

home life, and, axe on shoulder, swinging at a tree, he was a familiar sight to his Chestnut Hill neighbors. The North End of Boston appealed to him particularly. Roaming among the little shops, he had the courtly deference of his ancestors, and the Italian shopkeepers were always hugely pleased when he entered their little places and instinctively doffed his hat to them. He was a splendid representative of the genuine gentlemen who are unfortunately much less numerous now than a few decades ago.

Editorial *Boston Herald*.

## The Riddle of the Sphinx

ROBINSON CRUSOE may have been monarch of all he surveyed, but he was pitiably poor in the necessities and comforts of life because, working alone, he could produce so little. Now, in the midst of Twentieth Century industrial civilization, where the subdivision, specialization and coordination of labor, together with the use of power and machinery, have carried production to the *n*th degree of efficiency, we are offered the preposterous theory that men are poor and out of work because of the abundance of their productions!

Who shall properly diagnose our economic ailment and prescribe an adequate remedy? Recognized economists long since tacitly dropped the subject of economics in its larger aspects to pursue a specialized branch thereof. The "economics" they profess is really business administration. They have substituted an art for what is really a science. Instead of conducting an investigation into what civilization has done that deprives men of the opportunity of making a living unless they are fortunate enough to find a master to hire them, they merely study out ways and means to make the best of an admittedly bad situation. It is not pleasant to charge them with obscurantism, but we cannot otherwise explain their discarding the science for an art.—STEPHEN BELL in *Commerce and Finance*.

LET us not continue living in a fool's paradise. Let us honestly face the fact. We are enmeshed in a vast system of land parasitism. Shrieks of agony will arise at any attempts to eradicate the parasitic growth. But the task of rooting out this cancer must be undertaken or it will destroy, as it has done in past times, the civilization it feeds upon.—*Progress*, Melbourne, Aus.

GOD, by giving to man wants, and making his recourse to work necessary to supply them, has made the right to work the property of every man, and this property is the first, the most sacred, the most imprescriptible of all.—TURGOT.

IF Christianity was understood and taught conformably to the spirit of its founder, the existing social organism could not last a day.

—EMILE DE LAVELAYE, Belgian Economist.

## The Underlying Cause of Poverty

IT were idle to question the intelligence and ability of those who so vainly seek to solve the great question of increasing crime and persisting poverty.

Their utter failure is due to their neglect to diagnose the disease, before suggesting a remedy, and a correct diagnosis is as essential for the cure of social disease as for individuals.

What then is the underlying cause of world wide poverty and its manifestations in crime which flourishes everywhere in the shadow of schools and churches, poverty in the midst of plenty, famine amid full granaries?

First, may we agree that some Great Cause has enacted the laws which hold the worlds fixed in their whirling orbits? That we have proof that these laws are unchanging and beneficent? That the universe everywhere attests both the wisdom and the beneficence of this First Great Cause? That it is not conceivable that this Cause would show less intelligence in launching the Good Ship Earth into space than that shown in provisioning and equipping the "Leviathan?"

That, therefore the earth when launched carried ample equipment and provisions for all for the full duration of her voyage?

If then, the cabin passengers are surfeited while those in the steerage starve, this must be due to some action by man which ignores and defies natural law.

Since the effect is world wide, since poverty, starvation and crime flourish in Australia, Africa and Asia as well as in Europe and America, this defiance of natural law which is the cause must be equally wide spread.

In launching the Earth, air, water, land and sunshine were given as the common property of all generations, but the results of man's individual labor exerted on these became his individual property.

The more thoroughly we study the evils of today the more certain is it that their roots are in our treatment of this common property as if it were the fruits of individual effort and therein human law defies natural law.

This enables those to reap who have not sown, and not merely deprives the laborer of his earnings but enables the absentee holder to forbid the use by idle men of idle land to satisfy their hunger.

We have seen recently in Wales and Pennsylvania men shivering with cold above unmined coal, men vainly asking permission to sow crops on untilled land, labor idle because human law forbids men to satisfy their needs as natural law commands.

The only way to really benefit mankind is to teach men how to break down this artificial barrier which alone prevents the use of earth's bounties so that there will everywhere be work for all, food for all, comfort for all, leisure for all.—WILL ATKINSON.