

where we see the reform making real headway its political leaders expressly disclaim any connection with the "educational" element? Is this due to the inherent character of the proposition or to our methods of presenting it? I think to the latter entirely, and while there is probably little practical value in the suggestion now sometimes advanced that in our political efforts the name Single Tax should be suppressed, I expect when under the new impulse of Direct Legislation the reform becomes a real political issue, to find politicians who will see its vote-getting possibilities presenting it to their constituents under new names and in more popular phrases. Until then I suppose we must content ourselves with the proud feeling of superiority which ever pervades the breast of the true educator.

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## THE RIGHT TO WORK.\*

Translated from the "DIARIO de la MARINA. "

(For the Review)

By THEODORE SIDDALL.

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In the conflict which the present economic organization of society maintains between capitalists and laborers, extraordinary episodes are often produced which, with the compelling force of facts, defy the most subtle aphorisms of doctrine, of the schools and of political and philosophical systems.

Italy has just been the scene of an instructive incident, the ultimate result of which has been, by a strange contradiction of the powers of state, a strike-order given by public authority.

As stated in the *Temps*, the affair occurred about in this way: In the village of Cerato, province of Bari, several groups of peasants, exasperated and starving by the lack of work, united one morning, and, armed with hoes, sickles and other farming tools, invaded the vast estates of Dominico Capasse, a rich land-owner of the neighborhood.

Having entered, instead of falling, as one might expect, upon the granaries, and pillaging them, to satisfy their hunger, the invaders organized peacefully in crews, and with complete order all fell to work. The land-owner called

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\*The paper from which this is taken is a Spanish daily printed in Manila. There are five or six dailies printed in Spanish in that city and the *Diario de la Marina* is the most important. There is no Single Tax agitation in our far away island possessions, but articles like this appear every once in a while which show that the light is breaking even in the darkest places.

Mr. Siddall is a former resident of New York City, a member of the Manhattan Single Tax Club, and holds a government post in the islands.

upon the police to remove the trespassers, but being outnumbered by the peasants, did not resort to force, but endeavored to persuade them to stop work.

Some left, but the majority persisted, and it became necessary to call a commissary of police, who, with reinforcements, came up and ordered the peasants to quit work; whereupon the strange spectacle was presented of groups of peasants, with their tools, going out "on strike" by order of the public authority.

Examining this event by the criterion of law, it offers nothing remarkable—men who invaded the lands of another with the object of gaining food by their own labor: a proprietor who would not accept their services, and the public power to expel the invaders, and a legion of police doing their duty, expelling the honest peasants from the estate. This is all the substance the lantern of the law discovers in the facts.

Nevertheless, there is much more in the case. Soon may be seen a new form of collision between capital and labor, a conflict all contrary to that of the strike. How shall it be called? In political language there is no term to describe this new species of labor agitation.

Rising above the nomenclature of philosophy, in this event reason will find abundant motives, on which we will but lightly touch; after all, the only novelty is in the form of the affair. Leave out details and there only remains the very common state, of men without work, although the incident might furnish material to fill volumes in folio with lucubrations on the philosophy of right.

According to the laws of our present economic order, there are only two means by which man can live and not die of hunger—from his property, or by his work. In our system there is no means of acquiring wealth other than these, and every human being, excepting the "parasites," to use the classification of sociologists, must inevitably fall into one or the other category. Lawfully, one can not live except from his property or by his labor. Proprietors or capitalists, and workmen or laborers are the two classes in our social organization.

There always have been classes, and it is better, if not necessary, that there should be. So far the doctrine presents no vulnerable side. But now come the difficulties. Although the laborer must live by his labor, although labor is a right as perfect as the right of property, both means of sustaining life, why does the state, which enacts so many laws to regulate, arrange and defend property, do nothing to guarantee the right to work? Both rights occupy the same plane; why is one so heeded and the other so neglected?

Pursuing the inquiry further, it is observed that labor is a social function at the same time that it is a right, and also a duty, derived from self-preservation, and imposed by religion and moral law. Why does the state not take care to regulate this function? How shall it prescribe the duty without providing means for its fulfillment?

The question is, as we have said, rich in aspect, and propitious for innumerable deductions. In the day when states resolve the question according to the principles of distributive justice, the conflict of classes will cease to be a peril to peace and a menace to progress.