

icans to aid the victims, not alone in Belgium, but in the other countries that have fought to the point of exhaustion. And the price of every cannon, and of every ship of war, and of every fort that is put into food and clothing to be sent to those people will fortify this country a hundred-fold more than if expended for physical armament. The price of a battleship, sent to each warring nation at the dawn of peace, not as craven tribute, but as fraternal aid, will furnish more enduring protection than did the Great Wall of China.

s. c.



Senator Burton and Privilege.

On the ground that it "will create a privileged class" Senator Burton of Ohio denounced on January 7 the government ship purchase bill. It is a pity that Senator Burton did not earlier in his political career acquire such antipathy to a privileged class. He would not have voted so often in favor of protective tariffs. He would, in fact, have never seen his way clear to oppose the election, either as Congressman or as Mayor of Cleveland, of so staunch an enemy of privilege as Tom L. Johnson. But, if Burton has at this eleventh hour actually reformed, which is very doubtful, he should be welcomed nevertheless. Better late than never.

s. d.



An Old Poem's Modern Moral.

Many years ago somebody described in poetry the experience of a farmer with a lightning rod salesman. The salesman portrayed so vividly the danger of destruction from lightning that the farmer signed, without thinking, an ironclad agreement for enough lightning rods to make him thoroughly prepared for that emergency. Later when he realized the cost of these preparations he protested to the salesman, asking if he thought "that to protect my buildings from some uncertain harm, that I'll deed over to you the balance of my farm?" But the protest came too late. The farmer was legally bound. That lightning rod salesman has a successor, who improves upon his methods, in the advocate of military preparedness. One of these is thus quoted sympathetically by a correspondent of the Chicago Tribune in the issue of January 11, as follows:

What is it makes an army? Discipline, and more discipline, and then more until a man has ceased to think of himself, until a man never considers "I should rather do this—I should rather do that," but goes and does it. And can that be gained in three months? It takes years to do it—and those years should preferably be in youth.

So here is a military estimate of the cost of preparedness in addition to the money spent upon it. To guard against the very uncertain danger of political domination by a foreign power we must train our young men to become brainless automatons who will unthinkingly submit to the will of a few military martinets. Compared with this proposal the lightning rod salesman of the poem was marvelously moderate in drawing up his contract with the farmer. And the farmer displayed marvelous businesslike shrewdness in comparison with the American people should they hearken to the voice of the militarist.

s. d.



Repealing the Law of Supply and Demand.

The men who persist in urging their cotton valorization scheme to relieve the planters, little realize the ultimate effect of their action. A little reflection should show them the futility of such an undertaking. America does not produce all the cotton. Other countries now raise considerable quantities, and they are putting more and more land under that staple. Whatever influence affects the price of cotton in this country will have a corresponding effect upon prices in other countries. The present depression is felt in Egypt, in India, and in Russia, just as in the Southern States of this country. And if our Government should arbitrarily raise the price above the market rate, it means raising the price of cotton throughout the world, and putting foreign growers also on their feet. So that if it be granted that this Government is strong enough to carry all the cotton this country can raise, it must be seen that it cannot carry all the cotton the world can raise. And sooner or later it must break down, with general hardship to the whole country.



If reason and logic fail of conviction, the valorizationists may profit by the experience of Brazil in valorizing coffee. The Brazilian government, by taking from the market a certain quantity of coffee, was able to raise the price from 6.75 in New York in 1903 to 15.69 in 1912. But these high prices stimulated the cultivation of coffee, not only in Brazil but in all other coffee-growing countries, to such an extent that the Brazilian government was unable to market its own holdings, and was finally compelled to abandon the scheme. Last year the price ranged from 6.32 to 7.81, which, considering the general advance in prices, is less than it was before the Brazilian government began meddling with the market. Our

Congress has great power, but even when backed by the President and the Supreme Court, it can not suspend the law of supply and demand.

S. C.



Indignant at Its Own Work.

The wretched service furnished by Chicago's street railways is being made the object of a crusade on the part of The Tribune. Since The Tribune rendered valuable assistance eight years ago in giving a new lease of life to private monopoly of Chicago's streets, it is only objecting to one of the natural consequences of its own acts. If The Tribune is truly repentant it should urge that immediate steps be taken to put an end to this private monopoly.

S. D.



Chicago's Opportunity.

Any real and necessary reform can be brought about in this country as soon as the people's attention is centered upon it; the difficulty lies in fixing their attention upon one thing. Once in a great while, however, some incident, trifling enough in itself, will serve this purpose. This good fortune has fallen to Chicago. For many years the "I-Will" city has labored under one of the most absurd and unjust systems of taxation that ever has cursed the lot of man. Everybody recognized it in a dazed, non-resisting way; a good many have tried to discover the trouble—after carefully blinding their eyes, and a few, seeing the truth, have tried to tear the bandage from their companions' eyes. But the progress has been slow. Reason might cry: Open your eyes, if you wish to see. But Privilege cautions: If you do the light will blind you. And Privilege, being dressed in fine raiment, and wearing the air of affluence spoke with authority, while Reason, clothed in threadbare, and having a plain manner, was ignored.



A strange thing, however, has happened. An ambitious State's Attorney undertook to enforce the personal property tax law by having one of the city's richest citizens indicted on a criminal charge by the grand jury. After the millionaire had been thus pilloried it was discovered that a majority of the members of the grand jury and the State's Attorney had broken the same law. That was too much. The whole city laughed. And now people are seriously asking each other, what is to be done about it? The Chicago Tribune says:

What the people of Illinois lead with regard to

the revenue system is education. The time has come to apply real remedies to essential evils. Unless the people grasp the problem, the way of the genuine reformer will continue thorny and hard.

Yet the Tribune closes its editorial without having contributed a word toward the education of the people, and offers no remedy but a constitutional convention.



A constitutional convention will offer an opportunity to mend the antiquated tax laws, but they will not be mended for the better unless the delegates to the convention understand the principles of taxation—and not even then unless there is a public opinion behind Reason that will overwhelm Privilege. This is the tax reformer's opportunity. His opponents have delivered themselves into his hands. They have made themselves ridiculous. They can stand abuse, denunciation, and even violence; but to be laughed at is intolerable. The law will now be reformed; it is the duty of those who understand the principles of taxation to see that the new law is not worse than the old one.

S. C.



Sensible Disregard of Law.

"Anarchistic" is an epithet that has lost its force in Chicago. States Attorney Hoyne hurled it at the newspapers which are upholding violation of Illinois' outrageous tax laws. None seems impressed. On the contrary the States Attorney is being denounced for trying to enforce these laws. He is in the position of an ante-bellum sheriff trying to enforce the fugitive slave law. Perhaps the papers have seen a light. Perhaps they see that it is no more immoral to resist enforcement of an outrageous tax law than it was in ante-bellum days to resist the fugitive slave law. Perhaps they feel that legalizing a wrong does not make it right, and that there is no moral difference between resistance to a legal wrong and resistance to an illegal one. Undoubtedly every one of these papers would shrink from following to its logical conclusion such reasoning. It would mean immediate overturn of all predatory legislation, leaving on the statute books to be respected only those laws that forbid acts wrong in themselves, such as murder and theft. Of course, this situation is but temporary. In time, the papers will become law-abiding once more. They will advocate predatory legislation of a different kind and favor enforcement of outrageous laws that do not hurt their own interests. But an awkward precedent