

The socialists are right, as a rule, in their contention that free competition—that is to say, competition where monopoly controls no part of production—causes a constant lowering of the cost and price in exchange of products, but not that through this laborers would be injured.

Free competition permits the most abundant and perfect production of goods necessary for man's wants, with the least possible friction. The supplying of these wants in the highest possible degree—that is to say, to gain the most liberal consumption—is the end or aim of all production. Hence, freedom in competition implies increased consumption. Where this freedom is universal, and the exchange of services—that is to say, of the results of labor—is not obstructed, all should gain a benefit.

Contrariwise, where services or goods made dearer by friction or needless labor or unnatural conditions, on the one hand, are exchanged for services or goods made cheaper by a relief from friction, on the other, their relative conditions are then improper and burdensome to that party who has been handicapped. And now we return to an important point in the subject, and reaffirm that the protective laws of America produce a friction which causes a relative increase in the exchange value of protected commodities.

Many illustrations may be furnished to show that a friction, and a serious one, is placed on production by our meddlesome laws, but a few of these will suffice.

Wood screws are protected in the United States by a duty of ~~50~~⁷⁵ per cent. on the foreign article. The wood-screw combination is said to have paid the English makers of screws £25,000 yearly, to keep their goods out of the American market. We ask : has the American Screw Combination paid this £25,000 out of the pockets of its members for the mere fun of it? Has it not been taken from the consumers of wood screws in the prices charged them?

The Mills tariff bill, which was lately brought before

the American people by the then dominant party, proposed to reduce the ~~70~~³⁵ per cent. protection to 35 per cent. The manufacturers, of whom a large proportion were supporters of the party proposing the reduction, made such an outcry that the movement was abandoned. They declared, that with a protection of only 35 per cent. the business would be ruined! What was this but an admission from the manufacturers, either that the manufacturers are taking more than 35 per cent. of its protection from consumers, or that screws may be procured from other countries at 35 per cent. less than in the United States?

The window-glass industries of the United States have a protection of 70 per cent. Even with this, the manufacturers of these goods are not satisfied, and some of them have proposed moving to Belgium for the purpose of manufacturing and shipping to this country in the face of a 70 per cent. duty. Does this not indicate a friction somewhere, and a serious impediment to the production or procuring of these goods?

The tack-makers of Canada have a protection equivalent to 60 per cent., but these goods are coming in from the United States at regular prices plus this 60 per cent.; but the Canadian tack-makers, rather than lower their prices to the price of the foreign article plus the duty, desire more protection. This is an industry which was established and prosperous before the high-tariff era in Canada, and it cannot be claimed that such favors are necessary merely "to put them on their feet."

But here we have a very telling confession from a manufacturer himself, in a circular addressed to the capitalists of the United States, a copy of which will be found by referring to the *Iron Age* of New York, of

August 9, 1888. The paper first gives its views of the condition of the nail market in New York.

“After the dulness of the past month, there is a somewhat better movement in cut nails, and it is observed that the proportion of steel nails called for is growing. Inquiries are running toward heavier lots, but prices remain unsatisfactory, concessions from \$1.90 on dock for car-load lots being made with some frequency.”

And then the following :

“E. G. Scovil, of St. John, New Brunswick, has issued a circular, from which we quote as under : ‘Your attention is called to the large amount of money which can be made by manufacturing cut nails and bar iron under the present Canadian tariff. As a paying investment there is nothing to equal it in the history of the American iron trade. Cut nails are worth, wholesale, in Canadian market, \$2.60 per keg of 100 pounds for 10*d.*, and upwards, other sizes in proportion, or 55 cents a keg more than in the Boston market, while scrap iron can be landed here at \$4.82 per ton less than in the United States, this amount being the difference saved between United States duty on scrap iron of \$6.82 per ton and Canadian duty of \$2.00 per ton, viz. :

	Per ton.
55 cents a keg more than in Boston market, wholesale.	\$11 00
Saved on scrap iron.	4 82
	\$15 82
Total.	

the amount to credit of manufacturing here over and above Boston wholesale prices, which leaves the manufacturer a good profit. The demand for bar iron is large and increasing, and the profit of manufacturing is much larger than in the United States. Suitable coals from Nova Scotia can be laid down at proposed works for

\$2.65 per ton. Within six months we will have the Short Line Railway open, placing us within sixteen hours of Montreal, which will also open that market to this company, as finished goods can be taken to Montreal and other western points at a much less proportionate rate of freight than the manufacturers there pay upon our coal, which they must have. I intend forming a company with capital of \$200,000 in 2,000 shares of \$100 each, organized under the laws of New Brunswick. This company will pay a yearly dividend of 20 per cent. on its paid-up capital at present prices.' ”

The foregoing circular was from an old respectable manufacturer, who was quite competent to give correct information. The price of cut nails has been upwards of sixty cents per keg lower in price in New York than in the Provinces for the last two years, and continues so at the present day. The New York *Iron Age* of August 29, 1889, says : “ We quote cut nails \$1.85 to \$1.90 for car-load lots on dock for standard brands and good assortments.” At the same date not a keg of cut nails is to be procured in Canada for \$2.60

The Maritime Provinces consume about 100,000 kegs of cut nails yearly, of which the farmers should take at least one half. If they consumed 100,000 kegs during the last two years, they have paid out for this one article not less than \$70,000 more than had they the privilege of buying where they pleased.

To manufacture these nails it requires the service of about sixty nail-makers for the period of two years. Their families have consumed in the time not more than \$15,000 worth of the products of the Maritime farmers, on which the farmers' profit would not be more than \$3,000.

Domestic nails controlled the Canadian market before the Canadian protective era, and the farmers under comparatively natural conditions had nail-makers for customers of their productions. Consequently, the farmers of the Maritime Provinces are now paying—provided they are consuming the quantity of nails they should—\$35,000 worth yearly above free-trade prices, to insure the production of an article which does not in any possible way return them \$1,500 yearly net profit, and which was once produced among them with but a trifling artificial stimulant.

Between 1880 and 1886 every farmer in the United States, on all the nails he purchased, paid an average of thirty-five cents per keg more than had he the privilege of purchasing in the open markets of the world. During this period every pound of horse-nails worn out upon the feet of the horses of the farmers of the United States cost these farmers four cents per pound above free-trade prices. In fact, these articles were, at the time above-mentioned, sent from Canada to New York for export.

But it is the tariff against the import of European goods which causes the greatest burden to be put upon the farmers. Every article shipped between the United States and Canada is made dear through the practical prohibition of many European goods. The Canadian tariff is 25 per cent. higher against the average import from England than the average import from the United States. The United States tariff is 50 per cent. higher against England than against the average import from Canada.

Through United States customs laws about twenty millions of dollars go to revenue from the people's pockets in the enhanced price of imported manufactures

of cotton, and about ninety millions to the home manufacturers. Through them at least thirty-five millions of dollars go to revenue in the enhanced price of imports of iron and steel goods, and one hundred millions of dollars to the home manufacturers; about one hundred and fifty millions to revenue on woollen goods, and one hundred to the manufacturers; about thirty millions to revenue on the import of glass, and fifteen to the manufacturers; about five millions to revenue on the consumption of salt, and two and one half millions to the domestic producers of salt. Of these amounts at least two thirds are paid by the farmers of the United States.

In 1871, Canada manufactured 97 per cent. of her agricultural implements under a tariff of 15 per cent. In the interest of manufacturers the duty has been raised from time to time, until it now averages 39 per cent. The writer is prepared to state that the manufacturers, of all small farming tools at least, have loaded the price of the domestic goods to very near the full extent of this protection.

On an annual import by the Maritime Provinces of about \$150,000 worth of burning oil, a duty of \$100,000 is exacted, principally from the rural districts, all for the benefit of a few manufacturers in Petrolia.

In fact, the farmer of both the United States and Canada has to pay protectionist taxes on nearly every thing he eats, drinks, wears, or uses in the prosecution of his industry. He has to do this in order that favorites of this meddlesome system may secure profits from their investments. These favors average from 25 per cent. to 100 per cent. in the United States, and quite near as much in Canada,—principally at the expense of the farmer.

The socialists are right, that protection implies higher prices for goods, but it does not imply an increase in the exchange value of labor unless the laborer is enabled to combine with the manufacturer. The socialist should learn that there are two values to be considered : one, the value of goods in use or in consumption ; and the other, the value of goods in exchange or in production, and that the former is quite as important in estimating the power of income as the latter.

Nearly one half of the families of the continent of America, say twenty millions of families, are depending on industries almost directly upon land for their share of what is called the world's wealth. And what is this wealth? Political economy says : " Riches, or wealth, is, in fact, power—the power of getting what one wishes done by other men, either by remunerating them directly, as in the case of servants, or by purchasing their products, to which labor must be applied." And again : " Wealth may be defined as every thing which answers to men's rational wants. The complete and harmonious development of every human faculty being the object in view, all wants, the satisfaction of which tends to this end, may be considered rational."

It is a true political economy which endeavors to bring about, and to perpetuate, that condition which tends most to secure to all men the power of wealth in return for their labor, time, and efforts. It considers that, barring accidents, the full play of natural laws would go very far toward giving to every industrious and permanent citizen the opportunity in some shape for obtaining an ever increasing store of wealth, or a chance for the satisfaction of an ever increasing number of wants. Not merely power to satisfy the bare necessities

of an undeveloped existence, but for something far beyond this—something which makes man a victor over nature; opportunities for independent action; the chances for education, for travel, for comforts, for luxuries, for the adornment of homes; the power for voluntary action in charities, religion, or for social development. It is in the growth of this margin that man becomes an individuality, an independent manhood.

While natural laws do so much to place these chances within the reach of most men, it is a duty resting upon all, by every legitimate means, to gain, in some shape, the power these represent.

It is undoubtedly required of men that they occupy as large a place in the affairs of life as possible. The higher their aims, it is the more important that they control the influences which material acquisitions assist in securing. And is it not a beautiful, a grand arrangement in the laws of Providence, that the prosperity, the development of one manhood need not interfere with others, but rather that the advance of one may help to carry others forward?

Emerson finely says: "Kings have long arms, but every man should have long arms, and should pluck his living, his instruments, his power, and his knowing from the sun, moon, and stars. Is not then the demand to be rich legitimate? Yet I have never seen a man as rich as all men ought to be, or with an adequate command of nature. The pulpit and the press have many common-places denouncing the thirst for wealth, but if men should take these moralists at their word, and leave off aiming to be rich, the moralists would rush to rekindle at all hazards this love of power, lest civilization should be undone."

Whether the aim be to extend the beneficent influences of religion, or whether we seek to make this abode of man fairer, and brighter, and better through increase in the morality and virtue of its denizens, or, if we consider only the purely utilitarian aspect of the question, it is imperative that man's efforts toward the production of wealth shall result in a success that overlaps the satisfaction of the mere felt wants of an existence. But we require conditions which will do most to give to the greatest number these blessings of onward progress; better that the aggregate of wealth be less, if in the maximum there must be great inequality. The whole history of man supports the foregoing contention. The greatest progress has been where effort has been crowned with abundant returns. Through these successes in production power has been borne to the possessor, opportunities have become possible for the storing of wealth, abundant and profitable consumption, leisure for thought, for individual development.

Bastiat is correct in his claim that progress everywhere is, in fact, possible only through the increase of result as compared with effort. As effort is at the minimum as to the infinitude of result, so is power increased. Retrogression must of necessity follow the diminishing of the results of effort, until society is reduced to barbarism, ruin, and annihilation.

As Bastiat says: Do we not see everywhere that men in the management of their own interests strive by all means to remove obstacles in order that they may bring effort down to the minimum, and are, on the other hand, endeavoring by every recourse to secure the maximum of result, by the use of machinery, by invention, by the shortening and improving of routes of travel and of

transportation, by the removal of difficulties to navigation, and by securing every market, in all lands, for the cheapest and most desirable articles as agents in reproduction, or for unproductive consumption?

It is also true of our legislators as it was with the legislators of Bastiat's time, that though obstructionists in public policy when looking to their own interests, they show that they recognize the advantages of their procuring for themselves the largest returns by their endeavors to escape the friction between effort and reward they place against others. Is it not a common occurrence for legislators to favor friends and corporations by the removal of obstructions to the effectual disposal of the results of labor and to the receiving of the results of the labors of others? What is all this for but to increase the margin of gain between effort and result? In Canada a great transcontinental railway has lately been built with free foreign material, and is now disbursed and repaired with stock disencumbered from the taxation burdens which most of other productive enterprises have to bear. What has this been for but to secure to the stockholders the benefits of a great result in return for their efforts?

We are told that the success of such enterprises is a boon to the whole people. But is it not so with most enterprises? Should not the success of agriculture be a boon to the country? Can a nation afford that the farmers above all others shall not have effort crowned with rich result? Or is it wisdom to see, without regret, the agricultural population obliged to absorb the stored-up capital of the past in order to cancel the deficit between the effort and result of the present?

What sort of a national policy is it that takes no heed to these, when it is so jealous of the interests of others?

If government has a full treasury, supplied from the precious metals of the mountains of the moon, why not secure to agriculture a never failing margin between effort and result? There is a prevailing opinion or sentiment that our farmers and their like are only showing a commendable and, in fact, necessary patriotism in making no complaints against the conditions or the apparent impediments which exist between their efforts and liberal returns ; that it is only the proper patriotism for certain classes to make no complaints of returns which give only the satisfaction of ordinary wants, so long as others are increasing in importance and power ; and if they wish well to their country they should not mind if the rightful opportunities for a high place in the world's progress is withheld from them, so long as their country, by it, becomes independent in variety of industries.

In the first place, it is a trouble which is not confined to one country only. Any country, however, is badly off without a goodly number of patriotic citizens, but we do not require patriotism from certain classes only. We should not demand sacrifices from the great industrious, frugal, producing multitudes, and relieve those who control capital and the national purse-strings.

Capital is permitted to gain whatever it may require as agents in production, relieved from artificial impediments in order that its efforts may exceed the minimum. We have an illustration in Canada's annual import of the six and a half million dollars' worth of hides, cottons, and sheep's wool freed from duty. Capital is thus favored, that it may produce with a minimum of effort, at the sacrifice of patriotic treatment toward the farmers against whom these imports compete. Canadian national pride was sacrificed by its government in furnishing the High

Commissioner's a costly establishment in London, with English fabrics instead of Canadian. What a splendid chance was thus lost for an exhibition of patriotic feeling and for the advertisement of the country's superior productions !

When the Postmaster-General requires a quantity of wool serge for postmen's uniforms, as was lately the case in Canada, the order goes to a foreign country, although the farmers are all, more or less, depending on the successful production of the raw material from which such goods are fabricated, and the cloth manufacturers are grumbling on account of lack of orders.

Protection—more correctly “aggression”—is the deadly enemy of our farmers ; for, while the general tendencies are for monopoly to absorb the rural population, a protective policy, such as we now have, derives its power to assist monopoly, not from the planets, not from the mountains of the moon, but from the pockets of the farmers.

Protection narrows down, to the farmer, the margin of profit between effort and result. Thus his opportunities for progress are not only limited, but are actually being reduced to nothing. The results are, that the class who, in the early days of America's history, laid the foundation for its present greatness, are in the future to be deprived of the necessary opportunities for economic power, for political influence, for the gain of knowledge, for culture, for the exercise of the higher faculties through which progress is possible. There can be no escape from this conclusion, for reports and proofs come to us from all parties and from all quarters, that the farmers of America are becoming hopelessly involved in financial ruin.

Who now control all our great financial schemes, with their far-reaching social and political consequences, but the men who are secured a profit in their undertakings by government at the expense of such as the farmer? Who hold the balance of power in our legislation, but the men who are secured an abundant reward for their efforts at the expense of those situated as the farmer? Who are able to give to their families the shelter and luxuries of \$100,000 homes, and to their children the advantage of travel and European education, better than those who are subsidized by government, at the expense of those situated as the farmer? Who sit in higher seats, and in finer churches, and in more costly robes, than those who are permitted to carry on a practice of legalized brigandage against the pockets of such as our farmers? Who travel up and down our valleys, occupying our palace and first-class cars, fill our best hotels, to a greater extent, than the men who are sanctioned by government, in effecting combinations for systematic raids on the farmers' narrow incomes?

The result of protection is to destroy the efficacy of the natural powers of soil and climate; to counteract the rich returns of the earth, and dwarf the efforts of men; to render their actions futile; to exact the utmost from the capacity of the producing forces, and to withhold from them their natural powers as mediums for the satisfaction of wants. It is to pauperize man in the midst of his abundance; it is for man to see his overflowing granaries, without power to gain for him one step forward in command of the progress to which he is naturally entitled; it is for him to witness the magnitude of his flocks and herds, without the ability to cancel the demands of the usurer and the tax-gatherer; it is, in fact,

a force in the direction of barbarism, whereas freedom from its thralldom of attendant evils would allow high measures of progress and development.

Protection causes our rich valley farms to be little more powerful in yielding independence to the owners, than barren hill-tops would yield with freedom. It makes our mountain farms powerless to give to their owners command of the mediums for progress of scarcely any kind ; it is to shackle the farmers, from decade to decade, to nothing but rounds of drudgery, in order that they may be permitted merely to exist.

To meet our argument, some of the supporters of protective legislation contend that mankind progresses in civilization much faster where they have a great deal to contend against. They will say that, where natural conditions are too favorable, there the people will be indolent, shiftless, and improvident ; that obstructions remedy all this ; yet we find that, where the obstructions have been great, there mankind remains the same, making no perceptible progress through ages.

The school which finds obstructions so beneficial for the development of the mass is not the least disturbed at the prospect of easy and abundant incomes for its own members. They have no fear for the consequences to their families on account of the thousands guaranteed to them by government, for which they give nothing in return.

Protection has been very properly designated Sisyphism, from the fact that its effects are similar to those endured by the robber Sisyphus of fabulous history, who was punished by being required to roll a huge stone to the top of a hill, which stone constantly returned, consigning him to perpetual labor.

Protection to the farmer of America is Sisyphism at each turn. In his efforts in production every means necessary for its accomplishment is loaded with Sisyphism. Protection stands between his productions and those who desire them. It is a black, unrelenting wall, over which only professional smugglers and trained monopolists climb with safety. It puts a friction on every line of transportation. It stands ready to load with Sisyphism every attempt made by the farmer to gain a share in the productions of other lands, for the use of himself and family. It is a foe which robs the farmer of three dollars through taxes, for the benefit of monopolists and political parasites, to one for the necessary service of the country. It is, indeed, Sisyphism, on every hand; an endless slavery to its chief victims, the farmers of America.

CHAPTER V.

TRUSTS, COMBINES, ETC.

A RELIABLE statistical expert recently published the statement that, in the United States alone, the capacity for manufacturing the principal articles of production is equal to the requirements of two hundred and sixty millions of people instead of sixty millions. As the country has little foreign market for her manufactures, the results are: idle blast furnaces, closed-down mills, restricted production, extensive strikes, frequently throwing vast numbers out of employment; thus causing losses and expenses, which are thrown upon the people in various ways.

That manufacturers, as well as undertakers of some other great enterprises, may be safe from pressure upon the profits of their investment because of their idle works, and from competition, or that the returns may be commensurate with their idea of what the public should pay for their services, various systems are brought into play, familiarly known by the names of trusts, combines, and associations.

At the present time, huge trusts—in other words, enormous combinations of monopolies—are the prevailing methods of controlling production and profits. A description of the mode of forming these is interesting.

It is resolved by the great leading firms in a specified industry to put themselves in a position to secure its

success, claiming, of course, all for the public benefit. The formation of a trust is determined upon by the most powerful of the industry. These give notice of their decision to all engaged in this particular branch of business. The terms and stipulations are often of very objectionable character; to the smaller concerns, very unfair and oppressive. But rather than suffer the annoyance of continuous competition by more powerful rivals, they yield and become subject to it. Those who refuse to enter the grand union are squeezed out of existence; witness the "frozen out" sugar refiners, oil operators, meat dealers, etc.

One of the first effects of these combinations is to destroy all healthy markets for the sale of raw material. Only one appears as purchaser, whereas, before the union, many were appearing. The result is disastrous to those who must market raw materials, unless the owners of these raw materials are also in a similar combination.

The Butchers' National Convention in Philadelphia recently denounced the Western beef pool at Chicago as "the most infamous tyranny that ever existed in the United States. . . . We think also that the worst combination in the country is the beef, pork, and adulterated lard packers. The prices of cattle to the producer having gone down 50 per cent., and the price to the consumer having increased, every single dollar of the difference has gone into the pocket of the combination."

An instance of the power of trusts to control the price of raw products occurred at the port of New York in February of that year (1888). A cargo of 1,200 tons of raw Manilla sugar arrived, and was offered at auction—the

usual way of disposal. There was just one bid for it, and this bid secured it at $4\frac{1}{4}$ cents per pound. About four weeks previous to this sale, or before the sugar trust had begun to show its power, a similar cargo, almost a duplicate, was sold under competition at $4\frac{5}{8}$ cents per pound. This was a matter of about \$15,000, or thereabout, on a single cargo, for the benefit of the trust. Meanwhile the refined article, which had been selling for 6 cents per pound, was advanced to $7\frac{1}{2}$ cents or to $8\frac{1}{2}$ cents. From these data we gather that the trust realized on this single transaction over \$100,000, through restricting competition, on purchase of raw material, and the sale of the refined article.

The power of the trust, or in fact any monopoly or capital power over smaller competitors, was well exemplified in the exposé before the House Committee at Washington last winter, as to the character of the transactions of the Standard Oil Company as a competitor. It was found that the Pennsylvania Railroad gave the Standard and affiliated companies a rebate on crude oil of 49 cents per barrel in transportation charges from one field, and 51 cents from another. The railroad also gave the Standard $22\frac{1}{2}$ cents per barrel on all oils shipped by all people not affiliated with the Standard. The rates of freight were \$1.45 to the public and 80 cents to the Standard. State Senator Lewis Emery, of Bedford, testified to the effect that the independent refineries had been driven from the field by reason of the rebates allowed the Standard. Representative Breckenridge thought that the amount of rebates given to the Standard amounted in the aggregate to over \$100,000,000. Had the railways treated all shippers alike, those shippers would now have a larger income

by fifteen to twenty millions of dollars annually than they now enjoy.

Advantages similar to those of the Standard over their competitors are being secured all down through our manufacturing and commercial enterprises. Not long since a certain line of manufacture was not paying the concerns interested profits which satisfied them. A combine was proposed. The "big fish" of the industry refused to consent to an arrangement for an advance, unless he was allowed two cents per dozen, or about 10 per cent. on sales of the article by all the parties to the proposed arrangement, until *he* received ten thousand dollars out of *their* profits. The combine was formed; he received his 20 per-cent. advance on his own production, and finally *his* ten thousand dollars from the *others*. Such arrangements are being continually entered into and executed all over America, under shelter of the country's laws, whenever such sheltering is required.

Trusts and combines place the consumer at the mercy of the monopolist, who is empowered to dictate his own terms. If the consumer will but open his eyes, he will see that in many important industries competition has been virtually destroyed. It was stated not long since by the *New York Times* that the Stair Oil-Cloth Association of the United States, a pool of manufacturers, had made the one who violates the terms of the combine liable to a fine of \$500: no customer being allowed to undersell stipulated prices, while they reserve the right to advance prices at any time.

Very similar to the action of the Oil-Cloth Association has been that of the only lock-manufacturing company of Canada. Sheltered behind a thirty-five-cent protection, it has put in force a requirement that all jobbers

who purchasing from it must sell no lower than a certain stipulated price. The result has been that it has not only pocketed at least twenty-five per cent. above free-trade prices, but has, at the same time, compelled its customers to exact combination prices from all consumers. These are only a few illustrations of a widespread evil.¹

The Montreal *Star* (Protectionist), speaking of combines in Canada, says: "They are nothing less than a scandalous abuse of the privilege of protection from foreign competition granted to Canadian manufacturers."

Adam Smith was not far from correct when he said: "The price of monopoly is upon every occasion the highest which can be got; . . . the highest which can be squeezed out of the buyers."

At a recent session of the legislature at Albany, New York, the Committee on Trusts gave a very good description of the character of the average combine. "However different the influences which give rise to these combinations may be, the main purpose, management, and effect of all upon the public is the same, to wit: the aggregation of capital, the power of controlling the manufacture and output of various necessary combinations, the acquisition or destruction of competitive properties—all leading to the final and conclusive purpose of annihilating competition, and enabling the combinations to fix the price at which they would purchase the raw material from the producer, and at which they would sell the

¹ "All the Western pottery manufacturers, with a single exception, have entered into an agreement to maintain prices under bonds of \$1,200 each. . . . The greater portion of the pottery industries in the United States are represented in the combination."—*Iron Age*, item, Oct. 10, 1889

refined product to the consumer. In any event, the public at each end of the industry—the producer and consumer—is, and is intended to be, in a certain sense, at the mercy of the syndicate, combination, or trust.”¹

¹To evade the laws which have been recently passed aiming at the suppression of trusts, these organizations are merging into huge joint-stock associations, with the same purposes in view as the trusts—namely, to control both demand and supply.

BOOK IV.

IMPOTENCE OF THE REMEDIES PROPOSED, AND THE ERRONEOUS REASONS ASCRIBED FOR THE DIFFI- CULTIES NOW OVERTAKING THE FARMERS OF AMERICA.

What man is free to practise or not, is that association with his fellow-men which, within certain limits, increases his powers and enables him to perform prodigies. But carry this association to extremes, let no limit be assigned to its action, let it be developed and applied without measure and without consideration, and where does it end—in law or in communism?—COURTOIS.

CHAPTER I.

DOES PROTECTION PROTECT THE FARMER?

THE admitted decline of agriculture, especially in the most protected countries, gives pretty conclusive evidence that nothing has been done for it by forcing the growth of other industries at its expense. Notwithstanding this, it has been, and still continues to be, the prospect of indirect benefit to farmers sooner or later, which has tempted, and still continues to tempt, many communities to submit to laws which promise this result.

While natural laws of competition govern the production and exchange value of farm produce, the tendency is to make the consumer of farm produce, in almost any locality, independent of the local producer of such products. The tendency of the present day—there has always been a tendency—is in the direction of giving the consumer the benefit of this advantage much faster than the producer could gain by the growth of forced industries. The assumption is borne out by all facts bearing on the history of the subject. The conclusion follows, that protection, to be consistent, cannot be a temporary national policy. It must either grant equal privileges all round, which would be absurd, since it would be the people granting privileges to themselves out of their own pockets, or, after it has built up certain industries to the ruin of agriculture, it must then turn round and build

up agriculture at the expense of other industries. It must either do this, or it must be decided that a country may be as well off without prosperous husbandmen as with them—a position which it will hardly do to assume.

Furthermore, protection, to be fair, and especially to the farmers, should be extremely local in its operations. Each protective unit should be very small. This was the idea of General Hancock, though it is evidently true he lost popularity by its propagation. A protective line drawn around North America might serve the protective requirements of the carpet, rubber, paper, glass, sugar, and a host of other manufacturing industries. But what would it do to protect the fruit, the cattle, the sheep, the horses, and many other productions of the farm? The half-dozen concerns that may govern a line of manufacture may easily form combinations to govern the prices of their commodities, but not so the farmer.

To serve the protective purpose of the fruit raisers of New York, they must be protected from the fruit industries of Michigan; the cattle raisers of New England and the Maritime Provinces from Texas, Illinois, and the Northwest; the grain grower of the East from the grain grower of the West; the potato producers of New England from their rivals in the Maritime Provinces; the grain, butter, and cheese productions of the Maritime Provinces from those of Ontario, Manitoba, and the Western States; and so on.

Protection for the purpose of building up varied industries, that the farmer might be eventually benefited, has so far been a conspicuous failure in America. The sacrifices which this class has been called upon to make have never been made good, nor can they ever be.

In fact, the admissions that are made by protectionists as to the continued failure of the Eastern farmers on account of Western competition, are a tacit acknowledgment of the opinion that the manufacturers of the East have not come to the aid of Eastern farmers, as yet, though the manufacturers have been receiving aid from the farmers for a century.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOME MARKETS FURTHER CONSIDERED.

IT is claimed for protective legislation, that by stimulating the growth of home industries, and the creation of home markets for the products of the soil, a stop is put to the export of the extractive industries¹ of the country. That a tremendous waste is continually going on in the consumption of farm products, through their practical annihilation, at least for the time, as agents of reproduction, is very apparent. The waste is taking place at home, in every city of America. From all over the Union food products find their way to the New York market, are consumed, and the principal part of their fertilizing properties, in the change, flows to the ocean. Probably hundreds of tons of beef are transported from the country to that city each week, and but a trifling part finds its way back again to the country.²

The products of the extractive industries are continually being shipped between nations, and protective legislation is powerless to prevent it. Since Great Britain adopted a free-trade policy, other countries have ceaselessly poured into the ports of that country the products

¹ Agriculture is not properly an extractive industry.

² The city of Brooklyn alone expends ninety thousand dollars annually in carrying off to the ocean the kitchen garbage, to say nothing of what goes in the sewers.

of their extractive industries. The United States, with a policy, one of the objects of which has been to create home markets for the products of the farm, sent to other nations (principally Great Britain) during the six years, 1875-1880, of the products of the farm \$3,114,785,000, and during the six following years, ending with 1886, \$3,453,323,000, or about 72 per cent. of the total exports of the Republic. Under protective legislation there has been no diminution of the volume of the substance of this outflow, but, on the contrary, a vast increase. In 1860 the proportion of United States exports other than manufactured goods was 83 per cent. of her total export; in 1870, 87 per cent., in 1880 it rose to 88 per cent., or a total volume of \$685,961,000; 73 per cent. of the total in 1888.

In the revenue-tariff period, or in the ten years between 1850 and 1860, the growth of home manufacturing industries reached 88 per cent., while in the extremely high-tariff period, 1860 to 1880, or in 20 years, the increase was only 139 per cent. The export of manufactured goods increased, in the low-tariff period just mentioned, to the extent of 171 per cent., while in the twenty years which followed, the increase was only 90 per cent. Farther than this, we are not aware that the yearly export of manufactured goods from the United States has ever risen above \$130,000,000. These facts have special significance to the farmer, for they go to prove that, with all that has been done to build up the nation through the manufacturing industries, these industries have done nothing to bring wealth from abroad. The whole burden put upon consumers through inflated prices of manufactures, has been borne by one class for the benefit of another. And we must know that the farmer has had to carry a good part of the load at every turn.

The condition of the agricultural lands of New England, notwithstanding the great development of its cities, is very good proof that there is something wrong in the home-market theory.

The true home-market theory for the farmer is in the independence, through natural laws, of each little rural home. By allowing these to be the base of economic action, a home market is always secured. Manufactures will spring up as they are required. The productions of the farm will be the raw material of the home manufacturer. Then our manufactures will be of natural development, and these will exchange in foreign countries for such goods as are the natural productions of those countries.

This is the true division of labor, with a natural, a solid base. How senseless it is to force foreign raw material into our markets in order to give employment to our artisans, when, without compulsion, artisans might be fabricating our own raw materials for foreign countries. By following the former course, our position is always false; by the latter it would be sound and enduring, causing all classes to be ever more and more self-sustaining.

CHAPTER III.

TRUSTS FOR THE FARMERS.

THERE is quite a prevalent feeling among farmers that, if trusts and combines are to be the order of the future, the farmer may as well enjoy whatever benefits can be derived from them ; that many lines of the farmer's productions might well come into combination to the farmer's advantage, such as the milk business, the marketing of butter, and the like. Their opinion is this : that the services of middlemen may be dispensed with, prices made steady, and a profit from their industry always made secure, resulting in an advantage to the buyer as well as to the seller. This, however, has been the argument of all who are about entering the charmed circle of the combine. It is desirable for all farmers to give the character of the trust or combine a searching examination, that they may know whether they may so far countenance the principle of the combine as to depend upon such means for benefiting themselves. The indirect consequences, as well as the remote results, should be well weighed. However just and honorable may be the motives which prompt men to enter into an association, the object of which is to make safe their position in transactions with their fellow-men who may not be placed in equally secure positions themselves, and upon whom the means for the success of their enterprise

must largely depend, it is a dangerous position to occupy. As men gain power, they are apt to feel power; and become infused with the idea that power is safest with them and may be increased with profit to all. If they escape this themselves, there is always risk of their associates becoming subject to this influence.

The nature of trusts and combines is to encourage the impulse which seeks gain at the expense of others. This is an impulse which, for many reasons, the rural classes have a most decided interest in checking in every possible way. The effect of a trust that succeeds, is to crush all who are not inclined to come under its management. This is decidedly against the permanent welfare of the masses engaged in agriculture. The trust also forces terms upon the weakest members, and the weak become subject to the strong; a condition which the true friend of the typical American farmer would avoid as the danger of the future—real enthronement of wealth. The trust causes business to pass over to the hands of a directorate; thus it brings the majority of its members into a practical slavery. Its tendency is to stop the growth of individuality.

Completeness, individuality, self-dependence, is the ideal life which the country should stimulate—a state so desirable for the really developed man. The growth of sentiments and customs of a slavish character develops slavery. It is necessary, that the rural classes may retain their individuality, that they exercise it in all their institutions. In the stimulating of this individual development, there is the greatest actual bond of union. "Throughout our solar system, harmony of movement—interdependence—is a result of that local attraction which preserves a perfect independence. So, too, is it

with nations, the tendency toward peace and harmony among them being in the ratio of their interdependence ; that, in its turn, being the direct ratio of their independence." ¹ Since liberty is the soul of independence—power, so must a true interdependence know no slavish bonds. Association, union, there should be among farmers, but it should partake of no compulsory characteristics calculated to weaken the springs of individual activity. The trust, then, is not for the use of the farmer, though we would not throttle it in the manner that some legislators undertake to do.

Henry C. Carey, vol. iii., p. 464.

CHAPTER IV.

PROTECTION AS IT REFERS TO AGRICULTURE IN ENGLAND:

IN Great Britain, the freemen, or small holders of the land have been over-borne from time to time in one way and another, until they have become about extinct as a class. The great body of the farmers of England now own no land, but they must depend upon the lords of the manor for the privilege of tilling the soil, though not, as once, obliged under all circumstances to accept these lords' terms.

The agricultural lands of Great Britain are supposed to support three classes—namely, the landlord, the capitalist farmer, and the farm laborer. When a bushel of grain is raised in England, three parties must each have a share in the profit. The chances for a share of this profit to any one of these parties have very much lessened during the last fifty years. The chances for the landlord to take this profit to himself have also very much lessened in the same period. For many years, agriculture in the hands of the landlords was a monopoly; profits through laws which prevented foreign competition being secured to the landlord. These profits went to the landlord because the labor market was glutted.

These conditions are all changed. Agriculture is not now a monopoly in England; and the laborer is much

more independent of the landlord. Food supplies now invade the markets of Great Britain, from the broad fields of America, India, and the continent, at prices which appal the home producer. But the landlord is the one who looks upon this with the most concern. The capitalist farmer and the laborer are comparatively free to escape to other occupations.

Fifty to one hundred years ago, the English farm and English landlords were, as types, peculiar to England. The American farm and the American farmer, as types, were peculiar to America. Their relative conditions in this respect have vastly changed, and with it another striking change has come about. In those days landlordism in England was all that could be desired by the English landlord, and the landless English farmers, who were able to emigrate, were becoming the typical farmers of America. To-day the English capitalist invests his money in American land to become a competitive agriculturist, while the average emigrant is not attracted to the land, but comes to swell the other occupations. Although such a large portion of our interests are agricultural, not more than one to fifteen come as agriculturists.¹

Why these relative changes? Are we not insidiously bringing upon the small farmers of America what was done to them in England in past times by force?

Adam Smith's idea that agriculture, as he saw it in England, was the best of industries, because it supported three classes, was calculated to create an impression hardly correct as an axiom of political economy.

Intrinsically great as the industry undoubtedly is, it is not able to support an idle class, and when openly forced

¹ In 1886, of 117,546 males immigrating into the United States, only 20,528 came as farmers.

to do so, as in past days in England, it must have been at the expense of others.

In the days of monopoly in English agriculture the lands of England assumed a value which they could not maintain. Consequently, in comparing the condition of agriculture there now with former periods and with other countries, we must conclude that in England a more normal condition, even under a chronic disorder, is being reached for a time ; while in America an abnormal condition increases, while a chronic disorder is being produced.

When was the English farmer in a more miserable condition than just prior to the repeal of the corn laws? Lardner's *Annual Retrospect*, of 1831, stated that the most interesting topic touched upon in the king's speech, was that contained in the paragraph which informed Parliament that "the export of British produce and manufactures in the last year had exceeded that of any former year." It lamented that "notwithstanding this indication of active commerce, distress should prevail among the agricultural and manufacturing classes in some parts of the United Kingdom." Says our authority¹: "The country gentlemen brought reports to Parliament of the sufferings among the tenantry and laborers, that rents could not be paid, and poor-rates had absorbed the profits of the farmers. One petition to Parliament, from Bedfordshire, stated that the laborers were receiving wages which gave them barely the means of protracting a cheerless existence, deprived of all the comforts and almost all the necessaries of life ; that there are parishes in the country purely agricultural, where fifty to ninety able-bodied men, destitute of other work, are employed by the parishes, and receiving *four shil-*

¹ *The Financial Reformer*, of Liverpool.

lings a week, and that no blame attaches to the farmers, who are unable to afford more." In Berkshire "the weekly payment to able-bodied men who could find employment is stated as being in some places *so low as two shillings and sixpence*." A Buckingham petition informed Parliament that "many persons commit depredations and misdemeanors to get into prison, thus to preserve themselves from lingering starvation"; that "many have contracted disorders by eating the flesh of animals that die naturally, and other unwholesome food." The Bishop of Bath and Wells, in presenting one from Frome, in Somersetshire, said, in support of it: "I have been a witness to the most afflicting distress, which I could not, if I would, describe."

Sir James Caird, a very high authority on these matters, recently stated before a committee in England that the spendable income from the landed interests fell off \$114,000,000 in 1885. And yet it is evident that the mere day laborer was in no such deplorable condition in 1885, as is related of sixty years ago in the foregoing paragraph. Evidences clearly indicate that the land-owner, and tenant paying rents upon a basis of former values, are those of the landed interests which are feeling the depression most.

Finally, we arrive at the conclusion that, in all our comparisons as to the condition of agriculture in England to-day with former times and with other countries, we should keep the fact well in view that its congested state is due to the evil results of protection in the past, and a bad system of land-holding opposed to the best use of land.

Germany, France, and Italy, all having high protective tariffs, are each contending with most perplexing agricultural difficulties.

CHAPTER V.

AS TO FRUGALITY.

NOT a few, even of farmers themselves, attribute the disease, which they have to admit is settling itself upon agriculture in America, or upon the economic affairs of those who pursue it, to their habits of expensive living. For a cure they demand frugality. This demand may, in a sense, be reasonable ; but those who make it must concede to the view that they ask cure for a disease which is growing upon other classes even more than upon the farmers. Then, why are the agriculturists less able to bear up under it than other classes ?

It may well be claimed that the consumption of the income of the husbandman is as rational as that of any of his contemporaries. Let one become familiar with the expenditures and habits of the bulk of the manufacturing and commercial classes, and they will be convinced that these are far more irrational in such respects. In fact, the farmer, of all men, feels very sensibly the consequences of any injudicious use of his means. The farmer also faces, as no one else, the responsibility of his folly. It can rarely be thrown upon others, as in the more commercial, or even professional, occupations. Governments may be extravagant, and their supporters commend them for it, claiming that the country so represented is made to appear more important and influ-

ential through these expenditures ; but the people pay for them. The patent-medicine vender spends his hundreds of thousands in advertising, for the purpose of creating an interest in his compounds. The more conspicuous for costliness these outlays, the better they pay ; but the consumer foots the bill. The merchant spends his thousands upon plate-glass windows for his store, because it pays ; but the customers at his store pay the bill. The clerk and the commercial traveller must dress well, and the latter must visit the best hotels ; and the consumers of the goods he sells must eventually settle the bill. We can safely say, that whatever may be the evil of a too liberal use of income, such habits have not been engendered within the ranks of the farmers, but come from without.

But is there justice in the growing inability of farmers to equal others in a liberal consumption ? Probably not one farmer in a hundred, no, not one in a thousand, is consuming as liberally as we desire that he should, though perhaps less rationally. It is a calamity for a class to lose its power to consume. Being continually so situated, it must relapse into slavery of some kind. The man who is in bondage to another, consumes merely that he may produce. The one who can only consume what barely suffices for an existence, is a slave to his necessities. As man gets beyond this, and can become victor over nature, he becomes free. The greater the consumption, provided it be complete, the more advanced the individual, the more rational, the expansion of all the endowments with which God has been pleased to favor him.

No ! instead of less consumption for the farmer of America, to allow him more should be the aim of all who would guide his destinies to a happy issue.

CHAPTER VI.

HENRY GEORGE'S REMEDY.

THE undoubted tendency of the time toward larger farms, and the control of land by men of capital, and the increase in the number of farms owned by others than the occupiers, is evidently an indication that capital has, in some way, gained an ascendancy over the typical American farmers. That the greater number of farms becoming subject to the landlord are those of the quite small areas, also goes to prove that the small land proprietors are giving up the contest more rapidly than any others.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, there is nothing in the nature of the conditions now existing to give a grain of weight to the conclusion, that the destruction of land values to the individual would, in any way, give relief to the small land proprietor. That the large farm is growing larger by additions to its area of the small farms about it, only shows that the larger farm is, in some way, better circumstanced to hold its own in the contest for gain.

The causes which have brought the small farms into the hands of the capitalists are various, but the weight of mortgage-debt has been the final agent in the majority of cases. The once fortunate owners of such farms were, at the first, benefited by small loans from

the usurer, but through their struggle to keep on with their enterprises, and to meet the demands of society levied upon them, their debts were increased, interest ceased to be paid, and finally the mortgagee took them over to save his money. In the vast majority of cases to-day the owners of tenanted farms would gladly sell them off at a good discount on the amounts which they have invested in them. They have no desire to be landlords, and it has only been through the failure of the mortgageors that they have become so possessed with land.

The tendency of the present time in America is to destroy love for country life—to denude the farmer of the sentiments that should impel him to hand down to his own posterity, intact, the lands of his forefathers, with all their valued associations. The single tax is calculated to give greater impetus to this most undesirable tendency. It is to increase this tendency with those who engage in rural pursuits, for them to look upon the farm as only a great factory for material purposes, and material purposes only. The farms subjected to it would become more and more the possession of those who would look upon them only as the medium through which to gain riches. Its adoption would be but to give more stimulus to a tendency which Mr. George dilates upon as an evil of great proportions already—“bonanza farming.” “These machine-worked ‘grain factories’ of our Great Republic of the New World are doing just what was done by the slave-worked *latifundia* of the Roman world. Here, they prevent, where there, they destroyed, ‘the crop of men.’”¹ The wholesale system of agriculture, gathering more and more

¹ “The Land Question,” p. 59.

force in America, is something far more to be feared than any danger from landlordism. Under it are being destroyed our "best crops of men"—our small land proprietors,—a trouble that would not abate one iota under the single-tax regime.

Mr. George's remedy would relieve the "bonanza factories" of farm produce in the great West from taxes, for he says: "*To put taxation solely upon land values* would shift the weight of taxation from the sparsely settled agricultural districts to those populous centres where land has a real and a high value. As it would destroy the speculative value of land, the result would be that many farmers would have no taxes at all to pay; for, no matter what might be the value of his improvements, no farmer would have more taxes to pay than could be collected from unimproved land equal to his own in quality and situation."

On the other hand, the advocates of the single-tax claim that one of their aims is to make the great unoccupied lands in the hands of the capitalists cheap by taxing them, in order that men of small means may obtain them. I think the result would be more likely in the direction of making them bonanza agricultural estates, and thus increase competition in agriculture.

The single-tax theory abounds with contradictions, but at best it has nothing to offer for the relief of the small farmer. The great aim of the single-tax advocate is to bring about a greater equality in the distribution of wealth among men. It might have a levelling tendency in some instances, but in others it would have just the opposite effect. We will suppose the case of two farms of equal size and natural value, and each paying the same heavy tax: the owner of the one having capital to procure

the best of machinery, drains for his lands, trees for his orchards, and every article required, at the lowest price at which they could be purchased ; the other having none of these advantages. Under such conditions the latter would be driven to the wall. Under such a tax it would be only men of capital who could carry on production. Mr. George's remedies, from any point of view, would only make matters worse for the small farmer.¹

¹ See Book V., Chapter II., on "The Single Tax."



BOOK v.

TAXATION.

With high-tariff men, I am for promoting American industry; and with them, I am for bringing the producer and consumer as near together as practicable. Nevertheless, I am an absolute Free-Trader. I would have no custom-house on the face of the earth. Never will government be administered honestly and frugally until the cost of administering it is paid by direct taxation. And never will government be confined within its proper limits, until its sole office shall be to protect persons and property.—GERRIT SMITH.

CHAPTER I.

TAXATION IN GENERAL.

TAXATION of some sort and degree is a necessity of civilized life, and it should be the desire of every intelligent citizen to contribute something to meet the needs of organized society. Yet, on the whole, it must be considered one of the social burdens, and should be limited in its extent to the actual requirements of the state.

Excessive taxation is evidently a very great evil, though it has been strangely enough urged, by men high in legislative positions, that through it is "the only gateway to prosperity." Taxation of this sort, says the wise economist, is "a kind of suicide," however laid; while it is little less than criminal, when clumsily or inequitably drawn from the masses; for its continuance must finally end in the ruin of many whose incomes are not sufficient to bear any added strain.

The rapidity with which taxation has rolled up against the people of America during the last forty years, or since the farmers began to lose their political power, is enough to startle one when he takes courage to face the figures which tell the story. In 1840, the federal treasury of the United States took from the pockets of the people \$1.25 per capita; in 1888, \$5.57 per capita; or, for a family of five in 1840, \$6.25; in 1888, \$27.85; an

increase of over 400 per cent. in one department of taxation.¹

In Canada, federal taxation has grown in volume 125 per cent. during the last twenty years, while the population has not increased 50 per cent.

Mr. Edward Atkinson estimates the total taxation of the Union for 1880, viz., federal, State, and municipal, at \$14 per capita, or \$70 for the family of five, and the savings of the people at \$18 per capita. In Canada, the proportions are probably about the same. These figures, which we presume are near correct, show the somewhat alarming proportion taxation bears to actual savings, and how absolutely necessary it is that such a tax be put upon the right shoulders. According to Mr. Atkinson, the yearly net savings of the people would be nearly its present amount, but for these taxes. The incidence of taxation, in city as well as country municipality, and between the classes universally, becomes a serious one. Are not the majority of our agriculturists groaning beneath their unequal burdens?

There is hardly a doubt that such impositions did much to assist in bringing about the ruin of the ancient civilizations. And we are not without evidences to show that the peasant classes in those times were the bearers of the principal part of a load which was seldom any thing but crushing. Geikie, in his "Life of Christ," speaks of the exhaustion of Palestine through the oppression of the Romans "falling with special weight on an agricultural people like the Jews"; Gibbon, in his

¹ The late civil war should not be held accountable for the weight of taxes twenty-three years after its close. From 1789 to 1830, with the burden of the expenses of two wars resting upon the United States, the tax per capita was less than \$1.75 annually. But, what of Canada's federal tax in the year 1889, of \$5.66 per capita, without any disastrous war on which to throw the odium?

“Downfall of the Roman Empire,” of the “intolerable weight of taxes attached to the land.” How full of warning for all ages are the words of Lactantius, the Latin rhetorician, when referring in this particular to the fall of the Roman Empire. “Thanks to the multitude of functionaries, there were more tax-consumers in the empire than tax-payers,¹ so that the cultivator was ruined by the exactions to which he was exposed. Fields were deserted, and lands once tilled were abandoned, till they lapsed again into the forest.” Another writer says that “the treasury was a robbery which completed the fall of the Roman Empire.”

In the years in which the lands of Great Britain were passing from the control of the small landholders, the burden of taxation rested upon land. Indeed, we venture the assertion, that all through the ages since the organization of society, the principal state burdens have in some way been thrown upon the tillers of the soil whenever they could be so applied. In our time a piteous wail comes ever and anon from the tax-ridden peasants of Italy, France, and Germany. Of this unfortunate class in Russia, “a former resident” writes :

“The peasants are financially ruined; the worst off are dying, literally dying, of hunger, while others have scarcely any thing to eat, or to drink, or the wherewithal to protect their bodies from the cold, and yet their last cow that fed the children, innocent of mother’s milk, is distrained for taxes, and they themselves flogged in order to extract from them the money

¹ The central government at Washington embraces, in the Internal Revenue, Post-office, and other departments under its control, 130,000 officials, and its numbers are constantly increasing. If the number of officials multiply in Canada for the next fifty years as they have during the last twenty, they will comprise a body of tax-consumers not much fewer than the tax-payers.

requisite to keep the administrative machine in motion. Oh, Father of Compassion ! is this the only gateway to prosperity ? ”

After the masses of the ruralists have once begun to lose their relative power, it has only been when the lands have become the property of a monopoly of some kind or other that the land-holding classes have been able to dictate terms.

“ The progress of a community toward wealth and power being in the direct ratio of the combination of action among the people of whom it is composed ; it follows that the advance towards both must be in the ratio in which they are enabled to dispense with the services of the politician, the soldier, the owner of slaves, and the trader—of that class which lives by virtue of the simple act of appropriation. Every movement, however, in that direction, looking necessarily to a diminution in the power of the latter, they are all—soldier, trader, and politician—found uniformly banded together for the subjugation of the people ; as was seen in Athens and in Rome, and as may now be seen in all the countries of Europe and America. The history of the world is but a record of the attempts of the few to tax the many, and those of the many to escape taxation ; and the tendency of society to assume a natural and stable form is in the precise ratio of the success of this latter class—a success, however slowly and tediously accomplished, because of the power of those who live by appropriation to come together in towns and cities, while they who contribute to their revenues are scattered throughout the country.”¹

¹ This, from the pen of Henry C. Carey (“ Social Science,” p. 235), applies to America to-day even better than when it was written,—thirty years ago.

CHAPTER II.

THE SINGLE TAX.

WE are brought again to a consideration of the agitation now going on, to have all taxes for public revenue merged into one upon land only. It has already assumed proportions which should cause the utmost concern to the agricultural classes. Started principally in the interest of the laboring classes, years ago in Europe, and more recently and perhaps more prominently by Mr. Henry George in America, it is now growing in favor, we have to admit, with most city classes. And, even leading publicists and respectable influential journals are giving it their approval.

The single-tax advocate, makes a point of contending that so nearly is direct taxation now thrown upon real estate, that it would be but taking a short step farther to make it bear the whole. They are right, in so far as America is concerned, in claiming that the chief burden of direct taxation bears upon this class of property.

It is admitted by most observers that real estate is sure to be taxed, while personal property is sure to escape. The estimate recently made of personal property which is escaping taxation in the State of New York, runs up to the fine figure of \$2,500,000,000. Mr. Thomas G. Shearman, makes the statement that between 1860 and 1880, the assessed value of real estate in the United States,

increased from \$4,564,000,000 to \$10,470,000,000, or an increase of 130 per cent. ; while the increase in the assessed value of personal property increased from \$2,015,000,000 to \$2,870,000,000, or an increase of only 43 per cent. It must be borne in mind, in these comparisons, that personality in the aggregate, as it is valued in exchange, is augmenting at much the faster rate.

The situation appears serious for our farmers, when it is realized that the classes which may be likely to favor this system of taxation are a growing majority of the voters of America. Mr. George intimates his satisfaction on this score in his chapter on "The American Farmer," in "Social Problems." It is now proposed to have the adoption of this mode of taxation secured for all local purposes where the farmers are in the minority—and so hem the farmers in. Hence, it becomes incumbent on farmers not only to give the question of taxation their earnest attention, but their immediate attention also.

While Mr. George admits that the adoption of his scheme of taxation would destroy the selling value of the farmers' land, he claims ¹ that it would increase the value of his improvements, and thus make his labor so much more remunerative, that he would be more than compensated for the loss of his land. I think it would not only take from him the selling value of his land, but in many cases be the cause of the loss of the improvements as well.²

¹ "Social Problems," p. 304.

² According to Mr. Edward Atkinson, the total amount of taxes paid by the people of the United States aggregated \$700,000,000 in 1880. It is safe to assume that under the single tax much more than one half would have rested upon the land-holdings of the country districts—say \$400,000,000. At that time there were 4,008,907 farms. For these farms to have paid the \$400,000,000, the average

What are the single-tax arguments? They may be divided into two principal divisions, namely: those which maintain that all taxes must finally rest upon the consumer; and the opposites, which maintain that taxes fall altogether upon production. The first may be represented by the following quotations from Mr. Edward Atkinson's "Distribution of Products": "It will be borne in mind that, with few exceptions, all taxes are distributed, wherever they may be first imposed, and ultimately fall on all consumers in almost the exact ratio of their consumption." (p. 103.) "The writer is of the profound conviction that whenever the subject of taxation is reduced to a science, taxation on real estate will become the source of nearly all taxes." (p. 115.) It is true that in these quotations Mr. Atkinson does not pin his faith to the single tax, or one upon the rent value of land only; but they serve to represent the opinions of many leading students and publicists upon the subject of the final bearings of taxation.

As regards taxes upon land (or real estate) and the cultivator, it is argued: Every one must consume the products of land. Every producer must go to the land for his raw material. Consequently, where land is taxed, the one in possession of it is enabled to charge this tax to the consumer, who is obliged to purchase his products.

On the other hand, Mr. Henry George contends that "a tax on land values does not add to prices, and is thus paid directly by the person on whom it falls; whereas all taxes upon things of unfixed quantity increase

would have had to pay \$100. Since the unearned increment, or rent per farm accruing to value of the bare land in the United States, does not reach 40 per cent. of this amount, such a tax would certainly have encroached either upon the farmer's labor or his capital.

prices, and in the course of exchange are shifted from seller to buyer, increasing as they go"¹; that the unearned increment attached to the value of land should belong to the state; that it is becoming impossible for laborers to buy farms, and that, as a consequence, the cities are being overcrowded.

Neither the real-estate-tax advocate, who contends that all taxes placed upon land values must finally rest upon the consumer of the products raised from this land, nor the one who claims that no tax upon land values can add to prices, is, by any means, correct. This is where the grand mistake is made.

That all must consume the products of land is perfectly true, but that all must consume the products of labor is also true. Professor Sumner's claim, that the unearned increment is upon most property in a condition of property, is probably not far from correct.²

The gathering of people *about* land increases the value of land, the gathering of people *on* land creates a demand for the products of labor. One waits for his increment, and the other takes it at the time he throws his products on the market. The settler on land is induced to accept a small immediate return for the products of his land, looking to the more remote benefits to be derived through the increasing value of his lands as neighbors surround him; the fabricator of the materials extracted from land receives his unearned increment at once.

That the power of this increment on farm land may be over-estimated, as compared with the productiveness of other industries, is seen now by the relatively impoverished condition of the peasant proprietors of Europe, in their

¹ "The Canons of Taxation," p. 2.

² "What Social Classes Owe to Each Other."

efforts to hold on to their lands with devoted attachment after they have ceased to give their owners the necessaries of a tolerable existence (an attachment, however, which it would be a calamity to drive from the human breast).

Agriculturists could not shift their taxation burdens upon other classes through the price of their productions, simply because agriculture is not a monopoly; whereas all interests, under the single-tax *régime*, which are monopolies and touched by it, would have the same chance to shift their tax upon agriculture and other helpless industries, as now. But how easy would it be for great trusts, such as a salt trust, having control of the salt deposits; or the oil trust; or the coal and iron, having control of the coal and iron deposits, to force all consumers of these commodities to pay their land tax. They would simply charge to cost of production, and the consumers would pay it in the prices paid.

Customs walls aid these combinations in accomplishing their purposes, but they are not necessary for this end when combinations become international in their character. The single-tax advocate contends that by putting a tax upon the unworked mineral lands, these lands would become available to new competitors; but how long before the latter would be brought into the combination, or be crushed out by those with greater capital? The average farmer of America to-day is as powerless to burden society in any shape, in his control of the rent value of his land, as he is to make the consumer pay his taxes. In fact, these conditions move on parallel lines.

Mr. George is one who is able to see that the farmer cannot throw the burden of indirect taxation upon other

classes, for he says : " Let the working farmer consider how the weight of indirect taxation falls upon him, without his having the power to shift it off upon any one else ; how it adds to the price of nearly every thing he has to buy, without adding to the price of what he has to sell."¹

Why has the farmer " not the power to shift it off upon any one else ?" Simply because competition is so great in the articles he produces that he is powerless to make his own prices, and every pinch drives him to seek relief by increasing production—that is to say, competition.²

Notwithstanding the fact that many things indicate that land is going at the present time into the possession of large holders, and that the small land proprietors are being exterminated, there is not the slightest probability of competition in agriculture diminishing for ages to come. However, let the monopoly period be near or remote, competition under the single-tax regime would be sufficiently severe to exterminate the value of all improvements to the small holder, either through their

¹ " Social Problems," p. 301.

² When Mr. Edward Atkinson dealt with the question of the railway and the farmer in their economic relations, he evidently thought it quite possible for an industry to be so situated that it would be powerless to increase the prices of its products for the purpose of throwing its taxes or any thing else upon the consumer, for he says : " The charge (freights) which can be put upon the wheat is fixed by the price at which East-India wheat can be sold in Market Lane." (" Distribution of Products," p. 259.) He admits in this that the farmer cannot always make his own prices, consequently taxes may rest upon him when placed there. But, since railways may be in monopoly, the price of wheat at Market Lane may have nothing to do with the amount of freight they may take from the farmer ; besides, they are of the industries which may shove their taxes upon those who use them, as Mr. Atkinson elsewhere states.

abandoning their lands early in the contest, or later on when they were obliged to do so.

Mr. George thinks that the small farmer in competing with his bonanza rival would gain an advantage under his scheme of taxation which he does not now possess, as the small farmer has the greater proportion of improvements to be freed. But has he sufficiently considered the fact that the small farmers are principally near the cities, where he proposes to lay the burden of his tax, because there the lands have the greater rent value than in sections more remote, while the small farmer's most troublesome rival is situated on lands which have a much less relative value, and would bear but a small relative tax.¹ It is evident that the landholders which most threaten the peace of the typical farmer of this country are a landed plutocracy as competitive agriculturists, rather than a landed aristocracy withholding land from use. Little England years ago, with a large consuming population, and a great portion of her lands kept out of use by an aristocracy, and with a high protective tariff, was enabled to make agriculture a monopoly. It was then a period when the burdens of taxation were shifted from this industry. From at one time bearing all, it finally fell to less than 5 per cent., where it remains. Under such a condition, lands became abnormally high.² The peculiar position of England for a time gave to agriculture every advantage over other

¹ If this be met by the claim that one of the special purposes of the single tax is to bring down the rent value of land in and about the cities, as compared with land in the country, the conclusion must follow, from the single-tax theory, that the cities will become the more desirable for the masses to congregate in. Then what becomes of the great argument, the cheapening of country lands for the masses?

² See Book V. Chapter IV. on English agriculture.

industries,—a condition which is not likely to occur again very soon, certainly not over the principal part of the globe. In the States and Provinces every year sees the incomes from most other occupations rise in comparison to the value of farms, and Mr. George was in profound error when he said: "It has already become impossible in our older States for a man starting with nothing to become by his labor the owner of a farm." ("Social Problems," p. 314.)

The facts are that, in the old States and Provinces, it is becoming all the time easier for the farm laborer to buy out the typical American farmer who employs him; at the same time, he is less and less inclined to do so, preferring, as he gains means, to make his escape to the cities, or to mechanical occupations. At no period have there been greater opportunities for men of small capital to gain land than during the last twenty years. Yet never in America has the concentration of population in the cities been greater than during this period.

In leaving the country they leave land, if not falling in value, certainly, in most cases, not rising, to go to where land is rising rapidly in value. The human family, for some cause or other, is preferring those very spots where to obtain land gold enough to near cover it must be offered. It follows that if there is an evil in this flocking to cities, it comes not from pressure for want of land, but from something outside or anterior to the land-pressure trouble. Then the flocking of people to cities, in its relation to land values, is a cause, and not an effect, as the single-tax advocate maintains. The first cause lying back of the flocking of people to cities, other causes than those ascribed by Mr. George for the gregarious tendency of the time must be found.

In truth, these anomalous conditions, of which I have just been writing, seem a proof that the land of the typical American farmer is declining in value through the extreme pressure of taxation of all sorts which has been gradually forced upon it, to the ruin of the farmers, rather than that their ruin is coming through land rising in value by escape of direct taxation. If this be correct, the application of Mr. George's cure would be but to add to the disease.

In the neighborhood where I now write are families supported on incomes from farms which pay in direct taxes over three times as much as corresponding incomes from other occupations ; and I believe conditions similar to this are not rare all over America. Is this equality ? Why should one escape, and not the other ?

The proprietor farmer, however small the income derived from his occupation, has heavy land taxes to pay ; the wage-earner, who may have twice the income, practically escapes. Is this equality ?

The mortgaged land proprietor pays the usurers' taxes upon his capital, and the usurer pays on merely the income, and more frequently escapes altogether. Is this justice ?

Again we quote from Mr. George : " If we impose a tax upon money loaned, as has often been attempted, the lender will charge the tax to the borrower, and the borrower must pay it, or not obtain the loan." (" The Canons of Taxation," p. 2.)

Not a few labor under the same impression as Mr. George upon this subject. We beg to suggest that this error springs from a defective analysis of the question, notwithstanding the fact that so astute a reasoner as Mr. George is among the number who hold to the theory.

The rate of interest is governed by demand as well as supply ; decrease the number of those who borrow, and demand decreases. Every financial burden lifted from the borrower makes the lender less necessary. Relieve the one million or more mortgaged farms of the United States from all taxation for five years (say \$350 in all to each), and put it upon the loaners of money, and then mark the decrease in the number of mortgaged farms.

In shifting these burdens from the borrower to the lender you increase the number of those who have capital ; you are working in the direction of breaking up a monopoly. With a sugar, a salt, or an oil combine it is different ; put the single tax upon them and still they control the price of sugar, of salt, and of oil ; for these articles are still required, and these combines only furnish them. Something further is necessary in regulating the incidence of taxation, a subject which will receive due consideration further on.

It is argued by the supporter of the single-tax theory that the cities would bear as large a share of the burden as the rural districts, with all taxes levied upon the rent value of land, since real estate in our cities is reaching an aggregate value as great as in the country. Even so it but proves an abnormal condition, which we wish to remedy. Give to rural property the relative value which it had forty years ago, that is to say, from representing 35 per cent. of the total wealth of the nation to 60 per cent.,—a desirable change,—and where then would the tax fall the heaviest ? Or, apply the tax to-day in Canada, and which but the country would pay it ?

Looking upon the single tax in this, its most flattering aspect, it is found that it can only be applied to an abnormal condition, one which it would aid in continu-

ing. It is not reasonable that the lands of a great country should have an aggregate value higher in cities than in its country. Consequently, our aim should be, not merely to establish a system which only promises to serve a condition which must continue false, in order that the system may be maintained, but to look for something to bring about a truer state.

However, the procuring of a system for laying a just direct tax is a matter of grave importance. This necessity has been heedlessly evaded by economists, as well as statesmen, under whose province it comes for treatment. Every thoughtful publicist should know that its solution must become the base on which fiscal reforms must rise ! without which that many-headed monster—indirect taxation—must continue to hold sway.

CHAPTER III.

INDIRECT TAXATION.

IF farmers have been slow to appreciate the injustice of the system of *direct taxation* under which they have labored, and the dangers now threatening them in the agitations going on in the great influential centres to increase these evils, it is hardly a wonder that the more intricate question of indirect taxation has failed to receive the disapproval which it merits from them. Yet, on the other hand, it seems almost incredible that a scheme for collecting public revenue could be devised to work so much and so continuous harm as our customs and excise taxes have, without causing louder protests from the masses ere this; that farmers, who are the most deeply victimized, should nurse the delusion that possibly it was benefiting them.

It is plainly evident that indirect taxation has been the chief working instrument in a system of government prevailing in America, through which the slavery of class to class is being secured. Through it, the policy of protection, of which we have said so much in condemnation in the preceding chapters, has been of easy application. It has shown how it is possible, by artificial means, to entirely change the course of national industry. Without it, or similar means, it must have followed the course in America which the protectionists of as far back as 1789

decided it should not follow, viz. : "Seek with success a competency from our cheap and fertile soil."¹ Thus a century ago the first blow at American agriculture was given.

Practically, America's indirect-taxation system is just a century old. The modest proportions of the monster's early days seem almost ridiculous compared with its present huge development. The United States customs tariff of 1789, equivalent to an *ad valorem* rate of 8½ per cent. as a temporary expedient, has grown to a vicious tax of above 40 per cent. Canada is marching in the same direction, and at a rate quite as rapid.

To-day the evasions and perversions of the customs laws involve sums in terms of money not far behind the total-revenue considerations of a hundred years ago, to say little of the more important matter of the moral effects on the parties immediately in contact with the operations of the law. It is well, perhaps, for the peace of the spirits of those worthy gentlemen who in 1789 protested against an 8½ per cent. tariff, because of the temptation it would offer to the breaking of law and endangering the morals of the people, that they are probably ignorant of the fact, that here in America, within a century, under the fostering influence of the system then introduced, smuggling has become a fine art.

The history of our indirect taxation is an interesting study. From it we learn how it is possible for a people to become gradually and unconsciously enslaved, the power of the people to govern themselves to be snatched away, and the safety of our civilization brought into peril. Even away back in the days of the Romans, im-

¹ Fisher Ames.

ports on merchandise were levied, it is true, for revenue purposes; but a tariff, as a chief medium in holding together a system of government—a sort of despotism by jugglery,—has, strange to say, its highest development in modern ages.

Through indirect taxation, alliances between selfish interests having the command of wealth and governments with matchless fondness for attachments which insure possession of abundant money resources, are easily formed. Thus combines, monopolies, and other moneyed interests become ascendant in government. Such a rule brings the liberties of the people into actual peril. Farmers have much to fear from the sway of the plutocrat. Some one very correctly remarks: "A plutocracy has its throne in cities; an aristocracy in the country." Even an aristocracy is in sympathy with the great rural classes. Moreover, with the country shorn of its political power, democracy is a delusion. It follows, that the farmers, of all others, are imperilled by a revenue system which secures the alliance of wealth and government. But more of this elsewhere.

The first great canon of taxation laid down by all eminent economists is to the effect that the volume of taxation be rigidly limited to the actual necessities of the state. The violation in America of this first rule is to be laid principally to the door of our system of indirect taxation. Politicians have learned that by this system "the fowl is plucked without crying out." Taxation always becomes so adjusted as to bear upon those least likely to rebel against it. That the farmers are they of America who have never yet united their forces to resist this system of oppression is patent to all who have given the subject any attention.

We speak advisedly when we say—it cannot be uttered too often—that “indirect taxation is a cowardly, mean, unjust method of drawing from the small incomes of the people at large, vast aggregate amounts, which, if proportionately borne by the rich, would result in their immediate rebellion.” This brings us to consider the fact that through our indirect tax we are continually increasing the violation of another most important canon of taxation—to wit, the levying of taxation in just proportion between rich and poor.

Adam Smith’s rule as to equality was, that “the subjects of every state ought to contribute toward the support of the government as nearly as possible in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the state.” This canon must stand as the citadel of justice in schemes for obtaining public revenue; for the power of private revenue in society increases to the individual possessing it, as revenue is augmented from that of yielding what may barely suffice for existence to that of affluence and luxury.

Placing the bearings of indirect taxation on consumption at say 15 per cent., we will have the family whose total income is \$240, with the bare necessities of existence requiring an outlay of \$200 before indirect taxes are paid, contributing \$30 for revenue, or 12.5 per cent. of total income; while, on the other hand, the family whose income is \$10,000, living in comparative luxury on an outlay of \$5,000, will be paying \$750 in taxes, or only $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on total income. One will be paying 75 per cent. of possible savings—the true consideration in estimating the incidence of taxation; the other, less than 8 per cent. The million-dollar income contributes 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for revenue, and the so-called poor

man his 10 to 20 per cent. How unjust! the state stimulating the growth of inequality by treatment totally unscientific as well as inhumane.¹

To those who say that our indirect taxes are so regulated as to bear heaviest on articles consumed by the rich, we reply: A study of our tariff laws, our trade and navigation returns, and the opinions of those having practical information on the subject does not warrant such a conclusion. The writer's many years of constant observation of the workings of America's customs laws, and a knowledge of the many advantages taken and concessions made, permit him to make no such deduction in behalf of the wisdom and humanity of these laws. "Books, carpets, dishes," and the like, are a necessity of civilized life, and "surely" the so-called "poor men" of our farmers who should be obliged to "do without these" are few; though there are politicians who think otherwise.²

Another important canon of taxation is to the effect that a tax should take as little as possible beyond the sum that reaches the exchequer. Our system of indirect taxation is most expensive, for it exacts large sums from the payer, through the profits charged by the merchant who advances the tax.

Mr. Henry C. Carey was an uncompromising opponent of free trade and decidedly in favor of land taxes, but he has left on record the result of a vast amount of research,

¹ One hundred thousand capitalists in the United States are enabled to save more after taxes are paid than fifteen millions of its people, in whom are included the farmers, the greatest actual wealth producers of the commonwealth.

² The pauper is not treated as a subject for consideration in the incidence of taxation, as he is supported by the state in any case.

accompanied by his own opinions, all in most pronounced opposition to indirect taxation. He tells of how at one time, in the days of the Roman Empire, "duties on imports and exports, on the passage of country produce into towns and cities, on the passage of rivers, on sales by auction, on almost every kind of property in motion, mark the later portion of the history of the republic, and the whole of that of the empire. Slaves could not change masters, nor could property change hands by legacy or donation, without payment of a tax. The raising of cattle and the consumption of salt were privileges to be paid for to the state. The consumer of water, and he who needed to avoid it, alike were taxed. Nothing was so trivial in appearance as to warrant its escape from the hands of the tax-gatherer, provided only that it promised to add to a revenue required for the maintenance of a system under which labor and land declined in value and slavery took the place of freedom."

Of Turkey he said: "Taxation there has no reference whatever to the value of the land, but only to the ability of the collector and his agents to squeeze from its cultivator the largest share of its products."

Thus also of the United States: "The government of the United States has, throughout most of its existence, been misled by the erroneous idea that indirect taxation was the legitimate mode of raising the public revenue. . . . What has been the effect of this policy is seen in the facts already stated in relation to the comparative prices of agricultural products they need to sell and those metallic ones they require to purchase—the experience of forty years having exhibited a steady and regular increase in the quantity of wheat, flour, rice, tobacco, and cotton required to be given in exchange for smaller

quantities of lead, tin, iron, copper, gold, and silver. That being the road towards barbarism, and the course in that direction having been continued with remarkable pertinacity, we are thus supplied with an explanation of the facts, that the power of trade grows steadily while that of commerce declines, and that in the land in which all men were once declared to be free and equal 'free society' is now declared to have proved 'a failure.'"¹ And still the difficulty becomes greater. More decided protection has only augmented the forces of centralization within the national bounds, but indirect taxation remains the same evil.

¹ "Social Science," vol. iii., p. 191.

CHAPTER IV.

DIRECT TAXATION.

MR. THOMAS G. SHEARMAN, who is a student of this subject, claims that for the United States, by the substitution of direct for indirect taxation, \$650,000,000, or nearly one half the present burden, might be saved the people ; the total aggregate weight being \$1,350,000,000, made up of the " share to government, profits on levy by merchants, and the action of the tariff in increasing the cost of domestic manufactures."

The writer's estimate is as follows : United States customs and excise taxes amount to about \$335,000,000 a year ; domestic manufactures, which now amount to about \$6,000,000,000, are increased in price at least 5 per cent. (one quarter the average protection), which gives \$300,000,000. By adding together the taxes paid into the treasury and that paid the manufacturers, we have \$635,000,000, on which the jobbers and retailers get at least 20 per cent., or an aggregate amount of \$137,000,000. Thus we have \$1,132,000,000, representing the indirect taxes upon the people of the United States ; a yearly tax equivalent to \$12.86 per capita, or \$64.30 for the family of five. If this is the approximate sum of the indirect taxes bearing upon the average farmers of America, it is quite enough to account for the decline of American agriculture.

In Canada the federal treasury gets about \$28,000,000 at the present time through indirect taxation; domestic manufactures, which now amount to above \$400,000,000,¹ are increased on the average not less than 5 per cent., making another burden on the consumer of at least \$20,000,000. On these two amounts the merchants, jobbers, and retailers who collect them get at least another 20 per cent., or \$5,760,000, making in all the fine sum of \$57,600,000, or about \$57 for the average family.

An average direct tax of \$25 against the million or more incomes in Canada would secure a revenue of \$25,000,000. Would this not be a change calculated to lighten the load carried by many a tax-burdened citizen? An annual direct tax of \$15 upon each of the upwards of 500,000 farm holdings in Canada would yield a revenue greater than the sum total of its customs collections of twenty years ago (\$8,578,000 in 1868). This even would be too liberal a contribution to the federal treasury from the farmers of Canada; a small one, however, compared with that now extracted from them. The cities have a burden to bear, and personal property has no right to escape. Death, probate, legacy, or succession duties, to a limited extent, could also be utilized to regulate inequality.

But, on whatever taxation be laid, it should rest on the respective payers, as strictly as possible, in proportion to income, and it should, after a certain limit, be progressive. This is really the only scientific base on which to found an equitable fiscal structure; one at the same time in perfect accord with the highest principles of ethics. God never intended science to divide the

¹ Estimated \$635,000,000 for 1889.

brotherhood of men by an impassable gulf, growing wider and ever wider. Its mission is rather to bring all this seeming conflict of interests into harmony.

Properly adjust a progressive tax on property and mammoth incomes, and you give relief to the one to whom the labor for the gratification of his necessities is a real burden of itself. Levy this progressive tax with all the weight it should have on combines, trusts, and monopolies, and you give back to society an increment which is really unearned. Tax the bonanza farmer in this progressive way, relieve the small proprietor, and competition would be relieved of a terror, the result of an abnormal condition.

Small farmers could well demand this—without which there appears no salvation for them,—a right in conformity with science and the common weal; but not as suppliants for the crumbs of state charity; not as the millions of the peasantry of France and Germany, who are now receiving presumed favors from the state after being destroyed as actual forces in the national life.

Allow the small farmers of the world, before they have lost courage and become depraved, to come under the influence of these wise changes as to taxation; to take a place as the ideal typical farmers of America, and their power and usefulness as tax producers would prove them no subjects for the exercise of charity, but the equal of any of their contemporaries in bearing the burdens of the state. It is an abnormal condition which makes the farmer a subject of charity.

While these are my views on the one hand, I maintain on the other that it would be harmful as well as unscientific political economy to prohibit the aggregation of capital in industry. Deal with these matters by way

of taxation, as the great economist, Adam Smith, suggested over one hundred years ago. Allow capital freedom to work—the state securing its share; permit no public favors, and the harm from it will be brought into small proportions. If it becomes a monopoly, and is thus empowered to shift its burdens on the consumers of its products, it is then robbing the citizens of the state, and taxes should be put upon it until monopoly is broken. If the state be a factor in the accumulation of incomes, how much more is it true of the incomes which roll up into the millions, than of those which barely suffice for the possessor's existence? How much more then should the state claim from the former than from the latter? These views are in accord with those of many thoughtful students of the present day, while a few practical statesmen have dared to utter similar ones.

“The rich man, with a surplus income, should contribute more proportionately out of that income, than the poor man out of that poverty which leaves him no more than a bare subsistence.”¹ J. B. Say, long ago, taught that “taxation is a sacrifice to the preservation of society and social organization, which ought not to be purchased by the destruction of individuals”; that taxation “cannot be equitable unless its ratio is progressive.”²

An excellent precedent for a progressive tax is given in the eminently successful fiscal legislation of Solon, in the little community of Attica. The weight of taxation was then laid upon the largest property-holders—those having the highest political privileges; the next class was relieved to the extent of $\frac{1}{6}$; the next $\frac{1}{3}$, and so on, until those were reached who were ineligible for office—

¹ Hon. Edward Blake, speech at Toronto, 1886.

² “Political Economy,” p. 459.

these were relieved altogether. It is true that Solon's tax was levied principally on land, but the largest part of the people were at that time landholders, and it became the main concern to make taxation equitable between the small and the large land proprietors, and this Solon's policy accomplished in a high degree. In it was exhibited the "most equitable division of the responsibilities of citizenship that the world has ever seen." And through it a condition of society was established which "affected even succeeding generations most beneficially." Legislation which followed finally overthrew all this, and the masses became re-enslaved.

Mr. R. G. Haywood read an excellent paper before the Social Science Congress at Huddersfield, England, in 1883, on "How to Apply Direct Taxation." For England he suggested the following distribution :

1.—Lands and Tenements at 4s. in the pound income.....	37.4 %
2.—Railways, Canals, Mines, Minerals, at 4s. in the pound income.....	10.8 "
3.—Legacy Duty.....	2.8 "
Succession Duty at 1s. in the pound.....	15.0 "
4.—House Tax (warehouses, factories, works, offices, shops, etc.).....	20.0 "
5.—Miscellaneous.....	14.0 "
	<hr/>
	100.0 %

In amplifying this Mr. Haywood said : "The foregoing estimate is intended to show not only that there are abundant sources from which ample income may be drawn, but which are now unjustly allowed to escape their legal liability. Moreover, it is plain that a suffi-

cient revenue may thus be obtained by a direct system in the simplest manner at less cost of collection, and with no interference with the operations of trade.

“The present house duty affords the best foundation on which to build a system of direct taxation, extending to all interests beyond the owners of land. Every man resides in a house of some kind. Household suffrage is now the basis of our parliamentary franchise, and this fact will go far to reconcile even the lower classes to a revenue system constructed upon it. Adam Smith observes that ‘a proportional house tax might perhaps produce a more considerable revenue than any that has been drawn from it in any part of Europe.’ Again he says : ‘A tax put upon house rents would in general fall heaviest upon the rich, and in this sort of inequality there would not be any thing unreasonable.’

“It is not very unreasonable that the rich should contribute to the public expense, not only in proportion to their revenue, but something more than that proportion. To this, however, as well as to any other proposal whatever, a hundred objections will be raised. But a graduated tax, beginning with the exemption of the very poorest class having a bare subsistence, and rising in a scale adjusted not according to rent alone, but taking also into account the occupation, profession, and position in rank, might, and doubtless would, bring in a more elastic and productive revenue than our present income tax.”

The more these matters are studied, the clearer it will appear that the matter of adjusting a progressive tax, is not a more insurmountable difficulty than that of adjusting a single tax by taking the unearned increment of land. And, whether with or without the single-tax system, all lands held for speculative purposes

should be taxed at their highest rate up to their full market value, both for federal and local revenue. The same may be said of bonanza farms.

With direct taxation, however levied, a stop may be put to lavish and unnecessary public expenditures. Lord Derby's remark forcibly expressed its immense advantages when he said: "By making the whole revenue depend upon direct taxation, the pressure would be so odious that war would be avoided, because no party would incur the odium of carrying it on." The taxpayer will have a direct interest in holding a government to strict account for exactions which are made directly against him, for the reason that he directly feels the severity of the burden imposed. Under such circumstances it is only reasonable to suppose that he will weigh well the question of his ability to bear the imposition before he sanctions expenditures which may be avoided. This certainly is another weighty argument in favor of direct taxation. With direct taxation a check would be immediately put to the growing power of Parliaments. With it properly laid, and with the results which would necessarily follow, the American farmer would again take his place in our legislative chambers.

CHAPTER V.

THE REAL STRENGTH OF AN EVIL SYSTEM OF TAXATION.

IN early times despotism gained its power by physical force. It is claimed, with good reason, that, in most instances of to-day, governments gain ascendancy, not only over their opponents but over the people at large, by cunning. It is conspicuously apparent to the student of these subjects that, by this means, they are continually increasing their command of the purses of the people of America, and making stronger their alliances with the wealthy classes. Surely, with such an advantage as this, they have the power of position. Will they yield it up without a desperate struggle? We think they will not.

Professor Sumner very correctly remarks: "It is the Forgotten Man who is threatened by every extension of the paternal system of government."¹ "Every new subject to be legislated upon strengthens the influence and power of government, makes the politician more important in his own eyes, as well as in the eyes of others." "All governments like to interfere; it elevates their position to make out that they can cure the evils of mankind."² As the subjects seeking legislative benefits are continually increasing, these potent props to the paternal

¹ "What the Social Classes Owe to Each Other," p. 150.

² Walter Bagehot, in "Economic Studies."

system constantly augment its power ; while “ expectant ones ” who hope, sooner or later, to have a share in “ manipulating the state control,”—even down to the day laborer,—are ever putting themselves in line to give it support. Do away with indirect taxation, and place direct taxation upon a proper basis, and the paternal government of a civilized country would be shorn of its greatest power, and the leaders of its forces know this only too well. The twenty or more millionaires in the Senate of the United States are thoroughly imbued with the idea that wealth and government are inseparable ; they know just how specially serviceable government may be to wealth, and how specially serviceable wealth may be to government, and they, like their fellows in every department of the political machine, govern themselves accordingly. The result is that against reform in our system of taxation and the evils it occasions there is a well consolidated force, commanded by well-trained, experienced, and self-interested officers.

But it is not only this regular army of active forces which opposes this reform, there is also a force of negatives, more or less irregular, who are most effective impediments to wholesome efforts to effect this purpose. They object to the policies of the actives, but they formulate nothing to stimulate hope in the breasts of those who long for remedial action. Worthless as are their objections to action on the lines of their professions, they are really grave stumbling-blocks to the many who may desire a better state of things, for their ever ready “ wet blanket ” is a constant check to weak-hearted though honest reformers.¹ Yet reform is imperative.

¹ One of the most effective objections to radical changes in fiscal policies made by its assumed friends, is that the necessity for large

However ponderous and expensive the machinery of the state may be, it draws its support solely from the substance of the people. "Woe to the people who are incapable of limiting the sphere of the action of the state. Liberty, private activity, riches, well-being, independence, dignity depend upon this."¹

Have the farmers and the thoughtful people of America lost that power which alone can overcome these conditions, the continued triumphing of which must finally result in the ruin of all?

revenues precludes the possibility of making these changes. The reasoning is absurd: first, because revenue will always be required, and, under our present system, whatever party is in power, every day is making the conditions worse; second, if it be admitted that a change would be desirable for the collection of a small revenue, it is still more desirable for the collection of a large one. Under our system of taxation, the volume is increased at an arithmetical ratio, while the evils may be said to increase at a geometrical ratio.

¹ Frederic Bastiat.

BOOK VI.

POLITICS.

The conditions of prosperity with every people are involved in the extent to which they bring their purest and wisest minds into positions of honor and control. No nation, however strong ; no nation, however vigorous, could long preserve its relative prestige and prosperity in the world, if it should disregard these conditions.—DORMAN B. EATON.



CHAPTER I.

THE FARMER LOSING HIS POLITICAL POWER.

THAT the farmer of America is rapidly losing his chances to have a controlling influence in the political concerns of his country is patent to all who will give the subject any consideration. In the United States, forty years ago, the farmers composed 70 per cent. of the industrial population. And even twenty years ago the cattle farmers and agriculturists outnumbered all others. To-day they are in the minority. In Canada the agriculturist vote is still in the majority; but even in this new country we fear the farmer is losing a lingering chance to save his class from political annihilation. In proportion to numbers and to capital invested in agriculture and cattle farming, compared with numbers and amounts invested by other classes, there should be over one hundred farmers representing their various constituencies, sitting in the Dominion Parliament, and looking after the interests of the agriculturists. Instead of that number, not more than thirty-nine can in any way be classed as representing the farmers. Of the whole number of the last United States House of Representatives, only seventeen were farmers, or 1 to every 470,000 of that occupation. Even in 1870 twenty-six farmers, or 1 to every 228,000 of their number, had a seat in the House. In our State and Provincial Legislatures, the

representatives from other classes outnumber the farmers by three to one. These facts prove a decreasing power in the farmers in a matter fraught with vital importance to them.

Educated men of the professions are necessary for certain positions in Parliament. But the majority of our public men are inclined to encourage large expenditures, elaborate formulas, numberless acts, and to the securing of vast powers to Parliaments—much of all which is decidedly antagonistic to the true interests of the people. After prorogations, they boast of their labors, and the number of their acts passed, many of which will, in the public interest, require repealing. In Mr. Herbert Spencer's "Sins of Legislators," he informs us that in May, 1873, a Mr. Jason, vice-president of one of the law societies of England, publicly stated that from the time of Henry III. to 1872, there had been passed through Parliament, in England 18,110 public acts, of which four fifths had been wholly or partially repealed. We are inclined to think, that at no time have politicians been more anxious to magnify the necessity for much legislation than at the present day, and in no portion of the globe more than in some of our own local as well as our federal Legislatures.

In 1861, the farmers of Nova Scotia composed 61 per cent. of the industrial population of the province; in 1881, 43 per cent. This constant relative decline in the numbers of the agricultural class, as compared with others, shows most plainly that however prone the farmer may be at the present to throw away his chances, the time is not far distant when the power which he might exercise to-day will be gone, perhaps never to return.

Few, we think, will deny that even on great questions the farmer usually supports the old party, but he does it from far higher motives than those which govern the average voter. But the consequences are that the politician thinks it unnecessary to give himself any concern as to farmers' rights or his support. And, whatever has been said to the contrary, the average farmer of America is, I believe, above bribes. He, the farmer, with his industry, his self-reliance, is really the nation-builder; but in politics his vote counts but one, and the politician has faith enough in his integrity to know for whom it will be cast. With all that must be done to suit the exigencies of the times, the demands for benefactions, protections, preventions, and encouragements, and which the State can only satisfy by large demands upon the farmer and his like, who have produced and saved,—the farmer is what Professor Sumner calls him, "The Forgotten Man."

Even in many constituencies where agriculture largely predominates either a coal, a coal-oil, a cotton-seed, a railroad, a sugar-refining, or a cotton-manufacturing monopoly marches its forces to the polls, "an organized army." The agricultural vote is, so far as self-interest is concerned, practically a fruitless effort. When our polling days arrive, our agriculturists gather around the booths and promptly record their votes. So long as only farmers vote, the ward-workers have little trouble to decide the state of the poll, carefully guarded as the secrets of the poll may be. They know that their neighbors are influenced in their choice of representatives, in the main, by their feelings in reference to the antecedents of the party whose name the candidate bears. But the effect on the ballot-box by the squad of electors who are to be marched down from the factories near by, will

depend altogether upon the numbers who turn out. Antecedents do not count with these. At such important times a half-holiday is usually granted. "Election day!" "Hurrah for Edgar Thompson!" "Hurrah for the age of steel!" This great army of toilers march and record their votes in support of the majestic power of capital. Their numbers decide the state of the poll before the ballot closes. The friends of monopoly gather in crowds around the booths, the opponents disappear, capital wins! "Hurrah for the hammer!" "Hurrah for patriotism and progress!" A daring sceptic may have the hardihood to wait the sheriff's decision, and upon this outburst he very well suggests that it would be better if they could hurrah for "*liberty*, patriotism, and progress." He would be told that "the man who cries 'liberty' is an enemy to his country." The daring opponent might well retort that, "at the back of all this, there is a despotism which will one day crush us all." He would be told: "If you don't like your country, you had better get out." "Hurrah for the age of steel!" "There will be a grand dinner and an illumination at the factory!" "Hurrah for Mammon & Co!" Farmers of America! You have against you an organized enemy that requires a solid union of your whole strength to combat, or you are most surely undone!

Though far from believing in unbridled liberalism, or rather the extreme of egoism, I think there can be little doubt that Mr. Herbert Spencer is correct in his claim that one of the most alarming tendencies of our time is the encroaching power of Parliaments, and the willingness with which the people are surrendering one prerogative after another to the control of legislators. By such yielding up of the management of concerns, which

were once considered best under the control of individual choice, a slavery is established, which, though voluntary, is none the less real. The consequences are that not only is the scope of individual development and relative influence lessened; but, through such deliverance, new opportunities are created for selfish and unscrupulous lobbyists to victimize the masses.

We have seen the popularity of meddling legislation in the United States; and we have also seen the ease with which Canadian legislators have been able to satisfy their constituents, that in the hands of a paternal government they could trust the management of their dearest interests.

In the United States, at the present time, seventy-five per cent. of the people allow their liberties, in regard to trade, to be sacrificed to satisfy the avarice of a few monopolists and the needs of a ponderous political system. Yet the fathers of this same people, little more than one hundred years ago, rose in their might and waged war with England to gain perfect commercial freedom. Just now, in Canada, a faction are clamoring for the privilege of having their commercial dealings confined to this continent alone; though the liberties, and chances for trade, which they are willing to imperil, are valuable beyond compare with those which the colonies of America a century ago were ready to fight for in order to secure to their own control. In America, the most burdensome system of taxation that can be devised—taxes on imports—has increased, in the last twenty-five years, many times the increase of population. And still the people sanction a continual increase. Will they eventually cry a halt? Or will they allow it to go on unchecked, until they are powerless to compel a change?

Our political systems give to our legislators most tempting opportunities, by effecting slight changes, to put thousands into the hands of the monopolist and the treasury at the expense of the people ; while the manufacturer in return will put his hundreds into the politician's election fund, and make a good bargain by this exchange of services. The politician has but to support the aims of the monopolist, and the monopolist will stand by the politician.

So apparently irresistible are the toils of our various politico-fiscal systems that even some of our best men are unable to escape their pernicious influence. Have we not recently seen our most earnest, able, high-minded, and experienced statesmen, who, from their first entry into the political arena, have stood by the masses, finally advocating the cause of the oppressor as a last recourse for a return to power? The results, of course, are a greater victory for capital and the loss of champions for the interests of the people.

Many of our laws are made, not in the interest of the masses, but for the selfish ends of the few, and very often for the direct benefit of the selfish politicians who make them. A goodly number of our people know all this ; they feel that its corrupting and demoralizing influence has permeated through our whole social life ; but we, in effect, have decided that party despotism must be maintained.

How appropriate are these words of Bastiat : " What ! the law is no longer the refuge of the oppressed, but the arm of the oppressor ! The law is no longer a shield, but a sword ! The law no longer holds in her august hands a scale, but false weights and measures ! And you wish to have society well regulated ! Your system has

written over the entrance of the legislative halls these words : 'Whoever acquires any influence here can obtain his share of the legalized pillage.' And what has been the result? All classes of society have become demoralized by shouting around the gates of the palace : 'Give me a share in the spoils !' "

Yes, many of us know full well that our laws are oppressive, demoralizing, and expensive. Professor Sumner says of the United States : "Men are put up for the correction of these bad laws who are 'no better than the laws themselves'"—men whose hearts are not in the interest of reforms, whose very natures prompt them to oppression. Can we expect an extension of justice and liberty at their hands? "Can you gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?" Party declares for them ; and the independent voice, the best voice of the country, is not heard in our legislative halls.¹

Our public men are urged to stand by principle, by truth, by the cause of real liberalism, as the only cause worth working for, as the cause which must eventually win. But, in return, they say : "It is no time to philosophize, to moralize, to theorize" ; that "the man who

¹Says New York *Tribune* editorially : "The governing classes at Ottawa prosper with the adventurous aid of railway contracts and jobbery of every description. . . . The future seems dark and uncertain and clouded with difficulty, because the present is a period of disenchantment, during which the people have found out that Confederation is enriching a powerful ring of government politicians, officeholders, and corruptionists, without promoting the permanent prosperity of the people."—October, 1889. The people of Canada may be induced to stand by Confederation, but the greatest cause for dissatisfaction is in its being held together by the very system which Sir John Macdonald borrowed from the protectionists of the United States, for whom the New York *Tribune* is the chief organ.

advocates principles is a crank, a lunatic"; that "the first and main thing is victory, principles afterwards." Victory or no victory, principles are shoved aside or degraded into merely serving the objects of the hour. These politicians, it is true, often go to the hustings advocating changes of the most startling character for the presumed welfare of the "sovereign people." But when they get into secure positions themselves, they coolly take effectual measures to shelve these reforms or warp them into harmony with their own selfish interests. And are they brought to book by the people, as they should be? O no! Unforeseen circumstances require a new programme, and the dissatisfied are silenced for the time.¹

New schemes are being continually set afloat to mystify and captivate, and for the purpose of using up taxation surpluses, and to furnish excuses for further drafts on the people. For the onerous tax extracted from the citizen through a vicious system one day, he is made to laud and glorify his representatives the next for gaining for him, in the most conspicuous and flattering manner, a trifling service in return, the intrinsic value of which may be most questionable.

Our political schemes are decided, not by the inherent value of the different planks in the platform agreed on—not because those planks rest upon principles of high and desirable order, but because their adoption offers, as

¹ All thoughtful persons can bear testimony that the result of a dependence upon expedients ends in barren result—sorrow and confusion. Legislators are but human. Statecraft, however, is supposed to be the work of ripe experience. Says Ruskin: "It is far better to spend your thousand pounds in making a good gun, and then blow it to pieces, than to pass a life of idleness. Only do not let it be

the politician believes, the easiest and quickest route to power, to office, to the public treasury. These policies are made by the great "bosses," who give their orders to the professionals, and who write and work up the interests of party organizations in line with the party policy. The professionals give their orders to special ward-workers, who are supposed to carry out, to the letter, the plan of the "bosses." Those who "kick," remonstrate, or *philosophize*, are ostracised from any participation in the management or secrets of the great organizations. They are treated with the utmost severity. Neither on the platform nor through the press will they gain the public ear, if the party machine can prevent them. The press is too much controlled by one or the other of the great political parties. Those who are in office, make it their business to assist in holding together that party to which they are indebted for their offices. Those who are out of office must carry the next election in order to gain office.

Outside the great party machine are the larger portion of the people, who are getting to feel, more and more, either indifferent, discouraged, helpless, or disgusted with repeated failures, compromises, and expedients, in lieu of the fulfilling of promises and pledges, or expectations raised by the clever politician through the vehement denunciation of past wrongs. A farmer, here and there, may show dissatisfaction at all this. His pro-

called political economy." Legislators have as good a right as others to their years of experimental schooling. And they also have a right, as others have, to the plea for human fallibility. But they have no right to practise political experiments, speculations, and expedients at the expense of the people, and claim for their actions the appellation of statesmanship.

testations (should he choose to make them) are not to be heeded, if it can be avoided, though he make them ever so loudly.¹

The same old story is repeated over and over again. We tacitly decide that either one or the other despotism will rule, and rule in its own way, in defiance of the objections and threatenings of the victimized. Our whole political and social morality must be degenerating under this *régime*.²

¹ A few days ago the writer suggested to a legislator that we should have more farmers in our Parliaments. He replied: "It is a hard place for a farmer, for the moment he rises in the House in their behalf he is set upon by a half-dozen lawyers." The *Farm and Home* expressed similar views recently when referring to the action of one of our legislative bodies—views which apply well to the general feelings of politicians toward the farmer who runs the gauntlet of presuming to mix in political matters—"Whenever the Senate could see a farmer's head, it hit it."

² Recently said the *Quebec Chronicle* (Conservative): "There are honest men in both political camps, but the difficulty is to get them to enter public life. It is the tactician who eventually comes to the front, and success only crowns the efforts of the man who possesses an elastic conscience. In the old days there used to be a strong public opinion in the country. When the politicians went wrong there was such a thing as keeping them from power and putting into their places men of sterling integrity. Alas! we have no public opinion nowadays worth the toss of a copper. Self-interest is the first law of nature, and the premier who knows his man and understands the art of buying, can have little difficulty in maintaining himself in power as long as he has a mind to reign."

On the foregoing the *St. John Telegraph* (Liberal) remarks: "Has it really come to this, that an honest politician cannot succeed, and that there is no public opinion worth the toss of a copper? We trust it is not yet so bad as that. There is, no doubt, less honesty in politics than there was a quarter of a century ago, and vastly less of public opinion. . . . What fate is in store for a country that will not have honest men for rulers?"

Said George William Curtis, a few years ago, before one of the universities of America: "The *rural* statesmen who founded the Republic saw, in a vision, a homogeneous and intelligent community, the peace and prosperity and intelligence of the state reflected in the virtue and wisdom of the government. But is this our actual America? Or a glimpse of Arcadia? Is this the United States of Plato's Republic? Or Harrington's Oceana? Or Sir Thomas More's Utopia? What are the political maxims of the hour? In Rome do as Romans do. Fight fire with fire. Beat the devil with his own weapons. Take men as they are; and don't affect superior goodness. Beware of the politics of the moon; and of Sunday-school statesmanship. This is our current political wisdom; and the results are familiar. 'This is a nasty State,' cries the eager partisan, 'and I hope we have done enough nasty work to carry it!' 'The conduct of the opposition,' says another, 'was infamous. They resorted to every kind of base and contemptible means, and, thank God! we have beaten them at their own game.' The majority is overthrown by the political machinery intended to secure its will. The machinery is oiled by corruption, and grinds the honest majority to powder."

How well all this applies, at this very hour, to the party politics of Canada as well as the United States, all know too well. Either party in each country is energetic in its vociferations against the corrupting influences used by the other. Yet from all sides we hear that it is preposterous to think of gaining power without using the same corrupting means. However righteous the cause, however direct its appeals to reason, however great the interest of the people in its triumphs, it is the current

political wisdom to ostracise public discussion, and to favor the dependence upon petty bribes, secret influences, and pot-house arguments.

Knowledge of the fact that in less than fifteen years in Canada, over seventy elections have been voided by the courts of that country for corrupt practices, should cause all its right-thinking people to blush for its political impurity.

Even as late as thirty years ago, Simon Brown, the politician, and gifted editor of the *New England Farmer* of those days, had not lost hope for the future of America, through the power of the rural population to guide in wisdom and virtue the political, as well as the social and economic destinies of the Republic. He saw a future before the farmers of America as the proper governors of the commonwealth. In January, 1859, he said to them: "The people, the yeomanry, the dwellers in the rural districts,"—the readers of the *New England Farmer*, and the like, must realize that they are the legitimate rulers of the land, and act accordingly—must take the reins of government into their own hands.

Every year sees the farmer with less political influence than ever before. This certainly is a lamentable fact. When the people of Greece got to look upon its rural populations as unfit for any thing but drudgery, they were preparing the Grecian Republic for its downfall.

This, then, is a first cause of the American farmer's troubles, the neglect of his political rights and duties; others follow as consequences.

CHAPTER II.

THE FARMER'S INTEREST IN FREE TRADE IN NATURAL PRODUCTS ONLY.¹

I am not about to select that great interest connected with the agriculture of this country, and call upon the landowners to relinquish protection, unprepared at the same time to call upon other protected classes to relinquish protection also. In the confidence that the principle for which I contend is a just and wise one, I ask all protected interests to make the sacrifice, if it be a sacrifice, which the application of that principle will render necessary.—SIR ROBERT PEEL, 1846.

FROM the columns of a valuable little farm paper—*The Farm and Home*—we read the other day: “Most agricultural products seem to be viewed as raw material. This view appears to have largely permeated both political parties. It is a view that appears destined to do incalculable harm to our agriculture, if permitted to prevail. . . . Most of his (the farmer's) products are as really manufactured articles as are the clothes he wears. Let us demand and compel a halt until this principle is honestly recognized.” This protest seems to us correct and timely in the interest of the farmer. Is there not quite as much reason for protecting the producer of so-called “natural products,” or products of the farm, as the so-called manufactured articles?

¹ The substance of this chapter appeared in correspondence of the writer, printed in the *Halifax Morning Chronicle*, November, 1838.

Though the much-talked-of "Mills Bill," which the American people have lately passed their verdict upon, was certainly a free-trade measure in an international sense ; we are not surprised that it found no more favor with the agricultural classes. It offered them little relief from the avarice of the monopolist, while it threatened to take from a large class of farmers the little protection they may have enjoyed. But it is hard to conceive it possible that the farmers of the United States should have suffered the impositions which have been gradually put upon them, without louder protests ere this. We find, however, that these exactions have gathered with more or less increasing force for a century.

The "triumphant" Republican party boasts of having done much in the interest of the people in increasing the free list, from representing an import of only 14 millions per annum twenty years ago, to representing 244 millions at the present time. Into this free list has gone the greater part of the slight protection which the farmer may have had. While these changes have been made against him, more important ones have been made in another direction. The duties which he has been obliged to pay on manufactured articles, have risen from about $25\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. in the decade 1850-60, to 38 per cent. in the decade 1860-70 ; to be raised again to $42\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the decade 1870-80 ; and then again to 44 per cent. in the last seven years ; to finish up with 47 per cent. in 1887. The free list has been made to cover such articles as are consumed by all, and productive of revenue for the government treasury only—when taxed—and the few articles of farm produce which may be imported. Says Professor Taussig, in his "Tariff History of the United States": "Step by step, in the

various tariff acts which have been passed since the war, all the non-protective duties have been swept away, in order that the protective duties might be retained. Articles like, cocoa, pepper, cinnamon, cloves, olives, the most natural and proper sources of revenue from import duties, have been admitted free of duty. The decisive step in this process was the tea and coffee act of 1872. There are at present none other than protective duties in our tariff."

Thus we find that, though the United States customs free list has been extended, it has been by ignoring the farmer's right to be considered a subject for protection, while at the same time increasing protection to manufactures. While these changes referring to the tariff have been transpiring, the internal taxes upon domestic manufacture laid in 1862, which amounted at one time to \$127,000,000, nullifying, to a slight extent, the protection given the manufactures, have been discontinued. Besides this, the tax of \$72,000,000, which was taken yearly from the 460,170 persons who were found to have incomes exceeding \$1,000, to the aggregate amount of \$800,000,000, is no more collected. In fact, this vast aggregate income, which has doubled or trebled since the repeal of the tax, pays nothing for its protection into the federal revenues, except in the individual cases where the indirect taxes operate to the extent that the living expenses exceed the \$1,000.

In the earliest days of Canadian protective legislation, the agricultural interests were classed among those which were to be directly guarded and vastly benefited by restrictive duties against the products of the foreign rival. Many farmers were highly delighted at the prospect of having the domestic markets all to themselves for the

fruits of their orchards. The beef, pork, and hams of the United States were to be kept out of the country, and consequently the farmers would have a chance to market their meats at profitable prices. The duty levied against the import of corn and corn-meal, it was argued, would give the farmers of the Maritime Provinces an opportunity for reviving a once profitable industry—the raising of coarse grains for the use of the fisherman and lumberman. And the duty of fifty or seventy-five cents per barrel on the import of wheat-flour was, it was claimed, to cause the maritime consumers to depend upon the lands of the Lower Provinces for their bread. No doubt these flattering prospects prompted many a farmer to cast in his lot with the party for protective legislation. An enthusiastic advocate of this new policy, residing in the western part of Nova Scotia, was so deeply impressed with the probable happy results of protection to the farmers' grain interests, that he immediately erected an expensive mill for the grinding of domestic grains, imported large quantities of seeds, and gave his farmer friends every assistance possible in taking advantage of this new wealth-producing policy. The mill ran little more than a year, and then closed up.

The experience of the years which have passed since the inauguration of the Canadian policy of protection should do much to teach how delusive and unreliable are the promises of meddlesome legislation for the control of industry. Probably never before were the farmers of Canada driven more to depend merely upon the production of those articles which can be exported in competition with all rivals, than at the present day. When the manufacturers of cottons, of rubber goods, of agricultural implements, and of the products of sugar refin-

eries and the like have found that foreign competitors have continued to send in their productions in spite of existing restrictions, the paternal government has always been ready to answer their entreaties for more protection. Three times since the inception of the high tariff in Canada, have the manufacturers of agricultural tools been granted increased protection, in order that the foreign articles might be prohibited, and that the profit to their labors might be increased. We ask—What has been done for the Canadian farmer in this? We think the answer will be, all over Canada, “practically nothing!”

If it be desirable to increase the variety of industries, it should be good policy to retain and augment those already in existence. Why not increase the obstructions to the import of beef, pork, and hams into Canada, until the domestic productions have complete control of the *home markets*? Why allow the fruits of the orchards and gardens of the United States to take any part in supplying consumers in Canada? Would it not be encouraging as worthy a class of labor as that of the foreign workmen and workwomen, who are being drawn to our factories? But what is really the character of the Canadian protective principles in reference to this very important question, and what are the views of its guiding spirits? Sir John Macdonald, Premier of Canada, most astoundingly declares, that: “To the farmer free interchange of natural products (with foreign countries), would, of course, be highly advantageous”; but of the manufacturer, he says: “Free trade in manufactures would be disastrous for him at present.”¹

Sir Leonard Tilley, at present Governor of New Bruns-

¹ To the representative of the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

wick, who has the honor of being one of the principal framers of the national policy of Canada, which, it was claimed, would foster and develop the industries of all classes, now "favors a largely increased free list of the natural products, and of *certain kinds* of manufactured goods."

Sir Charles Tupper, late Finance Minister of Canada, has admitted to having lately offered to enter into negotiations with the United States Government for the purpose of placing all natural products upon the free list between the two countries. At the Cutlers' feast at Sheffield, England, September 5, 1888, Sir Charles stated that "they (the Conservatives of Canada) had always been ready, as they were ready now, to extend their commercial relations with them (the United States) with regard to the natural products of the two countries."

Moreover, in debating the question of unrestricted reciprocity before Parliament at Ottawa (1888), nearly every speaker on the government side of the House favored absolute free trade in "natural products."

One said: "I am the son of a farmer, and I believe in protecting every individual when it is necessary he should be protected. But I contend that, so far as the farmers of Annapolis and Kings (in Nova Scotia) are concerned, they do not want any protection."¹

Further, the whole government press in Canada is declaring the willingness of its party to enter into the utmost reciprocity of trade in farm products with any country willing for it. And is it not a provision of the national policy act, that, whenever the United States chooses to put natural products upon the free list, Canada shall reciprocate? Of course, to open thus the

¹Mr. Mills, of Annapolis.

markets of Canada to the farm productions of the United States, is to open such markets to the only competitors worth considering.

The more that is known of American protection, either in the United States or in Canada, the more it will be found that its aims are not for the benefit of all classes, but for a special class. Either this or protection is a delusion. It was well said by Sir John's organ, the *Toronto Empire*: "As far as the manufacturer is concerned, cheapening food (by imports), which the country cannot raise in sufficient quantities, is a protective measure, not an abandonment of protection." We presume this to be an authoritative exposition of the real sentiments of the leading Canadian protectionists who are giving the cause political guidance. Gradually the farmer must be borne on to the conclusion, that the national policy of Canada is not for his benefit; and that when the protectionist politician, whether innocently or otherwise, signifies his willingness to support a policy of free trade in "natural products only," he is one who would sacrifice the farmers for the benefit of the manufacturers! and that the protective policy of Canada, when properly looked into, like its prototype in the United States, means protection for the manufacturers and plutocracy, and for them only.

If it be contended the farmers, through protection to manufacturers, gain indirectly, by the increase of home markets, we answer: Would not universal free trade in natural products, or farm products, be making these very markets free markets for the farm products of the world? If this is so, then what becomes of the theory of building up home markets for the farmers?

The Hon. Charles Tupper, in a speech at Beaverton,

in September, 1888, gave utterance to most extraordinary views on this subject. He said: "I say again, that we have every reason, from the policy of the (United States) Democratic party, to believe that we can have virtually the old reciprocal relations and still keep the Canadian market for the Canadian manufacturer and the Canadian farmer as well." How these two opposite things could be accomplished we are unable to understand: keep the home market for the farmer, and at the same time throw it open to free competition.¹

What has been done by protection to make a home

¹ The following, from the *St. John Sun* of August 23, 1889, states the position of the government of Canada exactly: "In declaring their approval of reciprocity in natural products, therefore, government journals are not hedging, but simply restating a position from which they have never withdrawn."

The opposition press are equally correct in their claim that no public man in Canada has ever opposed "free trade in natural products only"; therefore the farmers' interests are not represented in Parliament.

The following is the standing proposition appended to the Canadian customs act of 1879: "Any or all of the following things, that is to say, animals of all kinds, green fruits, hay, straw, bran, seeds of all kinds, vegetables (including potatoes and other roots), plants, trees and shrubs, coal and coke, salt, hops, wheat, peas and beans, barley, rye, oats, Indian corn, buckwheat and all other grain, flour of wheat and flour of rye, Indian meal and oatmeal and flour and meal of any other grain, butter, cheese, fish (salted or smoked), lard, tallow, meats (fresh, salted, or smoked), and lumber may be imported into Canada free of duty, or at a less rate of duty than is provided by this act, upon proclamation of the Governor-in-Council, which may be issued whenever it appears to his satisfaction that similar articles from Canada may be imported into the United States free of duty, or at a rate of duty not exceeding that payable on the same under such proclamation when imported into Canada." This offer has been modified slightly, but not in the interest of the farmer.

market for the farmers of New England? From thousands of miles away to the West, the consumers of New England are being supplied with farm produce. "This 4,000,000 of people use grain," but 96 per cent. of their breadstuffs are sent in from the West. The West sends them annually upwards of 500,000 tons of grain, \$20,000,000 of breadstuffs, \$3,000,000 of butter, \$55,000,000 of provisions, \$45,000,000 of wool, besides hides and other farm products. In all, not less than \$200,000,000 of farm produce per year (or equal to upwards of \$300 for each individual employed in manufacturing in New England) is supplied by the West to the consumers of New England.¹

In the Maritime Provinces manufacturing towns may spring up, but any increase of demand for farm produce, consequent upon this, will be met by the Western or Ontario producer. We look over the advertising columns of the dailies of the manufacturing towns of New Brunswick at one time, and we find that the markets are being supplied by Ontario apples, at another by apples from the United States. And yet the Nova Scotia farmer looks to England for a market for his apples. Is not the *home-market* theory a delusion?²

Driven from one horn of the dilemma to the other, protectionists will tell us that the policy is necessary for the purpose of binding the country together, to create a national sentiment. Such schemes may be necessary where rulers and people are in a semi-civilized state. But in

¹ Mr. James G. Blaine to the Western farmers.

² Including grain and flour, the annual shipments of the products of the farm from the Upper Provinces to Nova Scotia, now amount to \$2,500,000; in other than grain and flour \$100,000 annually; whereas such shipments from Nova Scotia to the Upper Provinces has not amounted to \$50,000 in a quarter of a century.

order that a nation may be created is it necessary for an intelligent people to be moulded into the required condition through the existence of a fiscal policy that is destitute of the principles of equity, that is scientifically and economically false,—a policy towards which our best feelings must be in constant rebellion? Is this the true national policy for civilized beings?

And we may also ask, Is it a true and upright policy to strive to warp any intelligent community into any political change through the workings of a false fiscal policy?

What does protection undertake to do for the industrial classes? We have but to glance over the speeches and writings of its advocates to learn that it assumes the office of protecting labor, to secure to industrial classes a profitable market for their productions that national labor may not be exposed to the keen competition of the foreign rival. This being its aim, why should this protection not be extended to the laborers who till the farms, who cultivate the orchards, and who tend the flocks? That this object, the creation of a necessity for labor, without regard to its effect upon the masses, is a principle of the Canadian national policy, may be seen in many ways. We have an illustration in the peculiar sugar duties, which cause the import of raw sugars, which require refining, from countries to which she exports nothing, instead of encouraging the importation of sugars which may not require refining, and from countries which buy her *natural products* from her.

We must certainly admit that labor may not compose the total exchange value of productions, though it does in the main, but we contend that in our farm productions labor should be considered as important, both as regards its nature and extent, as in any of the manufactures for

which the farmer's productions are eventually exchanged. Taking this view as being undoubtedly correct, we are unable to understand why the laboring farmer, who throws on the market his barley, his oats, his apples, his small fruits, his beef and his pork, should be exposed to a world-wide competition to reduce the exchange value of his labor to the minimum ; while, on the contrary, the manufacturer's labor must be so protected that he may be enabled to force consumers to pay the maximum price for his hours of labor. For, is it not the admission of the meddlesome legislator, that the tendency of free trade is to reduce the price of articles exposed to free competition ? If not, why favor the free import of raw materials in the interest of the manufacturers ?

But we will go a little into particulars to show how protection in Canada has served the agricultural interests. In the fiscal year ending with June 30, 1887, the free imports of goods classed "animals and their products, and agricultural products," composed about $6\frac{1}{16}$ per cent. of the total imports into Canada. The three fourths of a million dollars of fruits, seeds, and trees, lately put upon the free list, increase these classes to above $6\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. of the total import.

In the fiscal year 1887, grain and grain products, animals, butter, cheese, lard, meats, sausage casings, vegetables, tomatoes, canned vegetables, seeds, trees, and green fruits, to the amount of \$4,908,145, were imported, on which, within a fraction of \$800,000 in duties was levied. To this dutiable import, by adding the \$6,437,219 free imports of farm products (omitting tobacco), we have \$11,345,264 to represent the imports of farm produce for that year. By a little calculating it will be found that these imports paid about 7 per cent. into the treasury, and

that the placing of about three quarters of a million dollars' worth of fruit, seed, and tree imports upon the free list reduces the farmer's protection down to about 6 per cent. Small as these figures representing the farmer's protection seem, it must also be borne in mind, that a large portion of even these small figures is made up of protective imposts on canned goods (really protection to manufacturers).

While the tendency in the past has been so much in the direction of putting farm products on the free list, it has been also in the direction of rapidly increasing the protective duties upon the farmer's articles of consumption. In 1867, the Canadian tariff gave the manufacturer 15 per cent. protection, and in 1877, $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. In 1881, the tariff had grown in the interest of the manufacturers to about 27 per cent., calculating on the dutiable list only, and about $23\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. if the free list of manufactures be also taken into account. In 1887, the average protection to manufacturers was about 30 per cent. on goods classed dutiable, and $27\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on dutiable and free manufactured goods combined. For 1888, it will not be less than 33 per cent. on dutiable manufactures, as the tariff for this year has been vastly increased.¹

Canadian protection has worked about as the following table shows :

1879. Assumed fair play all round.	Against the farmer as
1881. To the farmer 8 %, to the manufacturer 27 % . .	$3\frac{3}{8}$ to 1
1887. To the farmer 7 %, to the manufacturer 30 % . .	$4\frac{10}{7}$ to 1
1888. To the farmer 6 %, to the manufacturer about 33 %, ²	$5\frac{1}{2}$ to 1

The average Canadian protectionist seems to be perfectly satisfied with this one-sided protection. We had a

¹ This prediction has been fully confirmed.

² Over 500,000 families in Canada are depending directly upon agriculture for a living, and less than one fifth of this number upon

conspicuous illustration of this satisfaction in the remarks of the protectionist journal, the *Halifax Mail* (May 1 1888), relative to the repeal of the Canadian fruit duties, in an editorial entitled, "Cheaper Fruits and Berries." It said: "These changes in the tariff will place within the reach of our citizens a more bountiful supply of cheaper berries and fruits during the ensuing season."

The question arises, if fruits and other so-called natural products are made "cheaper" and more "bountiful in supply," and placed more "within the reach of our citizens" by reason of such freedom, why should not the same results follow to the farmer citizen, if manufactures were put upon the free list? If articles are placed "within reach of citizens" by being made "cheaper" through the removal of tariff obstructions, we have to conclude that the consumers of such articles have heretofore paid the duties, and have by these removals gained an advantage as consumers, without corresponding loss in income as producers. If so, why should not the "cheapening" of manufactures by free trade in them, "place them in more bountiful supply" and "within the reach of the farmers," or increase the farmers' advantages as consumers, without diminishing their power as producers? It can hardly be said that the home supply of manufactures is greater than the home supply of "fruits and berries."¹ If the increase of price in farm products

manufacturing; yet her customs laws collect less than \$1,000,000 upon the import of products which come at all into competition with her farmers; whereas over \$13,000,000 are collected from foreign manufactures.

¹ The fruit growers of Nova Scotia have now (January, 1890) a petition before the Dominion government asking for a reimposition of fruit duties, but even the representatives of the fruit-raising constituencies have not courage, at this date, to define their real economic views upon this matter.

through tariff legislation for the protection of the farmer cannot be met by the other classes through the indirect benefits which protection is said to produce, how can the farmer expect benefit through protection to the manufacturers? Moreover, if nothing can be done by protecting farm products and other natural products in the way of bringing laborers into the country, or to keep them in the country to raise such natural products, and thereby create a home market for manufacturers, how is the farmer to gain a benefit by protection to the manufacturers? Prosperous farmers mean decidedly good home markets for the blacksmith, shoemaker, carriage-builder, the house-builder, brick-maker, the school teacher, the clergyman, and the merchant.

The protectionists are undoubtedly right in the admission that an extension of free trade in natural products only, means an increase of protection to domestic manufactures. Free traders who contend to the contrary, are of a very questionable class; though, to use the words of Bastiat, "there is in political economy no more generally accredited sophism than this." In serving as argument in the hands of the pretended free-trade school, says Bastiat, "its most mischievous tendencies are called into action. For a good cause suffers much less in being attacked than in being badly defended." Yet, not only are the avowed protectionists willing for this one-sided trade, but some of the most prominent figures in the so-called free-trade party in Canada, as well as in the United States, are advocates of such a system.

It certainly appears obvious enough, that an extension of freedom as to the importation of raw materials and of food necessaries, gives the manufacturer a new advan-

tage in producing cheaply, without, in the least, compelling him to sell his productions at lower prices. On the other hand, it is evident that every additional article placed upon the list to be really protected, must, in a measure, reduce the chances for the monopolist to pocket monopoly profits, without contributing to the monopoly profits of others. A duty which raises the price of agricultural implements, discourages agriculture. A duty which increases the price of agricultural fertilizers, discourages the production of potatoes, grains, grasses, etc. On the other hand, a duty which increases the price of raw materials and food necessities, discourages the manufacture of cottons, boots, clothing, hardware, and sugar refining ; but why should these manufactures be granted an assurance of success at the expense of the farmer ?

The protective system cannot be fair all round, unless it protects all round. Though it is perfectly clear that to protect all round is to increase the price of production all round, until the object sought—the building up of special industries—is defeated. Moreover, to increase prices all round, or the cost of general production, is to destroy the chances to supply foreign consumers. This latter assumption is conspicuously shown in the continual decline in Canada's exports of many lines of manufacture since the adoption of her high-tax policy. And yet the farmer is not true to the interests of his class, if he does not demand either free trade all round, or protection all round.

The protectionists can hardly contend that the farmers are benefited by being permitted to import some lines of food, trees, seeds, etc., from other countries, instead of producing these themselves, or buying them at protected prices from their neighbors. Though no doubt all are

benefited when the consumers—and all are consumers—are permitted to procure every article required, from the place where most cheaply produced. For if the manufacturers find it is profitable to rob one another a little, for the chance to rob the multitudes a good deal, why should not the farmers, or any of the cultivators of the soil, find it equally profitable?

When England, in her old protective days, sought by this means to serve the interests of her farmers, she even prohibited the use of cotton goods at one time, because their use, it was thought, would sacrifice the farmers' wool industries. It might be asked, why allow free cotton to come into Canada to interfere with the consumption of wool in the manufacture of light woollen goods? Or, why not force, by increase of protection, Canadian consumers of grapes to depend upon her own vineyards, as England did in the early days of her history? Would it not be quite as much within the scope of reason, as the efforts which are being put forth to stimulate the growth of many of her highly protected manufactures?

Sydney Smith's description of the tax system which prevailed in England at the end of the French war, presents a picture of an ideal condition of universal taxation, which as well might serve the purpose of an ideal of universal protection: "Taxes upon every article which enters the mouth, or covers the back, or is placed under the feet. Taxes upon every thing which it is pleasant to see, hear, feel, smell, or taste. Taxes upon warmth, locomotion, light, and every thing that comes from abroad or is grown at home. Taxes on every thing on earth or under the earth. Taxes on the raw material, taxes on every fresh value that is added to it by the in-

dustry of man." Certainly, with such a system, few would be able to escape the privilege of at least paying taxes.

The great difficulty, however, in the way of a fair deal in a policy of protection, or of monopoly, was pointed out by Mr. Stanley Jevons. "There would," remarked he, "be a certain fairness in the establishment of monopolies if all trades were equally able to combine and tax each other. The result, of course, would be very absurd and very pernicious, but it would be equal ; as a matter of fact, however, those who most need combination to better their fortunes are just those who are the least able to carry it out." This is true enough, and the farmers of Canada, as those of the United States, are among those who cannot combine either under free trade or protection as protection is administered. After all, what do wool duties amount to in protecting the United States farmer? Measured by the trade and navigation returns, they amount annually to about \$1.70 per farmer (his whole protection amounting to not more than \$3.00 per capita). Measured in the same way, the average manufacturer gets not far from \$100. With the best that can be done for him, the United States farmer can get but the merest trifle through such means.

That protection to the Canadian farmer can accomplish little, unless each province or, in fact, each county could be made a protected unit, is shown by the fact that even with the slight duties she imposes against the import of farm produce, the import of this line of goods is only about \$1 to \$50 produced, while she is able to export \$1 to every \$12 produced. So slight is the advantage which the Canadian farmer takes of the little protection allowed him, that the foreign producer makes

but slight efforts to jump over it. On the other hand, notwithstanding the high-tariff wall placed against foreign manufactures, \$1 is imported to each \$7 produced, while the *home market* for manufactures is made so profitable to the home producer, by reason of forced tributes from the home consumers, that less than \$1 finds its way from the country to the \$100 produced.¹

In fact, since it is requisite that a protected area be even more than world-wide in extent, to save the farmer from the avarice of the manufacturing combines, and extremely small to be of any service in enabling farmers to combine for their advantage, the question of what would be a just and equal system of protection seems a difficult problem to solve. And yet, if protection is to be the order of the day, it is the protectionist legislators' duty to devise some scheme that will give the farmer his full share of advantages.²

The miller wants \$1 or \$1.50 per barrel duty on flour. His right is just as good to 20 per cent. protection as that of the manufacturer of shovels to 35 per cent. and free raw materials. The pork-packer wants \$4 per barrel duty on pork. He has as good a right to it as the manufacturer of scythes to 50 per cent., and so has the apple producer to \$1 per barrel. Only, in these changes, the farmers should see that an undoubted portion of the legalized plunder really comes into their hands.³

¹ Measured by Canada's trade and navigation returns in terms of money, the farmers of Canada get less than \$1.10 protection per capita, the manufacturers more than \$130 per capita.

² When an effort is made to apply protection equitably, it is then seen what a fribble, a burlesque, a farce, it really is.

³ Not a few, of even those who pass for free traders, contend that only articles of luxury should bear taxes, but we must remember that great aggregates of capital produced through a whisky or a cigar-

If free trade is the watchword, then let it be for free trade all round, the only true policy—a watchword for reform that means the extermination of a vicious system on all sides.

When England, in the famous free-trade struggle, removed or lessened the duties on articles of food, the same was done by foreign manufactured goods. Sir Robert Peel, in the onset of the great parliamentary struggle of 1846, sounded no rallying call to selfish interests. "In the confidence," said he, "that the principle for which I contend is a just and wise one, I ask all protected interests to make the sacrifice, if it be a sacrifice, which the application of that principle will render necessary."

Yet there are in England to-day, as there always will be, manufacturers who would have duties put upon imported manufactures; but the farmers will not let them. So should it be with the farmers of America.

So long as free trade goes no further than free trade in "natural products only," so long will the blight to the farming interests of America spread and increase—so long will the farmer continue to be the victim of the politician and the manufacturer.

manufacturing monopoly, fostered by indirect taxation, may be a far greater menace to the general good, than any advantage that the farmers can possibly gain by protection from the consumers of their products.

CHAPTER III.

FREE TRADE MAY BE SELFISH AS WELL AS PROTECTION ; OR, THE INEFFICIENCY OF FREE-TRADE MOVEMENTS.

IN working out our ideas of justice to the farmers of America, in reference to the matters treated of in the chapters on taxation, and on free trade in natural products only, we arrived at the conclusion that it is quite within the range of possibility for what passes for free trade to be altogether selfish in its aims ; that it is within the scope of probability that compromises will any day be made, as they have been in the past, between the manufacturers and their political friends, and those interested in commerce and their friends, by which free trade will appear to have scored a triumph for the people, though the very opposite is the actual result. By these compromises the evils of protection may not be lessened one iota, or the load of taxation be removed in the slightest degree ; may, in fact, be increased.

Free-trade movements, to be successes, must take higher grounds than they have done hitherto ; they must aim at justice to all ; equality in the benefits of the greater freedom, and equality in the bearings of taxation. These are the matters of vital interest to the great majority of the people. The commercial questions involved are of great importance ; little, however, com-

pared with the others just named. Look where you may over America to-day, and where is party to be found standing by the people as it should in this particular? Is there a political policy working which offers a shadow of hope to the farmers for the future? All that is before them appears little else than the selfish outgrowth of moneyed and partisan interests, and, as such, must be barren of results favorable to the people.

BOOK VII.

THE PHYSICAL, MENTAL, SOCIAL, AND MORAL CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED.

But the wealth of a nation depends in the long run upon the conditions, mental and bodily, of the people of whom it consists, and the experience of all mankind declares that a race of men sound in soul and limb can be bred and reared only in the exercise of plough and spade, in the free air and sunshine, with country enjoyments and amusements, never amidst foul drains and smoke blacks and the eternal clank of machinery.—JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE.

CHAPTER I.

THE DIVERGENCE OF INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT FROM A BASIS OF PHYSICAL STAMINA, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

THE men who figured prominently in laying the foundation of America's political, social, and industrial structure were no weaklings. They were men of nerve, muscle, and vitality. Their habits and exercises were such as to stimulate the growth of these most desirable functions. The claim is now frequently made that the majority are becoming more and more mental, emotional, nerveless, and effeminate. The whole tendency of the country's varied national life is undoubtedly in the direction of increasing in the characteristics of its people these most undesirable changes. "Functional nervous disorders" are increasingly frequent among the in-door classes of our civilization everywhere, "and specially so in all the Northern and Eastern States of America, where the sufferers may be found in nearly every brain-working household."¹ It may indicate a future far from happy.

Much as we may differ as to the nature of mental faculties, we can, with a considerable degree of reliability, gather data from which to prove that physical perfection in man means also corresponding completeness of brain power; that when there is a retrogression in the first

¹ Dr. George W. Beard.

particular eventually there must also be one in the second. In all great movements of the world, in the growth of nations, or in great crises, it has been the men of well-developed physique who have triumphed. The men of Greece took sufficient interest in the tilling of the soil to make it a first medium for fostering the growth of muscle and sinew. They practised also such manly exercises as made them the admiration of the world, as well as fitted them to be, as they were, the rulers of their time. We may say more than this of the Roman, whose national industry, in their palmy days, was husbandry. The brawny, deep-chested Englishman and the sinewy Scotchman have made themselves masters wherever they have planted themselves.

As a rule, just in proportion as a people have become effeminate in their habits and exercises, so have they degenerated in mental capacity. Observations have proved that the great man is more likely to be greater in stature, more symmetrically proportioned, and of more pleasing physical appearance than his contemporaries; while such a one will be governed by a brain of full physical development.¹ Science also claims, with good reason, that wherever a proper equilibrium has been maintained through a due exercise of the physical and mental functions, there the tendency has been towards a constant improvement in the types of men. And when the reverse has been the case, there has been experienced a marked deterioration. Says Herbert Spencer: "Each function has some relation, direct or indirect, to the needs of life. Then the complete life is one in which all functions are exercised to their normal capacity, and this can only take place in the physically developed man."

¹ Dr. Woods Hutchinson.

It follows that, as few, if any, occupations are better calculated to develop the physical structure than work upon the soil, and at the same time offer a limitless field for the most useful as well as the most pleasurable mental training, we must conclude that the farmer, of all others, should have a healthy, enduring brain. In fact, his occupation should offer the medium through which the highest development of the physical and mental may be united in force for the production of the perfectly developed man.

“Once let the human race be cut off from personal contact with the soil ; once let the conventionalities and artificial restrictions of so-called civilization interfere with the healthful simplicity of nature, and decay is certain.”¹

Consequently, how immensely important may be our dependence upon rural life—the farmer’s well-developed brain—for supplying whatever may be true and satisfying in our present condition, and also for the continuance of civilization itself !

Therefore, since science and the history of the growth and development of nations testify to the vast importance of physical completeness as a basis of brain power, and that farm life is most conducive to this end, we require a numerous body of tillers of the soil to supply our national brain capacity.

The fable of “Tellus, the Giant Son of the Earth,” in his valiant struggle with Hercules, and his final defeat when deprived of contact with his “mother earth,” is certainly a striking parable of the condition of the human family when the vast majority take no part in rural pursuits and the manly exercises. The Prince of Darkness

¹ Dr. Woods Hutchinson.

could take no better course to defeat man's progress and subdue the earth to himself, than by depriving one after another of intimate contact with their mother, the earth.

If it be health that is desired for the people (taking another view of the subject), compare a procession of cotton operatives pouring out of a cotton-mill in Lawrence and Lowell, with an equal number of farmers' sons and daughters as they are found in our country, and we will see nothing in the former of physical appearance to cause us to wish that the rural classes may become manufacturers.

In 1886, there was published in Massachusetts an interesting collection of facts relative to the average duration of life among the several occupations, covering a period of more than thirty years. The average farmer died at 66 years of age, the judge at 64, lawyers at 56, physicians at 55, sheriffs and policemen at 52, while milliners and factory girls died at 39, clerks and bookkeepers at 36, and plumbers and carvers at 35. In the same year (1886), Dr. C. W. Chancoles, in a paper read before the American Public-Health Association, stated that stone-cutters, both in Europe and America, on an average, do not live beyond 36 years, while knife and file grinders die at 35, edge-tool grinders at 32, razor grinders at 31, and grinders of forks at 29. Of the 100 sick, of the various manufacturing industries, the proportion of consumptives is quite suggestive: carpenters 14, cigarmakers 36, stone-cutters 36, steel grinders 40, brush-makers 49, cotton, hemp, and flax weavers 60; file-makers 62, needle-makers 70.

With such facts as these for guidance, both statesmen and people should pause before tempting the young of the rural classes to the manufacturing occupations. A

week in the year does not pass that the remains of human beings, below the meridian of life, are not conveyed from the great manufacturing centres to their early homes in the rural districts ; stricken down just as they should be entering on the most useful efforts of their lives. While one after another is guided back to the country settlements in the United States, others go to their sorrowing relatives in the Provinces, some to Quebec, others to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and not a few to the little Island of the Gulf. Many of these leave behind them children in tender years, to become, perhaps, a burden upon the old grandparents ; or worse, to drift into the slums of the cities, to be lost in vice. Go into a careful analysis of the causes which have tempted the young country people away from their rural homes in Canada, to seek new ones in the Great Republic (a popular subject for discussion), and in the majority of cases it will be found that it has not been from a desire to change their political allegiance, or because of the laws of their country, that they have fled from it, so much as from a desire to change their occupation. The effects of the false politico-economic teachings of the time had reached them, and had rendered them incapable of appreciating the merits of their occupation. From the politician, the manufacturer, and even the college professor, they were told that an agricultural people could never become great, and this poisoned their minds and unsettled them. They learned from these authorities that it was beneath a people of spirit to cultivate potatoes, and to tend the dairy, especially with a view of supplying foreign customers with the productions from them ; and they took the most speedy way of casting off such an occupation.

Though our city cousins may still be a good deal prone to look upon their rustic relations as rather stupid and unintellectual, it is well for them to know that natural conditions are all on the side of the countryman. And certainly the countryman should realize more fully what are his possibilities. The feeling which generally prevails, however, makes it preposterous for even the leading farmers of America to think of taking a place in society with the equally prosperous of other classes.

In business concerns we have regular meetings of our Board of Trade, in all our great commercial centres, to which it is not at all uncommon for lawyers, doctors, manufacturers, and newspaper editors to be invited to take part in debating questions that may affect the rural classes most deeply. But when are farmers requested to become members of these societies, or to give their views on the matters discussed? It is true, that the Grange organizations—societies which should have a welcome in every rural district—are beginning to give the farmer some prominence; through this medium, he should voice his sentiments and desires with effect. Yet the farmer is considered rather out of his senses, when he presumes to match his intellectual faculties with others; and, in fact, his want of success is frequently attributed to his lack of ability.

Have not the majority of our most able and useful public men, in all the walks of life, been bred on the farm? Are not our most advanced institutions of learning provided with their brightest intellects from the country families? We think few will undertake to deny this claim for the country. Said Emerson: "The great men are not in the halls triumphing, but in the fields working. . . . The city is recruited from the country. . . ."

The city would have died out, rotted, and exploded long ago, unless it were recruited from the country." The city of to-day was the country of yesterday.

The tendency of the time is evidently in the direction of constantly decreasing the number of those who have effectual contact with the soil, and increasing the number who would be mere parasites upon those who remain, reducing the worst victimized to the mere exercise of their animal powers. It is quite frequently contended by students of ethnology, that slavery was a necessity of early times, in order that a few might be enabled to have the leisure necessary for thought and for mental growth. To-day, all kinds of devices are set on foot to tempt the tillers of the soil into permitting others to do their thinking for them. They, in effect say: "You work and I think."

While the farmer's income is not increased, most other classes combine and force an increase of theirs. They tell us that mental giants must not be forced to do manual labor, and that mental workers must have all the educating influences possible at their disposal, and if their services are procured, the recompense must be commensurate with a satisfaction of these conditions; which amounts to this, that those who in most cases have to meet these conditions must work a little harder, with the hope that eventually an indirect benefit will follow. For instance, our governments in effect are great armies of parasites, which are continually creating some new plan for making places for additions to their numbers. That these new ones may be supported, the supporting class must work a little harder, and have, for satisfaction, the consoling assurance that a new batch has been created to do their thinking.

Granted that there may have been a necessity in primitive times for a portion of the human family to gain opportunities for thought, have not the conditions changed, when cunning must be resorted to to effect this object? Is it true that workers cannot think, and that thinkers cannot work? Is not the outcome of such a condition to create, on one side, indolent, enervated thinkers; and on the other side, only working machines, who have bartered away their right to think—they who should be in mind, as well as in body, as great as any of God's creatures?

It is well that we should have our mental giants; but those who have become the greatest in this way have been self-supporting, self-sacrificing men. There is danger in the sweeping away of the grand opportunities for a union of the mental and physical forces which rural life offers. Shall our cities, like the rotted-out civilizations of old, swell to overflowing with the indigent, the idle, and the voluptuous? Shall the edict again go forth—"You kill while I eat; you work while I think,"—and the freemen again depend upon martial exercise and the slaughtering of men for the stimulation of physical development?

With all that is being done through inventions for the saving of labor and the utilization of natural forces, there should be an ever increasing margin for mental exercise. It is only a true condition which favors this, and it is only a true condition which finds these necessary proofs of progress dispersed through the whole people; and it is only a true condition where all who are able bear something of labor for their physical benefit, if for no other. Emerson thought the ideal condition one in which man was enabled to have the detachment and the individuality

which is only possible in the country, with the intellectual stimulus which is only possible in the city. But this union of forces can only have healthy and enduring development where a basis of physical stamina is insured, and this basis is in the country. Then we must come to the conclusion that whatever tends to make one great division of the human family exclusively brain-workers, and another great division exclusively manual laborers, is producing a false and dangerous condition.

It is a grave mistake for the farmers of America to concede to the idea that the rural classes are peculiar for lack of ability, or to allow the results of their industry to be valued merely as the product of so much animal exertion ; but, on the contrary, they should emphatically maintain that they represent an intelligent, a dignified occupation.

It is an error to permit, as we do, the curricula of our institutions of learning, especially of those where the majority of the pupils attending are supposed to become agriculturists, to be almost void of branches which are calculated to create an interest in agriculture, and to ennoble the calling in the minds of the young.

“As it is at present, in thousands of our country schools, the instruction is wholly apart from the actual life of the scholars. The teaching is a weary round of book studies, and the wealth of practical instruction that is to be gained by a proper consideration of the everyday life and natural surroundings of children is entirely missed. Besides turning the young mind in the direction of agriculture, such instruction in the common schools would tend to increase the inborn love of the soil, and sow the germs of State and national pride and patriotism.”¹

¹ *American Agriculturist*, October, 1889.

It is also very far from wise for farmers themselves, as it is also for the general safety, to allow the opinion to prevail that they are unfit to grace our legislative halls or to put character into our laws. Mr. Gladstone says of the statesmen of the early history of the United States: "It is no extravagance to say that, although there were only three millions of people in the thirteen States at the time of the Revolution, the group of statesmen that proceeded from them were a match for any in the whole history of the world, and were superior to those of any one epoch. Their fortunate appearance was undoubtedly due to well-regulated muscular freedom."

It is a calamity for society to be governed by physical weaklings, with less and less brain capacity, who may become finally, as the monarchs of Europe were said to have been at the beginning of the century—imbecile.

CHAPTER II.

THE FARMERS' INTEREST IN THE SOCIAL OUTLOOK.

We may disinter the vanished draperies, we may revive the stately minuet, we may rehabilitate the old scenes, but the march of a century cannot be halted or reversed, and the enormous change in the situation can neither be disguised nor ignored. Then we were, though not all of us, sprung from one nationality, practically one people. Now that steadily deteriorating process, against whose dangers a great thinker of our own generation warned his countrymen just fifty years ago, goes on on every hand apace."

—BISHOP POTTER.

PROBABLY the most far-reaching problem before the public mind in America to-day is the vexed question of social rights. Whether we have presented to our consideration the difficulties existing between labor and capital, the distribution of land, the matter of public instruction, or the formation of fiscal policies, we have in some measure to deal with an important phase of the social question. Nearly every important movement in industrial and social life has much to do with this truly great matter ; and it might be stated, with little probability of contradiction, that at few former periods has this problem been subjected to such varied and urgent notice as it is now receiving. America is not now very much behind the rest of the world in furnishing material for the study of these matters ; and the old maritime States of the northeast of the Union, in a marked de-

gree, furnish a history of social changes of very great interest, especially as it relates to the rural classes. If we look for a locality where the development of industrial progress, with all the attendant social consequences which industrial progress implies, should, in its growth, correspond with the ideal of at least one great school, and, in fact, in line with the general trend of the economic thought of the day in America, we instinctively turn to those old maritime States. Their social history will, in relation to political economy, serve to a great extent as an index to the whole question in America. Is it satisfactory to any thoughtful mind? While it will be generally admitted that half a century ago the average ruralist of New England was an enviable type of citizen, that his social, financial, and political influence was a power in his country, that he was acknowledged on all sides to be a reliable, intelligent, and weighty authority on all political, economic, and social questions, and that his influence extended even to other countries, few make this claim for him to-day. The opinion that in character, ability, and enterprising spirit, the farmer of New England is losing ground, is expressed in the works of nearly every writer upon the condition of the farmers of those States.

One writer very pertinently remarks : " There was a time when New England was looked upon as a sort of reservoir of the true American spirit ; when she sent her sons and her daughters out from the towns to be teachers to the rest of the nation, and to found new towns in the West ; when New England spirit seemed to be a leaven, leavening all the national life. . . . All this is changed." ¹ Certainly it is not in the farmers alone,

¹ Mr. Geoffrey Chaplin, in the *North American Review*.

there is to be noticed the loss of Puritan character and true American spirit, though in them, in the fullest measure, dwelt these characteristics. And they were teachers to the rest of the nation, because in them rested a positive realization of the fact that it devolved upon them to infuse their spirit into all measures for the political, moral, intellectual, and industrial progress of their country. It was their country, their land, and they esteemed their privileges and their achievements, as became an independent and truly sovereign people. They honored and highly valued the result of honest labor, and of rural labor above all others. The "country squire" could talk politics with lively interest to the best man in the community, and the best man was very likely to be his near neighbor, because the politics of his time were to him of practical significance. He was sensible of a perceptible result in his efforts to influence the fashioning of laws and the course of law-makers. They had not reached out, as now, beyond him.¹

¹ Since my monograph was placed in the hands of its publishers, the following interesting editorial remarks upon an article of Judge Nott's has appeared in the *New York Evening Post*: "No other such body of cultivators of the soil as the New England colonists were, down to our own day, has ever been seen. No other men who tilled the ground with their own hands have had such an acute and active intelligence, such intense preoccupation with religious and moral problems, such a keen sense of the superior importance of spiritual things, such reverence for learning, such familiarity with and appreciation of literature, and such capacity for government by discussion. Puritanism, as has often been said, missed its mark in England; but it came as near realizing its ideal as human nature would permit on American soil. No student of politics or sociology will, in all probability, for ages to come, light on an experiment in all respects so interesting and so successful as Massachusetts and Connecticut were and continued to be down to the outbreak of the

It is, notwithstanding, a great mistake that the farmers of New England do not compare well with the average citizen in all that goes to make up the invaluable portion of the commonwealth. Especially is this the case, as we look at the matter from the standpoints of morality, religion, or social order. Social safety is with the citizen who possesses a desire to preserve his country's institutions and her political integrity. The farmers, sprung from the loins of the stock which shaped their country's early life, must, of all, be her truest patriots; whereas the ignorant, shifting, migrating classes, of which the American cities are becoming largely composed, have cast off their patriotic sentiments, if they ever had any. In them is danger, now and always. Forty-seven per cent. of the population of the cities and factory towns of Massachusetts in 1885 were foreign-born; while

civil war. The only important point in the catastrophe, which Judge Nott does not attempt to explain, or even to touch upon, is the equanimity, and even rejoicing, with which the New England farmers have witnessed the disappearance of the social edifice which they had passed two centuries in building up, and cementing with an enormous amount of religious zeal and self-sacrifice. For more than a quarter of a century New Englanders have, through their organs, in politics, in literature, and oratory, eagerly supported the policy which was visibly and rapidly changing the character of their population and the structure of their society. The most ardent advocates and promoters of 'the factory at your doors,' with its swarm of foreign-born voters, have been New England men. They have seen it rapidly and surely converting Connecticut and Massachusetts into foreign, and even into Catholic States, ousting the natives of the Puritan stock from all real influence in the government, and consigning to the lumber-room of history the old Puritan traditions of public spirit and public duty, and have seen it sending all their boys and girls flying into the cities and to the West, without a protest or even a word of complaint." December 5, 1889.

only 23 per cent. of the agriculturists of the State were so born.

In the older provinces of Canada the farmers compose as fine a class of men as are to be found anywhere. They form the best law-abiding, industrious, moral forces of the confederacy.

Yet, with the decline of American agriculture, and the diminution of the number of the small land proprietors, dangers to the social order and the security of the state must be more and more augmented as the evil goes on. The first impetus towards social insecurity may now be seen in the dissatisfaction which is growing among farmers because of their relative disadvantages. The second is rapidly approached when legislators begin to consider favorably the policy of re-peopling the old country towns with foreign stock, in place of removing the difficulties which are driving the old families away. The third danger is the relative decline in the number of those who should have direct interest in preserving the institutions of the country.

It is no doubt too true, that the farms and the villages of New England are no longer the nurseries of the type of "earnest thinkers and patient workers" that they once were ; while it is true that there is a growing unrest among the rural classes, because of the changes which oppress them. It is also conspicuously apparent that it is the exception to find farmers who look forward with pride to fitting their sons for an occupation which, as they must believe, is every day losing ground in social rank. New England, being the oldest English community in America, or the one most ripened in development, shows these changes more conspicuously than other parts. But is it not a disease which is spreading rapidly ?

The merest glance at the subject is sufficient to show that the whole world is growing gregarious with alarming rapidity; that the rural life is viewed with more and more aversion. The cities of France—an old country—in 1848 represented 34 per cent. of the entire population; a proportion, however, which grew to 36 per cent. in 1886. Beautiful rural France, with all its charms, then, fails to retain its due proportion of the people. Germany, since 1867, has increased her urban population at the rate of a little over $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum; the rural population in the same period increased at the rate of only $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. per annum. In parts of rural Italy, every means is being devised by the farmer to exchange country for city life. But of all the world this tendency is more marked in America than elsewhere. Had the increase of persons engaged in agriculture, in the decade ending with 1880, been equal to the average entire increase of population, there would have been 42,341 more engaged in this pursuit than were so found. In the same period, 1,147,977 represented the proportional increase of those in the professional services, trade, transportation, mining, manufacturing, and mechanical pursuits. The same movements are taking place in Canada. Of the province of Nova Scotia, we find that in the period 1861-81, the agricultural class fell behind the professional and trading classes, in proportional increase, over 20,000.

The cities and city occupations are evidently drawing the people to themselves. In 1790, the urban population of the United States was only 8.3 per cent. of the total; in 1850, 12.5 per cent.; but in 1880 it had reached 22.5 per cent. The Canadian census returns for 1881 reported an increase of 33.0 per cent. in the growth of the

urban population during the decade of which it treated ; while the growth of the rural population had only been 15.6 per cent. The cities of the United States having over 8,000 inhabitants in 1790 contained but one thirtieth of the population ; in 1880 they contained one fourth. In the State of Massachusetts, with all her markets created by a manufacturing population, her rural denizens decreased by 37,000 in the years 1860-85. In the first-named year, she had a rural population of 698,261 ; in 1870, 677,601 ; in 1880, 672,462 ; while in 1885 it had fallen to 661,588. In 1789 the cities of this State contained 5 per cent. of the population ; in 1885, 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ per cent.

Recently the Toronto *Empire* (Conservative) spoke, through its columns devoted to agricultural matters, to this effect : "Everywhere on the continent, east of the Mississippi at any rate, the drift during the past ten to thirty years has been from the country to the towns and cities . . . This continent is rapidly approaching the condition of Europe, where the city populations are far too large for the rural populations that sustain them." Yes, sustain them ! Our cities fill up with unnecessary government officials, or those who, by combinations, are enabled to increase their numbers through gathering to themselves a margin between service rendered and service received. Two perform a service that should require but one. The victim who receives it has double service to perform in return. Why should he not make his escape from such enslavement, if possible ? Prior to the fall of the Roman and Grecian republics, the cities were filled to overflowing, and nearly every free citizen had fled from the country. "The cities increased in splendor from day to day, and from age to age. Temples

were ever being erected of greater magnificence than any heretofore. Theatres were made still more and more attractive for the free exhibition of gladiatorial and other depraving fights. With all this, depopulation and poverty went on in the country, until disease spread throughout all the vital organs of society, and then the whole system collapsed.”¹ What course will *our* rural classes take when they come to feel that all escape from this enslavement may be cut off?

The New World, as well as the Old, echoes and re-echoes with the threatenings of the social revolutionist; and we are not alone in the opinion that republics and democracies may not be, under certain conditions, any more safe than monarchies from the machinations of the socialist.² He reasons: What abiding profit is the proclamation that all are equal, when gross inequality is allowed to go on gathering new elements of oppression? “What can be expected, when the sole aim of government is to foster such institutions as promise solely to increase riches and population? To give stability to law and national life, the social ideal should be character.”³ The governments of America lend their influence to building up populous industrial centres, the citizens of which are a danger to the social fabric. Lord Macaulay’s predic-

¹ Henry C. Carey.

² As this chapter is being prepared for publication, news comes from Chicago of the doings of a mass-meeting (October 13, 1889), at which, in the presence of one thousand people, of whom, the account says, over one half hissed at the Stars and Stripes, while the banner of Anarchy was greeted with cheers. One speaker said he was proud of the city in which the execution of anarchists occurred, because he felt that one day it would be the Paris—the city of revolutions—America.

³ Bishop Spalding.

tion, that the American Republic may yet be "ravaged by Huns and Vandals, engendered within itself and by its own laws, and by its own institutions," has not lost its significance.

It seems imperative, for the safety of a democratic country, that all its people take a direct interest in preserving its institutions. As matters are going in America, the proportion of those who are not so interested is rapidly increasing. While we extend political rights to all, in some communities, and propose to extend them in others, we increase the effectiveness of systems which are causing continual accessions to the ranks of those who at any time may become a revolutionary force. How long under such circumstances before the rule of the despot will become a necessity? It was a direct interest in protecting their own, which stimulated the hardy farmers of the Revolution to fight so well for their land. They fought not only to make it a "land of liberty," but *their* land of liberty. "The shocks of corn," said Xenophon, "inspire those who have raised them, to defend them."

It will be well, however, not to nurse the delusion that socialistic sentiments are destined to obtain lodgment in the breasts of only the laborers in our towns and manufacturing centres. They are, in some sort of shape, rapidly spreading to the rural districts.¹ All are aware of

¹ It is a striking coincidence, that while the first President of the United States made stronger claims than any of his successors for the interests of agriculture, and for its value in civilization, the President who leaves office in the centennial year of the inauguration of the first, should feel called upon in his last message to Congress, to sound an alarm at the unsatisfactory position of agriculture in this latter day. Mr. Cleveland looks with apprehension to the time when the farmers, among others, will, realizing the inequality and injustice under which they labor, breed a discontent dangerous to the beneficent operation of

the agitations in Ireland, and other parts of Great Britain, over the land question. In Germany, Bismarck's socialistic measures for the assumed benefit of the working classes have failed to satisfy the farmers. In France, these sentiments gain ground in the rural districts. The peasantry of Russia, Spain, and Italy are on the verge of revolt. In parts of Italy they have already shown their hand. In 1882, and again in 1888 Lombardy was the scene of serious disturbances among the rural classes; buildings were burned, and various crimes committed. Official reports state that "it will require energetic measures to combat these fermentations."

Collectivism, land nationalization, and other socialistic schemes are proposed to remedy all our social ills. These grow in favor as capital continues to rob the small holders of their land. In Mantua, a province in Italy, between 1871 and 1879, land proprietors had decreased from 39,868 to 35,535. The peasant in many cases holds on to his land with a death-like grip, with all the harrowing anxiety which its ownership entails; and it is only when its load of debt devours it, that he gives it up. He is then found low and servile, or the bitter enemy to the existing order. The three millions of so-called pauper land proprietors government. He says: "Communism is a hateful thing, and a menace to peace and organized government. But the communism of combined wealth and capital, the outgrowth of overweening cupidity and selfishness, which insidiously undermines the justice and integrity of free institutions, is no less dangerous than the communism of oppressed poverty and toil, which, exasperated by injustice and discontent, attacks with wild disorders the citadel of rule." This is not the disturbing utterance of a mere demagogue, or the hallucination of a disordered crank, but the timely warning of the true patriot, who would avert a calamity terrible to contemplate.

of France, inheriting from their ancestors a load of injustices, are hardly responsible even for what their own exertions might remedy. Circumstances may make men but little removed from the brute.

However, all socialistic schemes as continuous policies mean slavery. It is only when the evils which prompt retaliation by combination are removed, that freedom is real. Socialism is in direct antagonism with the true interests of agriculture. Under a general *régime* of one socialistic scheme against another, the game is against the best condition of agriculture. Freedom! Freedom! Individuality! must be the watchwords of the husbandman. The present state of land ownership in Great Britain is admitted on most sides to be unsatisfactory,—in proof of which is the endeavor of successive governments to remedy the evil legislation of centuries past. There, as in other parts of Europe, the disease having, in a certain sense, become chronic, a return to a better state of land ownership is most difficult. In America, the acute stage is approaching rapidly, through a somewhat different channel from that by which England's farmers lost their lands; but I trust it is not too late, in most localities at least, for the application of a salutary remedy.

I believe in a numerous land-holding class; small land proprietors have been the backbone of nearly all real progress in America; and the outlook is dark indeed if their power and influence is gradually to disappear. Sismondi says: "Wherever we find peasant proprietors, we find comfort, security, confidence in the future, and that which assures at once happiness and virtue." This independence certainly should be the desired condition.

The Belgian economist De Laveleye's opinion is, that "in England, large farming and large properties have killed this class of free and brave peasant proprietors, the yeomen who won the battles of Poitiers, Crècy, and Agincourt. . . . Never to be forgotten is Pliny's cry of grief, which echoes like a warning note through economic history. Overgrown estates ruined Italy and the provinces. Large properties produce everywhere excessive inequality, depopulation, class divisions, and decay. Countries inhabited by peasant proprietors have withstood all these crises." If we compare country with country, period with period, we will find that where the land has been well divided among the people, other things being equal, there prosperity will be the more generally apparent.

It is the Abbé St. Pierre's decision, that the infraction of the Roman laws limiting the size of the Roman citizen's estates to small dimensions, hastened rapidly the ruin of the republic.

All through the history of Greece we are impressed by the idea, that, notwithstanding her growth towards perfection in literature, science, and politics, she carried along with it the seeds of her own destruction. The depravity of the masses resulted largely from depriving them of the reasonable use of the lands. The history of the rise and progress, decay, and final downfall of these old civilizations, showing that the general features of each progressive stage were an index to the condition and importance of the agricultural classes, and of the manner in which the land was held by them, is of very great practical interest to us.

Dr. Bowen, an American authority of some note on these matters, believes that "every farmer should own

the soil he tills"; that "it makes him a better farmer, a better citizen, and a more patriotic one."

Collectivism would be no remedy for the abnormal state of things toward which we are now tending; it would be a cure more to be dreaded than the disease; and the same may be said of land nationalization. Extinguish that impulse which prompts our farmers to cultivate with energy, and beautify the lands of their forefathers, and you have stricken that land with a blight; cause the farmer to view the orchards and gardens which have been his childhood's delight, as the property of the highest bidder, and his interest in them fails; deprive him of the stimulus to work, which sole ownership and management of an estate freed from all encumbrances naturally gives him, and make a collectivator or government agent sole manager of his individual industries, and you have robbed him of the best incentives toward true progress. There is nothing original in all this. They are but the views of our ablest economists. Adam Smith's observations led him to the conclusion, that "the small proprietor who tills every part of his little territory, who views it with all the affection which property (especially small property) inspires, and who, on that account, takes pleasure not only in cultivating but in adorning it, is generally of all improvers the most industrious, the most intelligent, and the most successful." Arthur Young makes this striking and enthusiastic remark: "Give a man secure possession of a bleak rock, and he will turn it into a garden."

Nothing can be more conducive to the success of the farmer's enterprise than the confidence that his labors may secure him thorough independence. With increas-

ing faith in his opportunities to become an individual owner, his chances to become something of a capitalist are increased. As he gathers capital, he gathers power to defy the land-grabber or the usurer. But this is not the tendency in America to-day, and the consequence must be fewer and fewer men on whom to depend for social security—a most momentous matter.

CHAPTER III.

DANGER TO MORALS.

Everywhere we find political centralization counteracting the influence of that social decentralization which looks to elevating the condition of all the people of the state, whether male or female.

—HENRY C. CAREY.

IN an opening chapter I made the claim in behalf of the rural classes, that they, in addition to their many other valuable characteristics, were peculiarly the moral safeguards of society. Especially is this so in reference to the use of intoxicants.

Regrettable though it be, we are, in some particulars, becoming more susceptible to the acquirement of this habit than heretofore. We have already learned that nervous disorders are increasing. This is not only the case in the United States, but in Canada as well. "When the nervous system loses, through any cause, much of its nervous force, so that it cannot stand upright with ease and comfort, it leans on the nearest and most convenient artificial support that is capable of temporarily propping up the enfeebled frame. Any thing which gives ease, sedation, oblivion, such as chloral, chloroform, opium, or alcohol, may be resorted to, first as an incident, and finally as a habit."¹

¹ Dr. George M. Beard.

The Rev. Josiah Strong, commenting on the above, in dealing with this subject in his book, "Our Country," says: "Men of nervous organizations are not only more likely than others to use alcohol, and to use it to excess, but its effects in their case are worse and more rapid. The wide difference between a nervous and a phlegmatic temperament accounts for the fact that one man will kill himself with drink in four or five years, and another in forty or fifty."

The annual expenditure of the United States for foreign and domestic liquors is now estimated at one thousand millions of dollars. "This is more than is expended for beef, pork, and flour, and nearly equals the amount paid for wages in all the manufacturing establishments of every description."¹ Official statistics show that beer has largely taken the place of spirits, but though in 1840, the United States consumed four gallons of liquor per capita, in 1888 she consumed over twelve gallons per capita.

As the people gather more into the cities, a larger proportion of the nation becomes more subject to nervous disorders, and a consequent susceptibility to intemperance, a habit which further impairs the moral, the mental, and the physical capacities of men,—which fills jails with criminals, poorhouses with paupers, and makes many homes of wretchedness. The increased exposure to the vice of intemperance is one grave objection to change from country to city life. Especially is this the case with those who become engaged in the very unhealthy occupations—occupations which are on the increase. Higher wages are paid to those who are likely to be soon cut down by the deadly effects of their peculiar industry.

¹ Senator John J. Ingalls, *North American Review*, August, 1889.

Consequently a greater opportunity is afforded for holidays. Indeed, it is claimed that the drinkers live the longest, owing to their more frequent absence from work.

We might wish that Ebenezer Elliott's character of the grinder applied better to that class in his time than now :

“ There draws the grinder his laborious breath ;
There, coughing, at his deadly trade, he bends ;
Born to die young, he fears nor man, nor death ;
Scorning the future, what he earns, he spends ;
Debauch and riot are his bosom friends.”

As our young men drift into the cities, they come into contact, not with the once denounced and degraded bar-room, but with the respectable “ beer palace,” where every thing is made as attractive and entertaining as possible. To-day, as compared with twenty years ago, the selling of intoxicating liquors is an eminently respectable occupation, and consequently the tendency is to make the habit of drinking equally so. These “ beer palaces ” are gilded traps for our country boys, when they come to change country for city life. The city of New York alone has seven thousand of these legalized life- and soul-destroying dispensaries of sin and ruin, some of them being most costly and gorgeous in their appointments.

That the cities contain a larger proportion of excessive drinkers than the country, is proved by the much larger ratio of deaths in them from this cause, as compared with the country. In the city of London, one to 12,800 of the population dies from the use of alcohol, while of the whole kingdom, only one to 26,000 dies from its use.

In fact, the ruralists of our country can hardly realize how much the cause of temperance depends upon them

for its life and vigor ; though it is not difficult to obtain *data* to prove that the backbone of organized temperance reform is with the rural classes, while it is ' little less difficult to discover that organized opposition to this work has its chief strength with the urban classes.

To-day with the vast city vote against the country, the country majority is handicapped by the city majority, whatever it may wish to do in order to stay the tide of intemperance. The great temperance reforms of the past have been principally fought out in the country towns. To carry on this warfare successfully must become more and more difficult, as the cities grow while the country stands still.

Remarks Mr. Strong : " Our cities are growing much more rapidly than the whole population, as is the liquor power also." After which he propounds the query : " If this power continues to keep the cities under its heel, what of the nation, when the city dominates the country ? " New York is now practically ruled by the liquor interests, but New York is not alone in this by any means.

There are no more active workers in our political caucuses than the city and town dealers, manufacturers and promoters of this degrading and destructive traffic. These men spend vast amounts at every election to corrupt voters. And thousands of dollars are put up at every session of our legislatures, to buy up legislators for the purpose of keeping open this highway to destruction.

It is not the farmers of America who desire the growth of this evil, or who crave its exhilarating effects. And, be they prohibitionists or moral-suasionists, they have little desire to see the accumulation of revenue through the sale of privileges to import, to manufacture, or dispense that which debases, enslaves, and pauperizes so

many of the people. Neither can prohibitionists nor moral-suasionists anywhere permit, without heartfelt regret, the continuous change of conditions which tend to nourish proclivities towards the drinking habit, and to see those who are engaged in this trade the rulers of the land.

It was to some a startling statement, recently made by a prominent clergyman, that, unless a substitute be found, the liquor saloon supplies an absolute necessity in our great cities such as New York, with their "hundreds of thousands of homeless boarding-house and lodging-house population."¹ This condition has assumed gigantic proportions, apparently unnoticed. But now we must ask: As matters are drifting, will a substitute be found? Every new day sees a larger proportion of American people than hitherto, of the boarding- and lodging-house stamp. It follows, that we are rapidly increasing the proportion of our citizens to whom the beer saloon or a substitute is a necessity. The country of small farmers such as has been the pride of America in the past, requires nothing of the kind. To such the beer saloon, instead of being a necessity, is always a curse when established.

But, whether the sale of intoxicants for the purpose of being used as a beverage should be prohibited or limited by law, or its control be left to the influences of moral forces, there is no question as to the imperative necessity for the human family to avoid, by all means, that condition which must constantly increase their chances to be the victims of this increasing peril.

Another most serious phase of the question of the drift from the old farms to other occupations in the towns and cities—the dispersion of the old families from

¹ The Rev. Dr. Bacon.

the homes of their fathers—is in the diminution of permanent homes just where permanent homes should be increased. There is a safety to the state and to truest aims of life in the multiplicity of complete family circles.

I once heard the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher say, that he had no fear for the people who must build cellars under their homes ; for, in a climate where such were necessary, the father would be found at home when the day's work was over. Mr. Beecher was right. The home life is of the most desirable character, where the husband and father looks to his own fireside, himself to become the central figure in the family group, when he seeks rest and recreation from his toil ; the life where the wife and mother is least likely to have occasion to carry a heavy heart, because of the marriage vow having become shorn of the virtue it should possess ; the home where the round of household duties, though perhaps rough and laborious, may be performed with cheerfulness ; because it is a work in which a family's interests and sympathies share in promoting their accomplishment ; the home where the children may view with pleasure and with profit a harmony of purpose in all the details of the varied efforts which are being put forth to further the interests of the individual, the family, and the state.

Every new contingent which leaves the old farms for city or factory-town life, goes to swell the ranks of the classes which are doing least to preserve, in its full significance, the sovereign value of the family compact. We cannot give too much heed to the danger which must befall us, through thus following in the track of the civilizations which have gone down. With the people flocking to cities, and the corresponding moral dangers

therefrom, a growing disregard of the sanctity and indissoluble character and purpose of the marriage vow—the family compact,—we endanger the whole fabric of society. “Any reflecting person, considering these questions from the point of view of public policy and in the interests of civilization, without any prepossessions upon the subject that can be called religious, must see that the institution of the family is at the base of all our civilization, and it is the duty of every good citizen to repel all assaults upon it.”

Notwithstanding our great accumulations of wealth, our palatial residences with their varied attractions and appointments to make the average city home luxurious and comfortable, the father and husband, as a rule, is less at home than in the ruder days of the early Pilgrims and Puritans. With our development, the modern clubhouse and the fashionable restaurant have come—a menace to the permanency and nobility of the family. They take the heart out of the family circle, and leave it cold and purposeless. These institutions are growing in America out of all proportion to the increase of population.

Of the poorer classes, it is becoming strikingly apparent, that the number of married women looking for employment at the stores, offices, and factories is alarmingly on the increase. It is said by those who have given this matter attention, that the married who are thus striving for situations in our cities are not fewer in numbers than the unmarried; that of these the majority are women whose husbands have either left them, or who are compelled to assist the husband in procuring a subsistence for the family; that a vast proportion are wives of perfidious husbands. There was once a time when the young wife

of the man of small income was enabled to join by the side of the husband in the labors of his calling, as in the small retail stores—now almost extinct in our large cities. But of all, the country, under the *régime* of the small farmer, has afforded the best chances for this most desirable of partnerships.

The state wherein is destroyed the permanent home life must expect moral degeneracy, and the state which depends upon the great capitalists, and hired labor, and mechanics to supply it with the fruits of the earth must one day see its homes become devoid of character or honor—its mothers forced down from the high and rightful place which they should occupy.

Of the fallen Grecian Republic, says Mr. Henry C. Carey: "Wisdom, love, chastity, poetry, history, the liberal arts, and even Athens herself, were typified by female figures—Minerva, Venus, Diana, and the Muses having been the objects of divine worship among the people who looked to Solon for their instructions and their laws. When, however, we look to the interior of the Athenian family, we find, as in all cases of semi-barbarism, the home to have no real existence, the wife having been a mere drudge, whose sphere of action was limited to the perpetuation of the family and the superintendence of the household—the husband meanwhile finding the best society the city could supply in the dwelling of his mistress. Neglected as she was, chastity was then, nevertheless, the characteristic of the Athenian matron. When, however, Athens had become mistress of one thousand cities, when centralization had been fully carried out, when trade, war, and politics had become the sole pursuit of the Athenian men, we find Socrates lending his wife to his friend, while Pericles scarcely surprises his fellow-citizens when

presenting to them Aspasia, his own mistress, and the mistress of so many others, as his legitimate wife—the class of *hetærae* then constituting the most distinguished feature in the highly *civilized* society which had Attica for its home.”¹

“The tendency of legislation in this country has been to a relaxation of the matrimonial tie, and this is a tendency that there is urgent need of resisting.”² It indicates a general relaxation of moral forces. We are creating a state which is the least likely to resist this tendency, and legislators as well as others are participating in it.

Says Cardinal Gibbons: “In Rome adulteries increased as divorces were multiplied.”

After speaking of the facility and frequency of divorce among the Romans, Gibbons adds: “A specious theory is confuted by this free and perfect experiment, which demonstrates that the liberty of divorce does not contribute to happiness and virtue. This facility of separation would destroy all mutual confidence and inflame every trifling dispute. The minute difference between a husband and a stranger which might so easily be removed, might still more easily be forgotten.”

How *apropos* in this connection are the words of Professor Woolsey: “Nothing is more startling than to pass from the first part of the eighteenth to the latter part of the nineteenth century, and to observe how law has changed and opinion has altered in regard to marriage—the great foundation of society—and to divorce; and how, almost *pari passu*, various offences against chastity, such as concubinage, prostitution, illegitimate

¹ “Social Science,” vol. iii., p. 370.

² *New York Times*, October 25, 1889.

births, abortion, disinclination to family life, have increased also, not indeed at the same pace everywhere, or all of them equally in all countries, yet have decidedly increased on the whole. Surely in few parts of the wide world is the truth of these strong words more evident than in those parts of our country where loose divorce laws have long prevailed.”¹

From a total of 9,937 divorces granted in the United States in 1867, they increased to 25,535 in 1886: an increase double the increase of population. Near to every tenth family is broken up through difficulties between husbands and wives resulting in divorces. In fact, in some cities of America it is the exception to find a family that is not in some way afflicted by this growing evil. While this is the case in the cities, the separation of husband and wife is of infrequent occurrence in the country.

Woman—whose history, until a very recent period has been one of subordination, shame, and suffering, from the hands of her lord and master; who looks forward to the days of equal rights and greater freedom; who would sit enthroned in her proper sphere, honored, respected, and deferred to as an equal in intelligence and in worth,—has every thing to fear from the breaking up of the small land proprietories.

Every consideration, however, pales before the last that we shall mention—our tendencies towards those conditions least likely to preserve or increase Christian characteristics. Statistics bearing upon this subject are to the effect, that the country people have been greater church-goers than the city people, and that these proclivities have become in the past more and more marked.

¹ *North American Review*, November, 1889.

In 1880, one of the chief cities of America, Chicago, had only one church to each 2,081 of the people, whereas the country had more than one to every 516. In 1840, Chicago had one to every 747 of its people. The change has been more noticeable in this city than with most others, but the whole tendency has been in the direction thus indicated. The cities of America are being filled with those who have no desire for Christian worship. Indeed the extreme socialist declares himself the direct opponent of religion of any sort. The city is his home, and it is there that his contaminating influence is exercised.

Corresponding to the weakening of the desires of the people for religious worship, has crime increased. The ratio of prison population to each million of the inhabitants of the United States was 290 in 1850; 607 in 1860; 853 in 1870; and 1,169 in 1880. These figures show that crime in America is increasing out of all proportion to increase of population. It is in the great cities that the increase of crime is chiefly taking place.

But it seems a time does come when, the country having lost its economic, political, and social vitality, it may fail in moral and religious character. It has been so with the fallen civilizations. In its appearance we see that which may be the beginning of the end. What a pure, noble, and grand development, in high religious purpose, has been that worked out on the farms and in the country towns of New England! How sad that the scenes of these religious activities should cease to see perpetuated the Christian traditions marked so indelibly upon the history of the pioneer life of this interesting portion of the New World!

The Rev. Mr. Henry Fairbanks stated recently, before the Evangelical Alliance of America, that in Vermont

there were but 150,000 of the population of the State who now attend any place of worship, whereas there are 183,000 who never go at all. Another says that a generation of infidels has been reared upon the hillsides of New England, and that they are the worst heathen that he has ever met with.¹

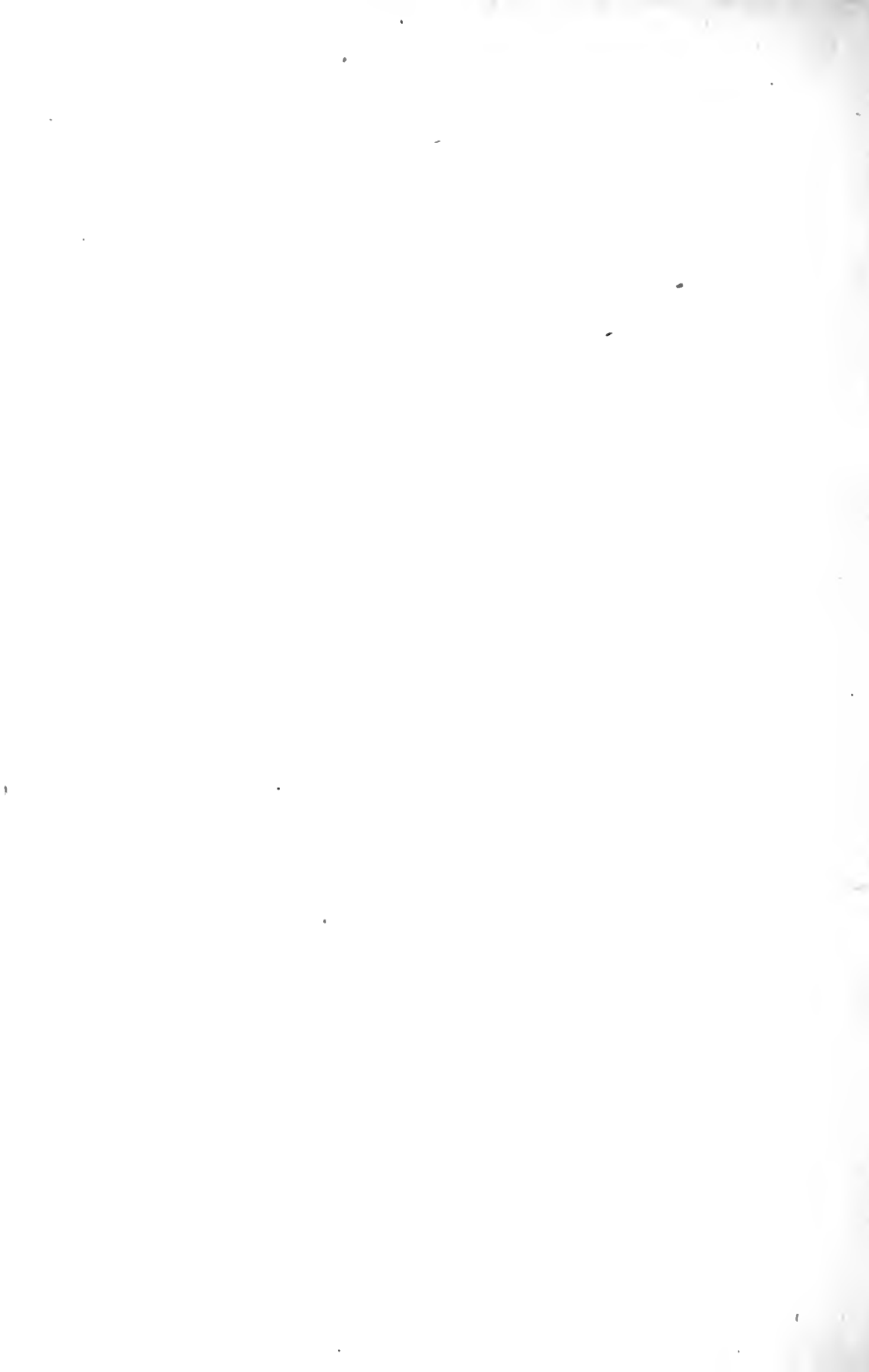
The Rev. Mr. J. S. Buckminster, in the first years of the present century, or when the typical American farmer was a most prominent figure in the affairs of that early period, saw in those farmers the greatest spiritual hope of the Commonwealth. He said: "No situation in life is so favorable to the establishment of habits of virtue, and powerful sentiments of devotion, as a residence in the country, and rural occupations. I am not speaking of a condition of peasantry (of which, in this country, we know little) who are mere vassals of an absent lord, or hired laborers of an intendant, and who are therefore interested in nothing but the regular receipt of their daily wages; but I refer to the honorable character of the owner of the soil, whose comforts, whose weight in the community, and whose very existence depends upon his personal labors, and the regular returns of the abundance from the soil he cultivates. No man, one would think, would feel so sensibly his immediate dependence upon God, as the husbandman." In the American farmer of his day, he saw the ideal farmer, in fact; he saw in him the one in whom religious character was of the most likely development from the circumstance among others, that the nature of agricultural pursuits, as he saw them in his time, "does not completely engross the attention as other occupations. Even then he saw the necessity of entreating the city classes, few as they were then by comparison, to

¹ Rev. Mr. Haynes.

“avoid the practice of any thing which might impair the vigor of rural virtues, simplicity and morality, and especially of the institution of the Sabbath.”

Coming down to the middle of our century, we find the Rev. Mr. Beecher sounding a note of warning: “If we neglect our duty and suffer our laws and institutions to go down, we give them up forever. It is easy to relax, easy to retreat, but impossible, when the abomination of desolation has passed over New England, to rear again the thrown down altars, and gather again the fragments, and build up the ruins of demolished institutions. Another New England nor we, nor our children shall ever see, if this be destroyed. All is lost irretrievably when the landmarks are once removed and the bands which now hold us are broken. Such institutions and such a state of society can be established only by such men as our fathers were, and in such circumstances as they were in. . . . The hand that overthrows our laws and temples is the hand of death unbarring the gate of Pandemonium, and letting loose upon our land the crimes and miseries of Hell.”

Robbed of that link of hope and reverence which prompts to aims and actions which are true and eternal in their influence upon character, the people thus divested must become as all nations that forget God. It matters not what the method employed to break down our best of institutions,—the direct or the indirect,—the result must be the same in the end, and the responsibility upon those instrumental in bringing it about, will be in proportion to the knowledge they possess of the drift and purpose of our social and national undertakings. The catastrophe in New England, should be an instruction and a warning to the rest of America.



THE CONCLUSION, IN WHICH THE REMEDY IS FOUND.

“Morality is stronger than a Majority.”

THE CONCLUSION.

THE first step towards a remedy for the decline of American agriculture, and an escape from the dangers it foreshadows, must be in a proper and more general realization of the imperative necessity for a larger proportion of the people to be engaged in tilling the soil than at present; a realization that agriculture must be made prosperous, and rank first among the great industries.

A further step may be taken in the farmers of America making themselves a political force, uniting for this purpose, and securing, wherever and whenever possible, the return of an intelligent farmer to Parliament; then, in the legislative halls bending their energies, not to further the schemes of the communist, nor those of the socialist, but the projects of the true social reformer—not seeking more laws, but better laws, and the liberty of a true equality. Buckle was no doubt correct in his remark: “The best laws which have been passed have been those by which some former laws were repealed.”

We can abolish all laws which tend to engender national strife, the destructive results of which must be borne by our toiling people; all laws which are barriers between supply and demand, preventing production—that is, man’s labor—from enjoying its natural and true value; all laws which tend to prevent the reduction of taxes to the actual needs of the government, and the reduction

of government to the actual needs of the people ; all laws which prevent the placing of taxes where they should be placed ; and all laws which force labor to give unfair support to capital or to monopoly, creating inequality, sacrificing the true ethical spirit, which should prevail, to the wiles of scheming politicians. This would do much, very, very much, to correct that greatly neglected division of political economy—the distribution of wealth. Then the farmers, both large and small, would be upon an equal footing with all others in the community.

With the powers which prosperity gives, well diffused among the small estates, dangerous socialistic movements can make little headway. Individual ownership incites to individual responsibility. Thus an effectual security is given to the prevention of social disturbances. In this greater diffusion of an augmented prosperity among the rural classes, is also to be found an escape from the dangers to morals, intellect, and the physical stamina of men, which now threaten the human family.

But, however true all this is, as conditions now exist, it may well be questioned if the farmers of America, with all the forces they may gather in our parliamentary assemblies, would alone be able to combat the forces which we see are pitted against them ; able to meet the argument that, though admitting a policy of universal economic freedom to be an “immense blessing to the world,” yet since the nations and so many individuals have given themselves over to a “general scramble for wealth and commercial supremacy,” it would be puerile and absurd for us to take the lead, or even to follow in an effort to gain for the world these immense blessings, but instead should take part in the scramble ourselves ; that it is a practical age, which has little room for visiona-

ries ; and that the "practical politician " decides against visionaries, while majorities support the "practical politician." This reasoning, though conspicuously false in fact, has many supporters. It is false in the assumption that others go farther than we in America in false economic systems. We represent the civilized portion of one of the five continents. Surely this makes us responsible for much. Second, to assume that the people of America are incapable of appreciating the advantages of a course which, if adopted, would undoubtedly lead to "immense blessings," is far from flattering to their intellectual capacities. Third, it puts a terribly low estimate on the power of moral purpose ; this is where the great mistake is made, when the would-be reformer allows it to deter him from action in behalf of the right. And yet it does deter.

Men of character, of the noblest purpose, see that dangerous conditions are settling in upon us, and that every good citizen is required to stand for that which is true and right, and that only. Bishop Cleveland Coxe tells us in America, that "we are confronted by the terrible fact that we are undergoing changes similar to those which have been the ruin of ancient peoples in many examples."

Bishop Benjamin Whipple says : "Awful problems stare us in the face—the centralization of swarms of souls in the cities, the wealth of the nation in fewer hands, competition making a life-and-death struggle." Bishop Spalding points to dangers which already hover over and around the great American Republic : "If we have been able to found a durable state with what elsewhere and hitherto has been the least stable kind of government, our success is to be ascribed to causes,

some of which have ceased to exist, while others are disappearing."

Says Prof. Austin Phelps : " Turn whichever way we will—South, West, North, East—we are confronted by the same element of crisis in the outlook upon the future. Every thing seems, to human view, to depend on present and dissolving chances. Whatever can be done at all must be done with speed."

Every thing warns us that this is no time for trifling with principles. It is a time for great victories or great failures. To whom and to what, then, are we to look for deliverance ?

Says the scholarly Mr. George William Curtis : " They are called visionaries who hold that morality is stronger than a majority." " But," says he, " the educated reformer of America has faith enough in the people to appeal to them against themselves, for he knows that the cardinal principle of popular government is the ability of the people to correct their own errors."

It is true that the men who have led in great reforms, as a rule, have been educated men ; but, they have been men who have always stood out conspicuously in their precepts, and examples as independent self-sustaining characters. They have been no parasites, but men of moral courage : men who could give to the world more than they expected to receive from it. We have such to-day scattered all over our land—in our colleges, in our school-rooms, in our editorial chairs, in our pulpits, and in our courts of justice. But it is not with such only that loyalty to high principles is recognized as the true monitor in the decision of matters pertaining to family, to society, to the state. It is found strong in the rank and file, and nowhere stronger than with our rural

classes, however they may have stood aloof from any practical part in the settlement of public questions, or however they may have appeared merely as partisans.

Knowledge is power, and it is a greater power for good than for evil; but is a mighty power for evil. Knowledge, though, is a greater power for good when in possession of those whose occupations, habits, and surroundings are calculated to develop morality and virtue. Good knowledge and morality are correlatives. In the rural classes, then, we may look for good knowledge to be most extensively disseminated, and in the greatest volume in the aggregate.

In America, in our day, that education which should render men capable of doing valuable service for most reforms is within the grasp of the average rural voter. It is only required, in addition, that he become inspired by real convictions. It has not been through men of profound speech, or of brilliant oratory alone that reforms have been wrought, but by all who are, to use an expression of Emerson, "appointed by Almighty God to stand for a fact." "Him who has the facts and can and will state them people will listen to, though he is otherwise ignorant." It is this standing for facts that finally tells.

Reform's best weapon is the plain, unvarnished truth, which strikes home to the heart of the humblest. Richard Cobden, when urging on his fellow leaguers in the great reform to which he had pledged his life's best efforts, said to them: "This is the work which requires no gifts of oratory, or powerful public appeals; it is a labor in which men can be useful privately and without ostentation." The same can be said of all great reforms in which the people are interested. Yes! the most of us are eligible for service in the cause of truth.

A belief in "the ability of the people to correct their own errors" also implies a belief in their ability to see their own errors. This awakening may be the hardest part of reform. If the citizens of the Roman Republic had been able, at some turning-point in its history, to see their own errors in their true light, that civilization might have gone on in its own development. We may say the same of the Grecian, or any other of our past civilizations. The lack of a proper realization of error is a continual stumbling-block in itself, and is ceaselessly working the downfall of men. Notwithstanding, we have faith in the people of America, not only to eventually see the right, but to act in its behalf.

When with such vexed social and political problems as the difficulties now existing between labor and capital, the distribution of land, the threatening power of combinations of wealth, and reforms in our governing methods, we affirm that we have faith in the people to solve them, we also imply a belief in the sovereignty of the people. Certainly in this we mean not merely a passive sovereignty, not only in the people being represented here and there through an unpledged and uninstructed leader, but a sovereignty in which the individual citizen acts the part of the true sovereign, and becomes responsible for the welfare of his subjects. Therefore, with such as we in America, where the people are empowered to be the chief rulers, safety is always in the timely action of the people, alive to a requisite appreciation of truth, and realizing their responsibilities as sovereigns.

That portion of the people by whom error should be the more easily recognized is composed of those in whom morality and virtue more largely predominate. It follows that all, be they clergymen, statesmen, judges, teachers,

merchants, fishermen, or mechanics, who believe in the abstract right as the true expedient, and who believe in the principles of liberty, justice, harmony, righteousness, and peace, as the true element in forming the base on which to found social and political systems, are natural allies with our farmers in all reforms having this end in view. Should they not be their natural allies in resisting the forces which are now weaving the network of illiberal, unjust, unchristian, soul-enslaving laws around the people of America?

Our paternal governments have sought for and formed their alliances with wealth and the parts of society, socialistic in their tendencies. They are plutocracies, made powerful by sucking the blood of the state; in league with that part of the state which seeks relief from its burdens by throwing them on the remainder.

Are not these really the two great parties about to engage in a struggle which is not very far off? The latter party is already a consolidated, disciplined force, as we have shown; and it has the wealth of the country and the greater number on its side. The former has yet to bring its forces together. But are not thousands of our own people willing to enter into the contest for reform? Will some only wait the rallying cry, while others are waiting the command to march? They are in the minority, but "morality is stronger than a majority."

We have long since come to the conclusion that we have not been dealing, in this work, with an economic question only, but a far-reaching moral question; and that when the moral question is settled, the economic question will, necessarily, in a great measure, be of easy adjustment. We must keep in view the fact that, nearly nineteen hundred years ago, Christ came into the world to teach

men a new morality¹ ; to give men a higher conception of human responsibility than they had hitherto known ; a new, startling realization of the all-important truth that the whole human race is one great brotherhood ; that their rights are essentially equal ; that all through the centuries that had gone before, an abnormal condition had existed in the alienation of these rights from the great majority of mankind ; that principles have no bounds.

It is indubitably correct that the human family have been far too slow in grasping these truths, with even a rudimentary conception of their immense importance to man, or of the responsibilities they call upon him to assume. We have much to assure us, however, that they do sink into men's hearts, and influence their actions. From the light they now furnish, error should be more easily distinguished. Had it shone around men and pierced their hearts in the earlier civilizations, who can say that, notwithstanding, they would still have fallen ?

To this same morality we must look to shed a light over those difficulties which now seem insurmountable. *Morality is stronger than a majority.*

Men must one day scorn the thought of seeking privileges through legislation at the expense of others. The day must come when all men will look upon the whole system of protection as a mean, selfish, un-Christian barbarism of the past ; when free trade will not mean merely liberty for particular interests, but justice to all ; when no man will dare insult his fellow-men by insinuating that they do not so far value liberty as to submit to a direct burden as its cost, rather than to be cheated into it by an indirect one ; when men will put no bounds to rectitude or justice ; when statesmen must look upon it as

¹ Geikie.

childish and undignified in the extreme to be guided in their policies in these matters by false systems of foreign countries.

It was for no small purpose that our Saviour, when on earth, taught men : " Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even unto them."

We are no pessimists, no fatalists. We believe that man is a being of high measures of perfectibility, not only individually, but that he is one day to see his fellows harmoniously and unitedly working out the great problems of social and industrial life with their brothers. That principles shall grow and finally prevail in grand triumph, we have implicit faith. Strip us of this prospective faith, and life would be a delusion.

But while we feel all this, we are not blind to the fact that many years *may* pass before we have reached that happy state ; many years of hard, unflinching labor for reform on the part of those who represent the true moral forces of our country. After years of strife between nations, engendered and quickened by their irrational, irritating fiscal policies ; after the communistic elements of society, which our state socialisms have fostered into active being, have joined the forces of " the Universal Revolution " ; after myriads of our small land-holdings have ceased to be, as such ; when the typical American farmer will be known only in history ; and, after years, perhaps ages, of efforts to adjust all the abnormal conditions which our unwise laws have occasioned, the truth may finally prevail.

Can we permit this delay ? Shall we not strike for reforms now, and by so doing save years of suffering, sorrow, and desolation in our land ? Shall not the moral forces be concentrated for a mighty effort to purge our

Western world from the disease which has fastened itself upon it? Surely we will not let the sun go down upon our days without the consoling thought that we, in this respect, have done something to make the world fairer, brighter, happier, and better.

It is unwise for any citizen who desires the best good for his country to shun the study; or evade a part, in a practical solution of these vexed political, economic, and social problems. It is not reasonable for us to complain of our evil laws, or of our law-makers, if we take no responsibility in improving them, or do nothing in the way of giving a moral backing to those who do. Plato's remark that "the wise are punished for taking no part in government, by being governed by worse people than themselves," still holds good.

While from our pulpits and platforms proceed loud and emphatic denunciations of the evils of selfishness, greed, injustice, robbery, duplicity, fraud, and corruption; the people should know that some of the false systems which engender these evils can, and will, be swept away, and that they must take part in its accomplishment. And while it is necessary that we place in our governing bodies, men of genuine integrity, of wise foresight, and strong purpose, to represent our views and to carry them into the statute-books; it should not be forgotten, that it is necessary, that all who represent these sentiments among the people become an active part of an organized body of reformers.

It is the people's great question, and it is needless to spend time trying to convert politicians. When the spirit of reform sinks deep into the hearts of the people, and a determination is shown to bring it about, the politician is powerless to stay its progress.

The Cobdens, the Brights, the Peels, and the Gladstones are rare ; yet, when men of purpose do appear, they should be borne up by the people.

If all who are heart and soul in sympathy with reform will unite, and stand by the principles involved, they will carry them through, in spite of parties. If they be animated by the spirit and determination which impelled Cobden and his colleagues in their great work of freeing the commerce of England, political parties cannot stand in the way. Said Cobden : " We have nothing to do with Whigs or Tories ; we are stronger than either of them ; if we stick to our principles, we can, of necessity, beat both." Speaking of himself, he said : " I seek no alliance with parties, and I will take none ; but having the feeling, I have the sacredness of the principle, and I can never agree to tamper with it." So may it be with the people who desire the true freedom of America—freedom from false systems. May they rise and go beyond party ! May there be with them no compromising of principles ! If defeat comes, let it come, once, twice, thrice, or more ; but may there be no surrender ! May they hold out as Abraham Lincoln did when facing the great crisis in his party, and as expressed in his exclamation, " If I must go down, then let me go down linked to truth—die in the advocacy of what is right and just ! "

" Morality is stronger than a majority."

And now we have accomplished our part of what we have considered to be a duty—in some respects a cheerful, and in some respects an onerous, duty ; but in all respects a conscientious one ; a duty to our country ; a duty to ourselves, and to others who are suffering.

We leave the question, for the present, to the good people of Canada and of the United States. It is of in-

tense importance to each, and especially to the farmers. May they put forth new energy in the cause of rectifying this great mistake of our day : that of legislating the annihilation of the *Typical American Farm* and the *Typical American Farmer*—a wrong to the best interests of their country, a wrong to the universal brotherhood, a wrong to themselves especially, and a grievous wrong to their children, who are soon to take their places in the battle of life.

The century which has seen in America freedom gained for the slave, in what may well be called "The Last Crusade," is drawing to a close ; but there is space left in it yet to win one more holy war ; a victory which will confer upon all, the blessings of that equality in economic rights, without which, they can scarcely be called freemen.

THE END.



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