

least able to spare. And the saying of some one that the burden of caring for the desperately poor falls upon the shoulders of the poor, came to my mind, with the further thought that there might be some connection between the extremely rich and the hopeless poor. Can the one be the complement of the other?

Then there came to me a vision. I saw in my vision a little log cabin which stood at the edge of a small grove of beautiful trees; and lying to the south of the cabin was a field of corn flanked on either side by another of oats and wheat. In front of the cabin stood a woman holding a child in her arms, and the little child, too small to speak, was waving its little hands at a man who was coming up from the cornfield leading a horse. He had been following the plow all day clearing the weeds from the corn, and now he was being greeted by the welcome of his first born child. My vision cleared and as the man reached forward and took the child from the arms of the woman and placed it upon the back of the horse and led it to the little log barn, the face of the child was turned toward me, and I saw in it the face of the man in the ambulance of the Health department.

The vision faded, and as I passed along another came to take its place. The little cabin with its surrounding frame of green trees and growing crops was gone, and in its place there stood a huge factory with its hideous and sordid surroundings of tenement houses, and its clouds of smoke polluting the air. The darkness came on, and the filthy windows of the great buildings gave forth a dim light, and the whir of the revolving wheels and the din of the clattering machinery stopped not for the night. And I saw that the huge mill was filled with women and with little children who watched the endless movements of the circling wheels; and among the little children I saw white-faced men whose sole business was to see that the little ones did not fall asleep in the long watches of the night, and suffer death, or maiming worse than death, from the cruel claws of the power driven machines. The little ones were pale and lifeless. They were old before their time, for the wealth of the world was taking tribute of their helplessness, and blood and flesh and human souls were being coined into dollars, and the coiners were seemingly blind to the blood that stained the coinage. I looked at the weary little forms, and among them I seemed to see the face of the man in the ambulance of the Health department.

The vision faded, and I saw another. It was a luxuriously furnished office. It might have been a bank, or a broker's office. In it sat a well-dressed and prosperous-looking man, smoking a fat and prosperous-looking cigar. Another well-dressed man confronted him, and I heard him say to the man with the cigar, "You got that farm from Bob mighty cheap. What ever became of Bob?"

"Well, I don't know as it was so cheap after all. Of course the mills came here after I bought it, and the town was built up around it, and I laid it out into town lots, and sold most of them for big prices so that I made a tidy little spec' out of it. But then there was the risk I took. The mills might not have come, and the town might not have been built, you see."

"You were pretty sure the mills were coming, though," said the other man.

"Well, reasonably so. I had a contract with the company to put up the mills on some of my other property," said the man with the cigar.

"You must have made nearly a million out of the deal all round."

"No, hardly that much. Around three quarters of it. And Bob—oh, he took the price of his farm and went over on the bottoms and bought him another place. The floods came along the next spring, and Bob was drowned trying to save his cows. The widow and the little boy couldn't make a go of it there—floods every year you see; and so they came to town after the factory got to running, and she and the little boy went to work in the mill. Good thing for the poor folks, isn't it, to have a place where the women and the little children can get easy jobs? Mill didn't agree with the widow, and quick consumption took her. The boy got sleepy one night, and lost two fingers and his job too. I heard he went to Chicago. There's lots of jobs there most as good as these in the mill, but not so steady." A huge cloud of smoke rolled up from the fat cigar, and the vision faded.

And the answer to my query was written in the cloud of smoke. Three quarters of a million dollars' profit from one little farm, going from the people who were forced to use the farm into the pocket of the man who held the title. The value made by the energies of the whole people taken by the one. *There* was the provision made by the Creator of the Universe for the common needs of all. Why is it that all of us permit a few of us to absorb the fund designed by Providence for public purposes that will benefit all of us? Who is to blame?

GEORGE V. WELLS.

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THE CIVIC MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Paper Read by Henry George, Jr., Before the Congress of the Episcopal Church at Detroit, May 13, 1908.

The subject of "The Civic Mission of the Church," upon which I have been invited to read a paper before this Congress, does not leave room for discussion as to whether the Church has or has not a civic mission. The form of the text implies that it has, and the only question for consideration is as to the nature of that mission.

Now the word "civic" means city, citizen, citizenship, and the word "mission" means duty; so that "civic mission" carries the idea of the duty

of citizenship—the relation of the citizen to the community as a whole. The broad matter for consideration then is the Church's duty in respect to general citizenship.

But the Church has not to deal with all matters of general citizenship. Its domain is only that of God's laws. It has nothing to do with human enactments, except as they transgress God's laws. The civic mission of the Church is therefore limited. It does not include all the phases of general citizenship, but is restricted to propounding the divine ordinance underlying it—God's mandate governing civilization. That mandate is justice, and justice is the natural order.

To those who will not be blind, this natural order is as obvious, simple and beautiful as are any of the manifestations in the physical universe. It is that men shall, by applying their labor to land, produce the things needed to satisfy their animal needs, and then rise out of their animal selves to the higher levels of the mind and the spirit.

Land is Nature's storehouse, and, taken as a whole, is inexhaustible. It is capable of ministering in abundance to every physical desire, so that there shall be no want where men are willing to work. And to guarantee this, the natural order ordains that all shall have equal access to this storehouse, and, as going with this, that labor shall be without let or hindrance, and that no fines, charges or exactions shall be put upon its fruits.

In a word, the natural order decrees that labor and the fruits of labor shall be free, and that all men shall have equal opportunity to enjoy nature's bounties. None shall have a right of levy or a right of exclusion, any more than any shall have a right of theft. If any be excluded or have even part of their labor's fruits taken from them, they are robbed, and the divine law of justice is transgressed—the law of the equality of opportunity and the freedom of labor. As the expounder of God's ordinances, it is the duty of the Church to protest and with all its might to assert the natural order.

That the divine law of justice has been transgressed among our people—that there has been a wide departure from the natural order—is palpable. And as a consequence, there is a strife and confusion worse than that which fell upon those who sought to war against God by building a tower to heaven. Look at the state of things among us to-day and say if a great punishment is not upon us.

Of all the countries on the globe, ours is the most blessed in respect to the abundance and richness of natural opportunities, and the mixture of bloods running through the veins of our people. We are also blessed with a greater production of wealth than any other people.

Yet wide and widening social disparities exist. Some have superabundance of luxuries, while increasing thousands are harried by want. With the

rise of the multi-millionaire, dizzy or drunk with overflowing riches, has come an army of tramps, degraded into brutishness by poverty.

We are justly proud of our growing cities, of our schools, libraries, theaters, museums, hospitals; of our developing public works, of our nation's gathering greatness. But what of our men, women and children? Are they improving—physically, mentally and morally—not some of them, but as a whole?

It is certain that faster than our population have grown great evils. There has been, not a decrease, but a more than proportionate increase in high crimes and misdemeanors, in insanity, in suicides, in divorces, inversely with the number of births in certain circles.

And what now is the standard of our business morals when lying and cheating have so characterized the recent era of "frenzied finance"? What are the methods of our "captains of industry" when a single company, after trial in court for unlawful discriminations, is sentenced to fines aggregating \$29,000,000? What noisome things are coming to light in manifold Federal, State and municipal searchings into the operations of great transportation and other privileged corporations?

And then our politics—corruption upon corruption! Not the old-time petty spoil of office and little graft, but the huge graft of special grants and immunities. To obtain such privileges, parties are subsidized, officials bought, courts influenced and money or other consideration placed "where it will do the most good"!

As to Federal politics, it has been charged on the floor of Congress, and stood without denial, that \$16,000,000 was paid for victory in a recent Presidential struggle—\$16,000,000 for victory and "Honest Money"!

And as for State politics—we smile when Pennsylvania is called "corrupt and contented," and when other parts of the country are described as "comfortably rotten"! The cynic among us defines "Goo-goo"—the Good Government man—as "a good citizen who has never been tempted"! To such a pass have we come in the State of New York that the prayer of a minister called in by chance to offer a morning invocation in the State Assembly at Albany, attracted little attention, although what he said was this: "Oh, thou merciful God, we thank Thee this morning for the realization that Thou art the Supreme Legislator of the universe. Bless the members of this distinguished body, and when life's journey is at an end, we ask Thee to bring us to that General Assembly where Jesus Christ will be the Speaker, and business shall be transacted without graft or the dictation of lobbyists!"

Who will say that all this poverty and suffering, these swollen fortunes and debauchery, this lying and cheating in business pursuits, this mad scrambling and turmoil, this unbalancing of minds and

seeking of death, this marital infelicity and refusal of parentage—who will say that all these things are by divine intent? If any stand forth and declare this, to him I say he blasphemes against the Almighty. So far from being of the natural order, they are consequences of departure from that order.

For the far-spreading want on the one hand and the concentrated riches on the other spring from privilege in some form—sanctioned though it be by human law—which appropriates from the many what it lavishes upon the few.

The high crimes and misdemeanors, insanity, suicides, divorces and refusal of progeny come, in very large measure, out of either gluttony or starvation.

The perversion of business morals results either from a striving for privileges that will rob their holders into riches, or from a fear of the devil of want, or from both.

The corruption of politics flows in the main from grants, immunities and other special privileges that are hung up as its prizes.

In face of these monstrous conditions, what is the Church to do?

Turn away and say: "This is no business of ours"?

Or, moved to do something, is it to preach the ostracism of the riotous rich, tell the more seemly rich that their riches are a stewardship, and, while deploring that the poor are so many and constant, preach a new crusade for charity?

Charity is good in its way, but what of justice?

Tolstoy has said that the privileged are willing to do anything for the poor—except get off their backs. Is the Church to be handmaiden to Privilege? Or is it to preach that religion underlying social and political affairs—equal rights for all God's children, special privileges to none?

John Moore, an Episcopal divine writing in the beginning of the last half of the 17th Century on "The Crying Sin of England," exclaimed: "Shame it is for any Christian society, city or town, to take no more care for the poor than that they be forced to beg. But how great a shame is it for a gospel magistracy not to suppress Make-beggars, which make such swarms of beggars in counties, cities and towns. I cannot but lift up my voice like a trumpet, and tell these Make-beggars their sins and these greedy gripes their transgressions. They care not how many beggars they make so themselves may be gentlemen, nor how many poor they make so themselves may be rich. I mean the un-sociable, covetous, greedy broods of those wretches, who by their inclosures of commons do un-people towns and un-corn fields. Question many of our beggars that go about from door to door, where they dwell and why they go about a-begging? Alas, master, say they, we were forced out of such a town when it was inclosed, and since we have continued a generation of beggars."

If times and terms are different, results are the same. What is all land but "commons"? By monopolization we "enclose" it. In effect we "un-people towns and un-corn fields."

We not only acquire private possession of land, but we hold vast quantities of it out of use throughout this country—the East, the West, the North, the South. And we do it with all kinds of land—city, suburban, farming, mineral, timber and grazing. Whether we desire to use it or not, wherever there is a prospect of a rise in value we acquire and hold for this future enhancement. He who wishes to use it must pay, not its present value in use, but a price based upon what he would have to pay for it at some future time if its owner were to continue to hold it. And the greater the prospect of future demand for it, the higher the present price.

Thus land is made artificially scarce. Vast quantities are locked up against users. The accessible parts of Nature's storehouse are claimed by some as their private property.

For instance, the distinguished head of the Anthracite Coal Trust in Pennsylvania is reported to have said that "God in his infinite wisdom" has given the "property interests of the country" into the hands of some "Christian men" who will take care of everybody else. In his case it was the anthracite coal fields.

But how do such men—Christian or otherwise—take care of everybody or anybody else? By making them pay a scarcity price for the thing controlled. The Creator made coal lands in abundance. If put generally to use, the anthracite coal fields, for instance, would yield a vastly greater quantity of mineral than they now turn out. An increase in supply would mean cheaper coal. Cheaper coal would mean a greater consumption in commerce and manufactures, as well as domestically. And the greater output of the mines would mean more demand for miners and therefore higher wages.

But the policy of the "Christian men" controlling these and all other mineral lands is not to open them and make their products cheap, but to limit their use and make their products dear.

The evil of land speculation is observable with monstrous effects in our greatest and richest city. Within the corporate limits of Greater New York there is land enough to give each family in its population a quarter of an acre of ground. But speculation has made the land enormously dear, and so the population does not spread out, but crowds together. Village populations are found in single square blocks. A million people swarm the tenement regions—whole families and lodgers, too, frequently sleeping together in single rooms. Dr. Felix Adler recently told of a case of three women and three men, all unmarried, sleeping together in one room. What chance have morals with such crowding?

But if we admit that this monopolization of land is wrong, what are we going to do about it? Divide up the land and give each his share? Have the Government take over the land and rent it out? No; the one is impossible; the other needless. The simple easy way to do—the way made feasible by our present governmental machinery—is to tax the value of land, what the political economists call “economic rent,” into the public treasury.

That would tax away all the advantage of speculation. Indeed, it would fine whoever held valuable land out of use. It would make him use it or give it up to someone who would use it. The actual quantity of land would not be greater, but the quantity made available to users would be much increased. The price of land would go down. The demand for labor in every direction would increase. Competition among laborers would lessen, wages would rise, and the hours of work would shorten. It would wipe out the trade union, for who would give up his freedom to join a union when all that he desired—plenty of employment, high wages and short hours—could be had without it?

And since the great revenue from land values would more than meet the present needs of Government—and increase with the natural rise of land values—all the taxes now bearing so heavily on labor and its fruits could be remitted.

Such a proposal means nothing new. We tax land values to-day, but only lightly. Increase that tax, and abolish all other taxes and their machinery, including that colossal humbug, the tariff. Leave land titles as they are, undisturbed. Let any call himself land owner who might please to do so, and let him buy, sell, or bequeath. But compel the owner, through taxation, to pay the annual value into the public coffers.

That would recognize the principle of equal rights in land. It would observe the divine mandate of equality of access to Nature's storehouse, and would to great degree free labor of its present encumbrances.

But to make labor entirely without let or hindrance, we should also have to abolish the private toll-gate system we uphold along our avenues of exchange. The public itself would have to own and operate all the functions of its public highways, because to give such functions into private hands would grant to such individuals a power over others.

And thus by opening Nature's bounties to all men equally, by cheapening land which all men must use, by lifting from industry the huge burden of taxation, by removing from politics the power to grant franchises to individuals which now corrupts it, by cutting off the source of great fortunes and leaving in the hands of the masses that large part of their labor's fruits taken from them—by doing these things, and what I have pro-

posed *would* do them, we would solve the great social problems that now confront and confound us. Superabundant riches and involuntary poverty would both disappear. Insanity, self-killing, divorces and race-suicide would be reduced to a minimum. Public morals would improve, politics purify and our nation become more nearly what was intended by the Fathers—a nation of equals.

Nor would this take away from private initiative, from individual incentive. On the contrary, it would give opportunities to the individual, give greater chance for the play of his bent and the development of his latent powers. It would change him from “brother to the ox” to the “roof and crown of things.” It would liberate mind and spirit in millions now groveling in the lower animal levels. It would bring a civilization such as only the pure in heart have seen. It would bring the reign of the natural order—the divine law.

To preach and strive for this is the civic mission of the Church—not for peace, peace, where there is no peace; not for charity, but for justice—the justice of natural law. If the Church shall do this, she will be as a city on a hill and become the light of the world. But if she fail of this mission, then for her will flame out upon the wall the words: “Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting.”

BOOKS

PROGRESS OF SOCIALISM.

Socialists at Work. By Robert Hunter, author of “Poverty,” etc. Published by the MacMillan Company, New York. Price 1.50 net.

The socialist movement would appeal much more strongly to what we may roughly describe as American modes of thought, if its emphasis were usually placed where Mr. Hunter would place it.

He endeavors, and perhaps with more success upon the whole than he himself supposes, to avoid the dangers incident to personifying economic interests which cross class lines, but which socialists are prone to consider as coinciding with class lines. Nor does he find it necessary, in order to avoid this error, to depart from socialist authorities. He is able to quote Liebknecht as including “in the working class all those who live exclusively or principally by means of their own labor,” and the first International as declaring that “the struggle for the emancipation of the working-class means not a struggle for class privileges and monopolies, but for equal rights and duties, and the abolition of all class rule.”

It is to be observed nevertheless that Mr. Hunter does not escape the serious error, common to all socialist controversy, of measuring the relative