

comprehended only the land and not its improvements. "I find," he writes in "The Conservative"—"I find this vast network which you call property, extending over the whole planet. I cannot occupy the bleakest crag of the White Hills or the Allegheny Range, but some man or corporation slips up to me to show me that it is his." In the same essay he makes the conservative say: "Touch any wood, or field, or house lot on your peril; but you may come and work in ours for us, and we will give you a piece of bread." In his "Man the Reformer," Emerson brings this thought to the logical and moral climax, for there he says: "Of course, while another man has no land, my title to mine, your title to yours, is at once vitiated." And in his essay "On the Times," he prophetically wrote of the spirit of progress as looking into the legal network of landed property and accusing "men of driving a trade in the great, boundless providence which has given the air, the water and the land to men to use and not to fence in and monopolize." In this connection four lines of Emerson's "Boston Hymn" must be forever memorable. They address themselves to that species of conscience before which hoary wrongs masquerade as "vested rights," that disordered conscience which protests in the name of justice against governments ceasing to do evil until the beneficiaries of the evil are compensated for the pecuniary loss they may suffer. Emerson wrote of chattel slavery, but his sentiment applies as well to the question of compensation for abolishing any other communal wrong:

Pay ransom to the owner
And fill the bag to the brim.
Who is the owner? The slave is
owner,
And ever was. Pay him.

"You think the manager is inconsistent, do you?"

"Why, yes! He tells the public he has the greatest clown on earth, and he tells me I'm not worth my salt."—Puck.

IMPERIALISM AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

There seem to be many who have failed to recognize any practical connection between imperialism and the internal social problems of a country. We are apt to think of imperialism as affecting only the foreign policy of the nation, and thus we fail to see its relation to home affairs, except, of course, as it increases government expenditures.

If we seek to get below the surface of vanity and hurrah, and try seriously to discover the real philosophy of the imperialistic movement, what, let us ask, is the impelling motive? Think of what England has added to her territory since 1870: an area of 4,754,000 square miles and an estimated population of 88 millions! Why this immense expansion? What strong forces are back of it? Manifest destiny and Anglo-Saxon push are words: what is the thing? Mr. Hobson, an English writer, in his book, "Imperialism: A Study," has given the answer.

"It is not too much to say," he writes, "that the modern foreign policy of Great Britain is primarily a struggle for profitable markets of investment. To a larger extent every year Great Britain is becoming a nation living upon tribute from abroad, and the classes who enjoy this tribute have an ever increasing incentive to employ the public policy, the public purse, and the public force to extend the field of their private investments, and to safeguard and improve their existing investments."

In other words it is in the growth of concentrated capital and the consequent desire for profitable foreign trade and investment that we find the explanation of colonial expansion. It is for foreign markets and the exploitation of weaker peoples that battleships are multiplied, taxes increased, expenditures quadrupled, lives sacrificed, and principles trampled under foot. It is for extending trade influence at the behest of financial rulers that the natural spread of civilization and self-government is disregarded and a domineering tyranny established over unwilling subjects.

All this has become as true of

America as of England. We have not an equal necessity of looking abroad, because of our larger home market; but we are looking ahead. It may be that the home market of America still takes 96 per cent. of all manufactured articles, only 4 per cent. going to foreign markets; but already we find that the extension of foreign trade and the competition in foreign markets are begetting and fostering our imperialism. And at the same time, as has been the case in England, they are beginning to be used as an argument for resisting the demands of laborers for better pay and shorter hours. This argument is being dinned into the ears of British workingmen, and in due time it will be dinned more and more into the ears of American workingmen. Furthermore, the same argument is used to excuse the monopolistic methods of trusts. In an article, for example, in one of the current reviews, a writer concludes a lengthy discussion of the Standard Oil Company by telling how this company sells about 60 per cent of the oil exported, how its power at home enables it to compete in foreign fields, and how it sells abroad at a lower price than at home only where it comes into competition with Russia in the eastern market.

But in a still more intimate way the purpose and methods of imperialism connect themselves with social problems at home. Readers of *The Public* may, perhaps, remember a book on Poverty reviewed some time since in these columns. It was a minute study of the English city of York, in which place the author found that over 40 per cent. of the population were virtually paupers. Now suppose England, instead of overwhelming the Boers, had given her thought and effort to enabling these people to become purchasers of her goods! Well does Mr. Hobson speak of the "absurdity of spending half our financial resources in fighting to secure foreign markets at a time when hungry mouths, ill-clad backs, ill-furnished houses, indicate countless unsatisfied material wants among our own population." Imperialism turns its back on these conditions in the home market. It does not seek to increase this market by

a better distribution of wealth at home. It goes about, at the cost of the nation's revenue and lives, seeking foreign markets and foreign investments.

Imperialism talks much about the spread of civilization. When we shall have attended better to social conditions at home, then and then only shall we have a civilization worthy to spread. But imperialists do not think so; the present civilization is good enough for them, and they want more of the same kind. So the great financial forces that in both England and America, through the Tory and Republican parties, are whistling patriotism and prosperity to the neglect of the conditions of ill-distributed wealth at home, are the same forces that are backing the policy of Imperialism.

Let us recognize the fact that there are many good men in these parties who have not considered the full purport of this policy. There are others who have been carried along by the impulse of a mistaken patriotism, or by the force of cleverly manipulated public opinion. To all these we must appeal to pause and think how false the policy of Imperialism is both in spirit and in method. Its spirit is driving us to acts of cruelty and to the sacrifice of the optimistic principles of democratic government. Its method is to divert attention and to turn away from the betterment of social conditions at home, while it seeks new fields to exploit abroad.

J. H. DILLARD.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, May 28.

Mayor Harrison has submitted to the Chicago city council a comprehensive and thoughtful message on the traction question (p. 102), wherein he specifies the terms upon which he, as mayor, will consent to an extension of existing street car franchises. His three principal demands are as follows:

1. Provision for public ownership at the earliest feasible date.
2. Submission of the proposed extension ordinance to popular vote under the "public opinion" referendum.

3. An express and unequivocal waiver of all rights claimed by the companies under the so-called "ninety-nine-year" act.

In addition to these principal terms or conditions, Mayor Harrison also demands—

4. An improvement of accommodations which will do away with the present uncomfortable, unwholesome and indecent overcrowding of cars.

5. Adequate compensation for the privileges granted; either in the form of a percentage of the gross receipts paid into the city treasury as a trust fund to be expended solely upon the public streets, a reduction of fares, or a combination of both forms.

6. The simultaneous expiration of all franchises on or before 20 years after the date of grant, and the express prohibition of the transfer of a franchise to a foreign corporation.

7. The use of the underground trolley within a certain district bounded by North avenue, Twenty-second street and Western avenue.

8. The realignment of terminals, that transportation may be rapid and street congestion as far as possible avoided.

9. The use of modern grooved rails in all paved streets, and the paving of the rights of way by the traction companies with asphalt or dressed granite blocks.

10. A universal system of transfers.

11. Full publicity of accounts.

12. The establishment of a system of arbitration for the settlement of disputes arising between the traction companies and their employes.

13. A single-car service instead of the present train service.

In the course of his extended discussion of the three principal conditions enumerated above, Mayor Harrison says, with reference to the popular demand for municipal ownership:

I fail to agree with those who claim to find the sole moving cause of the general desire for public ownership in the execrable service the people of this city have been subjected to for the last six years. In all likelihood general attention to the theory and desirability of public ownership was first directed by the outraged sentiment of the public, aroused by the intolerable service rendered by the local traction companies. It had its origin perhaps in the failure of the traction companies properly to recognize and appreciate the responsibilities and obligations assumed by them together with the franchises, from which, with such slight regard for the public rights, such tremendous financial benefits have been obtained. To-day the desire for and belief in public ownership has gone further than a mere wish for decent and comfortable facilities. The

great mass of our citizens has been educated to the idea that in public ownership lies the sole fair, just and reasonable method of handling all those utilities for the operation of which the practically exclusive use of public property is required. Public ownership is desired as something more than a mere means to an end—obtaining of satisfactory service. It is based on the belief that the profits accruing from the use of the property of the public properly belong to the public; that the granting to individuals of the right to enrich themselves at the expense of the many by the exclusive use of the public's property is as unfair in practice as false in theory, and as demoralizing in its results as was the habit of despots of the olden days, who farmed out the levying and the gathering of the taxes as individual perquisites to profligate favorites.

With reference to all three of the principal demands, the mayor concludes:

The waiver of the 99-year act, the reference of extension ordinances to popular vote, and the enactment of municipal ownership enabling legislation, prior to the extension of the franchises, are three demands which I have personally injected into the discussion and which have been so thoroughly debated and considered that more than 80 per cent. of the voters declared in favor thereof, when the questions of municipal ownership and the referendum were submitted to a popular vote. I can hardly think it conceivable that your honorable body would deliberately fly in the face of public opinion so unmistakably expressed, by ignoring these fundamentals in any extension of the franchises you may see fit to pass. Personally, I take it, I have entered into a contract with the people to secure these conditions. The platform upon which I was nominated explicitly stated these terms as absolutely essential to the consideration of extensions; in my public addresses to the voters I reiterated these terms and pledged myself unequivocally and emphatically to stand out against any extension ordinance which failed to protect the public along these lines. In so doing a contract was made and now exists between the voters and myself, and as far as I am concerned I shall live up to the very letter of it.

Regarding the 99-year act, of which Mayor Harrison speaks, an additional and significant move has been made. The receivers for the street car companies, appointed heretofore by the United States Circuit Court (p. 40), having applied to the court for instructions relative to the waiver of supposed rights under that