

SACRED RIGHTS.

An extract from a sermon delivered by Jenkin Lloyd Jones in All Souls church, Chicago, October 12, as published in Unity of October 23.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." This has been, in the estimation of the ages, high poetry; it is now coming to be estimated as cold science. It has been a line from a great hymn of praise; it is becoming an affirmation of sociology, a principle in economics. The Almighty, or Nature, if you prefer, never issued a quit-claim deed of the coal mines or any other of the great fundamental necessities of life to the coal barons of Pennsylvania or to any other set of individuals or corporations. Earth, air and water are the physical essentials of life, as they are the great universal bounties of nature; and the ultimate foundation of any claim to a right to possess or control any part of these by individuals, must rest in the assumption that they can thus be better administered for the public good than they could be by the body politic or collective control. And when any presumptive owner fails to administer these fundamental necessities of life to the advantage of the entire community, the commonwealth, the great original inheritors of the earth and "the fullness thereof," his title becomes clouded. And when he refuses or fails to administer this bounty, and claims the right to deny it to helpless women and children, homes of honest workers, school rooms and public institutions wherein are confined the helpless wards of the public, his claim becomes not only insolent, but criminal. We hear much said in these days about the "sacred rights of property." All rights are sacred. Civilization has largely depended upon the recognition of the rights of the individual to conserve his energies, his morals, his sagacity and his wisdom, in short, to hold property. But there is a more fundamental right, the sacred right to life, and whenever the rights of property stand in the way of this prior right to life, it must stand out of the way. Particularly is this principle true in regard to the ownership of that which man has not created and cannot duplicate, aye, which God Himself, so far as this world is concerned, is not creating any more, for Nature has gone out of the coal-making business; she is planting no more fern forests, and the crust of this old earth has become too stiff to give the

subsidence and elevation necessary to produce coal.

The title to real estate, either legal or moral, as every great jurist and moralist is prompt to recognize, is a short and at best a dubious one. At the farther end of every deed on mine or forest, oil well or prairie, there is darkness, cruelty, wrong; there is the selfishness of grab, the savagery of conquest, the treachery of invasion. These clouded titles are made good only by the intelligent consent of the most conservative government on the score that the present administration is justified by its utility to the state, its service to the whole. But whenever the individual possessor of any wealth forgets his trusteeship, violates the confidence imposed in him, perverts his privileges and uses his power to the hurt of society, he forfeits his title. It is a high and delicate question for the state to decide how far such perversion shall be allowed to go on before it asserts its primal right of "Eminent Domain," reclaims the stolen goods and restores them to the original and fundamental owners—the whole public, the great onward flowing stream of life, the elevation of which is the goal of all the travail of nature and of human nature.

TYPICAL AMERICAN SLANG.

The following choice bit of slangy eloquence, spontaneous and sincere, is credited by the Chicago Chronicle to William Devery, ex-Superintendent of Police, of New York city.

"Some time ago," remarked "Big Bill" Devery recently in discussing the election, "I said that David B. Hill was a political holdout man who wouldn't go into the game unless he could feel the marks on the cards through a pair of boxing gloves. He had the cards marked this time, all right, but one night after he had been smoking political dope and was shaking hands with himself in the white house somebody stole the deck from under his liver pad and changed the marks.

"I ain't playing no searchlights on myself as a prophet, but Hill's finish was as plain to me all through this campaign as the Flatiron building is to a man in front of the Fifth Avenue hotel. He rung the bell at the front door of the morgue the day he passed me along in the convention at Saratoga. After this his address is 'D. B. Hill, Deadhouse, Compartment No. 13; Handle With Care.'

"Ever since he has been in politics Hill has held a red hand, consisting of four diamonds and a heart. The Democrats have thought all along that in Hill they were holding five diamonds. Sometimes they have carried off a bluff with it and sometimes they have stayed out and let the other fellows chip along, but this year they had to show their four-flush when Odell called them and the Republicans won with a pair of nines.

"It's a funny thing," Mr. Devery went on, "how a human refrigerator like Hill has been able to make people think he was a real live one for so many years. Ever shake hands with Hill? No? Ever go into a market on a cold morning and pick up a fish? Yes? Then you've shaken hands with Hill.

"Up there in Saratoga I stood out on the platform and told Dave Hill that I demanded justice from him. I looked right at him when I said it. Did he look at me? It ain't necessary to give the answer. He looked into Tom Grady's ear like a boy looking into a picture machine. He couldn't look anybody in the face.

"When I said you couldn't elect a bald-headed man president I spoke the truth, but I was talking particularly about a bald-headed man like Hill. Whenever you see a man get bald in front first, so his forehead looks like half of a football, it's a bad sign. And when you scramble that up with a pair of eyes that work like the pendulum on a clock there's a combination to run around a corner and hide behind a tree from.

"Of course Hill won't stand pat and admit that he lost. He is doing the old stunt—hollering fire from under the bed. When Bryan was 'it' in the Democratic party Hill got into his cage up in Wolfert's Roost, locked the doors on the inside and the only time people knew he was alive was when they heard him snore.

"This year he thought there was a chance to get busy. He gets his 'I am a Democrat' sign out, puts some axle grease on his peanut cart and goes up and down the State telling people that he sets a better table at his house than Ben Odell sets. I don't think anybody believed him at that. He looks like he lived on cracked ice and olives.

"The picture men will have to revise Dave now. They'll have to put crape on his peanut hat and hang a sign on him reading: 'I am a load for a hearse.'"