

much discussed. But if there is danger of race suicide at all, it is not from a deficiency of that motherhood which is so humble that it aspires to little more than to bring children into the world, and takes no thought of the conditions which surround them. Statistics show where the dangers lie when they tell such dreary facts as that one-half the children die before they attain the age of five years, and that in the one city of New York alone 70,000 daily go to school unfed.

The noble understanding of Frances Willard, illumined by her great mother heart, apprehended and taught that the world needs a womanhood sufficiently elevated to be capable of rearing children in health and virtue; and to be possessed of the self-respect to desire their share of political power to enable them to seek out and secure better conditions in which to rear their children than those that now prevail. She besought for mothers the boon of a voice in the laws in those words of hers chosen to be inscribed on the pedestal of her statue: "I charge you, give them power to protect along life's treacherous highway those whom they have so loved."

LAURA CLAY.

**"ABILITY" AS A FACTOR IN PRODUCTION.**

Editorial in the American Machinist of December 15, 1904.

The proposition of Mr. Wallace Downey to institute a system of profit sharing in the shipyards of the Townsend-Downey company is being variously commented upon, and some are asking if it is to be expected that the workmen will share losses as well in case there are no profits to divide. This question seems to those who ask it to be pertinent, in view of the fact that not very long ago these yards suspended operations, and the reason given at the time was that the business could not be profitably carried on, and at the same time meet the demands of the various unions connected with the shipbuilding industries. Needless to say, however, Mr. Downey looks deeper into the matter and expects the incentive of possible dividends that may be divided among the workmen to reduce labor costs and, of course, therefore, the costs arising from fixed charges. At any rate, he seems determined to try it, and if he does his experiment will be watched with much interest.

One feature of his plan is, we think, to be regretted, and that is his classification of factors contributing to production. He proposes to first pay capital, ability and labor at the prevailing

rates, and then divide the remainder between them as profits. Now ability as a factor in the production of wealth has been invented by certain servile pseudo-economists for the purpose of justifying the enormous gains of promoters and others who do not contribute to production in any way, but simply scheme to make profits out of labor and capital devoted to industrial operation. The burglar may have ability, and some of them do have it; so have bank wreckers, railroad wreckers and rascals of various kinds. But their ability is not of a kind that should be rewarded, and usually is not rewarded—voluntarily. Considering an industrial establishment, no ability, executive or other, can be of the least service to it unless that ability is exerted to promote the production of the establishment; and as soon as it is so exerted it is labor, pure and simple. Labor in the broad sense does not mean muscular exertion; it may be mental as well, and in fact a great deal of manual labor is necessarily accompanied by mental exertion. Taking a group of draftsmen all working together in the drafting room of a machinery-building establishment, and usually some can be found whose work is almost entirely manual, others whose work is almost entirely mental, and between these extremes, those whose work consists in varying degrees and combinations of manual and mental exertion. To say where a man ceases to "labor" and begins to "exercise his ability" is impossible, and fortunately there is no occasion to try. Anyone who renders service of value in or in connection with a manufacturing establishment, works for that establishment, and he need not be ashamed to be classed as a worker. In fact, if he is ashamed of it his services are likely to be of little or no value. There are only three factors in production: land (which of course includes raw materials), labor and capital. Labor here means and is generally understood to mean useful exertion of every kind. The invention of "ability" or "executive ability" as a factor in production was, we believe, inspired by unworthy motives, and the use of the term is erroneous, or snobbish, or both.

**HOME LESSONS IN POLITICAL ECONOMY.**

For The Public.

Willy: What is a Trades Union, Papa?

Papa: A Trades Union, my son, is an illegal association of workmen who band themselves together for the purpose of interfering with the business

methods of their employers, and disturbing trade generally.

Willy: Who makes them do it?

Papa: The walking delegate, who prefers to wear kid gloves and make trouble, rather than to earn an honest living. The men are the greatest sufferers themselves in the whole affair, and the most of them don't half believe in it, either, but are persuaded against their better judgment.

Willy: Who persuades them, Papa?

Papa: The walking delegate, of course.

Willy: But who pays the walking delegate, Papa?

Papa: Why, the men, the Union, of course. They take money from their scanty earnings that he may wear good clothes and loaf at their expense.

Willy: But why do they do that, if they don't believe in it, Papa?

Papa: Don't ask silly questions, my son. When you are grown up, and in business for yourself, you will understand. It is disgraceful that in this enlightened age and country a man can't run his business to suit himself. There ought to be a law to punish as a crime any interference with a man's business, so long as he is honest, and does not transgress the laws of his country. Things have come to a pretty pass nowadays.

[Pause.]

Willy (looking up from paper he is reading): Papa, this Mr. Smith, the sugar refiner, is the one that married Mamma's cousin, isn't it? The one who shot himself, I mean.

Papa: Shot himself?

Willy: Yes; it says here he was driven out of business by the Sugar Trust, which he had fought for many years, and finally they ruined him, and he was desperate and shot himself.

Papa: Dear me, how very sad! I hadn't heard of it yet. Yes, yes, our modern industrial life is a hard struggle. It is the natural evolution that the big fish eat the little fish; but it's hard for the little fish, just the same, even if they know it has to be.

Willy: But, Papa, the Sugar Trust drove him out of business, by interfering with his methods of business, didn't they?

Papa: Yes, yes; the big fish and the little fish; it's the same all through the natural world.

Willy: But, Papa, you said just now that there ought to be a law to punish any interference with a man's business.

Papa: Eh, what?

Willy: Yes; when you were talking about the Trades Unions. Isn't the