

sincerity of that wish is open to question in any one who endorses also the concluding words: "Our country, right or wrong." One honestly desirous that the country be "always in the right" can not hope that it be offered the encouragement of success when it engages in an effort that is wrong, and he can not conscientiously help it in any way to gain such success. The first part of the Decatur quotation becomes meaningless and illogical, if not hypocritical, when subordinated to the chauvinistic sentiment "my country, right or wrong." Possibly Decatur did not realize this. He had been misled by his military training into the fallacious belief that it was not his duty to pass on the right or wrong of the government's policy. But there is not the same mitigating circumstance for most of those who approvingly quote him.



Stung by criticism, The Tribune in its issue of March 7, tries to defend its position by the explanation that "our country" "represents an instrument for the betterment of humanity," and a disaster to it would mean disaster to the ideals of patriotic citizens. This very explanation condemns Decatur's sentiment. When a country attempts to do wrong it becomes the reverse of "an instrument for the betterment of humanity." A disaster resulting from such an attempt would tend to discourage further efforts at departure from the patriotic citizen's ideal. It would serve, moreover, as a warning example to other nations inclined to wander from idealistic paths. There are citizens who regard the Republican party as an instrument for the betterment of humanity, and others who so regard the Democratic party. The Tribune's logic would urge these citizens to stand by their party when they know it to be in the wrong since "disaster to it would mean disaster to their ideals." It is easy to see that there would be far greater disaster to ideals in helping a party to success when it is in the wrong. The same applies to international policies of governments. In trying to defend an indefensible position The Tribune only makes more clear than ever that it is a very risky leader to follow.

S. D.



Testing the Beatitudes.

James Schermerhorn, who is demonstrating in a practical way, through the management of his paper, the Detroit Times, that the teachings of Jesus in the first century are worthy of practice in the twentieth century, refuses to be discomfited by the challenge that he apply the teachings of the Great Master to modern property rights. There

is no desire upon his part, he says, to stop short of preaching the whole gospel. "As a matter of fact," he adds, "the espousal of progressiveness all the way from direct legislation to Singletax has been a vital and at times a costly part of our process of testing the Beatitudes." That other reforms have been emphasized more than the land question is due to local exigencies, and in no way to a desire to shirk a responsibility or neglect an opportunity. This is but another illustration of how much wider are the ramifications of the land question, than those in the movement themselves suspect. There is a note in Mr. Schermerhorn's letter that is heard now and again from those who have found realization fall short of anticipation. The disappointment of primary elections, and of tariff revision downward, tend, he says, to make him less cocksure of results, than he was in the earlier days. He wonders if "the tax system that seems everlastingly just and logical and workable will bring in entirely the happy day we love to depict in our rhapsodic foretellings." And he closes thus:

While the desirability of holding companionship with the Beatitudes continues, you may put the Times down for the Singletax, firm in the faith that it will give average folks a better chance to reap where they have sown, but not convinced that with its advent the Sermon on the Mount will have completed its good and perfect work in the social realm.



The land question sometimes fails of finding its proper place in the sum of human knowledge through overvaluation by those who consider it alone, and by undervaluation by those who consider it in connection with many other reforms. The student who comes suddenly upon the land question, and grasps its enormous portent, if he be new in the study of sociology, and imperfectly acquainted with the myriad interests of man, may be tempted to think that the disposal of this question will be the solution of the social problem. On the other hand, the student who has delved into many phases of sociology, and who appreciates the multitudinous wants of man, his apparently conflicting motives, and his seemingly incorrigible cupidity, is apt, when he comes upon the land question, to think of it merely as one of a great number of things that may be done for the possible betterment of society, but as by no means indispensable. Each of these students is in error. The solution of the land question will not cure all the ills that flesh is heir to. Human nature will remain. And it may be doubted if this earth will last long enough to see the completion of human progress.

But while the land question is not the whole problem, it is an indispensable part of the problem; and unless it is disposed of, the solution—no matter how attempted—will be incomplete. Tariff reform, free trade, scientific currency, co-operative banking, and all the multitude of social reforms, each has its place in the achievement of human progress. The land question is not only basic and fundamental, but it is so close to us, and is so subtly interwoven in our thought and practice with present methods that it is difficult for some to realize that it is a problem at all.

s. c.



Getting Together.

The Coast Seamen's Journal, in commenting upon George W. Perkins' remark that an aviator approaching this country, and seeing its fertility, and its unemployed, would think it inhabited by lunatics, goes on to enumerate the various schemes that have been advanced to cure social wrongs. And after naming the Protectionist, the Free Trader, the Singletaxer, the Socialist, the Anarchist, and suggesting an infinite number of other "ists" and "ers," it asks why the Singletaxers, Socialists, Anarchists, and Trade Unionists do not get together and tackle the problem of unemployment. How can they get together when their beliefs are based upon contradictory and opposing principles? How can the Catholic, the Methodist, and the Mormon unite on the question of salvation? How can the Allopath, the Osteopath, and the Christian Scientist get together on the question of healing?



The Singletaxer would make the earth accessible alike to all labor and capital, and regulate their relations by the freest possible competition. The Socialist would eliminate competition, abolish production for profit, and arbitrarily apportion the rewards for labor. The Anarchist would do away with all compulsion and depend upon voluntary association. The Trade Unionist would strengthen organized labor, until it has the power to regulate industry. How can these various elements, holding as they do such opposing views, come together, and act in unison? While, however, it is impossible for these several schools to unite in a common belief, there are certain principles common to them all. The land question, for instance, is as essential to the Socialist, Anarchist and Trade Unionist as to the Singletaxers. And while the various reformers cannot unite in a single political party, they can and will if they are wise, incorporate in

their several platforms those things that are common to them all. The time is not far distant when the power of direct legislation will be available to the people. Then it will be possible for all those persons who believe the land question can be solved by taking land values for purposes of public revenue—though they be divided among a variety of parties, each having a small representation in the legislative body—to vote directly upon the common article of belief. Direct legislation is not likely to supersede representative legislation, but it will serve to make effective a majority sentiment, divided among minority parties.

s. c.



THE RIGHT TO WORK.

It is a distinguishing characteristic of what is known as the re-actionary mind to start from a premise born of abnormal conditions extant and reason, more or less logically, to a conclusion as abnormal and indefensible as the conditions which it contemplates. Thus, the Saturday Evening Post in a recent editorial, sees first that there are hundreds of thousands of men in the country who are not laboring; that these men would like to be able "at any time to step up to the window and say, 'Here's my day's work, give me two dollars,'" that we are obliged to ask, "But where is the window?" and, therefore, in conclusion, the Post asserts, "Of course, nobody has any more right to work than to do anything else." This is not unlike saying, "we are in a very mischief of a pickle. Those who got us into it are not legally bound to get us out of it. Therefore we have no right to get out." It is starting in a brier patch, scrambling around in a very small circle, and winding up at the point of beginning, with the loss of very little breath, and some cuticle, but no privileges. To lend additional weight to its conclusion, the Post adds the inquiry, "Who is under the least obligation to give you a job, or can rightfully require you to take any job you do not want?" Who, indeed; no one, absolutely no one. And yet the men who approve of just the sort of philosophy that runs through this Saturday Evening Post editorial referred to, arrogate to themselves the privilege of "giving" you a job—in the sense of permitting you to work if it suits them to let you do so, or withholding the job from you if that pleases them better. And, therefore, also they do arrogate to themselves the privilege of requiring you "to take any job you do not want"—or go hungry. More than that, for some reason, they insist upon retaining that privilege as "chosen