

needed to supply the coal that is required by consumers at the high prices charged for it. The result is that the output of the various mines is limited according to an agreement among the mine-operating companies. Mines are shut down part of the year. That throws the miners out of work. By the encouragement of foreign immigration into the mining districts the coal companies supplied themselves with more labor than they need. They made labor cheap. They have paid low wages and have made many charges against the men, such as those for rent, powder for blasting (a shameful overcharge), doctors' services (whether required or not), oil for lamps and provisions from company stores. In 1900 the United Mine Workers of America organized the anthracite coal miners and brought on a great strike, lasting 42 days and resulting in a substantial victory for the men. Some of the old bitter wrongs were righted.

Other wrongs remain. Wages are fearfully low. Work is precarious. The miner can barely live on what he is permitted to earn. Meanwhile the price of anthracite coal to the consumer has risen enormously. The coal monopoly, working under an ironclad agreement, absorbs the great profits and hides them away under tricky bookkeeping by which 40 per cent. or more of the selling price of coal disappears as freight charges—paid by the monopoly to itself. These charges are wildly unreasonable. Meanwhile the miner is permitted to dig when the mine is not shut down by agreement, making a bare living. He costs so little that the coal monopoly does not have to improve its methods. It can continue to use obsolete machinery and do its work in a wasteful manner because men are so cheap.

The coal trust pays its men on an average \$1.28 a day. As the miners are employed only a part of the time, the figures do not fairly represent what their wages is in proportion to their living expenses. Last year, which is said to have been a good year for the miners, they were employed only 194 days, which means that their actual yearly earnings calculated by the day amounted to less than 80 cents. In 1899 the average number of working days was 180. A recent estimate places the average earning capacity of a miner for a year at \$248. Out of this sum he must pay the coal trust for house rent from \$36 to \$72 a year, must supply his own powder at \$14 a year and his own oil at \$5 a year, to say nothing of the fee to the coal companies' physicians, which is \$6 a year whether the

physician is needed or not. With what the miner has left he must clothe and feed himself and his family, and this at a time when the necessaries of life are unusually high.

Recently the miners, through their union, asked 20 per cent. increase in wages. It was denied them. They are said to have offered to compromise on a five per cent. advance, but the trust declined to treat with them. Now the miners have struck. The coal monopoly is going to do its best to defeat the miners and destroy their union. It wishes to thrust back into their former condition of serfdom the men who ask a living rate of payment for their hard and perilous toil. It is a battle of men against a monster—a sight to bring tears of compassion to the eyes of anyone who considers all the circumstances attending it. These 140,000 workers ask merely a just wage, so that they may make life a little less hard for themselves and those whom they love. Yet they are to be crushed for daring to dispute with this lawless trust, which insists on "running its own business."

The coal monopoly makes one serious mistake. The business which it conducts in violation of God's laws and man's laws becomes the public's business because of its evil nature. It is the duty of the United States Department of Justice to destroy this wicked trust.

EFFECTS OF THE COLONY SYSTEM.

Extracts from an article entitled "The Broken Necklace: A lesson in the Government of Distant Colonies," by Robert T. Hill; published in *The Century Magazine* for May, 1901. "The broken necklace" is Mr. Hill's picturesque term for the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies. We have selected from the article scattered paragraphs which refer to the piteous poverty of the wretched inhabitants of these islands, despite the tropical prodigality of nature, and suggest various causes for it.

Notwithstanding the beauties of nature, the richness of soil, the accessibility to markets, the remarkable historical association, the pleasant impressions of these islands diminish when the traveler steps ashore and comes in contact with the social and economic conditions. . . . The laboring people, who outnumber the proprietor class a thousand to one, at first interest one with their peculiar habits and oddities of dress, but a look into their lives excites sorrow and pity. Wages are abnormally low, work is scarce, and vice, notwithstanding the many churches and schools, peeps out at every corner. Paupers

greet one at every step, and beggary is practiced by all.

At St. Thomas the traveler going southward through the Caribbee islands first sees those ever-present signs of natural decay, the abandoned sugar houses and mills, though nature conceals the old cane fields by rapidly spreading over them a mantle of tropical vegetation. This sight is repeated in every island. . . .

In Montserrat most Negro peasants possess land, and the universal poverty and distress are slightly less. The British in the West Indies claim that Montserrat has survived the sugar desolation and has branched out into new lines of agriculture, particularly the cultivation of limes. But I saw no sign of what Americans call prosperity. The conditions suggest only the "abandoned farms" of New England. The revenue is constantly falling off; public works are advanced and new roads are built, but these only add to the taxation and distress of the people. . . .

Beautiful St. Christopher, once the metropolis of the Leeward islands! Mount Misery is as fair as ever, but monkeys crawl over the battlements of the noble fortifications at its foot, and the jungle is creeping down its summit year by year, slowly reclaiming the fair fields that once waved with cane. Sugar is virtually the only export, and the industry is almost dead. Reduction of labor and want of employment caused great distress among the blacks who were unable to obtain holdings of their own, and in 1896 there were serious riots. More miserable than the monkeys of Mount Misery are these poor jabbering black people, who have to be literally knocked from the steamer's gangway with clubs, so ravenous are they for alms or work from the passing traveler. You step ashore and are waylaid by hundreds of these British subjects of dusky hue, who beg from you outright because you are an American. "Oh, Mr. Buckra, the American is so rich and the Kitefonian is so poor!" There is not one day's labor per week for the willing hands, and travelers need not wonder at the scramble of the black men for cargo or the piteous beggary ashore. These black Kitefonians are making more rapid strides backward than even the other islanders. Already they have an unpleasant notoriety for crime, and yet there are churches,

schools, government and taxes galore. The writer never saw one who could not read or write; but the untilled lands are not theirs. "Our system," complacently remarked our British fellow-traveler, "is for the proprietor, official and professional classes." . . .

In all there are eight distinct European colonial governments over the small group of Lesser Antilles, each of which, with the average area of an American county, means an administrative establishment as large as that of an American state, and in which each official draws a salary from two to five times that paid the average American public servant.

The population and wealth of all the islands are not sufficient to support more than one small and efficient administrative force. The expenses and revenues of Jamaica are exactly the same as those of the state of Texas, which has 70 times the area and five times the population. The salaries of the governors of the four British colonies in the Lesser Antilles, which have an aggregate population about equal to that of Alabama, amount to \$65,000, or as much as that paid to the governors of 17 American states. The present movement for confederation among these colonies confirms the proposition that there are at least three times too many British governors in the Lesser Antilles. . . .

A sad feature of small colonial government is the absolute inability of the colonials to help themselves. "I have no more power to act than you in the control of these islands," said an affable British governor. "My every deed and policy is dictated to me by a clerk in the colonial office in London. Yet the people think, or rather we make them think, they have local self-government. They have legislatures, which pass laws, which I, the representative of a clerk in London, am instructed to veto. It gives the people pleasure to think they are free, and the world gives us the credit of giving them freedom." . . .

Another curse of these colonies is absentee ownership of land. One reason which mother-countries advance for colonial ownership is that colonies offer fields for landed investment of capital. Large areas are thus acquired to be tilled for the profit of a distant owner, leaving only a small acreage available for the numerically larger native population. A plantation which fails to

yield its interest for a series of years goes back to the jungle for want of care.

It has been fully demonstrated that the provisions produced by a few acres in the tropics will support a peasant family, and yet the vast black population of nearly all the islands is forced to lie idle in towns because most of the land, often uncultivated and neglected, is tied up in the estates of foreign holders. The rich lands of one of the largest of the islands are mostly in the hands of three proprietors. The 800 inhabitants of Barbuda are crowded in a village an acre in extent; law prohibits their gathering a piece of wreckage on the shore or catching a fish in the adjacent waters, while the remaining broad acres, owned by a citizen of Edinburgh, lie idle and untilled. Yet this island has been on the market for years, and under any other form of government would have been purchased and distributed for a minimum among the people who would develop it.

Still sadder is the effect of colonial government upon the colonial citizens: they lean unduly upon the government treasury, thereby destroying their initiative and self-reliance. Public works are constructed, not because they are needed, but to distribute money among the idle population. The island revenues are made to yield to the individual at every opportunity. "Here is the greatest curse of this government," remarked a Canadian fellow-traveler as he pointed to an official bulletin-board in the principal club of Port of Spain, on which were posted announcements of pensions granted to various persons for trivial and sundry services.

The native of a colony is also politically the inferior of the citizen of the mother-country, and his opportunities in life are handicapped by this fact. Liberty and self-government, with the right to grow, prosper and derive from the soil its fullest yield, belong to some men; but the colonial people grope in despair, palsied by foreign governmental control, which gathers all they garner. Opportunity is the one grand heritage of republics. The superior caste of foreign official classes in the colonies is an ever-present reminder to the natives of a station to which they cannot attain. . . .

To produce revenue for alien planters the world is scoured for cheaper

labor than that already procurable upon the islands, thereby reducing the standard of living, keeping wages down to the merest pittance, and forcing thousands to idleness. At Trinidad I saw landing a motley crowd of Hindu immigrants, whose sole possessions were the filthy pugress and loin-cloths which they wore. They had been imported under the same contract-labor system as that which in our colonial days brought the low whites to Virginia. I asked a high official of Trinidad why a humane government permitted further addition to the 70,000 Hindus already oversupplying the labor market of the island. He replied that from his residence he could see 500 huts inhabited by idle people who would gladly work for a shilling a day, but for whom there was not an average of one day's work in five. . . . Trinidad has thousands of acres of virgin soil, but held at such price per acre that these people could not acquire it with years of steady labor. . . .

It is the favoritism and power of wealth and title at European courts that permit absentee landlords to hold the titles of idle soil which thousands of willing natives are anxious to cultivate. It is the avariciousness of European monarchies in their warfare for more territory which makes them forget and neglect that which they have. . . .

Since our national government has seen fit to establish for Porto Rico a colonial administration closely resembling that of the adjacent crown colonies, it will find in the history of the latter many valuable lessons which may prevent the repetition of injustice and economic strangulation.

GOD WILL SEND THE BILL TO YOU.

"Ez fer war, I call it murder,
There you have it plain and flat;
I don't want to go no furdur
Than my Testymnt fer that.
God has said so plump and fairly—
It's ez long es it is broad—
An' you've got to git up airly
Ef you want to take in God.

"Tain't your eppylets an' feathers
Make the thing a bit more right;
'Tain't a-follerin' your bell-wethers
Will excuse ye in His sight.
Ef you take a sword an' draw it,
An' go st'ck a feller thru,
Gov'mnt ain't to answer fur it—
God'll send the bill to you."

James Russell Lowell.

Mrs. Odd—Mary, where is the whisk broom?

Mary—Why, mem, we were all out