

tors, there is a suggestion of more vital importance in this impressive fact of the parallel periodicity of prosperity and rising land values, of hard times and falling land values. So impressive is it as to suggest more than a possibility of cause and effect. If Mr. Baird, for instance, were to think the matter over, he would doubtless incline to an opinion more far reaching than any he has ever yet entertained. He would see that land values rise under conditions of general prosperity because the extraordinary demand for land which prosperity excites is met by a constantly diminishing market supply, due to investments for a rise. He would also see that the culminating crash, instead of being caused in some mysterious way and reducing land values, is the necessary result of a condition in which the demand for land runs ahead of the market supply. There comes a time when the prices thereby caused are so high as to trench upon the profits of actual use. This causes here and there a failure. Similar failures multiply. After awhile comes the crash. Then land values fall, to rise again only after industry has readjusted itself. In a word, speculation in land during prosperous times, which progressively lessens the market supply and raises the market price, is the cause of periodical business depressions, including depressions in the value of land itself.

THE MISTAKE ABOUT CAESAR.

Julius Caesar furnishes an example of the truth of the saying that the greater a man is the longer it takes the world to understand his worth and to do him justice. The world has called Caesar great, but his real greatness, in spite of the modern eulogies of Froude and Mommsen, seems still too little understood by many who use his name. Believing as I do that he was, for his time and environment, one of the greatest and best among the leaders of the people, I am always sorry to see him alluded to by modern democrats as a type of the destroyers of popular liberties.

The reason for the mistake in Caesar's case is perhaps the same as that in the case of other popular leaders. The writers, the makers of literature and recorders of history, are generally on the side of wealth and oligarchy. They set a tone of opinion which dies away only after some lapse of time has given birth to a new historical sense which can harken back to the real notes of the man's purpose and character. It is true that the writers of the Augustan age, who, like Horace, were under court influence, lauded Caesar's memory; but there is no trace in their writings of his great services to the popular cause, and in the following centuries the tone of literature is distinctly adverse to him.

I propose, in brief outline, in as few words as possible, to indicate what seems to me to have been Caesar's policy.

I.

In the year 146 B. C. Rome sacked Corinth and at last utterly destroyed Carthage. She was the mistress of the Mediterranean. She stood glorified by a long line of brilliant external successes.

Within a few years from this date she had to turn her thoughts from conquest abroad to social problems at home. The inevitable results of long wars had come. The rich had gotten richer, and the poor poorer. The masses had been fighting foreign battles, and the land and money sharks had put in their work at home. Small holdings of land rapidly disappeared. The large estates grew. Slave labor increased. Grazing took the place of cultivation.

The first great leader who saw the dangerous trend of affairs was Tiberius Gracchus.

His brave fight for reform in 133 marks a new note in Roman history. He seems to have realized clearly that the fundamental question of social problems was the land question. Read the brief extract of a speech which Plutarch puts in his mouth. It has the internal mark of genuineness. Plutarch, great as he was, could no more have originated its thought than Matthew could have produced the Sermon on the Mount.

From this time we find again and

again mention of proposed "agrarian laws," all of them urged for the purpose of getting the people back to the land. I remember, as a school-boy, how we disliked to see the words "agrarian law" in obscure paragraphs of the school histories. Of course we had little idea of the meaning, and our teachers did not clear up the subject, being apparently as ready to slur it as the pupils were. So the death of Tiberius Gracchus seemed to us merely an incident of a political riot.

The work of Tiberius was taken up by his brother Caius, and he too was killed 12 years later.

It may be true that the two Gracchi made the mistake of being led into acts that transgressed the letter of a constitution that was still revered; but what at bottom they both died for was their attempt to undo the illegal greed of land-grabbers.

After their death things settled back, and the bad causes of concentrating wealth continued. There was more absorption of peasant holdings and common lands at home, more plundering of provinces abroad. What the efforts of the Gracchi had instigated, soon fell into hopeless desuetude.

Let us pass rapidly over the 50 years from 120 to 70 B. C. The war with Jugurtha over in Africa and the great defensive battles against the Cimbri and Teutones in the north intervened to divert attention from social problems. They developed Marius and Sulla—the former a mere soldier, not a great leader in politics; the latter both a soldier and a statesman.

No man in history, so far as I know, ever succeeded so fully as Sulla in turning back the wheels of time. His policy was to restore the old-time power of the senate. He did this; but when he let go there was of course a reaction, and the wealth-seeking middle class came back into their share of the government. This reaction was accomplished by the year 70. But the masses, the plebs, the "fillings," were growing more and more discontented, more and more pauperized, more and more depraved.

Nor were these the only parts of

society that were depraved. There was a Cato, but most of the old nobility were bestialized by luxury, or hardened by class privilege. There would naturally be some who, having run through their property, were reckless and ready for any sort of revolution. Such was Catiline, a natural product of the times. There is no doubt that what he fought ought to have been fought, and so it seems likely that he had some support at first from men of real ability, who could not follow his excesses. Caesar and other rising young politicians with democratic proclivities were strongly suspected of sympathizing with the movement.

The suppression of the Catilinarian conspiracy in 63 gave Cicero great temporary supremacy. Cicero was a thorough conservative, and his policy, while it may have been honest, was commonplace, short-sighted and shallow. His first effort was to hold the wealthy middle class, the so-called equestrian order, to the side of the senate. He wanted "good government," and he believed this could be attained only through the "better classes." He had no belief in the people, and what was more, he had no conception of their welfare except as perpetual underlings and slaves. What he failed to see was that the time must come when the masses could not be kept down in "beneficent quietude."

In 62 Pompey came back from an eastern series of campaigns, loaded with glory and plunder. The richest man in Rome was Crassus.

II.

It is hardly possible to picture in the few words of this brief paper the social condition of Rome at this time—a nobility given over for the most part to the refinements of a painful and wearying luxury; a middle class whose leaders were plutocrats of the worst type, men whose first ideal was commercialism and provincial jobbery; below these, all the grades of discontented laborers and loafers. In the country districts there seems to have remained little free labor; in the city there was an overcrowding of men at work and men out of work. There was no real religious belief; there were rituals

and superstitions, and far away from these, off in hopeless studies, far removed from the people and not even caring to reach them, there were philosophies. If ever a people were in a bad way, from top to bottom, surely the Romans, by the year 60 B. C., were that people.

What a problem for a statesman! Who was there that could take it all in? Cicero's vision was too narrow. Himself a "new man," and flattered by social attention, he could see no farther than an oligarchical circle, which he was willing to serve, and which he succeeded in making himself believe it was best to maintain. Cato was so stiff he could not bend to an idea less than a century old. Crassus was a money-bag. Pompey was the successful and popular soldier, without any real conviction on any matter, except his own importance. Who was there to see the problem and try its solution?

There was one who saw it and saw it whole, and he wrought upon it faithfully even till he died its martyr. He was born a patrician, but was in sympathy a populist. He was both conservative and radical. He was an idealist, but more a man of action. He was severe and benevolent, could punish and pardon, could be just to the letter and yet love mercy. He could sympathize with the millionaire as well as with the masses. He never indulged in demagogism, and he never spoke of luxury without contempt. He was without doubt the most many-sided man the world has ever seen, and yet out of all his opposite qualities and inconsistencies there was produced a character that was preeminent in dignity, balance and self-control. No man could have been better fitted for the gigantic job that presented itself.

The great problem was, how to restore some degree of justice and contentment to the masses of the people, while at the same time committing no real wrong to those who stood on the other side.

Up to this time little had been heard of him. Some perhaps remembered that the clear-headed Sulla had said he would bear watching, as there were many Mariuses in him. But he had not yet shown his full hand. He

began his real work by the combination he formed with Pompey and Crassus in the so-called "triumvirate." Pompey furnished the glory, Crassus the money, and Caesar the brains. It was a political deal.

III.

From this time until his death Caesar spent the busiest fifteen years that have ever filled the lot of man.

In 59 he was consul. He used all his influence to lessen the power of the senate in legislation and to increase that of the popular assembly. He also aimed to weaken the political power of the senatorial (conservative) party by alienating from it the solid support of the equestrian order. Almost his first act was to secure the passage of an agrarian law, by which 20,000 citizens, such as had three or more children, were supplied with land from remains of the public domain in Italy which had escaped the usurpation of the great landlords. Another characteristic act was the passage of a law aiming to protect the provinces from being plundered by officials and those who followed in their train.

These acts were enough to mark him as one to be hated by the aristocrats. The masses, on the other hand, instinctively felt that they had at last found a leader.

From 58 to 49 Caesar was in Gaul, but he kept in touch with Rome, and at the end of his Gallic wars he had at his back the prestige of a great feat and the support of a devoted army. Some of the best troops he afterwards led were of the peoples he had conquered. At the great battle of Pharsalia, where he overwhelmed Pompey in 48, it seems to have been Dutchmen from the lower Rhine who did the best work for him.

It is apart from our present argument to consider Caesar's work in Gaul. In reading his own inimitable record of his doings I confess that my sympathies are steadily with the Gauls, but there is no doubt that his policy was, with rare exceptions, one of clemency, conciliation and good government. In his future conflicts he seems to have had the support of these very people amongst whom he had waged his memorable campaigns. In the civil war he had

to win great battles in other provinces, but his opponents had no footing in Gaul.

Space forbids, nor is it necessary for our purpose, to enter into the details of the occurrences that led to the civil war with Pompey, nor of the events of that war. From all the records that we have three important facts are evident:

1. Caesar did all that he could, short of outright surrender of his policy and power, to avoid the resort to arms. His opponents were blind. The gods wished to destroy them. Pompey, who had gradually become more and more alienated from Caesar, and was now their leader, showed utter ignorance of the mind of the masses of the people. The senatorial party would listen to none of the compromises which Caesar offered.

2. The masses of the people were almost solidly for Caesar, and he was master of Italy, without a struggle, within a few months of the day he crossed the Rubicon. The rank and file were far more unanimously on his side than they had been in the time of his consulship, for during these ten years matters in Rome had been steadily going from bad to worse. An increasing idle population were being fed at public expense and amused with brutal shows. Disorder in the streets was frequent. Bribery and plunder were the life of politics. Meantime the rich gave elegant dinners and circulated between spacious villas and sumptuous city mansions, with visits in season to fashionable Baiaæ. What wonder that people who cared aught for public welfare were ready to welcome the one man whom they felt to be capable of leading them to order, reconciliation, peace and some degree of justice.

3. The third fact that stands out is that Caesar, during the civil war and after, displayed the utmost clemency towards his opponents. "Let us endeavor," thus he wrote in golden words, "let us endeavor in this manner to win the affections of all—it would be a novel plan of conquest to secure ourselves by mercy and liberality." He knew that Rome had been for several generations a house

badly divided against itself. He knew that the classes of privilege were arrayed unsympathetically against the masses, and he knew that the house so divided ought in some way to find self-reconciliation. His whole policy now lay in this direction. He was always ready to advance more than half-way in willingness to pardon and conciliate; his personal kindness had extended even to the hands that afterwards stabbed him. In his economic reforms, on which he set to work whenever peace permitted, he showed, along with essential radicalism, a sensible conservatism that alienated many radicals of his own party.

IV.

The sane and practical character of his policy, as well as his wonderful insight into Rome's social ills, can be seen by a mere enumeration of some of the reforms he was able to carry through in the brief spaces between his fighting and his death:

1. He reduced by half the number of those receiving free corn from the state.

2. He provided temporary work for the idle by beginning extensive public improvements, such, however, as would benefit the public, and not needless objects of extravagance just to "give work."

3. He had a law passed that not more than two-thirds of the laborers on the great stock farms should be slaves.

4. He instituted a strict inquiry into land titles, and thus brought about a farther distribution of domain that was found to be public, at the same time providing that it should not be alienated in 20 years.

5. He sent out 80,000 colonists to places outside of Italy.

6. He opposed a complete repudiation of debts as urged by extremists, but for the relief of debtors made certain remissions as to interest. He was the first to establish a sort of bankruptcy law by which the debtor could make surrender and start afresh.

7. He abolished the iniquitous practice of farming out to speculators the direct taxes levied on the provinces, and intrusted the collection,

whether in produce or money, to the proper officers of the district.

The trend of these measures is evident and shows, as Mommsen and Froude have eloquently maintained, that Caesar was the genuine supporter of the interests of the people.

Moreover, so far as it could express itself, he was backed by the popular will. That this will went on to welcome him as virtual monarch, monarch in fact if not in name, was the inevitable result of a long rule of tyrannical oligarchs, who, by sharpness and fraud under pretense of law, had robbed and degraded, then bribed and debauched, the masses of the people. What manliness, what power of self-expression, what expectation of justice was left, naturally sided with the one man who as leader had shown himself to be a democrat. Thus it was that the "empire" came, not from the side of the oligarchy, not from the conservative party that upheld privilege, but from the side of the democrats and populists. The men who had held the power and the wealth and the privileges were quite content with the old regime. They took the cue of talking grandly and solemnly about the preservation of the "republic," and, like Brutus, posed as patriots.

We do not know what political and constitutional reforms Caesar might have effected had he not been cut down in the midst of his work. Certainly he saw through the sham of the senatorial empire that called itself republic; but we must believe that he would have opposed any settlement that would have been permanently undemocratic. Throughout his whole career he had been true to his democratic principles, as Mommsen has finely summarized in the following passage:

Caesar, from the outset and as it were by hereditary right the head of the popular party, had for 30 years borne aloft its banner without ever changing or even so much as concealing his colors; he remained democrat even when monarch. . . . As he retained unchanged the essential ideas of Roman democracy, viz., alleviation of the burden of debtors, transmarine colonization, gradual equalization of the differences of rights among the

classes belonging to the state, emancipation of the executive power from the senate, his monarchy was so little at variance with democracy, that democracy on the contrary only attained its completion and fulfillment by means of that monarchy.

Whenever, therefore, "Caesarism" be spoken as reproach, let not the reproach rest upon the great name which fate and future events caused to be taken in vain.

JAMES H. DILLARD.

NEWS

The steel strike is not yet settled. Neither is it more aggressive. Judged from the press reports, it hovers over the commercial world like a cloud, which may dissipate without commotion or may burst into a terrific storm.

At our last report (p. 249) J. Pierpont Morgan, the head center of the trust, had given out a newspaper interview declaring that he would make no compromise; and Mr. Shaffer, the strike leader (p. 242), had threatened to hold the republican party responsible to the labor vote of the country for the consequences of the conflict. After that, Mr. Joseph Bishop, secretary of the Ohio board of arbitration, was authorized by the strikers to request Senator Hanna to present their case to Mr. Morgan. This was not done, however, until M. M. Garland, a former president of the Amalgamated association, who now holds a federal office at Pittsburgh, had tried to effect a settlement and failed. Whether in consequence of the appeal to Mr. Hanna or not, but certainly upon overtures from Mr. Morgan, through Col. Harvey, Morgan's manager of the Harper publications, a secret meeting took place in New York on the 27th between President Shaffer and Secretary Williams, of the strikers, and high officials of the steel trust, supposed to include Morgan, Schwab and Garv. The press thereupon reported circumstantial rumors of a settlement. One paper specified the terms, with probable accuracy, as follows:

(1) Mills that were nonunion on July 1 to continue so; (2) the trust not to sign the union scale for nonunion mills; (3) the trust, however, to pay the union scale in nonunion mills; (4) all mills to be open to union and nonunion men alike; (5)

the trust not to interfere with individuals wishing to join the union.

Two days after the conference a telegraphic notice summoning the national committee to meet at Pittsburgh on the 30th was sent out from headquarters. The object of this meeting was to determine whether the terms outlined at the New York conference should be accepted or the strike be continued. When the committee assembled on the 30th strong opposition to the terms formulated at New York developed. By way of compromise it was agreed to propose the elimination of five plants, which were nonunion on July 1 but have since been organized, from the nonunion category. Morgan replied on the 31st rejecting this proposal.

For the purpose of meeting the strike, steps have been taken by the steel trust to import southern negroes to take the strikers' places, and 300 were brought to a Chicago suburb on the 25th under employment by the Latrobe Steel and Coupler works. Residents of the suburb made vehement protests against this move, and the negroes were returned. They themselves participated by representatives in the local indignation meeting. One of the representatives, Henry Taylor, made the following statement to the meeting:

There is not a man in our party who will work at Melrose Park under a gun or in another man's place. We don't want to fill strikers' places and we won't work under guard. We were hired at Birmingham by a colored man named H. R. Bell, from Melrose Park. He told us there was no trouble at the works and no strike threatened, but that there was a scarcity of workmen. We were getting from \$1.25 to \$1.50 a day there, and he told us the least paid laborers here was two dollars a day. We were all to get that.

The objections to the importation of these negroes appears to have been wholly industrial, and not racial.

At one time the garment makers' strike in New York, mentioned last week (p. 249), was reported as settled. It had been, so far as two of the parties to the conflict were concerned. The manufacturers had agreed with the strikers upon their demand for union conditions and higher wages, but the contractors, or "sweaters," refused to unite in the agreement unless the manufacturers would bear the burden of the higher wages, and this the

manufacturers refused to do. The strike is consequently still unsettled.

Labor difficulties are reflected in party politics through the meeting at Indianapolis, on the 29th, of the two factions of the Social Democratic party. This convention was called (vol. iii, p. 665) for the purpose of harmonizing all branches of socialism in American politics. There are three: the Socialist Labor party, which is the original political organization; the Springfield branch of the social democracy, so called because its headquarters are at Springfield, Mass., and the Chicago branch of the social democracy, so called because its headquarters are at Chicago. The first branch refuses to harmonize, and is not represented at the Indianapolis convention. The third, under the leadership of Mr. Debs, clings to the primary object in forming the social democracy, namely, the principle of opportunism or of taking advantage of opportunities as they arise to give socialism a foothold in legislation. The Springfield branch is not opportunist. It tends toward the policy of eliminating from the party demands all half-way measures and concentrating its energies upon the complete revolutionary programme of socialism. Upon the assembling of the convention George D. Herron was chairman of the day on the 29th, and J. F. Carey, of Massachusetts, on the 30th. Owing to press statements that Eugene V. Debs had been "turned down" by the convention in its vote on a question of order on the 29th, a vote of confidence in him was adopted on the 30th. Max Hayes, of Cleveland, was chairman of the day on the 31st, when the really vital question of the conference came up for decision—the question eliminating from the platform of last year its opportunist demands. The convention decided against doing so. It also added to the platform a series of demands proposed by Dr. Herron, the principal clauses of which as reported by the press are as follows:

(1) The public ownership of all means of transportation and communication and all other public utilities, as well as of all industries controlled by monopolies, trusts and combines. No part of the revenue of such industries to be applied to the reduction of taxes on property of the capitalist class, but to be applied wholly to the increase of wages and shortening of the hours of labor of the employees, to the improvement of