

Wages could be advanced a hundred per cent., living expenses could be halved and business men would cease to grow gray and wrinkled worrying about making ends meet. Ground rent, that drives human beings into garrets and cellars, where they huddle together like animals, is merely what the few charge the many for living on the earth. And yet we talk about justice, liberty and equality of opportunity. Bah!

When the city hall was built on Manhattan Island the city lay below toward the Battery. The wise men who had charge of the plans and construction reasoned thus: "This city hall will cost so much money. The city will never be built into the country beyond it. The farmers driving into town with their butter and eggs and cabbages are rough, uncouth people, who won't care whether they face marble or sandstone as they drive to town, so we will save money by building three sides of this city hall of marble and the fourth side, toward the country, of sandstone, which is cheaper." And they so built it.

Ye gods! Who are the "Four Hundred" of Manhattan Island to-day? Many of them are the descendants of those rough and uncouth farmers of a century ago, whose farms are now covered with the business and resident blocks of busy New York. Multi-millionaires, with money to burn, nearly every dollar of which measures ground rent squeezed out of the population, living and dead, of Manhattan Island, as lemon juice is squeezed out of a lemon in a squeezer.

Standing on Fulton street in Brooklyn, between Loeser's and Abraham & Straus', the other day, an old resident pointed out to me two corner lots, with buildings thereon. "The one," he said, "is worth \$135,000, the other, \$150,000. I can remember," said he, "when either corner, with its building, could have been bought for \$7,000." The difference between five per cent. on \$14,000 and five per cent. on \$285,000 is \$13,550. This sum, going yearly as ground rent, would do much to increase the wages of all the people employed in these two buildings without increasing the price of one article sold therein.

And by the elimination of this annual income, derived from the increased value of the land on these two corners, the price of every article sold on these two corners could be very materially "driven down to the purchaser" without diminishing the wages of any human being. Q. E. D.

Corollary: With a decrease in price to the consumer, and wages, or purchasing power, remaining stationary, increased consumption would inevitably call for increased demand for labor and capital in production, and both wages and interest would rise. This is the law of supply and demand. Business would thus be always good. Home consumption would keep pace with home production and foreign markets would be sought, not for the purpose of sale, but of purchase.

At present we seek foreign markets in which to sell because home consumption is not equal to home production; that is, wages and interest are low while rents are enormous. The great multitude are the recipients of wages and interest, while the few receive rent. The purchasing power of the multitude is low, the purchasing power of the few great. The multitude purchase almost exclusively in home markets, while the few purchase very largely abroad.

Thus it is that by the inequitable distribution of wealth into rent, wages and interest, instead of into wages and interest alone, we have hard times and panics instead of good times and continued prosperity, peace, comfort and happiness for all.

AN ESKIMELODRAMA.

'Mid Greenland's polar ice and snow,
Where watermelons seldom grow
(It's far too cold up there, you know),
There dwelt a bold young Eskimo.

Beneath the self-same iceberg's shade,
In fur of seal and bear arrayed
(Not over cleanly, I'm afraid),
There lived a charming Eskimaid.

Thro'out the six months' night they'd spoon
(Ah, ye of Sage, think what a boon),
To stop at ten is much too soon
Beneath the silvery Eskimoon.
The hated rival now we see!
(You spy the coming tragedy,
But I can't help it; don't blame me.)
An Eskimucher vile was he,
He found the lovers there alone,
He killed them with his ax of bone.
(You see how fierce the tale has grown)—
The fond pair died with an Eskimoan.

Two graves were dug, deep in the ice,
Were lined with furs, moth balls and spice;
The two were buried in a thrice,
Quite safe from all the Eskimice.

Now Fido comes, alas, too late!
(I hope it's not indelicate
These little incidents to state)—
The Eskimurderer he ate.

L'ENVOI.

Upon an Eskimo to sup
Was too much for an Eskipup—
He died. His Eskimemory
Is thus kept green in verse by me.
—The Cornell Widow.

"There's a feller here that's in a peculiar sort of a predicament," said the genial landlord of the tavern

at Pettyville. "You see, he stubbed his toe on a loose board in the sidewalk, right at the town limits, and fell over into the county and broke his arm; and now he don't know which of 'em to sue for damages."—Puck.

Constable—What, sir! Dae ye suggest that I wad tak' a bribe? Dae ye dare to insult me, sir?

The Erring One—Oh, excuse me, I really—

Constable—Bit now, supposin' I wis that kind o' mon, how much widge be inclined to gie?—Glasgow Evening Times.

This Is Official.—Texas is a symphony, a vast hunk of mellifluous, an eternal melody of loveliness, a grand anthem of agglomerated and majestic beneficence. Texas is heaven and earth and sea and sky set to music. Grand Old Texas!—The Dallas News.

"What was the matter, captain?"

"Oh, nothing at all, but the engineer thought the screw was broke."

"Well, no one could see it under the water, so it would not matter anyway, would it?"—The Moon.

BOOKS

TOLSTOY.

One of the significant facts of history is that there have always been prophets in the world. If we go back through twenty-seven centuries, we shall find that not one of these centuries is without its prophets—men who, unblinded by the transient trend of things about them, see deeply and clearly the eternal truths of life, and who, unabashed by the dominant powers of their age, speak forth the ideas that should be, and so some day will be, dominant in the world.

It does not follow that these men are perfect. They have their weaknesses. They may indeed be mistaken about many unessential things. Their enemies may find defects to furnish excuse for criticism and sneers. But what makes their names now shine through the years is the fact that the essential messages which they utter—the "burdens" which they have to deliver—are seen to be true for their time and for all time.

The truths which these supreme men have to tell are found to be eternal and axiomatic. They find acceptance in the heart of every man who will clear the way for them through petty passions and prejudices. They fall in with the logic of the universe, and appeal to man's inmost reason, whenever this can be reached unblurred and unwarped by an artificial education or a blind conservatism.

In our generation a very remarkable fact has occurred, in that a great

truth proclaimed by one of the world's prophets has been at once accepted by another, who has come more and more to receive it as the supreme truth of the age, and to make its proclamation his own message to mankind. This truth, proclaimed indeed through the ages, but only now made imminent in the practical affairs of civilized men, is that all men have an equal right to the use of the earth. This truth, which Henry George made the burden of his message to the world, has been received by the great Russian prophet, Tolstoy, who has repeatedly, in recent years, professed his belief that its acceptance must be the next great forward step in the world's civilization. In his last published essay, he writes as follows:

"In order that this [the freedom to labor on the land] may take place it is indispensable first that the workmen understand that this change is necessary for their good, that they seek the means by which they can realize it, and that they refuse to accept their industrial slavery as their eternal and immutable state.

"The principal obstacle to this is the monopolizing of the soil by the proprietors who do not work, and it is the earth which the workmen should demand of their governments. In demanding it they do not exact some foreign thing which does not belong to them, but their most absolute and essential right, the right of living on the earth and of feeding one's self without asking the permission of other men."

These words, simple as they seem, express the truth which has now come into the world to battle for supremacy until it conquers. They are the tribute of one great prophet to another, who has not only uttered the truth but pointed the way.

J. H. DILLARD.

THE FLIGHT OF PONY BAKER.

I guess pretty nearly every grown up man can remember how as a boy he was hypnotized by a bigger fellow, and how, while the delusion lasted, he was ready to do anything at the behest of the imagined hero. There is no exaggeration in the description of the hold that Jim Leonard, miserable fellow that he was, had on Pony Baker. It was probably good for Pony after all to learn early in life the folly of leaning on a weak reed.

What a contrast between Jim Leonard and Pony's cousin, Frank Baker. The story of Frank's trusty care of the two thousand dollars shows what a fine fellow he was. Now why in the world did not Pony take to Frank as he did to the foolish Jim Leonard? That is one of the unsolved mysteries of boyhood.

Speaking of mysteries reminds us of the strange apparitions of the Fourth of July Boy at Pawpaw Bottom. Why is this episode drawn in? Did Mr. Howells have such an experience himself? It would be very interesting to know; the Society for Psychological Research ought to inquire.

Take this chapter out—not that we would like to take it out, because it is one of the most interesting chapters in the book—and we have a typical,

genuine slice of boy life in this new book by Mr. Howells. "The Flight of Pony Baker" (Harpers) is a book that parents will not regret buying for their boys. Certainly books for boys, that are true to life and free from lurid impossibilities, are so rare that they deserve attention whenever they can be found. To write such a book, unsensational and at the same time interesting, is a work for a master. Of course, if a book for boys is not interesting it is a failure; but if "The Flight of Pony Baker"—which is so happily postponed from time to time—does not interest the average boy, we should say that he is in a bad way, and needs medicine of some kind.

J. H. DILLARD.

"AMERICAN MUNICIPAL PROGRESS."

When the kind of endowment that feeds the "Coal Oil" university of Chicago is considered, there is something almost marvelous in the freedom of thought and expression which its professors exercise. Whether or not this is a reaction from the Bemis episode of a few years ago, it is certainly a fact. Not only do they appear to be exempt from official discipline for heterodox opinions, but what is of even greater importance, they are extraordinarily free from the deadening influences of the professional cult. It is doubtful if in the faculty of any other large university in the United States there can be found so much refreshing indifference to cult Grundyism as in this University of Chicago. As a result, the sociological products of its professors have as a rule neither the musty odor of one type of college work nor the plutocratic spirit of another. That rule finds no exception in the contribution which Charles Zueblin, professor of sociology in the University of Chicago, makes to the "Citizen's Library of Economics, Politics and Sociology," published by the Macmillan company, New York, and edited by Prof. Ely. Though the larger part of Prof. Zueblin's "American Municipal Progress" is devoted to subjects that involve few if any conflicting prejudices or interests—being simply descriptive of city transportation, public works, sanitation, public schools, public libraries, public buildings, parks and boulevards, and public recreation—the final chapter is devoted to the subject of "public control, ownership and operation," and here as elsewhere through the book, it is evidently Prof. Zueblin himself, and neither a professional cult nor a college "boss," that addresses the reader. In addition to its value as a contribution to the body of thought upon the subject of municipal life, this little volume is alive with illustrative facts gathered from all the progressive cities of the country.

LITERARY NOTES.

The handsome January number of the Craftsman (Syracuse, N. Y.) opens with a paper on the guilds and art of German and Netherlander, which is followed by a scheme for a school of industrial art by Prof. Triggs.

George C. Sikes is represented in the January Chautauquan with one of his interesting and instructive articles on the subject on which he is an expert—municipal affairs.

He tells here how the Chicago city council was reformed.

The World To-Day (Chicago), which is evidently trying to do the work that the American Review of Reviews is engaged in, does it much more satisfactorily, as its excellent January number amply testifies. It covers the field with better discrimination, it chooses and handles its subjects with greater courage, and it is vastly more readable.

McClure's for January comments editorially upon the coincidence of three contributions in the same issue relating each to a different kind of lawlessness—that of capitalists in the Standard Oil conspiracy, that of workmen in the anthracite region, and that of politicians in the misgovernment of Minneapolis. The first is the continuation by Miss Tarbell of her fascinating history of the Standard Oil trust. The second is a circumstantial account by Ray Stannard Baker of the

"Economic Tangles"

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