

stewards of God's bounty," to quote the late more or less lamented Mr. Baer.



We see the vast army of unemployed. We see the increasing want upon one hand and wealth upon the other. We see the divergence increasing and the conditions intensifying. Those who have jobs and those who have increasing incomes without jobs, and even those who confidently expect either of these, are prone to contemplate the state of things complacently, albeit the histories of other nations and the conditions of other peoples at this time make the obvious tendencies appear ominous. Those who do not need any jobs and do not want any jobs, and those who are profiting largely from conditions as they are, do not desire any change, and since they are "chosen stewards" and seemingly in control, they insist that there can be no change. Where, indeed is the "pay window," unless they see fit to open one?

But what about the unemployed? They are exceedingly numerous and, year by year, they are steadily increasing in numbers, in want, in hopelessness, in incapacity, and, incidentally, in either despair or desperation. They may have shown a lack of discretion in the choice of parents or in the time or place of birth, where better judgment would have permitted them to select themselves to be "God's chosen stewards," or had those good offices forced upon them. It may be that they should have exercised their influence to prevent the private monopolization of jobs before they got here and to have seen to it that the chosen stewards did not choose quite so much for themselves but rather more for the rest of the people. Be that as it may, it is not impossible that they still have rights and that those rights include the right to labor. More than that, when we see an occasional member of this vast soup house army, who has not been utterly ruined by his previous experiences and environment, have the good fortune to be transplanted in some way into a new country of relatively free land and therefore freer opportunities to labor, and we see him become a prosperous, independent, comfortable and worthy citizen, we naturally infer that all of the members of these vast armies of the unfortunate might perhaps also be better citizens and more prosperous citizens if they could step up to nature's "windows" in city or country and enroll for that labor by which alone they should be sustained, without being denied or paying tribute.



Man exists and exists only upon the products

of labor. He exists only upon the products of labor applied to land. There is no other way for human, mortal life to be sustained. If any man exists upon the products of other men's labor rather than his own, he is morally or at least fundamentally, a pirate, a parasite, a thief. We may refrain in charitableness from passing individual judgment because of circumstances and conditions, but the stupendous moral fact remains. And since man exists exclusively upon the products of labor, to deny him the right to labor is to deny him the right to existence altogether, without being a pirate and a thief. Have the retainers of the house of have and the votaries of things as they are reached the point where they really set up this denial? The most effective denial, of course, of the right to labor is in denying the common right to the use of land.

There are fearful pitfalls along the line of reasoning of the reactionary mind, but none of them so fearful as the conclusions that sort of mind reaches. Beginning at a point of abnormality, it circles 'round, amid things that are and reckons these inevitable, and finally comes back to its initial fact, which is seen from the other side of approach in all its hideousness, but is accepted as unavoidable, and men are told they have "no right to labor" to make it otherwise.

Incidentally, there are tremendous responsibilities resting upon those in editorial positions of wide influence, like the editor of the Saturday Evening Post, and sometime they will be called on for an accounting in their particular branch of stewardship.

ROBT. S. DOUBLEDAY.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

NEW ZEALAND POLITICS.

Auckland, 1st Feby., 1915.

The whole election in December throughout New Zealand was very complicated and the result indecisive. Even yet it is uncertain whether we shall have a change of government or no. Some disputed elections have still to be settled, and whatever the result of these may be will leave the position for or against the government even or with a majority of about two on either side. My own contest was specially complicated. One candidate for the government (Conservative), one candidate for the extreme I. W. W. section of the Labor party, and myself. I had my usual handicap of opposition from the land monopolists, the liquor monopolists and the tariff monopolists. I had the opposition of the Orangemen because I was giving support to Sir Joseph Ward, who is a Catholic. I had the Catholic opposition because I opposed giving government grants to their private schools, and then I had a new

element of opposition from a considerable section of the Protestant churches because I was opposed to their program of religious instruction being introduced into our national school system. The result was that all three of the candidates finished within 80 of the top and bottom, the Labor man winning by 74 votes. A little better organization would have made the difference, but neither my committee nor myself could seriously complain. I worked hard and made more and, I think, better speeches than I had ever done before, and my committee also worked enthusiastically. It was disappointing, especially as the time was ripe for just the kind of influence and help which I could have given.

However, I have the satisfaction of seeing my program of proportional representation and increased land value taxation embodied in the official program of the Liberal party, and in the program of both sections of the Labor party. I think it is probable the Liberal party may come into office with a small majority, including the Labor members (six), and if so proportional representation is sure to pass.

GEORGE FOWLDS.



THE CANADIAN SITUATION.

Ceylon, Sask., Mar. 1, 1915.

When two moving bodies meet in mid-career the unavoidable result is a clash; also, if the mass of these bodies is increasing and their speed accelerating the longer the meeting is delayed the greater the collision when it occurs. Such would seem to me to be the present state of affairs in Canada. Edward Porritt, the most exhaustive writer on Canadian tariff history, declares it his opinion that the principle of protection is more firmly entrenched in Canada than in any other English-speaking country. The rise of protective duties here has halted for several years, but the country's necessity now is the manufacturers' opportunity, and Minister White's budget proposes an increase of seven per cent in the general tariff, of five per cent against Great Britain, and, with a few exceptions, the wiping out of the free list.

Now the train is again on the track and the throttle open. There is no station in sight, but away on the horizon is another train coming to meet it.

Six years ago the forces of free trade in Canada were as scattered and inert as the clods of a fallow and frozen field. The Conservative party was committed as strongly as ever to protection, and in the Liberal party the free traders had been coaxed or bullied into silence. Then came the American offer of reciprocity and Laurier's tour of the west, and the valley of dry bones was quickly peopled with fighting free traders. The country was no more ready then, nor is it now, for their ideals than was the United States ready for Bryanism in 1896. But this other train is now on the track and it is headed for Ottawa. And it is bound to meet the first on the way.

The Grain Growers' Association is almost the only popular vehicle in western Canada for the advancement of democratic ideals, and its progress may be taken as roughly indicating the trend of independent political and economic thought. The G. G. A. is not and never has been a club for the discussion

and propagation of radical ideas. From its beginning it has labored consistently to develop agencies for the more economical handling of products that the farmer must buy or sell, and for legislation having the same end in view. Such progressive or radical ideas as have gained currency have been merely incidental to this other purpose.

The G. G. A. is the parent of one great commission firm and two elevator companies operated on the co-operative principle that together handle one-fourth of the grain marketed in western Canada, and now the Saskatchewan branch has undertaken to handle through its central office a large line of staple products which it supplies its locals at wholesale prices. The Grain Company handles the entire output of one flour mill, has purchased a timber limit in British Columbia, leased a terminal elevator at the head of the lakes, and proposes to lease another at Liverpool. The Elevator Company is said to own the largest number of local elevators of any company in existence, and a co-operative bank and the manufacture of farm machinery are under serious consideration.

There is a striking difference in the methods of the organized farmers here and those of the Farmers' Alliance in the States 25 years ago. There, not much was undertaken in the way of co-operation, but every local had its library and at its regular weekly meetings questions of economics and public policy were discussed. Each State had its official paper and its official lecturer, and many counties likewise. Public gatherings, both in-door and out-door, were frequent, and at these, vast throngs were addressed by speakers whom this process of education developed in astonishing numbers.

The high intelligence, practical sense and devotion of its leaders have given the G. G. A. a stability and commanded a respect unusual among farmers' organizations, but it has never gained anything like general support among the western farmers. Today, after 14 years' existence, it numbers scarcely one-fifth of the farmers of Saskatchewan among its members. For several years I noted very plain indications of a flagging of interest that did not always show in falling numbers, but during the past year there has been a notable increase in both numbers and interest. This undoubtedly is very largely due to the establishment of the co-operative buying and selling agency. It has appealed directly to a long-standing feeling of injustice toward the local dealers, whether well or ill founded, and has met with a tremendous response. The business has been very efficiently handled, and the results have brought visions of the Grain Growers' Association as a really popular organization.

While the G. G. A. has never undertaken any sort of social or political propaganda it has been fertile soil for the growth of progressive and radical ideas. But until it can make a more popular appeal its political efforts must be largely blocked by the inert mass of the unregenerate four-fifths. A case in point is the defeat of Direct Legislation. The G. G. A. at its annual conventions had endorsed it for several years, but the great body of its own members did not know what it was, let alone having any enthusiasm for its success. Contrast this with the case of South Dakota, where Direct Legislation was taken up by the Farmers' Alliance in a purely aca-