

the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union from further consideration of the bill, and that it be considered in the House as in Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection?

Mr. BARTLETT. Mr. Speaker, what is the bill?

The SPEAKER. The Clerk will read the title.

The Clerk read as follows:

An act to amend chapter 55 of "An act to establish a code of law for the District of Columbia."

The SPEAKER. Is there objection? [After a pause.] The Chair hears none. The Clerk will read the bill.

The Clerk read as follows:

Be it enacted, etc., That chapter 55 of the act of Congress entitled "An act to establish a code of law for the District of Columbia," approved March 3, 1901, be, and the same is hereby, amended by striking out sections 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, and 1613, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

"SEC. 1608. That the Commissioners of the District of Columbia be, and they are hereby, authorized to open, extend, widen or straighten alleys and minor streets in the District of Columbia under the following conditions, namely: First, upon the petition of the owners of more than one-half of the real estate in the square or block in which such alley or minor street is sought to be opened, extended, widened, or strengthened, accompanied by a plat showing the opening, extension, widening, or straightening proposed; second, when the Commissioners deem that the public interests require such opening, extension, widening, or straightening; third, when the health officer of said District certifies to the necessity for the same on the grounds of public health: *Provided*, That a minor street shall be of a width of not less than 40 feet nor more than 60 feet and shall run through a square or block from one street to another.

"SEC. 1608a. That if in the opening, extension, widening, or straightening of an alley or minor street, or in the extension or widening of public streets or highways, an alley or part of an alley may have been, or may hereafter be, in the judgment of the said Commissioners, rendered useless or unnecessary, said Commissioners are authorized to close the same. That if the alley to be closed is an original alley they may sell the land contained therein for cash at a price not less than the assessed value of contiguous lots. That if the alley is not an original alley the title thereto shall revert to the owners of the land abutting thereon, but all such land shall be subject to the assessment for benefits hereinafter referred to.

"SEC. 1608b. That the said Commissioners are authorized to accept the dedication of an alley or alleys and in connection therewith to close any existing alley or alleys in the square or block in which such dedication is made upon the application of the owners of all the property abutting on such existing alley or alleys. That if the alley proposed to be closed is an original alley the party or parties making the dedication and the parties applying for the closing of the alley or alleys shall present with such application a mutual agreement in writing and under seal, in duplicate, as to the future ownership of the land contained in the alley or alleys to be closed, together with two plats showing the alley or alleys divided into parcels, with the name of the future owner marked on each parcel, in accordance with such agreement. That copies of the order of the Commissioners accepting the dedication and closing the original or subdivisinal alley, together with the said agreements and plats in the case of an original alley, shall be forwarded by said Commissioners to the surveyor and recorder of deeds of the District of Columbia for record, and thereafter the title to the land in such subdivisinal alley shall revert to the owners of the land abutting thereon, and the title to the land in the original alley shall vest in the parties whose names appear on said plat in accordance with said agreement.

"SEC. 1608c. That the Commissioners are authorized to close any alley or part of an alley the width of which is less than 10 feet upon the application in writing of the owners of all the abutting property. If the title to such closed alley is in the United States, the land shall be sold, as provided in section 1608a hereof; and if the title is not in the United States, the land shall revert as provided in said section.

"SEC. 1608d. That whenever the title in fee simple to an entire square is vested in one person or tenants in common or partners, and such owner or owners desire to improve said square by the erection thereon of a building covering not less than two-thirds of the area thereof, or to use said square for the purpose of some business enterprise, the Commissioners are authorized, in their discretion, to order any alley or alleys in such square to be closed, and a copy of said order shall be filed with the surveyor and recorder of deeds of said District for record.

"SEC. 1608e. That whenever it becomes necessary to open, widen, extend, or straighten alleys or minor streets by condemnation the said Commissioners shall institute condemnation proceedings in the supreme court of the District of Columbia, sitting as a district court, by a petition in rem particularly describing the land to be taken, which petition shall be accompanied by duplicate plats to be prepared by the surveyor of said District, showing the courses and boundaries of the alley or minor street proposed to be opened, widened, extended, or straightened, the number of square feet to be taken from each lot or part of lot in the square or block, showing the existing alleys or minor street in said square or block, and such other information as may be necessary for the purposes of such condemnation. Upon the filing of such petition, one copy of the plat, indorsed with the docket number of the case, shall be returned by the clerk of said court to the said surveyor for record in his office.

"SEC. 1608f. That the said court shall cause public notice of not less than ten days to be given of the filing of said proceedings, by advertisement in such manner as the court shall prescribe, which notice shall warn all persons having any interest in the proceedings to attend court at a day to be named in said notice and to continue in attendance until the court shall have made its final order ratifying and confirming the award of damages and assessment of benefits of the jury; and, in addition to such public notice, said court, whenever in its judgment it is practicable to do so, shall cause a copy of said notice to be served by the United States marshal for the District of Columbia, or his deputies, upon such owners of the fee of the land to be condemned as may be found by said marshal or his deputies within the District of Columbia.

"SEC. 1608g. That after the return of the marshal and the filing of proof of publication of the notice provided for in the preceding section, said court shall cause a jury of five judicious, disinterested men, not related to any person interested in the proceedings and not in the service or employment of the District of Columbia or of the United States,

to be summoned by the said marshal, to which jurors said court shall administer an oath or affirmation that they are not interested in any manner in the land to be condemned nor in any way related to the parties interested therein, and that they will, without favor or partiality, to the best of their judgment, assess the damages each owner of land taken may sustain by reason of the opening, extension, widening, or straightening of said alley or minor street and the condemnation of lands for the purposes thereof, and assess the benefits resulting therefrom as hereinafter provided. The court, before accepting the jury, shall hear any objections that may be made to any member thereof, and shall have full power to decide upon all such objections, and to excuse any juror or cause any vacancy in the jury, when impaneled, to be filled; and after said jury shall have been organized and shall have viewed the premises, said jury shall proceed to hear and receive such evidence as may be offered or submitted on behalf of the District of Columbia and by any person or persons having any interest in the proceedings for the opening, extension, widening, or straightening of said alley or minor street; but all such hearings shall be in the presence of the court and under its supervision and direction. When the hearing is concluded the jury, or a majority of them, shall return to said court, in writing, its verdict of the amount found to be due and payable as damages sustained by reason of the said opening, extension, widening, or straightening under the provisions hereof, and of the pieces or parcels of land benefited by such opening, extension, widening, or straightening, and the amount of the assessment for such benefits as hereinbefore provided.

"SEC. 1608h. That if a part only of any piece or parcel of ground shall be condemned, the jury, in determining its value, shall not take into consideration any benefits that may accrue to the remainder thereof from such opening, extension, widening, or straightening, but such benefits shall be considered in determining what assessment shall be made on or against such part of such piece or parcel of land as may not be taken as hereinbefore provided.

"SEC. 1608i. That the court shall have power to hear and determine any objections which may be filed to said verdict or award, and to set aside and vacate the same, in whole or in part, when satisfied that it is unjust or unreasonable, and in such event a new jury in the case, having the qualifications hereinbefore mentioned, shall be summoned, who shall proceed to assess the damages or benefits, as the case may be, in respect of the land as to which the verdict may be vacated, as in the case of the first jury: *Provided*, That the exceptions or objections to the verdict and award shall be filed within thirty days after the return of such verdict and award: *And provided further*, That if the court is satisfied that part of the verdict or award should be set aside or vacated, then and in that event, at the election of the said Commissioners, the court shall set aside and vacate the entire verdict or award and a new jury shall be summoned in the case as aforesaid. The verdict of a new jury summoned in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be final, and if the amount of damages assessed by any new jury summoned as aforesaid shall not be greater, or if the assessment or benefits shall not be less, than the amount assessed by the jury first summoned, according as the objection to the verdict may have been to the assessment of damages or benefits, the costs of the new jury shall be assessed against the property of the party or parties objecting, but if the party or parties should prevail by the verdict of the new jury, either in increasing his or their damages, or in diminishing the assessment for benefits, then, and in that event, the costs of the new jury shall be paid by the District of Columbia, and if the Commissioners of the District of Columbia do not elect that the entire verdict shall be set aside, and the same be set aside or vacated in part, the residue of the verdict and award shall not be affected thereby.

"SEC. 1608j. That said jury shall assess as benefits accruing by reason of said opening, extension, widening, or straightening an amount equal to the amount of damages ascertained by them as hereinbefore provided, including \$2 per day for the marshal and \$5 per day for each juror for the services of each when actually employed, and all other expenses of such proceedings upon each lot or part of lot or parcel of land in the square or block in which such alley or minor street is to be opened, extended, widened, or straightened, and upon each lot, part of lot, or parcel of ground in the squares or blocks confronting the square in which such alley or minor street is to be opened, extended, widened, or straightened, which will be benefited by such opening, extension, widening, or straightening, in the proportion that said jury may find said lots, parts of lots, or parcels of land will be benefited.

"SEC. 1608k. That when the verdict of said jury shall have been finally ratified and confirmed by the court, as herein provided, the amounts of money awarded and adjudged to be payable for lands taken under the provisions hereof shall be paid to the owners of said land by the Treasurer of the United States, ex officio commissioner of the sinking fund of the District of Columbia, upon the warrants of the Commissioners of said District, out of any funds available therefor: *Provided*, That in all cases of payments the accounting officers shall take into account the assessment for benefits and the award for damages, and shall pay only such part of said award in respect of any lot as may be in excess of the assessment for benefits against the part of such lot not taken, and there shall be credited on said assessment the amount of said award not in excess of said assessment.

"SEC. 1608l. That when confirmed by the court the several assessments herein provided to be made shall severally be a lien upon the land assessed and shall be collected as special-improvement taxes in the District of Columbia, and shall be payable in four equal annual installments, with interest at the rate of 4 per cent per annum from and after sixty days after the date of confirmation until paid. That said court may allow amendments in form or substance in any description of property proposed to be taken, or of property assessed for benefits, whenever such amendments will not interfere with the substantial rights of the parties interested, and any such amendment may be made after as well as before the order or judgment confirming the verdict or award aforesaid.

"SEC. 1608m. That each juror shall receive as compensation the sum of \$5 per day for his services during the time he shall be actually engaged in such services under the provisions hereof.

"SEC. 1610. That no appeal by any interested party from the decision of the supreme court of the District of Columbia confirming the assessment or assessments of benefits or damages herein provided for, nor any other proceeding at law or in equity by such party against the confirmation of such assessment or assessments, shall delay or prevent the payment of award to others in respect to the property condemned, nor delay or prevent the taking of any of said property sought to be condemned, nor the opening, extension, widening, or straightening of such alley or minor street: *Provided, however*, That upon the final determination of said appeal or other proceedings at law or in equity, the amount found to be due and payable as damages sustained by reason of the opening, extension, widening, or straightening of said alley

or minor street under the provisions hereof shall be paid as hereinbefore provided.

"SEC. 1611. That all money derived from the sale of land in which the United States is interested, under the provisions of this act, shall be paid into the Treasury of the United States by the Commissioners of the District of Columbia to the credit of the United States.

"SEC. 1612. That in all cases where plats are required to be made under the provisions of this act, or where the said Commissioners shall deem it necessary that they shall be made in order to more effectually carry out any provision hereof, such plats shall be made by the surveyor of the District of Columbia, who shall require the person or persons desiring the same to deposit in advance a sum to defray the cost of preparing the same; any amount of such deposit remaining after the cost of such plats has been paid shall be refunded to the party so depositing: *Provided*, That plats ordered by the said Commissioners shall be prepared by said surveyor free of cost.

"SEC. 1613. That the validity of any condemnation proceeding under the act of Congress entitled 'An act to provide for the opening of alleys in the District of Columbia,' approved July 22, 1892, or under the act of Congress entitled 'An act to open, widen, and extend alleys in the District of Columbia,' approved August 24, 1894, or under the sections of the code of law for the District of Columbia hereby repealed, shall not be affected by the want of proper notice to any proprietor of land in the square, except as to such proprietor; and if it shall appear to the satisfaction of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia that any such proprietor was not notified as required by said acts the said Commissioners may proceed under this act to condemn the land affected by the want of such notice."

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I understand that we are proceeding as in the Committee of the Whole House, and therefore the bill is subject to an amendment at the end of any paragraph.

Mr. BABCOCK. Mr. Speaker, I asked unanimous consent that the bill be considered in the House as in the Committee of the Whole, and I desire to say that no effort will be made to shut out any reasonable amendment at all. There is no intention of that kind.

Mr. BAKER. I am well aware the amendment I am about to offer will not meet with the approval of the committee.

The SPEAKER. The Chair will suggest to the gentleman from New York [Mr. BAKER] that he ask unanimous consent to dispense with the first reading of the bill. Otherwise the bill would have to be read through and then read again after amendment.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I have no desire to delay the proceedings.

The SPEAKER. By unanimous consent the first reading can be dispensed with, and by unanimous consent the gentleman from New York [Mr. BAKER] could offer his amendment.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to offer an amendment.

Mr. BABCOCK. I have no objection. The gentleman from New York [Mr. BAKER] can offer his amendment.

The SPEAKER. The Chair hears no objection.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I offer the following amendment:

That in line 22, page 2, the bill be amended to read as follows: "That if the alley to be closed is an original alley, they shall lease the land contained therein."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of offering that amendment is this: I want to raise my protest against this policy. I understand I am proceeding under unanimous consent, Mr. Speaker, having offered my amendment and speaking to it.

The SPEAKER. Let the amendment be reported.

The Clerk read as follows:

In line 22, page 2 of the bill, strike out "sell" and insert "lease," so as to read: "That if the alley to be closed is an original alley, they shall lease the land contained therein."

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from New York [Mr. BAKER] offers an amendment and is entitled to the floor for five minutes.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I wish to enter a protest here now against this policy of the segregation of any land that belongs to the United States or that belongs, as in this case, to the municipal government of the city of Washington, or any land that belongs to or is to revert to this city.

I am not going to inflict any extended remarks upon the House. I have no desire to take up any unnecessary time; but I have endeavored to point out on other occasions the evil effects which have followed from this policy. But I do desire, approaching as I do the conclusion of my service in this House, to enter an emphatic protest and to point out very briefly the evils that have followed this alienation of public lands; and that term, "public lands," applies just as much to a city lot as it does to 640 acres of land under the timber and stone act, or 160 acres under the homestead law.

The effect of this alienation of public land, this selling it at its present value, is seen in the fearful evils which we all complain of, which we all recognize, but which nobody proposes to alter. The purpose of my amendment to this bill is to prevent a continuation of the policy which is responsible for concentrating land in the hands of a few, caused, as it has been, by the sale of public lands and the granting of special privileges to railroad, telegraph, and telephone companies. No land ever

should have been alienated. Communities, as well as the nation, should have reserved all of their land. I grant you that we can not go back and change that now, but we can in this little matter prevent a continuation of this vicious policy. That policy has resulted in the private appropriation of ground rent, individuals this land at its present value, the community thus losing the advantage of the value that would subsequently attach to it by reason of increased population, improvements in transportation and exchange, and improvements in government, all of which add to the value of land, but nothing else.

Mr. BABCOCK. If the gentleman will permit me, I will say to him that that provision is the present law.

Mr. BAKER. We can change present law, can we not?

Mr. BABCOCK. But this is merely copied as a whole from the present law.

Mr. BAKER. I am not raising any captious objection to this particular bill or to its phraseology. I am simply entering my protest against a continuation of a policy that is bad. I was about to say, when interrupted by the gentleman from Wisconsin, that the effect of the policy perpetuated in this bill has been that where communities rapidly increase, as great cities like New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, New Orleans, and San Francisco are increasing, that they have really granted their land rentals to a few individuals, giving to them possession of communal lands, communal property, thereby giving to those people—the Astors, Goelets, Gerrys, Rhinelanders et al.—the resultant enormous unearned increment to which they have no moral title whatever, but which have made them all multimillionaires, every penny of which, however, is a tax upon and is wrung from present-day toil.

It will be remembered that a few weeks ago I called the attention of the House to a bill to reimburse a widow for a one-sixth interest or a one-tenth interest in a plot of ground in San Francisco, taken by the Government of the United States as the site for its mint there fifty years ago, and which is to cost the people now scores of thousands of dollars, although it was all paid for at that time. Why? Because of this policy of allowing the alienating of the land. If that land had been retained by the city of San Francisco at that time, if it had been leased, or if it had been taxed according to its rental value into the public Treasury, as it should have been and should be to-day, the additional value that has accrued to it from time to time as the population increased would have accrued to the city, and it would not have been necessary, nor would it be necessary to-day, to raise a dollar of taxation by a tax on buildings or upon personal property.

I am opposing this bill in its present form because the principle is the same whether there be \$5 involved or whether it be a million.

Mr. Speaker, because Henry George's philosophy is the only just and righteous remedy I shall incorporate as an appendix extracts from his book, Social Problems.

Mr. Speaker, the ramifications of this question are endless. Scratch a millionaire or a multimillionaire and you will inevitably find that his millions have been acquired through the possession of a special privilege—generally the special privilege of control over land in some form. For it must be remembered, Mr. Speaker, that the exclusive privilege of carrying on such governmental functions as the transportation of persons and property by either steam railroads or by electric surface, elevated, or subway railroads, or the transmitting of intelligence by telegraphy or telephone, or the supply of water, gas, or electricity, is primarily based upon the control of extremely valuable rights of way—i. e., land.

The giant fortunes of the day constitute the greatest menace which confronts society and have their origin in the possession of valuable land in some form. The trusts and monopolies are based upon these special privileges and no "regulation," either by the Townsend bill or any other, will seriously affect them.

Unless you strike at the root of the trouble—land monopoly—the evils will not only continue but will surely increase, as there is no such thing as standing still in any of the affairs of life; progression or retrogression is the universal law. This country will go on under its present policies, which more and more concentrate wealth and power in the hands of the few, or it will heed the warning of one of the greatest men the world has produced—Henry George—and reverse its present thoroughly vicious policy, substituting therefor the principle for which he contended, to which he devoted and for which he gave up his life—the single tax—the taking through taxation of the rental value of land.

That principle, Mr. Speaker, is the natural, righteous solvent of our terrible social evils; apply it and at once this festering sore of these monstrous unearned fortunes and their inevitable corollary, debasing and degrading poverty, will be done away

of these so-called experts. In spite of their warning, the city installed her own telephone plant. The receipts for last year, up to March 31, averaged \$17.50 per telephone (the unlimited service is \$28.61; limited, \$17.54 and \$12.18). After deducting the post-office department's royalty the telephone receipts averaged \$15.79 per instrument, and this enabled the city to pay operating and maintenance expenses, etc. The net revenue amounted to a dividend of 9 per cent on the capital expended, out of which interest and sinking funds were deducted, leaving \$6,136 for depreciation fund.

These cities furnish examples of the actual practical results of public ownership of public utilities. How much longer will our people submit to being plundered to make others overrich, and, what is worse, submit to a spoliation which almost invariably leads to the corrupting of the people's servants?

The Arena tells us that the people of Portsmouth (England) were not deceived by this "expert" testimony. The people of the United States, Mr. Speaker, have within recent years, ever since this question of municipal ownership has become generally discussed, been treated to reams upon reams of similar "expert" testimony, the most prolific "expert" being that entirely disinterested gentleman Robert P. Porter, whom the public-service corporations of our big cities sent abroad to collect data which was to prove the folly of municipal ownership. They have doubtless paid him scores of thousands of dollars for his work, as his articles decrying what he is pleased to call "municipal socialism," have appeared in many of our large newspapers. I think, however, instead of helping his employers' cause he has injured it by provoking discussion and investigation, which was the last thing they really wanted. But having obtained their millions so easily it is not surprising they let a few thousands go in the attempt to hoodwink the people they are robbing.

WHY THE GAS TRUST IN TWO CITIES SEES PERIL IN YELLOW JOURNALISM.

It is doubtful whether the terrors of yellow journalism have ever before proved such a nightmare to the extortionate gas monopolies of New York and Boston, and to re-create public officials as of late. During the past few months Mr. HEARST has exposed the shameful and disgraceful methods by which the mayor and comptroller of New York sought to turn over \$9,000,000 to the gas trust. The public servants in the great metropolis strove in every way to consummate these iniquitous proceedings, but Mr. HEARST laid bare their action in his paper, attacked them in the courts, and finally secured a permanent injunction preventing the payment of the \$9,000,000, to the great chagrin of the discredited mayor and the exasperation of the grasping monopoly.

In Boston an aggressive movement on the part of the various gas companies that constitute the gas monopoly of Boston and her environs was attacked by Mr. HEARST, first in the Boston American and later before the State commissioners. When the case was brought before the officials Mr. HEARST, through his attorneys, presented the petition of 70,000 of the citizens of Boston asking that the present exorbitant price of \$1 per thousand cubic feet be reduced to 80 cents per thousand. The trust, as usual, was represented by the ablest legal ability and felt confident in its power to defeat the just demands of a long-suffering and shamefully plundered public.

But Mr. HEARST created consternation in the monopolistic family when he brought from Cleveland, Ohio, Professor Edward Itemis, the famous gas expert, who, after an exhaustive examination, made a merciless expose of the preposterous claims of the gas combine. He showed, for example, that from their own figures the Brookline Gas Company, which is one of the gas corporations in the present monopoly, could during the past seven years have paid 7 per cent on its entire capitalization and yet only have charged the public 80 cents per thousand for gas.

One of the State commissioners has from the first displayed a sense of fairness and that judicial impartiality which should always characterize officials acting in the capacity of judges. The other two commissioners, however, have shown a strong bias in favor of the views presented by the gas trust and its special pleaders, one of the commissioners, Mr. George, going so far as to declare, when he refused to call for certain books which the people's representatives asked should be presented before the commission, that "the law says that we shall settle this question, and not the community," thereby displaying that insolent arrogance which has marked the most offensive and odious puppets of despotism in olden times, but which is not supposed to be exhibited by the people's servants in a republic.

The impudent remark of Commissioner George, in which he expresses so much contempt for the will, desire, and demand of the community he is supposed to represent, affords another powerful reason why every American voter should place the demand for the enjoyment of democratic government through direct legislation above all other immediate demands. The people's servants have come to hold their employers in contempt and to frequently act as though they held briefs from the oppressors and plunderers of individuals and communities.

I also have here, Mr. Speaker, a clipping from Leslie's Weekly, which throws additional light on the extent of the extortion of "the system," as Mr. Lawson calls it, for it must be remembered that the Consolidated Gas Company is merely another name for Rockefeller, Rogers, and Stillman.

[From Leslie's Weekly.]

MAKING MILLIONS IN A DAY—INFLATED CAPITALIZATION AND THE OPPRESSION SPRINGING FROM IT.

The amazing statement was made before the City Club of New York recently that while the aggregate nominal capital of all the companies which entered into the Consolidated Gas Company of New York in 1881 was \$17,000,000, on the same day of the consolidation this capital was raised to \$39,000,000, although "no capital was contributed to the consolidated company except that which was transferred to it by the several constituent companies."

In other words, \$22,000,000 was made in a day by those who manipulated the combination, and on this vast amount of water the citizens of New York who patronize the gas company must pay interest, for all of the Consolidated Gas Company's stocks and bonds sell above par and

pay good rates of dividends or interest. One of the constituent companies was allotted \$7,500,000 of the new capital stock, though the entire amount its stockholders had paid into the company was \$750,000, and they had taken out of it in dividends during the fifty years of its existence over \$15,000,000—that is, they had received their original investment back twenty times over.

It was the former commissioner of water, gas, and electricity, under Mayor Low, Mr. Robert Grier Monroe, an excellent authority, who made this astonishing statement, and he followed it by another disclosure, equally astonishing, to the effect that in 1898 the independent electric-light companies in the Borough of Manhattan had an aggregate capital of stock and bonds of \$26,000,000, but when these were absorbed by the Edison Company this capital was raised to \$45,000,000 of stock and \$40,000,000 of bonds, and that the citizens of New York are now paying about \$4,000,000 annually above the cost of producing and delivering the electric current. On the same basis he shows that if the water supply of the city, which is now conducted by the corporation, were in private hands, the citizens of New York last year would have expended for their water from \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000 instead of \$5,000,000. Mr. Monroe added, and those who are familiar with the facts know that it is true, that "the lighting combination is powerful and dangerous because it includes among its members city officials and members of the legislature."

[From Henry George's Social Problems.]

CHAPTER I.—THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

There come moments in our lives that summon all our powers—when we feel that, casting away illusions, we must decide and act with our utmost intelligence and energy. So in the lives of peoples come periods specially calling for earnestness and intelligence.

We seem to have entered one of these periods. Over and again have nations and civilizations been confronted with problems which, like the riddle of the Sphinx, not to answer was to be destroyed; but never before have problems so vast and intricate been presented.

In a simpler state master and man, neighbor and neighbor, know each other, and there is that touch of the elbow which in times of danger enables society to rally. But present tendencies are to the loss of this. In London, dwellers in one house do not know those in the next; the tenants of adjoining rooms are utter strangers to each other. Let civil conflict break or paralyze the authority that preserves order and the vast population would become a terror-stricken mob, without point of rally or principle of cohesion, and London would be sacked and burned by an army of thieves. London is only the greatest of great cities. What is true of London is true of New York, and in the same measure true of the many cities whose hundreds of thousands are steadily growing toward millions. These vast aggregations of humanity, where he who seeks isolation may find it more truly than in the desert; where wealth and poverty touch and jostle; where one revels and another starves within a few feet of each other, yet separated by as great a gulf as that fixed between Dives in hell and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom—they are centers and types of our civilization. Let Jay or shock dislocate the complex and delicate organization, let the policeman's club be thrown down or wrested from him, and the fountains of the great deep are opened, and quicker than ever before chaos comes again. Strong as it may seem, our civilization is evolving destructive forces. Not desert and forest, but city slums and country roadsides are nursing the barbarians who may be to the new what Ilun and Vandal were to the old.

Nor should we forget that in civilized man still lurks the savage. The men who, in past times, oppressed or revolted, who fought to the death in petty quarrels and drunk fury with blood, who burnt cities and rent empires, were men essentially such as those we daily meet. Social progress has accumulated knowledge, softened manners, refined tastes, and extended sympathies, but man is yet capable of as blind a rage as, when clothed in skins, he fought wild beasts with a flint. And present tendencies, in some respects at least, threaten to kindle passions that have so often before flamed in destructive fury.

There is in all the past nothing to compare with the rapid changes now going on in the civilized world. It seems as though in the European race, and in the nineteenth century, man was just beginning to live—just grasping his tools and becoming conscious of his powers. The snail's pace of crawling ages has suddenly become the headlong rush of the locomotive, speeding faster and faster. This rapid progress is primarily in industrial methods and material powers. But industrial changes imply social changes and necessitate political changes. Progressive societies outgrow institutions as children outgrow clothes. Social progress always requires greater intelligence in the management of public affairs; but this the more as progress is rapid and change quicker.

And that the rapid changes now going on are bringing up problems that demand most earnest attention may be seen on every hand. Symptoms of danger, premonitions of violence, are appearing all over the civilized world. Creeds are dying, beliefs are changing; the old forces of conservatism are melting away. Political institutions are failing, as clearly in democratic America as in monarchical Europe.

The progress of civilization requires that more and more intelligence be devoted to social affairs, and this not the intelligence of the few, but that of the many. We can not safely leave politics to politicians or political economy to college professors. The people themselves must think, because the people alone can act.

In a "journal of civilization" a professed teacher declares the saving word for society to be that each shall mind his own business. This is the gospel of selfishness, soothing as soft flute to those who, having fared well themselves, think everybody should be satisfied. But the salvation of society, the hope for the free, full development of humanity, is in the gospel of brotherhood—the gospel of Christ. Social progress makes the well-being of all more and more the business of each; it binds all closer and closer together in bonds from which none can escape. He who observes the law and the proprieties and cares for his family, yet takes no interest in the general weal and gives no thought to those who are trodden under foot, save now and then to bestow alms, is not a true Christian. Nor is he a good citizen. The duty of the citizen is more and harder than this.

The intelligence required for the solving of social problems is not a mere thing of the intellect. It must be animated with the religious sentiment and warm with sympathy for human suffering. It must stretch out beyond self-interest, whether it be the self-interest of the few or the many. It must seek justice. For at the bottom of every social problem we will find a social wrong.

CHAPTER II.—POLITICAL DANGERS.

It is difficult for anyone to turn from the history of the past to think of the incomparable greatness foreshadowed by the rapid growth of the United States without something of awe—something of that feeling which induced Amasis of Egypt to dissolve his alliance with the successful Polycrates, because “the gods do not permit to mortals such prosperity.” Of this, at least, we may be certain: The rapidity of our development brings dangers that can only be guarded against by alert intelligence and earnest patriotism.

There is a suggestive fact that must impress anyone who thinks over the history of past eras and preceding civilizations. The great, wealthy, and powerful nations have always lost their freedom; it is only in small, poor, and isolated communities that liberty has been maintained. So true is this that the poets have always sung that Liberty loves the rocks and the mountains; that she shrinks from wealth and power and splendor, from the crowded city and the busy mart. So true is this that philosophical historians have sought in the richness of material resources the causes of the corruption and enslavement of peoples.

Liberty is natural. Primitive perceptions are of the equal rights of the citizen, and political organization always starts from this base. It is as social development goes on that we find power concentrating and institutions based upon the equality of rights passing into institutions which make the many the slaves of the few. How this is we may see. In all institutions which involve the lodgement of governing power there is, with social growth, a tendency to the exaltation of their function and the centralization of their power, and in the stronger of these institutions a tendency to the absorption of the powers of the rest. Thus the tendency of social growth is to make government the business of a special class. And as numbers increase and the power and importance of each become less and less, as compared with that of all, so, for this reason, does government tend to pass beyond the scrutiny and control of the masses. The leader of a handful of warriors, or head man of a little village, can only command or govern by common consent, and any one aggrieved can readily appeal to his fellows. But when the tribe becomes a nation and the village expands to a populous country the power of the chieftain, without formal addition, become practically much greater. For with increase of numbers scrutiny of his acts becomes more difficult, it is harder and harder to successfully appeal from them, and the aggregate power which he directs becomes irresistible as against individuals. And gradually, as power thus concentrates, primitive ideas are lost, and the habit of thought grows up which regards the masses as born but for the service of their rulers.

The tendency in all branches of industry is to the formation of rings against which the individual is helpless, and which exert their power upon government whenever their interests may thus be served.

The rise in the United States of monstrous fortunes, the aggregation of enormous wealth in the hands of corporations, necessarily implies the loss by the people of governmental control. Democratic forms may be maintained, but there can be as much tyranny and misgovernment under democratic forms as any other—in fact, they lend themselves most readily to tyranny and misgovernment. Forms count for little. The Romans expelled their kings and continued to abhor the very name of king, but under the name of “Caesars” and “imperators,” that at first meant no more than our “boss,” they crouched before tyrants more absolute than kings. We have already, under the popular name of “bosses” developed political Caesars in municipalities and States. If this development continues, in time there will come a national boss. We are young; but we are growing. The day may arrive when the “boss of America” will be to the modern world what Caesar was to the Roman world. This, at least, is certain: Democratic government in more than name can only exist where wealth is distributed with something like equality—where the great mass of citizens are personally free and independent, neither fettered by their poverty nor made subject by their wealth. There is, after all, some sense in a property qualification. The man who is dependent on a master for his living is not a free man. To give the suffrage to slaves is only to give votes to their owners. That universal suffrage may add to instead of decreasing the political power of wealth we see when mill owners and mine operators vote their hands. The freedom to earn, without fear or favor, a comfortable living, ought to go with the freedom to vote. Thus alone can a sound basis for republican institutions be secured. How can a man be said to have a country where he has no right to a square inch of soil; where he has nothing but his hands, and, urged by starvation, must bid against his fellows for the privilege of using them? When it comes to voting tramps some principle has been carried to a ridiculous and dangerous extreme. I have known elections to be decided by the carting of paupers from the almshouse to the polls. But such decisions can scarcely be in the interest of good government.

Beneath all political problems lies the social problem of the distribution of wealth. This our people do not generally recognize, and they listen to quacks who propose to cure the symptoms without touching the disease. “Let us elect good men to office,” say the quacks. Yes; let us catch little birds by sprinkling salt on their tails!

It behoves us to look facts in the face. The experiment of popular government in the United States is clearly a failure. Not that it is a failure everywhere and in everything. An experiment of this kind does not have to be fully worked out to be proved a failure. But speaking generally of the whole country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Lakes to the Gulf, our government by the people has in large degree become, is in larger degree becoming, government by the strong and unscrupulous.

The people, of course, continue to vote; but the people are losing their power. Money and organization tell more and more in elections.

The people are largely conscious of all this, and there is among the masses much dissatisfaction. But there is a lack of that intelligent interest necessary to adapt political organization to changing conditions. The popular idea of reform seems to be merely a change of men or a change of parties, not a change of system. Political children, we attribute to bad men or wicked parties what really springs from deep general causes. Our two great political parties have really nothing more to propose than the keeping or the taking of the offices from the other party. On their outskirts are the Greenbackers, who, with a more or less definite idea of what they want to do with the currency, represent vague social dissatisfaction; civil-service reformers, who hope to accomplish a political reform while keeping it out of politics; and

antimonopolists, who propose to tie up locomotives with pack thread. Even the labor organizations seem to fear to go further in their platforms than some such propositions as eight-hour laws, bureaus of labor statistics, mechanics' liens, and prohibition of prison contracts.

All this shows want of grasp and timidity of thought. It is not by accident that government grows corrupt and passes out of the hands of the people. If we would really make and continue this a government of the people, for the people, and by the people, we must give to our politics earnest attention; we must be prepared to review our opinions, to give up old ideas, and to accept new ones. We must abandon prejudice and make our reckoning with free minds. The sailor who, no matter how the wind might change, should persist in keeping his vessel under the same sail and on the same tack, would never reach his haven.

CHAPTER III.—COMING INCREASE OF SOCIAL PRESSURE.

We still talk of our vast public domain, and figures showing millions and millions of acres of unappropriated public land yet swell grandly in the reports of our Land Office. But already it is so difficult to find public land fit for settlement that the great majority of those wishing to settle find it cheaper to buy, and rents in California and the new Northwest run from a quarter to even one-half the crop. It must be remembered that the areas which yet figure in the returns of our public domain includes all the great mountain chains, all the vast deserts and dry plains, fit only for grazing, or not even for that; it must be remembered that what is really fertile, millions and millions of acres are covered by railroad grants as yet unpatented, or what amounts to the same thing to the settler, are shadowed by them; that much is held by appropriation of the water without which it is useless; and that much more is held under claims of various kinds, which, whether legal or illegal, are sufficient to keep the settler off unless he will consent to pay a price, or to mortgage his labor for years.

Nevertheless, land with us is still comparatively cheap. But this can not long continue. The stream of immigration that comes swelling in, added to our steadily augmenting natural increase, will soon now so occupy the available lands as to raise the price of the poorest land worth settling on to a point we have never known. Nearly twenty years ago Mr. Wade, of Ohio, in a speech in the United States Senate, predicted that by the close of the century every acre of good agricultural land in the Union would be worth at least \$50. That his prediction will be even more than verified we may already see. By the close of the century our population, at the normal rate of increase, will be over forty millions more than in 1880. That is to say, within the next seventeen years an additional population greater than that of the whole United States at the close of the civil war will be demanding room. Where will they find cheap land? There is no further West. Our advance has reached the Pacific, and beyond the Pacific is the East, with its teeming millions. From San Diego to Puget Sound there is no valley of the coast line that is not settled or preempted. To the very farthest corners of the Republic settlers are already going.

CHAPTER IV.—TWO OPPOSING TENDENCIES.

But there is in the conditions of the civilized world to-day something more portentous than a growing restiveness under evils long endured. Everything tends to awake the sense of natural equality, to arouse the aspirations and ambitions of the masses, to excite a keener and keener perception of the gross injustice of existing inequalities of privilege and wealth. Yet, at the same time, everything tends to the rapid and monstrous increase of these inequalities. Never since great estates were eating out the heart of Rome has the world seen such enormous fortunes as are now arising. And never more utter proletarians. In the paper which contained a many-column account of the Vanderbilt ball, with its gorgeous dresses and its wealth of diamonds, with its profusion of roses, costing \$2 each, and its precious wines flowing like water, I also read a brief item telling how, at a station house nearby, thirty-nine persons—eighteen of them women—had sought shelter, and how they were all marched into court next morning and sent for six months to prison. “The women,” said the item, “shrieked and sobbed bitterly as they were carried to prison.” Christ was born of a woman. And to Mary Magdalene he turned in tender blessing. But such vermin have some of these human creatures, made in God's image, become, that we must shovel them off to prison without being too particular.

The railroad is a new thing. It has scarcely begun its work. Yet it has already differentiated the man who counts his income by millions every month, and the thousands of men glad to work for him at from 90 cents to \$1.50 a day. Who shall set bounds, under present tendencies, to the great fortunes of the next generation? Or to the correlative of these great fortunes, the tramps?

When between those who work and want and those who live in idle luxury there is so great a gulf fixed that in popular imagination they seem to belong to distinct orders of beings; when, in the name of religion, it is persistently instilled into the masses that all things in this world are ordered by divine Providence, which appoints to each his place; when children are taught from the earliest infancy that it is, to use the words of the Episcopal catechism, their duty toward God and man to “honor and obey the civil authority,” to “order themselves lowly and reverently toward their betters, and to do their duty in that state of life in which it has pleased God to call them;” when these counsels of humility, of contentment, and of self-abasement are enforced by the terrible threat of an eternity of torture, while on the other hand the poor are taught to believe that if they patiently bear their lot here God will after death translate them to a heaven where there is no private property and no poverty, the most glaring inequalities in condition may excite neither envy nor indignation.

But the ideas that are stirring in the world to-day are different from these.

Near nineteen hundred years ago, when another civilization was developing monstrous inequalities, when the masses everywhere were being ground into hopeless slavery, there arose in a Jewish village an unlearned carpenter, who, scorning the orthodoxies and ritualisms of the time, preached to laborers and fishermen the gospel of the fatherhood of God, of the equality and brotherhood of men, who taught his disciples to pray for the coming of the kingdom of heaven on earth. The college professors sneered at him, the orthodox preachers denounced him. He was reviled as a dreamer, as a disturber, as a “communist,” and, finally, organized society took the alarm, and he was crucified between two thieves. But the word went forth, and spread by fugitives and slaves, made its way against power and against persecution till it

revolutionized the world, and out of the rotting old civilization brought the germ of the new. Then the privileged classes rallied again, carved the effigy of the man of the people in the courts and on the tombs of kings, in his name consecrated inequality, and wrested his gospel to the defense of social injustice. But again the same great ideas of a common fatherhood, of a common brotherhood, of a social state in which none shall be overworked and none shall want, begin to quicken in common thought.

When a mighty wind meets a strong current, it does not portend a smooth sea. And whoever will think of the opposing tendencies beginning to develop will appreciate the gravity of the social problems the civilized world must soon meet. He will also understand the meaning of Christ's words when he said:

"Think not I am come to send peace on earth. I come not to send peace, but a sword."

CHAPTER V.—THE MARCH OF CONCENTRATION.

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When a railroad train is slowly moving off, a single step may put one on it; but in a few minutes those who have not taken that step may run themselves out of breath in the hopeless endeavor to overtake the train. It is absurd to think that it is easy to step on a train at full speed because those who got on board at starting did so easily. So is it absurd to think that opportunities open when steam and machinery were beginning their concentrating work will remain open.

An English friend, a wealthy retired Manchester manufacturer, once told me the story of his life; how he went to work at 8 years of age helping make twine when twine was made entirely by hand; how when a young man he walked to Manchester, and having got credit for a bale of flax made it into twine and sold it; how, building up a little trade, he got others to work for him; how, when machinery began to be invented and steam was introduced, he took advantage of them, until he had a big factory and made a fortune, when he withdrew to spend the rest of his days at ease, leaving his business to his son.

"Supposing you were a young man now," said I, "could you walk into Manchester and do that again?"

"No," replied he; "no one could. I couldn't with £50,000 in place of my 5 shillings."

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All the tendencies of the present are not merely to the concentration, but to the perpetuation, of great fortunes. There are no crusades; the habits of the very rich are not to that mad extravagance that could dissipate such fortunes; high play has gone out of fashion, and the gambling of the stock exchange is more dangerous to short than to long purses. Stocks, bonds, mortgages, safe deposit and trust companies aid the retention of large wealth, and all modern agencies enlarge the sphere of its successful employment.

On the other hand, the mere laborer is becoming more helpless, and small capitals find it more and more difficult to compete with larger capitals. The greater railroad companies are swallowing up the lesser railroad companies; one great telegraph company already controls the telegraph wires of the continent, and, to save the cost of buying up more patents, pays the inventors not to invent. As in England, nearly all the public houses have passed into the hands of the great brewers, so, here, large firms start young men, taking chattel mortgages on their stock. As in Great Britain, the supplying of railway passengers with eatables and drinkables has passed into the hands of a single great company, and in Paris one large restaurateur, with numerous branches, is taking the trade of the smaller ones, so here the boys who sell papers and peanuts on the trains are employees of companies, and bundles are carried and errands run by corporations.

I am not denying that this tendency is largely to subserve public convenience. I am merely pointing out that it exists. A great change is going on all over the civilized world similar to that infestation which, in Europe, during the rise of the feudal system, converted free proprietors into vassals and brought all society into subordination to a hierarchy of wealth and privilege. Whether the new aristocracy is hereditary or not makes little difference. Chance alone may determine who will get the few prizes of a lottery. But it is not the less certain that the vast majority of all who take part in it must draw blanks. The forces of the new era have not yet had time to make status hereditary, but we may clearly see that when the industrial organization compels a thousand workmen to take service under one master, the proportion of masters to men will be but as one to a thousand, though the one may come from the ranks of the thousand. "Master!" We don't like the word. It is not American! But what is the use of objecting to the word when we have the thing. The man who gives me employment, which I must have or suffer, that man is my master, let me call him what I will.

CHAPTER VI.—THE WRONG IN EXISTING SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

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Between normal men the difference of a sixth or seventh is a great difference in height—the tallest giant ever known was scarcely more than four times as tall as the smallest dwarf ever known, and I doubt if any good observer will say that the mental differences of men are greater than the physical differences. Yet we already have men hundreds of millions of times richer than other men.

That he who produces should have, that he who saves should enjoy, is consistent with human reason and with the natural order. But existing inequalities of wealth can not be justified on this ground. As a matter of fact, how many great fortunes can be truthfully said to have been fairly earned? How many of them represent wealth produced by their possessors or those from whom their present possessors derived them? Did there not go to the formation of all of them something more than superior industry and skill? Such qualities may give the first start, but when fortunes begin to roll up into millions there will always be found some element of monopoly, some appropriation of wealth produced by others. Often there is a total absence of superior industry, skill, or self-denial, and merely better luck or greater unscrupulousness.

An acquaintance of mine died in San Francisco recently, leaving \$4,000,000, which will go to heirs to be looked up in England. I have known many men more industrious, more skillful, more temperate than he—men who did not or who will not leave a cent. This man did not get his wealth by his industry, skill, or temperance. He no more produced it than did those lucky relations in England, who may now do nothing for the rest of their lives. He became rich by getting hold of a piece of land in the early days, which, as San Francisco grew, became very valuable. His wealth represented not what he had earned, but what the monopoly of this bit of the earth's surface enabled him to appropriate of the earnings of others.

A man died in Pittsburg, the other day, leaving \$3,000,000. He may or may not have been particularly industrious, skillful, and economical, but it was not by virtue of these qualities that he got so rich. It was because he went to Washington and helped lobby through a bill which, by way of "protecting American workmen against the pauper labor of Europe," gave him the advantage of a 60 per cent tariff. To the day of his death he was a staunch protectionist, and said free trade would ruin our "infant industries." Evidently the \$3,000,000 which he was enabled to lay by from his own little cherub of an "infant industry" did not represent what he had added to production. It was the advantage given him by the tariff that enabled him to scoop it up from other people's earnings.

This element of monopoly, of appropriation, and spoliation will, when we come to analyze them, be found to largely account for all great fortunes.

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An English king, long since dead, gave to an ancestor of the present Duke of Westminster a piece of land over which the city of London has now extended—that is to say, he gave him the privilege, still recognized by the stupid English people, which enables the present duke to appropriate so much of the earnings of so many thousands of the present generation of Englishmen.

So, too, the great fortunes of the English brewers and distillers have been largely built up by the operation of the excise in fostering monopoly and concentrating the business.

Or, turning again to the United States, take the great fortune of the Astors. It represents for the most part a similar appropriation of the earnings of others, as does the income of the Duke of Westminster and other English landlords. The first Astor made an arrangement with certain people living in his time by virtue of which his children are now allowed to tax other people's children—to demand a very large part of their earnings from many thousands of the present population of New York. Its main element is not production or saving. No human being can produce land or lay up land. If the Astors had all remained in Germany, or if there had never been any Astors, the land of Manhattan Island would have been here all the same.

Take the great Vanderbilt fortune. The first Vanderbilt was a boatman who earned money by hard work and saved it. But it was not working and saving that enabled him to leave such an enormous fortune. It was spoliation and monopoly. As soon as he got money enough he used it as a club to extort from others their earnings. He ran off opposition lines and monopolized routes of steamboat travel. Then he went into railroads, pursuing the same tactics. The Vanderbilt fortune no more comes from working and saving than did the fortune that Captain Kidd buried.

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Consider the important part in building up fortunes which the increase in land values has had, and is having, in the United States. This is, of course, monopoly, pure and simple. When land increases in value it does not mean that its owner has added to the general wealth. The owner may never have seen the land or done ought to improve it. He may, and often does, live in a distant city or in another country. Increase of land values simply means that the owners, by virtue of their appropriation of something that existed before man was, have the power of taking a larger share of the wealth produced by other people's labor. Consider how much the monopolies created and the advantages given to the unscrupulous by the tariff and by our system of internal taxation—how much the railroad (a business in its nature a monopoly), telegraph, gas, water, and other similar monopolies have done to concentrate wealth; how special rates, pools, combinations, corners, stock-watering, and stock gambling, the destructive use of wealth in driving off or buying off opposition, which the public must finally pay for, and many other things which these will suggest, have operated to build up large fortunes, and it will at least appear that the unequal distribution of wealth is due in great measure to sheer spoliation; that the reason why those who work hard get so little, while so many who work little get so much, is, in very large measure, that the earnings of the one class are, in one way or another, filched away from them to swell the incomes of the other.

That individuals are constantly making their way from the ranks of those who get less than their earnings to the ranks of those who get more than their earnings, no more proves this state of things right than the fact that merchant sailors were constantly becoming pirates and participating in the profits of piracy would prove that piracy was right and that no effort should be made to suppress it.

CHAPTER VII.—IS IT THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS?

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The old idea that everything in the social world is ordered by the divine will—that it is the mysterious dispensations of Providence that give wealth to the few and order poverty as the lot of the many, make some rulers and the others serfs—is losing power; but another idea that serves the same purpose is taking its place, and we are told, in the name of science, that the only social improvement that is possible is by a slow race evolution, of which the fierce struggle for existence is the impelling force; that, as I have recently read in "a journal of civilization" from the pen of a man who has turned from the preaching of what he called Christianity to the teaching of what he calls political economy, that "only the élite of the race has been raised to the point where reason and conscience can even curb the lower motive forces," and that for all but a few of us the limit of attainment in life, in the best case, is to live out our term, to pay our debts, to place three or four children in a position as good as the father's was, and there make the account balance." As for "friends of humanity" and those who would "help the poor," they get from him the same scorn which the scribes and pharisees eighteen hundred years ago visited on a pestilential social reformer whom they finally crucified.

Lying beneath all such theories is the selfishness that would resist any inquiry into the titles to the wealth which greed has gathered, and the difficulty and indisposition on the part of the comfortable classes of realizing the existence of any other world than that seen through their own eyes.

"That one half of the world does not know how the other half live" is much more true of the upper than of the lower half. We look upon that which is pleasant rather than that which is disagreeable. The shopgirl delights in the loves of the Lord de Maltravers and the Lady Blanche, just as children without a penny will gaze in confectioners' windows, as hungry men dream of feasts, and poor men relish tales of sudden wealth. And social suffering is for the most part mute. The well dressed take the main street, but the ragged slink into the byways.

The man in a good coat will be listened to where the same man in tatters would be hustled off.

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Behind all this is social disease. Criminals, paupers, prostitutes, women who abandon their children, men who kill themselves in despair of making a living, the existence of great armies of beggars and thieves, prove that there are large classes who find it difficult with the hardest toil to make an honest and sufficient livelihood. So it is. "There is," incidentally said to me recently a New York supreme judge, "a large class—I was about to say a majority—of the population of New York and Brooklyn who just live, and to whom the rearing of two more children means inevitably a boy for the penitentiary and a girl for the brothel." A partial report of charitable work in New York City, not embracing the operations of a number of important societies, shows 36,000 families obtaining relief, while it is estimated that were the houses in New York City containing criminals and the recipients of charity set side by side they would make a street 22 miles long. One charitable society in New York City extended aid this winter to the families of 300 tailors. Their wages are so small when they do work that when work gives out they must beg, steal, or starve.

It is the fool who saith in his heart there is no God. But what shall we call the man who tells us that with this sort of a world God bids us be content?

CHAPTER VIII.—THAT WE ALL MIGHT BE RICH.

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I do not mean to say that absolute equality could be had, or would be desirable. I do not mean to say that we could all have, or would want, the same quantity of all the different forms of wealth. But I do mean to say that we might all have enough wealth to satisfy reasonable desires; that we might all have so much of the material things we now struggle for, that no one would want to rob or swindle his neighbor; that no one would worry all day, or lie awake at nights, fearing he might be brought to poverty, or thinking how he might acquire wealth.

Does this seem a Utopian dream? What would people of fifty years ago have thought of one who would have told them that it was possible to sew by steam power; to cross the Atlantic in six days, or the continent in three; to have a message sent from London at noon delivered in Boston three hours before noon; to hear in New York the voice of a man talking in Chicago?

Did you ever see a pall of swill given to a pen of hungry hogs? That is human society as it is.

Did you ever see a company of well-bred men and women sitting down to a good dinner without scrambling or jostling or glutony, each, knowing that his own appetite will be satisfied, deferring to and helping the others? That is human society as it might be.

"Devil catch the hindmost" is the motto of our so-called civilized society to-day. We learn early to "take care of No. 1," lest No. 1 should suffer; to grasp from others that we may not want ourselves. The fear of poverty makes us admire great wealth; and so habits of greed are formed, and we behold the pitiable spectacle of men who have already more than they can by any possibility use, toiling striving, grasping to add to their store up to the very verge of the grave—that grave which, whatever else it may mean, does certainly mean the parting with all earthly possessions however great they be.

In vain, in gorgeous churches, on the appointed Sunday, is the parable of Dives and Lazarus read. What can it mean in churches where Dives would be welcomed and Lazarus shown the door? In vain may the preacher preach of the vanity of riches, while poverty engulfs the hindmost. But the mad struggle would cease when the fear of poverty had vanished. Then, and not till then, will a truly Christian civilization become possible.

And may not this be?

We are so accustomed to poverty that even in the most advanced countries we regard it as the natural lot of the great masses of the people; that we take it as a matter of course that even in our highest civilization large classes should want the necessaries of healthful life, and the vast majority should only get a poor and pinched living by the hardest toil. There are professors of political economy who teach that this condition of things is the result of social laws of which it is idle to complain. There are ministers of religion who preach that this is the condition which an All-Wise, All-Powerful Creator Intended for his children! If an architect were to build a theatre so that not more than one-tenth of the audience could see and hear we should call him a bungler and a botch. If a man were to give a feast and provide so little food that nine-tenths of his guests must go away hungry we would call him a fool, or worse.

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What these maladjustments are I shall in subsequent chapters endeavor to show. In this I wish simply to call attention to the fact that productive power in such a state of civilization as ours is sufficient, did we give it play, to so enormously increase the production of wealth as to give abundance to all—to point out that the cause of poverty is not in natural limitations, which we can not alter, but in inequalities and injustices of distribution entirely within our control.

The passenger who leaves New York on a trans-Atlantic steamer does not fear that the provisions will give out. The men who run these steamers do not send them to sea without provisions enough for all they carry. Did He who made this whirling planet for our sojourn lack the forethought of man? Not so. In soil and sunshine, in vegetable and animal life, in veins of minerals, and in pulsing forces which we are only beginning to use, are capabilities which we can not exhaust—materials and powers from which human effort, guided by Intelligence, may gratify every material want of every human creature. There is in nature no reason for poverty—not even for the poverty of the crippled or the decrepit. For man is by nature a social animal, and the family affections and the social sympathies would, where chronic poverty did not distort and embute, amply provide for those who could not provide for themselves.

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The wealth-producing powers that would be evoked in a social state based on justice, where wealth went to the producers of wealth, and the banishment of poverty had banished the fear and greed and lusts that spring from it, we now can only faintly imagine. Wonderful as have been the discoveries and inventions of this century, it is evident that we have only begun to grasp that dominion which it is given to mind to obtain over matter. Discovery and invention are born of leisure, of material comfort, of freedom. These secured to all, and who shall say to what command over nature man may not attain?

It is not necessary that anyone should be condemned to monotonous toil; it is not necessary that anyone should lack the wealth and the leisure which permit the development of the faculties that raise man above the animal. Mind, not muscle, is the motor of progress, the force which compels nature and produces wealth. In turning men into machines we are wasting the highest powers. Already in our society there is a favored class who need take no thought for the morrow—what they shall eat, or what they shall drink, or wherewithal they shall be clothed. And may it not be that Christ was more than a dreamer when he told his disciples that in that kingdom of justice for which he taught them to work and pray this might be the condition of all?

CHAPTER IX.—FIRST PRINCIPLES.

Whoever considers the political and social problems that confront us, must see that they center in the problem of the distribution of wealth, and he must also see that, though their solution may be simple, it must be radical.

For every social wrong there must be a remedy. But the remedy can be nothing less than the abolition of the wrong. Half-way measures, mere ameliorations and secondary reforms, can at any time accomplish little, and can in the long run avail nothing. Our charities, our penal laws, our restrictions and prohibitions, by which, with so little avail, we endeavor to assuage poverty and check crime—what are they, at the very best, but the device of the clown who, having put the whole burden of his ass into one pannier, sought to enable the poor animal to walk straight by loading up the other pannier with stones?

In New York, as I write, the newspapers and the churches are calling for subscriptions to their "fresh-air funds," that little children may be taken for a day or for a week from the deadly heat of stifling tenement rooms and given a breath of the fresh breeze of seashore or mountain; but what little does it avail, when we take such children only to return them to their previous conditions—conditions which to many mean even worse than death of the body; conditions which make it certain that of the lives that may thus be saved, some are saved for the brothel and the almshouse, and some for the penitentiary. We may go on forever merely raising fresh-air funds, and how great soever be the funds we raise, the need will only grow, and children—just such children as those of whom Christ said, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father"—will die like flies, so long as poverty compels fathers and mothers to the life of the squalid tenement room.

An English writer has divided all men into three classes—workers, beggars, and thieves. The classification is not complimentary to the "upper classes" and the "better classes," as they are accustomed to esteem themselves, yet it is economically true. There are only three ways by which any individual can get wealth—by work, by gift, or by theft. And, clearly, the reason why the workers get so little is that the beggars and thieves get so much. When a man gets wealth that he does not produce he necessarily gets it at the expense of those who produce it.

All we need do to secure a just distribution of wealth is to do that which all theories agree to be the primary function of government—to secure to each the free use of his own powers, limited only by the equal freedom of all others; to secure to each the full enjoyment of his own earnings, limited only by such contributions as he may be fairly called upon to make for purposes of common benefit.

I wish to emphasize this point, for there are those who constantly talk and write as though whoever finds fault with the present distribution of wealth were demanding that the rich should be spoiled for the benefit of the poor; that the idle should be taken care of at the expense of the industrious, and that a false and impossible equality should be created, which, by reducing everyone to the same dead level, would destroy all incentive to excel and bring progress to a halt.

In the reaction from the glaring injustice of present social conditions, such wild schemes have been proposed and still find advocates. But to my way of thinking they are as impractical and repugnant as they can seem to those who are loudest in their denunciations of "communism." I am not willing to say that in the progress of humanity a state of society may not be possible which shall realize the formula of Louis Blanc, "From each according to his abilities; to each according to his wants," for there exist to-day in the religious orders of the Catholic Church associations which maintain the communism of early Christianity. But it seems to me that the only power by which such a state of society can be attained and preserved is that which the framers of the schemes I speak of generally ignore, even when they do not directly antagonize—a deep, definite, intense, religious faith, so clear, so burning as to utterly melt away the thought of self—a general moral condition such as that which the Methodists declare, under the name of "sanctification," to be individually possible, in which the dream of pristine innocence should become reality, and man, so to speak, should again walk with God.

But the possibility of such a state of society seems to me in the present stage of human development a speculation which comes within the higher domain of religious faith rather than that with which the economist or practical statesman can concern himself. That nature, as it is apparent to us here, in this infinitesimal point in space and time that we call the world, is the highest expression of the power and purpose that called the universe into being, what thoughtful man dare affirm? Yet it is manifest that the only way by which man may attain higher things is by conforming his conduct to those commandments which are as obvious in his relations with his fellows and with external nature as though they were graved by the finger of Omnipotence upon tablets of imperishable stone.

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Let us first ask what are the natural rights of men, and endeavor to secure them, before we propose either to beg or to pillage.

In what succeeds I shall consider what are the natural rights of men, and how, under present social adjustments, they are ignored and denied. This is made necessary by the nature of this inquiry. But I do not wish to call upon those my voice may reach to demand their own rights, so much as to call upon them to secure the rights of others more helpless. I believe that the idea of duty is more potent for social improvement than the idea of interest; that in sympathy is a stronger social force than in selfishness. I believe that any great social improvement must spring from and be animated by that spirit which seeks to make life better, nobler, happier for others, rather than by that spirit which only seeks more enjoyment for itself. For the mammon of injustice can always buy the foolish whenever it may think it worth while to pay enough; but unselfishness it can not buy.

In the Idea of the Incarnation—of the God voluntarily descending to the help of men, which is embodied not merely in Christianity, but in other great religions—lies, I sometimes think, a deeper truth than per-

haps even the churches teach. This is certain, that the deliverers, the liberators, the advancers of humanity, have always been those who were moved by the sight of injustice and misery rather than those spurred by their own suffering. As it was a Moses, learned in all the lore of the Egyptians, and free to the Court of Pharaoh and not a tasked slave, forced to make bricks without straw, who led the Children of Israel from the House of Bondage; as it was the Gracchi, of patrician blood and fortune, who struggled to the death against the land-grabbing system which finally destroyed Rome, as it must, should it go on in time destroy this Republic; so has it always been that the oppressed, the degraded, the down-trodden, have been freed and elevated rather by the efforts and the sacrifices of those to whom fortune had been more kind than by their own strength. For the more fully men have been deprived of their natural rights, the less their power to regain them. The more men need help, the less can they help themselves.

The sentiment to which I would appeal is not envy, nor yet self-interest, but that nobler sentiment which found strong, though rude, expression in that battle hymn which rang through the land when a great wrong was going down in blood:

"In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me.
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free!" *

And what is there for which life gives us opportunity that can be compared with the effort to do what we may, be it ever so little, to improve social conditions and enable other lives to reach fuller, nobler development? Old John Brown, dying the death of the felon, launched into eternity with pinioned arms and the kiss of the slave child on his lips—was not his a greater life and a grander death than though his years had been given to self-seeking?

CHAPTER X.—THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

There are those who, when it suits their purpose, say that there are no natural rights, but that all rights spring from the grant of the sovereign political power. It were waste of time to argue with such persons. There are some facts so obvious as to be beyond the necessity of argument. And one of these facts, attested by universal consciousness, is that there are rights as between man and man which existed before the formation of government, and which continue to exist in spite of the abuse of government; that there is a higher law than any human law—to wit, the law of the Creator, impressed upon and revealed through nature, which is before and above human laws, and upon conformity to which all human laws must depend for their validity. To deny this is to assert that there is no standard whatever by which the rightfulness or wrongfulness of laws and institutions can be measured; to assert that there can be no actions in themselves right and none in themselves wrong; to assert that an edict which commanded mothers to kill their children should receive the same respect as a law prohibiting infanticide.

These natural rights of man are thus set forth in the American Declaration of Independence as the basis upon which alone legitimate government can rest:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as shall seem to them most likely to affect their safety and happiness."

So does the preamble to the Constitution of the United States appeal to the same principles:

"We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Let us consider the matter. The equal, natural, and unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, does it not involve the right of each to the free use of his powers in making a living for himself and his family, limited only by the equal right of all others? Does it not require that each shall be free to make, to save, and to enjoy what wealth he may, without interference with the equal rights of others; that no one shall be compelled to give forced labor to another, or to yield up his earnings to another; that no one shall be permitted to extort from another labor or earnings? All this goes without the saying. Any recognition of the equal right to life and liberty which would deny the right to property—the right of a man to his labor and to the full fruits of his labor—would be mockery.

But that is just what we do. Our so-called recognition of the equal and natural rights of man is to large classes of our people nothing but a mockery, and as social pressure increases is becoming a more bitter mockery to larger classes, because our institutions fail to secure the rights of men to their labor and the fruits of their labor.

That this denial of a primary human right is the cause of poverty on the one side and of overgrown fortunes on the other, and of all the waste and demoralization and corruption that flow from the grossly unequal distribution of wealth may be easily seen.

As I am speaking of conditions general over the whole civilized world, let us first take the case of another country, for we can sometimes see the faults of our neighbors more clearly than our own. England, the country from which we derive our language and institutions, is behind us in the formal recognition of political liberty; but there is as much industrial liberty there as here—and in some respects more, for England, though she has not yet reached free trade, has got rid of the "protective" swindle, which we still hug. And the English people—poor things—are, as a whole, satisfied of their freedom, and boast of it. They think, for it has been so long preached to them that most of them honestly believe it, that Englishmen are the freest people in the world, and they sing "Britons never shall be slaves" as though it were indeed true that slaves could not breathe British air.

But what is the fact? The fact is that the right of this "free-born Englishman" to his own labor and the fruits of his labor is de-

* Battle Hymn of the Republic, by Julia Ward Howe.

nied as fully and completely as though he were made by law a slave; that he is compelled to work for the enrichment of others as truly as though English law had made him the property of an owner. The law formally declares that he is a free man, free to work for himself and free to enjoy the fruits of his labor. But a man can not labor without something to labor on, any more than he can eat without having something to eat. It is not in human powers to make something out of nothing. This is not contemplated in the creative scheme. Nature tells us that if we will not work we must starve; but at the same time supplies us with everything necessary to work. Food, clothing, shelter, all the articles that minister to desire and that we call wealth, can be produced by labor, but only when the raw material of which they must be composed is drawn from the land.

To drop a man in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean and tell him he is at liberty to walk ashore, would not be more bitter irony than to place a man where all the land is appropriated as the property of other people and to tell him that he is a free man, at liberty to work for himself and to enjoy his own earnings. That is the situation in which our Englishman finds himself. He is just as free as he would be were he suspended over a precipice while somebody else held a sharp knife to the rope; just as free as if thirsting in a desert he found the only spring for miles walled and guarded by armed men who told him he could not drink unless he freely contracted with them on their terms.

Illness often comes, and death too often. Then there is no recourse but the parish or "My Lady Bountiful," the wife or daughter, or almoner of "the God Almighty of the county-side," as Tennyson calls him—the owner (if not the maker) of the world. In these parts, who doles out in insulting and degrading charity some little stint of the wealth appropriated from the labor of this family and of other such families. If he does not "order himself lowly and reverently to all his betters;" if he does not pull his poor hat off his sheepish head whenever "my lord" or "my lady" or "his honor" or any of their understrappers go by; if he does not bring up his children in the humility which these people think proper and becoming in the "lower classes;" if there is suspicion that he may have helped himself to an apple or snared a hare or slyly hooked a fish from the stream, this "free-born Englishman" loses charity and loses work.

He must go on the parish or starve. He becomes bent and stiff before his time. His wife is old and worn, when she ought to be in her prime of strength and beauty. His girls—such as live—marry such as he, lead such lives as their mother's, or, perhaps, are seduced by their "betters," and sent, with a few pounds, to a great town, to die in a few years in brothel or hospital or prison. His boys grow up ignorant and brutish; they can not support him when he grows old, even if they would, for they do not get back enough of the proceeds of their labor. The only refuge for the pair in their old age is the almshouse, where, for shame to let them starve on the roadside, these worked-out slaves are kept to die—where the man is separated from the wife, and the old couple, over whom the parson of the church, by law established, has said: "Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder," lead apart from each other, a prison-like existence until death comes to their relief.

In what is the condition of such a "free-born Englishman" as this better than that of a slave? Yet if this is not a fair picture of the condition of the English agricultural laborers, it is only because I have not dwelt upon the darkest shades—the sudden ignorance and brutality, the low morality of these degraded and debased classes. In quantity and quality of food, in clothing and housing, in ease and recreation, and in morality there can be no doubt that the average southern slave was better off than the average agricultural laborer is in England to-day—that his life was healthier and happier and fuller.

So long as a plump, well-kept, hearty negro was worth \$1,000, no slave owner, selfish or cold-blooded as he might be, would keep his negroes as great classes of "free-born Englishmen" must live. But these white slaves have no money value. It is not the labor, it is the land that commands the labor, that has a capitalized value. You can get the labor of men for from 9 to 12 shillings a week—less than it would cost to keep a slave in good marketable condition, and of children for 6 pence a week, and when they are worked out they can be left to die or "go on the parish."

The negroes, some say, are an inferior race. But these white slaves of England are of the stock that has given England her scholars and her poets, her philosophers and statesmen, her merchants and inventors, who have formed the bulwark of the sea-girt isle, and have carried the meteor flag around the world. They are ignorant and degraded and debased; they live the life of slaves and die the death of paupers, simply because they are robbed of their natural rights.

And the same inequality of conditions which we see beginning here, is it not due to the same primary cause? American citizenship confers no right to American soil. The first and most essential rights of man—the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—are denied here as completely as in England. And the same results must follow.

Mr. BAKER. I withdraw my amendment.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman withdraws his amendment.

The Clerk resumed and concluded the reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading; and being engrossed, it was accordingly read the third time, and passed.

ADDITIONAL TERMINAL FACILITIES AT THE UNION STATION.

Mr. BABCOCK. I now call up the bill H. R. 18887, and ask unanimous consent that it be considered in the House as in Committee of the Whole.

The SPEAKER. The gentleman from Wisconsin calls up the bill H. R. 18887 and asks unanimous consent that it be considered in the House as in Committee of the Whole. The Clerk will report the title of the bill.

The Clerk read as follows:

A bill (H. R. 18887) to amend an act approved February 28, 1903, entitled "An act to provide for a union station in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes."

The SPEAKER. Is there objection? [After a pause.] The Chair hears none. The Clerk will report the bill.