

when he gets into his private room. That would be only a variation of every defeated lawyer's right to go "into the tavern woodshed and cuss the court." But what we are contending for is the right of every jury which returns its own verdict on the oath and conscience of its own members, to be free from any insolence from the judicial bench for having done so. If the jury system is bad or worn out, let's get rid of it by law, and not by judicial usurpation.

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Poverty's Causes.

"Intemperance and immorality are no longer the chief causes of poverty in New York City." So runs an Associated Press dispatch of the 9th in transmitting its account of a report of the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. Intemperance and immorality never were the chief causes of poverty, in New York or anywhere else. If intemperance and immorality were the chief causes of poverty the greatest poverty would be among the rich. Is that a paradox? Then make the most of it. Heretofore as well as now it has been true, as the above named society reports for the current year, that "poverty due to industrial conditions is far in excess of that produced by vices." Nor are these conditions accidental or unavoidable. Poverty among the industrial poor is caused by the wealth of the idle rich. Every dollar that goes to anyone who doesn't earn it, is extorted somehow from others who do earn it.

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Doctrinaires and Dunces.

When one person derisively calls another a doctrinaire, it is "better than an even bet" that the former does not understand the latter's doctrine and is too lazy to try to.

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Specialization and Generalization.

Intense specialization was a normal reaction from too much *a priori* generalization, and a good thing it was. But indolence, which is to human tendencies what inertia is to those that are purely physical, has made the fad for specialization as much an obstacle to progress as lazy generalization ever was. The effect is often shown in a species of contempt for generalization, a contempt which takes no account of whether the generalizer is generalizing with a wish-bone or on the basis of facts. Such critics are not only not generalizers, they are not even specialists; for specialization is useless except for purposes of generalization. The mere specialist belongs in the infant class,

where a horse is not classified as a quadruped but is considered as an animal with one leg at each corner, and a centipede would be regarded as altogether too complex for leg-classification.

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A CHRISTMAS STOCKING FOR "U. S."

In building the Panama Canal *we* are learning to do things for ourselves instead of turning the job over to syndicates and higher-up financiers, and paying them millions to do what *we* can do better—plus other millions of interest and dividends on the values *we* create.

We are learning to co-operate for the Common Good and for our common wealth in our Panama Canal task. We are doing that job far better than any "private enterprise" could do it, and that is natural; for public enterprise can do a public work better than private enterprise can, because the latter is interested chiefly in private profit, while public enterprise is concerned with public service.

Our public servants down at Panama are engaged in and are carrying to completion the greatest engineering work of modern times, the greatest of all ages. They are digging that public canal without "contractors," thus giving flat and conclusive denial to the myth that men must have the incentive of private profit to do good work; they have taken the straw out of the bogie that warns us against trying to do anything unless we get the consent of money-lending Oliver Twists who continually demand "more."

Just think of it—the spirit of Common Good has taken hold upon the laborers at Panama, and two gangs of common laborers, or Common-Good laborers, working on different dams, are engaged in a great Marathon race to see which crew shall have the honor of completing its work more quickly, more efficiently and at lower cost. One of the gangs has the advantage by one-eighth of a cent per cubic yard of concrete laid, and the other is striving to reduce that lead. Ever see two street paving contractors engaged in such a race for the Common Good?

* *

Panama was once "a place where white men can't live," but our sanitary corps in our little army of the Common Good down there has put the morbidity rate and the mortality rate below that of any city in the United States. We have learned why it was once true that white men couldn't live at Panama, and now we are begin-

ning to apply to our States and cities the knowledge gained in preventing disease at Panama. The village in Kansas will be more sanitary for that knowledge.

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In some other matters we have "butted into" the temple of holy private enterprise by our Panama experiment—for it is an experiment, based on scientific calculations.

We have learned that *we* can run for ourselves a line of steamers; *we* are running a line between New York and Colon, making the run one day quicker than private enterprise is running its steamers, and last year *our* profit on *our* line was \$150,000. Yet—is this too "radical"?—wouldn't it be even more profitable to *us* if we ran the line at cost? And still more profitable if we ran it free, as "business men" run elevators in their office buildings, and *pay the cost out of our land values?*

Then, on the Isthmus are two little railroads, owned by "us." On the cars and locomotives is the legend "U. S.," and that spells *us*. Our railroads down there show gross earnings of a little more than \$6,000,000; and since passenger and freight cars that travel up and down in high buildings are run free of direct charges, the service being paid for in rentals, can't we do the same with our back-and-forth passenger and freight cars, and pay expenses of service out of our increased land values? Is a system that is conservative enough for conservative business men too "radical" for *us?*

We are doing still more down there at Panama.

The great and good government of the United States has actually burglarized the Socialist platform—*we* are the burglars, mind you—and is conducting at Panama and along the route of the canal, publicly owned, Common-Good hotels, laundries, machine shops, bakeries, boarding houses, stores, et-cet-e-ra! Lost our minds, haven't we? And the Supreme Court hasn't issued a single injunction against us, so what we are doing at Panama must be judicially reasonable, even if it be commercially wild-eyed.

And again, worse and more of it.

Those of *us* who are doing *our* work at Panama get the best food for themselves and their families at anti-race-suicide prices. At our experiment station down there we are showing that we can do our Common-Good housekeeping honestly and efficiently without skinning ourselves, or permitting some of *us* to skin the rest of *us* with the knife of "public enterprise for private profit."

It's quite a jump from Panama to Alaska, and there's some difference between digging a canal and digging coal. But we can make Alaska an experiment station, and "difference" is a big factor in scientific experimentation.

We have vast coal fields in Alaska; great coal fields owned by *us*. We are actually running a coal mine owned by *us*, and private enterprise has shown *us* how not to mine coal as well as how to mine it.

Any reason why we can't dig our own coal in Alaska, out of our own coal deposits? Any reason why we can't build and operate our own railroads in Alaska, running them into *our* coal fields and bringing *our* coal in *our* cars over *our* tracks to *our* shipping ports, there to be loaded into *our* ships, brought to *our* public docks on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts, and sell it to ourselves out of *our* coal bunkers?

Long ago Brutus said, "I pause for a reply." Well, that's what I'm doing.

This coming winter, and the next and the next, we shall need coal at reasonable prices more than we need the Panama Canal. We don't need a canal to furnish heat; we can't cook breakfast with a canal; and possibly that's the reason the Guggenmorgans permitted us to build our own canal.

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Then, we have a few water-power sites left unmorganheimed, and they mean heat, power and light. Can't we do something for ourselves with our water powers?

Crazy? Of course we are.

But having made a good beginning, and since we are getting a reputation for craziness, let's make a good job of it.

W. G. EGGLESTON.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

ELEMENTARY POLITICS IN FRANCE.

Paris.

France is an old nation; her literature has lived for eight centuries; her past, glorious as it may be, weighs her down. She has borne so long the monarchical yoke, that it may seem still an open question to know whether purely democratic institutions may now suit her. Experience has yet to give its verdict. But so far, after many changes in governmental sign-posts and labels, France has known nothing but the worst features of autocratic and really irresponsible government. The present day regime is no exception to the rule.

France is nominally a republic; but that republic is, in fact, nothing else but an autocracy of vested interests. Parliament is filled with defenders of