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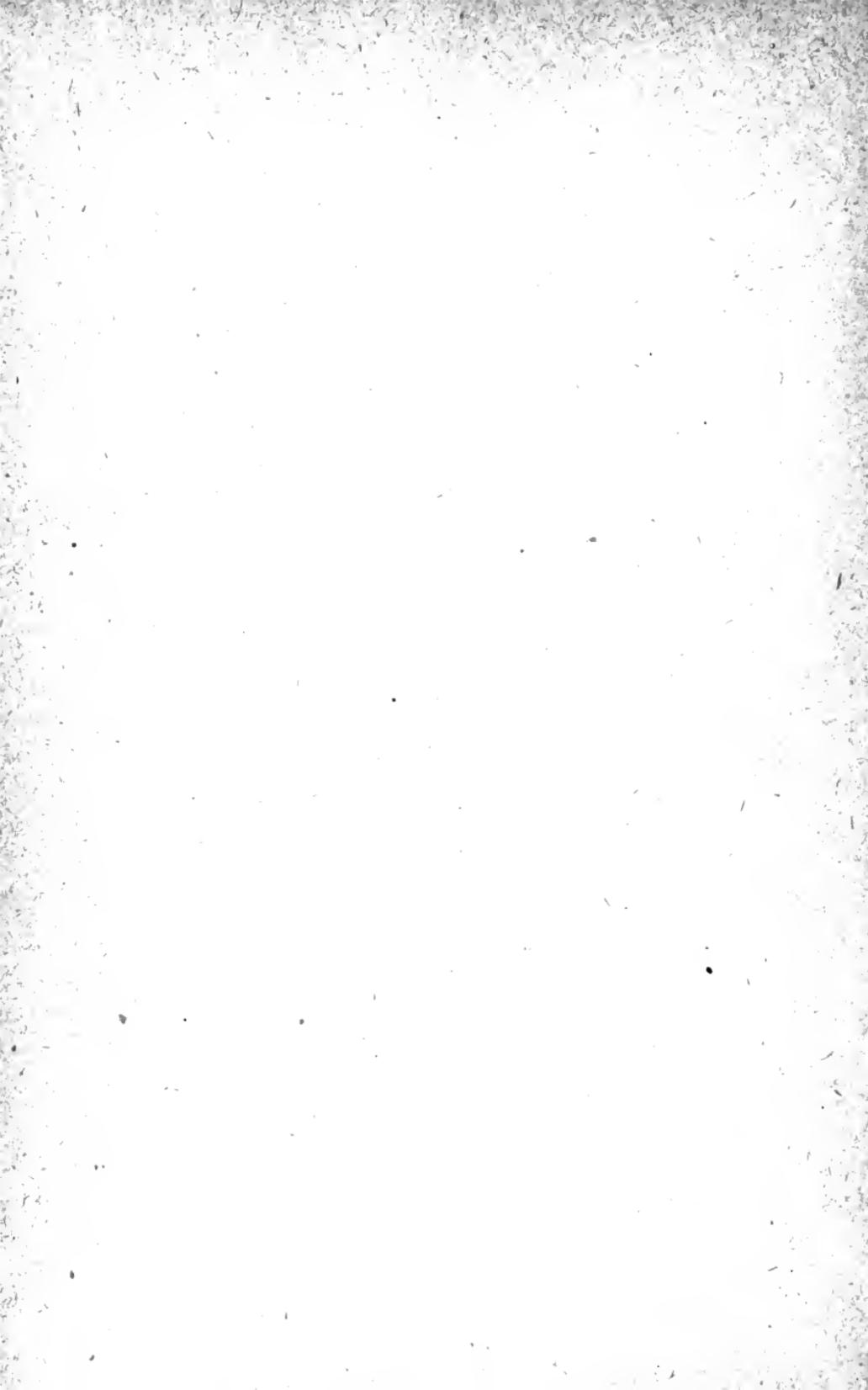
Wheelbarrow

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WHEELBARROW

ARTICLES AND DISCUSSIONS

ON THE

LABOR QUESTION

INCLUDING

The Controversy with Mr. Lyman J. Gage on the Ethics of the Board of Trade; and also the Controversy with Mr. Hugh O. Pentecost, and others, on the Single Tax Question.



CHICAGO:

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY,

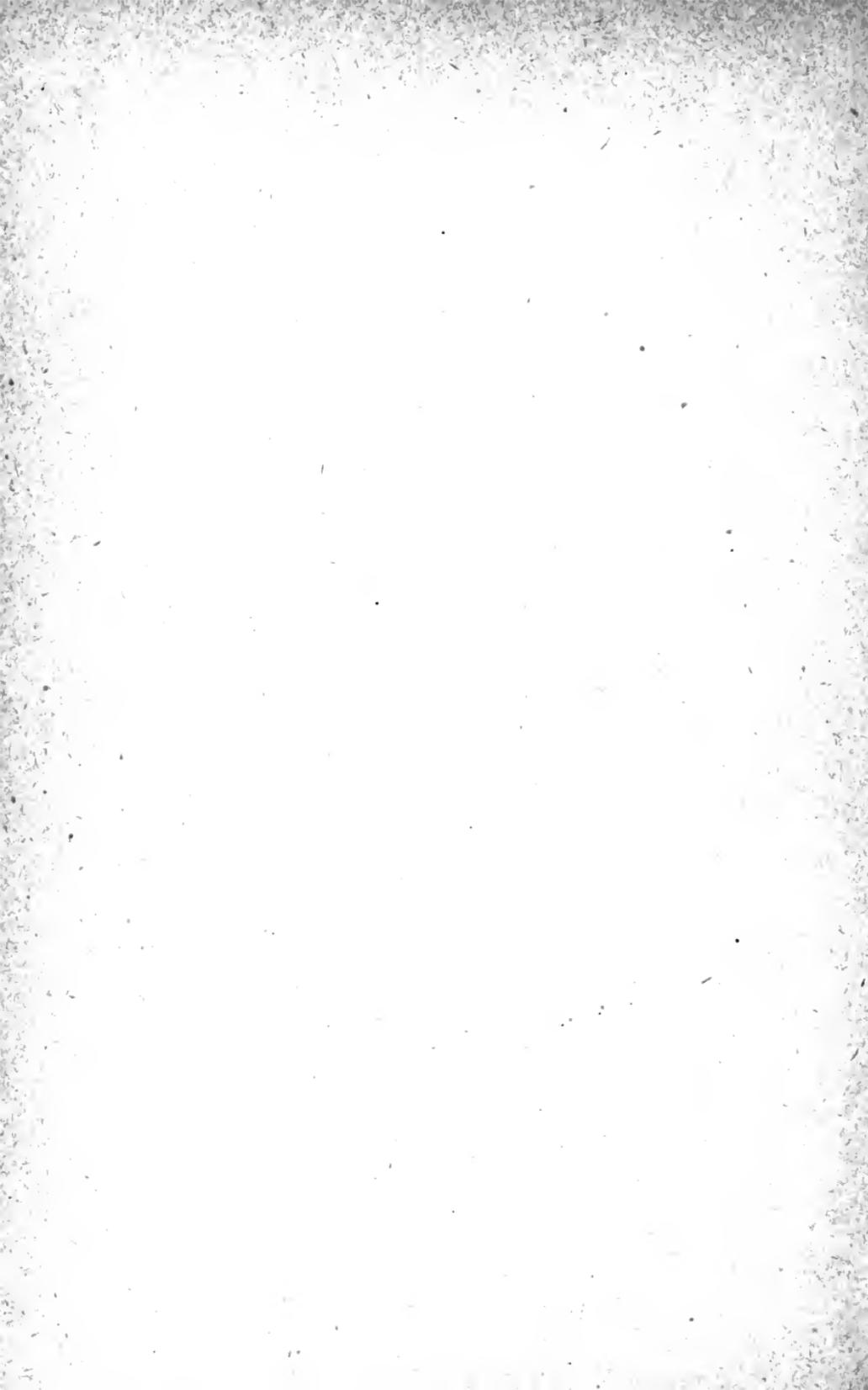
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1890.

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TO
EDWARD C. HEGELER, ESQ.,
OF LA SALLE, ILL.,
THIS LITTLE BOOK IS DEDICATED
AS A MARK OF
RESPECT AND ESTEEM,
BY HIS FRIEND
WHEELBARROW.



PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

THE articles of this book were written by a man who worked for years and years, his early childhood not excluded, as an unskilled laborer. With pickaxe, shovel, and wheelbarrow he helped to lay the first foundations of several railroads in this country. So he knows from experience the sufferings and hardships workingmen have to endure. His buoyant genius struggled against the odds, the restrictions, the impediments of his position ; and by wisely applied exertion he grew in importance as a man, he came to the front as a character who dared to stand up for his ideals of freedom and equal right. Honors were then bestowed upon him : he was elected to represent his fellow-citizens in the legislature of his State, and in war he rose to the rank of General. He worked no longer with the wheelbarrow, but with his brains ; he was powerful as an orator and wielded his pen with ability and vigor. But greater than his genius is the honesty of his aspirations, the nobility of his ideals, the broadness of his views. While aspiring to more intellectual and higher work, his sympathies with the laboring classes never waned.

Wheelbarrow, however, is not a demagogue. His articles are not written in an incendiary spirit. They are sustained by a moral purport. He does not preach hatred of class and has no intention to destroy the order of society. He stands upon the principle of justice, and thus he does not attempt to benefit the laborer by de-

tracting from the employer. Not by pulling down those who rise above the average man can we hope to progress, but by lifting the average man to a higher existence, by teaching him how to rise and how to work for an amelioration of his condition.

Wheelbarrow is no defender of one-sided theories, no believer in utopian millenniums. He is a man of practical life ; he knows there is no panacea for all the evils that flesh is heir to ; he knows there is no royal road of progress, for progress can be accomplished only by honest work and endeavor.

The present volume contains the matured fruit of his manhood, his inmost self, his soul of soul. We hope that the little book will do a great missionary work and contribute towards a peaceful solution of the labor problem.

Editor of "The Open Court"

My Dear Sir:

In reply to your kind request for the story of my life, I must quote the answer of "Canning's Needy Knife Grinder" to a similar application, "Story! God bless you, I have none to tell, sir". My life has been a strange eventful history to me, but, no doubt, commonplace enough to other men. These adventures, exciting enough to me, have little interest for them. Still, the story, such as it is, has its moral, at your desire I have written it. If the reader finds no entertainment in it, and is therefore disappointed, I must throw the responsibility upon you.

With kind regards, I am
Faithfully Yours

"Wheeler"





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AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

AS to where and when I was born? Well, "it was many and many a year ago in the Kingdom by the Sea"; in that Babylon where pictures of human life are seen in strongest light and shade; where opposite extremes menace each other forever, and where Dives and Lazarus exhibit the most glaring antithesis in this world. There I passed my childhood and my youth, and there at a very early age I entered the ranks of labor.

In entering this world, as in other ventures, much depends on getting a good start. If a human life begins in uncertainty and dispute, its journey will very likely be hilly, rough, and full of controversy. It is a perilous thing for a man to be born at midnight, literally between two days, so that he can never have a birthday, nor tell how old he is. Besides, think of the evil auguries connected with low twelve, "when churchyards yawn," when disembodied spirits walk the earth for punishment, when mischief broods in the time, and elfish goblins hide in careless babies who trespass into the world at that unlucky hour.

Before I was ten minutes old I found myself in

trouble about my birthday, and on that important question my parents were divided in opinion. My mother voted for the 30th, but my father thought I was born on the 31st. The doctor, who had opportunely looked at his watch, was invited to settle the question, and he unsettled it forever. He decided that I was not born either on the 30th or on the 31st, but on the very instant of midnight, and consequently not properly born at all.

That question being satisfactorily unsettled, a new debate arose concerning the *place* where I was born. It so happened that the dividing line between the parishes of St. Margaret and St. John run through my father's house and lengthwise along my mother's bed, so the disputatious genie who had taken charge of my destiny pretended to be anxious about my parish, a matter in which I never took any interest whatever. After embroiling the whole neighborhood for several days, it was agreed that the controversy be referred to the respective rectors of St. Margaret's and St. John's parishes; and the tradition states, although I don't believe it, that they very sensibly tossed up a shilling to decide it. The story goes that the rector of St. John won the toss, and at once decided that I was born in the other parish. In this way he relieved himself of all responsibility on my account, and threw the whole burthen of me upon St. Margaret.

When the entry belonging to me in the baptismal register came to be written, it was determined by the

rector that the date of my birth must be settled. So he decided that as it was always Friday night until Saturday morning, and as there could not be two twelve o'clock's in one night, therefore I was born on Friday, the 30th, and so it was writ in the baptismal register with his own hand, where I have seen it with my own eyes. I wish he had strained a point and made it the 31st, because it is luckier to be born on Saturday morning than on Friday night, and I believe that if he could conscientiously have decided for Saturday, it would have been luckier for me.

Listening when a child to those family-legends, my curiosity was aroused, and when I grew up to manhood, I was driven by that same genie to go and examine the record for myself. I was courteously introduced to the baptismal register, and there I found that I was officially born on the 30th of December, in the parish of St. Margaret, in the city of Westminster. This was quieting enough, but I was shocked like Robinson Crusoe at the footprint in the sand, when I discovered that this record threw a doubt upon my name.

Of course, born in such a doubtful way, the strings of my life were tangled into hard knots which could never be untied. The new puzzle was made in this way: My father's name was Mark, and my uncle's name was Matthew, so it was appointed that I should be called Mark, Matthew; but as this would have been an inversion of the apostolic order, something like the

Lord's prayer backwards, it was finally determined that I should be called Matthew, Mark. "Too much honor, Cromwell, too much honor," for any baby born in the humbler walks of life, as the rector properly thought, for he clipped the name and wrote it simply Mark in the baptismal register. He thought one saint of eminence was enough for any poor man's child, as I myself agree; but my father was deceived; he thought that I was Matthew, Mark; and I have been traveling along for nearly a lifetime, falsely pretending to own two patron saints, when one is more than I deserve. Without an explanation it looks as if I had purloined an extra saint for double patronage, a piece of religious larceny of which I am entirely innocent.

It is not wonderful that a boy started on a journey through the world amid contentions about the date of his birth, the place where he was born, and destined never to know his own name, should have a checkered career, embarrassed and impeded by contradictions, doubts, discords, and denials.

* * *

My father and mother were both religious people, and although they belonged to opposite and contradictory sects, that circumstance never made any discord in their domestic lives. Their moral doctrines were exactly alike, and they traveled along together in the very same path of duty. Their lives never deviated a hair's breadth from the straight lines of truth,

honesty, and charity. My mother was as divine as mortals ever get to be, and her faith rose above all troubles. My father was less courageous, although he was as brave as most men are ; yet he could not bear adversity with the same calm, patient, uncomplaining spirit. He was above all things an honest man. I do not think that any combination of disasters could have swerved him from his integrity.

In my father's code, cheating was not only a vice but a meanness. Lying was not only an act of sin but an act of cowardice ; cheating and lying were both unmanly. I believe he would rather have died than give short weight or measure, or falsely represent the quality or value of an article. In all this he was upheld and supported by my mother as by some superior moral power.

My father was doing a very fair business in a mercantile way, until he ventured a little farther than prudence warranted. This brings me to the first thing I can remember in this world ; and the sombre cloud of it has darkened my whole life, and still darkens it. I was about three years old ; it was night time and I was sitting on the bed. I remember the fire in the grate, the candle on the table, and everything in the room. Two men came in ; I see them now as plainly as I saw them then, two stout men in heavy coats. They read a paper to my father, and my mother began to cry. Then my father put on his overcoat, and after kissing my mother and me walked out with the

men. Then my mother flung herself weeping on the bed, folded me in her arms and said, "They have taken papa to prison." My father had been arrested for debt.

Next morning a neighbor came with a wagon and took me and my mother to see my father in prison. It was about three miles away on the other side of the river. This is my first recollection of London, yet I vividly remember it. I see again the crowds of people, the houses, the bridges, the river ; and most vividly of all, the obelisk in the borough. The prison was the old historic Marshalsea, damned by Charles Dickens to everlasting fame in the story of "Little Dorritt." I remember my father leading me by the hand up the long stone-paved courtyard up to the "Snuggery," where he ordered some refreshment for my mother and me.

My father was not long imprisoned in the Marshalsea, and he would not have been there at all except for the harshness of one creditor. All the others were willing to grant him time to extricate himself from his embarrassments, but this one man was inexorable. My mother managed to borrow money enough to pay him off, and the other creditors were made whole out of the assets of the business. My parents sacrificed everything to pay every man his claim to the last penny, and then began the world again with nothing but stout hearts and willing hands. The consequence of all this was that the rest of my

childhood and youth was spent in poverty, and a life that might have amounted to something was twisted out of all proportion to its original destiny. Many a time I have heard my father and mother discussing the oppressive conduct of that one unrelenting creditor, but never with any bitterness or hatred. They seemed to regard him as an unwitting agent of misfortune, as a cat, or a dog, or a gale of wind might be ; and sometimes I think that perhaps this is the proper way to think of all our enemies.

Imprisonment for debt no longer dishonors the jurisprudence of England. The Marshalsea is gone. There has not been left one stone upon another that has not been thrown down ; but the pain of its torments will continue from generation to generation. I saw it again a few days ago in a ghostly ghastly sort of way. I went to see a prisoner in the county jail at Chicago, and there happened to be a woman at the inside gate before me. When the turnkey came to the gate, she inquired for somebody, and the man answered, "You'll find him in the debtor's department." Instantly I grew sick at heart. Here was the Marshalsea again, and here was my mother asking for my father. "Can it be possible," I said, "that the cruel old barbarism of imprisonment for debt, long obsolete in England, is preserved and used in Illinois?" And a few weeks ago, sixty ministers of the gospel met and invited all the world to come to

Chicago in 1892, "to an exhibit of economic, ethical, social, and religious questions."

* * *

My parents being poor, it was natural that I should as early as possible help them to earn our living. At thirteen I was lucky enough to get a job of work at a dollar and a quarter a week, and thirteen hours a day. So I graduated from school with a little reading, writing, and "ciphering," as we called it in those days. My diploma reached scarcely up to the rule of three; indeed the four first rules were all of the arithmetic that I could honestly call my own. But a great education lies in the knowledge of those four elementary rules. I need not say how hard, grinding, and premature the labor in the days of my boyhood was; the memory of it is too bitter; so let it pass.

At the time I speak of, the lines of caste were sharply drawn in England, and I was duly instructed to "Fear God, Honor the King, and be contented in that station of life which it had pleased God to give me." Whether I was contented or not made little difference in the situation, for I soon found that the laws and social customs of England were ingeniously contrived so as to prevent any escape out of my allotted station. My highest ambition was to rise from the grade of "laborer" to that of "mechanic," but I was never permitted even to do that. In my time the "lower orders" were liberally supplied with

precepts, but although we could not get out of our station, we were not contented in it.

When the facts of our lives are considered it will not be surprising that we ceased to honor the King or to fear God. We became Chartists. The years of my youth were the years of the Chartist movement in England, and I flung myself headlong into it. Its high purpose, and its delirious enthusiasm attracted me. Its revolutionary promises fascinated the disfranchised and the poor. We were ready to storm the Tower of London as the Frenchmen stormed the Bastille. I made imitation Jacobin speeches, bombastic as the real ones, and I wrote red poetry for the *Northern Star*, the fiery organ of the Chartist party. These things illustrate the passions, thoughts, and manners of the time ; and their lesson applies to the social conditions prevailing in the United States even at the present day. There is a good deal of Chartism here.

The inflamed oratory of the Chartists was usually illustrated by a picturesque contrast between the starved and degraded condition of labor in England, and its dignified and prosperous condition in the United States. The contrast was greater then than it is now. Labor has a better chance to-day in England, and a poorer chance in America than it had then. Still, for all that, this country offers larger opportunities for a poor man than he can find in England, or anywhere else in the old world. Looking at

the conditions as they existed then, it is no wonder that America was the land of promise to the Irish peasant and the English laborer.

One Sunday evening I was at a coffeehouse in London where the Chartists used to meet and study the *Northern Star*. The paper for that week contained a copy of the new Constitution of Wisconsin, which territory was then making preparations for admission as a State into the American Union. Discussing it, one of the party said, 'Here is a land where the Charter is already the law; where there is plenty of work and good wages for all; why not go there?' To me the question sounded logical; if the Charter was not to be obtained in England, why not go to America, where the people were all happy under its encouragement and protection! Shortly after that, I was on board an emigrant ship a-sailing Westward, Ho!

* * *

It may be startling, perhaps incredible, but it is nevertheless true, that in those days, a trip across the Atlantic in an English emigrant ship was more dangerous to life than to stand up in the ranks and take a soldier's chances at Shiloh, at Chicamaugua, or at Gettysburg. I mean this to be taken literally, and without any grain of allowance whatever. The loss in killed and wounded in that ship in which I sailed, was greater in proportion to the numbers present than

the loss at Waterloo, at Gravelotte, or in the battles around Atlanta.

It was the year of the great exodus from Ireland, when I bought a steerage ticket on board the pestiferous *Julius Cæsar*, a worm-eaten old tub bound from Liverpool to Quebec. She was in the lumber trade, and her scheme was to take out a cargo of emigrants, and bring back a cargo of lumber. For that purpose the most inferior ships that sailed the seas were considered good enough. There was great profit on either cargo, but the shipowners were more careful of their boards and shingles than of their human freight. Their cruelty to passengers would in these days make them liable to the penalties of manslaughter, if not murder. It was murder then, but the laws did not punish the shipowners for the crime. The crazy old vessel was crowded with rats, a phenomenon I could not understand. What pleasure or comfort they could find in that ship was always a mystery to me, not to mention the imminent danger of sinking, which they certainly must have known.

I am happy to know that the story of that voyage on the *Julius Cæsar*, if told in all its tragic details, would not be believed in this generation—a pleasant sign that humanity has made a great advance in less than fifty years. I will therefore describe some only of the less revolting features of the trip. Although the ship was not fit to carry passengers at all, and was not large enough to give breathing room to a hundred

persons, four hundred men, women, and children were crowded into the dark, damp, and noisome dungeon called the "hold." In mocking irony we were told that the law would not permit a passenger ship to take any emigrants who were not healthy and sound ; therefore we were all subjected to a medical inspection. Having received a clean bill of health, we were allowed to sail. This, although they knew that scores of us were doomed to die before the voyage ended. With criminal deliberation they set us afloat, and consigned us to typhus and starvation.

The passenger agents, of whom we bought our tickets, had grim fun when they told us in their bluff, hearty, sailor-like way, that although they expected to "make the run" in twenty-one days, we would better out of abundant caution, lay in provisions for a month. At that time the law required emigrant ships to carry hard bread only, and this on board the *Julius Cæsar* was black, mouldy, and full of worms. Even the water was foul. Yet when our own provisions were exhausted, as they soon were, this poisonous bread was all the food we had.

Our cargo, for it would be gross flattery to call us passengers, consisted mostly of Irish peasant farmers and their families, fleeing from the famine which was then ravaging Ireland. Four hundred healthy men, women, and children, were consigned to the firm of Typhus, Dysentery, and Co. The bill of lading was commercially and scientifically made out. The ship's

manifest was evidence of a mercenary contract with Death. It was not until the eighth day out that any of the cargo was actually delivered according to the bargain.

On the seventh day out, we met a vessel going in ; and our captain roared through his trumpet to the other ship, "Report the Julius Cæsar seven days out ; all well." The mockery of that "All well" rings in my ears to this day. On the next night the first of our company died, a stout young fellow from Skibbereen, in Ireland. He was flung into the sea without preparation or prayer. It was a sultry night, the moon shone clear, and a dead calm rested on the sea. Our late comrade refused to sink as he should have done. He seemed inclined to stay by us, and it was several minutes before he drifted away. Some of our cargo said that the spirit of our friend would revisit us in a storm. They said he was a Christian, and entitled to a Christian burial ; and we should see what luck would come of it, this burying him like a "haythen."

My own opinion is that the heathen-funeral, if it was heathen, had nothing to do with it ; but at all events, a storm struck us next night such fierce and angry blows that the old ship groaned like a human being in pain. The sails were torn, and the masts broken, while the sea poured in from above, and leaked in from below. Our provisions were damaged, what little there was of them, and the Typhus poison grew thicker and more putrid than it was before. Then a

woman died, and then a child. And so from day to day the revelry of death went on. Some days death never came near us; while on others he would carry off two, or three, or four. There is no drama on the stage that can compare in pathos with this fifty-days tragedy enacted on the Julius Cæsar.

There was a rugged Englishman on board, a Cornish miner on his way to Pennsylvania to work in the mines. His mother was with him, a ministering angel, always comforting the sick. She took the fever and died. When we buried her in the sea the stalwart Englishman went mad.

There was a peasant farmer with us from the south of Ireland, accompanied by his wife and three children. They were kind, respectable people, and the children were good-looking and good. One of them, a bright little boy about seven years old, was my particular playmate and pet. One day the fever struck him and speedily burned him to death. We had placed him on the floor underneath the hatchway for the advantage of such fresh air as might thereby be obtained, while his father and mother knelt in agony beside him, watching his throbbing pulses beating fainter and fainter, until they stopped forever. The photograph of that scene is imprinted on my memory ineffaceable evermore. In a few days another of the children died, and then the last one. When we landed at Grosse Isle, I saw the father and mother, fever-smitten and delirious, swung ashore in baskets. Whether they

died or got well I never knew. Let us hope they died. This virulent form of typhus was familiarly known as the "ship-fever," as if the ships were in some way guilty of creating it. It was in reality the shipowners' fever, and their cruelty and avarice produced it.

I think my escape from the fever was owing to some little knowledge I possessed of the fresh air gospel. Early in the campaign, I deserted the "hold" and took refuge with half a dozen others in the long boat which was swung "amidships" in the open air. It was not a luxurious cabin, being filled with sails, ropes, blocks, tackle, and miscellaneous rubbish; and although these made a hard bed to lie on, and we were exposed to wind and rain, it was better than sleeping in the fetid atmosphere below. Although fresh air was obtained under all these disadvantages, I believe that in my case it operated as an antidote to the deadly ship-fever.

With impartial favor the plague stole up from "between decks" and breathed upon the sailors in the fore-castle. It sneaked into the cabin and smote the captain of the ship. When we landed, I helped to swing him ashore in a basket. He was helpless as the poorest of the cargo he despised. Whether he lived or died I never knew. He was a stern man, a good sailor, no doubt, but without any sympathy for us. He never once came down into the hold to look at us, nor did he ever speak to us one comforting word.

For fifty days fever and famine held riot on that ship. On our fifty-first day out from Liverpool, we cast anchor in the St. Lawrence river, and landed at Grosse Isle. Sixty-two of our number had died on the voyage, and were buried in the sea. It was estimated that as many more died of the fever after landing. I have no doubt the number was larger than that, because not more than twenty of our crew and cargo were free from fever or dysentery when we landed at Grosse Isle. This was one of the tragedies attendant on the great exodus from Ireland. No regiment in the civil war could show such a list of killed and wounded in any battle, or in any two or three battles, as our little regiment could show as the result of a fifty-days campaign on board the *Julius Cæsar*. Through such perils the emigrant had to pass who sought the promised land by means of an English emigrant ship from the British Islands forty-three years ago.

What beneficent changes have come to men since then ! Now the steerage passenger comes over in a week or ten days ; in a big steamship, and spends his time grumbling at the bread and butter, and beef ; at the vegetables and soup ; at the rice, tea, coffee, sugar, and soap ; and especially at the canned fruit. Now the steerage passenger criticises the poultry and the pudding ; and frequently complains that iced cream and strawberries are not provided in the "menu."

A few years ago I returned to England in a float-

ing palace, but not in the steerage this time. I occasionally visited the steerage in an inquisitive way, where I heard the grumbling, and connived at it, but all the time I was thinking of the Julius Cæsar. Although the doctors assert that grumbling is injurious to health, and interferes with the digestive process, there were no deaths on the voyage, and no illness, except sea-sickness, which, it is only fair to say, appeared to be quite impartial between the steerage and the cabin. The contrast between the steerage fare of the *Devonia* and that of the *Julius Cæsar* measures the increase of material comforts made in the lifetime of one man. A similar advance has been made in other directions, but it is to be deplored that the poor man has not in all other cases received such a proportion of it as he gets on an emigrant ship.

* * *

Grosse Isle was the quarantine ground below Quebec. Here we got plenty to eat, and here I got my first job as a roustabout. A Frenchman came down with a schooner laden with lumber, to be used in building sheds for the sick. He hired me and a couple of others to help him unload the schooner, and he paid us five dollars for the job. After staying on the island for several days where the fever-stricken were sifted out and sent to the sheds, the rest of us were loaded on to a steamboat and taken to Quebec, but the city authorities would not permit us to land. In self-defense they were compelled to reject us.

Quebec was crowded with plague-stricken emigrants, and the fever was invading the homes of the citizens. They ordered us to "move on." The steamboat, weary of us, hurried up to Montreal and dumped us on to the levee. Had they rung the church bells in my honor, the salutation would not have been more welcome than this which I received, "Do you want a job of work?" The strange question compensated me for all I had undergone; it was an invitation to immediate independence.

This was a strange experience to me. Never before had any man done me the honor to solicit my services, and the new world already looked bright and beautiful. Men were actually walking about the levee inviting the newly come emigrants to work. I saw in a moment that it was only a question of health and strength with me, and that I need not be hungry in America. I immediately entered into negotiations with the man who had given me such a cheery welcome to the new world, and the following dialogue was had: What kind of work is it? Railroad? Where? Longueil! Wages? Dollar a day! When? To-morrow! Put my name down for a chance, and let us go. He hired a few others of our company, and that evening we crossed over on the ferry boat to Longueil.

Next morning I went to work. The tools and implements of my profession were a wheelbarrow, pickaxe, and shovel. These the boss generously furnished out of his own capital. Some of the virus of the

Julius Cæsar must have been lurking in our blood or in our clothes, for the fever accompanied us over the river, and in a few days five of our men were stricken down, but only two of them died ; the others recovered. I grew stronger all the time, and kept my job until the Canadian winter made the ground like stone, and I could dig no more. The lesson of all this is that there was a time in America when men did not have to go begging for work, because work went begging for them.

This demand was not confined to the lower forms of labor ; it was eager for mechanics, clerks, teachers, and professional men. The range of employment was almost unlimited. Having saved a little money, I started on foot for Vermont, but on the road near Granby in Canada, I was waylaid by a farmer who wanted me to work for him. He offered me seven dollars a month and board, so I took the job. Though not great wages, it was more than I was worth. Unfortunately I was incompetent for the business, and I soon discovered that farm labor is "skilled labor," and that it requires a special training and talent.

As soon as I went to work I found that I could not even learn the trade. I could not learn to milk, to chop, to pitch hay, or to do anything else. My employer was a patient, good-natured man, and instead of scolding me, he laughed at my awkwardness. At last he saw that my case was hopeless, but instead of sending me away, he said, "Here, it's no use for you

to try farming, but I think I can get you a job at school-teaching. This will be easier for you, and it will pay better wages too." It was now my turn to laugh at him. I told him that I had no learning, and that I could not pretend to teach others until I had some education of my own.

The state of the case was this: I had always been a diligent reader, and my conversation had such an intelligent appearance that people were deceived by it; and they supposed I must have had some education. Also, I could write a good hand, and this helped the delusion. I could easily pass an examination in reading and writing, but I was deficient in arithmetic. Of grammar I knew nothing at all. "No matter," said my employer, "you know enough to teach our district school, and I will help you to get it." He kept his word, and I got the school. To my surprise I gave satisfaction, and won the reputation of knowing a great deal more than I did. I was treated with unbounded hospitality. Among the happiest portions of my life was the winter when I taught school and "boarded round" among the hospitable settlers in the backwoods of Canada.

And now for the first time I tasted the luxuries of an intellectual life. My work was light, and improving to the mind. It was more educational to me than to the pupils, and the hours were only from nine to four. My evenings were my own, and I made the most of them. That winter I mastered the arithmetic and

made myself entirely familiar with Smith's grammar, which luckily was a very easy one, written in the form of question and answer.

My term having expired, I resumed the march to Boston. My exalted position at Granby had awakened within me a new ambition, and I felt the throbbings of a higher aspiration. I had been advised at Granby by a friendly patron to study the law. At first I thought he was jesting, but he was entirely serious, and he assured me that the professions in America were not as in England, the exclusive property of the rich. The dream was a fascination, for I was anxious to escape the drudgery of the shovel and the wheelbarrow.

School-teaching was over until the following winter, so I had to go back to my old profession. With my bundle swung across my shoulder, I traveled buoyantly along at the rate of twenty miles a day, and the journey was luxurious. There was no hardship in it. To a fellow who had been cooped up most of his life within the walls of London, the splendid scenery of a world entirely new to him was a joyous excitement almost worth a journey in the *Julius Cæsar*. It was also a valuable bit of education.

I was rolling in opulence, for I had more than twenty dollars in my pocket ; and my meals at the farm houses never cost me more than fifteen cents. Railroad building was in progress near the town of Windsor, and there I got a job ; once more at a dollar a day ; but school-teaching had lifted my soul above the trade

of wheeling and shoveling. I had grown fastidious, and had no relish for the manners and conversation of the company at the shanty where I lived. So after loading my exchequer with some dollars earned on the railroad, I took a walk to Boston.

In those days it was easy to get work in Boston, and I soon found employment at a pork warehouse, again at a dollar a day. It was better than digging on the railroad, for I lost no time on account of rainy weather. The work was hard enough as any man can testify who has handled barrels of pork, but it was not continuous, like shoveling and wheeling on the railroad. There was a good deal to do about the warehouse that was easy and light. The skies were getting brighter and brighter every day.

One day I happened to pass a building where the American flag was flying, and the windows were ornamented with flaming placards, inviting all patriotic young men of spirit to join the army for the conquest of Mexico. I have never been able to explain either to myself or others why I wanted to conquer Mexico, but here was excitement, adventure, and foreign travel, all to be had for nothing. I put my name down on the list of conquerors and before night I was a "boy in blue." I was then shipped off to Governor's Island, New York; and from there to Mexico, in the exalted rank of private in the 2nd, U. S. Artillery.

Before I had been a soldier two hours, my enthusiasm for conquering people received a shock from

which it has never since entirely recovered. I happened to pick up a newspaper which contained a sarcastic poem about the war. It was written by one Hosea Bigelow, a poet of whom then I had never heard, but of whom I am happy to say I have heard a good deal since. One verse oppressed me like a nightmare, and it weighs on my conscience still. This was the verse :

“ If you take a sword and dror it,
And should stck a feller thro’;
Guv’ment aint to answer for it,
God will send the bill to you.”

I believe the sentiment of that verse is based on moral truth, but I also believe that when a set of men called “Government” plunge nations into war, they will have to answer for it, and that God will send the bill to them.

I was rather lucky as a soldier, for in a few weeks I was appointed sergeant, and shortly afterwards First sergeant of my company. Through military association I became well acquainted with many of the men who afterward became famous as generals fighting against each other in the civil war. Of course, I knew nothing at that time of the ethics or the politics of the war with Mexico; but afterwards, when I came to study the genius and the inspiration of it, I thought it nothing to be proud of; unless we regard the acquisition of California and New Mexico as a great achievement. This must be considered a valuable result, if we leave out of the estimate the moral quality of the means by which it was obtained.

After my discharge from the army I worked in different places and at various kinds of labor. In the winter I taught school. All my spare time and all my evenings were spent in studying law, and learning the Latin language sufficiently to understand the law Latin, which I found abounded in the books. Part of the time I worked at Norfolk, Virginia, and there I found a kind preceptor who lent me books, and gave me systematic instruction of great value.

From Norfolk I went to Richmond, and might have succeeded very well there, but for an imprudent habit of criticising slavery. When the Winston family was murdered by a female slave, a panic struck the town of Richmond, for the people thought it the signal for a negro insurrection, and a search for Abolitionists was immediately organized; something like a wolf-hunt. I was not curious to see the end of it, and that night found me in Fredericksburg. The next morning I was in Washington. From there I started westward, and did not stop until I was landed safely on the free soil of the western prairies.

Railroad building had not yet begun in my locality, so I got a job of work in a brick-yard. Brick-yard work is very hard; much harder than hod-carrying. The hardest part of hod-carrying is going up the ladder, but coming down is easy enough, and the time spent in carefully placing the bricks in the hod is a period of comparative rest, also after dumping mortar a good deal of time can be judiciously wasted in scraping out

the hod, and sprinkling the inside of it with sand. Brick-yard labor is almost continuous; there is much bending of the back, while the sodden clay is perverse, inelastic, heavy, and dull.

Brick-making ends with the early frost, so in the winter I taught school again. I continued the study of the law, and was fortunate enough to find a generous lawyer who lent me books, directed my reading, and gave me an examination every Saturday. In the following spring I was admitted to the bar, after passing an unusually severe examination, caused by prejudice of the bar against the admission of a brick-yard laborer.

Having obtained my diploma as a lawyer, I went back to work in the brick-yard, that I might earn money enough to take me to some other part of the state, and buy me a few books on which to build a new profession. I was great sport for the other fellows in the brick-yard, and they always called me "Counselor." With grave pleasantry the boss would say: "Will the learned counsel on the other side bring more clay?" "Will my learned friend spread those bricks a little faster." "If the counsel desires more time he must make the proper affidavit." "The demurrer is overruled," with much other brick-yard humor of a similar kind. I enjoyed this banter more than they did, because it was based on fact, and was a prophecy of better times for me.

Brick-making for that year ceased in the fall, and

as I well knew it would be useless to open a law office among people who had seen me working in a brick-yard, I walked off to another part of the state, a hundred miles away, and began to practice law. I got along very well, and in about a year official honors began to crowd upon me. I was nominated for the office of district attorney, but this nomination I declined. I did not think myself competent for such a position, and besides I did not like to begin my professional career in the character of an office-hunter; but in spite of that, I was elected. However, I was firm in my resolution, and refused to qualify.

My objection to office holding did not last long, and in the fall of 1857, I was nominated on the republican ticket for the legislature. There were three counties in the district and the political battle was fought all over them. After a bitter contest I was elected; and in the following January I took my seat as a member of the House.

I was now an American statesman, and I played the part with perfect satisfaction to myself. The office yielded glory and renown, but not much money; for in those days the wages for a statesman was only three dollars a day. This was better pay than I got on the railroad, or in the brick-yard, while the work was easier and more genteel. Besides, we could adjourn whenever we pleased, which was a great improvement on the old system. In the brick-yard, and on the railroad, a motion to adjourn was always "out

of order." I acquitted myself as a statesman about as well as the rest of them, and my experience in the legislature enlarged the circle of my acquaintance with prominent men, which was of great benefit to me in a professional way.

There were some comical scenes in that legislature, and I herewith present a couple of specimens for the information and instruction of the reader. The great commercial panic occurred in 1857, and our chief statesmanship consisted in passing laws to hinder and prevent the collection of debts, especially debts due to bloated capitalists and wholesale merchants living outside the state. We needed all our money for home consumption, and we did not intend that our people should waste it in paying foreign debts, contracted with the people of other states. We spent our time in debating stay laws, appraisement laws, valuation laws, laws giving defendants in civil suits the right to a continuance for two or three terms of court, and many similar devices. There was an old pioneer farmer there who went by the name of Blackhawk, and one day when some of this generous legislation was under debate, he rose in his place and said: "Mr. Speaker! I would like to ax a question. If this yar bill passes, will it be a criminal offense for a man to pay his honest debts if he has a mind to?" The Speaker had his doubts, and the question was never answered.

An active and very influential member of the House

was Tom Drummond, a bright young fellow from Benton County. He was killed in the war, fighting bravely under Sheridan at the battle of Five Forks. Tom was a fine singer, and one day, after he had spent the previous night at a convivial gathering, he got sleepy, and at last, dropping his head upon his desk, took a nap. The House went on with its business and took no notice of Tom. Waking up in the afternoon, he thought he was still at the jollification, and immediately began to sing in a clear loud voice the melody of "Auld Lang Syne." The members looked at each other in amazement, and at last they gazed at the Speaker, expecting that he would order the Sergeant-at-arms to arrest the Honorable member for his unparalleled breach of decorum. Instead of that the Speaker listened for a moment, and then bringing his gavel down heavily upon his desk, he shouted: "The House will join in the chorus."

When my legal career appeared most promising, it was rudely interrupted by the outbreak of the war. The attack on Fort Sumter was Treason's defiance to all free government, a challenge inviting Liberty to defend itself in battle. I enlisted for the war. Our company was made up of squads from different counties, and when we all got together an election for officers was held. I had the good luck to be chosen captain of the company. I say good luck, although I am well aware that among disinterested patriots the matter of rank is not worthy of consideration, yet I frankly

confess that I would rather be a captain patriot, than a corporal patriot. I confidentially admit that I would rather get a hundred dollars a month than thirteen dollars, and I would rather command than be commanded.

I served as a captain for fifteen months, first in the Missouri campaign of 1861, and afterwards in the army of the Tennessee. In August, 1862, I got a sudden jump to the grade of Lieut. Colonel of my regiment, and I was afterwards appointed Colonel of Cavalry. Towards the close of the war I was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General, and commanded a cavalry brigade. As mere incidents in my own personal career these matters have no interest for others, and I only mention them to illustrate the variety of opportunities which existed in America at that time, and the chances offered the "lower orders" for promotion to a higher social plane. Mine was not a singular instance. Such examples were numerous in the American army.

And the same social phenomena were apparent in civil affairs also. When I came home at the close of the war, I was immediately elected to the office of District Attorney, without any effort of mine, and when General Grant became president, he appointed me Collector of Internal Revenue, also without any solicitation from me. I held that office during the whole of his administration, and although the collection of millions of dollars is a grave responsibility which makes a man tumble and toss about in his bed at

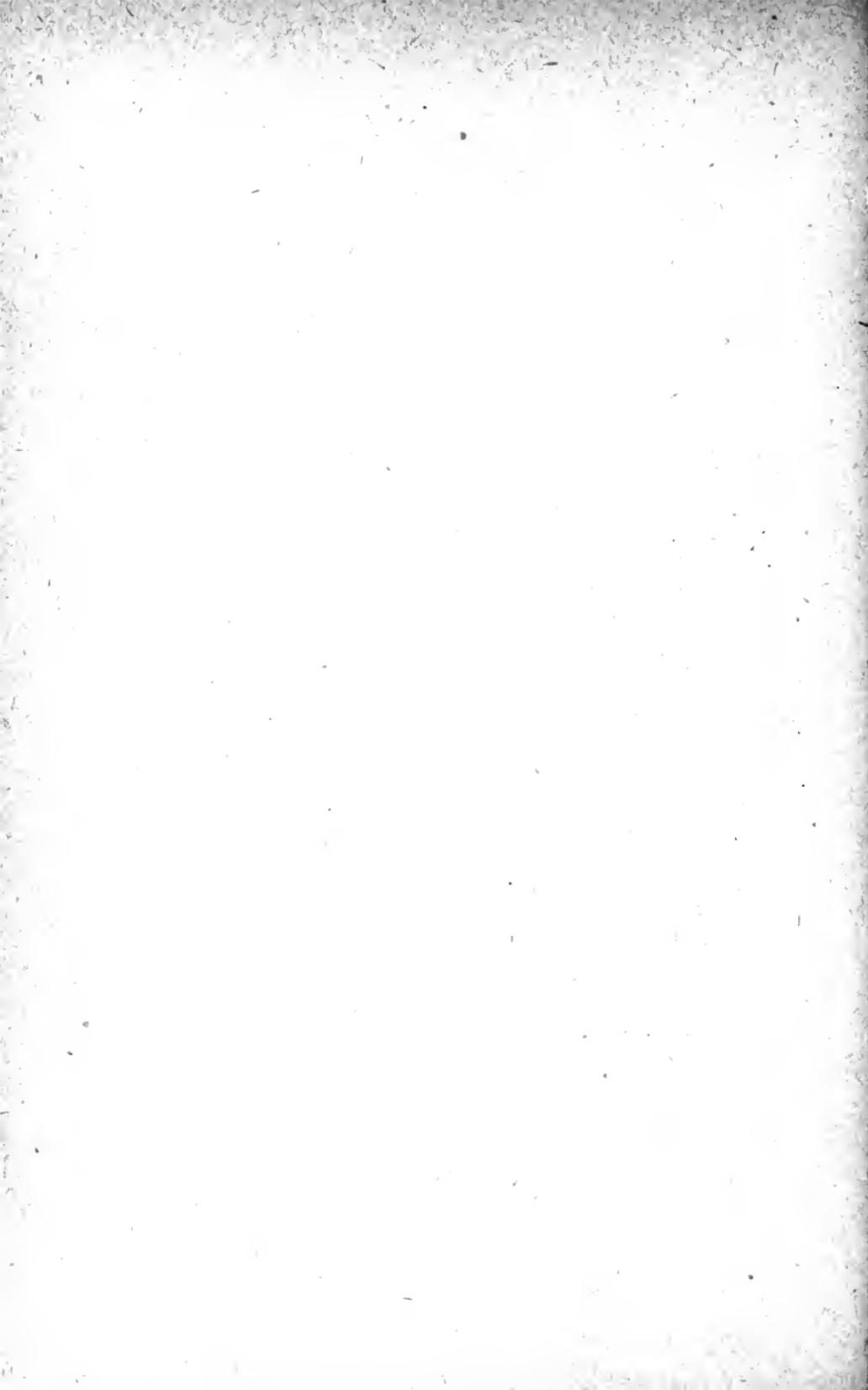
night, I met with no disaster and no loss. Of course there was in all this, besides my effort to perform my duty, an element of luck, and many better men than I did not have the same good fortune.

Although the field of opportunities for the poor is yet very broad in America, it is becoming more contracted as wealth and population grow. The development of caste and class among us is much to be deplored. The tendency of our legislation is to classify the people, and to abridge the freedom of enterprise based on labor alone. Special interests are rapidly becoming the special concern of statesmanship. With natural resources unparalleled and inexhaustible, almost at the beginning of our national career, we are afflicted with labor agitations angry and inflamed; with strikes, lockouts, boycotts, and ominous premonition of a social war. Schemes of political economy, partial and unjust, advocated by one class, are met by schemes of social economy, wild and fantastical, advocated by the other. We are drifting to the policy of protection for the rich, and correction for the poor. We must spend more money for the education of the people, and less for their punishment. And while we are about it, let us not forget the importance of schools for the education of the rich.

* * *

Coming out of the labor struggles of my childhood, youth, and early manhood, covered all over with bruises and scars, and with some wounds that will

never be healed either in this world or in the world to come, I may have written some words in bitterness, but I do not wish to antagonize classes, nor to excite animosity and revenge. I desire to harmonize all the orders of society on the broad platform of mutual charity and justice. I have had no other object in writing these essays.



SIGNING THE DOCUMENT.

FEW men of this generation understand the meaning of those words, and yet the time was when they menaced the liberty of all the workingmen of England, and the time has now come when they threaten the independence of all the laborers of America.

About fifty-five years ago the workingmen of England combined for their own welfare and protection into a trades-union organization, something like the Trades Assembly and the Knights of Labor here. So formidable did this organization become that the government resolved to stamp it out, and conspiracy laws were passed against it. It's too long a story to tell now, but after a great deal of fining and imprisoning and transporting, the contest ended in something like a drawn battle—the trades-unions were not entirely conquered, nor were they entirely successful. Other societies came into existence, having other methods of assisting labor, and the trades-unions melted into them. What remained of them ceased to be very dangerous, and was "let alone."

As a protection to themselves against the trades-unions, the employers of labor, or the "masters," as they were termed in England—and we might as well adopt that name here, now that we have "signed the document"—the masters formed themselves into a counter organization, and the first thing they did was to prepare an agreement for all workingmen to sign.

This was a pledge not to join the trades-unions, or any similar society. The masters, on their part, pledged themselves not to employ any mechanic, artisan, clerk, or laborer who refused to sign this document, and they agreed to discharge all workingmen now in their service who should also decline to do so. This paper was something like the one submitted by the telegraph companies to the striking operators four or five years ago.

The "document" meant servitude and subjection. It was so translated by the workingmen. They refused to sign it, and were discharged by thousands from their various employments. Popular sympathy at once rallied to the side of labor, and so menacing became the discontent, that the government was alarmed. Songs containing the watchwords of the Unions were sung in the streets, and the agitation became dangerous. A remarkable evidence of the stubborn freedom of the English was that the men most resolute in refusing to sign the document were not the trades-unionists, but men who had never joined the unions, but had always bitterly opposed them. They said they could not sign away their own liberties, nor the liberties of their children, and they declined to give the "masters" any other reason for declining to sign.

Of course, some "signed the document," and retained their situations, but those unfortunate men were always held as tainted by a moral leprosy. Twenty years afterward, and so long as that generation remained, it blasted a man like a crime to say of him, "He signed the document"; indeed, men took more pains to deny this accusation than to deny a charge of burglary. Sometimes a man would work in a shop among a hundred men, maybe for a year or more, when some

craftsman would come along who knew him long ago, and would tell that he had "signed the document." From that time his life would be uncomfortable in that shop. Although no harm would be done him, he felt that his shopmates all regarded him as unsound in moral fiber, and no true Englishman. Boys at school could not insult one another more effectually than to say, "His father signed the document." At our school more fights grew out of this insult than out of all other causes put together.

And this was the end of the telegraph strike. The operators all "signed the document," and went back to their work. Their offer to surrender would not be accepted unless accompanied by a written abdication of their independence. This abdication involved important consequences not only to themselves, but also to all wage-workers of every degree. Not only did they sign away their own birthright but that of the whole great brotherhood of labor. That other masters would exact the same pledge was certain, and quietly but unrelentingly this encroachment upon liberty has been advancing. Labor was deprived of its dignity and subjugated, while monopoly and privilege were correspondingly strengthened and exalted when the telegraph operators "signed the document."

A few months ago a young man of my acquaintance, in the employ of a very powerful and wealthy corporation of Chicago, said to me in a tone of sadness and humiliation, "Well! I have signed the document. The firm required it and we all did it." I asked him if there were no rebels who refused. "No," he said, "not one. What could we do? Its easy to talk and moralize about these things, but its not so easy to get into a job as it is to get out of it. My work is hard,

but the wages is fair, and if my job were advertised in the papers to-night as vacant, there would be fifty men after it before nine o'clock to-morrow morning; fifty men just as good as I am. Who of the million men in Chicago would care a cent about me, or sympathize with me for quitting my job 'on principle'? Not one! They would all call me a fool. Knowing this, I signed the document."

I had no reproaches to make; the philosophy of his reasoning was too plain. This indifference to the welfare of others is driving both humanity and divinity out of our social state. Justice beating up against it has to tack like a ship striving against a head wind. This indifference is a dangerous thing, as we shall find out some day. September 2nd was "Labor-day" in Chicago, and thousands of workingmen celebrated it by a procession and some festivities. I walked through the city, but I could not see the slightest interest in the occasion outside the workingmen themselves and their own families. This was not well, and the influence of this neglect is evil. There ought to have been some show of kindly feeling on the part of those who do not have to toil so hard as those artisans and laborers. Do the capitalists imagine that these men will not return them scorn for scorn. Labor-day is a national holiday in England, and it ought to be so here. Nay, capital has very skillfully obtained credit for the festival; it is called "Bank Holiday." It was made national by Act of Parliament through the efforts of Sir John Lubbock, a banker; and in the vernacular of the common people, the holiday is called Saint Lubbock's day. In the calendar of the canonized I find a patron saint for almost everything and everybody except labor and laborers. Sir John Lubbock has been chosen to fill

that vacancy, and his canonization is more valid than that of many saints I know of. Few rich men realize how much easier the "Labor Problem" has been made in England by Saint Lubbock's day.

On the second of September, I watched the workmen's procession with some sadness because it did not appear to be the march of light-hearted men with springy feet, except when the band played the Marseillaise. Then I saw good marching and a flashing in the eyes, while some of the marchers broke into song. A fiery stimulant is that Marseillaise.

While waiting for the procession, and watching the busy crowds moving rapidly to and fro, I saw a policeman with a prisoner in his charge. The criminal was a young man with a good face enough, save that it wore a somewhat hard expression. His slouch of a hat was drawn down over his eyes showing a feeling of pride in him yet. He walked doggedly and almost defiantly along like a prisoner of war. Nobody paid the least attention to him, nor showed any concern for his fate, and he returned the indifference as I could see by his manner and his walk. He evidently felt that in the battle between the classes and the masses, he had been captured by the classes and was simply not a criminal but a prisoner of war. His fellow men were too busy to bother about him, and why should he care about them. Between him and them there existed a state of social war.

I borrow the phrase "too busy" from the Governor of Illinois, with whom I had an interview in August. I was pleading with him to perform an act of justice and humanity, which I knew would bring upon him a storm of hostile criticism. Without conceding or denying the justice of my prayer, he said,

“How can I affront popular opinion by doing what you ask? The public mind is made up.” I answered, “The justice of it will be seen when the matter is investigated.” “But,” he replied, “it will not be investigated. Men are too busy to explore for justice. They will only read the headlines of the articles denouncing me for doing it. They are too busy.” “Moral cowardice,” I quote his very words, “moral cowardice is the failing of our people. Some of the men who join with you in asking this of me, would join my enemies in denouncing me for doing it.”

The man who told me this was a student of politics and of men. He had found out that indifference to the rights of others was a trait of our social character. It was a hard lesson to learn and I did not like to learn it. I am glad to know that it is not universally true, for I can point out hundreds of men whose generous lives give it splendid contradiction, but what I saw on Monday convinced me that much of it was true. How then can we expect an ambitious man, honorably ambitious too, with a possible great future before him to imperil his prospects by offending public sentiment? And how can we expect a man of humble station who must labor with his hands for bread, in a social atmosphere of absolute indifference to him or his affairs, how can we expect him to risk his job of work by refusing to sign the document?

LIVE AND NOT LET LIVE.

THIS is the motto of monopoly, the creed of selfishness, the religion of greed, and it makes no difference whether it is practiced by the man of millions, or by him who has no capital but his trade.

I sign my name "Wheelbarrow," because that is the implement of my handicraft, or was, when I was a strong man. I was by profession a "railroad man"; my part of the railroad business was making the roadbed, by the aid of a pick, a shovel, and a wheelbarrow. I was a skilled workman, and had obtained the highest diploma that could be got in the profession. Jemmy Hill and myself worked on the same plank, and so buoyant and easy did we make the trip up and down, and dump the dirt into the exact spot, that we were worth twenty per cent. more than any other men on the job. There was a superannuated old Irishman in our "gang" who had helped in building every railroad from Montreal to Minneapolis; he had become too stiff for the wheelbarrow and the pick, and was reduced to the shovel alone, which he could still handle tolerably well; his duty was to stay on top of the pile and "level off" with the shovel. His work was made hard or easy according to the skill of the rest. Awkward fellows would dump their loads in a dead heap, maybe a couple of feet from the place, leaving him to shovel it the rest of the way, while Jemmy and I would

give the loads a flirt with the right wrist, or the left, as the case might be, and scatter the dirt on the precise location, leaving Tim nothing to do but give it a couple of taps for form's sake. One day he burst into admiration at our skill, and said, "Yez could wheel on a horse's rib." I show this diploma, not from vanity, but as proof that I graduated with high honors in the railroad college.

You may sneer at classing dirt-shoveling with "skilled labor." A hundred dollars to one that you can't wheel a 'barrow full of dirt up a plank, say at the easy incline of 30 degrees, without looking at your feet, and the same wager that you can't come down the plank, dragging the empty 'barrow behind you, without running the wheel off the track. You won't take the bet? Very well; then don't make fun of my diploma until you are able to "wheel on a horse's rib."

One day a greenhorn came along and got a job in our gang; he was awkward as a landlubber trying to climb the top-gallantmast. He would look at his feet as he went up the plank, and the wheel of the 'barrow would run off; he would look at the wheel, and his feet would step off; he asked advice, but we who had learned the trade had now become monopolists, and refused to give any instruction; all of us except Jemmy Hill; he took the fellow in hand, and showed him how to walk the plank, which he obviously had no right whatever to do. That night, up at the shanty where we lived, my tongue swaggered a good deal, to the admiration of everybody except Jemmy Hill. I gushed eloquently about the wrong done us in employing greenhorn wheelers and "plug" shovelers, and we proposed to form ourselves into a "brotherhood" to protect ourselves against monopoly, and especially

making it a capital offense for one of the "brotherhood" to teach a fellow-creature how to wheel a 'barrow full of dirt up a plank.

The next day was Sunday, and Jemmy and I took a walk to a favorite spot where we used to smoke our pipes and gossip. The glorious St. Lawrence rolled at our feet, and the sun shone bright overhead. Jemmy was a young fellow from the North of Ireland, about five feet nine or ten, slim, all sinew and bone, blue eyes, light hair, and a fair, smooth face, beautiful as a girl's. He had a soft, musical voice, and there was nothing manly about him, except that he liked to smoke; but he was brave as Phil. Sheridan; he was a holy terror in a fight; I saw him scatter a dozen fellows once in a riot, like Samson used to clear out those Philistines. He is president of a railroad now, and rides in his own special car, in which there is always a welcome berth for me.

We talked about the necessity of protecting our craft from "plug" workmen, or, rather, I did; Jemmy merely smoked his pipe and listened. At last he pulled out of his pocket a watch-charm, and handed it to me to examine. The crest on it was a couple of torches, one lighting the other, with this motto underneath: "My light is none the less for lighting my neighbor." He explained that this was the motto of some secret society that he belonged to in Belfast; I forget the name of it now, but no matter, that was the motto of it, "My light is none the less for lighting my neighbor." I accepted the rebuke, and acknowledged that the motto was a good one. That was many years ago, but the longer I live the more I am convinced that it is sound in political science and social economy. It



is the very antithesis of the narrow principle, "Live and not let live."

I commend it to workingmen the world over ; the practice of it will make them better, happier, and richer than the other principle, which cannot become general without reducing the world to barbarism. Had this been the motto of the telegraph brotherhood, it might have saved them the humiliation of "signing the document," it might have spared them the necessity of the strike, and even in their failure it would have secured to them the sympathy of all men whose good opinion was worth having. How can we sympathize with men in a struggle with monopoly who themselves seek to become monopolists of the knowledge that earns bread, who in the very charter of their order pledge themselves to one another never to teach their trade, and who seek to control the free action of their brother craftsmen? Men who would enslave others easily become slaves, and the telegraphers who left their keys free men and proud returned to them in a month with their liberty signed away. George Stephenson, the greatest engineer of modern times, or perhaps of any time, was refused admission into the "order" of engineers because he was a "plug," who had never served an apprenticeship. The men who did that would have deprived him of his genius if they could, although that genius has multiplied the comforts of man a hundred or a thousand-fold.

Men are interested not in the downfall, but in the upraising of one another ; not in the poverty of any, but in the riches of all ; not in the ignorance of a part, but in the intelligence and wisdom of the whole. The contrary principle impairs the symmetry of the moral universe, whose laws are perfect and harmonious as the

laws which govern matter. Every man is interested in the welfare and prosperity of every other man ; none can suffer loss without all sharing in it. I cannot show you where I lost a penny by the great Chicago fire, and yet I know that two or three hundred million dollars worth of property could not be blotted out of existence without my losing something somewhere. I cannot show you that I lost a dollar by the Franco-German war, and yet I know that two great nations cannot destroy tens of thousands of each other's men, and tens of millions of each other's property without my losing something. This world of ours is a small world, and no part of it is so remote from me that people can suffer loss without my sharing in that loss ; and conversely, mankind cannot grow richer and leave me poorer, nor wiser and leave me ignorant, nor better and leave me worse. That is my religion, and, in the language of Ingersoll, "Upon that rock I stand."

THE LAOKOÖN OF LABOR.

MOST of us have seen the picture of Laokoön and his two sons in the embrace of the avenging serpents sent to punish them for sacrilege. I think that was their offense; or perhaps it was blasphemy. It was some crime against religion, and the punishment was of that exquisite cruelty that angry gods delight in. I am not familiar with the legend connected with the picture, but I have read that the piece of sculpture from which it is taken is considered superior to every other work of art in the world. I can readily believe it, for even the picture shows the muscular contortions of the strong man in his agony. But they avail him nothing. His masculine sinews, hardened and distended by the death struggle, only furnish a firmer fulcrum for the grip of the serpents, and he and his boys are crushed together.

Like Laokoön of old, the American laborer and his children struggle in the coils of the strong serpents—monopoly and aristocracy. Capital furnishes their constrictive power, and every effort for freedom only tightens the grip. We strike for higher wages, and end by “signing the document,” making our slavery a matter of record, and mortgaging our children “even to the third and fourth generation.” On the altar of “brotherhood” we immolate fraternity, and forbid the cunning hands of our neighbor’s boys to learn an honest trade because we work at it. We incorporate the

principle of caste into the religion of labor, and sneer at the "plug" workman while denying him the right to learn. We butt our heads against stone walls, under the delusion that the exercise toughens the brain and strengthens the mind. Assailing capital we insist on being paid in cheap dollars for dear work, and with inverted patriotism we carry torches in the fool parade whose transparencies demand "high prices for everything." I have a right to talk like this, because a moment ago, when I went down to the shed for a hod of dear coal, I saw inglorious in the corner the helmet that I wore and the torch that I bore "in the last campaign," when, in company with two thousand other patriots, I escorted "the orator of the occasion" to the grand stand. I have "the privilege of the floor," for I got a sore throat in cheering his fluent glib-gab as he boasted of our great prosperity, and called upon us all to vote early and often, and bring our neighbor to vote for the man that made everything dear. The same crusading will be done again by workingmen next year, but "not for Joseph—if he knows it—not for Joe." I have carried my last torch.

Before labor can be lifted up to its rightful dignity every workingman and every man willing to work must be made free of the "brotherhood." By helping one another we all rise together; by dragging each other down we all fall together. So long as the man who lays the bricks treats as his inferior the man who carries them up the ladder, neither of them is free; so long as the man who drives the engine despises the man who pushes the wheelbarrow, so long monopoly will hold them in a common bondage. This is the philosophy of all experience since man first became the hired man of his brother.

I once had a job of shoveling at a place called Manchester, in Virginia, just opposite Richmond. One Sunday I was taking a walk with a friend in Richmond, and I remarked the inequality of the negroes in the streets, as indicated by their personal appearance. Some were ragged, brutal-faced, and twisted out of shape by premature and unnatural toil; others were well clad and evidently well fed. One bright mulatto, of genteel figure and face, was clad in black broadcloth; he wore a shiny silk-hat and carried a cane. It was easy to see also that there were castes among them, superiors and inferiors, and that the higher orders looked with scorn upon the lower classes. I thought that those finely dressed negroes were probably free. "No," said my friend, "they are all slaves, but there are degrees even in slavery; there are 'soft things' there as in freedom." Next day I was standing by the Washington monument, when I saw a procession of negroes fastened by couples to a long chain. They were marching to the shambles to be sold, where I followed them to see the auction. That lot of fellow-Christians brought, on an average, about six dollars a pound. Among them was the bright mulatto—plug hat, broadcloth and all. He was chained to a vulgar looking field hand. All supercilious airs were gone, and every face carried the same hopeless look of despair. All distinctions were leveled in the handcuffs that tightened them to a common chain. So it is with the workingmen. We may build steps on which to place the various crafts one above another, with the laborer and his wheelbarrow at the bottom, but while we are doing that concentrated capital is binding us by couples to an impartial degradation. We can, if we will, reverse the fate of Laokoön and

strangle the serpents, but we must all work together ;
the trowel must not tyrannize over the hod, nor the
jackplane sneer at the shovel.

MAKING SCARCITY.

SOME time ago I made a few remarks upon that "competition" hobgoblin, which makes the hair of workingmen stand up in fright, "like quills upon the fretful porcupine." From my boyhood, it was a terror to me, but it does not scare me now. As I grew older I grew bolder, and at last I walked close up to it and examined it. I found it was a hollow pumpkin, with eyes, nose, and mouth cut in it, and stuck on a stick clothed in the drapery of a white sheet. I see that the President of the Federation of Trades Unions has exhibited this venerable old ghost to the Senate Committee on Education and Labor. Whether it scared the committee or not I cannot say. Since then I have noticed that some other gentleman has appeared before the same committee, in company with the same spectre, and demanded that convict labor shall not be put in competition with the mechanic trades, but shall be exclusively devoted to the business of "working on the roads."

I have tried to analyze the principle of non-competition, as enforced by the trades unions, and so far as I have been able to resolve it into its constituent elements, its chief ingredients appear to be monopoly and selfishness, with some very foolish dread of the evils of abundance. Take this convict labor question for example. Convict labor is not opposed on

any ground but that of "competition." It competes with outside labor, that is, it produces something, and this production is the injury complained of. Let us reduce the question to a concrete form. Suppose that the two thousand convicts in the penitentiaries of Illinois are all compelled to work at the shoemaking trade, and suppose that they each make a pair of shoes a day, or 62,400 pairs a year, will it be contended that the addition of this number of shoes to the common stock is an injury to the people of Illinois? There is no one who will claim that; but the President of the Federation will say: "It is an injury to the shoemakers' trade, and therefore it ought to be prevented."

Very well, then make tailors of the convicts. This plan doesn't solve the difficulty either, for the tailors won't agree to it, nor the tinkers, nor the tanners, nor the masons, nor the carpenters, nor any other trade. As the butcher, and baker, and candlestick-maker all refuse to work in competition with the convicts, and as none of these economists are daring enough to require that the convicts live in idleness, an easy solution of the problem is found by compelling them "to work upon the roads." But really this is only shifting the difficulty, and is no solution at all. At school I have solved many a hard problem in long division, which is as far as I went, by getting some other boy to do the sum for me, and the President of the Federation adopts the same plan with the convict labor difficulty. He dumps it on the "laborer" class, and says: "Here, you man with the wheelbarrow, work this hard sum." But I am not able to work it, because I find that I cannot set the convicts at any useful employment without putting them in competition

with somebody. They must either live in idleness at the expense of the community, or they must earn something to pay for their board ; to earn something they must produce something, and that is an addition to the aggregate wealth of the people, at which we all get a nibble at last.

If adding to the wealth of a country is an injury, then subtracting from that wealth must be a benefit, and therefore the destruction of shoes and clothes, and houses and furniture, must be a desirable thing ; the Chicago fire, instead of being a great calamity, was a great blessing. This fallacy is firmly cherished by workingmen ; it is the guiding principle of trades unions, and is productive of want and poverty incalculable. It was instilled into me in my very childhood, and it was late when I got rid of it. I never ate a meal when a boy, that was not somehow or other complicated with the everlasting consideration of "work." When I got a good dinner I knew that my father was "in work" ; when the meal was scanty I knew that he was "out of work." In our home all human affairs whirled round and round the image of "work" forever. A big fire devoured a street—"It will make work," I heard my father say. A ship was lost at sea laden with silk, and leather, and cloth—"It will make work," said my father. A reservoir broke jail and swept the heart of the town away—"It will make work," my mother said ; and so all human calamities were softened as blessings to me ; they made work, and work made wages, and wages made bread and potatoes and clothes for me. God bless the shipwreck, and the fire, and the flood ; they make

"Work, work, work, till the eyes are heavy and dim,
And work, work, work, till the brain begins to swim."

Oh, comrade of the trowel, the needle, and the awl ; oh, toiler at the anvil and the loom ; oh, brother of the jackplane and the shovel ; oh, chivalry of toil by land and sea, it is not work we need so much as rest ! Let us make all the wealth we can, and destroy nothing ; let us not be jealous of each other's talent, but teach each other everything we know ! Let us make plenty in the land, and then let us try to shape our social system and the laws so that a fairer share of it will come to us after we have made it.

Last fall I picked up a newspaper and read in great black headlines this alarming news : "A Heavy Frost. It spread over various sections of the Northwest Friday night. Early planted corn escaped with little injury ; the late crop practically ruined." It requires no great skill in political economy, as they call it, to understand that the blighting of the corn crop is a great calamity ; it means less food the coming winter, and less food means less of clothes, and coal, and wood. And yet there are a lot of workingmen who would regard a blight of the hat crop, or the shoe crop, or the coat crop as a blessing to labor ; but in truth they are all equally injurious as the blighting of the cattle and the corn. Food, and clothes, and furniture, and all necessaries of life, are so intimately related, that the blight of one is the blight of all, and it means less of each to the workingman.

It is easy to prove by the doctrines of the anti-competitionists that this disaster to the corn crop is a good thing, because it removes from the farmers living south of the frost line the competition in the corn market of the farmers living north of it. And it is also a good thing for the people who have old corn in the bins ; but this is a narrow and selfish way to look

at it, and if the doctrine be carried out to its logical end it elevates to the rank of a moral principle the unnatural dogma that the prosperity of one man depends upon the adversity of another. Once upon a time I had a job of "work on the roads" not far from an Indian agency. The tribe had just been paid off, and the Indians were trading at the store up at the agency, where I happened to go for some tobacco. They were buying some needles, for which the trader charged them fifty cents apiece. They complained of the price, but when the trader assured them that the needle-maker was dead, and the needle-making industry thereby terminated, they appeared satisfied. This lying excuse for the high price of needles presented to me a tough problem in economic science, and I went up to the shanty to work it out.

I lighted my pipe, and tried to read the solution of the problem in the clouds of smoke. The first question to be answered was this: Suppose the needle-maker was really dead, and his art lost forever, would that be a good thing? I had no trouble with this question at all. I could readily see that although it might be a good thing for the man who happened to have a large stock of needles on hand, it would be a bad thing for everybody else. The next question was not so easy. It was this: Suppose that one-half of the needle-makers in the world should die to-night, would that be a good thing in an economic point of view? It took several pipes of tobacco to answer this question, and I am not sure that I got it right even then. The answer involved so many collaterals. It was very clear that if every needle-maker was a master, and not a journeyman, those who survived, being relieved of competition to such a great

extent, would make good profit out of it by raising the price of needles, but the community would still be losers. But suppose that of the survivors 95 per cent. were journeymen, and 5 per cent. masters, where would the new profits go? Labor being a marketable thing, the masters would still want to buy it at the old figures, and the journeymen would get but a trifling raise of wages, while the increased value of needles would nearly all go into the pockets of the masters. But even supposing that the increased profit were fairly divided between them, the community would still have to pay it, and, therefore, the sudden removal of so much competition in the trade would be an injury, and not a benefit. Applying this rule to every other trade and occupation, it appeared to me that the loss of wealth, or of wealth-producing capacity, is injurious to the community, that the workingmen cannot be benefited by such loss, and that all attempts to create a scarcity of competition by crippling talent, or forbidding the industry of anybody, can only be of local or personal benefit here and there, and the pursuit of such false systems of relief is a sad waste of the moral strength of the workingmen.

“Nature abhors a vacuum,” is a maxim in physics, and in moral philosophy also. So nature tries forever to preserve an equilibrium in the moral and material universe. The very earthquakes and volcanoes are efforts in this direction, and men can no easier keep trades unbalanced than they can disturb the level of the sea. Create a vacuum in any trade and nature rushes in to fill it. If I should give paralysis to every shoveler to-night, how long should I enjoy my monopoly? In a week I should see shovelers galore. The telegraph operators made a vacuum,

but only for an instant ; it at once began to fill ; in a month the hole was almost gone. We may think we have destroyed competition by excluding a brother craftsman here, but he or somebody else has slipped in over there, for the struggle of life goes on. We must liberate labor, and exalt it by grander schemes than these.

COMPETITION IN TRADES.

A SHORT time ago the president of the Federation of Trades Unions testified before the Senate Committee on Labor. I see by the papers that he proposed as a remedy for the alleged wrongs of journeymen mechanics, that the convicts in penitentiaries, instead of working at trades within the walls, be taken out and worked upon the public roads. On behalf of the "knights" of the shovel and wheelbarrow I protest against this plan. What right has the Federation of Trades Unions to dump—I use a term suggested by my profession—what right has that federation to dump the whole convict "brotherhood" upon us? What right has the president of it to make his class an order of nobility to flaunt their airs of eminence in the faces of us who labor in a lower calling, who have not reached the rank of mechanics, but who must content ourselves with the honorable but yet inferior designation, "laborers"?

The president of the Federation and his order get higher wages than we laborers get; they can better afford to stand the competition of the convicts than we can. We who "work upon the roads" have just as much right to protection against convict picks and shovels as the president of the Federation has to protection against convict chisels, awls, or jack-planes. Will he give us some good reason why convicts should be permitted to compete with some kinds of labor and

not with others? Are we to have an aristocracy of trades?

I never had time to study the principles of political economy, and I know nothing about the laws of social science, but the facts of both have fallen upon me heavy as a hammer, and upon the stern logic of those facts I built my own ethics of labor in those delightful moments when, having dumped the load, I leisurely trolled my wheelbarrow behind me down the plank to the hole in the ground where it had to be filled again. Sixteen hours a day of hard work is bad schooling for a boy of thirteen. In the bright days of childhood, when the mind and body should grow into strength and beauty, mine were being stunted and warped by toil savage and unnatural. I ought to be five feet ten; that's my correct stature by rights; I am less than five feet six. Toil stunted me when I was in the gristle. I had no time to study books, and the principles of life that I learned, such as they were, I had to gather in the college of hard knocks.

After all, a man can think with considerable clearness walking down a plank with an empty 'barrow behind him, and I have worked out hundreds of labor problems while "walking the plank" in that way. Some of my solutions I afterward threw away as incorrect, and others I cling to still. The open air is a good place for mental work; a clear atmosphere makes clear thought, while the inspiration of a few big draughts of it into a good pair of lungs quickens the mind. You don't get your full ration of oxygen in the house; out of doors you do, and that is a wholesome stimulant better than wine. You can unlearn a great many things, too, in the open air, and one of the useful arts is that of unlearning. I have unlearned many

of my theories about labor, and some of my doctrines I have been compelled not only to change but to reverse. The effort of labor competition upon the welfare of workingmen appears to me now in a different light than it formerly did, and I am satisfied that we must reverse our ancient opinion that it is desirable to produce a scarcity of men, a scarcity of skill, and a scarcity of production. So long as we cling to those old superstitions we can never successfully assert the dignity of labor.

Already they have reduced labor to a mendicant condition. It begs for favors where it ought to compel rights. The beggarly petition "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work," is unworthy of straight-built, square-cut men. Let us shape the laws of this land—social and political—so that we may obtain a reward for our labor equal to its full value. We are leveling wages to the grade of alms, and our masters pay it to us like the dole of charity. If we take a narrow view of human life our share of life's comforts will be narrow and mean. We must expand the horizon of man, and not contract it. What can be more degrading to labor than the assumption of the Federation that the hosts of workingmen in Illinois cannot stand the competition of a couple of thousand prisoners bungling at the tasks imposed on them for punishment? The welfare of the workingmen can never consist in the scarcity either of talent or goods, but always in the abundance of both.

Men like the president of the Federation fight the beneficent law of mutual assistance under the impression that they are fighting competition by limiting human skill. So they foolishly resolve that all handicraft shall be a monopoly; they put "mechanics" back

again among the black arts, and forbid the teaching of trades. Not only would they set convicts to "working on the roads," but all the children of the poor. I have four sons, all free-born Americans, so-called, and all now grown to manhood. I tried to give them trades, as they respectively reached the proper age, but in every instance I was forbidden to do so by the laws of the trades. All four of them are now men, but not one of them was permitted to learn a trade in the land where they were born and which they have been taught to call a land of freedom. The oldest got a job as fireman on the railroad, and after a few years managed to steal the trade of an engineer; the next drifted off to that undefinable country known as "the mountains," and there he is wasting away his life digging holes in the ground searching for silver and gold. The next picked up a book and taught himself the shorthand trade; he gets twice as much wages as I ever got with my wheelbarrow and shovel; the youngest gets a dollar a day in a store in the humblest capacity, but hopes to work up in time to the grade of a clerk. That all four of them didn't become hoodlums and tramps is not the fault of the unions. A man with a heart in him, even if he has no brains at all, must see in a moment that the policy which robbed those boys of the right to learn a trade cannot be right, and not being right it cannot be either economical or wise.

One evening I was talking to that shorthand writer about the strike of the telegraph operators, supposing that he would probably take a deep interest in the subject, but he cared little about it. "I hope the operators will win," he said, "but I am not anxious either way. It's a choice of monopolies, and I side with the

weaker. The companies monopolize the profits of telegraphing, the operators monopolize the art. They forbid one another to teach the trade, and if their monopoly is beaten by the other it will be no more than the big pike swallowing the little one."

I look at it that way myself, and it appears to me that if the policy of shutting up one trade in order to prevent competition is good for that, it must be good for every other calling or profession, and all the trades and occupations being closed, the people outside must be either rich, or tramps, or thieves. The trades having shut everybody out, have shut themselves in, and having deprived a large part of the community of the means of buying anything, trade diminishes, there is less demand for labor, and less money to pay for it, another exclusion then becomes necessary, until we get back to the wigwams, where we don't need any mechanics at all. We might follow the principle to greater extremities yet, until at last we grub roots or climb trees for a dinner, like that primeval ape from whom we all have sprung. I think it is in the story of *Rasselas* that I read an account of an ambitious man who was promised by the genii the fulfillment of one wish, whatever it might be. He wished that he could be the only wise man in the world, and that all other men might be fools. The wish was granted him, and immediately afterward the people took him and said, "this man's a fool," and they put him in the lunatic asylum, where he remains to this day. He was a fool, and so is every man a fool who thinks to grow wise on his neighbor's ignorance, or rich on his neighbor's poverty.

I object to the principle for another reason. It fosters the spirit of caste among workingmen, and cre-

ates a ragged aristocracy, the shabbiest aristocracy of all. In a gang that I worked in once was an Irishman named Jack Patterson; an honest man was Jack, and as true a gentleman as ever swung a pick. He had a son named Dick, and how he managed it I don't know, but Dick broke through the crust that excluded him from the trades, and learned the art of a plasterer. Being now a mechanic, he occupied a round on the social ladder one step higher than we did who worked with a shovel and a pick. Having attained this giddy elevation Dick refused to associate any longer with his father. A friend condoling with his mother on Dick's unfilial conduct, the old lady replied: "Well, Dick always was a high-sperited boy; sure, you couldn't expect him to associate wid an Irish laborer." The Federation of Trades Unions would make Dick Pattersons of us all.

TO ARMS!

I HAVE just been reading the proceedings of "The Trade and Labor Assembly," and also the resolutions of "The Cigar Maker's Progressive Union." Both gatherings demand social and economic changes of great importance, but the Cigar Makers are the more "progressive" of the two. They have reached the end of rational argument, and propose to fight. Their program was contained in a "circular," the first demand of which was "Destruction of the existing class rule by energetic, relentless, revolutionary, and international action." They also adopted some resolutions, the chief of which was "that the only means through which our aims, the emancipation of all mankind, can be accomplished, is open rebellion of the despoiled of all nations against the existing social, economic, and political institutions." Those resolutions have a flavor of Barnaby Rudge. They resemble the crimson doctrines proclaimed by the London apprentices, led by that "relentless" warrior of the thin legs and the wooden sword, Captain Sim. Tappetit. Still, for all that, their language is plain, and they express a bold purpose. A hater of "class rule" all my life, I am willing to fight for its destruction. Where is the recruiting office?

Although I am not certain that a "class rule" of "Progressive Cigar Makers" would be any better than

the "class rule" we are living under now, and although there is no close affinity between shoveling coal and making cigars, still, I am willing to stand by the Cigar Makers as brother constituents in the great confraternity of labor. Unlike most occupations toward each other, there happens to be no reciprocity of benefits between the Cigar Makers and me. The favors conferred are all from them to me, and none from me to them. They are compelled to burn coal, and thus give me employment, but I am not compelled to burn cigars. I cannot help their trade to the amount of five cents a year. I cannot afford to smoke cigars. I have to be contented with a pipe of tobacco, and think myself lucky to get that. My son, however, the short-hand writer that I spoke of, gets twice as much wages for scribbling curious pot-hooks and hieroglyphics as I ever got for shoveling coal, and he can afford to smoke cigars. I think he smokes more of them than is good for him, but that's his own affair, not mine. If I had his wealth I should probably smoke cigars as he does. Whether I smoke their cigars or not makes no difference ; I am as ready to fight for the rights of Cigar Makers as for my own ; but, although I have sought diligently for it, I have thus far been unable to find the recruiting office. Where can I find the headquarters of Captain Sim. Tappertit?

Brothers, unless we are ready to open the recruiting office, let us not talk about fighting. By doing so we expose our own weakness. We bring derision upon ourselves and contempt upon our cause. That is not the worst of it ; we undervalue the moral forces which we hold in our own hands. We depreciate the strength we have by appealing to a strength which we have not. It may be rash and foolish to fight even for liberty, but

it is brave. To talk fight without intending it is equally rash and foolish, but not brave. It is neither wise nor patriotic to persuade the working men that their moral resources are all exhausted, and that there is no reform power in the ballot, in the press, and in public opinion. The statement is not true ; and the men who make it present to us a dilemma of double despair. Without arms, discipline, leaders, or even a plan of battle, fighting is clearly hopeless. If the ballot is impotent also, then we must fall back for comfort on bombast and beer. We can fill ourselves with nectar of the gods at five cents a glass, and boast of our intention at some future time to paint the universe red. It is all very fine to pass a string of resolutions, to "sound the tocsin," whatever that is, and summon us to the fray, but the resolutors will not lead us. They pretend that they can no more set a squadron in the field than Michael Cassio. They invite us to go ahead and do the fighting. If we win, and accomplish the "relentless" revolution, they promise to step up and accept all the offices under the new government. This division of labor is not fair.

Suppose that we do possess power enough to overturn one government, have we sufficient wisdom to form another and a better one? I have serious doubts about that. I think we have a great deal to unlearn before we shall be competent to establish and conduct a just government. I fear that even the "Progressive Cigar Makers" are scarcely equal to the task. At the great Labor picnic I saw them with "relentless" fury destroy the stock in trade of a merchant on the ground. His offense was, that he had some cigars in stock which had been made by Cigar Makers who were not "Progressive." For this, his property was

destroyed and his life placed in jeopardy. Men, who value liberty only so far as it gives them freedom to oppress their fellow men, talk of building a new civilization on the ruins of the American political and social system.

For instance, in the "circular" referred to above, I find a demand of "equal rights for all without distinction to sex or race," and I also read that the very meeting that adopted it "protested against the employment of women." What sort of "equal rights" will be established by a party which refuses to women the equal right with men to earn an honest living? The Trade and Labor Assembly also appointed a committee, which made a report complaining of many wrongs which labor suffers in the City of Chicago, and among them this: "Female labor is being largely used to replace male labor in skilled occupations, such as telegraphing, bookkeeping, etc." The radical mistake of the labor reformers is the delusion that all persons who work at the same trade are enemies, snatching bread from one another. I used to think that way, but now I believe that the reverse of it is the true doctrine. I believe now that everybody should work, that the more workers the more product, and consequently the more comforts of life for us all.

The equal right of women to work at "skilled labor" is evidence that we are emerging from that social barbarism which consigned one part of them to the bondage of the kitchen, another to the insipid languor of the drawing room, and another to a dependence on man's wickedness, so pitiful and so sad that we fear to look upon it lest it show us the reflection of our own guilt, and make our consciences rebel within us at the savagery of man. "Skilled labor" is

one of the blessed agencies that shall redeem women from poverty, from wash-tub slavery, and from sin. It may be said that I can talk this way because women don't compete with me at shoveling coal or carrying the hod. That's true; but I would talk the same way if I were a skilled mechanic. If I were a telegrapher or a bookkeeper, I would hold myself unmanly to whine and whimper should a woman come along and compete with me at the trade. Throw open to women all the trades, all the offices, and all the professions, and make her independent. I have another theory also, and it is this: That the elevation of woman can never degrade man nor her prosperity injure him.

There are some things that we feel to be wrong, although we may not have sufficient ability to demonstrate their injustice. The principle of excluding persons from learning or exercising trades I am confident is not sound, although I may not be able to tell why. I feel it because I have suffered from it. I told, in a former article, how my four sons were forbidden to learn any trade in this land where they were born, which their forefathers fought to establish, and which their father fought to re-establish. They were forbidden to learn by the laws of the trades. I feel that the exclusion was unjust, and that the principle of it is wrong. My daughter learned a trade in spite of the doctrine, and it is now proposed that she shall not exercise it. She is a bookkeeper. She is competent, has a good situation, and although not yet seventeen years old, she feels absolutely independent. A lot of social reformers get themselves together in a beer saloon, and "resoloot" that she ought not to be guilty of earning her living at "skilled labor," on the

ground that she works for less wages than a man would work. How do they know? And whose business is it but her own? The fact is that she is getting higher wages than some masculine bookkeepers get, although less than some others. That isn't all; there are plenty of young men in town who would gladly take her situation at less wages if they could get it. There are hundreds of "males" who would readily work at her desk for ten dollars a month less than she receives. The people who are so sensitive about "competition" are quite willing that she shall compete with some poor girl as housemaid, or cook in the kitchen, but they are not willing that she shall "compete" with a man at a desk. The most curious thing about it all to me is, that those "reformers" who make this fussy war on women have the nerve to talk about fighting men.

MONOPOLY ON STRIKE.

I SEE by the papers that the retail coal dealers have struck. These down-trodden and afflicted fellow-citizens demand a raise of fifty cents a ton on coal, from the first day of November, and, what is more to the purpose, they are going to have it. With pious gratitude they see the merciful Indian Summer fade away, and they hail with hymns of gladness the snow clouds coming in the North. A week ago they met at the Grand Pacific Hotel, and sang the doxology of the coal monopoly, "O, ye frost and cold, O, ye ice and snow, Bless ye the Lord: praise him and magnify him for ever." Praise him and magnify him, an extra fifty cents a ton.

It was further resolved at said meeting that any retail coal dealer, wicked and depraved enough to sell coal at a fair profit after November 1st, should be boycotted by the association, and his business destroyed. A communication was read from the agents of the coal monopoly and wholesale dealers, to the effect that they would do the boycotting; that they would not sell coal to any abandoned profligate retailer who should refuse to join the strikers, or who should decline to take advantage of the icebergs created by an all-wise Providence for the benefit of coal merchants. I am writing this a few days before the first of November, but I write in the confident assurance that the strike

will be successful, and that from that day forward I must pay an extra fifty cents a ton for coal. The strikes of capital and monopoly never fail; the strikes of labor seldom succeed.

It is not at all certain that this will be the last strike of the coal dealers this winter. It is highly probable, indeed, that they will strike for another fifty cents a ton by the 1st of December. It depends on the weather. All through November they will watch with greedy eyes the beaver and the squirrel. If the beaver builds his house with extra care, and makes a thicker wall than usual, or if the chipmunk lays in an extra store of nuts, the coal men will decide that the winter will be "hard," and they will sanctify the augury by another tax on coal. Fifty cents a ton on coal isn't much when you look at it as a mere question of arithmetic, a sum in simple addition; but when you measure it by a poor man's wages, and realize that it means a half a day's work for him, it rises to the dignity of algebra, and if you reflect that it includes the warning of a corresponding extortion upon all other necessaries, it becomes a headaching, heartaching problem of economical trigonometry that baffles Benjamin Franklin.

It makes the pews laugh at the pulpit, and the pulpit laugh at the pews as the coal dealer's prayers go up to heaven, asking for an early winter and a late spring. For instance, I see by last Sunday's paper that the lumber dealers had a meeting the day before, and resolved to strike for an extra \$2 per thousand feet. Their strike will be successful, too, because they have the capital to make it win. As I have no money either to build houses or to buy them, it looks as if the strike of the lumber dealers is nothing to me. My neighbor's affairs can regulate themselves; it is enough

for me to mind my own business. I used to practice that philosophy, but I think it cramps the liberal soul, and shuts the generous hand. I have joined the other church, and I now believe that my neighbor's affairs are also mine, and that I have an interest in everything that happens in this world.

I have an interest in the strike of the lumber dealers, because I know it will be followed by a strike of the nail dealers, and the brick dealers, and the glass dealers, and the dealers in putty. Dear material means less building, and that means less demand for workmen, and less wages for the mechanic and the laborer. This strike attacks me front and rear, because although I may not feel the added price of lumber so directly as I feel the extra price of coal, yet it hits me indirectly in the rent I pay for the house that gives me shelter from the storm. I cannot escape it any easier than I can escape the changes of temperature that follow the procession of the sun.

It does not equalize conditions to tell me that I have the privilege to strike for higher wages. When the wild geese are flying south what chance have I to strike? "The stars in their courses fight against Sisera." The weather itself forbids me to strike, and I shall be thankful if my employer does not strike against me. What good is my old shovel to attack monopoly intrenched in the Capitol? Early in the war, I was part of a small force guarding a railroad bridge in Missouri. Suddenly we were attacked by a superior force of the enemy, who opened fire upon us with a four gun battery. We had no artillery, so our Colonel telegraphed to the general for instructions, stating that the enemy's battery was dropping shot and shell among his men, and that he had nothing with

which to reply. Instantly the answer came back, "Take the battery." This was excellent advice providing the battery would consent to be captured. So, when Capital strikes for higher prices, the advice to Labor to make a counter strike for higher wages, is merely an order to "take the battery." The odds against us are too great, and the battery refuses to be taken.

The other day I read, with much pleasure, that the output of coal for this year was greater than last year by about three million tons. Left to the natural laws of trade and production this would give us cheaper coal this winter, and that was the reason I rejoiced. The coal dealers, in order to protect themselves against the calamity of this abundant output, conspire to withhold it from the poor, and taking the coal owners into the plot, they actually increase the price of coal when they ought to lower it, and lay an extra tax of eight per cent. on every bushel of coal that the workingman must buy.

The rich man has already discounted the extortion. He has laid in his winter's supply at the summer prices, but the poor man is not able to do that; he must buy his coal from week to week, as he buys his bread.

As for me, it is only by force of the co-operative principle that I am able to enjoy the luxury of coal at all. My sons and I throw our wages all in together, and one fire warms us all. Otherwise I must give up either coal or bread. I shudder as I think of the long winter impending over homes poorer than mine. I heard a lecture once on chemistry, and the lecturer said that coal was carbon sent here from the sun, that it was nothing else than the sun's rays transformed by natural

chemistry into trees, and these again by decomposition converted into coal. He said that in this way the rays of the sun, shed upon the earth millions of years ago, were concentrated and embalmed, to be liberated by combustion into flame and heat, millions of years afterwards, for the use and benefit of man. He said that not a ray of sunshine that fell upon the earth was wasted, but that nature had provided for the saving of it all. The strike of the coal dealers to keep the dead rays of the sun out of the poor man's home, only proves that they would monopolize and tax the living sunshine if they could. They would sell the air we breathe, the green upon the grass, the perfume of the flowers, and the songs of the birds ; but let us rejoice that they are not able to do that yet. As the swart blacksmith, Ebenezer Elliot, used to sing at his anvil, so I sing at my wheelbarrow,

Beneath the might of wicked men
The poor man's worth is dying,
But thanks to God, in spite of them,
The lark still warbles flying.

The unbelievers tell us there is no place of future punishment, but I cannot agree to that. There must be a place "beyond Jordan" where fuel is cheap, where sulphur can be had for nothing, and where coal dealers who strike against the poor will be kept warm for ever. Else there would be a gap in the moral universe where a big chunk of justice had been knocked out.

GIVE US A KING.

It sounds conceited to hear a poor man boast of having lived a life of luxury, and yet I make that boast. I make it, I trust, with becoming modesty, but after all with pride. The sentiment is not original with me; I borrow it from Robert Burns, who, with much other valuable instruction, taught me "the luxury of being independent." Independent in soul, he meant, for neither of us was ever independent in body—that is, free from poverty and the threatenings of its ministers, cold, hunger, and care. To be sure, I was born rich. I came into the world with a large capital in the shape of health and vitality to my credit in the bank, and although it has been greatly wasted and impaired by many follies, I feel that there is quite a fund still subject to my order. I have worked from dawn till dark at the hardest kind of labor, with pick and shovel and wheelbarrow. I have unloaded lumber from ships; I have carried bricks and mortar in a hod, up, up, ladder after ladder, as high as the top-gallant mast of a man-of-war, and all for scanty wages, but I was proud of the health and strength that enabled me to do it; and the consciousness that I was a free citizen whose vote was equal in power to that of the millionaire, made life not only worth living, but a revelry of enjoyment. When the high-caste party challenged the low-caste party to fight it out, I stood by my order, the low-caste party, and fought it out on that line, not only all summer, but for four summers, and four

winters, too. When the bullets knocked me over, as they sometimes did, I let the doctors patch me up again, and came forward for another round. At the end of the dispute it was my supreme luxury to "stand up stiddy in the ranks," as the low-caste banner went up and the high-caste banner came down, and I saw the flag of slavery furled for ever. It is now seriously proposed that I shall vote no more.

A large quantity of self-conceit was knocked out of me some time ago by my favorite paper, *The Chicago Tribune*. With surprise and consternation I saw that it had gone over to the Tory party. It insisted that I should be degraded, and deprived of the right to vote. This, not for any crime that I had ever done, but because of my caste and my poverty. In the creed of Toryism it is shameful to work for a living, and poverty is the unpardonable sin. The argument of *The Tribune* was contained in what is called a "lay sermon," preached by one of its editorial writers before the Chicago Philosophical Society. With high-class exultation it proclaimed in big headlines that the lay sermon consisted of "plain truths told in cold English." The description was only half correct. The argument was "cold" enough, cold and bitter as the northern blast; but the "truths" of it were false, in morals, in politics, and in religion.

While I was reading this lay sermon three wonders grew up in my mind. First—That any woman could be "cold" enough to preach it. Secondly—What sort of philosophy was taught in that Society? Thirdly—What sort of philosophers belonged to it? Had they possessed one spark of true philosophy they would have hung down their heads in mortification to hear a woman plead in the name of social science for

the starvation of the poor man's child. I do not like to believe that any woman ever said what I here quote from the report of that lay sermon in *The Tribune*. It is unnatural for any woman to scold at "Christian charity," or any other kind of charity, especially charity to little children:

Few recognize the influence of what we call "Christian charity" in drawing these irresponsible men to and keeping them in our cities. They gather like crows around a carrion, and industrious people say, "O we cannot let them starve." Cannot let them starve? Why not? How does their starving come to be any business of yours? Oh, but you cannot let their children starve! Why not? What right has any woman to be the mother of children whose father refuses or neglects to provide for them? The governor of this world lets innumerable creatures die of want. It is by letting some die that he teaches others to live, and we have no right to interfere with his arrangements.

The human soul shivers in the breeze of such "cold" blasphemy as that, and again I refuse to believe that a woman uttered it.

I don't know that lady editor, but in the following paragraph she fires very straight at me, as if she had taken particular notice of me when I first walked into the town:

By what rule of right does any man, entering a city with no more than his clothes, assume political equality with him who has dwelt there, and given time and labor to build and maintain that city?

Whether this lay preacher is a large woman or a small one, is uncertain, but I defy Mr. Sullivan, of Boston, to hit a man harder than that. I came into the city in just that way, with nothing but my clothes; that is, if you call the man inside the clothes nothing. "Gentlemen of the jury, do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty?" said a rural justice of the peace at a recent trial. "Guiltier than a dog," replied the

foreman. And that's the way I feel, "Guiltier than a dog." True, I earned an honest living, but with no more capital than a shovel and a wheelbarrow. I had the wickedness to vote right along, year after year, just the same as if I were President of the Board of Trade.

Speaking of city evils, the lady editor says that the remedy for them consists in the passage of "laws by which no one but the owners of property shall have a vote in the city government." She also says that in municipal elections "no issue is involved save that of levying and distributing taxes," and that "the government of a city is purely a financial question." She also makes the common mistake of likening a city corporation to a private corporation formed for pecuniary profit, such as a railroad company, and logically falls into the advocacy of the cumulative vote. She would give Mr. Potter Palmer a thousand votes, and me none, on the following principle:

If one owning 100 shares in a railroad has 100 votes, while he who owns one share has but one vote, and he who owns no share has no vote, by what rule of ethics does a man who owns no share in a city vote as often or oftener than he who owns 100 shares?

Having demanded that voting in cities shall be the exclusive privilege of property owners, she rails with passionate eloquence against "the bald impertinence which enables any poor man to claim or exercise the power to control the property of his rich neighbor," meaning the exercise of the right to vote.

It is a pity that the philosophers of the Philosophical Society did not show to the lecturer that the rights of persons as well as the rights of things are involved in city government. The lives, health, peace, comfort, and security of all the people are included in

the city administration, and these far outweigh in social and political importance mere considerations of property. The education of all the children is also a duty laid upon the city, but this very education is, no doubt, one of the wrongs against property of which the preacher complains. Toryism has always protested against the education of the poor. Let their children grow downward and travel backward rather than make education a tax upon the firm of Plutus, Cræsus, Dives and Company. That poor children should learn anything at all is a "bald impertinence."

Fortunately, the Tories are not yet in power in Chicago, and our children can still go to school. My little daughter in the twelfth class has already learned more about the constituents of a city than this reformer and her philosophers appear to know. She learned it in what she calls a "piece" which she had to recite from one of the school books. She declaimed it for my instruction a few nights ago, in what I suppose to be the style of Henry Irving when at his best. It goes something like this:

"What constitutes a State?
 Not high raised battlement, or labored mound,
 Thick wall or moated gate;
 Not mansions proud with spires and turrets crowned;
 Not banks and boards of trade,
 Nor stock-yards, oleaginous and wide,
 Where pigs to pork are made,
 Where Bridgeport shanties waft perfume to pride.
 No; men, high-minded men,
 These constitute a State."

And the same rule applies to a city; the bricks and mortar, the bonds and mortgages, the piles of grain and the stocks of goods, the street cars and the wooden pavements; all these constitute but an inferior por-

tion of Chicago. The eight hundred thousand men, women and children are its greater elements, and their welfare rises higher than the materialism represented in taxation. Tested by the instincts of nature the political morality of this lay sermon snaps like a brittle thread. Over there is a tenement rookery, and close beside it a millionaire's palace, filled with "all the wealth of Ormus and of Ind." They are both on fire. The firemen care nothing for the worthless old tenement house, but direct all their efforts to save the palace and its furniture. Now let somebody tell the firemen that there is a child in the third story of the rookery, and instantly they leave the palace to its fate and rush to save the child. It is vain to assure them that the child is a vagrant's child, and that it ought to die in justice to the taxpayers. "Lay sermons" are useless now; through the fire and the smoke they go at the peril of their own lives to save the vagrant's child. As one of the heroes appears at the window with it, and carries it tenderly down the ladder, ten thousand people cheer. Thus the pulsations of the human heart break to pieces the mere mathematics of life, and nature itself proclaims that the poorest baby is of more consequence than brown stone fronts four stories high. Here all philosophies give way.

Besides all this, the workingmen not only build the city, but they pay the taxes too. Do the Tories wish to discuss that question? Before the debate is ended they will learn more of political economy than they will care to know. The man who owns that factory round the corner employs four hundred men. On Monday morning he shows them raw material worth five thousand dollars. They put their labor on it,

and when Saturday night comes, it is worth thirteen thousand dollars. He pays the men five thousand dollars, keeping three thousand as his own reward for brain work, care, anxiety, interest on capital, taxes, insurance, and the risk of a falling market. Will it be pretended that in this three thousand dollars the workmen have not paid their own taxes and their employer's too? Because the men who own all the laboring muscle of the city, and all the artisan talent, are permitted to vote, the Tories exclaim like the fools of Israel, "Give us a king to rule over us."

So long as I have the ballot I am the friend of order; take it away from me and I become a revolutionist. Toryism in America is folly. The boon that *The Tribune* seeks would be its own destruction. If it could have its way and disfranchise all the workingmen, the value of the fine building on the corner of Madison and Dearborn would depreciate. Stocks would fall, and there would be such a "shrinkage in values" as this generation has not seen. The ballot is the safety valve of American society. So long as I have equality of rights and opportunities I will never complain that my neighbor is rich while I am poor. Take away the ballot from the workingmen, and instead of a police force you would need an army to preserve your privileges and your property. So long as the ballot is impartial, property is safe from revolutionary violence. The social inequalities that now exist we shall struggle to remove by moral forces, and the amelioration of the laws, by lifting up the poor without dragging down the rich. Deprive us of our moral weapon, the ballot, and we shall then try to equalize conditions by the sword.

CONVICT LABOR.

I SEE by the papers that the Trade and Labor Assembly held a largely attended meeting on Sunday. Judging by a report of the proceedings, the members worked very hard at the wasteful industry of chopping sand. Convict labor was the subject of debate. This contemptible question is unworthy the dignity of a Trade and Labor Assembly. Until mechanics and laborers can rise to a grander theme than competition with convicts, and until they can conquer their fears of "over-production," they will accomplish nothing worthy to be done, either for themselves or others. By keeping down upon this lower plane, they proclaim themselves a lower caste dependent upon the charity of some, the extravagance of others, waste by everybody, and merciful acts of the legislature forbidding other people to work. They persist in limiting production, because they think that scarcity is beneficial to workingmen. It appears to me that this opinion is a serious mistake, and that the very opposite is true.

The speakers did not agree with each other on the question of convict labor. Mr. McLogan repeated the old opinion that convicts should not be allowed to work at mechanical trades, but should be confined to the "building of country roads." "This plan," he said, "would recommend itself to the rural districts." In a former article I showed the unfairness of this plan. I showed the injustice of giving convicts wheelbarrows

and shovels, and setting them to work in competition with me. I showed that if convicts must be employed at useful work, they should be employed at that which is most profitable, and if they must compete with labor, they should compete with that labor which gets the highest wages, because that is most able to stand the competition. So long as knights of the wheelbarrow work upon the roads, they want convicts employed at some other kind of labor—watchmaking, for instance, or fancy needlework, anything that they don't have to do.

Mr. McLogan stated that the employment of convicts upon the public roads was the "English system." I doubt this. I think it is a mistake. I have traveled afoot over many of the country roads in England looking for a job, but I never saw any convicts working on them. Still, this is only negative evidence, and Mr. McLogan may have positive evidence the other way. What of it? Is the scheme practical for us? If not, it must be admitted that the discussion of it is a tiresome chopping of sand. If what Mr. McLogan calls the "rural districts" are to be won over to the support of his plan, they must be persuaded that it is advantageous to them, and must be assured of an equal distribution of its profits. There are probably about 50,000 miles of public roads in Illinois, and about 5,000 convicts, although I hope there are not so many. This would give the "rural districts" one convict to each ten miles of road, making it necessary, therefore, to have less roads or more convicts. In 1862 the regiment that I belonged to was marching through Tennessee, and every night when we went into camp a lot of negroes had to be provided for, who had left the plantations to follow the flag of

liberty. Our colonel distributed those negroes among the different companies as servants—so many to each mess. One evening he noticed a disturbance in the camp and inquired the cause of it. "Why," said a disputant, "our mess ain't got its full ration of nigger." The fatal objection to Mr. McLogan's plan is that it would be impossible to give each "rural district" its full ration of convicts.

Mr. George Schilling had another plan; he thought "that penitentiaries might be made self-supporting by turning them into farms, whose surplus produce could be used to feed the poor." The objections to this plan is that it might make an "over-production" of pork and potatoes, and place the convicts in competition with the farmers. Mr. Schilling, I am sure, will admit upon reflection, that he also was chopping sand. If there are in the Joliet penitentiary a thousand convicts, they ought to be able to cultivate a farm of 20,000 acres. Now, in order to keep them from running away, it will be necessary to chain them and handcuff them. This will somewhat impair their efficiency as farm hands, and the harvest home will show a very small quantity of "surplus produce" to be distributed among the poor.

Perhaps Mr. Schilling intends to have the farm walled in; if so, I am in favor of his plan. To put a high wall around 20,000 acres of land would make a good deal of "work" for brickmakers and masons. It would create employment for shovelers and hod-carriers, to both of which professions I have had the honor to belong. It would make a job for me, and this, according to a very popular philosophy, appears to be the chief business of laws and government, to give a job to *me*, and take it away from *him*.

Since writing the above criticism on the proceedings of the Trade and Labor Assembly, the justice of my position has been vindicated in a very instructive way. The city government of Washington, impressed by the wisdom of Mr. McLogan's plan, passed an ordinance to the effect that convicts must not compete with the aristocracy of mechanics, but must "work upon the roads." Thereupon the noble order of scavengers arose in their might, and threatened revolution. They would not allow unsavory criminals to come "between the wind and their nobility." The ordinance was repealed, and revolution averted.

I take this opportunity to explain my position on the important subject of "organized labor." I have been regarded by many able and useful organs of the workingmen as an opponent of Trades Unions, Knights of Labor, and labor associations generally. This is a mistake. I have said over and over again that in the present pressure of monopoly upon labor, it would be the very imbecility of resignation if workingmen should not organize themselves in Trades Unions for their own protection. I have merely criticized such of their laws and regulations as I thought were founded on error and injustice. I am not discouraged because the workingmen in their trades-unions disagree with me in their theory of social economics, if that is the correct phrase. It is not of much consequence, just now, whether workingmen in their associations are thinking right or wrong; the sublime encouragement is that they are beginning to think at all. They will think right in time.

That many of the doctrines now held by the trades-unions will be radically reversed by them, I have no doubt whatever. The unnatural dogma that every

workingman is the "competitor" of every other workingman must go. It makes the death or illness of every wage-worker a benefit to all the rest, a doctrine which in its full development would make society a hideous thing to live in. In its place must come the nobler and the manlier principle that every worker is the helper and the friend of every other. The trades-unions will reverse the opinion that scarcity is a desirable thing, and substitute for it a belief in the blessings of abundance. They will see that not "over-production," but "under-production" means hunger to the poor man's child.

Once upon a time I worked on a railroad at a place called Longueil, just opposite Montreal. I had to work from daylight until dark, and slept in a barn. I got a dollar a day, and the shoveling was hard, for the land round there was rocky and tough. One day, when my muscles were very tired, I tried to sneak up the plank with a light load, when the boss roared out, "Tom, fill up the 'barrow; you wouldn't put out a yard of dirt in a week." Thinking the whole matter over that night, I imbibed this industrial heresy, that in order to my happiness the laws of society should be framed, not so as to make more work for me, but less. It occurred to me also that in order to have more food, more clothing, more wages, and less work, I ought to encourage the multiplication of all the comforts of life, and then seek by proper laws a fairer distribution of them, and in that heresy I expect to die.

CHOPPING SAND.

I BELIEVE there is somewhere in the laws of mechanics a principle known as "waste of power." At allevents, I have heard the phrase used by workingmen, and although I do not understand its technical or scientific meaning, I suppose it refers to some leak or other defect in the machine or implement, in consequence of which its mechanical efforts are weakened, and some of its labor lost. I fear that many of the efforts of workingmen to improve their condition are in the wrong direction, and therefore a "waste of power."

Much effort is being used to relieve the mechanic trades from the competition of convict labor. I think this effort is a "waste of power." Lately I pointed out the unfairness of the demand that convicts be not permitted to work at the mechanic trades, but only "on the roads." As a worker "on the roads," I claimed protection also from convict competition. It is gratifying to notice that my claim has been conceded by the trades as reasonable and just, for in the platform adopted by the Anti-Monopoly Convention in New York, the demand that convicts be compelled to "work upon the roads," has been abandoned, and it is only now required that they be employed at such labor as will be least in competition with workingmen outside.

It is plain as figures that if they are employed at any useful or productive labor at all, they must com-

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pete with somebody, and in that case the spirit of the resolution requires that they be employed at the most expensive occupations ; at those trades which pay the highest wages, because they can best afford to stand the competition. Of course this doctrine will not be admitted, and having made the circuit of every useful trade and calling in the land, we bring up at last against the frank position we should have maintained in the beginning, namely, that convicts must be compelled to work at something that produces nothing, and I suggest that they be employed at chopping sand.

I have no patent on this plan ; it is not original with me. I have seen it actually tried, and I know its value. Once I was employed with some other men in building a house. I was bricklayer's clerk. My duty was to carry up the bricks in a hod, while the bricklayer fixed them with his trowel, square and true. This was before the hod-carrying business was prostrated by the competition of the pulley and the rope, and when I used to find it a healthful rest and recreation from the monotony and weary iteration of the shovel and the pick. One day the boss brought a young fellow with him to work upon the job. He had taken him as an apprentice to the bricklayer's trade ; he gave some instructions about setting the youth to work, and then went away. The newcomer was not well received, for it was clear as print that unless he should tumble off a scaffold and break his neck, he would grow into a "competitor" at the bricklaying business with the very men then working on the job. "What shall we set him at for a beginning?" said one of the men to the foreman. "Set him to chopping sand," he answered, and that was done.

It was explained to the newcomer that the sand

they were using was rather coarse, and that some of a finer quality was required. A hatchet was given him, a bushel or two of sand was placed in front of him, and he was told to chop it up fine. He worked faithfully and well, but at last he discovered that all his labor was a "waste of power," that although he might chop forever, the sand would remain the same. Here then is the solution of the convict labor problem, set the convicts to chopping sand ; this will give them work enough, and the results will be the desired nothing. How much of the workingmen's efforts to improve their social condition is based on false reasoning ; how much of it is a useless "waste of power," a weary chopping of sand !

Again, if the hard labor of convicts is intended merely as a punishment, nothing can be more exquisitely refined and cruel than the labor of chopping sand. To work and produce nothing is torture. The divine quality of labor is proved by the pleasure its product brings. Whether the profit of it comes to the worker or not, it is a satisfaction to know that by his work something exists that did not exist before, or exists in better shape. In my childhood I knew an old man for whom my father used to work. His name was Andrew Mann. Poverty and hardship were his lot in early life, but in his old age he had become very rich, partly through some lucky speculations, and partly through some "unearned increment" of some town property which he had bought in an early day. Riches bring to a man the luxury of eccentricity, and there are some men who from lack of early education, or some other aptitudes, enjoy no other luxury in old age. Andrew Mann was one of these.

One day a poor man came to him for charity.

“Why do you not go to work?” he said; the man answered that he could not get employment. “I want a man to turn a grindstone,” said old Andrew; “you can have the job if you want it, and I’ll give you a dollar a day.” The poor man gladly accepted the offer and went to work. He turned the grindstone merrily under the old man’s directions, but nobody came to grind anything. This, of course, was none of his business, and he kept on turning. At last he became very tired, and said, “Mr. Mann, isn’t somebody coming to grind something?” “No,” said his employer; “but go ahead with your work.” Like the never-ending drip of water on the head, his profitless toil at last became intolerable, and the poor man fairly begged his tormentor to send a man to grind an axe, or a chisel, or a hatchet, or anything at all that would show some benefit from his toil. But the old man was inexorable, and told him to grind on. At last the torture became insupportable, and the man threw up the job. “I don’t object to turning a grindstone,” he said, “if I could see anything to grind, but to grind away at nothing will drive me mad.” If punishment alone is the object of convict labor, and if it is good social economics that convicts must not earn anything, then let them turn barren grindstones or chop sand.

HONEST AND DISHONEST WAGES.

I SAID a few days ago that although my wages had nominally increased from twenty-five to fifty per cent. in the last thirty years, it had not swollen in proportion to the cost of living, and that I find it harder to live now than in 1859. I acknowledge myself a little confused and doubtful about it, since a great Chicago editor has contradicted me in his testimony before the Senate Committee on Education and Labor. He assures me that I entirely mistake the cause of my poverty; that it is not because I do not get wages enough, but because I don't save what I get, but squander it in luxury, and tobacco, and beer. Well, if I should save all of it, and never spend a cent, it would take me more than a thousand years to become as rich as that editor; therefore, I prefer the evidence of my own home and my own pockets to the opulent moralizing of this economical philosopher. In his tenderness for the workingman, he travels all the way to New York to impress upon the committee the prudent maxim of one Dr. Benjamin Franklin, that "a penny saved is a penny earned."

This editor is one of those philanthropists who pay fifty cents for a dollar's worth of work, and make up the balance in good advice from Poor Richard's alma-

nac. The question is not what we do with our money, but do we get what fairly belongs to us? As for beer, I have never read any more glowing tributes to the virtues of it than I have found in the editorial columns of that very editor's newspaper. No doubt it would be a good thing if all poor men would abandon beer, and it might be a good thing too if all rich men would take the pledge of Sir John Falstaff to "eschew sack and live cleanly," but this is a matter of morals and prudence to be decided by the freewill of each person for himself, rich and poor alike. It is not a question of wages. In the inventory of the great qualities of a certain President of the United States I find recorded his boundless capacity for champagne. I think it would have been better for him if he had never drunk champagne; but that is no affair of mine. Mr. Editor will not be allowed to confuse the wages question with the beer question, for each must be discussed on its own merits, and decided by itself.

Speaking for myself, I have long since abandoned the use of beer, and all other intoxicating drinks; first, because I couldn't afford to buy them, and secondly, because I am stronger and healthier without them. As for tobacco, I am still undecided as to whether its use is hurtful or beneficial. Of course cigars are beyond my reach, but a pipe of tobacco has a soothing influence upon me, and the expense of it is nothing in comparison with the solace it brings. I have a fancy that to a certain extent it has the virtue of appeasing hunger. No doubt a doctor could easily show me that I am wrong in this opinion, but I have always noticed that whenever I have abandoned the use of tobacco I have been hungrier than I was before, so that I really believe the cost of it is more than balanced in the sav-

ing of bread. It may be replied to this that smoking must therefore be injurious, as it weakens appetite, but this is no argument in my case, because of all human blessings a good appetite is the smallest benefit to me. I have no use for it. I can stand the expense of tobacco much better than the expense of a good appetite.

But I began to write about wages, and have permitted that editor to switch me off to the side-track of beer. I said that I was getting a dollar and a half a day. That's what they tell me I get, but I have my doubts about it. Do I really get it? Last week I earned nine dollars exactly—nine silver dollars. I spent them for groceries; did I get nine dollars' worth? I suspect that I did not. I believe I was cheated in the weight of the dollars, but I am quite sure that the grocer didn't cheat himself in the weight of the groceries, and I fear that I only got in goods the value of the silver in the dollars that I paid for them. They tell me that the quantity of silver in a dollar is worth eighty cents in gold, and no more; if so, then my wages is only one dollar and twenty cents a day in gold. This is a frightful discount, and it goes far to explain the reason why my dollar and a half a day is not so much to me as a dollar a day was in the olden time, because the extra twenty cents is not half enough to cover the extra cost of life.

I suspect that this twenty per cent. on our wages is a tax upon labor, which goes all into the pockets of capital—a tribute to monopoly—every dollar of which is profit. I believe that this twenty per cent. furnishes the capital stock of all the national banks in the country, and that it largely contributes to the unjust distribution of wealth, which is the reproach of our

statesmanship, and a menace to the life of our institutions. It widens the social difference between the rich man and me until we scowl at one another—I at him with envy, and he at me with fear. It is making castes and class distinctions in this country that some day will come together with a crash like thunder, as they did in France in 1789. A dollar and a half a day in silver for me, and ten thousand dollars a day in gold for Mr. Vanderbilt, is illogical in a state of society pretending to recognize the equality of us both; it is the illegitimate offspring of capital and polluted law. I must have more and he must have less, or the strained ligament that holds society together will break. Not by confiscation, nor by physical violence, will the change come—at least in our day—but it will come that way in the next generation, unless the moral forces now at work shall establish capital and labor on a more friendly and equitable basis, unless our social system shall be arranged on juster principles, insuring a fairer division of the profits of labor between the employer and the employed.

I mentioned my suspicions about the silver dollar to a friend who understands monetary science better than I do, and he assured me that my argument was all unsound, because based on the fallacy that dollars of different metals were of unequal value, and the additional fallacy that if I should not be paid in the cheaper metal I should be paid in the dearer one at the same rate of wages. He told me that all dollars are of equal value by decree of Congress. He proved his case by the practical test of a dollar's worth of sugar, which was the same in quantity, whether paid for in paper, or silver, or gold. As he brought the proof of his argument to actual demonstration, I was

compelled to yield, but I was not satisfied, although the concrete evidence of a dollar's worth of sugar was palpable as a church or a barn.

I learn by object lessons when I learn anything at all, because my mind soon tires with metaphysics and abstract reasoning. In that way I tried to solve the puzzle by the actual experiment of a silver dollar which I paid out the other day for coffee. It was a bright, good-looking dollar, with stars and other national emblems upon it to give it character, and the positive statement that it might be depended upon as "one dollar." If any suspicion of short weight, or fraud, or adulteration attached to it, such suspicion immediately vanished on the discovery that it was a religious dollar, inscribed with the legend "In God We Trust." Not to trust in a pious dollar such as that would be to lack faith like an infidel ; but, after all, I believe that it did not buy me a dollar's worth of coffee. As I walked over to the store I said to myself : "Does it make any difference whether this coin is called a dollar, or a florin, or a doubloon ? Will it buy me any more coffee than the worth of the silver in it ? The grocer buys his coffee in Brazil, and he pays for it in gold ; if this coin is worth eighty cents in gold and no more, I can get eighty cents' worth of coffee for it, and no more ; unless the government steps in and agrees to make up the difference between the value of the cheap dollar and the dear one. If the eighty per cent. dollar and the hundred per cent. dollar have equal purchasing power, it must be because in some way or other the government promises to redeem the cheaper coin. Unless this promise of redemption can be found somewhere in the fiscal machinery of the government, I could not possibly get more than

eighty cents worth of coffee for my silver dollar. There is no political economy in the world that will convince me that the grocer could afford to give me any more. I know that Aladdin gave a new lamp for an old one, and got the best of the bargain, but that was an exceptional case, the only one in history. Similar good luck is not likely to happen in our day. The transmutation of metals has not been done yet, and until it is done we need not expect to buy a hundred cents' worth of coffee for eighty cents' worth of silver. I think I am cheated in the dollars I get for my work.

PAYMENT IN PROMISES TO PAY.

It is generally conceded that a promise by one man to pay another a hundred dollars is not payment, but there are some persons who believe that "Government" has the magic power to pay ten thousand million dollars with its own promises to pay. They even expand the miracle so that a citizen debtor can pay his debts by the simple "tender" of one of those promises of "Government." Several gentlemen who believe in this impossible alchemy have criticized my doctrine of dollars, with tart sarcasm which reminds me of crab-apple vinegar. I will turn the other cheek to them by a few words in reply. I will first notice Mr. Albert of Kentucky.

Mr. Albert abandons his former position. He admits that he was wrong on his law point, and he changes his argument as to the work performed by government in balancing the value of gold and silver dollars. In his first criticism he said that the American grocer could buy as much coffee in Brazil with the silver dollars he receives in payment for it here as with gold dollars, because "he exchanges his paper or silver to the government at a nominal discount to cover the transfer, and receives gold in return." Being shown his mistake he now says that the government "does not do it directly, but indirectly, by receiving gold, silver, or paper at the same value and indiscriminately for taxes and duties." "Upon this hint

I spake," said Othello, and I think that Mr. Albert spoke those words on a hint from me, but they must vexatiously entangle him because in the preceding sentences he impressed it upon me that "paper shall not be accepted in payment of duties." This, he was careful to remind me, is printed on the reverse side of the greenbacks themselves. Mr. Albert calls my arguments "nebulous." No doubt they are nebulous to him, and so I fear is every kind of knowledge, for his brain is wrapped in clouds; yet he frankly admits that he is "a well-informed man."

How queer it is for "a well-informed man" to say that "a promise to pay without any specified time for payment is of no value," and that "*nominal* value is a term unknown in political economy, for it cannot be defined." I confess, as Mr. Albert kindly says, that it is a subject of which I know little. I have had no time to study political economy, but in the few books on the "dismal science," which it has been my privilege to read, the term is often mentioned, and this must be my excuse for using it. Jevons on "Money," page 75, treats of the distinction between the *metallic* value and the *nominal* value of coins. The statutes of the United States frequently speak of the "*nominal* value" of the money we are using now. It is a pity that our statesmen should have been so ignorant as to speak of "nominal value" in the very laws of the land. Had they consulted "a well-informed man" he would have warned them that "*nominal* value is a term unknown in political economy for it cannot be defined."

A critic who makes those fundamental mistakes is not entitled to any further reply. We cease to discuss the rules of rhetoric with a man as soon as we

discover that he has not yet mastered the alphabet ; so the man who shows that he has not yet learned the alphabet of finance is not entitled to the tribute of argument which we extend to a capable disputant. I must decline therefore to notice the rest of Mr. Albert's errors, except incidentally in my reply to that comical person, Mr. J. Allen, of Wyoming Territory, who has danced into the controversy looking very much like little Breeches in the poem, "peart, and chipper, and sassy."

Once upon a time a pugnacious Arkansaw traveler came suddenly upon a very exciting tournament. Goaded by a love of glory, he inquired, "Is this a free fight?" They told him it was. "Count me in," he said ; and in he went. After the lapse of a minute and a half, he again remarked, "Is this a free fight?" They answered, "Yes." "Count me out," he said, and left the meeting without waiting for the benediction. Mr. J. Allen rushes with kindred bravery and want of discretion upon a like experience. He knows little enough to say that "'Wheelbarrow' entirely overlooks the real cause of the depreciation of silver dollars ; it is nothing more nor less than the lack of the legal tender qualification necessary to make it a bona-fide dollar." He has not yet got far enough in his alphabet to know that silver dollars *are* a legal tender, and yet he has the nerve to criticize and explain the American financial system.

A finance critic who does not know that the silver dollars of his own country are a legal tender could hardly be historically accurate, and he is not to be held responsible for the following mistake : "The first sixty million dollars of greenbacks issued by this government were a legal tender in the payment of all

dues, and were in no sense based upon gold, and a better money was never uttered." Now, it is a curious fact that this celebrated sixty million dollars was not legal tender at all. Of course, the good or bad character of those dollars is a matter of opinion. Mr. Allen thinks "a better money was never uttered." I think worse money has been uttered, but that was very bad. Speaking of that famous sixty millions, the American Cyclopædia makes the following flattering remarks. It says, those notes "did not enter freely into circulation, and there were instances of soldiers having to submit to the loss of a discount on those received for pay of from four to twenty per cent. in the District of Columbia." "Better money was never uttered," says Mr. Allen, although, at Washington, where it was made, soldiers paid in that money for defending the Capitol itself, were cheated by it from four to twenty per cent.

Listen to this: "A nickel," says Mr. Allen, "which is neither gold nor silver, *nor redeemable in either*, will purchase just as much coffee as five cents in silver." Here, again, he reasons upside down. The nickel does that just because it *is* redeemable. On that subject I find in the Revised Statutes of the United States the few feeble remarks following, that is to say:

"The five-cent and three-cent copper nickel, and one-cent bronze coins shall be a legal tender at their *nominal* value for any amount not exceeding twenty-five cents in any one payment, and

"The Secretary of the Treasury is required to redeem in lawful money all copper, bronze, copper-nickel, and base metal coinage of the United States."

The faith of the people that they will be redeemed according to the promise of the law gives them currency, exactly as faith gives value to milk tickets.

This morning I was roused from slumber before daylight by the milkman "rapping, rapping at my chamber door." I got up and let him in. He gave me a quart of milk, and I gave him a paper ticket, about the size of a silver dollar. At certain times I buy a dollar's worth of tickets, and file them away for use when wanted. These tickets are not milk, they are merely securities redeemable in milk. Although they are not "*legal tender*" I have faith in them, because the dairyman has never failed to redeem them at their *nominal* value, a pint of milk for a red ticket, and a quart for a yellow one. If he should fail in business, my milk tickets on hand would be like the paper money of a broken government—worthless. But the metal money of a country up to its full bullion value, never fails. The coins of Alexander the Great have survived a hundred nations, and are good to-day.

The promise of redemption gives the greenbacks value. This promise is not only printed on the face of them, but has been solemnly written by Congress in the law of March, 1869. It contradicts the assertion that they are dollars, and this denial has been enrolled among the judgments of the Supreme Court of the United States. That tribunal has decided that,

"The dollar note is a promise to pay a dollar, and the dollar intended is the coin dollar of the United States. These notes are obligations, they bind the national faith. They are therefore strictly securities."

On that principle greenbacks are exempt from taxation. The Supreme Court has decided that also, on the ground that they are not dollars, but merely securities of the United States, and therefore not taxable either by the nation, or by any city, or county, or State.

I feel like making an apology for degrading controversy by answering the statement of Mr. Allen that if the world were to demonetize gold, a gold dollar would be worth only five cents, and the equally wild assertion that it would be worth about fifteen cents if the United States were to demonetize gold. The American gold dollar contains 25.8 grains of gold. According to Mr. Allen the value of the metal is fifteen cents, and the United States by coining it into a dollar adds an extra value to it of eighty-five cents. Do I not owe an apology to the reader for noticing such exuberant error?

Coinage adds the merest trifle to the value of the metal coined. This is proven by the fact that gold bullion is nearly equal in value to the same quantity of gold in eagles or in sovereigns. I think the four hundred shekels of silver paid by Abraham for the field of Machpelah were not coins, for they were *weighed*, not *counted*, and yet they were "current money with the merchant." When the sons of Abraham passed under the dominion of Rome, and those shekels bore the "image and superscription" of Cæsar, their value relatively to the other silver round about them was not changed. The coining of them simply dispensed with the trouble of weighing them. The "image and superscription" merely said to the merchants, "You need not weigh this piece; Cæsar hath already weighed it, and vouches that it contains so many grains of silver." And wherever those shekels are to-day, whether in shillings or in dollars, whether bearing the image of Queen Victoria, or our own Goddess of Liberty, the "image and superscription" upon them only testify to their weight. Whatever additional value they obtain by reason of their "*legal*

tender" quality, is a dishonest value, the measure of their usefulness in cheating creditors and poor men out of their wages.

There is a playful innocence in Mr. Allen's fairy-like vows of what he would do with gold and silver had he the power. He would reverse the laws of the universe, and make water run up-hill instead of down. He would demolish what he calls the "idol" gold, and erect a paper "idol" in its place. He would make gold inferior to silver, and then "base both of them upon a paper standard, making them redeemable in United States Treasury Notes, and then demonetize both of them." Many similar miracles he would perform by the same power. All this is like the boasting of the poetical child, who delights us with airy promises of what impossible things he would do if he were King of France.

THE WORKINGMAN'S DOLLAR.

THE praiseworthy effort to prove that a pound of coffee weighing sixteen ounces, and a pound of coffee weighing fourteen ounces, can be made equal in value by Act of Congress is still going on. I am thankful to the finance teachers who have kindly taken me in hand, although I fear that I shall never be able to understand the "laws of money." I go down meekly to the foot of the class, and acknowledge myself the dullest pupil in the school. I cannot yet see that the silver dollars I get for my wages, each worth eighty cents, are just as valuable as gold dollars worth a hundred cents a piece, and I don't believe they are.

In a friendly criticism Mr. Albert of Kentucky gives me a lesson, and he tries with patient good temper to make the matter clear as mud, in this way: He says—"I would first advise 'Wheelbarrow,' the next time he gets hold of a greenback, to read it carefully. He will find the words 'on demand,' which are a distinctive feature of redeemable money, left out. Any lawyer will tell him that a promise to pay, without specified time of payment, is of no value." This leads me to suspect that Mr. Albert is a lawyer, which gives him a great advantage in the argument. It is very easy for him to refer me to a lawyer for information as to the legal obligation of promises to pay, but I cannot afford to get knowledge in that way. As it

would cost me a week's wages and a dollar over to speak to a lawyer in Chicago, I went down to the public library and got a look at some law books on "Contracts," and they all said that a promise to pay without specified time for payment is a legal and moral obligation to pay the amount stated, of so much "value" that it will be enforced at law. This discourages me at the very start because it makes me doubt the wisdom of my teacher. If Mr. Albert's finance is as bad as his law, I fear that his instruction is of "no value."

Speaking of the greenbacks, Mr. Albert says: "For ten years the United States made no pretensions to exchange them for gold or silver, and yet they had a value varying from par to fifty per cent. discount. What gave them that value?" "Was it faith?" he says, "or the result of some natural law?" and he advises me at my leisure to "study out that conundrum." Well, I'll wrestle with it, and while I'm working it, will he tackle this one: What gave them the discount?

My first guess at the conundrum is this: Faith gave them value, and doubt gave them discount; just as they gave value and discount to the legal tenders of the Confederate States. The value and discount were regulated by the chances of their payment in gold, and the time of such payment. I was in several battles down South, and I noticed that whenever we got whipped the greenbacks got discount, and the graybacks got value, and *vice versa*. When Sherman took Atlanta the graybacks got so much discount that they have never had much value since.

The ancient assumption that a fish put into a vessel of water adds nothing to the weight of the whole, is

adopted by Mr. Albert, and he coolly remarks: "As to the reason why the laborer's eighty cent silver dollar will buy as much as the boss's one dollar gold piece;" as if that fact were proved, when it is the main point in dispute. The reason, however, is pure magic; here it is: "All things have two values—the intrinsic value and the exchangeable value; money owes its value to both. The government can regulate the exchange value, it cannot affect the intrinsic value." That is to say, that money has a real, genuine value of itself, independent of the government, and a false value given it by Act of Congress. What Mr. Albert probably means is that government gives a *nominal* value to money, and that it circulates at that value within its own dominions. All this is but an evasion of the true question, which is: Ought governments to give a nominal value to money different from its real value, and thus cheat all men who work for wages? Government can give an exchangeable value to the yardstick, and decree that thirty inches shall be a yard, and it will be so, but government can never make ten yards of calico measured by the new yardstick equal in length or value to ten yards measured in the old way.

I am confident that Mr. Albert is in a whirl of confusion on the currency question, or he would not give us whole sentences utterly destitute of meaning, like this: "The government, by affording facilities to exchange silver, paper, nickel, and copper at par, or nearly so, it makes their exchangeable value equal to that of gold, after it has placed its stamp upon them." At par with what? "That pig," said the seller, "will weigh 200 pounds *on an average*." Does Mr. Albert mean silver, nickel, copper, paper, "at par" with one another, or with gold? And if either or both, at what

standard? Ounce for ounce, or bulk for bulk? This obscure sentence is the most important in his article, because he bases all his argument upon it, quaintly remarking: "This explains why the silver dollar will buy as much as the gold one, and also why a grocer can buy as much coffee in Brazil with the silver he receives in payment here."

Here is a painful headache in all that inconsequent reasoning of Mr. Albert. That very miracle is just what the grocer cannot perform. He cannot buy coffee in Brazil and pay for it in silver dollars at par with gold dollars, for the obvious reason that gold dollars and silver dollars are not of equal value. In the market reports of the newspapers I find silver quoted like wheat, or oil, or pork. Nor can the government help the grocer to the value of a cent. It will not even try to help him, and Mr. Albert makes an inexcusable blunder when he says that the grocer "exchanges his paper or silver to the government, at a nominal discount to cover the transfer, and receives gold in return." He does nothing of the kind. The government will not give gold dollars for silver dollars. On the contrary, the government actually buys silver in the market, at the current price, whatever it is, then takes eighty cents worth of it, and stamps it, "One dollar: In God We Trust," and makes a clear profit of twenty-five per cent. This profit is a tax upon the wages of the workingman, who is compelled to take these dollars at their apocryphal or "exchangeable" value, instead of at their real value. "To increase the weight of the silver dollars," says Mr. Albert, would make them "heavier to carry about." That's true, but I'll try and stagger along under mine. As Mr. Albert is in error as to his facts, of course his

arguments founded on them partake of their defects, and are valueless. If government can give an "exchangeable" value to silver dollars and make them equal to gold dollars, why will it not exchange one for the other? Why repudiate its own work, and dishonor its own coinage?

To be sure, I can go into a store and buy a dollar's worth of coffee, and the grocer will give me the same quantity, whether I pay him a gold, or silver, or paper dollar; but this apparent equality in value ought not to deceive anybody. It is evident that where payment can be made in different coins of the same denomination but of different metallic values, the merchant must fix the price of his goods on the presumption that he will be paid for them in the cheapest currency; if he gets the dearer coins occasionally, so much the better, but he cannot afford to count on them. During the war the prices of goods went up as the value of greenbacks went down. It could not be otherwise; and when I take my nine dollars, which I get as wages every Saturday night, and buy household comforts with it, I find fifteen or twenty per cent., and sometimes more than that added to the price of nearly everything I buy.

If the greenback is of "no value" because the words "on demand" are left out of its promise to pay, why does Mr. Albert contend that it is just as good as gold? And if it is of "no value" for any reason, why should it be imposed on me as wages for my work? The value of any promise in morals, in business, or in politics depends entirely on the size of the chance that it will be redeemed. The value of a greenback dollar, or a silver dollar, or a brass dollar, depends on the chance that it will be redeemed in the dearest money current in its life time, and, at present, this is gold. If

silver dollars worth eighty cents apiece, and gold dollars worth a hundred cents apiece appear just now to circulate at mercantile par with each other in ordinary transactions, it is because there is a working promise somewhere in the machinery of the government to pay the twenty cents. Where is it? Let us see.

Mr. Albert kindly advises me to read the green-back, and I shall find the words "On demand" left out. Will he "change works" with me and read the legend on the silver certificate, and he will find the words "on demand" left in; but it is very careful not to say, "dollars payable to bearer on demand," but *silver* dollars. On the reverse side of it, that invidious distinction is apologized for, and partly cured in the following agreement: "This certificate is receivable for customs, taxes, and all public dues." Here is the working promise to make up the difference in value between the silver dollar and the gold dollar. The promise appears to me to be reliable enough within the sphere of the sum total of the public revenues, and perhaps, a little beyond that sum; but it is a precarious reliance for the laboring man, because it is liable to be broken at any time by law or by war.

THE PAPER DOLLAR.

MR. S., of Lincoln, California, has criticized my complaint against the silver dollar. He says that I offer "only one argument against continuing the coinage and use of the dollar, namely—there is not enough silver in it." This, he says, "is about the only argument founded on fact, advanced by any opponent of the monetization of silver. Very well, the only argument "founded on fact" against the last half ton of coal I bought was that it contained only seven hundred and fifty pounds. What further argument is necessary? The coal merchant gave troy weight in mistake for avoirdupois. The quality of the coal was good enough. I complain not of that. So the nine silver dollars I got for my week's wages were good silver, but they were deficient in weight. That's all I complain of.

The weakness of my argument, says Mr. S., "is apparent upon reflecting that there is not a dollar's worth of paper in a greenback or bank-note; yet the paper dollar will buy as much as the gold dollar." The weakness of this argument consists in the fact that there is no such thing as a paper dollar. As to the pieces of paper that travel about as dollars, I will do them the justice to say that they make no claim to be anything more than promissory notes. I had one of them this morning: it was my only mone-

tary possession in this world, and I squandered it at the meat-market, but before parting with it I read carefully the legend on it—"The United States will pay to bearer one dollar." This promise I traded for beef. I had no money to pay for the beef, but the butcher accepted the printed promise of the United States to pay for it, and I walked off with my Sunday's roast. Mr. S. thinks that the "paper dollar" buys beef because of its own value; and he reveals in that queer delusion the weakness of his own position.

When anybody tells Mr. S. that the reason why the paper promise to pay a dollar will buy beef, is because it is based on gold, and can be exchanged for gold, he replies, "Is it possible that any considerable number of those who make this reply do not know that the silver dollar can also be exchanged for gold, or for silver certificates, that are equal to gold in purchasing power?" With shame I confess that I am so ignorant as not to know that the silver dollars can also be exchanged for gold ones, and I will be thankful if Mr. S. will tell me where this wonderful miracle is done. Do they perform it at the United States Treasury? If not, will they do it at the Mint in California? If Mr. S. knows the magician who performs this valuable alchemy, will he kindly introduce me to him? I should like to win his friendship.

"Or for silver certificates." This unlucky phrase condemns Mr. S.'s argument, because if gold dollars and silver dollars are of equal value, then gold certificates and silver certificates must also be equal for similar amounts, and silver dollars could be exchanged for gold certificates; but the fact is, they can only be exchanged for silver certificates, because of their inferior value. All decrees of legislatures regulating

the purchasing power of money, or the selling value of goods, are void by the constitution of nature and society. They are futile as the law which declares how many bushels of wheat shall grow on an acre of land, and how many pounds of wool a sheep shall wear in his overcoat. If silver dollars and gold dollars were equal, surely the Government would not make any distinction between them. Let Mr. S. test the Treasury, and he will see his golden vision vanish. Let him deposit ten thousand silver dollars with the Treasurer of the United States, and ask him for a gold certificate of that amount, and the very messenger boys will laugh at him. Let him ask for a certificate to that amount simply in dollars, without specifying the metal, and the result will be the same. His certificate will be very careful to say that his deposit was in silver dollars, and the Government will pay back nothing else when the certificate is returned.

Mr. S. asks a plain, straightforward question, "Does 'Wheelbarrow' believe it would be good to retire the silver dollar, or would he have more silver put in it?" He shall have a straightforward answer. I believe that if more silver were put in it, it would do "good"—to me, and it was purely from a standpoint of self-interest that my attack upon the silver dollar was made. As a man working for wages, I confess that I am not satisfied with the weight of silver in the dollars I get for my labor, and I would like to see the metal in the silver dollar increased until it reaches the value of a dollar in gold. To tell me that a silver dollar worth eighty cents will purchase as much for me as a gold dollar worth a hundred cents, is to trifle with my common sense; it is like persuading me that fourteen ounces make as valuable a pound



of coffee as sixteen ounces, and that it is a superstition to believe that there is any difference between them.

If I accept Mr. S.'s invitation to wander off with him into a discussion of the good or evil policy of "retiring" silver dollars, both of us will soon be floundering out of our depth in the flood of jargon invented by currency tinkers and quack statesmen to bewilder a lot of dupes like Mr. S. and me. What gibberish is this about "retiring" anything that is of actual value to mankind? Nature has planted the ore in the earth; men dig it out and smelt it, and refine it into silver for human benefit, and immediately a lot of financial marplots want to "retire" it into the moonbeams, or into the nebular hypothesis, or "anywhere, anywhere, out of the world." As wisely talk of "retiring" the mountains whence it comes. As well talk of "retiring" corn, or hats, or calico. The coinage of silver should be unlimited, for coining is nothing more than the government certificate stamped upon the piece of metal to the effect that it weighs so many pennyweights or grains; but it should be an honest coinage, not eighty per cent. truth, and twenty per cent. falsehood. The present Silver Coinage Act is a monument of imbecility or dishonesty. If silver coinage is a good thing, why limit it to four million dollars a month? And if it is a bad thing why compel the government to coin at least two millions a month? This kind of obstruction to nature's laws is ironically called statesmanship.

Mr. S. is kind enough to say that I am "too sensible a man to wish to see silver demonetized and left in circulation, as was done in 1873." He is also positive that I "did not work for wages during those six terrible years from 1873 to 1878, when em-

employers bought silver at from ten to fifteen cents discount, and paid their laborers with it at *full* value." As to that I can only say that I did work for wages during those "terrible six years," but I must confess that my employers did not oppress me to such a heartless extent as to pay me in silver dollars, because they were at a premium. I never received a dollar in silver during the whole time, because greenback dollars were cheaper than silver dollars, and my employers paid me in paper. Employers on the Atlantic coast were not so hard-hearted as they were on the Pacific coast. They didn't impose upon their workmen the cruelty of silver dollars. If they had done so, it would have been better for me. Mr. S.'s illustration curiously proves my position, that workingmen are always paid in the cheapest money current at the time, and if he will keep strict watch he will notice that in proportion to the cheapness of the dollars paid them for their wages, inversely and adversely is the dearness of the necessaries of life which they are compelled to buy.

What will I do "if silver appreciates in value until it is worth more than gold?" Well, I will cross that bridge when I come to it. But I shall never cross it, because when that appreciation comes I shall be treading the golden pavements of that celestial city where silver is cheaper than sand.

So long as the government redeems the silver dollar by accepting it for taxes at its face value, so long it may be kept at mercantile par with a gold dollar; but whenever the government knocks that prop from under it the silver dollar will fall to its bullion value; business will drop to a silver basis with a crash, and the prices of everything will rise except the price of labor. A depreciated currency is a continual menace

to the working men. When I hear them clamoring to be paid in cheap money for dear work, their cry sounds like a vehement appeal for lower wages.

THE SHRINKAGE OF VALUES.

I AM just now engaged in exploring the dark recesses of monetary science, but I don't make much progress. It is a mammoth cave, full of labyrinths and passages. I fear that my guides are ignorant also. They pretend to know all its pathways, but the lights they carry only flicker in the gloomy vastness; guides and followers stumble along together. To rich men, the study of finance and its laws, may be of little consequence, but to me, whose wages never exceeds \$400 a year, it is of the highest importance that the money of the country should be of good material, and strong in market value. The rich man can protect himself against its fluctuations and its changes, its expansions and contractions, but I am helpless. The Secretary of the Treasury never consults me as to whether he shall buy bonds or sell them. The Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee never waits upon me at my office in the Sand Bank, to enquire whether I desire the coinage of silver dollars to go on or stop; the Judges of the Supreme Court do not care whether I want the legal tender act sustained or declared unconstitutional. Banking syndicates, Boards of Trade, Wall Streets, Incorporated Sweat Extractors of every kind, never inquire whether my dollar and-a-half a day will buy me enough to eat or not. For these reasons I desire to see the monetary policy of the country on

a solid and scientific foundation. To me it is not a matter of party expediency; it is a question of bread.

I don't know how to build a house, but I can tell a good job of work when I see it. If I see a crack in the wall, I suspect a bad foundation, and I know that a botch has had something to do with it. When I find the Secretary of the Treasury paying off the 3 per cent. bonds, and further discover that the United States of America has bound itself by solemn treaty with the United States of Wall Street not to pay its 4 per cents, until the year 1907, I know that the job was a botch, and that the Congress who did the work was composed of a lot of "plugs." Either that, or they were knaves making bad laws for their own profit.

Much of the pleasure of my life has consisted in wishing my life away. My joy of an afternoon has been to see my shadow lengthen in the sun. As it grew longer my time of rest grew nearer. I have been honest than other men, because I was compelled to be. The luxury of cheating is not mine, for somebody is watching me forever. I have stolen a little rest occasionally by the fraudulent device of lighting my pipe with contrary matches, which would never burn until the impatient boss yelled at me, "Tom, it takes you a long time to light that pipe." One day when this occurred I seized my 'barrow, and walking down the plank, I thought like this, "He will not allow me to wheel up a light load; he will not permit me to clip a moment of time, is he so particular to pay good money for wages?" It flashed upon me all at once that he always paid me in the cheapest money that was current at the time, and it occurred to me also that I had been howling for payment in cheaper money still. The experience came full upon me the other day when,

picking up a Chicago paper, I read this alarming heading to an editorial article, "Drifting toward dear money." It was evidently written by one of the stumbling guides of the mammoth cave.

What is dear money? Something dreadful certainly, for "drifting" suggests a ship, helpless, and rudderless moving to its doom. My fright ended when on reading the article I discovered that "dear money" meant something that would buy more goods than money of the cheaper sort; and when on reading further I saw that "dear money" included the calamity of cheap rent and clothes and fuel and bread, I shouted, "Let her drift." The artificial values that have been placed by bad laws upon the blessings of life, must come to an honest level some time or other, and the sooner the better for me.

The prime cause of this impending calamity, according to this bewildered guide, is the "virtual contraction of the total volume of exchangeable credit caused by the steady withdrawal and cancellation of about \$2,000,000,000 of United States National Bonds; which, in our exchanges with Europe, had performed the functions of an international currency jointly with gold." Occult phrases have always been the stock in trade of conjurers, and this ponderous jargon about "exchangeable credit," complicated and confused with thousands of millions of dollars, is the device of a lost guide to conceal his ignorance of the road. He did not see that the bonds had been "cancelled" by payment, and that their vacant places had been filled by actual gold money, created by the labor of the people, and drawn from them by the surgical process known as taxation. "Exchangeable credit" is only the reverse side of a coin having "exchangeable debt" on its

obverse side. A bond is only a promise to pay a debt, and the credit in it and the debt in it must travel the world together.

A great many fictitious attributes of goodness have been given of late to these bonds. The beneficent national banks have been built upon them; they furnish a convenient savings-box for widows and orphans to keep their money in; they make the "coupon clippers" loyal to the government, and many other miracles they do; now we are told that they make a fine article of "exchangeable credit," and "perform the functions of an international currency." If those bonds have all these virtues they are blessed things, and the war that brought them is entitled to all praise. I shall never believe that, for I was there from the beginning to the end. It was a bloody sacrifice; and the only consolation it ever brings to me is that it bought the freedom of the slave. The price was the highest ever paid for freedom in this world, but then, freedom is cheap at any price; many of the war curses are embalmed in those bonds to plague our children and our grand-children for a long time to come. The interest on them has been squeezed out of the laboring man, and converted into usury to oppress him. For all that I would not flinch a hair's breadth from either the letter or the spirit of the contract, but would redeem it to the last penny. I would stand up to a hard bargain as faithfully as to an easy one.

It is complained that this appreciation of money has diminished the value of real estate. The effect of this disaster upon me is that I must pay less rent. It is also complained that it has lowered the value of all merchandise. The only way in which this "shrinkage of values" is made manifest to me is in lower prices

for everything I buy. Why then should I be troubled? "Because," retorts the capitalist, "it means a shrinkage of wages too." I am not afraid of that. It is a lying old ghost that will never scare me again. The resources of the country still exist; the necessities of mankind are just the same, and the labor of men upon those resources is as valuable as it ever was. There is no "shrinkage of values," Bad laws made by bad men in the interest of speculation, usury, and monopoly, have made an artificial increase of prices, and when those prices begin to fall in obedience to the claims of honest industry, extortion sets up a howl that "values are shrinking." The "value" of a house cannot shrink, except from physical causes, any more than the walls can shrink. The rent may shrink when the artificial causes that have swollen it cease to operate, but the honest and legitimate value of the house remains the same. I think the time has come when workingmen may profitably unlearn much of their old economy, and reverse their opinions as to the blessings of cheap money. Dear money is the rightful reward of honest labor, and that money we should insist upon.

MONETARY PROBLEMS.

A SERIES OF QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO "WHEELBARROW."

MR. WHEELBARROW :

1. Is a sound financial system the greatest of superstructures upon which any good government rests ?
2. Is there a shorter, as well as better, method of accounts than with money as a circulating medium ?
3. Is money, as a circulating medium, other than a representative of value ?
4. If there be those who can expand, or contract, the volume or amount of money, and they should so contract said volume or amount, would, or would it not, hamper all persons engaged in adjusting their accounts with others by the use of said circulating medium ?
5. If those having said circulating medium should say to those needing it for the purpose of adjusting their account with their fellow, come, you must, by our law, have this circulating medium, in order to adjust your account with your fellow, and while I am aware you cannot afford to pay so much for the use of it, yet, if you will pay our price, we will help you out this once, and that price should be three times what the party could afford to pay, what effect, if any, and more especially if the controller of the volume continues so to act, will such and kindred acts have in driving the buyer of it to poverty ?
6. What would you say, if there should be such persons with such a power, as to its being a safe one for them to exert or use ?
7. If money be a representative of value, or short method of accounts, what, if any *good* reason, can you give for such costly representatives as silver and gold ?

8. If the increase of wealth in a nation per year be represented by the gain per cent. upon its principal, is, or is it not, true that but the three classes, agriculture, manufacture and mining, create that nation's wealth?

9. If the remaining class, commerce or the wealth-distributers, should take a greater rate than the other three get for their distributing process, will the one not become wealthy and the other three go to poverty? _____ C. B.

WHEELBARROW IN REPLY.

WHAT have I done that those questions should be thrown at me? I am innocent both of monetary science and political finance. The banker's grammar is very hard Greek to me. The prickly phrases that bristle all over the tree of gold and silver knowledge sting me like the blackberry-thorns of years and years ago. I have never been initiated into the esoteric mysteries of money. The occult jargon of "circulating medium," "measure of value," "double standard," "ratio of exchange," "elastic limit," "minimum reserve," "multiple tender," and all the rest of it, is a perpetual headache to me. I cannot tell the difference between an obolus and a kobang. I know no more about "Gresham's law" than Gresham did. But the moral "standard" of money may be as plain to me as to the banker or the statesman, perhaps plainer. By that standard all "circulating mediums" must be tried.

It would be easy for me to say, "give it up," and thus escape those conundrums, but that is an ignoble retreat, and especially where the questions include a compliment, implying a belief in the inquirer that I am competent to answer them. This compliment is gratifying to me, and it would be ungracious not to say so. When Mr. Toots was asked, "What are you

going to do with your raw materials when they come into your ports in return for your drain of gold," he boldly answered, "Cook 'em." So I will at least attempt an answer though I may fire as wide of the mark as Mr. Toots himself.

I am always a little suspicious of hypothetical questions, and questions which conceal within them an expression of opinion, or the statement of a fact, because a man unskilled in the artfulness of logic, may in his answer unintentionally confess the fact, or subscribe to the opinion. It may be that I am walking into an ingenious verbal trap, but whether or not, I will at least be as brave as Toots.

To the first question I answer, No! I am sure good governments have superstructures greater and stronger than financial systems. It appears to me that financial systems are merely expedients of government. They are only agencies created by government, for purposes of national housekeeping.

The second question is not so clear as it might be, and perhaps in trying to answer it I may be springing a dead-fall for myself, but I do not know of any shorter or better way of keeping accounts than with money as a circulating medium.

To the third question I answer, Yes! It will circulate as a "medium" all round the world by force of its own actual positive worth, when it cannot travel the length of a street as a "representative" of value.

I tread with caution all around the fourth question. I think it conceals a trap big enough for a grizzly bear, let alone Bre'r Rabbit. It begins with "volume or amount of money," and ends with "said circulating medium." Do "money" and "circulating medium" in this question mean the same thing? However, giv-

ing the language a liberal construction, and supposing it means the metal coins, and the paper "circulating medium" known as currency, I answer in the affirmative. It would work very great injury to the community if any persons had the power to expand or contract the volume of money, at their own will; and among those persons I include the person called "government," the most dangerous of them all. At the same time I do not see how it is possible to expand money except by digging it out of the ground and coining it. This kind of expansion is always a public benefit, while the expansion of paper credits, which pass under the name of money, is very likely to be an injury, especially to the poor, and all who live by wages.

The fifth question I suppose refers to the rate of interest for money, and suggests, again, the hard bargain between Shylock and Antonio. I wish I knew some way by which those "having said circulating medium" might be induced to share it with those who have none, or, at least, to lend them some of it without exacting usury, but I fear I shall never discover the way.

The sixth question assumes that there are persons who have the privilege of expanding and contracting the circulating medium at will, so that by making money scarce and dear, they may exact extortionate usury and oppress the poor. In answer to the question, I promptly say that, if there are persons possessed of such a dangerous power, it ought to be taken from them. It is not a safe one for them to "exert or use"; at least, it is not a safe one for those who happen to be scarce of "circulating medium."

The seventh question assumes that money is only a representative of value, or short method of accounts.

I think that metallic money is all that and something more. It has value of itself outside and beyond its money uses, and that is the reason why it has always been the money paramount. It is "a thing of beauty and a joy forever." Silver and gold are not "costly *representatives*." They are costly actualities, and in this very costliness lies their supremacy as money.

Is it fair to demand of me *good* reasons for using silver and gold as money? "If reasons were plenty as blackberries, I would not give you a reason on compulsion." To demand *good* reasons is a species of compulsion. I can only render such reasons as I have. They may be good, or they may be bad. The jury, the readers of THE OPEN COURT must decide. I might answer from the books, as we answer our adversary's move when we play a game of chess by letter. I find by the books that the reasons for using gold and silver as money are their superior homogeneity, utility, portability, cognizability, indestructibility, divisibility, stability, and ductility. These ought to be convincing, but I have others. For thousands of years all other kinds of money have rendered homage and confessed allegiance to gold and silver for the privilege of circulating as money at all. For ages, all other kinds of money have come to gold and silver to be measured, and to receive their tickets of "ratio." Men instinctively trust in gold as the foundation and basis of all money, and as the safest of all. Their faith in other money rests on gold as its ultimate redeemer, and unless that promise of redemption appear somewhere about it, all token, credit, promissory, representative, and substitute money stands condemned by common consent. You may demonetize gold by statute, and it will stalk through the marts and markets, lord para-

mount of money, in defiance of the law. It is natural money by the constitution of commerce, by the common law of the world.

The eighth question demands my surrender to the combined powers known as Agriculture, Manufactures, and Mining. I am not ready to give myself up. I admit that so far as human labor makes the wealth of a nation those three powers give more than others to the aggregate fund, but they do not contribute all. Hunting, fishing, and some other human activities contribute something, and there are agricultural products, manufactured articles, and minerals whose value consists more in the labor of those who distribute them than of those who raise them, fabricate them, or dig them out of the ground. For instance, Nature has established coal cellars in different parts of the country and filled them full of coal. Underground Pennsylvania is one of those coal cellars. Now, the value of that coal up stairs at the mouth of the pit is not only what the laboring miner has given it, but also what the capitalist who sunk the shaft, and the engineers who contrived the means to reach the coal, have given it. The value of it in Chicago is what all those together and the distributors have given it by their joint exertions, and the distributor may have furnished the larger share.

To the ninth question, I answer that the hypothesis appears to me to suppose an impossibility. The last value of an article is the price paid for it by the consumer, and that price includes the reward of everybody who has had anything to do with it. Commerce can get its own share and no more. It cannot get the share of the farmer, the manufacturer, or the miner. If it could, they would consume their own products,

and commerce would cease to be. Each of the "three classes" gets the price of product at the farm, the shop, or the mine. The "wealth distributor" then takes charge of it, and carries it to the dearest market he can find. He charges "whatever the traffic will bear," and the consumer pays it all. The bridge between the original producer and the final consumer may be long or short, and the person who carries the "projuice" over it may be an extortioner, but after all, he cannot get any more than the traffic will bear. That the profits may be more fairly shared by the other "three classes" is the object of state railroad-regulations, inter-state commerce laws, and similar contrivances, some of them wise and some of them not. Whatever rate the wealth distributor may charge for his work, it does not follow that therefore the farmer, the miner, and the manufacturer must "go to poverty."

It may be that there is no common agreement between my questioner and me as to what really constitutes money. He may recognize many potencies as money that I reject, and after all, we may be strangers to each other's meaning, like two men trying to converse together in different languages. I remember long ago, when I was meandering through France, how vexed I used to be at the stupidity of the French people, who could not understand their own language when spoken to them by me. So, I fear my questioner may be vexed at my dullness because I do not understand exactly what he means by money.

"There are many "circulating mediums" of bad character traveling about as money, and they are doing a very extensive business on false pretenses. Certain substitute money, having served for a time in that

capacity, declares itself real money, is recognized as such, and does a great deal of mischief before it can be arrested and suppressed. For this, government is responsible. It has usurped prerogatives and powers that belong to omnipotence alone, and with cheap money it has cheated the poor man out of his wages. It was a daring and arrogant usurpation when governments declared money to be a legal-tender in payment of debts, for by doing so, they made a political standard of honesty, elastic, uncertain, and shifting from time to time. This despotic legislation has thrown the whole system of human dealing into a chaos of moral confusion. Governments declare tobacco, coon-skins, rum, promissory notes, and various other things to be legal-tender in payment of debts, and the consequence is, that the sense of moral obligation is weakened among the people.

I do not mean to say that it is not within the legal province of the supreme power in the state to close its courts to creditors, and declare that certain coon-skins, or other legal-tenders, having been offered them, their debtors are free, and their debts paid; but, in the dominion of morals, the act is absolutely void. There justice reigns, and a debt is not paid until the moral obligation it contains is cancelled. Great as this government is, it is not able to pay any man's debt by statute. It may declare the debt expunged, satisfied, wiped out, even "paid," but only the debtor can pay it. The moral confusion in these cases arises from the use of the wrong word, "payment." A debtor, finding that his debts are "paid" by legal force, is apt to think that the moral obligation, as well as the legal obligation, has been discharged by the laws of his country, when, in fact, the moral obligation can be

discharged by himself alone. "I owe you nothing," said a dishonest debtor to his creditor, "that note was outlawed last week." In like manner, the bankrupt, having passed through the court, thinks that he owes nothing and that all his debts are paid.

It was a fantastic dream of the alchemists that by chemical expedients they might change the baser materials into gold, but it is a more irrational fanaticism that believes in the power of governments to create money that will pay debts. All the resources and skill of the alchemists failed, and there is no political alchemy that can perform this miracle. Right here, perhaps, my questioner and I find ourselves trying to converse together in different languages. He may mean one thing by "money" and I another. Until we can reach a common understanding as to what really constitutes money, we shall have no foundation whereon to build "a sound financial system."

THE POETS OF LIBERTY AND LABOR.

GERALD MASSEY.

For a' that, and a' that,
 It's coming yet for a' that,
 When man to man the world o'er
 Shall brothers be for a' that.—ROBERT BURNS.

IN these little tributes I speak only of those who are poets to me. What rank they occupy in literature is a question too profound for my limited learning, and so I do not trouble myself with it. I know nothing about the laws of taste nor the rules of criticism. I suppose that Gerald Massey does not rank among the poets at all; at least I never see or hear anything of him in such reading and preaching as comes to me. And yet by the sympathy of a common fate and a common suffering, his verses weave themselves around me like a spell, and that spell is poetry to me. I am not at all ashamed to say that Massey is to me one of the great poets, although the confession may bring upon me the ridicule of cultivated men. Homer, Shakespeare, Milton, are not poets to me, except in those odd places, here and there, where my mind is strong enough to understand them, and where their spirit is able to purify and lift up mine.

If she be not fair to me,
 What care I how fair she be.

Gerald Massey is a genius, twisted, gnarled, and stunted by hunger and cold, and that premature toil

which never should be laid upon a child. Although his crippled wings have kept him near the ground, his notes are true, and drawn from nature's own dear heart. What songs he might have sung had he been permitted to soar like England's bonney skylark up to the gates of heaven! He sings in a minor key, for his hymns are plaintive and sad. They have struggled into life out of poverty. That they are sometimes angry and bitter is not to be wondered at. As he said himself at a later day: "Those verses do not adequately express what I think and feel now; yet they express what I thought and felt then, and what thousands besides me have thought and felt, and what thousands still think and feel." He was only a boy when he wrote "The Three Voices," and without any education how was he to put a nice polish on his work, especially in the everlasting moaning and droning of that infernal mill. The people who despise this passionate rally may think it very inartistic and crude, but to the men who, like Massey, are grinding their lives away in shops and mills and factories, it has all the inspiration of poetry, and it *is* poetry. Here is the second of "The Three Voices."

Another voice comes from the millions that bend,
 Tearfully, tearfully, tearfully!
 From hearts which the scourges of slavery rend,
 Fearfully, fearfully, fearfully!
 From many a worn noble spirit that breaks,
 In the world's solemn shadows adown in Life's valleys,
 From mine, forge and loom, trumpet-tongued it awakes,
 On the soul wherein Liberty rallies:
 Work, work, work!
 Yoke fellows listen,
 Till earnest eyes glisten:
 'Tis the voice of the Present. It bids us, my brothers,
 Be Freemen; and then for the freedom of others,
 Work, work, work!
 For the many, a holocaust long to the few,

O work while ye may!
O work while 'tis day!
And cling to each other united and true,
Work, work, work!

There is a personal bond of sympathy between Massey and me arising partly from acquaintanceship, and partly from other accidents. Once when I was about nineteen years old I went from London down into Lancashire. I had a job of work at a place called Prescott, a short distance out from Liverpool. I had to make the trip on foot, for I couldn't afford the luxury of riding. I walked forty miles the first day, and rested that night at a little town called Tring, in Hertfordshire. I was on the road before daylight next morning, for I wanted to make another forty miles before night. It was a chill, drizzly morning in November, and just as I started I met a lot of shivering, hungry children going to their work at the silk factory. Among these poor blights was Gerald Massey. At least I have always pictured him amongst them. He was born in Tring, and worked as a child in that silk factory, and I shall always think that he was among those children that I met that morning. That was Massey's childhood, if it be not sacrilege to call such misery by that beautiful name. "I had no childhood," he writes. "Having had to earn my own dear bread, by the eternal cheapening of flesh and blood, from eight years old, I never knew what childhood meant. Ever since I can remember I have had the aching fear of want throbbing in heart and brow." In hopeless mill-slavery he sung :

Still all the day the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark ;
And the children's souls, which God is calling sunward,
Spin on blindly in the dark.

When Massey was writing his beautiful poem "Lady Laura," the memory of his infant sufferings in the silk-mill wrung from his soul a cry of anguish so like a curse that we tremble at the sound of it with a sort of guilty fear lest it may fall upon us. We wonder whether we have done anything to deserve it, and whether we are partners in that or any kindred wrong :

Pleasantly rings the chime that calls to the Bridal Hall or Kirk ;
 But the devil might gloatingly pull for the peel that wakes the child to work.
 "Come, little children, the mill-bell rings," and drowsily they run,
 Little old men and women and human worms who have spun
 The life of infancy into silk, and fed child, mother and wife,
 The factory's smoke of torment with the fuel of human life.
 O weird white faces, and weary bones, and whether they hurry or crawl,
 You know them by the factory-stamp, they wear it one and all.

A few bursts of lyric melody that trill among the domestic affections like the canary bird's music at home ; some martial and patriotic poems ringing like the bugle-call at Balaklava ; some amorous wooing of freedom all aflame with desire for the exaltation of labor ; some bursts of joy and sorrow mingling in the spring-time of his life, as April days are sometimes made of little bits of sunshine and much rain ; and then his poetic strength gave way. His intense genius was exhausted in the first ecstasy of freedom, like some ambitious tree that spends its life-time vigor in one exuberant fruitage, and is barren evermore. For twenty years Massey has done nothing great in poetry. He has written books, indeed, but his harp is dumb, and it is too late now to awaken its chords again.

The revolutionary storm that swept over Europe in 1848 found in Massey its poet laureate. He was then a youth of nineteen, small, weak, but brave and ready to fight, somewhat revengeful under a sense of social injustice, exultant in the noise of falling thrones, and hopeful that, at last, the people were coming into

power. When the reaction came and all was lost, he still believed that the blood of the vanquished had not been shed in vain, and that out of it would grow a harvest of better laws, and victory at last. He believed that the men of the barricades would be avenged, and that in a more triumphant day their memory would be glorified in a Marseillaise hymn rolling far beyond the boundaries of France, clear over Germany, England, and all the lands of Europe. Here is something that reads like one of the hymns of Körner :

They rose in Freedom's rare sunrise,
Like giants roused from wine ;
And in their hearts and in their eyes
The God leapt up divine !
Their souls flashed out as naked swords,
Unsheathed for fiery fate !
Strength went like battle with their words—
To men of Forty-eight !
Hurrah !
For the men of Forty-eight.

Some in a bloody burial sleep,
Like Greeks to glory gone,
But in their steps avengers leap,
With their proof armor on ;
And hearts beat high with dauntless trust
To triumph soon or late,
Though they be mouldering down in dust—
Brave men of Forty-eight !
Hurrah !
For the men of Forty-eight.

Is it kind in our mother nature to make such high-strung souls as that of Gerald Massey ? To be sure they enjoy the brightness of life more keenly than the rest of us, but they suffer more intensely in the cold and darkness of it. In his pain Massey sought sympathy in the spirit world, and found it ; at least he told me so. I believe that Spiritualism is unreal, a trick which some of our faculties play upon the others, an unfair advantage which the imagination takes of our desire for com-

munion with something better than ourselves. But how can I speak for him? He has told me of happy meetings with his dead wife, not in dreams, but in wakeful day, and when she has counseled with him face to face. He has told me of the happiness that comes to him in his sad moments when he hears the bright voice of his dead child calling him "Papa," and feels the palpable weight of her as she climbs upon his knee. I can readily believe him, for the soul that could suffer so keenly at her loss might have power to bring her back. In all the poetry springing out of domestic bereavement there is nothing that I know of so like a flood of tears as "The Ballad of Babe Christabel." Here is a bit of it picked at random, but it is all of equal beauty :

With her white hands claspt she sleepeth ; heart is husht and lips are cold ;
 Death shrouds up her heaven of beauty, and a weary way I go,
 Like the sheep without a shepherd on the wintry Norland wold,
 With the face of day shut out by blinding snow.

And in the kindred poem, "The Mother's Idol Broken," the same grief-strains break out of his heart and flow in a deep current that purifies human life, if it does not spiritualize it. There are whole pages of this poem, and all the verses of it are diamonds of equal brilliancy. He doesn't see Death taking his child away, but only some spirits calling for it.

Our rose was but in blossom ;
 Our life was but in Spring,
 When down the solemn midnight
 We heard the spirits sing :
 "Another bud of infancy,
 With holy dews imperaled ;"
 And in their hands they bore our wee
 White rose of all the world

* * * * *

This is a curl of our poor "Splendid's" hair !
 A sunny burst of rare and ripe young gold—
 A ring of sinless gold that weds two worlds !
 Our one thing left with her dear life in it

The domestic poems of Massey brighten every home, and glorify wives and mothers. Some of them in home-grandeur almost rival those of Robert Burns. Here is a bit of one that might aspire to the society of "John Anderson, my Jo," which is claiming a good deal :

Her dainty hand nestled in mine, rich and white,
And timid as trembling dove ;
And it twinkled about me, a jewel of light,
As she garnisht our feast of love ;
'Twas the queenliest hand in all lady-land,
And she was a poor man's wife !
O ! little ye'd think how that wee, white hand
Could dare in the battle of life.

There is no humor in Massey ; at least, none that I have ever found. His poems are all passion, burning, vehement passion, crowded with gorgeous imagery, so crowded, indeed, as often to obstruct their sweet melodious flow. He is a fervent Englishman. His political anger was never turned against the motherland. It smote only the oppressors who had ravished the scepter out of her hand and made it an instrument of wrong. In the gloomy days of the Crimean war, his heart beat high for England, and his verses thrilled with the old heroic fire. How this bit makes the pulses throb :

I had a gallant brother, loved at home, and dear to me—
I have a mourning mother, winsome wife, and children three—
He lies with Balaklava's dead. But let the old land call,
We would give our living remnant, we would follow one and all !

I had a brother in the "Light Brigade" in the Crimean war, and maybe that's another tie between Gerald Massey and me. I join in his song to England :

The old nursing mother's not hoary yet,
There is sap in her Saxon tree ;
Lo ! she lifteth a bosom of glory yet,
Through her mists, to the Sun and the Sea.

WHEELBARROW.

Fair as the Queen of Love, fresh from the foam,
 Or a star in a dark cloud set;
 Ye may blazon her shame—ye may leap at her name—
 But there's life in the Old Land yet.

In the democracy of Gerald Massey the "higher classes" are the people who work for a living, the "lower classes" are the idlers who live on the sweat of others. The old chivalry is abolished, and the chivalry of labor takes its place. Knighthood can only be won in the field of usefulness and toil. Here is a song worthy to be the anthem of the Knights of Labor all over the world:

Uprouse ye now, brave brother band,
 With honest heart and working hand.
 We are but few, toil-tried and true,
 Yet hearts beat high to dare and do.
 And who would not a champion be
 In labor's lordlier chivalry?

O! there are hearts that ache to see
 The day-dawn of our victory.
 Eyes full of heart-break with us plead,
 And watchers weep and martyrs bleed.
 O! who would not a champion be
 In labor's lordlier chivalry?

Work, brothers mine; work hand and brain;
 We'll win the Golden Age again.
 And Love's Millennial morn shall rise
 In happy hearts and blessed eyes.
 Hurrah! hurrah! true knights are we
 In labor's lordlier chivalry.

THE POETS OF LIBERTY AND LABOR.

ROBERT BURNS.

ONE of the chief tests of a great man is this, What was the ethical result of him? What influence did he have on social character and political morality? Let us apply this test to Robert Burns.

A few days ago the birthday of Burns was honored with memorial festivities by all the people of British lineage throughout the world. This poet is greeted on his birthday with a loving homage such as never has been offered to any other poet in this world. The explanation of this pre-eminent popularity is found in the universality of his genius; it embraces all mankind. A marvellous thing, when we remember that no other poet is so intensely national as Burns. He was a Scotchman in every pulsation of his heart. He was himself the intellectual Scotland of the 18th century; equally so as the Scotland of the 16th century was the incarnate conscience of John Knox. Burns is the type and model of the Scottish race in its highest development. No other man has ever stamped his own individuality upon the clay of which his countrymen are made, as Burns has impressed his personality upon all Scotchmen. Their love and veneration for him spring from gratitude and pride. He has elevated the standard of them all. He has added a cubit to the spiritual stature of every man in Scotland,

from MacCallum Moore in his Highland castle to the humblest peasant who tends his sheep upon the mountains.

The chief elements of Burns's popularity are his lyric genius, his ardent patriotism, his manly independence, and his unselfish love toward all the children of men. "In ease, fire, and passion," says Allan Cunningham, "he was second to none but Shakespeare." He might have added that as a lyric poet, as a national song writer, he was not excelled nor equalled by Shakespeare nor by any other poet that was ever born. Burns had the divine gift of music in such excellence that he could put in tune all the different instruments in the great orchestra of man, and force them to vibrate in harmony. There are single songs of his that make the hearts of all men throb in unison together. These songs have passed out of the exclusive ownership of Scotland; they have become the joint property of all nations in that sublime communism represented.

In the parliament of man,
The federation of the world.

It was said by Emerson that Burns made a mere provincial dialect classic. He did more than that; he glorified by his pathos and humor, not only the dialect of Scotland, but the very weeds in her valleys, the heather on her banks and braes, the hamely fare and hodden gray of her peasantry, yea, the very rags of her poverty. He made all of them classic as the majestic imagery of Milton. He poured his soul in love and benediction upon his country in such exuberant flood that before the end of the eighteenth century it had overflowed the British Islands, and now covers all the world.

It was patriotism in exquisite refinement that caused this man, when reaping in the harvest field, to turn the sickle aside and spare a thistle because it was the "symbol dear" under which his fathers for a thousand years had fought for Scottish liberty and independence. Only a soul in love with nature, manifest in the modesty of beauty, could apologize to a mountain-daisy which the plough struggling for bread had overthrown.

There is deeper feeling still, and a closer kinsman sympathy in the apology which Burns offers to a mouse whose home with all its furniture and stores was wrecked by that same plough in that same struggle for bread. The mouse runs away in spite of the poet's assurance that there is no occasion for fear. He will not even wait to hear the explanation that the ruinous earthquake was an accident, and that the author of it was totally unaware that the mouse's home was in the ploughshare's way. There is nothing so kind and dignified in all the etiquette of courts as the tone and language of this apology :

"I'm very sorry man's domination
Has broken nature's social union,
And justifies that ill opinion,
That makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
An' fellow mortal."

Only a poetic genius gifted with a knowledge of the divine unity pervading all things, could have made the lofty comparison expressed in the last two lines of that stanza. Only an eye, illuminated by a light brighter than the light of the sun could have seen the spirit thread that binds even men and mice together in a communion of suffering, toil, pleasure, duty, disappointment, and an impartial mortality.

Here, in the words "earth-born companion, an' fellow mortal" we find a key to the social ethics of Robert Burns. We can follow this ethical thread from the mouse to the sheep in "Poor Maillie's Elogy;" from the sheep to the horse in the "New Year's Address to the Auld Mare Maggie;" and from the horse to the human brotherhood in "Man was made to mourn."

The ethics of all this tenderness to animals lies chiefly in its reflex power upon the social state; the rebounding of this charity from horses and mice and sheep, upon men and women and children. This poet, whose barns were none of the largest, and seldom overloaded, recognized the claims of every "earth-born companion, and fellow mortal" to share with him in the hour of its need. That the mouse was outlawed under the "habitual criminals act," as an incorrigible thief, rather increased than diminished the charity of Burns towards him. In fact, he says,

"I doubt na, whiles but ye may thieve,
What then, poor beastie; thou maun live,
A daimen icker in a thrave
's a sma' request;
I'll get a blessing wi' the lave
An' never miss't."

Have we any ethical culture of a finer quality than that? Have the churches any more sublime religion than this philosophical socialism of Robert Burns, that he who gives a share of his abundance as justice and benevolence demand will get a blessing with the rest of it? Have they or we any more exalted theology than this of Robert Burns:

"The heart benevolent and kind,
The most resembles God."

“The merciful man is merciful to his beast,” says the scripture, meaning also that kindness to animals is a sign of a morally well-built man, and, let me add, of a brave man. I noticed when in the cavalry that a soldier who was cruel to his horse was generally a coward in battle. In mathematics, the greater includes the less ; in ethics the less includes the greater ; and in religion too : “As ye have done it unto the *least* of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.” So the demonstration is complete ; the man who is tender, merciful, and just to his fellow mortals of the inferior creation, will be considerate, just, and kind to all his fellow men.

The sympathy of Burns was not limited to the universe of mice, or sheep, or men. It went down into the infernal regions, and whispered hope into the ear of the arch-fiend, Satan himself ; but this hope was conditioned on reform.

“Then fare ye weel, auld *Nickie-ben*
 Oh wad ye tak a thought an' men' !
 Ye aiblins might, I dinna ken,
 Still hae a stake,
 I'm wae to think upoñ yon den,
 E'en for your sake.”

The sentiment of his “Address to the Deil” may not be theologically orthodox, although, I think, it will be orthodox in time. Our doctors of divinity and our doctors of law have been much confused in their divinity and their law, owing to the erroneous account of the great battle fought in heaven, in the primitive eternity before time was. It is a mistake that Satan lost that battle; and for that mistake John Milton is very much responsible. Satan won it; and that explains the dominion of selfishness, inequality, injustice, avarice, lust; slavery and gibbets upon this earth.

But although Satan won that battle, the war is not at an end. Year by year, and day by day, the reinforcements of truth, knowledge, wisdom, philosophy, forgiveness, charity, and all the powers of light are coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and the kingdom of Satan will cease to be. I do not say that it will be violently overthrown, for, aided by the poetic and prophetic vision of Robert Burns, I see the coming day when Satan himself will be converted and reformed; when even his principality shall be numbered among the powers that make for righteousness. "Nature's Social Union" broken by "man's dominion," will, by man's intellectual and moral enlightenment, be restored.

The necromancy of Burns, the magnetic power by which he subdues the hearts of all men, lies chiefly in his eloquent songs. In these, the poet touches with majestic ease and magic melody every string in the diapason of human passion and emotion, from the martial thunder of "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled" to the sweetlove whisper in "John Anderson, my Jo," where virtuous old age is glorified, and where the domestic affection of the Scottish people is made famous for evermore.

In his ideal of a social democracy we find the political ethics of Robert Burns. The key to it may be found in that manliest of democratic songs, "A man's a man for a' that." Here "sense and worth" are exalted as the only patents of nobility that can give legitimate rank or titles to any man. In the political morality of this song, the man who is worth the most is the man who has the most worth. It is the proud assertion of a laborer that he is a man for all that, and it is a dignified protest that shall stand forever against the

degradation of "honest poverty." The political economy of it is the right of every man that every other man shall work. He must do something by hand or brain useful to the community.

I have heard this song criticized according to the canons of literary taste and style. I have lately read a criticism of it by Matthew Arnold, an eminent man indeed, but one who never came under the spell of its poetry, because he never belonged to the classes represented in the song. Let him criticize it who has toiled in the field, the factory, or the shop; him who has worked out in the weather, building houses and railroads; him who has earned his honest bread up on the giddy mast, or down in the dark mine. As well criticize the Declaration of Independence, for its rhetoric. In fact, "A man's a man for a' that" is the American Declaration of Independence condensed into the poetry of Scotland. The inspiration and the doctrine of both productions is the equality of man. I have seen the Declaration of Independence very severely criticized not only for its diction but for its politics, too. I have seen fifty thousand critics in a line criticizing it with shot and shell and musketry. What of it? When their criticism ended, the flag born of the Declaration streamed above their speechless cannon, and from every star in its brilliant constellation there shone upon the world the gospel of the political new testament: "All men are created equal;" "A man's a man for a' that."

The personal independence of Burns gives masculine strength and moral vigor to his poetry. It is this personal trait which his countrymen try to imitate. To his immortal honor be it said he founded his independence on his ability to earn his bread by the labor

of his hands. In the dedication of his poems to the noblemen and gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt, he is careful to say that this is done only as a tribute of regard, and not as a bid for patronage or favors. In that dedication he uses these words, "I was bred to the plough, and am independent." Here he reverses the former doctrine that independence consisted in the ability to live on the labor of other men. He proclaimed the higher law of independence, the ability to live on his own labor. "I was bred to the plough, and am independent."

I complain of the amiable injustice which is continually done to the independent spirit of Robert Burns. Loving admirers mourn the hardness of his lot, and reproach his country for neglecting him. "Scotland," they say, "lavish of posthumous honors to her great son, permitted him to live in poverty, and die in debt. He asked for bread and he received a stone." Nothing can be more untrue than that; and they honor not Burns who say it. He never asked for bread; he earned it. Nor did he ever in his lifetime receive a stone at the hands of Scotland. Scotland would not have dared to offer him help either in alms or pensions. He was too proud to accept the patronage of anybody. The brave heart which in life would accept no man's pity, is humiliated with gratuitous pity after death. It is because Burns bore his cross alone, and asked no other man to carry it for him, that we honor him to-day. There is no moral majesty in this world which has not at some time or other worn its crown of thorn. Would Burns be a royal king to-day had he not had the double coronation of poverty and pain? The man who makes the journey of life in a palace-car, who worships from a gilt edged prayer-

book, and drinks his eucharistic wine from a golden chalice, presents a dim and dingy appearance at St. Peter's gate, because the soul of him has never been polished by the friction of adversity and struggle. He gets inside, of course, for I believe that every one gets inside, but having no moral mark upon him, no sign of the cross, he mixes with the plebian multitude and is not recognized in celestial "society."

In like manner the Holy Willies croak harsh judgment against Burns for his indulgence in unworthy appetites. I do not say that Burns was guiltless altogether, but I do say that his vices have been exaggerated, as was necessary, in order to show them in glaring contrast with the moral grandeur of his virtues. For much of this exaggeration the poet is himself responsible. In his moments of remorse, he accuses himself in terms of self-reproach so eloquently keen, that many even of his admirers have taken him at his word. In the course of my life, it has been my happiness to number among my intimate friends many members of the Episcopalian Church, and I have often been amused to hear them denounce themselves as "miserable sinners," when I knew that their lives were pure, beneficent, and virtuous, that they were not sinners at all, and that there was a house and lot reserved for every one of them in the New Jerusalem. I will not take them at their word, neither will I accept Burns's plea of guilty, extorted from him under the duress of sorrow and remorse.

One day last summer, I stood with a friend gazing on the statue of Schiller in Lincoln park. My friend was one of the Pharisees of art, and he pointed out several defects in the statue. I endured his criticisms very well so long as we looked the great poet squarely

in the face, but when the critic took me behind the statue, and showed me that the wrinkle in the back of the coat was not according to the canons of high art, I lost all patience and told him that his criticism had dropped into mere backbiting, and that I must beg pardon of Schiller for listening to censorious remarks about him, uttered behind his back. So the Pharisees of poetry stand behind the image of Burns and show us wrinkles in his character. There are people who will not allow you to praise the splendor of the full moon. If you do so, they will say that it is well for the moon that only one side of her is visible to man, and that if we could see the other side we might find that her ladyship was no better than she ought to be.

Although much of Burns lived in the earthy fog where inferior mortals dwell, his forehead was always above the clouds. There, radiant in the sun, it reflected upon earth the melodious poetry of heaven. Near my home is a church, with a tall spire on it crowned with a gilded cross. That cross is the first thing visible to me in the early morning when everything beneath it is wrapped in fog. I can see it gleaming in the sunshine before I can see anything else in the city, several seconds indeed before I can see the sun. There are the church, and the priest, and the congregation, enveloped in the fogs of a Gothic superstition, but above them all I see blazing in the sun the symbol of self-sacrifice, and in the brightness of it I can read a promise that the mist and the fog shall be dissolved into the ether of eternal truth. So above the clouds I see the forehead of Robert Burns lighted by the forgiving beams of heaven, and there I see the golden promise that the mists and fogs which have so long obscured his greatness will all be cleared away.

THE POETS OF LIBERTY AND LABOR.

THOMAS HOOD.

How like a bonny bird of God he came,
 And poured his heart in music for the poor ;
 And trampled manhood heard, and claimed his crown,
 And trampled womanhood sprang up ennobled !
 The world may never know the wealth it lost,
 When Hood went darkling to his tearful tomb.

—GERALD MASSEY

THERE are some hearts born into this world that never die. Like the great ocean, they encircle all humanity, and throb forever. Upon them trampled manhood and trampled womanhood fling themselves for comfort when tired and sorrow-laden. There the laborer finds rest, and there he picks up new courage to help him in the battle for bread. Among those immortals Thomas Hood stands "crowned and glorified." Upon his breast labor lays her troubles and her wrongs. Out of his bosom comes an inspiration that shall some day give the toilers victory.

Those thoughts came to me this morning, as I was reading an account of the proceedings of the "Trades Assembly," which met last Sunday at No. 57 North Clark street. I cannot exactly account for it, but somehow or other, on reading Mr. McLogan's description of the workingwomen, I turned instinctively to Thomas Hood, for spiritual strength. I turned for consolation to the inspired writings of the prophet who sang "The Song of the Shirt ;" and again I heard him say—

Oh, men, with sisters dear !
Oh, men, with Mothers and Wives !
It is not linen you're wearing out,
But human creatures' lives.

I have still a hope that Mr. McLogan was misinformed, and that it is not true that "whole families have to work eleven hours a day to earn twelve dollars a week." I trust that Mr. Foley was in error when he said that "the average wages of women in Chicago shops and factories was only 60 cents a day." If those statements are true, they reveal a profligate condition of society, and the end is easy to foresee. That society cannot stand. It is built on the shifty sands of inequality and injustice, where no government has ever yet been safe in this world. This condition will breed a social gloom, out of which we shall see growing a funnel-shaped cloud reaching from earth to heaven. We shall hear the roar of a whirlwind that will shake our political inheritance to its foundations, and perhaps destroy it.

I don't know much about poetry ; of the great poets nothing at all. I cannot understand them for lack of education. I can only interpret those poets that understand me, and there is not a line in Thomas Hood that I cannot comprehend. Many of his verses seem woven of threads drawn from my own life and experience, and I almost fancy that I wrote them. How glorious it is to know something ! What a splendid thing is learning ! In my sorest poverty I never envy a man riches, but I have always been jealous of his better education. When I was a youth I had a job of work at Cambridge, in England. Here were colleges all around me. In this one Milton studied ; in that one Byron ; in that other one Newton trained his mighty mind. Those colleges were all castles fortified

against me. I used to look up at the walls as I passed by them, and long to get inside, that I might feed on the learning that had developed those mighty men. I used to look at the young fellows there of my own age, students of the university, with an envy that I have never felt in all my life toward any others of my brother men. As they passed me clad in their uniforms of cap and gown, I hated them with jealousy. In a fool's vanity I sometimes think, even now, that perhaps I might have been somebody if I could have had a chance at schooling in my youth. But at thirteen I entered the ranks of slavery, and there was no more school for me. Perhaps it is because I cannot understand the great poets, that I cherish with stronger affection those who have come down to my own level, and woven my own sorrows into song. It may be that this is why I cherish Thomas Hood.

Statements like those of the Trades Assembly, revealing the slave-condition of the needle-women of London, brought from the soul of Thomas Hood that indignant protest known as "The Song of the Shirt." It startled men out of their guilty ease. It rang across the land, filling England with alarm, as though the archangel's trumpet was calling Dives to judgment. Every man tried to shift the sin upon his neighbor and in affected anger inquired, Who has been starving the women of England? Out of the rhyme of Thomas Hood came back the answer to every monopolist, "Thou art the man." There was discomfort in the mahogany pews, for, drowning the preacher's voice and the roar of the great organ, was heard the shrill wail of the hungry seamstress:

It's oh! to be a slave,
Along with the barbarous Turk,

WHEELBARROW.

Where woman has never a soul to save,
If this is Christian work.

* * * * *

With fingers weary and worn,
With eyelids heavy and red,
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,
Plying her needle and thread—
Stitch, stitch, stitch,
In poverty, hunger and dirt.
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,—
Would that it's tone could reach the rich,—
She sang this song of the shirt.

It did reach the rich, and they tried to buy peace for their consciences that winter by copious giving of alms, but above all that, the voice of labor cried like a storm, "We want not charity but justice."

It is difficult to say which had the greater influence upon the heart of England, the "Song of the Shirt," or "The Bridge of Sighs." One was really the complement of the other. Together they smote the adamant social system like the rod of Moses on the rock of Horeb, and the waters of healing gushed forth. There was a stupid alderman of London, Sir Peter Laurie—Dickens has satirized him in "The Chimes"—whose mission it was to "put down" suicide, and whenever any of the girls who jumped into the river from Waterloo Bridge, were rescued by the boats, and brought before him, he punished them by sending them to prison. "I am determined to put down suicide," he used to say; but he never thought of putting down the social crime that made the suicide. Nor did English public sentiment. It was thick and stolid as the head of Sir Peter Laurie. Newspapers moralizing could not arouse it, neither could the passionate denunciations of orators and statesmen. Then came the poet, and awakened it to a higher sense of duty, and to wiser plans of charity. Hood's poem appeared, and a new

light shone upon the bridge. By the gleam of it "society" could see itself pushing the girls into the river, and in self-accusation said: "Sir Peter, you ought to send us to prison, and not the girls." A more humane feeling was created, which shaped itself into schemes of social amelioration, and into better laws. There was no more talk of "putting down" suicide by sending girls to prison. And ever after that, when some homeless and forsaken wanderer sought rest in the dark waters, there was no harsh condemnation, but men said with genuine sorrow—

One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death.

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young and so fair.

* * * * *

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny,
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

There was not a man of healthy morals, in all the town of London, who was not awakened by the eloquent reproach of the poet, a reproach memorable now throughout all the English world, familiar in Melbourne and Chicago, as in England—

Alas! for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun!
Oh! it was pitiful!
Near a whole city full
Home she had none.

And every libertine was smitten with disgrace and terror when he read—

In she plunged boldly,
 No matter how coldly,
 The rough river ran,—
 Over the brink of it,
 Picture it—think of it
 Dissolute man !
 Lave in it, drink of it
 Then, if you can !

To hammer philosophy into shapes of beauty is the calling of the poet. What a grand workman was Hood ! What melodies rang out from his anvil, and what sparks from his hammer flew ! What chaste and lovely forms he made ! Every one of his creations ministered unto virtue, and none of them could be used to decorate a wrong. Like Burns, he lifted labor up, and left it a step higher than he found it. His humor was an overflowing well, so copious that some men used to think there could not be any room in him for greater poetry. And yet his wit and humor, so delightful, and so pure, were but the framework to poetic jewels worthy to shine in the coronet of Shakespeare.

Certes, the world did praise his glorious wit,
 The merry jester with his cap and bells !
 And sooth his wit was like Ithuriel's spear :
 But 'twas mere lightning from the cloud of his lire,
 Which held at heart most rich and blessed rain.

There was an abundant English market for cant when Hood was in his prime ; but though poor, and troubled, and sick, he would not pander to Mammon, either in church or state, and so the rich rewards of soul-servility passed him by. But the poet kept his gift, unsullied by hypocrisy or bribe. As he would not flatter the popular beliefs, bigotry assailed him. One prominent reviewer, Rae Wilson, Esq., criticized his poems as having an irreligious tendency, and Hood's reply left Mr. Wilson looking like a scarecrow. Such banter and comedy, and fun, have rarely been united

to overwhelm an assailant as they are in the "Ode to Rae Wilson." Seldom has the uncharitable character of self-assumed piety been so vividly exposed as in that ode. I know nothing superior to it, except "Holy Willie's Prayer." It is full of gems like this :

Spontaneously to God should tend the soul,
Like the magnetic needle to the pole ;
But what were that intrinsic virtue worth,
Suppose some fellow with more zeal than knowledge,
Fresh from St. Andrew's College,
Should nail the conscious needle to the North ?

Mr. Wilson was of St. Andrew's, and Hood continues thus :

I will not own a notion so unholy,
As thinking that the rich by easy trips
May go to heaven, whereas the poor and lowly,
Must work their passage, as they do in ships.

One place there is—beneath the burial sod,
Where all mankind are equalized by death ;
Another place there is—the Fane of God,
Where all are equal who draw living breath.

* * * * *

He who can stand within that holy door,
With soul unbowed by that pure spirit-level,
And frame unequal laws for rich and poor,—
Might sit for Hell, and represent the Devil.

That lust of gold which coins the poor man's children into money, hides its face from the scorn of Thomas Hood. His poetic wrath scorches avarice like fire. The laboring heart is drawn by the magnetism of his preaching up to a healthier atmosphere, where the currents of life flow purer, and where humanity sees more clearly the work it has to do. Not for ever shall the greed of privileged classes rob the laborer of the profits of his toil. Every day the workingmen are learning something new. By and by they will know their duty and organize their power. Then the moral force of a great cause, backed by a voting strength in-

vincible, will put them in possession of their great estate. Not by fighting, not by bombs and bullets ; these are barbarism. The labor triumphs that are coming will be moral victories, and even they must be preceded by our conquest of ourselves. If we seek justice, we must do it ; if we demand liberty, we must grant it. The whole domain of handicraft must be free to all the people. The right to learn a trade must be conceded to every American boy ; and after he has learned it, the right to work at it must not be taken from him. We have much self discipline to undergo yet, and the sooner we go into moral training the better. The control of our own appetites must come before our final victory.

HENRY GEORGE AND LAND TAXATION.

WHAT a glorious idea: the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and a millenium on earth by the simple means of a single tax on land! That is the promise contained in Mr. Henry George's doctrine, so brilliantly set forth in his *Progress and Poverty*. I have read the book—nay I have devoured it. There was so much truth in it, and, alas! so much impossible fairy-land that I began to doubt. It is a most fascinating work on political economy, and I am under the spell of its eloquence still. The line of demarcation between reality and dreamland is not easily drawn where both are so closely blended.

The book contains a doctrine which I learned from somebody, or some book, many years ago, and which still clings to me, although entangled with many misgivings. It is that of abolishing the tariff and the whole system of indirect duties, and putting all taxes on land. I am told that the idea was first proposed by the French economists called *physiocrats*, who conceived the directest way of taxation the best. They compared the social growth of a nation to that of a tree which derives all its sap and strength from the roots. The roots are agriculture, the stem is the population, the branches are the different industries, the leaves are commerce, and the blossoms are the sciences and arts. If but the roots are sound, let nature

take care of the rest. The leaves, the blossoms, and the fruits, how distant they all appear from the roots! and yet they are all in closest connection; the leaves draw all their juice from the roots. There is no need of protecting the leaves for the sake of the roots; and even if branches are torn off by the storm, the injury is not serious, and the work of restoration immediately begins if the roots have not suffered.

While Mr. George's enthusiasm animates and encourages me, I think I can see a flaw in his policy. I believe in the justice and practicability of land taxation. Let land be taxed according to its value, and remove the many duties on other quarters which are obstacles to progress and weigh heaviest on the poor. I have no other argument for my view than that it seems to me not unjust, and not impracticable. My proof would be a fair trial. I trust it will work well and commend itself especially to those who start in life. As land would lose in value, if burdened with taxes, it would afford to a poor man a greater opportunity to take to farming. All machinery and other products of industry would be cheaper, if the prices were not, as is the case now, artificially raised, so that a full dollar in the United States goes on every seventy or sixty cents, or even less, in England and in the world's market. Money would be dear, and if a little dear money buys much goods, a start in life will be easier in every field.

So far as land taxation, its justice and practicability are concerned, Mr. George and I travel together. But almost from the beginning in Mr. George's arguments our roads part. I believe that a radical defect in this plan lies in the mistake that a tax may be converted by political magic from a bur-

den to a blessing. Taxes may be unwisely and unfairly levied, and the burden of them thereby increased; but in their wisest and most virtuous form, they are a burden at the best. Believing this very important premise of his argument to be an error, I doubt the economic soundness of his conclusions. To the man who buys land, it will be a boon to have it on easy terms, but to the farmer who owns his farm, land taxation will always be felt as a burden.

But there is another fundamental error. Mr. George calls his book "Progress and Poverty," and denounces every progress under present circumstances as driving a parting wedge between the rich and the poor. Every progress, he maintains, benefits the rich only, it makes them richer and oppresses the poor worse than they were before. This Mr. George has not proved, and there is little probability that he ever will prove it, for it is not true and very likely the contrary may be proved most easily. Progress is always beneficial to the poor as well as to the rich. A poor man would consider himself wretched now if he did not enjoy certain comforts which were luxuries in former days.

The arguments upon which Mr. George builds his system are patriotic and humane. He bases it on the idea of the fatherhood of God and proclaims that the earth is God's impartial gift to all the children of men. "It is in the scripture, Trim," said Uncle Toby. So Mr. George believes that "The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," and from that sublime text he preaches a very old agrarian gospel in a newer form of words. It is possible that our Saxon ancestors when they took possession of Britain cherished similar ideas, as did the children of Israel in the time of Moses. Whether they did or not, they certainly

acted in that way; they abolished the land monopoly, these of the Cananites and those of the Britons, and both of them established another land monopoly of their own. They took possession in the name of their gods, and when the Normans invaded England they also came in the name of the Lord, for the Pope had blessed their leader's sword.

All these arguments from beyond the clouds are of a very doubtful nature and we should not employ them so long as we have other arguments which are more palpable and not so sentimental. Wherever they are employed I am apt to be prejudiced that there is something wrong; and if the cause for which they are used is not wrong, there must certainly be a lack of proof or a flaw of logic in the man that argues.

Mr. George makes a difference between Land, Capital and Labor. Land is the condition of our existence as well as of our labor. Labor creates all values, and capital is as it were, stored up labor.

Mr. George points out the difference between land and capital, but he loses sight of the fact that land in itself and apart from labor has no value whatever. It acquires value only by the application of labor. It is true that an unimproved lot in the city has value, but what is that value otherwise than the labor of those who live there. I agree with Mr. George that that value should be taxed, but even in this case it is labor that is taxed, and not the land. I would not buy a hundred square miles of most fertile land in Central Africa for a dime if it could be had for that price, because it is useless; it is without value so long as there is no hope to make it valuable through labor. If only land should be taxed apart from improvement, many lots on the lakeside of Chicago should be free of taxa-

tion, for they consist of improvement only. The Dutch people should be free from all taxation, the districts where swamps have been before ought to be a forbidden ground to tax gatherers. In truth all lands under cultivation are like Holland, they have been gained or improved by labor and the sum total of their labor value is rarely covered by their market value. If only land should be taxed apart from improvement, as Mr. George proposes, this would be an abolition of taxation altogether.

While the basis of Mr. George's theory is vague and unsubstantial, the consequences which he prophesies to follow are fantastical. It is the abolition of poverty and the beginning of a millenium upon earth.

Mr. George's optimism is enviable, it is like that of a child. Here he places himself in one and the same line with the many other reformers that have found a panacea for all evils in the world. But the promises are so positive, that Dr. McGlynn says, he would not hesitate, if he could, to introduce at once such changes as would realize this single tax theory. Does the Doctor forget that all sudden changes must bring about a most dangerous crisis. Even a sudden change for unmixed good may be fatal. A consumptive person has to be accustomed to good air by degrees, and a half-starved man must take his first meal by small bits. Moreover, are not those who have invested their capital, *i. e.*, their stored-up labor in land, entitled to be protected in their possession acquired under our present system. Is it just to deprive a farmer of his farm which he has bought with the toil and sweat of his or his fathers' life?

These difficulties are not insurmountable, although they must for a time impede the introduction of land

taxation. Land taxation can easily be introduced by slow degrees, and a compensation may be given to those who would suffer unfairly by the change. But even granted that the advantages of land taxation would be great, I fail to see how it can produce such a glorious state of things as Mr. George hopes for.

Is he so utterly blind to the fact that poverty has many sources, (of which I confess our wrong system of taxation is a very important one,) and that after the removal of this, there are a hundred others to fight? If there is one chief source of poverty we should not seek it in circumstances but in man. The savage is dependent upon circumstances, but civilized man should be able to govern circumstances, and use all his mental and moral powers to make the best of his situation by wise foresight, economy, thrift, and industry, instead of letting things go until circumstances have improved. I know of one panacea only; it is man's obedience to the moral laws. But the application of this rule, simple though it sounds in its generalized form, is so complex that it hardly deserves the name of a panacea. Land taxation even if it had in its consequence all the impossible blessings it is supposed to have according to Mr. George, would be of no avail to him who believes that he is the mere product of circumstances, and who does not know that a man's character is the most important factor among the conditions that shape his fate. If a man is aware of that, he will dare to become the master of the circumstances that surround him. The most urgent step forwards is the moral elevation of man, and progress is no progress unless it is accompanied by a moral progress of man that makes him stronger and more humane.

WORDS AND WORK.

I had a dream which was not all a dream.—BYRON.

I HAVE not been able to study many books this summer, and I find once more that loafing in camp weakens discipline. I now see the value of daily drill although I could not see it when a soldier. I have been dreaming away the summer, and so great is the luxury that I have some charity for the opium eater who yields to the fascination, and dreams himself to idiocy and to death. The temptation is great.

What little reading I have done has been chiefly devoted to the dreams of others, notably the communistic dream of Edward Bellamy, and the anarchistic dream of Elisée Reclus. These have a brotherly likeness to each other, and a family resemblance to the dreams of seers and saints and soothsayers, from the trance of Balaam to Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones which he conjured into men; from Belshazzar's nightmare to the Apocalypse of John; from the Utopian visions of Sir Thomas More to John Bunyan's dream, told in that immortal classic which sprung full-armed out of a tinker's brain; from Walhalla and Paradise to the ideal Boston of Bellamy; and from him to the swarthy gipsies who prophesy for sixpence. All these dreams and dreamers weave spells around emotional natures. In the old slavery days before the flood I

have seen Virginia negroes, dazzled by the gold and pearl and sapphire of the Apocalypse, lift up their voices in camp-meeting and sing :

“ John saw the angel Gaberel
Sitting on a golden altar.”

Considering that it was felony by the law to teach those people to read, they may be excused for misunderstanding the text, and beholding the splendors of liberty in the Heaven of John. Wild, weird, and impossible, as we regard it, nevertheless John had a dream which was not all a dream.

Dreamers move the world only as they stimulate action. Work is the way, the truth, and the life; and work for others is the most religious prayer that man can pray. Wholesale philanthropy is well, but retail philanthropy is better. Each can pave his way to heaven by simple deeds. We may neglect the individual sinner to preach comprehensive plans of salvation until our own salvation is lost. In our zeal to reform systems, we may neglect little bits of charity until the gates of mercy close against ourselves. The preacher who stands at the altar and invites the people to come to the eucharist of bread and wine, the holy communion of equal brotherhood, does well; but God's preacher is the man who bravely carries the sacrament out of the sanctuary to the hovels of the poor. It is well to call upon the people to come to the temples and hear the word of life, but it is better to carry the word of life to their houses, and a bit of the bread with it.

Those doctrines were revealed unto me in a vision. Most of us who have had a theological and religious education have had visions of St. Peter at the gate. Many of us are ashamed to acknowledge it, but it is

true for all that, especially of men like me, who are in the sunset, wondering what our Heaven or otherwise is to be. In all my visionary interviews with the apostolic turnkey I have managed to squeeze through on doctrine, although I passed a very poor examination when it came to works. In my last effort it was a close debate whether I should get in or stay out. I pleaded the many good things I had advocated, and the bad things I had rebuked. "Yes!" replied the venerable saint, "you have said some good things, but what good things have you done? What griefs have you lifted from the hearts of your fellows? Whose tears have you dried up? You have forgiven the enemies of other people, but which of your own enemies have you pardoned?" I was silent. "I shall let you in," he said, "but I cannot promise you a very good position, because, my son, you must remember that the man who has given a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul takes higher rank in the celestial monarchy than he who spent a lifetime in denouncing the mismanagement of the water-works." I had a dream which was not all a dream.

The hopeful schemes of "Scientific" socialism and "Philosophic" anarchy are only dreams of an ideal state, for which an ideal people must be made. This will require the slow gestation of ten thousand years. I am not sure that figs will not grow on thistles after proper grafting; but the grafting must be done; and even after that must come the education of the thistle. It is only the poets who can "hear the feet of angels coming down to men." They do not come, unless re-incarnated as a punishment, and then they are no longer angels. Angels have their own affairs to attend to, for there is work to do in heaven, and aspiration

for a higher heaven still. Some day there may be a people on this earth fitted to live in the anticipated Boston of Mr. Bellamy, although I am not sure that I should care to dwell among them any more than I should like to live in a planet where the oceans have no tides, and the air no storms. For all that, we may by individual effort, by retail philanthropy, lift ourselves and others out of many social evils up towards the improved condition pictured in the vision. Behind all my doubts and fears comes up a hope that Mr. Bellamy has had a dream which is not all a dream.

There is something fascinating in the scheme of "Philosophic" anarchy, "life without government and without law." That is the life that suits me, and I find that I have been an anarchist from a boy. If a slight amendment would be in order I would move the following addition, "and without work." For those principles I am ready to turn out and carry a torch. I never had much schooling, and what little there was of it was made unprofitable by precocious anarchy. I wanted to live "without law and without authority," and so I ran away at every temptation to go a-swimming, and a-skating, and a-fishing, while a band of music would troll me away into the deepest cavern in the mountain like the foolish children who followed the pied piper of Hamelin; and it can do so yet. There is too much restraint upon me. I am altogether too much bound down by authority and law. It would be much better if this were otherwise; better for me I mean. As for my neighbors, I must frankly say that it is better for them that my savage inclinations be restrained.

I fear that the virtuous "Anarchism" advocated by

Reclus is an impossible state, to which present humanity can never attain. I fear it is an ideal paradise never to be enjoyed by us who live in this real world. I think that Anarchism, as he desires it, is a revolution that must follow, and cannot precede, a revolution of human character. A state of society where all is justice, kindness, liberty, and love, where law and authority are unnecessary, must be based upon an aggregate humanity virtuous and enlightened, a general and individual character purified from selfishness and greed, from low ambitions and the dross of human pride, from lust and all ignoble passions. I believe that such a state is not possible in our time, nor under the conditions of our present physical, mental, and moral organization. It may come in the future, when through the slow education of centuries mankind shall have reached another stage of development. Meantime, "law and authority" must both remain to protect the good against the bad, the weak against the strong. Before we can reach the healthy table land of the delectable mountain, the peaceable Anarchism of Reclus, we must be relieved of that nature which now enfolds us and weighs us to the ground. Poring one night over *Æsop's* fables to relax my mind which had been somewhat strained by the speculations of Reclus, I fell asleep and dreamed a fable of my own.

The mud-turtles held a convention to take into consideration the degradation and poverty of the mud-turtle classes of society. Delegates attended from all the mud-ponds round about, and the convention was honored by the presence of some eloquent and distinguished mud-turtles from abroad. The base and groveling condition of the mud-turtle classes was contrasted with the delightful and superior existence of

the birds of the air. One eloquent speaker said, "We aspire not to rival the eagle in the strength of his wing, nor the swallow in the swiftness of his flight; we desire not the plumage of the parrot, nor his power to speak in any language; we ask not the strong toenails of the hawk, nor the mocking-bird's gift of song; but is it right, is it just, my fellow-mud-turtles, that even the ignoble buzzard should be allowed to refresh himself with the pure air of the cerulean heavens, while we are limited to the fever-and-ague districts of the most inferior portions of the earth? Let us arise in our might and fly." The committee on resolutions having adopted a platform in accordance with the tenor of the above remarks, the chairman was about to put the question, when a venerable mud-turtle on a back log rose and said:

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the Convention—Did it ever occur to you that before we can carry out the resolutions of the platform and fly like the birds, we must first discard the cumbersome overcoat which we are now in the habit of wearing, and adopt in place of it a garment of feathers and wings?"

This fable teaches. We must fit ourselves for that condition to which we aspire.

JIM THE INVENTOR.

My friend Jim Short is a mechanic; and what is more, he is a genius in mechanics. Had he been simply a mechanic he might have prospered and made money, but being a genius he has accumulated nothing but glory, on which he will receive no dividends in this world. They will all go to the multitudinous corporation known as Homo Brothers and Co. It is a surprise to Jim that this practical epoch does not use genius well. It has neither time nor money to waste on theoretical men. After a long and weary search, Jim Short has discovered the principle of perpetual motion, and he has invented a machine to utilize it for the abolition of hard work. It needs only a few more wheels and pulleys to make it perfect, and then the social problem will be solved; we shall need no exercise, but play. It unites the virtues of the philosopher's stone, the elixir of life, and the Balm of Gilead. It is the supreme panacea which, like Aaron's rod, shall swallow all the rest.

They give no credit at the patent office, and they refuse to issue patents on ideal inventions. They will not accept promissory plans, models, and specifications latent in the inventor's brain. They insist on realities made of wood, and leather, and iron. This is

the prosy reason why Jim has not received a patent for his promise of "perpetual motion." His models contain cogs, wheels, concentrics, eccentrics, and pulleys enough for twenty patents, but because they lack just two trifling elements, a lever and a fulcrum, the department absurdly refuses a patent, and what is worse, the government declines to furnish genius with money enough to supply the missing powers. The people refuse faith, and the government refuses money. That Jim's manifold patterns do not work is no fault of his, but of the heedless government which declines to render him substantial aid. His efforts being for the benefit of all the people, Jim thinks that the government should subsidize his genius or at least encourage it with a pension, that he may pursue his experiments above the cankering fear of poverty. Morse received a subsidy for a promise of quick motion, and why should not Jim receive a like stimulus for his promise of perpetual motion? He wants a few immediate assets and there are none in the assurance that he shall be renowned in after ages like Watt and Stephenson.

Jim's definition of his perpetual motion machine is this: he describes it as a mechanical contrivance that needs no food and works for ever. It is the one great miracle under the sun. The skeptical crowd laugh kindly at poor Jim as a visionary in mechanical economy. They easily detect the flaw in his logic, but with childish credulity they pin their own faith to inventors in political economy more visionary than Jim. His theory is a panacea that works in all emergencies and cures everything; so is theirs. Each of them declares that he has discovered the secret of perpetual motion, and as soon as he can supply a lever and a fulcrum to

his machine he will abolish every form of social disease. Jim is not alone in fairy-land. The woods there are full of dreamers fantastical as he.

Forty-five years ago, there was a social reformer in England, who found "perpetual motion" in the spade. His theory was to abolish the plow and divide England up into four-acre farms, to be cultivated by the spade alone. This would give employment to everybody, and poverty would cease to be. He was correct, because it is very plain that to cultivate all England with the spade would require the muscle of all her people. He put more than a million dollars into his experiment. He bought large tracts of land, divided it up into four acre farms, armed his "freeholders" with spades, and set them to work. The scheme failed, and the failure broke his heart. In his efforts to find the missing lever, fulcrum, or whatever it was that his machine wanted, he became insane, and died at last in the lunatic asylum.

A very popular "perpetual motion" machine is the panacea known as the single tax on land-values, which is to abolish poverty. In fact the proprietary name of it stamped upon the bottles, is "Anti-Poverty." All other preparations for abolishing poverty are counterfeit. Another inventor, of the type and quality of Jim, assures me that he has discovered "perpetual motion" in State Socialism, where all of us are to be absorbed into that ethereal Nirvana which is called "government," wherein we are to live and move and have our being. Another tells me that he has found "perpetual motion" in the principle of individualism, or anarchy, where government is unknown because unnecessary; where every man is his own policeman, clubbing himself over the head whenever he does wrong

and continuously taking himself into custody. Another assures me that he has found the great principle in mutual banking and an unlimited supply of paper ten-dollar pieces. When every man has a pocket full of bank stock, Utopia becomes a geographical fact. When we can draw on the bank for whatever amount we need by simply depositing a philosopher's stone in the safe, "perpetual motion" becomes a crystallized reality. I have a friend, an editor of a newspaper, who writes me that he has found "perpetual motion" in a graduated income tax by which every man is to be fined in proportion to his prosperity, the fines to go to the unprosperous. He does not know that this was one of the resources of the French Republic, a hundred years ago, by which "equality" was to be established among all the people.

Jim, the inventor, is not alone in his theories of "perpetual motion." He has the company of hundreds, who believe that they have solved the riddle of ages, and that their special inventions, if they can only get them patented, will bring the millennium in.

ECONOMIC CONFERENCES.

I HAIL it as a healthy sign that the political unrest created by the "Labor" agitation has weakened the division-wall between capital and labor in Chicago; and let us hope that in due time the wall will be shaken down. At last some of the just and more enlightened men of the wealthy class hold out their hands to the laborers and say, "Come, let us reason together." This invitation has been accepted, and the result is an interchange of opinions through the medium of "Economic Conferences," where all sides may be heard.

That we are in a state of social war is due largely to the ignorant rich. They have made themselves a caste having rights, to whom the poor are a caste owing duties. The rich who are not ignorant must also bear a part of the responsibility. They have wrapped themselves in pleasure, and have avoided the meetings and discussions of the working men. They have abandoned the laborer to his errors, and made an enemy of him who might have been a friend. They have shorn the locks, and put out the eyes of Samson, but his arms clasp the pillars of the temple. They have left the working man to his passions and allowed him to become the spoil of demagogues and blind leaders of the blind. They refuse to meet the laborer in debate, and then they reproach him for his fantastic visions of a new and impossible society. They decline to guide

the people right and then complain because others guide them wrong.

When the wild and irrational tactics of the Trades Unions alarmed Great Britain fifty-five years ago, Macauley warned the ignorant rich and the luxurious rich that because of their neglect the poor had fallen under evil guidance, and he adapted the parable of Gotham to the social condition of England. The trees having decided to elect a King, the vine would not accept the office because of its cheeriness, and the olive would not because of its fatness, and the fig-tree would not because of its sweetness; so the bramble was anointed King, and out of the bramble came the fire that devoured the Cedars of Lebanon.

I greet these conferences as a truce to barbarian methods on both sides, to the vengeance of the bomb, and the vengeance of the gallows. There are moral forces throbbing in the rich and poor alike, and out of these forces all measures of reform must come. Physical and intellectual powers make changes, but only moral forces make reforms. It is not true that in this land we have reached the alternative between anarchy in robes and anarchy in rags.

In the "Conference" course the opening was given to the working men, and the first lecture was by Mr. Geo. A. Schilling, an eloquent man and a leader in the "order." His theme was "The Objects of the Knights of Labor." The hall was crowded, and the audience was highly charged with mental and spiritual electricity. The positive and negative elements of opposing social forces were under very active excitement, while the banker and the blacksmith, the millionaire and laborer jostled each other in their eagerness to hear a "Knight" of the latter day crusade which is to

rescue the holy land from lords, rents, mortgages, and monopolies, a soldier in the chivalry of labor. It reminded me that when I was a youth in England, it suddenly became the fashion for earls and barons and bishops to come to the Mechanics' Institutes and lecture to the working men. They spoke to us with a patronizing air, and we listened with humility as became our lower station. At Mr. Schilling's lecture I was glad to see that neither "order" was disposed to ask or offer patronage. The genius of the occasion was democratic and its influence was good.

Mr. Schilling spoke as an advocate, and yet he declared himself opposed to some of the especial objects of the order. He confessed that radical differences of opinion existed among the Knights themselves as to the wisdom of their own constitution in some of its essential claims. He was himself an extreme individualist, opposed to the theory and doctrine of state socialism on which the order itself was built. He would restrict, and not extend the powers of government. More dangerous to the order than the men within it of opposite opinions, are the thousands of its members who have no opinions at all. From all this it is easy to predict the early dissolution of the society. In the evolution of organized labor it must give way to more scientific agencies; to a higher order of Knighthood able to contend with the actualities of life, and to muster into service all the moral forces of the time.

Mr. Schilling is an enthusiast, and his argument had much of the strength and some of the weakness that belong to enthusiasm. Parts of it reminded me of the Wendell Phillips I heard long ago. He said, "The hanging of a few agitators will not abolish popular discontent." This is true, because the discontent

will remain so long as the reason for it remains. John Ball organized the Knights of Labor in England five hundred years ago. The government hung John Ball, but the Knights had more necks than the government had ropes, and the order in some form or other has lived on to this day. The weakness of Mr. Schilling was his apology for the exclusive, aristocratic, monopolistic principle which actuates the Knights of Labor. It is no excuse that the working man, suffering under a sense of wrong, his home forever haunted by the ghost of hunger, has a right to clutch at the law of self-preservation, and shut his fellow craftsmen out of that part of the labor market where his own muscle is offered for sale. He has no such right, and the assertion of it has ever been the weakness of the Trades Unions, and the Knights of Labor. The Exclusion principle is unjust, and like every other injustice it carries punishment and failure upon its wings. Labor statesmanship, like all other statesmanship, must stand on a moral foundation, or it will not permanently stand. The objects of the Knights of Labor cannot be separated from their methods, and they must all be criticised together.

Among the objects of the Knights of Labor was this: "The greatest good for the greatest number," and Mr. Schilling's own defense was evidence that in the mathematics of the Knights the greatest number is number one. It is a deceitful phrase always used to cloak the tyranny of those who claim to act for "the greatest number." In political morality there is no such principle, because it implies a smallest number outside the Common Weal; a smallest number entitled only to the smallest good. I never see this popular bit of sophistry without looking behind it for some in-

justice which it covers, and I generally find it. Slavery used to be justified for "the greatest good of the greatest number," and in the present case the sentiment is used to excuse practices which in themselves are indefensible, harsh regulations which arrest liberty, which make work for one man and idleness for another, which are supposed to make high wages for the "Knight," and low wages for the churl. I advise the Knights to erase that false motto from their coat of arms, and substitute for it "the greatest good for all."

Mr. Schilling claimed, and with success, that the use of machinery in the mechanic arts and the subdivision of hard hand and brain labor into easy elements had changed industrial conditions and had silently worked a social revolution in 50 years ; a revolution in which the working men had altogether the worst of it, and whereby capital had multiplied its power ; a revolution by which the master has become a more and more intelligent energy, and the workman a more and more unimportant and unintelligent hostler, harnessing and unharnessing, driving and grooming the machine. Of the multiplied product the greater part had gone to the owner of the machine, and very little to the hostler. This was not the exact language of Mr. Schilling, but it was the substance of his claim, and I think he was right. Ingenious machinery has broken up several of the mechanic trades into separate bits of work, each one of them requiring very little strength and very little skill. Where formerly twenty men made twenty watches, each man making one, twenty girls will now make two hundred watches in twenty separate parts. The girls simply tend the machines whose cunning fingers make the wheels, and springs, and all the inside works with a delicacy and precision that human fingers cannot imi-

tate. The shoemaker is becoming extinct like the Indian. The shoes are made in parts by different machines. Furniture is made in the same way, and cabinet making will soon be among the forgotten arts. This evolution of industry is the puzzle of economics, the despair of politics. That this multiplied product is a blessing to mankind is true. It is immensely for the greatest good of the greatest number, but there is a smallest number stunned and bewildered by the revolution claiming that society has abolished its means of existence, and giving back to it no compensation out of the increased abundance. That society will adapt itself in time to the changed conditions is true, but while society is doing it two million willing hands are reaching out for work and are unable to obtain it.

I know the claim is made that the increased product is fairly divided, although not equally divided and that the working men are getting absolutely and relatively a greater share of it than capital receives. Mr. Edward Atkinson asserts that the rate of wages has been increasing absolutely in more money, and relatively in lower prices for what the workman has to buy. He proves it by the statistics of 60 years. His figures are fallacious, for the problem is not the rate of wages and the price of provisions to the man in work, but the puzzle is this, what is the rate of wages of the man who is earning nothing? And what is the cost of provisions to the man who is not getting any wages at all? The million or two of willing workers who are not able to obtain work is a factor in the problem that confuses the statistics, and gives a moral contradiction to the mathematical proof. Labor is not prosperous wherever there is an over-production of men.

While our moralists and statesmen stand baffled and

dumb in the presence of this ugly fact, is it any wonder that untaught laborers blunder in their statesmanship too? Is it any wonder that like the fly in the spider's web they entangle themselves more and more in their efforts to be free? Must we expect more wisdom in them than in their masters? More virtues too? They will struggle for better things. They may not struggle wisely, but they will not lie down. If their plans are vicious help them to better plans. Society must learn that moral consequences are not to be evaded, and that justice must be done. Working men begin to see how precarious is their bread. They begin to see how easy it is to "lock them out" whenever the "trust" they are working for, chooses to "shut down" in order to make scarcity and raise prices. In the midst of the ills they suffer, and the greater ills that threaten them, it is folly to expect that working men will quietly lie down and patiently await their doom. "I shall be made into soup to-morrow," says the turtle in the restaurant window to the passers-by, but we must not expect such calm philosophy as that from the American working man.

"The Earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof"; and according to the Knights of Labor it belongs to all his creatures. Literally, they want the earth, and this claim is endorsed by Mr. Schilling. He is opposed to the private ownership of land, or as he called it the monopoly of land. He contended that all the people should have free access to the land, and that mines ought never to be private property. He said if the coal mines of Pennsylvania had not been owned by a few rich barons the strikes would not have occurred. Perhaps the strongest point in his lecture was this, and the strength of it was due not so much to its abstract

merit as to the fact that the avaricious combinations of mine-owners increase the price of coal, while their absolute control of the markets enables them to "lock out" the miners at any time when they want to stiffen prices by making scarcity. Land ownership although its abuses may be modified, can hardly be abolished. Give a man free access to the land and the very day he applies his labor to it, he becomes entitled to some security for its permanent possession, and ownership is nothing more than that. Ownership of land has always developed the free spirit of a people, and it may be doubted whether it is possible to abolish the freehold without abolishing freedom too.

Mr. Schilling was opposed to the demand of the Knights of Labor that the capricious power called "Government" should own and operate all the railroads, canals, telegraphs, banks, boats, bridges, gas works, water works, express companies, and other enterprises, on the principle that government becomes despotic in proportion to its power, and for the further reason that government is not able to work as efficiently and cheaply as private individuals can. The whole question is one of expediency rather than of principle and depends greatly on the conditions that surround the government, and on the elements that comprise it. In this country the scheme would be a good thing for "the party in power." It would make the tenure of office permanent, and settle the question of civil-service reform. At the last presidential election all the mail carriers marched in the Blaine procession. Had all the railroad men and telegraph men and the rest of them joined in the line, we should have seen at once how hopeless would be any attempt to "turn the rascals out." And it is a curious phenomenon in this country

that the "ins" are always the rascals and the "outs" the honest men.

In some respects the Knights of Labor builded better than they knew, and better than they ever meant to build. For instance in the demand that women shall have equal rights with men for equal work. This has come to mean not only the right of women to equal wages, but the equal right of women to earn wages wherever they can, and this meaning is given to the claim by many of the Knights, perhaps by a majority of them now. It was not so intended in the beginning. Behind the fair face of it was concealed a sinister design. The intention of it was, though all the Knights may not have known it, to draw the line between men and women at the sewing machine, and to drive the women back behind that line. It was thought that if this demand for equal wages could be enforced, employers would say, "well, if we must pay the same wages to women as to men, we may as well have men." Some of the Knights have a hope that such will be the effect of it yet, but most of them are now, as a few of them have always been, sincere in their claim of equality for women. Besides, the women are so strongly entrenched in the professions, the clerical employments, and the lighter mechanical trades, that it would be impossible to turn them out. In this, as in some other things, the order has had an educational influence on its members. Its successor, for it will have a successor, will abandon many of its claims and dogmas as gladly as men discard old boots that never fitted them. The new order will be wiser and better than the old one.

The means by which the Objects of the Knights of Labor are to be achieved according to Mr. Schilling, are Agitation, Education, and Co-operation. I have

only room for a remark on the Education plan. When Mr. Schilling was asked if the Knights included in their scheme of "education" the instruction of the hand, the right of a boy to be educated in a trade, he would only answer affirmatively for himself, and was not willing to do so for the Knights of Labor. It is well known that the Knights of Labor restrict the education of the hand, which they have no more right to do than they have to restrict the education of the mind. They have no more right to forbid a boy to learn a trade than they have to forbid him to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic, for by the aid of these he may some time or other compete with some Knight for a job. They have no more right to sentence a boy to hard labor for life with a shovel, a wheelbarrow, and a hod, than they have to sentence him to hard labor in the penitentiary. So long as they persist in doing it, they will fail to get the sympathy of just and liberal men outside the order, and they will lose the sympathy of many just and liberal men inside of it. Their platform must come to the test of the spirit-level, and all its inequalities must be planed away. Otherwise the order will be an obstacle in the path to liberty, a hindrance to the elevation of labor.

ECONOMIC CONFERENCES.

II.

BANKING AND THE SOCIAL SYSTEM.

THE first lecture in the "Economic Conference" course was by Mr. George A. Schilling, a working man; the second by Mr. Lyman J. Gage, a banker. Mr. Gage chose for his theme "Banking and the Social System." He spoke eloquently, and in a dignified way addressed himself to the intelligence, and not the prejudices, of the congregation. He took an optimistic view of our social future, but was fully alive to the dangers of the present, manifested in what he called the "industrial revolt." He said some things which required courage to say, but he made no attempt to flatter his audience nor the larger congregation outside. Claiming that the world was growing better, and not worse, he said :

"The rising sun of Christianity drove back the clouds of pagan superstition, and brought to light the true dignity of man as a moral being, and revealed a nobler deity. The Reformation broke the power of a dominant religio-political church disposed to hold in mental subjection those it had made free from the influence of pagan superstition; and finally modern rationalism has purified the reformation, and promises to free the mind from bondage to spiritual tyranny of every kind."

Mr. Gage advocated our present banking system as a necessary and valuable ingredient in American social organization, and in this he was right, if the pre-



vailing conditions that encompass labor, trade, and capital, are natural, just, and wise. A large majority of his audience, however, believe that the National Banking System is an eruption on the surface of society indicating impurities within, and this impression Mr. Gage did not remove, although he was quite successful in showing the necessity of banks to a farming, manufacturing, and commercial people. He reasoned thus: Exchange of products is a good thing, banking facilitates exchange of products, therefore the *National* Bank System is good. I see a fallacy in this reasoning although I may not be able to separate it from the tangle of the argument. I have heard the war praised by stump orators in the same way. They said the National Banks provide a sound currency, because the notes are secured by national bonds, which are secured by national debt, made by national war. No war no debt, no debt no bonds, no bonds no banks, no banks no currency. I know this chain has a flaw in it although it appears to be sound.

Mr. Gage, instead of defending the National Bank System as a monopoly necessary to a safe currency maintained that it was no monopoly at all, and he gave us the dictionary meaning of the word. Working men care little about the etymology of a word, or the Latin or the Greek of it; they regard only the fact it expresses. It may be true that monopoly means the "sole power" to carry on a certain business, and that National Banks have no such power because any five men with fifty thousand dollars may start a National Bank; nevertheless, if the law confers upon National Banks certain privileges which other banks have not, then to the full extent of those privileges they have what may be practically, if not grammatic-

ally, called a monopoly. I do not mean that every monopoly is mischievous because it is a monopoly, it may in fact be beneficial to the community, as Mr. Gage is competent to show.

When Mr. Gage gave us the catalogue of powers and privileges enjoyed by the National Banks, he forgot to mention the most important one of all, the exclusive right to issue currency. A prohibitory tax of ten per cent. upon the circulating notes of all private banks and bankers limits the issue of currency to the National Banks. The reason given for this is the duty of protecting the people from what is known as Wild-cat banking, and I am inclined to think that the reason is a good one. This is an important question, because the prejudice of the working men against the National Banks is largely built upon a misunderstanding of the "money power," given to the banks by the exclusive privileges to issue currency. Mr. Gage was very successful in showing that this privilege is not so valuable as people think it is. His figures must have surprised his audience. He said that the Chicago banks with a right to issue fourteen million dollars in National Bank notes, have outstanding less than one million dollars of such notes; while all the National Banks in the country, with a right to issue about five hundred millions of such notes, have outstanding only about one hundred and sixty-six millions.

Although the title of his lecture was "Banking and the Social System," Mr. Gage did not clearly show any moral agreement between the National Banks and our social System as it ought to be. He spoke on the social question and he spoke well, but he has placed himself under the yoke of the political econ-

omists and allowed himself to be awed by their portentous jargon and their stately axioms. He is a victim of the patent medicine men who profess the "dismal science." They take a few accidental facts, generalize them into a principle, express this in a rotund formula, and then impose it upon everybody as an orthodox prescription.

After comparing the labor "trusts" and the capital "trusts," and showing that any unnatural profits made by either of them must result in drawing competitors to the trade or business in such numbers that the profits vanish, leaving the competition behind to plague the investors of the trust, Mr. Gage was betrayed into the mistake of wrapping up his whole argument in the ponderous old formula compiled by the medicine men about the rate of wages. He said, "the wages of labor will rise and fall as the number of wage-workers increases or diminishes in relation to the existing quantity of capital. If capital increase in a greater ratio than the population, wages will rise. If the population increase in a faster ratio than capital, wages will fall. No combination can long resist the silent but irresistible influence of this principle."

I think there is no such principle, and the claim for it appears to have no foundation except an occasional example. We see it verified in particular cases, and erroneously think that it is of universal application. I am often stunned by the heavy maxims thrown at me by the economists, and before I have time to recover my senses I have confessed their claim. Long ago I was confused by this maxim, but when I brought a little moral intelligence to bear on it, I saw that its character was bad, and as it was unsound in ethics I knew that it was unsound in politics too. Out of it

grows the arrogant theory of a "surplus population," the surplus being always the unemployed poor, and never the unemployed rich. Out of it grows the cannibalistic doctrine that working men must eat one another or perish. It makes every wage-worker the competitor and the enemy of every other. It elevates war to the dignity of a moral science because it kills men and diminishes the number of wage-workers. Capital never makes wages except for its own profit, population makes wages by creating a demand for supplies. Very often the wage-worker creates the capital before he can draw any share of it as wages. Let us test the principle by the known increase of capital in the United States.

In 1884, Mr. Blaine, in a carefully prepared paper, said that the capital of the United States had increased from fourteen thousand million dollars in 1860, to forty-four thousand million dollars in 1880. An increase of thirty thousand million dollars in twenty years, although during four years of that time the wealth of the nation was wasted in war, and wage-workers were killed by the thousands. Does Mr. Gage believe that wages increased in the ratio of increased capital, even allowing that it increased at all? His formula might be correct if amended thus: "If capital increase in a greater ratio than the population, wages *ought* to rise." His proposition fails because there is no power in social economics to compel men to pay high wages, but population is driven by natural forces to make wages because men must eat, wear clothes, and live in houses. To provide for its own comfortable existence population sets all the wheels of industry in motion. The workers create the capital, and we invent an economic contradiction when we make increased capital attendant on

the diminished number of the people who produce it. Men are driven to supply their own wants by labor, and thus make wages for each other. The reason they do not make high wages is because their energies are not free ; artificial obstructions are placed in the way of industrial ambition; the worker's natural resources are withheld from him by law, and that "increased capital" which Mr. Gage thinks raises wages, is combined successfully in a hundred ways for the purpose of keeping wages down

Because the working men themselves have been led into many follies and some crimes through their belief in this doctrine, I wish to show its influence on them. It did more than any other article in Labor's creed to freeze up the sympathies of the English working men. We were always praying for war so that "capital might increase in a greater ratio than population." When cholera swept the land we saw the triumph of the principle and rejoiced. When a colliery explosion killed two hundred men, although we felt actual sorrow, there was mingled with our grief some abstract joy, for the ratio of population to capital was lessened, and we had fewer competitors in the labor market. This false economics hardened our hearts and debased our character. How could there be brotherhood among men who believed they were taking bread from one another? I was cured of the doctrine by an old farmer in Vermont, and I cheerfully advertise his recipe.

Shortly after landing in this country I got a job of work in building a railroad near the town of Windsor in that State, and the digging was very hard. One day we were knocked off on account of rain, and I put in the day doing chores for a farmer whose house was close to the shanty where I lived. That night he gave

me a good supper, and after supper we sat outside on the door step and "calmly smoked and jawed." I felt that I was an intruder upon the United States because I was adding one more to the labor population, and diminishing the rate of wages in that "ratio." My farmer friend was polite enough to say that no apologies were necessary, and that the obligation was all on the other side; that in point of fact the United States of America was much indebted to me for coming. "I reckon you," he said, "as a clear gain of one thousand dollars to the capital of the country." This wild heresy bewildered me, and I explained to him that I did not bring five cents with me to buy a welcome, but he insisted that brawn and brain were part of a nation's capital, and the source of all its capital, that population and capital must increase and diminish together, and that they were not antagonistic factors in fixing the rate of wages. I see now that he was right, although I did not see it then; and while particular exception to his principle may be found in actual business, yet I am convinced that when applied to the vast aggregate of the nation including all its population and all its capital, his doctrine is morally and politically sound.

I follow the old man's argument as well as I can; it was something like this: A healthy young man of twenty, working on the railroad, receives as wages one dollar a day. Allowing for loss of time by reason of rainy days and other causes, and giving him two hundred and fifty days work in a year, he receives in ten years two thousand five hundred dollars. His work is worth more than that. He has certainly put three thousand five hundred dollars into the railroad values of the country. This is a contribution of one thousand

dollars to the capital of the nation in ten years. This rule will apply to all the other workers, and Mr. Blaine's figures are evidence that the estimate is low. Admitting that large numbers of men are a loss instead of a gain, that they eat more than they earn, nevertheless, when the national balance is struck the result is an enormous aggregate gain. Another test is this. Every generation leaves behind it something for the succeeding one, proving that increase of population and increase of capital are in direct proportion to each other, and that the relations between them are not to be estimated by the Inverse Rule of Three.

I once heard a judge tell a lawyer that statutes are to be construed in favor of human life. This rule extends beyond human codes. It is the law of the moral universe, and political economy cannot reverse it. The doctrine quoted by Mr. Gage is in favor of human death. It makes living men a dead weight upon the public weal, a dangerous paradox. What does Mr. Gage himself say in refutation of the doctrine? He says this: "With a population of sixty millions this country is sparsely settled, and will support under good industrial condition two or three hundred millions in peace and plenty." Why then moralize about imprudent marriages and a redundant population? In that one sentence he surrendered himself a prisoner to Mr. Schilling. If the country possesses the abundant natural advantages which Mr. Gage describes, why are a million wage-workers out of work? If the country is "sparsely settled," why do men jostle each other and suffocate each other in the labor market? If "the treasures of mineral wealth beneath the surface are inexhaustible," why is not their opulence developed? Is it not because capital owns the key of

the underground cellar and keeps it locked from labor? Mr. Gage's admission that the country is sparsely settled while its natural resources are inexhaustible, was a strong support to the claim of Mr. Schilling that labor shall be given access to the surface of the earth, to the forests upon it, and to the minerals below.

When Mr. Gage advocated "co-operation industrial and otherwise" as a social remedy, there was loud applause in the pit and in the gallery, as if he had just condescended to patronize one of the absolute virtues such as temperance, honesty, industry or brotherly love. Perhaps the most plausible bit of sophistry in the labor debate is the "co-operation" excuse for the mistakes and offenses of "organized capital" and "organized labor." Co-operation is not a principle, it never was anything but an expedient, a plan, sometimes wise and sometimes not; sometimes good and sometimes bad. It may be virtuous or not, according to its purpose and its action. What do you co-operate for? is the test question that must be answered by the Knights of Capital and by the Knights of Labor, and upon the answer the quality and value of the co-operation must depend. The co-operation of the Knights of Capital to develop coal mines and bring coal to Chicago is beneficial, but the co-operation of Knights of Capital to raise the price of coal is mischievous. The co-operation of the Knights of Labor to raise their own wages is good; their co-operation to lower the wages of other men is bad. The co-operation of the Knights of Capital to boycott their workmen who refuse to "sign the document," is tyrannical and unjust; the co-operation of the Knights of Labor to boycott the craftsmen who decline to sign *their* document, is equally tyrannical. Co-operation is good only so far as its aims and methods are generous and iust.

ECONOMIC CONFERENCES.

III.

AMERICAN Chartism has a very close resemblance to the English article of that name, so close indeed, that listening to Mr. Thomas J. Morgan, who came third in the Economic Conference course, I thought myself once more a boy in London cheering the labor gospel at the Chartist hall in John Street. Mr. Morgan looked like a Chartist, spoke like a Chartist, and the spirit of Chartism was the magnetic string by which he tied the audience together. Mr. Morgan is an effective orator because he has the sincerity and zeal of a fanatic. That is not the worst of it; he is a fanatic with a cause; a fanatic with an argument written in tears.

With some cleverness, Mr. Morgan captured the sympathy of his audience in advance of his argument. He complained that he was only five feet two inches high. The crowd laughed at this, not seeing the subtle charge behind it. They saw it presently when the orator declared with much dramatic force that he had been cheated out of his rightful stature by the rapacity of capital. As he said that, I thought of the cynical Gloster in the play scolding nature for a like wrong done to him :

"I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by disembling nature,
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time,
Into this breathing world scarce half made up."

Mr. Morgan could not complain that he had been cheated of feature, for his face is well enough; and what there is of him is in fair proportion, but he had been cheated of stature, not by disembling nature, but by unfair advantage taken of him when a child, prematurely sentenced to hard labor in the factory, where children's hearts are squeezed like grapes and the product sold for gold. All this was mournful enough, but the sympathetic pain of it was felt only by the small men in the audience, men like me, cheated of our stature in the same way. Not so, when he complained of his diminutive social size, for here he touched a chord that vibrated in the hearts of all the men present, who, like himself, were cheated of social stature because they worked for bread. Referring to the slighting way the newspapers always spoke of him, he said: "My social standing and dignity may be measured by the contemptible insignificance of the words 'Tommy Morgan,' and I am a type of the wage class."

Although that preamble was given in a sneering way as if rendering scorn for scorn, there was artful pathos in it, because every working man in the house was smarting under the low-caste brand stamped upon him by society. Here was a man of character and ability, of earnest convictions, and active philanthropy, whom the newspapers would not allow to rise above the littleness of a nickname because he worked for wages, and had the daring to say things in criticism of society. Notwithstanding Mr. Morgan's manly claim for courtesy, it was refused him by the press; and the

next morning the newspapers deliberately repeated the insult of which he had complained ; they jeered him again as "Tommy." They saw a sensitive man whom they could wound, and they wounded him. I think the newspaper that thus wantonly violates the laws of social kindness can hardly be called a gentleman. Editors and writers from long habit of criticism sometimes forget the chivalry and charity which will not wound the feelings of other men ; a chivalry which in ordinary social intercourse they are careful to display. It is the gentle instinct refined and polished by exercise that makes a gentleman. The possessor of it may be a peasant or he may be a king. He may be an editor also, but in that case his nobility will be reflected in his newspaper. "The hard rain," said Rory O'More, "the hard rain only cuts the body, but the hard word cuts the heart." I have read that much of the cruelty of the French Revolution was vengeance for ancient scorn.

Mr. Morgan's pathos became sarcasm of good quality when he showed the obsequious deferential way in which those papers spoke of the banker, who lectured in the same course on the preceding Sunday night. This contrast marked with double emphasis the ungenerous treatment given to Mr. Morgan. There are not ten rich men in Chicago outside the learned professions who own as much useful knowledge as Mr. Morgan owns. There are not five of them who can weave that knowledge into an argument with such ingenuity and skill as he can do it, and there is literally not one of them who can present an argument in such logical shape, and with such oratorical power as Mr. Morgan presented his reasons for State socialism. Yet, because he is a laborer, he is not allowed the or-

dinary civilities of life, nor any designation higher than "Tommy." Of all the ills in Hamlet's catalogue, "the proud man's contumely" is the most irritating to the working man.

Mr. Morgan's theme was "The labor question from the standpoint of a Socialist." He built his argument on a platform of statistics, the arithmetic of poverty. Sophistry delights in statistics. They are plastic and accommodating witnesses. Although the proverb says that "figures won't lie," they seldom come into a court of investigation without being successfully impeached. That squalor abounds in all great cities is confessed by everybody. It is not necessary to bring witnesses to prove it. Squalor is the sediment of cities. Its causes are a thousand, its cures must be as many. Speculative reformers like Mr. Morgan forget this. They have a patent medicine, a magic balsam which cures all political and social disorders. Society must be cured by that or they will not allow it to be cured at all. Like the jealous physician they would rather see the patient die, than cured by any other "school of medicine" than their own. Mr. Morgan sees misery produced by a multitude of causes, yet he has but one remedy, the vague, uncertain hope and promise called State Socialism; wherein all individual ambition is to cease, where no man shall grow taller than his fellow, and especially not more than five feet two inches high. Mr. Morgan looks and speaks like a man who would stand by his principles with consistent heroism. Like Sam Weller's acquaintance, who shot himself to prove that muffins were wholesome, Mr. Morgan would rather carry a donkey's load forever than be relieved of his burthen by any other methods than his own.

Men and women who reform the world by wholesale, and who scorn to help their fellow creatures by any retail system, charge all human ills upon society, and relieve mankind from individual guilt. Thus Mr. Morgan transfers the vice of drunkenness from the men who practice it to their form of government. Strong drink, our most efficient poverty-maker, was presented to us rather as a friend of the working man than an enemy; a useful tonic and restorative. Mr. Morgan shifted intemperance from its old position, and made it the effect, not the cause of poverty. This unlucky transposition will have an evil influence over the men who follow his lead, and they constitute a large element of the laboring population of Chicago. We are grateful to the man who unloads our private faults upon the public, but a better friend is he who tells us to reform ourselves now without waiting for changes in the law. Self-discipline is premature, says the flatterer; wait until the State is reformed. Then will be the time to curb your appetites. For the present, comfort your hearts with wine.

After flattering strong drink as a tonic whose office it is to raise the heart of the exhausted worker, Mr. Morgan said: "Give the laborer a chance to get a better home than a couple of rooms. Give men a reason for living and they will not need intoxicants." The applause here had a mendicant flavor about it which was depressing and very sad. The man who comforts himself with "intoxicants" while waiting for "government" or some other benevolent fairy to give him three rooms instead of two, will not have two rooms very long. Whose duty is it to give a man reasons for living? Men must make their own reasons for living, and they must not be expected to share

them with the rusty delinquents who think that good enough reasons for living may be found in beer. Individual ambition, and an active personal conscience are the levers by which the working men must lift themselves. Self-reform is the true tonic of exhausted labor. The man who would elevate society must raise his own part of it, which is himself. A maudlin trust in "government" will accomplish nothing. "Who would be free themselves, must strike the 'blow.'" Above all things the working men need freedom from the flatterers who tell them that their vices are not their own.

In like manner Mr. Morgan transferred the sin of laziness from the idler to his external conditions. For this he gave some reasons which society may well examine. He said that idleness existed among the poorer classes because "they were born tired." This bolt struck its mark with the force of a cannon shot. A comprehensive indictment against the existing order of things was condensed into a single sentence. I have often heard it said of lazy men in jest that they were born tired, but Mr. Morgan uttered it seriously as a physiological truth. He said the habitual exhaustion of laboring men and women was transmitted to their children, and that millions of children were tired at the very moment when they came into the world. They inherited laziness. This is a terrible charge against our present social organism, and I fear that Mr. Morgan can bring much evidence to sustain it. In Lord Byron's drama, "The Deformed Transformed," Bertha says to Arnold, her deformed son: "Out hunchback!" and Arnold answers, "I was born so, Mother!" In this answer he flings the reproach for his deformity back upon his parents, where indeed it

properly belonged. So, Mr. Morgan, confessing the vices of his order, confronts an accusing world, and retorts with bitterness, "We were born so, Mother!" If he is correct, then is our penal code nothing but an expression of legislative ignorance. Whether he is correct or not, his plea of hereditary defect is entitled to grave consideration. It warns us that a little benevolent perfumery sprinkled on the decaying spots of our social system will not disinfect the slums, that we must go down below the surface of our industrial conditions and wrestle with evil in the place of its origin. Men in cloth, and women in silk, wholesale dealers in reform, moralizing against the wind, must work more and talk less. However small the cause of one man's poverty, or of ten men's poverty may be, it is not beneath the dignity of any man who truly desires justice to remove it if he can.

Mr. Morgan showed that in the labor-market there are more sellers than buyers of human muscle and brawn; therefore strikes fail, because there are always unemployed men enough to fill the vacuum created by a strike. Here he threw in a word of pity and apology for the "scab." He overdid it, and showed that his own order needed most the pity and the apology. He said, "These alleged idlers are the men termed 'scabs.' They risk losing their lives in the event of securing a job—prefer the abhorrence and detestation of their fellows rather than be without employment." Rather than be without *liberty* is the correct statement. It is not the fear of poverty but the love of liberty that gives that courage to the "scab." The so-called scabs are the nobility of labor, the hope of industrial emancipation. They have been the martyrs of independence in all ages. They are the up-

right brave who run the risk of death, the abhorrence and detestation of their fellows, rather than surrender their manhood into the keeping of other men. Those who threaten scabs with death, who load them with detestation and abhorrence, should beware how they fling contemptuous names which may rebound upon themselves. The "scab" is a free laborer; the man who can be "ordered out" or "ordered in" by a "chief," a "grand master," or a "walking delegate," is not. I do not speak in reproach, but in sympathy for men driven by despair to bad methods of defence. I have heard that it is written in the law that if two shipwrecked men are clinging to a plank which will only support one man, either of them may drown the other, and the act is not murder; but I do not believe the working men of America are in any such extremity.

Necessity is the plea offered for intolerance. "Organized labor" says: We have placed our freedom in the hands of trustees, who promise to prop up wages for us by the persecution of all other men if necessary. It is easy to preach on this and show the folly of it. It is easy to censure the cruelty of it, but men who live in haunted houses where the ghost of hunger sits forever on the hearthstone, are very apt to be feeble in philosophy and confused about *moral* distinctions. Holding work by a precarious tenure, liable to be idle any day, limited to a small ration of nature's raw materials out of which to make his living, with new inventions daily cheapening skill, it is natural that the mechanic, frightened by the combined adversities that threaten him, clutches at any means of safety, and shoves his neighbor off the plank. In Mr. Morgan's own words, "The worker, realizing by experience the futility of individual resistance seeks in trades-union-

ism the means of protection." To which I answer, "'Tis true, 'tis true, 'tis pity ; and pity it is 'tis true." For all this, the laborer must learn that he will never win his own rights by doing wrong to others. He must learn that the laws of justice are binding upon him as upon all other men. Passionate critics, like Mr. Morgan, feeling keenly the rich man's advantage, make no allowance for the millionaire, who may be the victim of his "environment" as helpless as the laborer in his. They do not see that magnanimity may travel upward as well as downward, and that it is equally due from the poor to the rich as from the rich to the poor. It sounds odd, but few of us know how much the rich need charity.

Mr. Morgan pretends that the laborer's margin of comfort is so small that he has no room for self-denial, and that the luxuries he is called upon to deny himself have already been denied him. He refuted this last Sunday, when he led the working men of the Trade and Labor assembly to resolve against drinking beer for thirty days, as a punishment to the master brewers who were employing non-union men. This bit of self-denial Mr. Morgan approves as discipline for the master brewers, but is not the self-discipline of it a victory more sublime. Trade-union statesmanship never devised a plan for raising wages so effectual as that. By it, every man in the scheme raises his own wages, or saves a wasted portion of it which amounts to the same thing. On Monday, Mr. Morgan said, "I drink but one glass of beer a day, and I quit that last night." This was a wise resolution unless Mr. Morgan intended to increase his daily allowance, because if the tired working man needs beer to tone him up and keep him going, one glass of it per day is

not enough, and if he does not need it, one glass is evidently too much. Mr. Morgan raises his own wages five cents a day. Not much indeed, but it amounts to a suit of clothes a year, which to a working man is considerable in this climate.

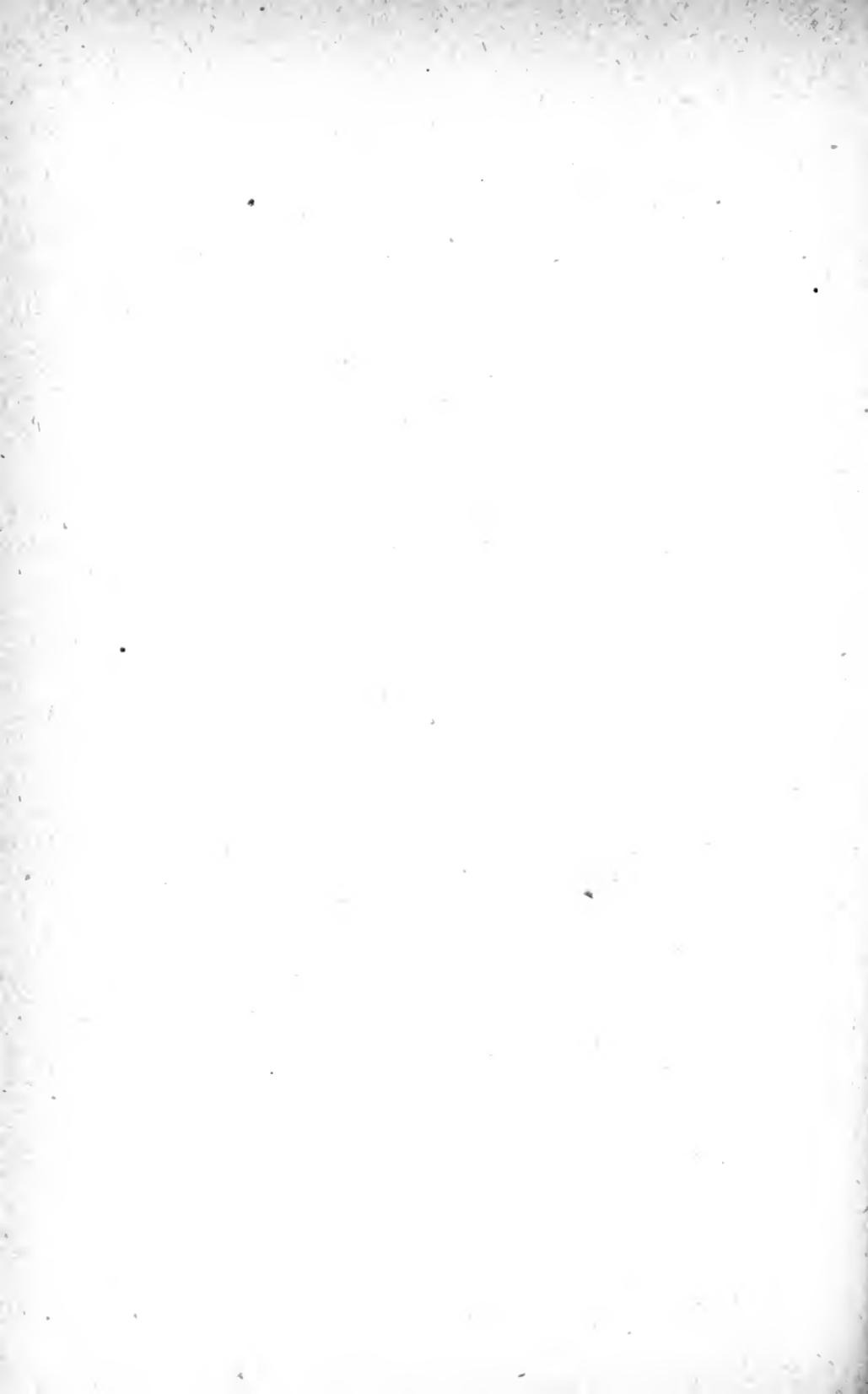
According to Mr. Morgan there are four acts in the evolution drama, barbarism, feudalism, individualism and socialism. We are now near the end of the third act, and individualism has possession of the stage. The arrangement is purely fanciful, and if the order were inverted it would be just as true. Is not State Socialism a quality of barbarism? I don't mean a bad quality, for many philosophers of high rank look upon State Socialism as a redeeming virtue in the political system of the Indians. Is it not error to think that individualism prevails even in the United States? Here every citizen has a legislature in almost continual session embracing him, petting, patronizing and protecting him. Sometimes two legislatures are affectionately squeezing him at the same time, and like a brace of benevolent garroters, literally "holding him up." Is it not the dream of every citizen that congress has the power to make prosperity? And many actually believe that Congress can make money. It is the chronic state of every man in this country that he "wants to have a law passed." What sort of individualism is that?

Mr. Morgan appears to be jealous of specific reforms. He prefers to see injustice breed injustice, and wrongs multiply. He thinks that after a fruitless march of calamity, the people in despair will turn to State Socialism for prayer and rest. The prospect for labor is not bright when leaders like Mr. Morgan "hail with delight the organization of every corpora-

tion, pool or trust that monopolizes production, communication, distribution, transportation or exchange." There is an unfortunate cabman in the lunatic asylum, who, although sane on other subjects, thinks that the nearest and best way to anywhere is across the great desert of Arabia. In his efforts to go by that route he caused his passengers much inconvenience. Mr. Morgan desires to conduct the working men to a better social state, but he insists on taking them there by way of the Arabian desert.

THE ETHICS OF THE BOARD OF TRADE.

A CONTROVERSY WITH LYMAN J. GAGE.



MAKING BREAD DEAR.

BY WHEELBARROW.

A FEW days ago a friend lent me a copy of *The North American Review*, in order that I might read an article by Mr. Henry D. Lloyd, on "Making Bread Dear." In that article Mr. Lloyd shows me the intricate wheels, cogs, and pulleys of that ingenious machine by which a conspiracy of the "rich criminal classes" can increase the price of bread. As my muscle and bone have always been cheap, it is of critical importance to me that bread should be cheap also. As I have usually sold myself in the market for a dollar a day, and from that to a dollar and a half, it has been an essential condition of existence to me that the land around me should be fertile, the rain upon it copious, and the sunshine strong. I have prayed against the late frosts in the spring, and early frosts in the fall, so that the crops might be abundant, and provisions cheap. My prayers have generally been answered as to the crops, but flour has not been cheap, and for years I have been dodging the price of bread. Sometimes I would sneak behind potatoes, but they were perishable, and grew dear in the winter time; then I hid among corn, and a good retreat it was, but the children asked for sure enough bread—the Johnny cake was dry. In the winter time white beans have

been my generous friends, and often they have helped me to evade the price of bread. All through the summer time, Nature, the bounteous mother, covers our share of the earth with a carpet of grain resplendent in green and gold, while bands of criminals are permitted by the laws to discount it and corner it, to bewitch it and bedevil it, that it may become costly and scarce to the workingman. The guilty profit goes to them, and with it they corrupt our laws in the very capitol where they are made.

While one gang of food gamblers raises the price of bread, another gang raises the price of meat, but this concerns me little, for little of it I get. Another gang raises the price of coal, another the price of oil, and another the price of matches with which I light my pipe. I am in the toils of monopolies that shave my wages down to "what the traffic will bear." I use the slang of capital, which in my case means the lowest point that flesh and blood can bear, and have strength enough left to shovel. When the wages comes the monopolies lay tax and tribute on it, and scale a bit of unjust profit from whatever I have to buy. I am helpless. I cannot get even with any one. As I am the very mudsill of society, there is nobody below me that I can oppress in revenge. I cannot retaliate on anybody. If I try to skrimp the dirt, and wheel up a light load, the boss on the bank detects the short measure, and yells, "Fill up the 'barrow." Bread-earners by hard labor of every degree. We are the Hebrew Hercules, shorn, and in the hands of the Philistines; we make rare sport for their holiday, but the revelry of monopoly cannot last forever; the hair of Samson will grow again.

I am told that high prices indicate social prosper-

ity, and that they are necessary in order to make high wages for me. I doubt that; I think it is untrue. For many years my wages has remained in figures much about the same, although its power in the market has varied a great deal. Sometimes it would buy a good many comforts, and at other times very few, although nominally it was about the same sum. Since I first worked with the wheelbarrow the population of the country has doubled, while the wealth of it has multiplied fourfold and more. Of that multiplied wealth I get no share at all. I know of it only from reading. I never felt its growth in the swelling of my wages. The increased cost of life I know by hard experience, but no proportionate recompense in higher wages has ever come to me. Relatively, indeed, I am sure my wages is less than it was, because the higher prices make it harder for me to live. Through the increased power of machinery an hour's human labor now produces twice or thrice as much as it did some thirty years ago, but I get no benefit from that; my hours of labor remain the same. I shall never again believe that high prices for everything is a good thing for me.

When I first went to railroading, my wages was a dollar a day; it is now from a dollar and a quarter to a dollar and a half. To say nothing of the increased wealth of the country, and the multiplied facilities for producing all the comforts of life, this raise of wages does not even correspond with the higher prices of food, fuel, rent, and clothes, to say nothing of a hundred other things. You may prove to me by what you call political economy, that I am wrong in this opinion, but I can prove to you by my household economy that I have had no meat for dinner to-day, and in

that I know that I am right. I have not capacity sufficient to learn the abstract principles of social science, and if I even had the genius, I am too tired to exercise it now. I learn by object lessons, like a child, and I know that the home of every laborer in Chicago is an object lesson, from which even our statesmen yet may learn that progress sometimes travels hand in hand with poverty. As I lay my touch upon the Titan wrist of labor, I feel in its pulsations, the resolution that they must be divorced, that the makers of progress shall enjoy a larger share of its beneficence, that the men who flinch not from the penalty "in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," must have the ration that their sweat has earned, and that not much longer will they be cheated out of the bread, after they have paid for it the full price demanded by the great Creator's law. As making bread dear is morally a crime, let us make it a crime by law; let us build new penitentiaries to accomodate those vermin of trade who make dear the food of the poor. They are the lineal descendants of the sordid Egyptian speculators who tried to corner all the corn in Egypt, because there was a famine in the land of Canaan.

It is an impious thing to arrest the bounty of the Creator on its way to the poor man's home. Men combine to reverse the commandment "Feed the hungry," they contrive by strategy to prevent the hungry from being fed. "We must make the five cent loaf a little smaller," said the bakers of Chicago a month or two ago, when a rich forestaller had successfully performed an operation on the "Board." "Or else we must reduce the weight of the pound loaf to fifteen ounces." Either way, it means a smaller ration for me. In defiance of this visible fact, I am assured by impossible algebra

and much double rule of three, that I am getting richer every year by higher wages, and fatter by cheaper food. Statesmen of terrapin brain tell me that I cannot possibly be hungry, because the statistics prove the increasing fatness of the land. I once took a seat in the gallery of the United States Senate in order to hear the debate. In the arena below me was a club of millionaires. To my surprise I saw that they had lost the power of natural speech. They could not talk; they chinked, like dollars rustled in a bag. In metallic monotone they tolled me that of the joint product of labor and capital the share of labor was absolutely and relatively increasing, while the share of capital was relatively decreasing. When I ask for my dividends I am told that I can get them from the statistics. Meanwhile I hear the drone of the everlasting driving-wheel furnishing power to innumerable eccentrics whose province it is to make bread dear, and laborers cheap.

CORNERS AND THE BOARD OF TRADE.

A CRITICISM OF WHEELBARROW'S ESSAY, "MAKING BREAD DEAR," BY
A SYMPATHIZER (LYMAN J. GAGE).

IN Number 78 of your paper, I read an article signed "Wheelbarrow." Too easily affected perhaps by the unfortunate condition of my fellow-men, I was greatly moved by the description given by Wheelbarrow of the hard lines in which his life is set. To be forever pushing a wheelbarrow at the meagre remuneration of \$1.25 per day, with a hard taskmaster standing near (at much higher wages per diem), forever crying, "Fill up the barrow," is indeed an unhappy lot. But this is only part of the picture he drew. While he secures for his toil only the small wages attaching to this most common kind of human labor, there is, according to him, a wicked design on the part of those superior to him in position, to render his pittance the most inadequate for his numerous wants, by artificially raising the prices of those things which his necessity demands.

My heart burned with indignation as I read his eloquent, if somewhat ambiguous, indictment of society; for he is truly eloquent, and when I read his glowing words, I wondered why he did not turn his attention to the Bar, the Pulpit, or the Press, because in either of these his mental gifts give promise of success; and by his own confession, pushing a wheelbarrow is hard, monotonous, and unprofitable work.

But this reflection made the contrast between what he might have been, and what he is, the more painful, and served only to aggravate the wickedness of those who try to oppress him. With these thoughts in mind I read again his pungent article. On the second reading, doubts arose in my mind. I asked myself the question, "Is this the statement of real fact, or is it a sketch in which a fervid imagination has outrun sober fact and reasonable judgment?" This I determined to ascertain if possible. I took the following extracts as fairly representative of his chief grievances, and said: "If I find this true, I will take his statement for the other specifications."

"All through the summer time, Nature, the bounteous mother, covers our share of the earth with a carpet of grain, resplendent in green and gold, while *bands of criminals are permitted by the law to discount it and corner it, to bewitch it, and bedevil it, that it may become costly and scarce to the workingman.* The guilty profit goes to them, and with it they corrupt our laws in the very capitol where they are made.

"While one gang of food gamblers raises the price of bread, *another gang raises the price of meat.* * * * As making bread dear is morally a crime, let us make it a crime by law; let us build new penitentiaries to accommodate those vermin of trade who make dear the food of the poor. They are the lineal descendants of the sordid Egyptian speculators who tried to corner all the corn in Egypt, because there was a famine in the land of Canaan."

Determined to be thorough in my examination of the matter, I called upon a farmer friend, showed him the article, and asked if the farmers were engaged in the wicked combination. He replied: "I know of no

combination to make wheat or flour high. I do know that the price is very low—so low as to afford the farmer but little remuneration for his toil. Statistics prove that the average pay to the farmer is about 82 cents per day, or about two-thirds of what Wheelbarrow earns, and the truth is that many from the country are moving into the city to secure, if possible, a more remunerative job, such as Wheelbarrow enjoys." I then called upon a miller who I know is honest. He said: "There is no combination among millers. On the contrary, competition is very fierce. If we get 25 cents per barrel for the use of our mill, and the risk we take, we are satisfied. In fact we do not average so much."

I had anticipated about this form of reply from facts already within my knowledge, and therefore was not much disappointed that in these two places—the farm and the mill—Wheelbarrow's trouble did not originate.

I then went to the Board of Trade. I visited a man, not an operator himself, but well acquainted with all the course of trade and speculation in the form of cereal and other product dealt in in this market.

He read the accusation of Wheelbarrow and said: "This kind of loose talk is hard to answer. It has no real foundation in fact. The only reply possible, is to set forth the real facts; and that requires a great many more words than it is necessary to use in accusing a man of murder, conspiracy, or other crime. No one wants to make bread dear; no one wants to make it cheap. The speculator operates to make *money*. He buys hoping for a *rise*, or he sells for future delivery hoping for a *decline*. There can be no buyer without a seller, and no seller without a buyer. If the short

seller was too numerous, grain would go down, and bread would be cheap ; but the agriculturalist would suffer, and if this influence continued long enough, he would cease to raise wheat, when a reaction would ensue, wheat would be scarce and high, and bread would become dear.

“Against this influence, the speculative buyer offers the only barrier. He is handicapped at the beginning by charges and expenses from which the short seller is free, *i. e.*, if he buys and carries wheat or other property, he is subjected to the cost of storage, interest, insurance, and the risk of deterioration in quality. Both the buyer and the seller are governed by their conclusions, reached from the best examination they can make of the present and prospective quantity of grain, as compared with the present and prospective demand for it, whether for home consumption or foreign exportation.

“One immediate effect of the operations described is to make a continuous cash market for all products so dealt in, and the two forces, it may be safely asserted, operate to bring the average price of wheat to a fair equilibrium under the law of supply and demand. At least it is true that in an open market such as usually exists, the current price is an expression of the agreed opinion of the world as to the fair value of the article. I say world, because the world trades in our market. If the price is for a moment higher than any individual trader's opinion of the real price he will offer for sale, and thus affect the price downward. If he thinks it too low, he will buy in the market, and thus influence the market upward. The opinions thus backed by monied risk, are much superior to the *ex*

parte notion of Wheelbarrow, or any other person who merely stands off and looks on.

"I might go on and speak about 'corners' so-called," my informant continued, "but perhaps I have said enough."

No, I replied, it is about corners that I especially want to hear, for I suspect that there, if anywhere, will be found the true occasion for Wheelbarrow's severe strictures.

"Well," he said, "I will tell you all I know about them. I have already spoken about an open market, meaning by that a market which is under no individual's or syndicate's control. Now, it occasionally happens, at infrequent intervals, that some one man, or a small group acting together, will take advantage of a moment when the actual stock of wheat or provisions in store is small, and secretly buy it all. With the actual property thus in possession, they will make contracts of purchase with the unsuspecting seller for future delivery. When the contract is due, the seller must buy in what he had previously sold, but as the stock is already in his adversary's hands, he can buy only of him, and at his price. The short seller is thus occasionally caught and put in chancery by the wily, and perhaps unscrupulous, dealer, who has thus cornered the market.

"But in the nature of things, such a condition must be of short duration. The operator who has cornered the market must buy all that comes. The advancing price, which is its inseparable feature, brings into the market the reserve from all points, and under the rapidly increasing load, the cornerer usually finds himself unable to continue to buy, and is at last

obliged to let go of his holdings, suffers enormous losses, and frequently involves himself in ruin.

“Some years ago, Jim Keene, of New York, tried the game. He lost two millions of dollars or more. Afterward McGeoch tried it. His losses amounted to millions, and he retired a ruined man. Ten years ago, a Cincinnati clique tried it. They lost enormously, and some of those interested are now in the penitentiary, where Wheelbarrow says they belong. But those are episodes. They are like raids in the rear of an army, or piratical excursions over ordinary peaceful seas. Their influence is so brief they seldom affect the price of the product to the actual consumer.

“As an illustration ; in a celebrated pork corner some three years ago, the price for regular delivery on change rose to \$35 per barrel, but the consumer could buy for use or shipment to other parts of the country for \$14 per barrel in any quantity he desired. This is a brief, but substantial statement of the fact. They cannot be said to make bread dear as Wheelbarrow alleges, for in a swing of months or years, their influence is next to nil in that direction.”

Having thus exhausted the chief specification of Wheelbarrow, I did not pursue the question into other fields. My own mind was greatly relieved, and I have thought others among your sympathizing readers might be similarly affected by this perusal.

Part of Wheelbarrow's unhappiness arises from the alleged fact that since “I first worked with the wheelbarrow * * * wealth has multiplied fourfold or more. Of that multiplied wealth I get no share at all.” Now, he might be asked in what way he has contributed to increase wealth fourfold. As a wheeler of earth, has his power increased fourfold, or even doubled, over

his predecessor in the same line a thousand years ago? He can walk no faster, he is no stronger, and he works fewer hours than his brother laborer of a century ago. By what right then can he demand that he share in an increase which he did not contribute to produce? As a matter of fact, however, he *has* shared in the larger productivity which society as a whole has brought about. When he went to railroading, "my wages was a dollar a day; it is now from a dollar and a quarter to a dollar and a half." This itself is a gain of from 25 to 50 per cent., and if he will take note of the table of prices for the things which he consumes, he will find the purchasing power of his dollars has increased.

I dislike to characterize his essay in unfriendly terms, but it is that kind of writing, now so much in vogue from labor agitators and would-be reformers, which hurts the cause it would help, confuses the true issues, obscures sound judgment, and helps to paralyze the efforts of those who would gladly aid the humbler members of society to attain a better hold on life.

MAKING BREAD CHEAP.

AN ANSWER TO THE CRITICISM OF "A SYMPATHIZER"

BY WHEELBARROW.

IN the last number of THE OPEN COURT I find a formidable criticism by a "Sympathizer" who reproves me as a "would be reformer," "paralyzing the efforts of those who would gladly aid the humbler members of society to attain a better hold on life."

At first I was disposed to regret my article "Making Bread Dear" if the tendency of it was to such a mischievous result; but on reflection I saw that it had worked the other way; and I felt rather proud that it had not been without a good effect on Sympathizer. It did not paralyze him. It aroused him. It moved him so strongly that he investigated the evils I denounced. He examined my accusations and answered them.

The first witness offered by Sympathizer for the defense is a farmer, who did not know of "any combination to make wheat or flour high." Sympathizer went to the wrong farmer. He should have gone to one of those grateful farmers who sent a memorial to the very forestaller I complained of, thanking him for raising the price of wheat by working a "corner" in which hundreds of men were "squeezed" into poverty, the prime article of life bewitched, and the hunger of the poor increased. I assert that any agency is im-

moral which obstructs the natural ebb and flow of the tide running up and down between the producer and the consumer, that healthy, navigable stream which is called "supply and demand." It is an immoral agency that by conspiracy or cunning raises the price of bread to the hod-carrier, or lowers the price of wheat to the farmer.

It is a mistake that the farmer's pay is only 82 cents per day. Statistics may say that, but they cannot prove it because it is not true. Sympathizer's friend, I suppose, meant a net income of 82 cents a day over and above all expenses. It must also be a mistake that farmers are moving into the city to compete with shovelers. I have not yet seen any farmers who desire to trade ploughs for wheelbarrows. If the statement were true it would prove that agriculture had become the weak, attenuated base of American existence, and our social fabric would topple over, splitting itself to pieces in the fall like an iceberg in the sea. I admit that the farmer is much poorer than he ought to be; I admit that he is the victim of numerous legalized extortions, but as he seems to enjoy them, and fears that they may be lifted from him, I will try to bear *his* poverty with resignation, although I have no patience with my own.

The next witness is a miller who testified as follows, "There is no combination among millers. On the contrary, if we get twenty-five cents per barrel for the use of our mill and the risk we take we are satisfied." The honesty of millers is proverbial, but I think this testimony will not stand the test of cross-examination. Did the witness mean that he made a barrel of flour for twenty-five cents, paying his workmen out of that, and also his taxes, and insurance?" Or did he

mean that his profit was twenty-five cents a barrel? As to the "combination," I fear that Sympathizer's miller has not yet got the key to it. According to the journals published in the milling interest, negotiations have been for several months in progress looking to a combination of the big millers to freeze out the little ones, and abolish that "fierce competition." I have no doubt that the conspiracy will eventually succeed.

The next witness was a man who testified for the Board of Trade. He was not himself a member of the Board, but he knew all about its machinery and methods. He was one of those exasperating witnesses who know too much, and hoodoo the side that calls them. It will be necessary now to bring on a real member of the Board to contradict or explain the testimony of Sympathizer's friend. His evidence verified my complaint, and showed that the price of bread *can* be artificially raised by "operations" on the Board of Trade. Nothing can be more cold-hearted and selfish than the following testimony: "The speculator operates to make *money*. He buys hoping for a *rise*, or he sells for future delivery hoping for a *decline*." Let Sympathizer read that sentence carefully and he will see that it springs from the ethics of the "pit" where conscience is drugged and stupefied. Let him bear in mind that the "speculator" spoken of "operates" on the bread of the poor; I say the bread of the poor because bread is literally the staff of life to the working man, while it is a trifling element in the rich man's bill of fare.

What is it that the speculator buys "hoping for a *rise*? Wheat! Just think of a man wasting his religion in praying for a *rise* in the price of wheat! This, too, in a prayer sometimes three months long. 'Or to sell

for future delivery hoping for a *decline*.'” What a perverted moral instinct it must be that prompts a man to hope that the value of an article will diminish after he has sold it to his neighbor. Is it really true that no man can prosper unless at the expense of others?

The defense is as bad as the offense. Here is the explanation: The speculator sold at a stated price for future delivery that which he did not have, but which he must buy before the day agreed on to deliver it. For instance, on the first day of May, Peter sold Paul one hundred thousand bushels of wheat at one dollar per bushel to be delivered on the 30th day of June. Peter doesn't own a bushel of wheat but has two months in which to buy it. He spends the two months in praying that wheat may fall to seventy-five cents a bushel. His prayers are granted, and he buys the hundred thousand bushels of wheat for seventy-five thousand dollars. He delivers them to Paul and demands and receives from him a hundred thousand dollars for the wheat. He cares nothing for the fact that the wheat is not worth what he takes for it, nor for the further fact that the twenty-five thousand dollars won by Peter may be the measure of Paul's ruin.

Not only do the “operators” pray for those unnatural prices, but they also work for them, and effect them. Here is the confession of sympathizer's witness: “If the price is for the moment higher than any individual trader's opinion of the real price, he will offer for sale, and thus effect the price *downward*. If he thinks it too low, he will buy in the market, and thus influence the market *upward*. The opinions thus backed by monied risk, are much superior to the *ex parte* notion of Wheelbarrow, or any other person who merely stands off and looks on.”

I do not see the superiority of those opinions to mine, for they are the very same opinions that I myself expressed. I complained that rich operators *could* affect the market, and effect the rise or fall of wheat by the aid of money. What is gambling but "opinions backed by monied risk?" That expression is a plagiarism from the invitation of the man who runs the wheel of fortune at the races. "Step forward, gentlemen, and back your own opinions."

Manufacturing or Commercial industry "backed by monied risk" is a very different thing to the speculation on the prices of things which the seller does not own and the buyer does not want; things which are not now and never will be in the possession of either party, and which perhaps are not yet in existence. This kind of speculation does not equalize the temperature of prices, and make a fair average one month with another between the producer and the consumer. In a market subject to artificial derangement, the poor man must always pay for a speculative margin which the baker must keep on the price of bread to protect him from a possible rise in flour. Every man who handles the wheat from the time it leaves the farm until it is sold in the form of bread, is compelled to insure himself against a possible speculative inflation of its price, and the consumer pays the insurance.

The witness did not deny that "corners" were operated by rich men on the Board of Trade. He not only admitted it but gave examples of its vicious and gambling character. I submit my case on the testimony of Sympathizer's witness. The details of his testimony reveal commercial business in its most heartless form, where the measure of one man's gain is the measure of another man's loss. In reply to

the apology that "their influence is so brief, they seldom affect the price of the product to the actual consumer," I offer the fact that the great "corner" of three months ago did actually raise the price of bread in the city of Chicago. The coal barons of New York who levied a tax on all consumers of coal, are well remembered still. Answer that, explain it, or excuse it if you can.

Sympathiser's witness tells us that "corners" are merely "episodes." He says: "They are like raids in the rear of an army or piratical excursions over ordinary peaceful seas." What further testimony is necessary to their amiable and benevolent character? Fancy Captain Kidd on trial for scuttling ships. Sympathiser's friend is called in as a witness to character. He testifies that he is well acquainted with the defendant, and that he is merely an inoffensive pirate; that he did not scuttle all the ships on the ocean "as he sailed, as he sailed," but only a few of them; and that his "influence was so brief as to not affect the price of the product to the actual consumer."

Suppose a gang of pirates should raid Lake Michigan for a few days, plunder ships, and destroy them, swoop down upon Chicago and carry off rich booty, would Symnathiser comfort the victims of the raid by the assurance that the influence of the pirates "is next to nil"?

Sympathizer says that I have no right to claim an interest in the increase of my country's wealth, nor, I suppose, in the expansion of its glory. He says that as a wheeler of earth I can do no more "in that line" than my predecessor did a thousand years ago. That is true, and I only ask wages in proportion to the rank of my wheelbarrow in the scale of productive activities.

The wealth of a country is the product of all its industrial forces working together. Let us suppose that of this product the wheelbarrow contributes one part, the jackplane two parts, the trowel three, the plough four, the yardstick five, and so on up to the banker's ready reckoner, which we represent as ten. In twenty years the product of them all has doubled ; shall the banker's share be twenty, the merchant's ten, the farmer's eight, the trowel's six, the jackplane's four, and the wheelbarrow's only one. I insist that in proportion to my rank in the scale of production I am entitled to my share of the increase. I am a stockholder in the Bank of Industry, and I am entitled to my dividends in proportion to the stock I hold. If I did not wheel earth somebody else would have to do it, perhaps the bricklayer, or the clerk, or the merchant, or the banker, for wheeling of earth must be done. When in the great lottery of life the duty of doing it, fell to me, I bore upon my shoulders men of greater skill to work at higher trades than mine. Without me to stand on, they must have worked upon a lower plane. I am willing that the man who contributes five talents to the capital stock shall receive another five over and above. I envy not the hundred per cent. reward to him who has contributed four, or three, or two talents, but I insist that my one talent, if I bury it not in the ground, but throw it into the common fund, shall be doubled in honor like the rest.

While other men grow up with the country must I stand still? As I cannot release myself from duty to my country, neither can any other man justly deprive me of my share in its greatness and its growth. You can no more justly deprive me of my share in the increase of national riches than of my share in the

increase of national freedom, for which I fought in many battles. Have I no inheritance in the legacy of the past? Did the great inventors and discoverers leave me nothing when they died? As well tell me that Shakespere, Goethe, Plato, Newton, Bacon, left me nothing. I am heir of all the men whose genius has multiplied the moral and material riches of the world. Every other man is co-heir with me in the great inheritance, and every woman too.

Sympathizer kindly advises that if my Wheelbarrow wages is too low, I turn my attention to the Bar, the Pulpit, or the Press. This is like the physician who advertised advice gratis to the poor, and when they came for it, recommended them to try the climate and the waters of Baden-Baden. Does Sympathizer know of any wealthy congregation in want of a preacher of my peculiar faith?

Let it not be thought that my censures were aimed at the Board of Trade as a corporation, or at its members as a class. They were aimed at certain methods practiced by certain men within the privileges and opportunities of the Board, methods which are confessed and condemned by Sympathizer and his witnesses. Many of the most honorable, generous, and useful men in this community are members of the Board of Trade; men whose friendship any man may be proud to enjoy.

When I demand cheap bread, I do not wish to deprive the farmer, the miller, or the Board of Trade man, or anybody who contributes to its production and distribution, of his deserved reward. Everybody who does work for the benefit of society is employed in his own way to make bread cheap. Bread, it is true, under special conditions, with a given amount of labor and its machinery, cannot be cheaper than the

legitimate wages of its producers. But its price is often increased by additional taxes levied upon it by industrial "pirates" that intervene between the legitimate distributors. Theirs is that making bread dear of which I spoke.

Let us unite against the common enemies of society. Every honest calling is productive of some good. It makes life easier and better. The honest business of the Board of Trade, as Sympathizer explains, is to equalize the price of wheat and facilitate its journey from the farm to the laborer in the city. That appears to me to be a useful work and I can see how it may tend toward "making bread cheap. From what I had heard of Sympathizer's article, I expected a complete refutation, but I think he strengthens my position. I see clearer than ever that "making bread dear" is a crime.

THE TWO SIDES OF THE QUESTION.

A REJOINER TO WHEELBARROW ON MAKING BREAD DEAR.

BY A SYMPATHIZER (LYMAN J. GAGE).

WHEELBARROW complains in his last essay about the small inheritance of wealth or reward which he receives from the increased productivity of society as a whole. He demands higher wages.

Space will not permit any thorough consideration of Wheelbarrow's complaint, but, adopting his comparisons and figures, may not the following suggestions go part-way towards explaining the small share which comes to him, as an individual? He has supposed, and seems to approve as reasonable, a certain relative value in industries. Thus wheelbarrows as a class, he says, are entitled to one part in the industrial product, jackplanes two parts, the plough four parts, etc. Now he supposes that in twenty years the product of them all has doubled. Shall the farmer's part now be eight, the jackplane's four, and the wheelbarrow's still only one?

Accepting his formula, may it not be true that wheelbarrows, as a group, taken altogether, *do* get their portion doubled, as jackplanes as a whole receive their double portion? If this be true, then the division of the share coming to these groups would become equitably divided among the units composing them. If, therefore, the units composing the wheelbarrow group increased in a faster ratio than the units com-

posing the jackplane group, the share to the units in the wheelbarrow group would be relatively less than would fall to the units or individuals composing the jackplane group. If all men were wheelers, there would be no productivity. Neither must the wheelbarrow wing of the great industrial army be too large. Society can afford to that group, as a division, only a certain share.

In fact, I believe and statistics seem to prove, that the comparative increase seems to favor the lowest class of workers. The unskilled laborer could in former ages scarcely earn his daily bread and in rare cases only provide himself with a home and have a family. He is comparatively best paid in a highly civilized society. Any increase of industrial productivity will benefit all classes, but the least skilled do comparatively profit most of all.

The individuals composing a group or division, if their share of the allotment be too small, must join some other division, and no motive can be more effective than the desire to gain a larger individual share of the total industrial product. This is, however, only a suggestion. The question is a large one. It deserves serious and continued study.

It is a hopeful sign that modern thought is becoming engaged with it. Let us hope that through the intelligence displayed in Wheelbarrow, and the growing intellectual power evident on every side among workmen, the great questions of our social economics will find at last a just and final solution.

* * *

But let us confine our attention to the main point of our discussion which is the "crime of making bread dear."

It is somewhat anomalous that one who has never owned a bushel of wheat, nor more than one barrel of flour at any one time, should find himself defending speculation in bread-stuffs. But as the probability is that "Wheelbarrow" is in about the same case, we both have the advantage of looking at the subject from a comparatively disinterested standpoint; and I think we both desire to find the truth.

His review of my criticism is keen and searching; but if I may say so, it appears to be a little disingenuous. For instance, my "witness" said: "The speculator buys *hoping* for a rise, or sells *hoping* for a decline." Wheelbarrow thereupon attacks him, and tries to impeach his character. He says:

"Nothing can be more cold-hearted and selfish than such testimony; it springs from the ethics of the pit. Just think of a man wasting his religion in praying for a rise in wheat. This, too, in a prayer sometimes three months long."

Well, I think I ought not to have exposed my witness to this stricture; and perhaps I ought to have stated in specific terms that a speculator rarely prays, and if he does, it is as often that he prays for a decline as for a rise. My witness used the word "hope" it is true, when the word "belief" would have expressed the facts more clearly. Let us say, then, that the speculator buys *believing* that wheat will rise in price, or sells *believing* it will fall in price, and thus save Wheelbarrow from further moral pain.

Again, my "witness" did not defend corners. He first explained them, and then candidly admitted that they bore to the regular operators of the Board of Trade about the relation that a piratical excursion bears to commerce, or that the hurried raid in the rear of an army bears to the regular movement of a cam-

paign. But Wheelbarrow scolds my witness as a defender of these objectionable, though brief, influences, and this is not quite ingenuous.

Where commerce covers the sea with ships ministering to the needs of man, experience shows that the pirate may, now and again, in ships manned by men, make excursions hostile to commerce ; but experience shows also, that these are incidents, and that their total effect is next to nil, and it is a comfort to know that it is so. It is satisfactory, also, to know that "cornerers" are in their nature brief events, incidents to greater movements, and that in the sweep of time their influence is comparatively unimportant.

I am ready to join with Wheelbarrow (abandoning my witness if necessary) in denunciation of the kind of "cornerers" who resemble pirates. But there remain the "cornerers" whose actions my witness likened to that of a hostile raid in the rear of an army. This does not resemble piracy. It is often excusable. It is frequently patriotic and praiseworthy. Wheelbarrow himself says :

"When I demand cheap bread, I do not wish to deprive the farmer, the miller, or the Board of Trade man, or anybody who contributes to its production and distribution, of his deserved reward."

This is just and right, but if Wheelbarrow would study the facts, he would find that there is frequently at work an influence which, if left unchecked, would rob the farmer, if no one else, of his hard earned reward. This influence is the "short seller." Like the poor, he is always with us, though more audacious. An honest *believer* he may be that lower prices will prevail, owing to his belief in increased crops, or a diminishing demand. He will sell for future delivery if

anyone will buy. Like an auctioneer, he will offer it down until he finds a buyer.

In former times governments performed the functions of the Board of Trade equalizing the price of grain by establishing storehouses, buying when the price of wheat was low and selling when it was high. They thereby lowered the price of bread in hard and raised it in good times, thus favoring now the farmer and now the consumer. A socialistic government would have to do the same as did the old paternal governments. Whether they would do it as well as the Board of Trade does it now, remains doubtful.

Now, let us suppose a practical case—a case which has more than once had real existence.

A “rich” man on the Board of Trade, performing the function of the benevolent government of former times, discovers that the course of the market has brought the price of wheat to a point which does not yield to the farmer his “deserved reward,” nor such a price as to justify him in future effort to raise wheat on his farm, if the current price were to continue. In the *belief* that such a state of things cannot long continue, this “rich” man buys. Possibly he has a warm sympathy with the poor farmer, whose crop is ready to market: at all events, he buys: he buys largely. Does the price advance? No, it declines. To average his purchase, he doubles his first purchase at the now lower price. Does it then advance? No! it declines. He figures up the extent of his holding. He finds that he has purchased for an early delivery nearly as much as the total stock in our warehouses, but the price is still falling.

He goes upon “change.” A score of voices are offering to sell, by the thousands, by the hundreds of

thousands of bushels, competing with each other at fractions less in price at every breath. Shall he join that shouting throng, surrender his judgment, sell as best he can, bear his losses the best he may. He will not do so if he begins his name with an "H." He discovers that a planned campaign has been inaugurated by the "bears" to break the market to the lowest point, and by heavy calls on him for margins, compel him to let go his holdings, and sell to them at their own price.

To face such a situation requires nerve and courage of the highest order. If this buyer has it, and can control the capital necessary, he will plan a work similar to that of "a raid in the rear of an enemy." He will buy. He will buy all that is offered. He will control or corner the market. Only thus can he protect himself. If he is successful, he teaches reckless men,—men who have no regard for the farmer's "deserved reward," that there is retribution for their reckless disregard of equity. And I do not hesitate to say that, under the condition I have sketched, his action conduces to the welfare of the country, and herein is patriotic and praiseworthy.

Wheelbarrow asks—and his question possesses a pathetic interest: "What is it that the speculator buys?" And he answers with impressive emotion: "Wheat!"

Will Wheelbarrow allow us to remain calm at all his excitement?

What is it that all buyers and sellers buy and sell? If it is not wheat, it is meat, or fruit, or coal, or tools, or books, or other necessities which men want and use. Every article, be it made of iron or wood, may it serve directly for the production of food or indirectly to the

prolongation and amelioration or elevation of life is to some extent "our daily bread." Man does not live upon bread alone, and in a certain sense we all are engaged in producing bread—life-stuff for human beings—in some form, and who will deny that everybody attempts to sell his part of it as dear as possible? and everybody has a right to do so. Wheelbarrow agrees with me, that if anybody's work is more difficult, he may have greater rewards, and the scale of wages can easily be regulated by free competition.

Wheelbarrow becomes sentimental when he observes that some people deal in wheat, and that they hope for a rise of wheat.

When Wheelbarrow delved and carried earth at a railway job, he undoubtedly added his mite to the general capital and was engaged in making bread cheap, for the road will soon carry farmers and their machines West to raise more wheat. But when Wheelbarrow now demands his wages doubled, his own and of course those of all wheelers of earth too, he prays for making bread dear; for higher wages must increase the expenses of building railroads, and if any disproportionate increase of wages took place on a larger scale, it might prevent roads to be built and thus would necessarily make it impossible for many farmers to go West, and those who live West could not send their wheat East. It would tend to making bread dear.

While upon the whole, Wheelbarrow, as it appears to me, means what is right and just, he has one fault, and that is his rhetoric. What is the use of sentimentality in economical or in any other questions? Let us come to business in plain and clear terms without any verbosity and ado, and we will the quicker under-

stand one another. Making bread cheap in the sense Wheelbarrow preaches, may be well enough, but let us not forget, that in a certain sense, we are entitled to make it dear, just as much as Wheelbarrow is entitled to demand higher wages, if he can get them, or rather—if he deserves them.

When I undertook to oppose Wheelbarrow I chiefly intended to call attention to the fact that there are two aspects of the question of making bread dear. Labor agitators, as a rule, demand that "the bread we eat must be cheap, but for the bread we make we should demand the highest price," and the short-sighted, credulous listeners are apt to believe him who promises most. They do not see that agitators preach "yes and no" in one breath, that sour and sweet at the same time comes out of their mouth.

There is a modern reformer appealing with his arguments to the broad masses, who promises by the simple means of taxing land to its full rental value to offer bread for nothing. Henry George says in "Progress and Poverty," that if but the landlords were taxed out of existence, we would realize the ideal of the communist. We shall have meals at public tables for the mere asking of it, free libraries, free theatres, free baths, free railroads, free street cars, heat and motor power furnished in our houses at public expense, etc., etc.

What is that else than offering bread gratis? and it is bread for body and soul, bread of any description. But if all that can be had for the mere asking of it, who will then work? "That is just the advantage of it," I am told, "wages will rise, they will rise as high as they never have been, and men will not work at all unless it be for the pleasure of work."

An excellent prospect if it were possible! Pray, gentlemen, how can you, for any length of time, distribute values gratis, unless you can also create them gratis?

Mr. George promises that we shall reap where we did not sow and that we shall have an unlimited credit in the bank of public prosperity without being obliged to make any deposit.

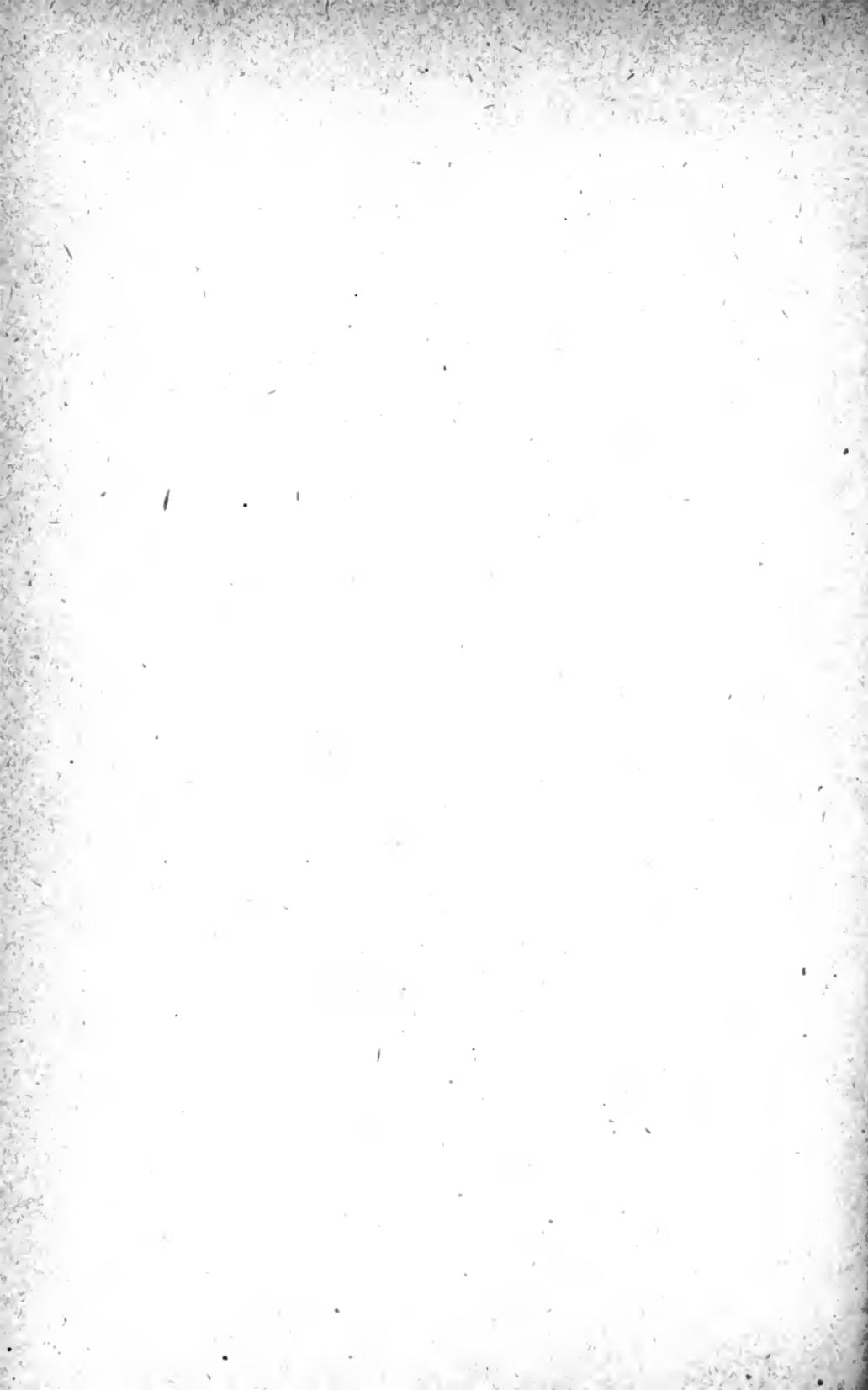
Mr. George has a great followership and whatever be the merit of his idea of land taxation, nobody seems to be aware of the utopian scheme of what constitutes Georgeism proper. He promises that the bread we eat shall be cheap, so cheap that it is given for the mere asking of it, and the bread we make shall be dear, so dear that nobody shall be able to buy it, unless he pays the full price we demand.

Let us cease to be overawed by oratory. There is an untruth in every exaggeration and every untruth contains poison.

Let us work to produce bread, every one in his way; useful work will lead to make bread cheap. But at the same time let us bear in mind that bread means human labor, it means human lives. Any artificial combinations to make bread dear for the benefit of a few conspirators—pirates as I called them—is to be condemned. In that I fully agree with Wheelbarrow. But let us not demand that bread be too cheap, for that would necessarily degrade a certain number of human lives into abject poverty, and deprive them of their due reward for having contributed to make bread.

THE SINGLE TAX QUESTION.

LETTERS WRITTEN IN THE CONTROVERSY UPON
THAT SUBJECT.



THE SOURCE OF POVERTY.

A REPLY BY WHEELBARROW TO MR. L.'S CRITICISM.

THANKS for allowing me to answer Mr. L.'s criticism. I like to meet a critic who frankly confesses that he comprehends the subject and that I do not. From such a critic I always expect instruction, and seldom get it.

Is Mr. L. perfectly sure that he "comprehends" the case? His illustrations indicate that he does not. True, a physician finding his patient suffering from headache, indigestion, pains in the side, and cold feet, might wisely say, "These are not four diseases, but four symptoms of one disease," and on that theory he might properly prescribe a single remedy; but suppose four patients afflicted with different disorders, will he treat them all alike? This is more nearly like the case about which we are now holding a consultation, and Mr. L.'s instance does not fit. Society is composed of many persons, some of them healthy and some not. The sick patients have all sorts of disorders, and the cures must be as various as the causes of disease.

"Poverty," says Mr. L., "is the real disease"; and he would abolish it by levying a single tax on land. He can as easily remove it with a crowbar. Whatever poverty results from land monopoly will vanish when that monopoly shall cease to be; but the poverty caused by the land system is only a small portion of the aggregate wants and deprivations which go by the name of poverty. Poverty is a consequence, like sorrow, and like sorrow it comes from a thousand springs. The college of physicians was once confounded by a wise man who advised the faculty to abolish "sickness," instead of attacking diphtheria, measles, and fever. "Remove sickness, gentlemen!" he said, "and all the diseases will disappear."

A good many years ago, I lived on the western "frontier." Jerry Dodd was the only doctor in our village, and even he graduated in the blacksmith shop, where he picked up his medical education by physicking horses. Jerry had one infallible remedy for all diseases, from typhoid fever down to corns and bunions. He called it "lobeely." It was the only medicine I ever took that would produce sea-sickness on land. No matter what ailed us; he always prescribed "lobeely." I once had a painful felon on my thumb, and Jerry made me take a stiff dose of lobeely, to remove, he said, "the poverty of the blood." So I am continually meeting with Jerry Dodds, who have a specific for the cure of all social and political ailments, a dose of "lobeely" to remove all the poverty of the people.

I can hardly be civil to the doctrine that sobriety and economy reduce wages; but as I used to believe it myself, I will treat it courteously. Will Mr. L. give us one instance in the United States where sobriety and economy had any such effect? When the temperance movement was spreading among the workmen of England, the brewers and publicans used to employ talkers to go among us and explain that the whole scheme was gotten up by the masters to lower wages, and that whenever it should become evident that we could do without beer, the value of the beer we used to drink would be deducted from our wages. I believed all that for a long time, but at last I noticed that when a man got his wages raised, or was promoted, he was in almost every case a teetotaler. As soon as my eyes were directed towards the actual facts, I saw in a moment that not only was the doctrine false, but that the reverse of it was true. It is amazing that this mischievous error should be revived in the United States!

When and where did Col. Ingersoll say that "the bankbook of a mechanic is a certificate that wages are too high?" Col. Ingersoll has said many eloquently foolish things, but I do not believe he ever said anything so foolish as that. There must be a mistake about the quotation. As to the kindred sentiment, that "It is not men we must try to improve; it is the conditions that make men what they are that must be altered," I repeat that it has been for ages an obstacle to the progress of mankind. It gives us a cowardly excuse for laziness. It enables us to shift our vices and mistakes from ourselves to our "conditions." It encourages us to shirk our duty, and to desert the moral work set out for us to do. **We must** try to improve men and their conditions too. The former

is the more important action, because improved men will improve conditions long before improved conditions will improve men. I do not think it well to place these two reforms in opposition to each other or in contrast. They should march along step by step together, like two soldiers of the same file.

"A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." A priest and a Levite came along, both of them wholesale reformers, and they said, "To help this man would be beneath our dignity; we are not in the retail business. Let us alter the 'conditions' that produce thieves, and highway robbery will cease." Then came a Samaritan and said, "I will gladly assist you to reform society by wholesale, but while we are doing it, I do not think it beneath me to do good in a retail way." So he went to the injured man, "and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine; and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." The moral of this is, work for the removal of suffering wherever you find it. There are many wrongs in our social and political systems, each one producing its own share of poverty. By removing each separate wrong we remove its quota of evil; and the man who thinks he has some stuff in a bottle that will cure everything, is enthusiastically wrong. It is a mistake that a single tax on land will remove the poverty caused by drunkenness, idleness, rheumatism, or falling among thieves. The man who will do nothing to remove our social evils, but levy a single tax on land, simply leaves the victim of injustice to die on the Jericho road

I have no excuses to offer for the wickedness of the "Coal Barons," who lock up nature's coal cellars and turn the miners out. If I had my way there would not be any coal barons, nor any other "barons" for that matter; but without any further dwelling upon that, I proceed to answer Mr. L.'s question concerning the locked-out miners. "Does not Wheelbarrow see that the strictest economy, the temperance of a St. John can be of no avail to those unfortunate men?" Well, no, I do not see any such thing. It appears to me that under the circumstances temperance and economy must be of great avail. It is easy to say that they have been deprived of "the right to the use of the earth," and I rather think myself that they ought to have the coal mines; at least I wish they had them, but would they not be coal barons then? And suppose I should go

there with my shovel, pickaxe, and wheelbarrow, and begin digging coal for a living, how long would it take them to fire me out of the mine? And if I should tell them that I had a "right to the use of the earth," they would say, "Yes, but not to that part of the earth which your neighbor has a right to the use of." And how could I answer that? Phil. Fogarty, an Irish friend of mine, was president of the land league, and one day he told me that he had hired a man to kill landlords.

"What do you pay him for the job?"

"I give him a hundred and sixty acres of land for every landlord he kills."

"What if he kill ten landlords?"

"Then he will get sixteen hundred acres of land."

"Why, that will make him a landlord; will it not?"

"Yes, but I have a man ready to kill him then."

While Mr. L. is abolishing the "conditions" which produce "coal barons," let him be careful that he substitute not some new "conditions" that will create new "barons."

All poverty will not be removed by sobriety and thrift, but they will abolish that part of it which has been caused by improvidence and drink. I think these propositions are self-evident, yet Mr. L. thinks the result of them would be to reduce us "to a mere animal existence." The man who believes that self-discipline, industry, economy, temperance, will reduce those who practice them to "a mere animal existence" probably attaches no definite meaning to such phrases as, "It is not restriction, it is freedom that labor needs?" "Throw open natural opportunities." "Put all men on equal footing in regard to natural bounties by taxing to the fullest extent and for the benefit of the whole community that fund which has been created by the whole community." And so on for several columns. May I ask, "What fund? and why tax it at all? How can taxing a fund created by the whole community be for the benefit of the whole community? All that magniloquence reminds us of the "red-faced man" described by Dickens, who used to stun the company with gong-phrases that might mean anything or nothing. "What's freedom?" said the red-faced man, "Not a standing army. What's a standing army? Not freedom. What's general happiness? Not universal misery. Liberty aint the window tax, is it? Society is bending beneath the yoke of an insolent and factious oligarchy; bowed down by the domination of

cruel laws; groaning beneath tyranny and oppression on every hand, at every side, and in every corner."

The man who thinks that there is a "sole cause" for all the poverty, vice, misery, errors and mistakes that abound in society, may call himself an "economist," and a "student of natural law," but he has not been much of a "student" if he has not learned that poverty occasioned by drunkenness, gambling, or even by business imprudence, is not to be removed by levying a tax on land. It is quite in harmony with "natural law," that such an "economist" should hug the delusion that "nothing short of rebuilding our whole social structure will be of any real or lasting benefit to the masses." Why so? Is there any need for such a wholesale change? "Nothing will ever cure that smoky chimney," said the old lady, "except rebuilding the whole house." She had studied just enough "natural law" not to know that rebuilding the chimney might answer every purpose. The rebuilding of "our whole social structure" would be the most tremendous feat of engineering ever done by mortal man since he attempted to scale heaven from the tall towers of Babel; yet there are architects in every town who can furnish in a moment's notice the plans and specifications by which the rebuilding may be easily and successfully done. And the world is distracted by their confusion of tongues.

Familiar and friendly as the clown in the circus, our old acquaintance the "iron law of wages" steps into the arena and says, "Here we are again." Close behind him follows the ancient antithesis known as "the millionaire and tramp, the one the complement of the other." Those veteran bits of rhetoric have done good service; they have earned retirement and a pension. Let them go. The tramp is not the complement of the millionaire nor the millionaire of the tramp. They are distinct social phenomena, the one independent of the other, the tramp a little more independent sometimes than the millionaire. There is a good deal of maudlin sorrow and stumpy pathos wasted upon one specimen of the tramp, and much undeserved reproach upon the other. Rarely is the tramp a sign of want, or even of a scarcity of work. As a picturesque victim of social oppression he is a healthy, rollicking fraud. The stout young fellow who goes on tramp for the gypsy fun of it, and because he would rather beg than work is a despicable creature who ought to be kept on the stone pile; but the laborer who prefers to walk from one part of the country to another, rather than

ride, may be as respectable as the man in the palace-car. Neither the one tramp nor the other is chargeable to the millionaire. In this country the tramp is not the product of poverty but of riches. It is not scarcity but abundance that causes the tramp to blossom in the United States. The fact that a man can get "a meal's vittles" for nothing, almost anywhere in America has developed that contemptible jolly mendicant known as the tramp. As a political argument he is an impostor.

It seems to me that the "student of natural law" utters a contradiction when he says in one paragraph that the millionaire and the tramp "are but creatures of the same natural forces;" and then tells us in another paragraph that "nature is not concerned with the making of millionaires and paupers anymore than with the making of Jews and Catholics." I think they are all the products of artificial forces; although, as to the tramp, nature has had a good deal to do with producing him. Any man who has had much acquaintance with nature in the woods and fields knows the artful way by which she seduces boys from the schoolhouse and men from the shop. The man who has never been a tramp; I don't mean a mendicant, but the tramp who pays his way; the man who has never been a tramp knows not what luxury is. He has never quaffed the wine of life from the chalice of the Gods. He has never felt the holy spirit pouring down upon him from the sun. Health glows in the brown face of the tramp, and nature makes for him a pic-nic and a holiday. Do you like pictures? Tramp through Old England in the spring, or New England in the fall, and roll past you with your own feet a landscape of 20, 30, 40 miles a day. How the glories of the Louvre and the Vatican pale before the groupings and the colorings you will see. In his gilt-edged poetry the millionaire reads about "the music of the spheres," but the tramp actually hears it in that symphony of praise wherein all the harmonies of nature sing together. He drinks a gallon of air at a draught, and consumption and dyspepsia know him not. A pleasant stroll that I can recommend for anybody needing a tonic is a twenty mile-a-day walk across the "pleasant land of France," say from Dieppe, straight away to Strasburg. Let us not waste any more tears on the tramp, nor any more cant.

And this reminds me of "The iron law of wages," which has been imported into this debate. It gives to the argument a learned look, as cap and gown give an air of scholarship to an Oxford

student. "The iron law of wages" is an old myth which used to vex and puzzle me, but like some other ghosts it fled when I challenged it. I then discovered that it was unreal, like "The stuff that dreams are made of." It has no more substance than the wooden rule of three, or the leather law of interest. If a figure of speech is needed let us call the law of wages india-rubber, which it resembles. It is elastic; it swells and shrinks, and stretches and bends according to the pressure and resistance of the time. It changes according to the "conditions." Time, place, and circumstance; crops, climate, capital; product, strength, skill, character, and a thousand other forces control and modify the law of wages, if there is any law of wages other than the law of price for groceries, the law of getting the most sugar and the most labor for the least money?

I once held the position of deputy bricklayer. I carried the bricks up in a hod, while my principal set them in the wall. He was a labor-orator and a good one. Did you ever hear a sailor box the compass? Well, that's the way my principal used to rattle off the jargon of the "dismal science." The pathetic way in which he would explain the "iron law of wages," used to make us all so thirsty from shedding tears, that we had to call for beer. One day we had this dialogue:

"Jem," I said, "what is the iron law of wages?"

"O, 'ts the law which allows a working man just wages enough to purchase the necessaries of life, and keep his muscles in working order."

"Does it cost any more to keep your muscles in working order than mine?"

"No."

"Then how comes it that you get three dollars a day, and I only get a dollar and a quarter?"

"Well, of course, you know, skilled labor is more valuable than unskilled labor in the market."

"Then the value of the article in the market has something to do with the price of it?"

"Certainly."

"And there is no iron law?"

"Yes, there is; for the lowest forms of labor, but not for the higher."

"This," I said, "amounts to a confession that there is no "iron law of wages."

Mr. L. hopes and expects too much from the land scheme of Henry George. That scheme was lifted into popularity by the eloquence of its advocate as much as by its own merits, and in spite of its mistakes. The moral defect of it is that it makes taxation a principle. It elevates taxes to the rank of blessings. Taxes always deprive society of some comforts; they never can increase its wealth, any more than levying measles upon a special few can increase the health of all. The paradox is visible in Mr. L.'s proposal to abolish poverty "by abolishing all taxation upon the products of labor, and putting it upon land values, taxing them to the last penny." What are land values but the "products of labor!" And why confiscate land values "to the last penny?" The only revenue that any government can obtain by taxing land values must come from the values which are the product of labor. The speculative land value of a vacant lot, the anticipated profits of an uncultivated "quarter section," will yield nothing to the tax-gatherer, if assessed to the "last penny" of its prospective worth. In this case the land and the lot will simply be forfeited by the owner to the State, and if conferred upon a new owner they will not yield the first penny in taxes or in profits until they have been made productive by the magic touch of labor. There is much in Mr. George's land scheme that appears to me to be correct, and some of it I advocated in a crude way before Mr. George was known as an author. I think there is a good deal of social relief in the principle of the single tax on land, as being the least impediment to labor; but I do not see how that relief can ever be greater than the sum total of the taxes required for the strict necessities of government. Mr. George is not to be held responsible for the views of his disciples, but many of them believe that under his plan every man who owns lands and lots is to be fined for the offense "to the last penny" of their value.

The personal questions addressed to me in Mr. L.'s last paragraph must be answered. *First.* "Does Wheelbarrow go down below the surface and wrestle with evil in the place of its origin?" To that I answer, yes; as well as I can; but I see a thousand origins of evil, and to the best of my ability I wrestle with them all. I give such help as I can to every reformer, and to every reform. I complain that progress is retarded because reformers will not assist each other. "A single tax on land is the only way to relieve poverty," says one. "Wrong," says another, "State Socialism is

the only cure for poverty." "Both wrong," says a third, "Money reform is the one thing needful." "All wrong," says a fourth, "Prohibition of the liquor traffic will remove all poverty," and so on, until the relief of individual misery is looked upon as very unprofessional in a wholesale reformer. Whenever I see anything in any man's plan that I think will remove evil either by wholesale or by retail, I am his disciple.

Second. "Does Wheelbarrow intend to give labor back the right to the use of the earth?" To that I answer, yes; and when labor uses the earth, I would not tax its product *as a punishment* for using it.



IS THE SINGLE TAX THE SOLE CURE ?

REPLY TO MR. S. L.

MAY I offer a few words in reply to Mr. L's latest criticism? He says that he can give "many instances where economy has had the effect of reducing wages," and he hopes that, "having demonstrated this," I will treat his doctrine courteously. He demonstrates nothing. He simply makes two assertions, without attempting to support them by any evidence whatever. The first is, that the wages of cigar-makers have been lowered by "economical Bohemian workmen"; and the second is, that the wages of Pennsylvania miners have been lowered by "frugal and economical men from Italy and Hungary." It is not necessary to dispute these assertions because the point in controversy here is not whether the wages of miners and cigar-makers have been reduced, nor whether it has been reduced by 'frugal and economical' Bohemians, Italians, and Hungarians, but whether the reduction is caused by their economy and frugality. It is quite impossible that the frugality and economy of workingmen can have the effect of lowering their wages. If such a result were possible, all the reasons that regulate wages would be reversed, and economic science would stand on an immortal foundation. For centuries, there have been "frugal and economical" men in every trade and calling. If their prudence lowered the wages of their brother craftsmen and themselves, wages would have fallen long ago to the minimum necessary for existence.

Mr. L. repeats much of his former argument; and my answer to that will apply to the repetitions also. I will notice a few of his later statements. He admits that in his former article he misquoted Col. Ingersoll but the reason was that he was a little careless, and 'quoted from memory.' He now gives us the quotation as amended, being careful at the same time to shelter himself behind the Colonel's back. He adopts the easy stratagem of weak disputants and overwhelms his adversary by taunting him with a sentiment from the writings of some great or famous man. A friend of mine, who worked with me on the same job, used to floor me in debate by the following formula: "Oh, you differ with Henry Clay, do you? Bad

for Henry Clay." In like manner Mr. L. tries to be sarcastic by showing "how a great lawyer, and a man of rare accomplishments is liable to lose his reputation as a scholar when confronted by 'Wheelbarrow's' school of political economy." In other words, "You differ with Ingersoll, do you? Bad for Ingersoll." The sneer is wasted upon me. I have no "school" of political economy.

I admit that Col. Ingersoll is a man of rare accomplishments, but nobody has ever accused him of being a great lawyer, although everybody confesses that he is a brilliant advocate. He is an ornamented soda-fountain, gushing, frothy, and sweet. His "reputation as a scholar" is not heavy enough to hurt him, while his political economy is narrow and illiberal. Last summer he proclaimed that the true policy of a nation is to find out what economic scheme will injure another nation and then adopt it. His code of professional ethics as explained by himself, shocks the moral sense. It is beautifully wicked. However, I have no controversy with Col. Ingersoll. I mentioned him incidentally because Mr. L. quoted him as having said that "The bank book of a mechanic is a certificate that wages are too high." This appeared so extravagantly foolish that I thought there must have been a mistake made by Mr. L. in the quotation. He now admits that there was a mistake, and that Col. Ingersoll did not say what Mr. L. "quoting from memory" thought he said. Does Mr. L., having found out that Col. Ingersoll did not say it, still think it "an indisputable economic truth"?

Still sarcastic, Mr. L. sneers at me for "throwing chunks of wisdom at the head of the laborer by preaching temperance, frugality, and self-denial, by telling him to be good, virtuous, and economical." I fear there is good reason in the sneer, and that there is much waste of work in throwing chunks of wisdom at the laborer; but after all, it is better than throwing chunks of unwisdom at him, by preaching that the virtues lower wages, and that all the ills that he is heir to, can be cured by the magic of a single tax on land.

Mr. L. quotes from Henry George's *Standard*, a catalogue of impossible blessings that will come to society by taxing land-values "to their *full amount*," and then reproaches me as follows: "This simple just but radical reform, Wheelbarrow terms 'the most tremendous feat of engineering ever done by mortal.'" I fear Mr. L. is again "quoting from memory," because my remark was directed not at any plans proposed by Mr. George, but at the alarming decision of Mr. L., who, for the moment had let the land-tax go, and said that "nothing short of rebuilding our whole social structure will

be of any real or lasting benefit to the masses." Considering the many thousands of years it has taken to build our social structure up to its present greatness, I thought that the taking of it all apart again and "rebuilding" it, would be a most tremendous feat of engineering. I think so still, although no doubt, there are men in New York ready to "put in a bid" for the job

The quotation from Henry George about "taxing land-values to their full amount," is followed by another, from Herbert Spencer, beginning, "Such a doctrine is consistent, etc.," insinuating, of course, the doctrine just previously quoted from Henry George. I think the quotation from Herbert Spencer is worthless in this debate, because Mr. L. wrenched its head off before he brought it in. The doctrine that Spencer was referring to, was not given. Separated from the context, which would have explained it, the beheaded quotation is tacked on the doctrine of Henry George, concerning the taxation of land-values to their full amount. This is hardly fair to me. In the language of honest Iago, "I like not that." I think the "doctrine" that Herbert Spencer was talking about should not have been suppressed and another one substituted for it, as little Buttercup mixed up those children in the play.

Mr. L. kindly tries to explain to me the difference between taxing land, and taxing land-values. He clears up the matter in this way: "Land-values are not the product of human exertions; they are not a product at all, but simply a value that attaches to land by the growth of a community. The taxing of this fund made by all for the use of all would not be a tax at all, but in the correct sense of the term would simply be rent." This is like unraveling a tangle by tying a few more double knots in it. The explanations are contradictory. According to Mr. L., land values are produced by the "growth of a community," and yet, he says, "they are not a product at all." A community is merely a collection of human beings and all values made by the growth of a community are due to human exertions, yet, he says, "Land-values are not the product of human exertions." If land-values are not a product at all, they are nothing at all, and in taxing them nothing is taxed. Land-values are incorporeal. They are mere qualities, as intangible as black, yellow, wet, or dry. Human laws have no jurisdiction over land-values separate from the land, because human laws cannot bring land-values under forcible subjection. If the taxes on land-values are not paid, the land itself is arrested and sold, in satisfaction of the debt.

Mr. L. is himself drawn into the whirlpool of his own logic. He

spins round and round until different objects appear all alike to him. *Land-values*, which are "not a *product* at all," become a "*fund* made by all for the use of all," and at last the tax upon this "fund" merges into "*rent*." In saying this, I do not intend the slightest reflection upon Mr. L's logical ability. I think the result was inevitable. The very moment we subject incorporeal "values" to the process of taxation, or to the burdens known as rent, we are compelled to attach them to some substantial reality upon which the penalties of the law may operate. All taxes are nominally upon values, but in reality they are upon things. When the assessor came round last spring, he asked me this question, "Have you a watch?" "Yes!" "What's the value of it?" "Twenty dollars." And he made the proper entry in his book. It looks like a distinction without a difference, when I am told that the "value" of the watch was taxed, and not the watch itself.

Mr L. brings his argument to a provoking anti-climax in the last sentence of his article, where he affirms that "it is as true to-day as it was a hundred years ago when the French Assembly declared that 'ignorance, contempt, and neglect of human rights is the *sole* cause of public misfortune.'" I suspect that this quotation is also made "from memory," although the French National Assembly said many things even more absurd than that, though not quite so ungrammatical. "Ignorance," "Contempt," and "Neglect," are three causes, and as neither of them can therefore be the *sole* cause, there may be a mistake in the quotation, especially as none of those three causes is the *sole* cause, according to Mr. L. He said in his former article that land monopoly is the *sole* cause, and taxing land-values to the last penny the "only remedy." After putting me to the trouble of showing that there is no *sole* cause for public misfortune, but that there are many causes for it; and after disputing with me down to the very last sentence in his second article, he there abandons his own *sole* cause, and adopts the three different *sole* causes which he says were declared by the French National Assembly a hundred years ago.

Mr. L. says that he has no "personal controversy" with me. I have none with him; but as I believe him to be a man who sincerely desires the reformation of our social system, I have a personal appeal to make to him. I implore him to abandon the "sole cause" theory, and the "only remedy" prescription. A man of influence and ability may do great injury to the workingmen by telling them that any specific plan of reform must "*precede* all others." In the great

scheme of human progress all the moral forces work in harmony together. Not any one of them has precedence over another! There is no jealousy amongst them, no pushing of each other out of the way. A single wrong fears nothing from a thousand rights disputing among themselves over questions of precedence.

WHO MAKES THE "LAND-VALUE" OF A FARM?

IN THE OPEN COURT for Feb. 28th, I am honored by criticisms from three advocates of Mr. George's plan of taxation. Those criticisms are evidently written by men competent to defend their own position, and attack mine. They have the advantage of me, for I have not their ability to analyze and compare the abstract properties of things. I cannot separate the shadow of a tree from the tree itself, nor the value of land from the land.

My critics complain that I do not correctly state Mr. George's doctrine; and they kindly advise me to read him again. Well, I will if they will. Mr. Williamson says that Mr. George's position is that "*almost* all the value of land comes from the growth and labor of the community, and not from the individual who legally owns the land;" while his brother critic, Mr. Stephenson, says the strongest claim of Mr. George is that "the value of land is *entirely* due to the labor of the whole community." I have placed "*almost*" and "*entirely*" in italics for easier comparison. Which is Mr. George's word? Somebody has made a mistake as to his position here. Either Mr. Williamson or Mr. Stephenson ought to read Mr. George's works again.

The variance above noticed is of no importance to the main argument if both statements are erroneous, as I think they are. I do not know how to dissect the doctrine based upon them, but I do know how to analyze a farm, because I have seen farms made, and have helped to make them. Here is the process used in Illinois.

In the first place the virgin soil was communistic property; it belonged to all the people of the United States, and it was expressively described as "Government" land. The experience of my old acquaintance, Thomas Clark, will illustrate the subject like a book. Having selected a quarter section of land in Boone County for his future home, Tom Clark was immediately confronted by Mr. George's law. The government said to him: "This land is the common property of all the people, and before you can have it, you must pay to the people the land-value of that quarter section. This is fixed at

a dollar and a quarter an acre." Tom paid the money and took the land. Then he broke forty acres at a cost of three dollars an acre. His quarter section was now worth \$320 in visible value. Next he built a house and barn upon the land, and fenced the forty acres with rails. By this time his plantation in the rough was worth about \$500. How much of that value was due to the labor of the "community"? Absolutely none of it; and yet this is the way "land-values" were made in Illinois. The settler who furnished all the labor, and all the capital, and made all the value the land possesses, is coolly described by Mr. Stephenson as the "alleged" owner of the land. He is also the "alleged" owner of the "alleged" fence, and the "alleged" house and barn.

In the wilderness of occult economics I can easily lose my way, but I get along fairly well by the aid of an object lesson so large and palpable as a farm. I ask my critics how they will apply Mr. George's doctrine of taxation to the farm which I have just described. By much wear of muscle and sweat of brow, Tom Clark has brought the whole quarter section under cultivation, and there is an orchard in one corner of it. Now which of the ingredients of this farm shall bear the single tax? Is it the breaking of the wild sod? Is it the fence, the barn, or the apple trees? This is a fair question, and ought to be fairly answered. It is never answered. It is evaded thus: "We do not propose to tax any of these improvements nor the land itself; we only propose to tax the *land-value* of the whole farm."

In that evasion the single tax on values' theory vanishes "like the feverish dream of a summer's night." The land value of that farm separate from the improvements, is *nothing*. I have Mr. George for that. In "Protection and Free Trade," page 291, he says, "Land in itself has no value. Value rises only from human labor." If so, we tax human labor when we tax land-values. Whose labor made the land-value of that farm? Was it the labor of the man who plowed the land, split the rails, built the house, and planted the apple trees, or was it the labor of the "Community?" The community did nothing; and besides, it had sold its communal right in the land for a dollar and a quarter an acre.

I repeat that Mr. George loses sight of his own doctrine that land of itself has no value, when he says, page 302: "Now it is evident that in order to take for the use of the community, the *whole income* arising from land, it is only necessary to abolish one after another, all other taxes now levied, and to increase the tax on land-values until it reaches as near as may be the *full* annual value of the land." Now

if the government takes from Clark the "full annual value" and "the whole income" of his farm, whether by tax, rent, or confiscation, it practically takes the whole farm and all the product of his life-time industry.

It is paltering in a double sense to separate the value of that farm from the farm itself. It is pure mystification to say, "We tax the flavor of the apples, but not the apple trees, nor the land on which they grow; we tax the fragrance of the roses, but not the flowers nor the garden; we tax the sweetness of the grapes, but not the vineyard nor the vines." If the tax upon the sweetness of the grapes is not paid, the sweetness is not levied on, but the vineyard is arrested and sold. In like manner, when the tax on land-values becomes delinquent, the land itself is taken. In the language of my critic, Mr. McGill, "The owner of the improvements pays the annual value of the land to the freeholder." Under Mr. George's system he would pay it to the municipality. In either case he must pay it or *lose his improvements*.

Mr. McGill says that Mr. George's experiments "are a plea for the application of the 'Moral Law.'" I do not doubt that Mr. George and Mr. McGill conscientiously believe that; but I can hardly imagine anything more immoral and despotic than a law which would attach Mr. George's theory to the farm I have described, and take from the farmers who made the farm "the whole income" of it, and its "full annual value." The farm that I have selected is not an exceptional instance; it is a fair example of the manner in which "land-values" have been made in Illinois and all the Western States. If the answer to this is that the land-value of city lots is not made in that way, I reply: Very well; then let Mr. George apply his doctrine where it fits, and where the application of it can do no wrong, if there is any such place, which I doubt.

Mr. Stephenson requires me to "point out the exact place in Progress and Poverty where the millennium is promised by the simple means of a single tax on land;" and also, "where Mr. George denounces every progress, under present circumstances, as driving a parting wedge between the rich and poor." I will cheerfully do so. Let Mr. Stephenson read pages 326 and 327, where Mr. George describes the condition of public happiness which would result from levying a simple tax on land. It is too long to quote here, but it describes that social state which is usually called the millennium. "We should reach the ideal of the socialist," says Mr. George, "but not through government repression."

For answer to the second question, I refer my critic to page 11, where, after confessing the vast progress made in "comfort, leisure, and refinement," Mr. George says this: "In those gains the lowest class do no share." Then, further on, he says, "The new forces, elevating in their nature though they be, do not act upon the social fabric from underneath, but strike it at a point intermediate between top and bottom. It is as though an immense wedge were being forced, not underneath society, but through society."

Personally, I think there is much truth in that statement, but I believe that Mr. George's remedy would make matters worse instead of better. To levy each year a tax upon Clark's farm equal to the "full annual value" of it,—and to deprive him of the "whole income" arising from the land, would be adding another injustice to the wrongs which afflict society now.

Here is a circular explanation of Mr. George's doctrine which mystifies me like a Greek oracle. Mr. Williamson says: "Now if you tax the value of land you are taxing the labor of the whole *community*, *slightly*, and the natural opportunity and growth of the community; but as the taxes are expended on the community—for the growth of the community—nobody is injured, and the *growth* pays for the *growth*."

Isn't that chopping sand? What is the use of taxing the labor of the community, slightly, to expend the taxes on the community, slightly? And how does the growth of the community pay for the growth of the community? I have traveled round and round this proposition looking for a gate-way to its meaning, until I am giddy. To tax the value of land belonging to the whole community is to impose upon ourselves the cannon ball torture for nothing. One of our punishments in the army was this: A circle was drawn on the ground about 90 feet in diameter. On the outer edge of the circle, holes were dug about a yard apart. In one of these holes was a 32 pound cannon-ball. The delinquent had to pick up this cannon ball and drop it into the next hole, and so on, round and round, for so many hours a day. This was done as punishment, but Mr Williamson wants to do it for fun, by the whole community taxing the labor of the whole community; the taxes to be expended on the whole community.

When Tom Clark's quarter-section belonged to the whole community it was never taxed at all, because there is no sense in a community levying taxes upon the values of its own land, and paying the tax into its own treasury. I once knew a man who fined himself a

dollar every time he used profane language, but he merely took it out from one pocket and paid it into the other.

If Mr. Williamson means to say that taxing the land-values of Tom Clark's farm taxes the labor of the whole community, I think he makes a mistake. It appears to me that the taxation is levied upon the labor of Clark, and the taxes ought not to be "expended on the community."

NATURAL OPPORTUNITIES.

"I THINK there be six Richmonds in the field." I have answered five, and now comes Mr. Doblin with new arguments. He charges at an effigy of me made out of his own head, as the school-boy made the ship I merely call upon him to direct his lance at me, and not at my "Counterfeit presentment." Mr. Doblin makes phrases, puts them into quotation marks, and then refutes their argument. This in itself is innocent enough, but people who do not understand it may infer from the quotation marks that the phrases and the sentiments are mine.

I never said "Morality is a compound of foresight, economy, thrift, and industry." These are useful ingredients of character, but they are chiefly duties to ourselves. They are in the moral code indeed, but its more important parts prescribe the duties which we owe to others, the higher obligations of "Morality."

Mr. Doblin cuts, clips, shortens, plaits, and takes in fold after fold of the spiritual garment called "morality," until it is diminished to the stature of a man whom he calls Jay Gould. Then he insinuates that "Wheelbarrow" did the tailoring, and that the diminished robe exactly fits my pattern of morality. I may exclaim with Cassius in the play, "You wrong me every way, you wrong me. Brutus;" you charge to me a superstructure which I never built, for contrasts and comparisons I never thought of.

Is it not presumptuous to sit in judgment on our fellow men, and tell the world that we are holier than they? Is it not self-righteous to contrast the vices of his "Jay Gould" with the shining virtues of ourselves? Our moralizers would become insolvent if that "awful warning" should be called to his reward. He serves the purpose of a dummy block whereon reformers may display their neighbor's fault for public reprobation. When they have it fitted on the image to the worst advantage they advertise it, and exclaim, "Here is a choice article of social wickedness; see how it fits this

dummy." Not one of them will try it on himself and say, "Behold, how closely it fits me." So handy is that Wall Street curiosity to "point a moral, and adorn a tale," that I sometimes think the odium cast upon him springs from envy at his vices and his luck. I fear to weigh my own righteousness against the sins of any man, lest when I gaze into my looking glass I see reflected there the features of that man.

The ironical sentiment about contentment is put within quotation marks as if it came from me. I am innocent of it; but it furnishes a text for high grade moral reprobation, which I heartily approve. All I ask is that the indignant "No, sir!" be addressed to the guilty person, and not to me. I am on record against contentment, if by that is meant the end of aspiration for myself, or the end of work for others. Neither have I ever told poverty to gamble upon what the *morrow* will bring forth. The odds against poverty are too great.

If I ever advised poverty to be thrifty in order to "relieve the hunger of yesterday," I did a foolish thing. I think I am innocent of that also, although I plead guilty of advising thrift against the hunger of to-morrow. I never grieved over the 'hunger of yesterday' but once, and that was when I was a little boy. I was asked if I would have a bit of meat pie; I said "No," when I meant "Yes," and was taken at my word. Next day I was tortured by the vision of that lost meat pie. Toward night it occurred to me that it was useless to weep over the hunger of yesterday, and I have never done so since. It is the hunger of to-day that worries me.

I fully agree with Mr. Doblin that we cannot teach morality to dead men. I think with him that as a "first condition" of success in teaching, the pupils "*must* be alive."

As to the "spirit of the Henry George doctrine" I have no quarrel with it; "the letter killeth." It is not Mr. George's motives, but his measures that I question. I am as anxious as he is to "open up the natural opportunities," although I think the phrase is vague, uncertain, and misleading. We differ as to the means by which to "open up." Tom Kennedy and I were shovelers in the same gang. We were working on a bit of railroad not far from Chambly in Canada, and lodged in the house of a little Frenchman there. Tom was an Irishman, who reached conclusions by the most illogical means. One night he woke up complaining of the closeness of the room. "We must have some fresh air," he said, "I'll open up the windy." Instead of doing so in a Christian manner, he picked up

one of my boots and flung it through the glass into the street, where I found it in the morning. Tom's conclusions were all right, but his way of reaching them was defective. Fresh air was a "natural opportunity" to which he was entitled, but he had no right to obtain it by throwing another man's boot through a third man's window. Neither has Mr. George nor Mr. Doblin.

If I should ask Mr. Doblin to "drop his preconceived ideas" in favor of Mr. George's theory, long enough to study my objections to it he would rightly consider my demand unreasonable. It is not necessary to the candid study of any subject that a man should drop his preconceived ideas concerning it; yet Mr. Doblin, with complacent self-esteem, demands that I drop my preconceived ideas of his particular faith before I study it. This is a concession which no disputant has a right to ask of his antagonist. A man who denied the efficacy of prayer was requested by the preacher to give the matter "prayerful consideration."

My preconceived ideas of taxation leaned very much toward the scheme of Henry George. I am dropping some of them because the study of the question leads me to doubt their wisdom and their justice. For instance, in the case of Thomas Clark, the farmer whom I spoke of lately, I think that society has no right to confiscate his farm because some other man holds land for speculative purposes. To tax it away from him by Mr. George's plan is to confiscate it.

"The Rights of Man." What man? What are the rights of Thomas Clark to the farm which he has literally planted in the wilderness? To tax the value of that farm to its full amount, the whole of which value has been made by the hard labor of Clark, would be a wrong for which the only excuse would be a plea of political insanity.

THE SINGLE TAX AND GEORGEISM.

MR. GEORGE made a blunder by going to England and leaving his doctrine loose in the hands of his disciples. They have given it so many emendations and explanations that he will hardly know it when he gets home. If he could read the thirty or forty defenses of it which have appeared in *THE OPEN COURT* he would laugh at their paradoxical ingenuity. He would exclaim with that Maryland farmer, "Friends of the single-tax had better stop explaining."

The most condensed explanation of the single-tax doctrine is given

by Mr. Hugh O. Pentecost in THE OPEN COURT, No. 85. I will first notice that. He says:

"If Wheelbarrow cannot separate the idea of 'the value of land from the land,' as he confesses, he certainly ought to understand that one piece of land has more renting value than another, and he ought to understand so simple a proposition as having *ground-rent* and nothing else paid into the public treasury. That is all there is to the 'George Theory.'"

Very good! That simplifies the debate. Mr. Pentecost is of high authority as a commentator on the gospel according to George. If Mr. George left the key to his problem in the hands of any man, he left it in the hands of Mr. Pentecost. I must therefore consider his interpretation orthodox although it is hardly consistent with the original text as written by Mr. George himself. Mr. Pentecost gives us a very narrow definition of Mr. George's claim. Mr. George expands the *ground-rent* project until it includes the confiscation of all the value of all the land. This is practically the confiscation of the land, and the communists of Europe and America understand it so. Mr. George himself understands it so. In proof of this I quote his very words, as I find them on page 302 of "Protection or Free Trade."

"Now it is evident that, in order to take for the use of the community the *whole income* arising from land, just as effectually as it could be taken by *formally appropriating and letting out the land*, it is only necessary to abolish, one after another, all other taxes now levied, and to increase the tax on land values till it reaches, as near as may be, the *full annual value* of the land."*

Can confiscation be declared in plainer words than those? They are copied from Webster's dictionary, where Confiscation is defined as "Appropriating to the public use." Why quibble over words and phrases such as "single tax," "ground-rent," "land values," and similar labels on the bottle, when Mr. George declares that the remedy *in* the bottle will "take for the use of the community the whole income arising from land, just as effectually as it could be taken by *formally appropriating and letting out the land?*" "It is only *ground-rent*," says Mr. Pentecost, after the manner of Leroy Carter, a comrade of mine, who was arrested for killing a pig. "Did you kill that pig?" said the colonel. "No, sir," said Carter, "I did not. He came smelling around the tent, so I just run my bayonet through him, and he—died." It is only *ground-rent*, but it appropriates the land. We do not propose to kill Tom Clark, we shall only just playfully run him through with a bayonet.

The popularity of Mr. George's theory lies in the extravagant claim he makes for its beneficence. I have been criticised for saying

* The *italics* are mine.

that the millennium is included in his plan. Let us examine his most recent utterance on the subject. A few weeks ago Mr. George wrote a letter to the *Chicago Times*, in which he said :

"The single tax reform is the most pressing. This is the one great reform that by relieving industry of all burdens and preventing the monopolization of the one element necessary to all production and all life, will enormously increase production, will secure an equitable distribution of wealth, will solve the labor question, which lies at the root of all our social and religious difficulties, will make Christianity possible, will give the masses of men opportunity for more than a struggle to exist, and will open the way for an advance to a far higher and grander civilization."

If that is not the millennium, what is it? Does Mr. Pentecost believe that such tremendous results are to be obtained by the application to society of the insignificant porous plaster which he calls *ground-rent*? Does he believe that his fly-blister will draw the inflammation from the body-politic, allay the social fever, solve the labor question, and "make Christianity possible"? Is not Christianity possible now? And does it not exist in many different forms? If the full promise of Christianity has not yet been realized, will it come through the diminutive device called *ground-rent*? The towering pretensions of Mr. Henry George are brought by Mr. Pentecost to an anti-climax when he declares that *ground-rent* paid into the public treasury "is all there is to the George Theory." All that is needed now to "make Christianity possible" is a little *ground-rent*.

Mr. George ridicules the protectionists for trying to make people rich by taxing them, yet he attempts the same impossible feat in a tenfold more difficult and exaggerated form. He actually says that a single tax on land values amounting to the "*whole income*" of the land and its "full annual value" would benefit the farmer. This contradiction is the illusive creed of multitudes, as appears from the letters in THE OPEN COURT.

Let us see how Mr. George's plan would enrich Tom Clark. He would be taxed \$8 or \$10, for his farm according to the Georgeian assessor. But some new comers would be willing to pay more for God's bounty, and Mr. Clark would be evicted. Those who can separate the land value from the land will perhaps tell him how he can take his improvements along. You declare that Tom Clark may sell his improvements. You can even force him to sell; but you can force nobody to buy them.

I agree that land values may be taxed; but I maintain that they cannot be seized and sold in satisfaction of the taxes, any more than a crack in the wall of a house can be taken in execution for the rent.

All taxes upon land values are ideal in their assessment; they are actual and real in their collection. They attach to the realty, the land, and if not paid, the land itself, and not the land value, is sold by the sheriff. Therefore all taxes upon land values are taxes upon land. To assert that they are friendly to the soil itself, is to repeat in a new form the apology for the cut-worm, who merely attacks the wheat, but is careful not to injure the land.

The State of New York, *e. g.*, must bear a very large burden of taxation, and it is not statesmanship but sentiment which proposes to obtain the money by a tax on land values irrespective of the improvements on the land. According to the ratio of population, the State of New York must pay twenty-seven million dollars annually in taxes to the national government alone, although according to the ratio of wealth the share of that State would greatly exceed that sum. How could the money be raised by a tax on land values alone, in addition to the sum necessary to defray the vast expenses of the State, County and Township governments? Men live in dreamland who think to benefit the New York farmer by levying all taxes upon land values, and exempting from taxation all the personal property of that opulent State, all the money, bonds, banks, railroads, ships, factories, stocks of goods, and all buildings of every description whatsoever. There is not in all dupedom a more deceitful vision than that of a farmer growing rich by the exemption from taxation of all kinds of property except his own.

I should like to continue but I must stop here to-day because it will take me a few days of hard study to answer your Dakota correspondent who can see no moral distinction between stealing horses, and investing capital in land; and that Ohio critic who says that Mr. George is not after Tom Clark, but his children; and that Chicago man who desires to encourage Tom Clark in making improvements on his farm by exempting everybody and everything from taxation except land owners and land values; and that Massachusetts economist who tells us that the abolition of poverty is only a "side issue."

Mr. Pentecost sees no difference between the proportion of land taxation and Georgeism. But I see a difference. While I consider the one feasible, I think that the latter is fantastical.

MR. PENTECOST AND GEORGEISM.

THE Single-tax religion, which is to "solve the labor question" and "make Christianity possible," has grown very thin under the attenuating advocacy of Mr. Hugh O. Pentecost. With excusable vanity Mr. Pentecost exults because I paid him the tribute of saying that, "If Mr. George left the key to his problem in the hands of any man, he left it in the hands of Mr. Pentecost." I did say that, and when I said it, I thought that Mr. Pentecost was a more inspired and more competent apostle than he is. I cheerfully withdraw the opinion, and apologize for having uttered it. I think now that Mr. George put that key into his own pocket, and carried it away with him to England. Mr. Pentecost still persists in whittling the doctrine down to the common-place exaction known as *ground-rent*, imposed and collected after the manner of Chicago in the case of the First National Bank, and after the manner of New York in the case of the city docks. How much has Christianity been made possible in New York by the application of the Henry George theory to the city docks?

I am aware that Mr. Pentecost has the advantage of me in this discussion because of his greater learning, and his more extensive acquaintance with the subject. He is candid enough to acknowledge this himself, and politely says, that Wheelbarrow "does not know what he is writing about." As to himself he frankly says: "There can be no doubt, then, that I know what I am talking about. If any one knows what Georgeism is, I do." There is such a cheerful egotism in all this, that I will not disturb the complacency of Mr. Pentecost by any language of resentment. I will merely, in a religious way, sprinkle a few coals of fire, or a few drops of hot water on his head.

Mr. Pentecost accuses me of "lamentable ignorance," but I will bear the reproach with resignation if he will only be civil to himself, and continue to describe himself with becoming pride as an "intelligent single taxer." His opportunities have been greater than mine, and I shall never be able to compete with him in the graces of controversy and the eloquence of slang. I will reason with him as well as I can, without wishing to "prance into the ring," to "jump on him" or to pin him down." I will not call him a "wriggler," nor appeal from his

"high jinks," whatever they may be. In those prize-ring dialectics, where he is so "intelligent," I must confess to "lamentable ignorance." That style of grammar and diction still further dilutes the doctrine which Mr. Pentecost, with sectarian conceit, absurdly entitles "Georgeism." The more tenderly Mr. Pentecost nurses it with strong language, the weaker it grows.

I once heard a three-thimble artist at Epsom races rebuke the by-standers for "wriggling" after the nimble pea instead of selecting, in a straightforward way, the thimble which concealed it. The reproach appeared to me to be unjust, because the wriggling eye-search for the pea was due to the wriggling of the pea itself, under the three thimbles manipulated by the artist. I am told that three-card monte has the same peculiarities, and that it is only by ingenious mental wriggling that the by-standers can track the Jack of Clubs, and 'pin him down.' Now there are three thimbles called, respectively, "single-tax," "ground-rent," and "land-confiscation." Under which of them is "Georgeism"? Mr. Pentecost, accomplished in what he elegantly calls "illustrative tricks" and "sleight-of-hand performances," lifts up the "ground-rent" thimble and exposes the pea for an instant, but when the by-stander bets his money on it and lifts the thimble, he finds that the pea has fled. It is then under the "single-tax" or the "confiscation" thimble. The man who can follow "Georgeism" in its wriggling journey under the three thimbles, must be himself a "wiggler" equal in quickness to the man who moves the thimbles.

"Don't be a-frightened, ladies and gentlemen," said the pop-merchant at the picnic, as the liberated corks flew out of the bottles with a noise like the firing of artillery, "don't be a-frightened; it's only ginger beer." "Don't be a-frightened," says Mr. Pentecost, "it isn't confiscation; it's only ground-rent; that's all there is to Georgeism." There is a melancholy deception here, in which Mr. Pentecost is himself deceived. I think that land confiscation is "all there is to Georgeism." It is that, or it is nothing. In this meaning of 'Georgeism' lies its popularity, for "appropriating" land by government gratifies the landless. It may be, as Mr. Pentecost says, that "Wheelbarrow does not understand the single-tax doctrine" but Mr. George understands it, and he says that "Georgeism" proposes "to take for the use of the community the *whole income* arising from land, just as effectually as it could be taken by *formally appropriating* and letting out the land." I think that is confiscation. I have no patent on my opinion; I adopted it from Webster, who, in defining the word "confiscation" borrowed from Henry George the very lan-

guage I have quoted above. In defiance of the obvious meaning of the words, Mr. Pentecost persists in saying that they express nothing but ground-rent.

Having tried to show wherein the scheme *is* confiscation, I will now try to show wherein it is *not* ground-rent. In doing this, it becomes necessary to "wriggle" around after the nimble pea in its tortuous windings among the intricate meanings of the words "tax" and "rent." These words are used interchangeably by "intelligent single-taxers," to confound the moral distinctions between "rent," which government has no right to exact, and "taxes" which government has the right to impose. A tax is never levied by government upon its own land; rent is never drawn by government from land not its own. Whatever income is received by government from its own land is rent, assessed by special contract between the government and the occupier of the land, as a tax never is. A tax does not rest upon any special contract between the government and the tax payer. Its rate and amount are fixed by the government alone, at its own will. Ground-rent is a compensation rendered to the owner of land by the occupier of it; and no person other than the owner has any right to exact ground rent for the use of land. Before government can "make Christianity possible" in the United States by exacting ground-rent from land, it must first own the land.

Mr. Pentecost, rather heedlessly I think, asserts that the George doctrine is already applied by the city of New York to the city docks, and by the city of Chicago to the First National Bank of Chicago. As to the New York matter I am not informed, but I know something about the First National Bank of Chicago, and I can assure Mr. Pentecost that the illustration is a very unfortunate one for him. The city of Chicago gets ground-rent from the First National Bank because the city *owns the land* on which the bank building stands. This rent has been assessed by mutual agreement between the First National Bank and the city of Chicago. It is rent fixed by contract, and not a tax imposed by the one-sided will of the city. Time was when the city owned the bank lot, and the adjoining lot. It sold the adjoining lot, and therefore obtains no revenue from it except the proportion of taxes levied upon it in common with other lots of equal value under the revenue law. From the lot which the city owns it obtains ground-rent; from the other lot it obtains taxes. Before it can obtain ground-rent from both lots the city must own them both, and before it can own them both it must confiscate or buy that ad-

joining lot. Mr Pentecost sneers at the danger of "eviction under Georgeism," and innocently remarks: "The fear of eviction was not before the eyes of the men who built the massive buildings in Chicago upon the city ground-rent plan." True enough! But why? Because they had a seventy years' lease of the land. Does Mr. Pentecost think, that men will put up "massive buildings" without ample security of possession? Does he think that men would put up "massive buildings" if they supposed that "Georgeism" was among the possibilities of social or political change.

I do not know that Mr. Pentecost has ever been a school-teacher but I suspect him, because he talks like the fretful schoolmaster under whose neglect I finished my education. I had struggled up to the rule of three, and half way through it, when I came to an "example" which baffled me. I appealed for help to the teacher, but he scolded me, and said that I was ignorant and stupid, and that my efforts were all nonsense. He helped me a little with his cane, but he did not show me how to do the sum, and so I graduated there and then right in the middle of the rule of three. My school days ended, and my child-labor began. I am still wondering how to work that sum. I have long since forgiven my teacher for not showing me how to do it, because I found out afterward that he did not know. His reproaches were intended to conceal his own incapacity. Mr. Pentecost talks exactly like my poor old schoolmaster when he rebukes me thus:

"When Wheelbarrow says that under the George system, the *land itself* and not the value of the land would be sold by the sheriff to satisfy the claims of the tax-collector, he talks nonsense. *How can land which is taxed by the government up to its full rental value have any selling value.*"

The "nonsense" consists in taxing the land up to its full rental value; but before exposing that, I must compliment Mr. Pentecost on the dexterity with which he conjured the little pea from the "rent" thimble to the "tax" thimble. It is now "taxes" and not "ground-rent" that he talks about. "How can land," he asks, "which is taxed by the government up to its full rental value have any selling value?" In this conundrum the "intelligent single taxer" displays at least a glimmer of genuine intelligence. It appears to me that such land has no more selling value than the bung-hole of a barrel; and the paradox presented by the question stultifies the whole theory of Henry George. Land which is taxed up to its full rental value is confiscated and smitten barren by the law. It is barren to the owner because blighted by taxes equal to its product. It is barren to the

government, which has taxed it up to the confiscation point, for no man will buy it thus encumbered. When I pointed out that anomaly, the 'intelligent single-taxers' told me that I did not know what I was talking about, and that they only meant the rental value of the land *independent of the improvements*. The pea wriggled away again.

The conundrum put by Mr. Pentecost presents the distinction between "rent" and "taxes." It is true that only the *value* of land is taxed, but although the taxation is of the abstract, the collection is of the substance. Government may tax the key-hole of a house, but the house will be liable for the tax. So, if the tax on the value of land is not paid the land is answerable for the debt. If because of excessive taxation, or for other reason, the land has no selling value, the government buys it, or "bids it in" for the amount of taxes and thus becomes the owner of the land, as the United States of America became owner of the Arlington estate at Washington. Not so with delinquent rent. In this case the owner of the land resumes possession of it in the last resource and evicts the tenant for non-payment of the rent agreed upon. Rent is assessed by contract between two or more; taxes, by the sovereign will of one.

I never said that "under the George system Tom Clark would be taxed \$8 or \$10 on his farm." I was merely quoting the opinions of some of my critics to that effect, and I was trying to show how erroneous their estimate must be, and that if all the public burdens be thrown upon land values, the share of Clark must be very much greater than that estimate. But what matter? The question of Clark's proportion is devoured by the larger theme, the proposition to "take for the use of the community" the *whole income* of his farm, and in this way deprive him of it altogether. The amount of Clark's taxes is a trivial question in comparison with the proposal to confiscate his farm.

CONFISCATION.

The communication of Mr. Pentecost in No. 93 of THE OPEN COURT is tenderly introduced as an "Explanation." I call it a confession. I think I have a right to call it so, because I conducted the cross-examination which procured it. After evading me like quicksilver for about three months, Mr. Pentecost now acknowledges that my interpretation of the vanity known as "George-

ism" was correct, and that in spite of his taunts and insinuations to the contrary I did "understand the question," and did know "what I was talking about." Not often does a witness break down under cross-examination so completely as Mr. Pentecost has broken down. He now says:

"Georgeism does involve the practical confiscation of land by the government. In *form* it leaves the present owner of land an owner still; but, in *fact*, the government becomes the owner. * * *

"When a majority of the people of this country come to see that the private ownership of land is a *crime against humanity*, as chattel slavery was a crime against the negroes, then the land will be confiscated just as the slaves were freed. * * *

"Wheelbarrow seems to think that if he can fix the charge of confiscation upon Georgeism he has dealt it a heavy blow. On the contrary, that is what we Georgeites glory in. We mean to utterly destroy the private ownership of land by confiscating *ground-rent*. * * *

"*Ground-rent* would be all that any one would have to pay to government. The land would all be confiscated—taken away from the present owners without compensation, just as we now take a stolen horse away from a horse-thief or away from him to whom the horse-thief sold him."

Considering how these explanations contradict those which Mr. Pentecost gave us in THE OPEN COURT. NOS. 85 and 91, there is droll comedy in the question: "Is there any possibility of Wheelbarrow's failing to understand the thing this time?"

To that I answer: How can I fail to understand it? The purpose to confiscate is declared. "How can any man fail to understand the "Georgeites" when they say: 'We mean to utterly destroy the private ownership of land'?" A reference to the former numbers of THE OPEN COURT will show that I always understood it so, and that Mr. Pentecost did not. If he did, he concealed his understanding from us by pretending that Tom Clark would be better off under "Georgeism," and that his farm would be burdened with taxes amounting to little or nothing. Mr. Pentecost now declares that the purpose of Georgeism is to take Tom's farm away from him entirely, as if it were a stolen horse.

I earnestly call the attention of Mr. Albro and Mr. Williamson, who immediately follow Mr. Pentecost to his astonishing confession; and I ask them, not in taunt or triumph, but as fellow searchers after truth, whether it is not a waste of arithmetic to figure up the probable amount of Tom Clark's taxes, when only the *form* of his farm is to remain to him while the *fact* and substance of it are to be taken away?

The comparisons of Mr. Pentecost are discordant and confused. There is no likeness between a slave and a farm, nor between the emancipation of a slave and the confiscation of land. The slaves were not confiscated; they were freed. It is true that Gen. Butler in the early part of the war did confiscate some slaves, under the prevarication that they were "contraband of war"; a mischievous pretense, which proved to be a sophism both in ethics and in politics. About the same time I had the honor to emancipate a slave who had taken refuge in my camp. I did it on grounds opposite to those assumed by Gen. Butler. I refused to give the negro up, not because he was a chattel forfeited, but because he was a man, and therefore impossible to be contraband of war. I expose the inaptitude of Mr. Pentecost's comparisons because it is the habit of social reformers to press into the service of their argument the emancipation of the slaves. We commit a solecism when we compare a scheme of serfdom to that splendid achievement of liberty.

I use the word serfdom with deliberation because the ownership of land has ever been the political distinction between a freeman and a serf. The ownership of land is the sign and title of a freeman, the inspiration of his patriotism. His very estate is called a freeholding, or a freehold, and he himself is called a free-holder. Every tenure below the grade of a freehold is politically "*base*," and I am informed that it is technically so in law. To confiscate all the farms in the United States, and to compel the farmers to hold their lands as tenants at will to "Government" would substitute a base tenure for a free tenure; it would practically reduce farming to a menial business, and farmers all to serfdom. Fancy the ragged condition of American freedom when all the farms and all the town lots in the country are confiscated by the government and thrown into politics. Imagine the confiscation done in 1889. The farms are all owned by the government and the letting them out begins. Would a Democrat get a lease if a Republican wanted it? Not one. The corruption growing out of such a system would breed Chaos. The spirit of freedom may die out everywhere else, but on the hearthstone of the freehold the fires of liberty burn forever. It is a perverted philanthropy which seeks to improve society by abolishing the freehold.

Again Mr. Pentecost invites me to read "Progress and Poverty." There is kindly patronage in the invitation, and I gratefully accept it, although I think that the weakest debater on any subject is the shiftless disputant, who, when he has had enough of the controversy throws a whole book at his adversary, and tells him to read

that. However, I will read it once more to please Mr. Pentecost, and while I am about it, will Mr. Pentecost gratify me by reading Sir Thomas More's Utopia, and a few chapters in Don Quixote.

PRIVATE PROPERTY IN LAND.

HAVING had a job of work to do in another part of the State, I am in arrears to the critics who testify against me in Nos 96 and 97. I beg a little space that I may pay to all of them the respect of a reply.

Mr. Lynch makes a strong case, and the object-lesson he presents is valuable. It shows how unfairly taxation may be apportioned between the resident owner of a town lot, and the non-resident owner of the adjoining lot, who holds it for speculation only. In this inequality lies the popularity of Mr. George's doctrine. I think this wrong can easily be righted by fairer methods of assessment, but will Mr. Lynch explain how it can possibly be cured by sweeping both lots into the gulf of confiscation?

Mr. William C. Wood of Gloversville, N. Y., overwhelms me with the portentous warning that I have "raised up a mightier adversary than Mr. George—the combined legal and judicial talent of the civilized world." This reads like the challenge of the circus bills which I see on the fence across the street, a style of literary composition greatly affected in these days, and which I have always admired. It gives a piquancy to the double chestnuts of the clown, and the double somersaults of the man who jumps over eight horses and an elephant. I enjoy a friendly wrestle in *THE OPEN COURT* with men of my own caliber, or with men a trifle heavier than I am, but I do not care to try a fall with "the combined legal and judicial talent of the civilized world." I think it is hardly fair to bring such a combination against me. However, as Mr. Samuel Weller said on his way to the swarry, "I'll try and bear up agin such a reg'lar knock down o' talent." I will do the best I can.

Mr. Wood confines himself to massive law, and he gives authority to his legal argument by adding M. D. to his name, as if the discussion were a mere matter of measles or lumbago. A doctor prescribing law is like a lawyer prescribing physic. To rely on either prescription is hazardous. "The cobbler to his last" is an old proverb—I forget the Latin of it. Indeed, I never knew it, but the philosophy of it is good in any language, and will keep in any climate. To be sure a blacksmith may make a watch, but he is liable to leave

out some important wheels necessary to its perfect mechanism. A doctor may draw a tooth, and still not be able to draw a bill in chancery because he is liable to leave out some important wheels essential to the perfect mechanism of the bill. When I want a patch put on my boot I go to a cobbler ; when I want a fever cured I go to a doctor ; and when I want a bit of law, I go to a lawyer for it, if I can afford to do so. It costs more than the jurisprudence I get from the tinker, albeit he is a wise man among kettles, but it is cheaper even at the higher price. For these reasons, not feeling competent to contradict the law of land as asserted and expounded by Dr. Wood, I consulted a lawyer, and he told me that Dr. Wood was wrong on every point for which misfortune, being a doctor and not a lawyer he is not at all to blame. My legal adviser, not having time to attend to the matter, told me to consult a New York lawyer by the name of Kent, and I did so.

Without any legal assistance I could see at a glance that some of Dr. Wood's law was error. For instance, this : "No man absolutely owns land. He may hold, it is true, an *estate* in the land. This *estate* consists of three things : The right of possession, the right of enjoyment, and the right of disposition." I could see in a moment that this curious bit of law came out of the surgery, because my landlord, the man who owns the house in which I live, has not the right of possession. He is owner of the house and lot, but the right of possession is in me. He has given me a lease of the place for one year. From this I think that several men may own several estates in the same piece of land, according to the quantity of interest that each man hath therein. I may incidentally mention that Blackstone agrees with me in this, which is a fortunate thing for Blackstone.

With praiseworthy self-confidence Dr. Wood expresses his medical opinion that even such right in land as a man may have is "subject to the right of the State to alter or defeat it." I did not need legal advice on this part of the subject, because I remembered that this "right of the State" is expressly denied by the American constitution, wherein it is declared that "private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation." Here the right of the citizen to own land, even as against the State, is recognized and protected by the organic law. So long as the constitution remains as it is now, the State has no right to "alter or defeat" the estate of ownership which a man may have in his land. I also remembered that once I "entered" a forty-acre tract in Iowa, for which I paid the government fifty dollars. In return for the money I received a

patent from the United States transferring the estate from the government to me, and my heirs and assigns forever. There was nothing said in the deed about the right of the government to resume the title to the land, and to confiscate it after scooping my fifty dollars into the treasury. My ownership of the forty acres was complete as soon as I received the patent, and that ownership was made secure to me by the Constitution of the United States.

Dr. Wood, in the dogmatic style which professional men employ, asserts that "absolute private property in land has no legal existence and is an impossibility, being incompatible with civil government." I offer as evidence against that statement one of the most conspicuous facts in civilization, the government of the United States under which men actually enjoy the right of absolute private property in land. I find in the United States, compatible with private property in land, a very good quality of civil government. It is not perfect by any means, but comparatively speaking, it is a fair article of government as governments go. It is quite certain from this evidence that absolute private property in land has a legal existence in the United States, and is not incompatible with civil government; but it is not at all certain that civil government of the best quality could exist without the right of private property in land.

I am somewhat acquainted with real estate having dug and wheeled a good deal of it, but I am not quite so familiar with the law of land as I am with the weight of it on a shovel. I therefore make the following statements on the authority of my legal adviser, Chancellor Kent, of New York. He once wrote a book entitled "Commentaries on American Law," I think that was the name of it, and speaking of land-ownership in the United States, he says:

"Though the law in some of the United States discriminates between an estate in free and pure allodium and an estate in fee-simple absolute, these estates mean essentially the same thing; and the terms may be used indiscriminately to describe the most ample and perfect interest which can be owned in land. The words *seizin* and *fee* have always been so used in New York whether the subject was lands granted before or after the Revolution; though by the act of 1787, the former were declared to be held by free and common socage, and the latter in free and pure allodium.

"The New York Revised Statutes have abolished the distinction, by declaring that all lands within the State, are *allodial*, and the entire absolute property invested in the owners, according to the nature of their respective estates."

In order to ascertain the meaning of "allodium," which I thought must be some kind of metal, I searched in Webster's dictionary, and there I found the following definition of the word:

“Allodium land which is the absolute property of the owner ; real estate held in absolute independence, without being subject to any rent, service, or acknowledgment to a superior.” This is about as plain as print can make it, and it must be quite a revelation to Dr. Wood that all lands in his own State are *allodial*, and the entire, absolute property invested in the owners. It is to be regretted that Dr. Wood neglected to examine the subject a little before writing his commentaries on the law of real estate, because they are so “incompatible” with those of Chancellor Kent, and so curiously at variance with the Revised Statutes of New York. The law of New York making all the lands *allodial* is the law of all the States, and on this matter Chancellor Kent makes the following remark :

“In many of the States there were never any marks of feudal tenure, and in all of them the ownership of land is essentially free and independent.”

Dr. Wood tells us he is aware that the State has treated land as though it were actually private property. Chancellor Kent has now told him the reason why. The State treats land as though it were actually private property, because it actually *is* private property, declared to be so by the law, and protected as private property by the Constitution of the United States. From all this it appears that it is Dr Wood who is combating “the combined legal and judicial talent of the civilized world.”

THE COMING FIGHT FOR CONFISCATION.

IN NO. 97 of THE OPEN COURT I am confronted by three new adversaries who reinforce my critics like the historic “men in buckram.” I regret that these disputants exhibit personal feeling, and show some signs of irritation. Peevish personalities weaken an argument, and they show some debility of thought. I will reply to them, so far as I am able to do so, in their order.

Mr. William Camm begins by contradicting some statements made by Mr. Pentecost in his controversy with me. I take no interest in that, believing with Mr. Camm that Mr. Pentecost “is amply able to manage his own cause.” I will answer Mr. Camm, and in doing so, I must compliment him on his refined phraseology. There is such delicate courtesy in saying to a man during a friendly conversation with him, “Had you thought beyond the end of your nose.” People whose thoughts are worth anything think behind and a little above the nose, a habit which I fear is not practiced by Mr. Camm.

When he shall have acquired that habit he will not say "the man with longest purse knocks the persimmon," nor will he talk about "hunting for a mare's nest in words that may be synonyms."

Mr. Camm, in his elegant way, referring to my proposition that the ownership of land has ever been the political distinction between a freeman and a serf, says: "Such a proposition is so shallow and so transparent that the man who holds it ought never to touch Mr. P.'s glove nor that of any other man who has 'seen the cat.'" I am glad that my propositions are "transparent," for Mr. Camm's are not very clear, nor could clearness be expected of a man who gets enlightenment from the sight of a cat. How did the mere sight of that cat inoculate Mr. Camm with feline wisdom? It is not easy to reason intelligently with men who, in the inflammation of self-conceit, can boast for lack of argument, that they know all about it because they "have seen the cat"; yet people thus mentally infirm, have the nerve to overturn and reconstruct the whole social and political constitution of the United States.

"What the individual requires with land," says Mr. Camm, "is secure possession, not ownership." What is ownership but security of possession? To secure a farmer in the possession of his land, the laws of the United States confer upon him the absolute right and title to it, so that no man may molest him in his quiet possession of his farm. His right of ownership is made perfectly secure to him by the constitution of the State and by the constitution of the United States. Not even the government itself can trespass upon him. It cannot even run a highway across his land for public uses without paying him "just compensation." What security of possession will a man have under the single-tax or confiscation plan, which Mr. Camm, very innocently says, "means the same thing in this connection."

Mr. Camm informs us how bravely he "led men to battle and to death fighting for the emancipation of the chattel slaves and now that our heads are growing gray, he would to heaven we could fall in to emancipate the industrial slaves—our own children." There is a little fustian in the style of that sentence, arising probably from too much looking at cats, but we can forgive that, in gratitude for the valorous deeds done by Mr. Camm. I am rather proud of Mr. Camm for *wading* his men to battle, because there were so many other commanders who *followed* their men in, and at a very healthy distance. I also congratulate Mr. Camm that, although he led his men "to death," he managed to preserve himself. Like Captain Sir John

Falstaff, of martial renown, he led his men "where they could be well peppered," and like Sir John, he was not peppered himself.

Mr. Camm, with the old bravery bubbling in his veins, wants to "fall in" again, and fight more battles. "to emancipate the industrial slaves." When I carelessly used the word "serf" in describing the landless, Mr. Camm was offended, and rebuked me for it. He, himself now calls them "slaves," and wants to fight for them. He once fought for emancipation, and now he wants to fight for confiscation. I can assure him that there never was a finer field for his valor than is presented in the United States to-day. Let him open his recruiting office at once. Before the farmers of this country will submit to the confiscation of their lands, there will be the liveliest fight that has ever been seen upon this earth. I advise Mr. Camm to beat the long roll and "fall in" without further delay.

Mr. J. K. Rudyard comes next. He, too, in poverty of reasons, flings in his little personalities after this fashion: "Wheelbarrow still in wordy warfare makes it hard to believe that he finds any real difficulty in comprehending the George theory. There may be a mental aberration which corresponds with color-blindness. If Wheelbarrow is thus afflicted he deserves sympathy, but uncharitable people will dismiss his case with the remark that none are so blind as those who will not see." Mr. Rudyard, of course, classifies himself among the "uncharitable people," and speaks in their style. For the opinions of uncharitable people I care very little; they are as a rule, neither sensible nor kind. Only the opinions of charitable people are of any value to me.

I do not think it can be fairly said that I have ever had any difficulty in comprehending the "George theory." I have taken Mr. George at his word, and given his language its accepted meaning. If it has an occult meaning known only to those who have "seen the cat," I may have some difficulty in understanding him. It surprises me that so many of Mr. George's disciples fail to comprehend him; for instance, Mr. Rudyard, who, while quoting from Book VIII, Chap II, "Progress and Poverty," is so wilfully blind that he will not see the "George theory" as it is proclaimed in that very chapter.

If, as Mr. Rudyard so courteously says, "It is all so simple and straightforward that a fool need not err therein," why does Mr. Rudyard err therein? Why does he quote from Chap II just enough to hide, and not enough to explain the "George theory?"

"I thank thee, Jew, for giving me that word," said Gratiano to

Shylock. and I thank Mr. Rudyard for giving me Book VIII, Chap. II, "Progress and Poverty." In that chapter, Mr. George declares the injustice of private property in land, and then he shows us the "straightforward" way in which he proposes to abolish it. Why was Mr. Rudyard so wilfully blind that he would not see the following choice bits in Chapter II:

"We have seen that private property in land has no warrant in justice, but stands condemned as the denial of natural right.

"We should satisfy the law of justice, we should meet all economic requirements, by at one stroke abolishing all private titles, declaring all land public property, and letting it out to the highest bidders in lots to suit, under such conditions as would sacredly guard the private right to improvements."

I think a man who can read and write must be wilfully blind if he will not see the intent and purpose of that language. The qualifying clause at the end of the last sentence is pure deception like the saving clauses in a party platform. What can any honest man think of the following "straightforward" method by which Mr. George proposes to abolish all private titles "at one stroke:"

"I do not propose either to purchase or to confiscate private property in land. The first would be unjust, the second needless. Let the individuals who now hold it still retain, if they want to, possession of what they are pleased to call *their* land. Let them continue to call it *their* land. Let them buy and sell, and bequeath and devise it. We may safely leave them the shell, if we take the kernel. *It is not necessary to confiscate land; it is only necessary to confiscate rent.* *

Here the "straightforward" plan begins with a juggle of words, a distinction without a difference between the confiscation of land, and the confiscation of rent. Is it "straightforward" statesmanship which proposes to take the *kernel* of a man's fortune from him, and leave him only the *shell* of it, which is nothing? This legerdemain is conspicuous all through Chap. II, Book VII, "Progress and Poverty." In that same chapter, Mr. George, after showing to his disciples the deadfall or trap into which the farmers are to be decoyed by incantations and conjurations about the abolishing of all taxation except the taxation of land values, says:

"That is the first step, upon which the practical struggle must be made. When the hare is once caught and killed, cooking him will follow as a matter of course."

Certainly, as a matter of course. And the farmer, who is so blind that he will not see the hook within the bait, who will stupidly walk into the trap, deserves to be 'caught and killed.' I hope that Mr. George when he catches him will cook him, and cook him well,

* The *italics* are by Mr. George,

even as Molly Bell did cook Bob Ridley's possum. I hope that Mr. George will use him

"To make a fry, and to make a stew,
And a roast, and a lo'l, and a barbecue."

Reading in Book VIII, Chap. II, "Progress and Poverty," the "straightforward" means by which private property in land is to be destroyed, and noticing the very large number of men who are captured by the "melancholy deception," I exclaim with Shakespeare:

"Is't possible the spells of George should juggle men
Into such strange mockeries?"

As to Mr. F. Hess, he takes it out in scolding, and he wanders away from the question to talk about matters which are not in the debate. There is a little oil of vitriol in the sarcasm about "Lord Wheelbarrow" who has offended Mr. Hess by adopting gold dollars as the standard measure of all values. I have never done so. I have merely asked that my wages be paid in gold dollars because they are dear money, and I prefer to be paid in that. I have been cheated so much and so often by "cheap money" for dear work, that I have wished that some law might be passed requiring that laborers be paid in the dearest money current at the time.

Mr. Hess complains because I have "not a word to say about the practical confiscation of small freeholds such as Thomas Clark's under our present usurious system of taxation and sales for delinquent taxes." Well, the reason why I did not speak about it was, that I was talking about something else; but if confiscating Tom Clark's farm for non-payment of taxes is an act of injustice, what does Mr. Hess think of Mr. George's proposition to confiscate every man's farm for non-payment of taxes amounting to "the *whole income* and the *full annual value* of the land"?

I do not know of any "Irish evictions" here in "free America." I know of some American evictions here, and I think they ought not to be allowed quite so easily as they are; but how will it be under Mr. George's system, when every farmer will be evicted at the bidding of "the highest bidder" for the use and occupation of the farm? I wish that no man could be evicted from his home. Mr. George's plan will evict everybody. Under his system the American home would be abolished.

THE RIGHT OF EMINENT DOMAIN.

DR. WOOD, replying to my remarks about that bit of law which I thought came "out of the surgery," says, "The surgeon copied it verbatim from 'The Limitations of Police Power,' by Christopher G. Tiedeman, professor of jurisprudence at the University of Missouri." In that statement Dr. Wood makes an important mistake. He must have copied from his own memory, and not from Professor Tiedeman's book. Here is what Professor Tiedeman says:

"An estate has, in respect to the real property, the three elements, the right of possession, the right of enjoyment, and the right of disposition, subject to the right of the State to defeat it, *and appropriate it to the public use, or for the public good.*"

Dr. Wood carelessly omitted the words in italics, and substituted for them the following words, "*and subject to the right of the State to tax it.*" He also re-inforced the word "defeat" by the word "alter," which is not in the original text. Of course, a writer is not bound to quote all that his authority says, but he ought not to halt in the middle of a sentence, and leave out its qualifying and explanatory clause, especially when, as in this case, the very essence of the statement is in the omitted words. This shows the danger of making a "verbatim" copy from memory, instead of book.

Dr. Wood makes another mistake when he quotes Professor Tiedeman as saying, that an estate *consists* of three things, the right of possession, the right of enjoyment, and the right of disposition. Professor Tiedeman could hardly have said anything so comically "absurd." It would be as if a man should say, "A dollar consists of three things, weight, color, and size." These qualities may be elements of a dollar, as the rights of possession, enjoyment, and disposition may be elements of an estate in land. Even as Professor Tiedeman made it, the statement is incorrect, because a man may have an estate in land without either of the "elements" known as the right of possession or the right of distribution.

Dr. Wood says:

"The statement that absolute private property in land has no legal existence, that as against the State no man absolutely owns land, but that land is always subject to administration by the State is justified at length by Sheldon Amos, Examiner at the Inns of Court, London, and may be found in his work on the Science of Law."

That is another mistake; and I fear Dr. Wood has again trusted to his memory. It must have been some other book that betrayed him into error. I do not know what Mr. Amos "examines" at the Inns of Court in London, probably the wines and liquors, which, I am told, are very good at the inns of London. "Examiner at the Inns" is, no doubt, a refined expansion of the plebeian word "gauger," as we speak it in this country. I do not admit his claims to legal rank, nor his right to speak as a judicial authority, but I do recognize his right to publish an essay on the Science of Law, and his further right to be quoted correctly, or not at all. His views and opinions ought to be fairly quoted or let alone. Mr. Amos's views are in strong contrast and opposition to those ascribed to him by Dr. Wood. Mr. Amos tries to show not only the moral dignity, but also the social value and the political necessity of private property in land. I will make a few extracts from his essay on the "Science of Law," and I will be very careful to copy him "verbatim."

"One of the most important steps out of savagery into civilization is marked by the fact that security of tenure depends upon some further condition than the mere circumstance of possession." Page 151.

"The moral aspirations and needs of individual man are scarcely less signal y sustained and gratified by ownership than the material." Page 155.

"It is obvious, that, apart from the possibility of ownership, the position of man, as a moral being, is pitiable, and even contemptible in the extreme." Page 155.

"Nor is it merely that the absence of ownership prevents the most precious qualities and elements of human nature from being properly cultured and developed. It prevents those qualities and elements from so much as existing at all." Page 155.

"From the above considerations it will be seen what is the meaning of the favorite view of the great school of German jurists, to the effect that ownership increases man's power (*Vermögen*) or physical and moral capacity." Page 157.

And much more of the same character, wherein the civilizing and refining influence of private property in land is "justified at length." It is true that Mr. Amos asserts the power of the State to correct the abuses of land-ownership, but he claims that the right of private property in land is a very necessity of the State, of more importance to its welfare than it is to the welfare of the land-owner himself.

Dr. Wood takes a very heavy fall when he drops from the clouds of State ownership to the hard ground of "eminent domain." The right of eminent domain is not founded on ownership but on the political right of sovereignty, and it applies to persons, and personal property, as well as to land. It may take anything for public uses, and even the citizen himself, as was done by the United States during

the war. The State does not take the citizen or his horses or his cattle, nor levy taxes by any right of ownership, but by right of eminent dominion or domain. On this subject, Judge Cooley, referring to the mistake that the right of eminent domain is based on ownership, says:

"More accurately it is the right which exists in every sovereignty, to control and regulate those rights of a public nature which pertain to its citizens in common and to appropriate and control individual property for the public benefit, as the public safety, necessity, convenience, or welfare may demand."—Cooley on Constitutional Limitations, page 524.

The right of eminent domain is recognized in the Constitution of the United States, but limited so as to exclude the doctrine of State-ownership. The citizen is called the "owner" of the land and the government cannot deprive him of it except for public uses, and even then it must pay him "just compensation." Chancellor Kent says:

"The right of eminent domain or inherent sovereign power gives to the legislature the control of private property for public uses, and for public uses only."—Kent's Commentaries, Vol II, 239.

I am criticised for using the phrase "absolute private property in land," and I am solemnly reminded that *absolute* ownership cannot exist where the State has the right to confiscate for taxes. This criticism is a metaphysical doubt, not an argument. We are told by men learned in philosophy that the "absolute" cannot exist in this world. This may be ideally true for anything I know to the contrary, but we are dealing with actualities, and must use such words as express the facts of life. I am not responsible for the word "absolute." I found it in familiar use by the "combined legal and judicial talent of the civilized world." "Fee-simple *absolute*" has been a law phrase for centuries. Chancellor Kent says:

"The title to land is essentially *allodial* and every tenant in fee-simple has an *absolute* and perfect title."—Kent's Commentaries, Vol. III, 488.

Even Webster, in his definition of *allodium* describes it as "land which is the *absolute* property of the owner." The explanation is easy; the law used the strongest words it could find in order to give emphasis to the right of private ownership, and in order to deny the claim of ownership in the State.

What amazes me more than anything else in the controversy is the statement of Dr. Wood, that he "was well aware that the lands of the State of New York were declared *allodial*." How a citizen of New York, well aware of that fact, could rise in his place and deny the existence of private ownership is a puzzle that I fear will never be explained.

I think that Dr. Wood has correctly quoted Professor Tiedeman in the following extract: "Surely, the right of eminent domain can rest only upon the claim that the State is the absolute owner of all lands situate within its dominions." This is nothing but the private opinion of Professor Tiedeman, and is of no more value than any other man's opinion, because it has no judicial authority to support it. As well say that the right of eminent domain over horses and cows rests upon the claim that the State is the absolute owner of all the live stock within its dominions.

The doctrine of State-ownership is merely a tradition still running along under the momentum of the Norman conquest. It has no longer any vitality even in the law of England. Blackstone calls it a "fiction," and Chancellor Kent remarks: "The King is by fiction of law the great lord paramount and supreme proprietor of all the lands in the kingdom." The fiction is practically obsolete in England, and it has been expressly abolished in America. Even Dr. Wood's authority, Mr. Amos, "Examiner at the Inns" says:

"On the other hand the Brown, from whom lands are sometimes held by a tenure involving nothing more than the performance of some ancient service, *is not considered as owner of the lands.*"

And the learned author of the article "Real Estate," in the Encyclopedia Britannica, says:

"The law of real estate in the United States is the law of England modified to suit a different state of circumstances. The main point of difference is that in the United States, the occupiers of land are generally wholly or in part *owners* and not *tenants*, as in England."

I have not written on the legal aspects of this question from my own learning or authority, because I am not competent to do that, but I have quoted the decisions and opinions of men who hold the highest rank as jurists in this country, men who have no social speculations to advance, and who explain to us the law as it actually is, and not as they may think it ought to be. From these authorities, I think, it is very clear that private property in land has a legal existence in the United States, and that the right of eminent domain does not include the State-ownership of land.

LAND VALUES AND PAPER TITLES.

IN THE OPEN COURT for August 15th, I am assailed by three more soldiers of the "new crusade." They spring out of the ground like the clansmen of Roderick Dhu. These are more formidable than

some of the others; they are stronger, and better armed. For answer to these new antagonists I will take a few texts from the law and the prophets of the new revolution.

"Private property in land has no warrant in justice."

"We should meet all economic requirements by at one stroke abolishing all private titles declaring all land public property and letting it out to the highest bidders"—Henry George, "Progress and Poverty." Book VIII, Ch. 2.

"Now it is evident that, in order to take for the use of the government the *whole income* arising from land just as effectively as it could be taken by *formally appropriating and letting out the land*, it is only necessary to abolish, one after another, all other taxes now levied, and to increase the taxes on land-values till it reaches as near as may be *the full annual value of the land*."—Henry George, "Protection or Free Trade." P. 302.

"Georgeism does involve the practical confiscation of land by the government. In *form* it leaves the present owner of land an owner still; but in *fact*, the government becomes the owner"—Hugh O. Pentecost, THE OPEN COURT, No. 91.

"We mean to destroy the private ownership of land by confiscating *ground rent*."—Hugh O. Pentecost, THE OPEN COURT, No. 91.

I present those texts in order to show that Mr. Albro's very instructive and intelligent article has little application to "Georgeism," but is explanatory of an entirely different scheme of change. Mr. Albro's plan would not destroy the private ownership of land. It would strengthen private ownership by relieving the land-owner from some of the burdens of taxation. It must have been thus presented to the farmers at the meeting to which Mr. Albro refers, or they never would have approved the plan.

I am strengthened in that opinion by the estimate those farmers made of the taxes which, under Mr. Albro's plan, would fall upon a New York farm worth \$15,000. I say Mr. Albro's plan, because it has no resemblance to the plan of Mr. Henry George, except in this, that all other taxation is to cease. The estimate made by Mr. Albro, and agreed upon by the meeting as "about right," was \$150, or one per cent. on the value of the farm. This in lieu of all other taxes, would be a light and easy burden. It would not be "the *whole income*, and the *full annual value* of the land." It would not make the government owner "in *fact*" of the farm. It would not give the "kernel" of the farm to the public, and leave the "shell" to the owner. It would secure to the farmer the ownership of his farm not only in form but in fact. This is not what Mr. George desires. He insists that *all* private titles shall be abolished "at one stroke."

There is much guesswork and fanciful speculation concerning the "relation between land-values and population." The variations are so many that nothing positive or even reliable is to be had upon

that subject. It cannot be true that the farmers and land-owners of this country owe \$600 to each and every other person. I cannot believe that each person's "existence" adds \$600 to the value of land in the United States. I think that whatever value my "existence" gives to the farmer's land, is fully compensated by the value of the farmer's "existence" to me. I think it very likely that the "existence" of some people adds value to land, but I am sure that the "existence" of some other people diminishes that value. How much does the "existence" of criminals, idlers, and sports add to the value of land? Nothing, and yet they count equally with worthy citizens in the population. It is not a man's existence but his work that benefits the community. Not for being, but for doing, is man entitled to anything. I wish that Mr. Albro would explain himself a little further.

"Tricycle" is bright, witty, illogical, and incautious. When I advised Mr. Pentecost to read Don Quixote, I wondered whether anybody would snap at the bait, compare me to the Don, and laugh at me for fighting windmills. Sure enough, Tricycle took the fly like a hungry salmon. He compares my controversy to "that doughty hero's celebrated battle with the windmills, which he mistook for giants." Well, I did not mistake my critics for giants, and if I thought them "windmills," I preferred that somebody else should call them so.

Let me assure Tricycle that I never was "haunted by the idea" that under the single-tax Tom Clark's farm would be taken away from him. I knew how wildly irrational and unjust was the scheme of Henry George to take it away from him, either by the "single-tax" deception, or by the bolder plan of confiscation. I have never been "haunted" by any fear of Mr. George's impossible revolution. It will never come.

Tricycle thinks it strange that I cannot see "that the single-tax would leave Tom Clark in absolute possession of his farm." I think it strange that Tricycle cannot see the contrary after reading in the text what Mr. George means by the expression "single-tax." In addition to what I have quoted at the beginning of this reply, I will now give Mr. George's latest utterance on the subject printed in a recent number of *The Standard*:

"Although the right of private property in land is not the present practical question in connection with the single tax, it is involved and should be understood by all who undertake to promote or antagonize the movement."

Here Mr. George confesses that the very right of Tom Clark to his farm is involved in the single-tax question, and yet Tricycle

thinks it strange that I cannot see that the single-tax "would leave Tom in the absolute possession of his farm."

It is a pity that a writer so keen as Tricycle should be so deficient in the logical faculty as to see no difference between the man who recognizes private property in land and the man who does not; between a wish to increase the number of land-owners and a scheme to deprive every man of his land. I desire to increase the number of the landed, and diminish the number of the landless, while Mr. George declares that every man must be landless. By a most illogical contradiction Tricycle asserts that this would make *all* men *land-owners*. As well say that the confiscation of all the cattle in the country would give every man milk for his coffee. It is false reasoning that leads a man to say the destruction of land-ownership would make all men land-owners.

Mr. Theodore P. Perkins, suspicious that the doctrine of Henry George is indefensible, drops him altogether, and says: "It is not so important to know what Mr. George or any one else meant by certain phrases, as it is to know what is a just land system, and how we are to get it." This is a new departure, and a very sensible one too, but it reflects not on me. For months my critics have been pounding me with Henry George; they have been explaining what they call "Georgeism;" they have been advising me to read his works that I might correctly understand him. They have been dogmatizing like sectarians, and with a good deal of self-righteousness have described themselves as "Georgeites." Now I am gravely told by Mr. Perkins that it is not important to know what Mr. George meant by what he said. Mr. Perkins cannot switch the George doctrine on to the side track, because he thinks it has been damaged in the collision. "Georgeism" so-called, not by me, but by the sect of Henry George, is the theme of this debate. It cannot be hustled out of the way by Mr. Perkins, because he has had enough of it. I most heartily agree with Mr. Perkins that it is not important what Mr. George or any one else means. The subject itself is a grander theme than the opinions of any man. When I see the obsequious deference which my critics pay to Henry George and "Georgeism," I offer them the advice which Jefferson gave to his nephew, Peter Carr: "Never believe nor reject anything because any other person rejected or believed it."

Mr. Perkins is a robust antagonist. A man of ability, who thinks for himself, who knows that he is honest and believes that he is right in his opinions, is not to be easily disposed of. He is much stronger than the man who confesses himself the disciple of another, and is

therefore embarrassed by the eccentricities and the inconsistencies of his master and apostle. It is Mr. Theodore Perkins who must be answered now, and not Mr. Henry George.

Mr. Perkins emphatically says that it is not just that land should have an "owner" but he claims that man should have "the privilege of peaceably occupying land for use." This peaceable occupation, he says, "is a right." If so, this "right" ought to be made secure, and its highest security is ownership. On that security depends the whole theory and practice of agriculture, the strength and foundation of all the other arts and sciences. When this security is denied and the land is made common property, agriculture ceases, and hunting takes its place. Mr. Perkins insists that the privilege of peaceably occupying land for use is a "right," but the red savages of America, who anticipated Mr. George by many centuries, deny this right entirely. They say that no man has a right to appropriate the land or any portion of it for his own peaceable occupation, because the Great Spirit gave it as the common property of all.

There is a good quality of moralizing in the reflections of Mr. Perkins on the abuses of land-ownership, and the wickedness of private property in land, but he converts it all into pure sentiment when he says: "It is true that every man has a right to as much control over land as is needful for his use and enjoyment of it, and for the security of the fruits of his labor." Very well, what is this right to control but ownership? If a man has the right to control a piece of land, every other man's infringement upon it is a trespass. Mr. Perkins qualifies his concession by denying that this right exists after death. I think his position here is weak, both in morals and in politics. What sort of civilization is it wherein a man has no inducement to work for his children? What sort of savagery would result should every man's property be scrambled for at the moment of his death? Where would be "the security of the fruits of his labor," if a farmer could not share those fruits with his family, and leave them to his family at his death?

The privilege of controlling land which the owner is not using, is a wrong, says Mr. Perkins; so that the right or wrong of land-owning shrinks to the narrow measure of use. "The question is," remarks Mr. Perkins, "how shall we get rid of the unjust privileges without letting go the rights?" Why, we must reach them by the serpentine road that winds around Robin Hood's barn. Here is the scheme of Mr. Perkins: First, "In the case of unimproved land, to refuse governmental assistance to the holders of paper titles against

would-be settlers, meanwhile protecting such settlers from the interference of the owner or his agents."

Let us examine that anomaly for a moment. Government gives a man a patent to a piece of land, and when the trespasser invades it, the government dishonors its own deed and protects the trespasser against the "interference" of the owner. But, suppose there are eight or ten "would-be settlers," all jumping the claim at the same time; shall their disputes be settled by bloodshed, or by the courts? If by the courts, the decision in favor of one or the other of them becomes enrolled on the records of the courts, and that record becomes another "paper title," which the courts, according to the land scheme of Mr. Perkins, are bound to dishonor in behalf of some new would be settler, who has made another trespass upon the land, and so on forever. A "paper title," whether it is a deed, a patent, or a judicial decree is only evidence of title, and under any civilized land system that evidence must exist on paper somewhere, before any man can be safe in the enjoyment of "the right of occupying land for use." This is Mr. Perkins' first step to chaos.

And the second is like unto it. "In the case of improved lands, to refuse government assistance to the holders of paper titles against the owners of the improvements on the land." But, what if the owner of the paper title is also the owner of the improvements on the land, and a trespasser comes and pitches him into the road? His "paper title" being of no value in the courts he can only obtain redress by proving that he made the improvements on the land. This might be a difficult thing to do, and suppose he did not make the improvements himself, but bought them of the man who did make them, his proof of this must be the paper title called a deed, which, according to Mr. Perkins, the government must not recognize, for his third step to chaos is this: "To refuse to record warranty deeds, or to enforce the provisions peculiar to them;" and the fourth is this: "To refuse to enforce any conditions in deeds old or new."

And to make confusion worse confounded: "In general, to assume that occupancy and use give the best title, and to refuse to consider any suits at law for the purchase money or rent of land, apart from, or over and above, the value of the improvements on it." This would be to make all men "infants" by declaring them incapable of making contracts. The seller and the buyer of a farm would not be allowed to agree upon its value if any part of the purchase money remained unpaid. The debt could not be secured by mortgage, because that would be a "paper title" which the courts must

not recognize. It could not be evidenced by a note for the same reason. The parties to the sale would not be bound by their own agreement, and the whole neighborhood must be called in to decide upon the value of the improvements on the land, every man making a different estimate, and holding an opinion different from the others. This reaction toward the ancient barbarism out of which society has been evolved through the travail of many centuries, is innocently called by Mr. Perkins a "reform." It would be a return to the land system of the savages.

PRODUCTION AND LAND-OWNERSHIP.

DR. WOOD returns to the charge in No. 106 of THE OPEN COURT, with a criticism entitled "Wheelbarrow's Heresy;" and reasoning inversely, as his habit seems to be, pretends to see some "George Theory" in my article on "Convict Labor." By the orthodox tone of Dr. Wood, I recognize a controversial friend who used to say: "I differ with you in this matter, and that puts you *prima facie* in the wrong."

Because I claim that every man should work in order that our comforts may be multiplied, Dr. Wood concludes that by that claim I testify to the wisdom of his way of reaching the result. This begs the question, for the dispute between us is about the means to accomplish the desired end. Dr. Wood assumes that because I wish to see a sufferer cured of typhoid fever, I must therefore favor the remedies prescribed by Dr. Wood, when, in fact, I may believe that his treatment of the case will make the patient worse instead of better.

Dr. Wood appears to think it "no trouble to show goods," and he spreads upon the counter a lot of remnants which have been in stock for ages, such as "comforts and necessities are drawn from the great storehouse of nature;" "by labor acting upon raw material wealth is produced;" "without access to the raw materials furnished by the earth, labor must cease to exist;" and much Bunsbeyism of the same sort. I am ponderously told that after inspecting those remnants I shall be "forced to admit that the right to live, the right to labor and produce being granted, it also follows that the right to land upon which to labor and to live is self-evident."

I am not sure that I have "the right to live," any more than the sheep which I slay for food; but I am certain that I have "the right to labor," and I must do my fellow-men the justice to say they have

never abridged that right. In fact, they have never been jealous when I have enjoyed the right of working twelve, fourteen, or sixteen hours a day. "The right to labor," in my case, has been too generously given.

Was it by inadvertence or design that Dr. Wood, while insisting upon my right "to live, to labor, and to produce," omitted to mention my right to *own*? If he answers that the "right to land upon which to labor and to live," includes the rest, I reply that it does not. The negro slaves had the right to land on which to live and labor. It was a worthless right. What I contend for is the right to land upon which to labor and to live, to *own* and to enjoy. The "George Theory" denies me the right to own.

"God has made man a land animal," says Dr. Wood, "incapable of existing elsewhere, and an all-wise intelligence would never have subjected man to certain conditions without at the same time furnishing him with the right and means of compliance." How does Dr. Wood know all that? Is he a Doctor of Divinity too? I do not venture upon the theology of the question, for I do not understand it, but admitting that Dr. Wood knows all about it, he proves too much. If God has made man a land animal, has he not made the deer a land animal also? And what right has one land animal to deprive another land animal of land? Every other land animal asserts the same inheritance from God. The water animals all make the same claim to the sea. One claim is as good as the other. God made the sea, says the whale, for me. Who shall contradict him? Are not all the "conditions" of his argument there?

The buffalo claims that the land animal, man, has tortured and disfigured the land with plows, and harrows and spades, instead of leaving it undefiled and beautiful as it came from the hand of God. He says, the "all-wise intelligence made these plains and covered them with grass for me. He has adapted me to grazing conditions and supplied the grass. He would not do that without furnishing me the right of enjoyment." The red Indian land animal denies that, and asserts that God made the plains as hunting-grounds for him, and furnished the game in the shape of buffalo. The Caucasian land animal denies the rights of both, and says that the fertility of the soil proves that God made the land for the man who has sense enough to plow it and plant it with cabbages and corn. We are on perilous ground when we explain the purposes of God.

In the early settlement of Iowa there lived on the Boone River in what is now called Webster County, a frontiersman named Allen. I

knew him well, Horatio, a fellow of infinite jest, of most exquisite fancy. He was a brave, kind, hospitable, honest man, and like Nimrod "a mighty hunter before the Lord." He had a wife to correspond, a mother in Israel blessed in the memory of all travelers who have stopped at her house on their way forward and backward across that part of Iowa. We had to stop there, for it was the only place to stop between the Iowa River and the Des Moines. Mrs. Allen carried a sensitive religious conscience into everything, even into cookery. In that virtue she excelled all other women. I do not think that any other woman ever knew how to cook a venison steak, and cook it right; while the recollection of her crab-apple sauce is a perpetual feast to me.

My work in those days caused me to travel a good deal across that country, and I often stopped at Allen's, where I was always welcomed with three cheers; no flip-flap shake of the hand, and a formal 'Glad to see you,' but three actual cheers that shook the leaves off the trees in "Allen's Grove." And then the best of everything, fish, venison, and such butter and cream as the city millionaire cannot buy for money. I dare not mention the size and flavor of the vegetables, because if I should mention them, I should not be believed. Allen was a devout man, and gave thanks to God in a frank, sincere and manly way. Always before retiring for the night the household united with him in prayer, and this is what he prayed: "Oh Lord, we thank thee that thou hast cast our lot in this howling wilderness; we thank thee that, although the buffalo is getting scarce, the elk is abundant on the prairie, and the deer tollable plenty in the timber; we thank thee for the Boone River meandering through the grove; we thank thee for stocking it with fish of good quality, and that we have no trouble in getting a mess of pickerel or black bass, and occasionally a trout." Here was a land animal who religiously believed that all other land animals, and water animals for that matter were created merely to be his prey; but the elk, the deer, the pickerel and the trout were of a different opinion, and might reasonably claim the benefit of the argument from adaptation.

It is a melancholy delusion that by abolishing the private ownership of land, production will be increased, and the comforts of life multiplied. The opposite result must follow, and for that reason I oppose the fantastic speculation called the "George Theory." It is merely a claim refuted by the history of centuries and by all the facts of civilization. Without the right or hope of ownership there is no stimulus to production. Where individual reward is denied, individual

exertion ceases. Men will not cultivate land without security of tenure, and the best security is ownership. This is the supreme inspiration of agriculture. To increase production, I desire to increase the number of land owners instead of abolishing land-owners altogether. Mr. George's design is a reaction toward the primitive state of man.

It is not new. It was the law for thousands of years, and it is yet the law among the barbarous tribes in Africa, America, and Australia. It yielded slowly to the law of evolution, but it yielded, and its resurrection is impossible. By this law the hunter gives way to the shepherd, and the shepherd yields to the plowman. Man developed from the savage state where all the lands and animals were owned in common, to the pastoral state, where flocks and herds were private property, and from the pastoral state to the higher civilization of agriculture, wherein the title to the very land itself was given to the farmer as an inducement for him to cultivate the soil.

From game to sheep was a great advance, from a forest of doubtful food to a land flowing with milk and honey, was a beneficent emigration. The phrase poetically pictures a land rich in grass for cattle, and flowers for bees. Only a pastoral people could appreciate its value. From a land of milk and honey to a land of corn, and wine, and oil, was a more beneficent emigration still. It was an advance to agriculture and the private ownership of land. This law of evolution is visible in the allegory of Cain and Abel. Abel was a "keeper of sheep," but Cain was a "tiller of the ground." Pasturage is overcome by tillage. It is the law. The man who can earn his dinner from a yard of land must have the land in preference to him who requires for his dinner a territory long and wide as a sheep's ramble, or a stretch of land equal to the reach of an arrow from his bow. The scheme of confiscation as advanced by Henry George and his disciples, if seriously attempted, would countermarch humanity, and turn mankind from progress backward toward poverty.

CHEAPEN LAND BY TAXING IT.

IN THE OPEN COURT, No. 107, Mr. J. G. Malcolm wraps up a conundrum in a very comical paradox, and then hurls it at me. Presuming that Mr. Malcolm is not jesting with me but inquiring in good faith, I will answer him. He calls upon me to "explain why it is that to tax anything else but land makes it higher-priced; but to tax land makes it cheaper, and the higher it is taxed the cheaper it be-

comes?" The fallacy here is concealed in the assumption that the tax is a burden in one case and a benefit in the other. The truth is that the tax is a burthen in both cases, the manner of its mischief being differently shown.

A tax upon land operates as a blight in proportion to the severity of the tax. It cheapens land as Canada thistles cheapen it, by making it less valuable, and harder to enjoy. Ten years ago a plague of locusts fell upon Northwestern Iowa. In despair the farmers of that region sold their farms for a trifle and fled from the plague. The locusts were a blessing because they cheapened land. The single-tax plague would cheapen land just as the grasshoppers did. It is a mistake that we can benefit the general community by tormenting land with any form of barrenness, tax, or blight.

Another fallacy concealed in the conundrum is that land and personal effects, as merchandise, have the same character, as for instance, cloth and land, when the true comparison is between the product of the loom and the product of the land. We may make land less desirable or "cheaper" by taxing it, but the man who cultivates it must add his extra taxes to the price of wheat and pork or he must perish. Unless he can get his taxes back by the sale of his produce, he must abandon the land, and if we make the single tax high enough, we can make the land so cheap as to be worth nothing. We may levy this single tax on sheep, and the effect will be to make sheep-raising so precarious as to cheapen sheep, but the sheep-raiser must lay his tax-burden on to the wool he sells, and the weaver who pays it in the higher price of wool must lay it on to cloth; and so on until it falls at last upon the man who buys a coat, the final product of the sheep and of the loom. Either that, or it will tax all sheep-owning out of existence, as Mr. George and his disciples propose to tax land-owning out of the world.

What matters it, whether land is cheap or dear if men are not permitted to own it? In Mr. George's Utopia men are forbidden to own land, and consequently can have no object in buying. The single-tax artifice is used by Mr. Malcolm, although he ought to know by this time that it has no place in Mr. George's theory, except as a means by which to confiscate all the lands in the country. Mr. George says the end he seeks is the abolition of private property in land; the single-tax contrivance he declares is only the means to that end. The substance of the plan is confiscation, the single-tax the form.

USERS OF LAND, AND OWNERS OF LAND.

DR. WOOD comes back again and says that he and "Wheelbarrow" are getting together very rapidly. I am glad to hear it. He is not the first of my critics to see the error of his doctrine. Mr. Pentecost, who censured me for doubting the efficacy of the single-tax expedient, now denounces it himself. In a recent number of the *Twentieth Century* he proclaimed the single-tax to be a "humbug and a farce." I never said anything about it so severe as that. I have called it a "deception," but without implying that its advocates have any intention to deceive, for I do not think they have. They and their disciples are all innocent victims of the same philanthropic delusion. Persons who compare Dr. Wood's last criticism with his first one, will see what a great advance he has made in the knowledge and understanding of land, and man's relation to it. He will soon discover the impossibility of making all men land owners by the inverse process of abolishing land ownership. National ownership of all the postoffices does not make me a postmaster, neither will government land ownership make me a land owner. I think it would be very unjust if every man should own the land that one man tills. I think that he alone should own it. More than that, I think his land should bear its fair proportion of the public taxes according to its value, and no more.

Dr. Wood reproaches me that I have as yet "advanced no remedy except objections to other people's remedies." I am not quite certain, but I think that statement is correct. I have not yet received my diploma as a Doctor of Politics and I am afraid that if I should go to mixing "remedies," I should not succeed any better than Dr. Wood. I fear that like him I should provide another bane instead of an antidote. Besides, a man may criticise the plans of others without thereby assuming any obligation to furnish better plans. Last month I attended a Scotch picnic, and had great sport in watching the athletic games. The prize for the longest running jump brought out many competitors. The best jump was made by a sinewy fellow who cleared 19 feet 11 inches. I happened to say to a friend that it wasn't a great jump, when a bystander, a friend of the jumper, turned sharply upon me, and said: "Well, go

and beat it or shut up." I thought him very rude, because I was not bound to beat it before criticising the achievement. And in like manner, all sorts of botch work claims immunity by demanding that its critic shall do better or say nothing.

Can anything be more useless than a scheme to deprive the farmer of his land, and then "leave him secure in his possession and use of it?" I want to give him that security by making him the owner of the land. I desire to see men owners and not renters of the soil. We perpetrate a solecism grotesque and palpable when we confiscate a farm in order to make the farmer "secure in his possession and use of it."

Dr. Wood says: "In order to increase production I desire to increase the number of land users." Very well! But no man can or will use land to its greatest capacity of production unless he is the actual owner of the soil. No man with a title below the rank of ownership can afford to cultivate his land to the best advantage. He cannot afford to plant orchards and vineyards, dig wells, build houses, barns, windmills, buy reapers, mowers, threshing machines, or even make his fences permanent and strong. He cannot even afford to manure the land. In proportion to the strength of his title will he develop the resources of his farm.

Mr. Theodore Perkins rather ungraciously rejects the compliments I paid him a couple of weeks ago and therefore I must take them back. He sneers at my "smart way of putting things," but I will not repine; nor will I return evil for evil. I will not retort upon him, nor charge him with saying anything smart. I will cheerfully testify to his innocence in that regard. He kindly advises me to "think more and publish less." No doubt, Mr. Perkins thinks ten times more than I do, which perhaps will explain the diluted character of his thought. Quality, not quantity, is the test of thought. Better think right for a minute, then wrong for an hour.

Mr. Perkins is apparently anxious to abandon his own premises for some other ground of controversy more favorable for him. I decline to go with him, nor can I permit him to coax me or provoke me into a false position. I cannot accept his challenge to defend the abuses of land ownership and the extortions of the landlord system. I would make things better instead of worse, and therefore I oppose the scheme of Mr. George and his disciples to deprive the American farmer of independence, and reduce him to the condition of a vassal and a tenant. I wish to make every tiller of the soil a free man, the

owner of the land he plows. The "single tax" apostles desire to make him a serf, the dependent villain of the State.

Mr. Perkins thinks that Scully's Illinois tenants would be more successful farmers if they did not have to pay two-thirds of their crops as rent. I doubt that Scully's tenants pay two-thirds of their crops as rent; but if they do, they are better off than they would be under the landlord that Mr. George desires to put over them. Hear him again:

"Now it is evident that in order to take for the use of the community the *whole income* arising from land, just as effectually as it could be taken by formally appropriating and letting out the land, it is only necessary to abolish, one after the other, all other taxes now levied, and increase the tax on land values until it reaches, as near as may be, the *full annual value of the land.*"

The mythical "Scully," even by the exaggerated statement of Mr. Perkins, would only take two-thirds of the products of the land, while the beneficent "single-tax" landlord would take the *whole income* of it, and levy rent amounting to the *full annual value of the land*. I present again this project of despotism because my critics tenderly step around it on tip-toe, as if afraid of waking it. They try to conjure it out of sight by the "single tax device" which is elastic enough to stretch from a mild and gentle method of taxation to a sinister plan for confiscating every farm within the dominion of the American republic.

Mr. Perkins says that I misrepresented his statement concerning the *postmortem* rights of a man in land and its products. If so, I am sorry for it. I would not willingly misrepresent the position of an adversary. In this case I must have failed to understand the statement made by Mr. Perkins, but he will admit that it might easily be misunderstood. I ask him to read it again. Here it is: "It is true that every man has a right to as much control over land as is needful for his use and enjoyment of it, and for the security of the fruits of his labor. It is not true that this right exists after his death" If that is not what Mr. Perkins meant, he is misrepresented by himself and not by me. His own language led me astray. What makes a farmer feel secure in the right to "the fruits of his labor?" He is stimulated in his work and comforted by the knowledge that his right will be continued in his widow and his children. This law is of the highest social value; it is the moral strength of life; it makes man and his work immortal, so far as anything can be immortal on this earth. When Mr. Perkins declared that a man's right to his home and the "fruits of his labor" ceased at his death I was justified in

asking those questions about the widow and the children. Every man who plants corn in the spring knows that he may die before harvest, but he is animated by the thought that in case of his death his folks may gather the crop. The Third Reader used to have a story like this, "An old man was planting an apple tree. A fool came along and said, 'What foolishness is this! You will never live to eat apples from that tree.' 'I know it,' said the old man, 'but my children may.'"

I would confirm the right which Mr. Perkins grants by making the user of the land the owner of the land. In what other way can the "right to control" be made so effective as by ownership? The very best lease is an inferior security. It gives the lessee a limited "control over land," but a control qualified by time, and hampered by tributes and terms.

Mr. Perkins condescendingly assumes that his readers "know some things." He could hardly have assumed that when he wrote his curious reflections on "paper titles." It is not necessary to repeat my answer to that part of his former article but I think it has had some influence in modifying the opinions of Mr. Perkins. He now appears to be willing to recognize a "paper" bill of sale, a "paper" note, a "paper" mortgage on improvements, and a "paper" quitclaim deed. He thinks it very likely that I never heard of quitclaim deeds. Yes, I have heard of them; I saw one a few years ago, and I was told that it would pass the interest of the grantor just as effectually as a warranty deed made on parchment of the finest quality. "Title to improvements," says Mr. Perkins, "could be conveyed by bill of sale as well as by deed." If so, it is a "paper title" just as good as a deed, and ought to come under the same condemnation. Say, for instance, a bill of sale to an orchard, a vineyard, a mill-dam, or a well.

Did Mr. Perkins assume that his readers "knew some things" when he was telling them about the queer inhabitants of the Kingdom of Nahant, "who, when they buy land, omit to record the deed, preferring to get a title by simple occupation"? What do those strange people take deeds for, except as evidence of title? And why should a native of Nahant risk his title for twenty years, when he can establish it in twenty minutes by simply recording his deed?

Mr. Perkins can hardly expect that his readers will assume that he "knows some things," when he tells them that "in the older States, if the holder of a title deed neglects to assert his legal privileges, twenty years' possession of the land gives any other man a perfect

title, despite the deed." That must be in the State of Nahant. If Mr. Perkins will look a little deeper into that matter, he will find that the "twenty years' possession" must be of a certain legal character, havinfi certain qualities outside the mere possession; and he will find that a twenty years' trespass gives no title at all. His readers will be still more doubtful about his knowledge of "some things," when he tells them that title to some of the "best land in Boston was gained thus by a 'squatter' within the present century." Such chimney-corner legends are hardly within the scope of serious debate.

THE CUT-WORM AND THE WEEVIL.

IN THE OPEN COURT for Oct. 3d, Mr. W. J. Atkinson asks me a few questions. Quoting my assertion that "without the right or hope of ownership there is no stimulus to production," he inquires, "Ownership in what? *In the instrument of production or in the article produced?*" To that I answer, In both, if possible, in order to make more certain the future enjoyment of the product. If a producer does not own the instrument of production, he must pay rent for the use of it, or he must become the hired man of the owner. As a hired laborer, I discovered long ago that the man who works for wages at any instrument of production, will, as a rule, get less product out of it than he would get if he owned the instrument. The man who pays rent for an instrument of production, will get all he can out of it, but he has no interest in its welfare, nor does he care to preserve or increase its productive power beyond the time for which he has hired it.

This rule attaches more closely to land than to many other things because land refuses to do business except on long credit. It will not pay its laborers for months, and sometimes it makes them wait long years for their wages. He who breaks the virgin soil must wait until the second year for a crop of wheat; he must wait ten years for a crop of apples. No tenant with a short lease will ever plant an orchard, repair the fences; or manure the land. It may be true that God made the land, but man makes the farm; and the most productive farm is made by the man who owns the land he plows. I want the farmer to own this instrument of production, that he may be sure of the "article produced." It is true, as Mr. Atkinson says, that a large part of the production of the country comes from leased lands,

but it is also true that a larger product would be had, if the tenants who hire those lands, were owners of the soil.

Mr. Atkinson thinks that my maxim in reference to individual exertion and individual reward is broken, when the tax-gatherer calls and says, "Mr. Wheelbarrow, because you have been industrious, and Mr. Bicycle idle, your taxes are heavy and his light." Mr. Atkinson means to show by this that the taxation of labor's product lessens the incentive to exertion, and encourages idleness. The moral of the parable fails, because all taxes must come out of the products of industry. All the product of the nation's idleness will not yield ten dollars' worth of taxes in a year. The whole statesmanship of the question lies in fair and equitable assessment, so that one industry shall not pay taxes and another escape taxation. If idleness could yield revenue, it would be wise to levy all taxation upon idleness, and exempt industry altogether; but, unfortunately, idleness is not a tax-payer. No matter how we may contrive or disguise taxation, whatever cash revenue is obtained by it, must come out of the "product of industry." We can as easily get revenue out of moonbeams as out of abstract "values," separate from the substance which industry has made.

Continuing the catechism, Mr. Atkinson asks this question: "Would it not be better to say, henceforth, if a man desires to erect a building, we will not fine him for it?" I answer, Yes! I think it would be very foolish and unjust to fine a man for building a house, and I have never yet heard of such a practice in any civilized community. What Mr. Atkinson means is that the taxation of a house is a fine for building it, and he further insinuates that the taxation of personal property is a fine imposed upon "thrift, energy, industry, and enterprise." Mr. Atkinson would not fine a man for being rich; I would not fine a man for being poor. If taxes are fines, they must be paid by one or the other, and I prefer that the rich man pay them. I do not think that money, stocks, bonds, ships, railroads, factories, merchandise, street-cars, jewelry, plate, carriages, and horses, ought to be exempt from taxation, because they happen to be the visible signs of thrift. They should all bear a fair proportion of the public expenses, because without the public protection they could not exist at all.

I offer in evidence here a couple of hard facts in the form of houses. Just round the corner are two lots of the same size, one exactly opposite the other. They are of precisely the same value. The owner of one of them is Mr. North, a bookkeeper, who has

managed by thrift and industry to build a frame house worth twenty-five hundred dollars, and his furniture is worth about five hundred dollars. The owner of the other lot, Mr. South, has built a house upon it worth forty thousand dollars, and his furniture, stable, horses, and carriages, are worth eight thousand dollars more. Besides all this, he is worth a million dollars in bank stock, money, and merchandise. Mr. Atkinson and Mr. Henry George require that Mr. North and Mr. South shall be taxed alike, and contribute equal sums to the public treasury. I think such an apportionment would be unjust, and if attempted by the law, intolerable. In order to avoid fining the rich man for being rich, Mr. Atkinson proposes to fine the poor man for being poor. This impossible scheme of injustice he innocently thinks would bring about "the reign of common sense in taxation." He also thinks that the tribute levied on Mr. North would not be a tax on "the product of labor." How is the man to pay it, except by the product of his labor?

Close on the trail of Mr. Atkinson comes Mr. W. E. Brockaw in No. III of *THE OPEN COURT*. He takes for a text this quotation from an article of mine, "Men will not cultivate land without security of tenure, and the best security is ownership. Without the right or hope of ownership, there is no stimulus to production" Then he says:

"It is strange how men came to erect such fine buildings on the school lands of Chicago without any stimulus' Without the 'hope of ownership' and therefore with no 'stimulus to production,' men pay the City of Chicago hundreds of thousands of dollars ground-rent for the mere privilege of producing"

I answered that argument three months ago, when it was offered in *THE OPEN COURT* by Mr. Pentecost. I will only repeat this part of what I said then. The owners of those "fine buildings" took very good care to obtain "security of tenure" before they laid a brick. They took a seventy-years' lease of the lots. In other words, they became owners of the lots for a term of seventy years. The long lease was the "stimulus" to build. Last spring a citizen of Chicago contracted to build a magnificent hotel on a lot for which he had a three years' lease. He had hardly begun to lay the foundation, when, as might have been expected, he was taken to the lunatic asylum, and there he is yet. Did Mr. Brockaw ever see a man fit to be at large, erecting "fine buildings" without ample security of tenure?

I congratulate myself that Mr. Brockaw almost recognizes the contrast which I pointed out between the civilizing influence of personal land-ownership, and the Red Indian system of land commu-

nism. He now says, "Individual *possession* of land everywhere marks the advance of civilization. Common or communal *possession* of land everywhere marks the savage." This attempt to make a distinction between *possession* and *ownership* scarcely affects the principle for which I contend. When it is conceded that individual title to the *possession* of land is an essential element of civilization, the rest of my claim will soon be conceded also; because in that case the strongest and most durable right of possession must be the best; and that is possession by right of ownership.

The attempt to make the right of possession and the right of ownership antagonistic and hostile principles in a civilization where one of them is absolutely necessary, is an impossible task, because the right of possession is itself a qualified right of ownership. There is no difference between a right of possession and a right of ownership except in duration and degree. If a man has the exclusive individual right to the use and possession of a farm for ten years, he is the owner against all the world until the expiration of that time. We invert the rules of reason when we say that "although individual possession is necessary to social development, individual ownership of land is wrong in principle."

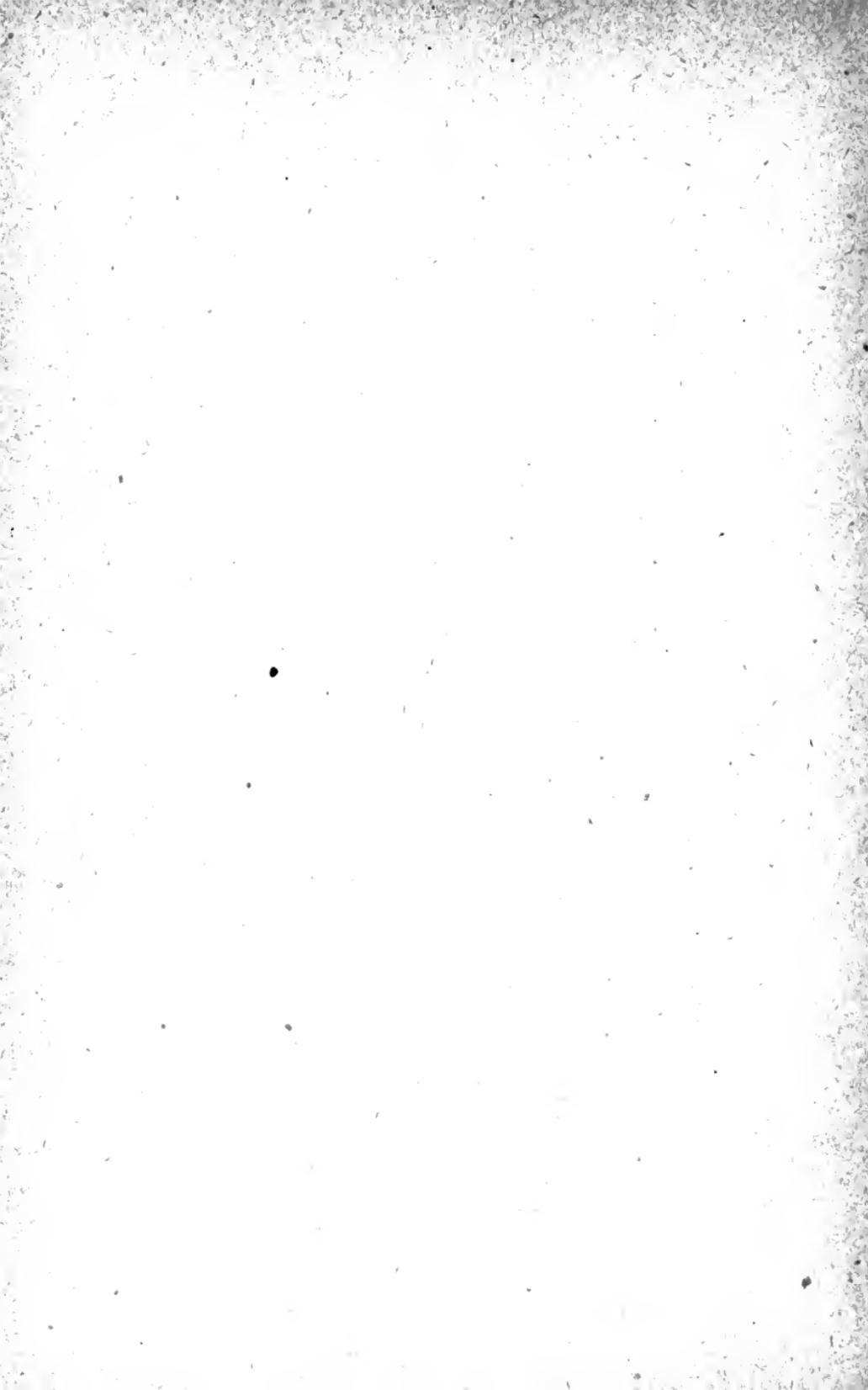
Mr. Brockaw tells us that Herbert Spencer and others have written "with a force of logic which is overwhelming against the right of individual ownership of the resources of nature," and then in great astonishment he inquires, "Why have their unanswerable arguments had so little effect?" My guess at the conundrum is this, because they were not unanswerable; and for a like reason the overwhelming logic did not overwhelm. Mr. Brockaw answers thus, "Because they saw no way to harmonize the *right* of individual possession with the *wrong* of individual ownership." A very sensible reason when we consider the opposite qualities of right and wrong, and how hard it is to bring them into harmony. I advise Mr. Brockaw not to try where Herbert Spencer failed; if he did fail, of which I am not sure, because I hardly think that he has ever tried to harmonize the *right* of one thing with the *wrong* of something else. To harmonize the right of possession and the right of ownership is easy enough; and if it is conceded that either is right in principle, the other cannot in principle be wrong. If it is wrong in principle to own land for a hundred years, it is wrong to own it for ten years or for one year.

Mr. Brockaw's premises come to an untimely and inconsequent end in the curious admission that "A nation of *homes*—small independent holdings—is generally believed to be the best." Have

I not been contending for *independent* homes? and have I not been criticised and rebuked for doing so by Mr. Brockaw and other defenders of the single-tax philosophy? Is it not the declared purpose of Mr. George and his followers to abolish all "independent holdings" by the scheme of the "single-tax," so that there shall not be any such thing as an independent home in the United States? Mr. Brockaw insists that no man shall have an "independent holding" but that every holder of land shall be a tenant; and he reasons as if rent were a natural incident attaching to land like grass, when in fact it is an unnatural infliction resulting from an artificial social state

Mr. Brockaw, still believing that rent is "native to the manor born," and racy of the soil, says, "The tenant might as well pay his rent to the government as to an individual." Certainly, but it is better for him to be free from rent entirely; better for him to have a "home," an "independent" holding than a dependent holding, for which he must do homage and pay rent to his neighbor, or to the government. If the farmer every year must lose a portion of his crop, it may make no difference to him whether the weevil or the cut-worm gets it, but it is not necessary that either of the pests should have it; and in the matter of rent, so far as the farmer is concerned, the private landlord and the public landlord are to him as the cut-worm and the weevil.





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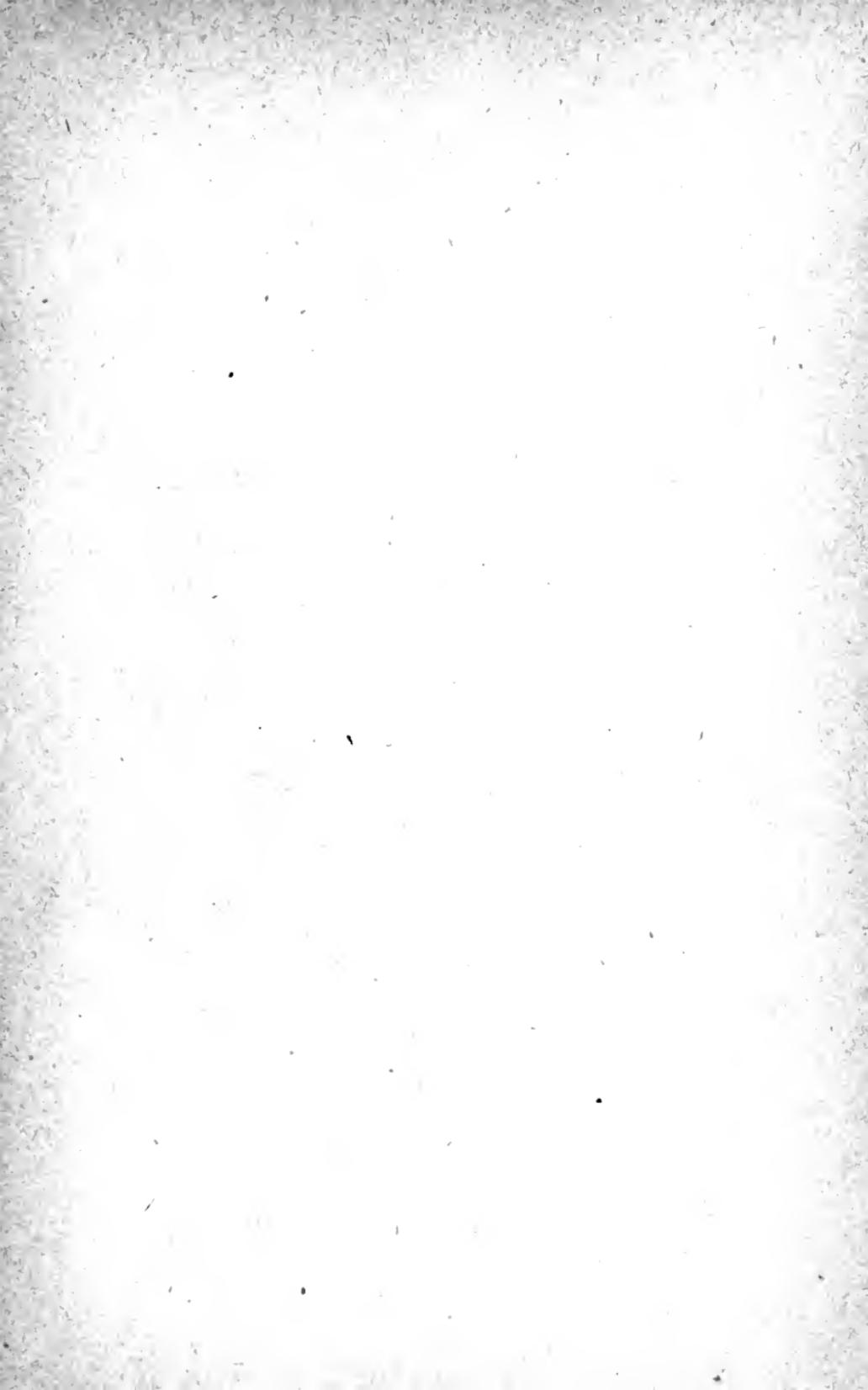
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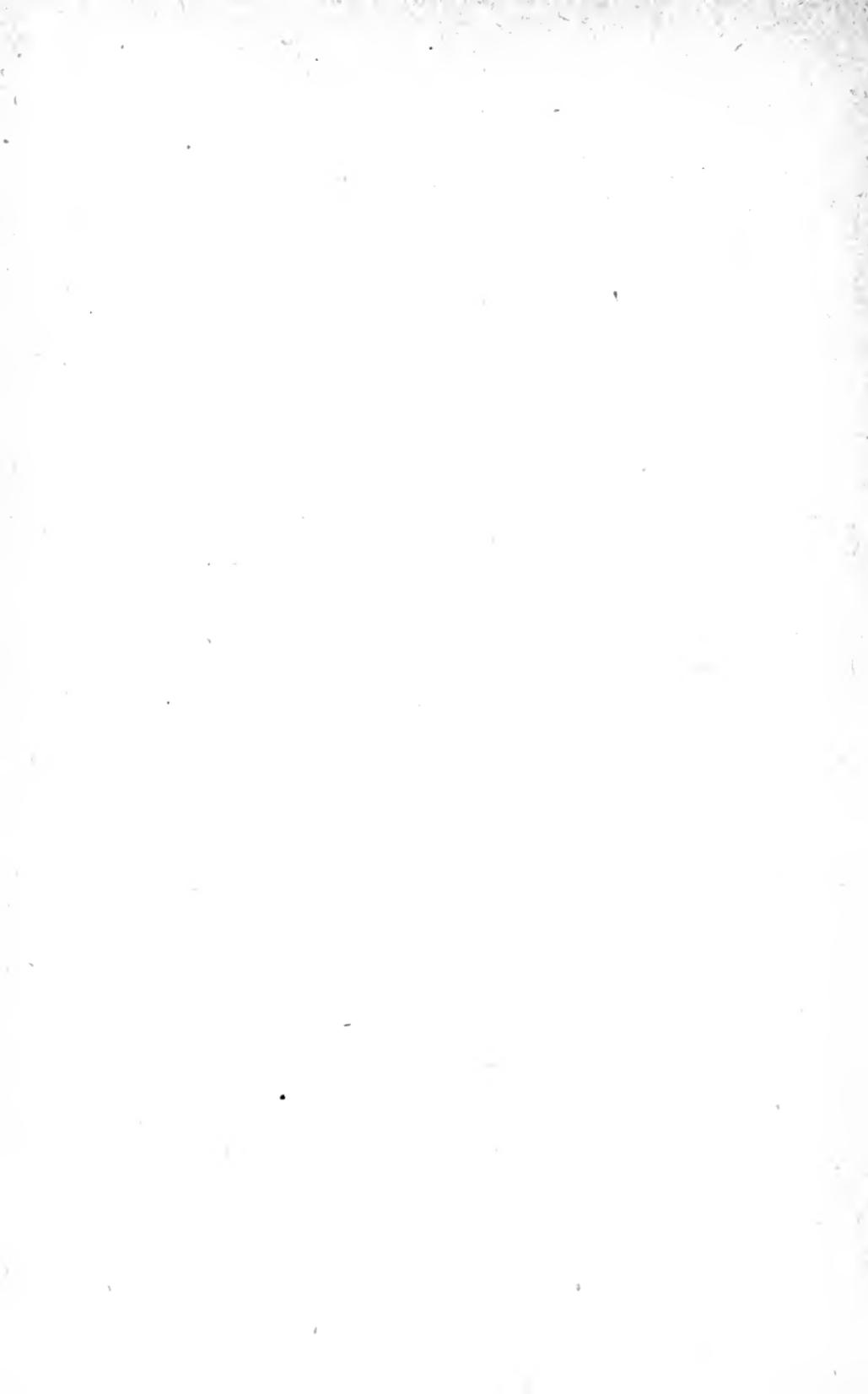
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