

Under "Methods of work" I should like to call the reader's special attention to the proposal of an information bureau. Such bureaus are already existing for some other movements, for instance, the Peace Bureau at Berne. As we no doubt will be able to procure a great amount of materials at very low cost, it will be possible to start this work at any time, or as soon as we can find the right man for it.

Among other things which an association can do, nothing will perhaps be more useful than the desire to preserve the peace between West and East.

The "yellow peril," and the Asiatic question in general, have got such a hold on public opinion in the civilized world, that from the point of view of policy alone it will be a good thing to lay special stress upon it. And I dare say that no body of men are more qualified to do it than we, as the fundamental issue after all is one of equal rights and economic freedom.

The system of organization here proposed is already in use among societies in Scandinavian countries, and has proven a success. With the great distances separating members in such an organization as proposed the provisions will be found still more needful.

The intention is that the whole work should be done with as simple and cheap a machinery as possible. We cannot expect very much financial support from the already overburdened reformers.

The plan has been laid before several of the leading Single Taxers in Australia, always finding understanding and compelling interest. I hope that interest in the plan will be found everywhere, and that very soon we may be able to get to work.

UPPSALA, SWEDEN.

MY ISLAND.*

(For the Review.)

By JAMES R. BROWN.

Private property in land is the most baneful institution that has ever cursed the human race. It is the most flagrant violation of human rights. Few are the social and individual wrongs that cannot be traced to this fundamental evil. We take issue with those who hold that the wretchedness of this world is due to the fallen and perverse nature of man, and boldly declare the doctrine of total depravity to be a lie and a slander, a convenient refuge for

* The story of "My Island," which we will publish serially, is an elaboration of a speech which Mr. James R. Brown has repeated on a number of occasions, and which at the instance of Mr. Thomas Ferguson, an active member of the Manhattan Single Tax Club, he has cast into narrative form. No effort has been made to give this literary polish, but, on the contrary, the writer has endeavored to preserve the character it bears as a

those who cannot, or will not, trace involuntary poverty and consequent misery to their true source, and offer old Adam as a sufficient cause of it all. We hold that men are naturally good, true, manly and generous, more inclined to do good than the sparks are to fly upward, and only depart from this high plane under strong pressure. Our present civilization is not one of which any thoughtful man can be proud. In this so-called highly developed Christian civilization, our distrust of each other is complete; every window and door is locked, bolted and barred. A mat worth ten cents will be chained to the stoop. We impugn the motive of every person that comes to us and have a deep suspicion that every one who approaches desires to "do" us. We have reached a point where the most popular worship is that of the dollar, and he who obtains it in abundance is forgiven almost any crime he may have committed in securing his wealth, and be gladly received into the arms of Society.

To-day, to be a working man means to be a poor man, and while it is clear that there is no wealth which is not produced by labor, it is also clear that to be a working man, a producer of wealth, means to be one who enjoys very little of it. Nothing would surprise us more than to find a stone mason, a blacksmith or a tailor, be he ever so industrious or thrifty, seated in Sherry's or Delmonico's enjoying a good, square meal, properly served; and we would be sure to inquire of him how he come to be there. To-day the baker's children go hungry, the shoemaker walks on his uppers, the tailor wears shoddy clothes, and they who build palaces live in hovels. A sad commentary this upon a civilization which is supposed to worship God, revere His name, and be based on His law of eternal justice!

The suffering and wretchedness of man seem to me to be due not to any inherent tendency of evil, but rather to social conditions that make the mere getting of a living a fearful struggle in which want or the fear of want, becomes the directing influence. This pressure is not due to any niggardliness in nature, or to any limitations in the power of nature to meet all demands that humanity has so far put upon it, but to the fact that having reduced land to private property and allowed land value to go into private pockets, we have given great incentive to withdraw land from use for speculative purposes, thereby making land artificially scarce. On the other hand, by a foolish system of taxation, we have discouraged production and made commodities artificially high priced.

So subtle is this evil institution of private property in land, that there are

speech, to which many Single Taxers of this vicinity have listened with keen enjoyment. We think that in large measure its racy characteristics have been transferred to the printed page.

To those of our readers who may think that Mr. Brown's treatment of ecclesiastical institutions might fairly be coupled with qualifications we may say that no one would be more ready to admit the existence of many exceptions to his animadversions, than the author himself. But it may be said that what Mr. Brown satirizes is ecclesiasticism, not religion, churchianity, not Christianity. As Mr. Brown himself would say, in his own characteristic fashion, these are "so different."

few people who see any relationship between it and involuntary poverty. For this reason I write the following story, in the hope that it may hasten the day when the toiler shall go forth in the morning with song upon his lips, returning at eventide with joy in his heart. There is nothing so dreary, so heartbreaking, so depressing, as a life of unrequited toil, nothing so tragic as forty years of toil that lead but to the poorhouse and the pauper's grave!

In order to be thoroughly understood by those of my readers who have not made a study of economic or social problems, I shall avoid, as far as possible the use of technical or scientific terms, and try, on a small scale, to apply and work out some of the social institutions that obtain in every civilized land, in the hope of making clear to the lay mind the evil influence of reducing the earth to the private possession of a few, thereby making all the rest of humanity but tenants, who must pay to the fortunate owners of the earth a price for what we are oft-times pleased to call our "God-given heritage." To this end I shall use, as an illustration, an island.

CHAPTER I.

As the result of a shipwreck, twelve of us are stranded on an island. The morning after the wreck, having dried our clothing in the sun, we gather together what we have saved and make a sort of inventory. Among my effects I find a title deed to an island, and upon examining this title deed I am surprised and pleased to learn that the island referred to in the deed is the very island upon which we are shipwrecked. This deed descended to me through an ancestor of mine who was on very intimate terms with Queen Anne of England. He obtained it from her during a period of extreme good feeling due to the liberal libations in which both were indulging. However, the deed is just as good under those conditions as if given for a more tangible consideration and in a more sober moment. While she was in the giving mood she should have thrown in a couple of stars.

After being convinced of its validity I called the other eleven survivors and passed the deed around for their inspection. They expressed surprise at the peculiar coincidence and laughingly admitted my ownership of the island. I laughed, too, but it was with more real feeling and conscious knowledge of what was involved.

The pangs of hunger asserted themselves and they began to cast about for a means of satisfying their desires. One of them started off to pick berries. Before he had gone far, I called him back and he said, "Well, Brown, what do you want?" I said "Jones, I would have a word with thee." I tell him if he is going to use my island he must make terms with me; this is my island, and he cannot use it without my consent; of course, if he does not wish to use my island, that is his affair, but if he wishes to pick berries he must have my consent. He is a believer in private property in land and in the righteousness of the institution, and finally does the only thing he can do,—asks me what my terms are. I tell him that out of every four quarts of berries picked by him he must give me one

quart. Circumstances force him to agree to this, so he goes forth to his task of satisfying his desires, and, incidentally, my own.

Another man starts off to catch fish. I make the same terms with him. All of them engage in some labor, and I enforce like terms with all. In other words, I am enabled to live on the fruits of labor without the disagreeable necessity of laboring myself. It matters not to me whether the summer suns are hot or the winter winds cold. My back never aches from toil, my hands are never blistered; I am never cold, I am never weary. I have food, raiment and shelter. All of this comes to me not by my labor, but by virtue of a title deed to this island given by Queen Anne, who did not herself produce it, and did not even have a speaking acquaintance with the one who did. But the title deed and its validity were never questioned, owing to the ignorance of the people.

This order of things is very satisfying. In my devotions, for I am a very devout man, I thank God for having in his inscrutable wisdom seen fit to cast my lines in pleasant places and given me such a goodly heritage.

My tenants have assumed a very deferential attitude towards me which is pleasing to my self-importance. Whenever they meet me they doff their hats and stand with an air of humbleness and contrition. All of this affords me the keenest satisfaction and pleasure. It offsets the half-conscious feeling hidden away in the recesses of my being that I am a parasite and a loafer; that my title has no standing in the court of ethics and that my comfort is at the cost of theirs.

Years roll on. The population has increased. Their knowledge of the arts and sciences has also increased; their ability to produce wealth has increased; their demand for land has increased, and while I have no part in any of this progress, not being a laborer, a producer, a helper, a thinker, a worker of any kind, I recognize the effect it will have upon my income, for this increase in the demand for land increases the value of land and so increases the share that goes into my pocket.

Considering the value of the land, I feel that I would not be doing justice to myself unless I raised the rents so that they will yield something like an equivalent for such value. Therefore I called the tenants together and made a speech to them as follows:

"I am pleased to note your industry and I am delighted to have you as neighbors. We all have good reason to be grateful to Almighty God for His kindness to us and the many blessings He has bestowed upon us. However, there is a matter I would like to talk over with you. I have been considering the value of this island and the increased amount of wealth produced, and I feel that in justice to myself I must raise the rents."

I appear very reluctant in this address, as though I only did it under great impelling influence to do justice to everybody, beginning with myself. The tenants, of course, object; they always do. They are an ungrateful lot. They do not seem to recognize the hand of God in all this. But I show my title deed and tell them they do not have to use the island unless they want to

of course, but if they do they will have to use it on my terms. What will become of them is no concern of mine; the mainland is a thousand miles away, but they are all good swimmers. Somehow or other, they fail to recognize my benevolent and benign attitude, but after much protestation they agree to my proposition, which is that hereafter one-half of all they produce must come to me in return for permission to use the natural forces of my island. They return to their occupations sullen and sore. The day when they shall sit under their own vine and fig tree is no nearer. Rest and ease is further off than ever and there is nothing left for them but the monotonous round of daily toil, producing much, enjoying little.

The condition of affairs of my island have, in some respects, assumed serious proportions. Poverty and want among the toilers are becoming very apparent. There are hungry men upon the streets who are both able and willing to work, but somehow they cannot find employment; wages of those who are employed are going down. There is a decided fall in the standard of living. Interest in what we call the higher plane of life has almost disappeared among the workers; morals have been debauched, and there is a general dog-eat-dog principle at work among the people on the island. The struggle to just live is more keen and bitter each year, and selfish, greedy brutality is to be seen on every hand from the top to the bottom of society. In the upper circles it is glossed over; in the lower circles it is to be seen in horrid nakedness. Many efforts are being made to stem this tide of destruction. Many are the causes assigned for all this, and varied indeed are the remedies suggested.

Having a great deal more wealth than I can use personally, and desiring the good opinion of my fellow men, I seek some way to use part of this wealth that I have taken from the workers to win back their good will which I have forfeited through my position as a landowner. I think that first of all I will build a church. I have one erected with stained glass windows through which the soft light floods the sanctuary. There is a great steeple pointing heavenward and a bell in the tower for the purpose of calling the people to worship.

Having built and completed the church, I look about for a man to occupy the position of pastor, and send to a theological seminary. I always smile when I pass this seminary at the blunder of the Irishman when he called it a theological "cemetery," for in my inmost consciousness I recognize that it is the "cemetery" of truth. However, I am perfectly willing to use every institution that exists if it will serve my aim, which is to maintain the present social order which enables me to live in luxury without working. To this institution I apply for a graduate, one who has a certificate giving him permission to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. This certificate is like a walking delegate's card. He cannot go to work without it. Rather a different arrangement than that which Jesus entered into with the fishermen! However, this is the Twentieth Century, and we are a progressive people. It must be a dreary thing to have a certificate in your hand and no fire in your heart, drawing a salary for preaching any kind of doctrine. I let it be known to the faculty of this institution that I desired the services of one of their graduates, and one called upon me.

I informed him that I took a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of the people on my Island, and I had built a church and wanted someone to minister to the spiritual needs of the population. I employed the word "spiritual" not knowing what it meant and not caring much, for I had an entirely different reason for building this church and hiring a pastor. My purpose in building it was to have the people taught that the present social order is God-given. This theory serves me mightily, and so long as they continue to believe this my idleness and luxury will continue.

The person who called was one of those curious freaks, a preacher of the gospel of Jesus, looking for a job to preach the gospel for a price. He was twenty-five years old, but had not started to work at his trade as yet. He was dressed in black broadcloth. Why it is that preachers always dress in black is not clear to me except that there is something moribund about their calling. We speak of them, you know, as "the cloth." His collar was buttoned at the back, another habit of preachers. An explanation of this was offered by a friend of mine who said they were going backwards. His hair was smooth and slick as a wet rat, and he had a pious look on his face that would have made a tombstone look jolly in comparison. He addressed me most deferentially and expressed great pleasure at having met me, said I must be a very pious man indeed to have given up so much of my time and wealth to the spiritual welfare of poor sin-sick humanity, and that men of my type were indeed rarities. I told him I was very glad to meet him, and that I had no doubt he was a wise and thoughtful man. I also told him that it was not of much importance to me what particular brand of doctrine he held to. The main string on the fiddle that I expected him to play on almost continuously was to teach the people patience and to submit to the will of the Lord, especially as regards the existing social arrangements, not to complain if life was hard and the struggle keen, and in their moments of gloom and depression to cheer themselves with the thought that there was a mansion in Heaven awaiting those who are meek, humble, patient and long-suffering. I desire him to lay particular stress upon the fact that the present social order, which gives me the ownership of the island and makes me a very wealthy man, undoubtedly had its origin in the divine mind and is two-fold in its manifestation of infinite wisdom. Firstly, it enables me to cultivate charity, generosity and condescension by allowing me to expend large amounts in various ways for the benefit of humanity, and, secondly, it enables the people to cultivate humility, patience and gratitude as recipients of my charity. I told him I did not care whether he was a deep-sea Baptist, or a liberal Baptist, whether he was a believer in the final perseverance of the saints, or, in fact, any one doctrine of the Christian church, or, of any particular sect. The one specific thing he must stand for, through thick and thin was that private property in land was a righteous, just, wise and God-given institution.

I decide that his compensation is to be \$5,000 a year in order to enable him to live and enjoy some of the luxuries of life. My aim being to place him beyond the common herd and make him independent of everybody in the church except myself, for, of course, I shall be a member of this church.

He tells me he recognizes the magnitude of this undertaking, and sees very clearly the divine wisdom in this whole social arrangement, and he assures me that every time he prays he will thank God I live and that he has the opportunity afforded him of engaging in such a noble undertaking, namely, to minister to the spiritual and moral welfare of these people, and to work for me.

After fully assuring myself that he was onto his job, I had him installed as the Ambassador from Heaven. The people received him, praised him, and passed favorably upon my choice of a pastor.

(To be Continued)

ANDREW CARNEGIE'S PLEA FOR HIS PLEA.

(For the Review.)

By EDMUND CORKILL.

A multi-millionaire who has written a book on "Democracy" in which he made the admission that he had lived long enough to discover that the men who earned the wealth did not get it, must command the attention of all earnest social reformers when he essays to expound and explain "The Problems of To-day."

Mr. Andrew Carnegie, by adding another to the already numerous attempts to solve these questions in volumes which occupy many shelves in his public libraries, evidently regards those previous efforts as unsatisfactory and his present work as the one thing needful to brush the cobwebs of error out of our brainial cavities and so make room for his own infallible remedies; more than that, Mr. Carnegie claims that he can truthfully say "I told you so," about "some of the doctrines which are now promulgated so freely"—that he "held and expressed advanced views upon 'Labor' and 'Land' before he could be ranked as one of the multi-millionaires" and that he is not "only a recent convert to such views."

After a careful reading of his book it is not easy to see how far he has "advanced," for he has the habit of presenting a part of a truth that he neutralizes later by discordant conclusions or qualifications. But through all is seen the shrewd Scotch intellect, so far commercialized as to enable it to reduce even the highest moral and altruistic elements of social life to the primary unit of money making. This is strikingly shown in his use of the parable of the talent hid in a field, obviously intended by the Nazarene teacher to point a spiritual truth, but which is adduced by the Ironmaster in support of his favorite virtue, thrift. It did not occur to his acute intellect, warped by commercialistic habit, that his own career as a monopolist might aptly find illustration in that impressive parable, but true it is that time was when *his* talent lay hidden in the ground in the shape of iron ore—for surely that must count as