

on the herds belonging to their husbands, brothers, or fathers, and maintain them with pleasure, profit, and credit.—The London Spectator.

THERE IS PLENTY OF WORK.

Many of those who are seeking to bring about social and economic reforms seem to imagine that the cause of present troubles is the lack of sufficient amount of work to be done.

Capitalists are praised and spoken of as public benefactors, on the ground that they furnish work to so many people. Philanthropists propose that the government should undertake the construction of highways and public buildings in order to furnish work to the people. Labor organizations are advocating the reduction of the hours of labor largely on the ground that if each man works fewer hours, a greater number of men will have an opportunity to get some of the work.

The whole line of argument is based on the supposition that there is not sufficient work to go around, and that men must struggle with each other for an opportunity to labor.

This is a mistake, and leads to endless misapprehension in regard to the nature of present difficulties and the proper course by which they may be overcome.

Some of the things aimed at as a remedy for this imaginary scarcity of work are in themselves good. Reduction of the hours of labor is, under proper conditions, a good thing, because it is not best for men to spend every hour of their waking time in a mere struggle for existence. But reduction of the hours of labor will be a result of correct social and economic conditions, and will not by itself bring about these conditions.

The construction of highways and public buildings, where these things are needed, will be an advantage, because of the value of the highways and the buildings. The liberal construction of such works will be a result of correct social and economic conditions, but will not bring about these conditions.

There is no real lack of work to be done. There is no occasion for devising plans to create work for the multitude. There is no necessity for attempts to restrict the amount of work any man shall do that he may not exhaust the supply and deprive others of the opportunity. There is no reason in the nature of things why men should struggle with each other for an opportunity to labor. The opportunity to labor in this world is absolutely limitless. All the work that needs to be done can never be done.

No matter how much any man may work, he does not thereby, in the slightest degree, lessen the amount of work for others to do.

And yet to judge from a large portion of the writings of social and economic reformers, of philanthropists and others, one would conclude that work was the scarcest and most precious thing in the world; that it must be husbanded with and parceled out with caution, so that there may be enough to allow a little to each man.—The New Era, of Springfield, Ohio.

THE VIRDEN TRAGEDY.

Let us see how monopoly reduces the people to slavery. Two miners struck a rich vein of gold. The heat was intense, and there was no water. The gold they could not drink. Without drinking they could not live. Their vein was worthless until they discovered near by a freak of nature. A creek sprang out of the ground, cool and sparkling, and after running a few yards suddenly disappeared. The miners were rejoiced. They toiled on. In the course of time a stranger came into the valley. They were glad of company; they showed him how fortunate they had been in discovering Minute Creek, as they called it, and urged him to stake out a claim, for there was gold enough for all. The stranger did not like digging for his own gold. Instead he staked out his claim around Minute Creek. He put a barbed wire fence about it. He erected a stockade and supplied it with men armed with Winchesters. Then he told the miners that if they wanted water they must bring him half of all the gold they dug. They were at his mercy, for he had a monopoly of one of Nature's resources. No man can get \$1,000,000 without a similar monopoly.

The country is stirred by the tragedy at Virden. Fourteen men are dead and more wounded. Gov. Tanner's act was clearly illegal. He admits it. The operators claim the right of free contract, which the law grants them. The Governor justifies himself on the ground that the miners' homes are more sacred than the law. Whatever people may think of it, they must not forget that the laws, while granting the right of free contract to the operators, have denied that right to the miners. The miner cannot work without a mine; therefore his very life depends upon his having access to a mine. But the operators, like the man who fenced in Minute Creek, have a monopoly of those resources of nature, without which the miners cannot live.

If the mines were owned by the state, and the railroads also, to prevent discriminating rates, there would be work enough and to spare for all miners, Alabama negroes included; and they could leave the operators to starve in their stockades or take a pick and go to work.

Whose fault is this tragedy at Virden? The miners blame the operators. The operators blame the miners. The newspapers blame the Governor. I blame the great mass of well-to-do people who live in comfort, who have been blind partisans, who have not thought, who have not known the meaning of the word patriotism, whose indifference has fostered such unjust legislation that to-day the justice-loving people stand ready to applaud the act of a lawless Governor. Our mines and oil wells are fenced in. Our very streets are given away. The heavens are obscured by the wires of monopoly and the earth beneath is a network of pipes through which flows the treasure of a despoiled people.

"The existing industrial organization," said Prof. Matthews recently before the Conference of Charities and Correction, "is one monstrous monopoly of nature's abundant provision the world over. This monopoly establishes between the great majority of the human race on the one side and the minority on the other the relation of serf to master, and it leaves to the majority absolutely no legal right to live except in the almshouse."

The act of Governor Tanner is as justifiable as the act of John Brown. The blood of Illinois miners will be well spent if it shakes the country from its indifference to the nature and the evils of commercial slavery. But the remedy is not in bloodshed. Let the people regain the power to make their own laws. With this power let them legislate every form of monopoly out of existence. Then will dawn a new day; then will approach to earth the kingdom of righteousness, the reign of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity.—Rev. H. S. Bigelow, as reported in the Cincinnati Enquirer.

THE TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH IN GERMANY.

"The Coming Nation," of Ruskin, Tenn., reprints the following interview between a San Francisco Call reporter and Heinrich Hofmeister, director of the German telegraph system and superintendent of the cable station at Emden, who had arrived in San Francisco from Central America, where he had gone on official business for his government.

Asked to state the difference between the telegraphic service in his country and this, Dr. Hofmeister said: "The greatest difference which I