

ernment is too weak to maintain order and compel respect for the territories of England and France adjoining. It has long since been apparent that the Negroes in America would stay in America, otherwise our government might take a very lively interest in Liberia as a place still promising to fulfill the hopes of its founders. Indeed, if there were even now any prospect of making this African state attractive enough to American Negroes to make it a possible place of colonization for them in the future, and thus relieve the United States in some degree of an acute race question, the reorganization of the country with American aid might be seriously considered. So far as can be seen now, however, the reorganization of Liberia would offer no practical advantages to the United States along these lines. If the United States were to take over the Republic as a dependency and govern it, the chief work would consist in controlling the native savages and no doubt civilizing them according to modern imperialistic methods. The project, in short, would be in effect, the establishment of the United States as a colonial power in Africa, no less. And the step would be taken without such warrant as we had had in Cuba, or even in Santo Domingo, where the Monroe doctrine inhibits the establishment of new European protectorates. The main reason for going to the help of Liberia seems to be sentimental in view of the fact that the founders of the state came from America and drew their inspiration and their first Negro colonists from these shores. Certainly, there is no treaty obligation to drive our government to the task, for Liberia has for many years been an entirely independent state.

We wanted once to make a short declaration of principles on which all land value taxationists could agree.

I was deputed to get it up in consultation with Thomas G. Shearman and Henry George; so I went to Shearman first and we two lawyers did certainly make a weird jargon out of it.

Then I took the finished product to George; he read it. "I don't like it," he said, "it isn't clear." So I sat down and made the language plainer.

"That's better, perhaps," said George, "but it isn't so."

I tried again, with no more luck, and read it to George. Said he, a little impatiently, "What is it you want to say?"

"Why," I answered, "I want to say that we will relieve all improvements of taxation, and take the rental value of the mere bare land in taxes every year, so as to make it unprofitable to hold land out of use, or for speculation."

"Well," he said, "say that."

And we did.

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**THE ABSTRUSE AND THE OBVIOUS.**

A. J. Portenar, Member of Typographical Union, No. 6, in the Independent of Jan. 20, 1910.

I went up to the hook and took off a "take" marked "editorial." Then back to the machine to earn my bread and improve my mind at the same time by putting that copy into type, for much of instruction for the head and balm for the heart have come to me while setting Independent editorials. This one opened well: "The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science considers \* \* \*" So I sat down to consider with them. But that innocent looking piece of paper held mental disquietude for me, and I was not long in reaching it. Eyes on the copy and fingers on the keyboard soon had to deal with the following:

The writers who take a philosophical view of the general situation agree with the judgment expressed by Senator Crawford, in our issue of November 25, that the essential factor in the increase of prices is not the trusts or railroads or anything other than the great increase in the amount of gold, which is the basis of all our circulation. But if the gold supply is increased it becomes cheaper, that is, it will buy less and prices in gold will soar.

Crash! Down went my most cherished grievance. Not the greed of men, not the imperfect organization of society, were the cause of economic hardships, but the bountifulness of Nature, in putting useful metals where men could find them, was to blame. Fortunately the work of typesetting becomes mechanical after long practice. My fingers did not stop, although my head was in a whirl. But more, if not worse, was to come. Crushed already by the ponderous authority of Senator Crawford and the afore-mentioned "phil-

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**RELATED THINGS**  
**CONTRIBUTIONS AND REPRINT**

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**THE PHILANTHROP ST.**

For The Public.

Great gifts he made through all his days  
Out of his wealth in divers ways.  
But Charity is loath to claim  
All alms that bear her honored name.  
For some are like the prayers of lip  
Through which no word of soul can slip,  
Like idle words that little weigh,  
Whatever foolish people say.

From out his hand he gave, but grudging  
The little from his heart, and so,  
Not as the foolish people know,  
But as God sees, he shall be judged.

JOSEPH DANA MILLER.

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**HENRY GEORGE ON LITERARY  
STYLE.**

Bolton Hall in The Chancellor (Published by L. J. Quinby, 304 Boston Store Bldg., Omaha, Neb.)

The English Budget agitation recalls the following incident, which has not been in print before:

osophical writers," that editorial proceeded to turn defeat into rout by bringing up Mr. John Moody and Mr. Thomas Gibson as a supporting column, and mental resistance was at an end. I was heart-broken. What was the use of striving for initiative and referendum, public ownership of public utilities, tariff revision downward? What would it avail us to stop speculation in food products, to secure the power of recall of corrupt or incompetent officials, to curb the waste of public funds? The mines would continue to pour forth their golden stream in increasing volume, and all our efforts would go for naught. Let anybody that can, monopolize anything or everything we need; it does not make any real difference. My soul travailed for my lost illusions.

But there came a reaction. Albeit amazed at my own temerity, I had the hardihood to decline to regard it as settled that "the essential factor in the increase of prices" is the increased production of gold. I realize that it may seem ludicrous for one situated as I am to oppose his opinions to those of men acknowledged to be experts on the subject, men whose daily life is concerned with questions of government and finance, while my own horizon is bounded by the four walls of a printing office; and yet, while admitting my failure to grasp the abstruse, I crave permission to present the obvious.

It is my purpose to examine how this question looks to the man in the street. Although I have already confessed my incapacity to grapple with the masters quoted above, I can speak for the man in the street because I am one of him.

Some years ago Mr. C. P. Huntington fixed railroad rates by making them "all the traffic will bear." Railroad corporations have not changed their methods since then. Transportation rates are an "essential factor" in increasing the prices of all things transported.

Tariff rates are admittedly too high in this country. Steel rails, watches, sewing machines, are exported at prices much lower than they are sold for at home. It would seem that the tariff is an "essential factor" in increasing the prices of many things.

The newspapers complain that a combination has fixed an extortionate price on white paper. If their contentions are well founded, that combination is an "essential factor" in increasing the price of paper.

Waste of forests that are being cut and the withholding of forest lands for speculative purposes are charges against human greed that are not denied. This may be an "essential factor" in raising the price of lumber.

A half dozen railroad corporations have a practical monopoly of the anthracite coal lands. Legislative investigations have plainly demonstrated what thrifty use they make of their opportunities.

Small doubt of what is the "essential factor" in the increase in the price of coal.

The Borden Company earned in net profits in 1909 \$2,617,029, and then raised the price of milk because they claimed there was no profit in the business. This might properly be considered the "essential factor" in the increase in the price of milk.

To further multiply instances will be to use space without adding to the weight of argument. Now add to these "essential factors" the increase in taxation caused by official corruption; the myriad devious burrowings into the public purse which Supreme Court Justice Howard estimates at 40 per cent of the amount collected; and then add to that again the increase in prices caused by the "unearned increment" in appreciated land values created by all and appropriated by a few; and I begin to doubt the infallibility of the wise men—senators, financiers, sociologists.

I think I will take up my grievance again. I feel my faith in the efficacy of the initiative and referendum, the power of recall, and, greatest of all, the single tax, reviving as I write. In the meantime my prayer shall be: O Lord, if Thou will deliver us from the evils that are so plainly discernible, we will bear with resignation the afflictions that may follow the discovery of any metals that Thy bounty has provided for our use!

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## SOME REMARKS MADE BY OLD TOM HARDER

About the New Conquest of Egypt, and Other Disconnected Subjects.

For The Public.

"Yes, I've got a little breathin' spell now between the oats and the corn plantin,' so might tell you some o' the things that come to me while I've been watchin' the disk tear up the ground an' fix it so the seed would have a fair chance of its life. Things come to you then that you can hardly keep to yourself, an' you feel like it would be a relief to talk to something, even if it's nothin' but a fence post or a jack rabbit. Sure, this is the most remarkable spring I ever saw, an' its nearly eighty of 'em that I can count since I came from out o' the nowhere to this revolving ball, where the man that cares about stopping has to make a bargain with somebody that got here before him, for a place to sleep and eat an' work.

"Yes, it looks like we'd a right smart chance to raise big crops this year, an' prices are high too. But prices are high because we hain't got much to sell, an' money's so plenty it's the cheapest thing in the market. Some of it's sound money, sure. But some of it is open to suspicion. It circulates of course, an' that's all the good of money. If we do raise a big crop an' want to exchange it for the