

of work, or his family may be in great need of the money, but that does not matter. The city demands nevertheless its pound of flesh. And this barbarous law is being enforced. So far all the victims have been Negroes, but, as a resident of the city states, the poor whites will not be long unmolested. About the only example of mercy in enforcement reported was the case of a laborer with a sick wife, and six children. He was not excused, but was given a week's grace in which to pay. Like the other states, Florida taxes labor products, compelling workers to pay either directly or indirectly in taxes for all benefits derived from government although their landlords have already compelled them to pay in rent for the very same thing. Then it levies a poll tax for the right to vote. And now the street tax is levied for the right to stay out of jail. What is there left to tax?

S. D.

Premiums for Lying.

What chance have moralists to cultivate truth-telling habits among mankind, so long as the legislators continue to make it to the advantage of the individual to lie? The income tax, the personal property tax, the tariff tax, are as productive of lying as though that were their primary purpose. What American, man, woman, or child, ever returned from abroad without a secret purpose in the heart to evade as much of the import duties as was safe? What man or woman ever confessed to the tax assessor the literal truth about his or her hidden property? These laws, however, have the excuse of raising revenue for the Government; and so long as the people insist upon raising their revenue in the wrong way, the moralists will have to wage the uneven contest.

What shall be said, however, of the registration laws in operation in many cities that require the voter, upon pain of disfranchisement, to tell his or her age? There was a time when birth days could be celebrated, but times have changed. Jobs have become so scarce that employers fix a maximum age at which they will employ labor. Hence, it is as inexpedient for a job-hunting man, as for a husband-seeking woman, to betray his age. Some of the big corporations that have instituted pension systems will not hire a man after he has reached the age of thirty-five years. None cares to hire him after he is fifty. Gray hairs are tell-tales, but hair-dye may contradict them. A confessed age on the poll books, however, or elsewhere, is not easily disguised. Now that women

in many places are voters, the recording of the age might be a positive hardship. The only legitimate reason for requiring more than the statement that the person is of voting age is that it may serve for purposes of identification. But this is not a complete identification; and if the voter, feeling the necessity of concealing his age, lies about it even this service is lost. If a real and effective identification is needed, thumb prints will answer the purpose, and will at the same time relieve the voter from the embarrassment of confessing his or her age.

S. C.

Where the Disgrace Lies.

Some partisans of European belligerents show a curious kind of sensitiveness regarding news reports of that struggle. They consider it an affront to their side to report any suffering, loss or defeat which the war is said to have brought upon it. They ought to realize that no defeat can increase the disgrace due to entering a needless and avoidable war. No victory can lessen that disgrace. The question of which side is best able to manipulate its brute strength has nothing to do with honor. The true friend of a belligerent will feel shamed at every report of slaughter in which its forces were engaged, regardless of whether it won or lost.

S. D.

Another Scheme to Abolish Jury Trials.

The autocratic spirit that reluctantly yielded to democracy the right of trial by jury has never become quite reconciled to its loss. No age has passed from that day to this that has not seen some effort to modify or destroy the right. The most insidious attempt, perhaps, was that of the employers' use of the injunction to control labor organizations. When "friendly" judges enjoined strikers from doing what the law already forbade, the accused were as completely at the mercy of the judge as though trial by jury had never been. So plain and palpable was this subversion of common rights that a nation-wide protest has frightened Privilege into abandoning this particular form of usurpation, and compelled politicians to take steps to redress the wrong.

But no sooner is autocracy barred from the door than it tries to creep in at the window. The bills now pending in Congress, giving the Postmaster General power to exclude newspapers from the mails for certain offenses, are vicious not alone because they give new definitions to old offenses,