

special privilege is the exclusive use of the streets for all street railroad purposes under a franchise that authorizes a five-cent fare; and the law that conferred that special privilege was an unjust law, for it conferred upon the street railroad company an unfair advantage over its patrons.

The only way any monopoly can be destroyed is the way the monopoly of the streets of Cincinnati was destroyed; namely, by repealing the law upon which that monopoly is based. It will be a great day for labor when the masses clearly see this point; that their real enemy is Privilege, created by law. Then they will use their votes, and not to express class hatred nor to threaten property rights, nor to try revolutionary experiments, but to repeal by conservative steps the laws out of which manifold monopolies have grown. Thus they will throw open to competition opportunities and enterprises that have been monopolized. This is the only salvation of labor; it is the only salvation of capital. Such a programme no man can intelligently oppose, unless he is a holder of some monopoly privilege. And upon the high moral ground that the welfare of the individual cannot conflict with the welfare of society, the monopolist himself ought to see that it would be for his interest also if he were shorn of his privileges.

Another striking example of the unfair advantages enjoyed by the street railway monopolies is the exemption from their fair share of taxation which the law allows them. The laws of Ohio, as interpreted by the courts, forbid the taxation of the franchise value of these corporations. And so it comes about that we see the owners of street railway franchises drawing dividends on \$20,000,000 while paying taxes on less than \$3,000.00. As a general proposition, it is safe to say that the average street railway is capitalized for five times its actual cost. Yet it is obliged to pay taxes only on one-fifth of its actual value.

Now note how different it is with other forms of property. Take real estate values in Cincinnati. Here is an example: A private dwelling in one of the best sections of the city was sold for \$13,000 nine years ago.

The other day it was sold again for \$5,000. This depreciation was not due to any change in the character of the neighborhood. There were several causes for it, but the chief cause was the fact that the property had been outrageously taxed. Nine years ago, when it was sold for \$13,000, it was list-

ed on the tax duplicate for \$7,000. The other day, when it was sold for \$5,000, it was on the tax duplicate for \$5,800. That is, private property is taxed at 116 per cent. of its actual value, while the street railroad is taxed on a valuation of \$2,800,000, or 14 per cent of its actual value.

The distribution of the burden of taxation is a problem most important for labor to consider and solve.

To adjust the burdens of taxation so that monopoly shall bear more of them, and shall be discouraged; so that labor and capital shall bear less of them and labor shall no longer be robbed and investment of capital shall no longer be checked by unnecessary and unjust taxation, and so that the opportunities for employment, which are under the control of monopoly, shall be thrown open to enterprise, is to encourage labor and capital alike and make friends of them, as they ought to be. For, on the one hand, it will increase the demand for labor and advance wages, and, on the other hand, while it will infallibly diminish the dividends of monopoly on watered stock, it will insure larger and steadier returns to honest capital.

This subject may not be an inviting one for the orator, but the statesmanship of the future will be turned toward the overthrow of monopoly, to lighten the burdens of industry and to establish equality of opportunity between man and man.

WHAT IS PRIVATE PROPERTY?

A letter from the Rev. Charles F. Dole, of Jamaica Plain, Mass., to the Boston Herald of October 9.

The discussion which is now going on in regard to the situation in the anthracite coal region raises the very practical question: "What justly constitutes private property?" Many indications make it probable that society is being irresistibly urged to undertake a new definition of this term. We have an obvious historical precedent in favor of the likelihood, as well as the righteousness, of a more restricted definition of private property than we have hitherto been accustomed to make. It is a short period since political power, offices and titles were commonly regarded as the property of individuals—lords and princes. A sovereign could give or sell a dukedom; his oldest son, however unfit to rule, was regarded as having the right to succeed his father in his titles, revenues and crown lands. We, in America, have

altered and limited this meaning of property. Even the senatorial claim of a right to dispose of the patronage of a state rests upon what is styled "courtesy." We have become so accustomed to our narrower definition of property that we hardly reflect how destructive it once seemed and still seems in the eyes of a hereditary nobility. We ought to be ready to ask further questions as to what property justly is.

Everyone agrees that what a man actually makes or earns, or what represents his toil, or skill, or service, is his rightful property. If Mr. Carnegie or Mr. Morgan has benefited mankind to the extent of his present fortune, so far no one grudges him a dollar of its value. If out of this grand fortune he chooses to give \$100,000 to a friend or relative, we make no complaint. The gift may be foolish. This depends upon how the friend uses it. The gift of \$10,000 a year may pauperize the man or woman who lives an idle life as fatally as alms given at the street corner. We are disposed, however, to let a great benefactor have his way with his gifts, at least as long as he lives.

How long now, after a great benefactor of mankind has died, ought society to suffer his "dead hand" to rest upon it? Forever? We give no such lease of life to the most useful patents and copyrights. Suppose the millionaire "founds a family," as in the case of the Astors and Vanderbilts. An income of even \$40,000 a year represents the entire labor of a force of 60 average men. Is it not an enormous extension and exaggeration of the definition of property that a man may claim the right for his heirs through successive generations to appropriate to themselves this vast share of the product of labor? Is this equitable? Is it not rather a wholly artificial arrangement? Why shall we not some time look upon the claim to the hereditary holding of an industrial dukedom, as we all now look upon the claims of an arrogant medieval prince?

This view becomes clearer when we begin to ask how far the rich man's acquisitions (in the case of Mr. Morgan, for example) really represent toil or skill or useful service. Would he dare himself to urge that he deserved all his millions? Must he not see that anomalous industrial conditions, and often peculiar laws, and possibly peculiar financial transac-

tions, have enabled him and his groups of managers to set their own price, as it were, upon their services? Who can say that it is a just price? It may be true that these men have shown large constructive ability in organizing industrial enterprises. But this constitutes no reason why they should be paid inordinately more than we pay a President Lincoln or a Gen. Grant. Much less is any just reason to be seen why they should be allowed to make their princely incomes a perpetual lien upon people unborn.

Grant, if you will, that the drops of water on the crest of the wave are bigger and whiter than the drops of water beneath them; yet they owe their superior position largely to the vast bulk of the wave—possibly to the fact that a storm is on, lifting the waves higher than in ordinary times. So the makers of great fortunes obviously owe their position to all sorts of subtle forces, not of their own creation; often to the labors and inventions of unthanked men; often, again, to the monopoly of coal lands and oil wells and other gifts of nature, which ought never to have been granted to private persons "to have and to hold" as their own. Have we the right, through any system of laws, so to define property as to put a mortgage on the shoulders of the men of the next century—not now for useful services honestly rendered, but for the mere fact that certain individuals have possessed themselves of immensely lucrative monopolies?

I do not prescribe what to do. We must do what is just, which may or may not be what has been accounted legal. Slavery was legal, but it was just to abolish it. We must keep promises actually made. But I cannot see how, except by a legal fiction, we can bind to our promises, or make promises to, people who are not yet born. If society in the twenty-first century, for example, finds individuals in possession of railroad leases which we have drawn for 1,000 years, it must, doubtless, be fair and generous in its treatment of the leaseholders as long as they live, but I cannot think that it will see any sacredness in our ill-advised lease. . . .

At any rate, if it is right, as it looks to me, to limit our present excessive extension of the idea of private property, and to restrict it more closely in the direction of that which a man has actually done, or the

value which he has contributed by his services to society, ought we not, then, to urge upon everyone who spends money the fundamental questions of justice, namely: "Where did the money that I am spending come from?" and "Whose labor does it represent?" No one has yet received a liberal education who has not learned to ask these questions.

"LOBSTERS" I HAVE MET.

A TRAVELING MAN OF THE STRENUOUS TYPE.

For The Public.

Usually it is a monotonous journey from Elmwood to Buda. The surrounding country is good for farming, but to the average traveler there is nothing of interest.

On the particular morning to which this story relates I was in the smoking car of the morning train bound for Buda. The car was divided into two compartments, one for baggage, etc., and the other for the accommodation of smokers. There were probably 15 passengers in the car, mostly traveling men. I was seated near the center of the compartment quietly smoking a cigar I had purchased of the train boy. It was a typical train boy cigar, one that had been made to sell. Opposite me sat a big fellow who had bought one of the same sort.

"These cigars must have grown near Elmwood," I said, addressing him.

"I don't believe the cabbages around here are as bad as this," returned the big fellow, grimly.

"It's a Democratic cigar," said another.

"Not on your life," I retorted; "no Democrat is so mean as to make a cigar like that."

"Oh, I don't know," returned the other, "they made the hard times; seems to me they will do anything if they get a chance."

Everybody looked my way, expecting me to make good. It was in the fall of '93, when Grover Cleveland was "all the eggs" at Washington.

"Well, now here, old man," I said, "I voted for Cleveland. and I accept my share of the responsibility for the condition we are in, so far as he and the Democratic party, are to blame for it, but I think we should have had this state of affairs no matter who had been elected."

"It's all right for you to say that, but you know we had good times till the Democrats came in; then everything went to H'l."

"Everything except Cleveland," chimed in another.

"Too bad he didn't go," yawned some one else.

"The whole thing goes to show this country can't get along without protection," said the big fellow opposite me.

"Protection from what?" I asked.

"From the pauper labor of Europe," he replied, forcibly, while several others chorused: "That's right!"

"What are they doing, that we should need protection from them?" I asked.

"What are they doing?" he cried, angrily; "they are getting ready to dump their stuff onto our shores."

"Do you think they will dump it and run?"

"What do you mean?"

"Do you think they will dump their stuff and run away without waiting for anything in return?"

"No, they'll take our gold, I suppose."

"Who'll give it to them?"

"Why, whoever buys their stuff, of course."

"Just so; they won't bring their stuff here, unless our people order it, will they?"

"No, I presume not," he replied, in a much calmer tone.

"Then what you want is to have the government prohibit people buying goods where they please?"

"Well, no, not exactly; but I object to people buying goods abroad."

"Yes, I quite understand. You don't object to people buying where they please, so long as they don't please to buy abroad. It's as clear as mud. How about drinking, do you oppose the use of liquor?"

"No, not if it is used in moderation."

"That is to say, you want the government to hire a policeman to see that you don't drink to excess?"

This brought out a laugh from the crowd.

"No, I don't think I need it."

"Well, then, you would have a policeman to see that I don't drink to excess?"

More laughter from the crowd, in which the big fellow joined.

I continued: "How about theaters? Would you have the law determine when they should be open and when closed? It's only a few steps from the last proposition to this."

"No, I think I'd let the theaters alone. I'm no Puritan."

"I'm glad to hear that. Now, tell me why you object to people buying goods abroad?"

"Because every dollar's worth of goods bought abroad leaves that much