

OUR EXTRAORDINARY PROSPERITY.

Chicago Inter Ocean (Rep.), Dec. 25.—The American people as a whole were never so rich and never so prosperous as they are to-day, nor were their wealth and their prosperity ever so widely diffused as now. That some few rich are growing richer is true, but the well to do are growing richer and the poor are growing well to do more generally than ever before. And while the really poor are and always will be with us, there was never such willingness to help them to what they lack as in this nation now.

PREDATORY FORTUNES.

Milwaukee Daily News (Dem.), Dec. 29.—In the making of the great American fortunes, with a few exceptions, the railway has played an important part. It is a history of crime, swindling and wholesale robbery. And in the day of final accounting the means by which these fortunes were piled up will be made to justify the belated righting of the great wrong which their founders perpetrated.

MISCELLANY

IMPERIALISTIC EDINBURGH.

For The Public.

"As I gaed up the Canongate
I heard a lassie sing."—Old Song.

"The poverty and dirt of the bairns in some parts of Edinburgh, says a correspondent of the Times, are inconceivable to anyone who has not seen them."—Edinburgh Evening News, of Aug. 27, 1902.

EDINBURGH, 1872.

Lawnmarket, High street, Canongate,
I trod them when life was young.
I saw but the knights who once rode there
With pennon and banner wide-flung.
The flash and the glitter of armour,
The bit and the bridle that rung.

Black Douglas, grim Ruthven and Leslie,
Regent Moray, Montrose and Argyll,
John Knox—the wise and great-hearted—
Who knew neither fear nor gulle,
Poor Chastelar, Rizzio, Darnley;
Fair queens have a fatal smile!

I caught a blythe glint of gay faces,
As Queen Marie rode down the long
street,

With her ladies and pages behind her,
And her whispers and glances so sweet.
What wonder the bravest were dazzled
And laid their hearts down at her feet?

I heard the long bede-roll of poets;
King James with his "Kingis Quhair,"
The Guildman o' Ballengeich, jovial,
As he sat "in his ain mickle chair,"
Douce Barbour, Sir David Lyndsay,
Gentle Drummond were all with me there.

All the names of the martyrs who suffered
In the wide Grassmarket below;
The artists—the bards who have shrined
them

Forever—wherever men go,
In the islands of far southern oceans,
Or the cold Himalayan snow.

And I thought how this old town had wit-
nessed

In the long historical years,
A procession of Scotland's greatest,
Enshrining their triumphs and tears.

*From an old song:
"Was ye at Holyrood? Saw ye him there?
Saw ye him sittin' in his ain mickle chair?"

And her songs rang out like a paean—
Like a coronach walled in my ears.

EDINBURGH, 1902.

From Holyrood up to the Castle
I paced the old High Street once more,
But gone from my sight were the pageants
And the lords who had ridden of yore.
The Queen and her Maries had vanished,
The dream of fair women was o'er.

For my heart had been taught by life's
lessons,

And—shaped in its clamorous forge—
It had learned to look on the present
In the pages of Henry George,
And the student of "Social Problems"
Saw only God's image "writ large."

In the faces of helpless bairnies
All unknowing of home-like joys,
With the cold, hard plainstones for play-
ground

And the mud of the gutter for toys.
O, the poor, bare feet of the girls!
The rags and oaths of the boys!

O, the haggard, toll-worn mother,
With the poor household washing to dry
On two sticks from a wee, old window,
In a single room six stories high.
Greater trophies than banners of "Empire"
Those duds that darken the sky.

Far greater than royalist monarch
That struggling woman, I ween,
Ever scrubbing, cooking, washing,
Keeping guldman and bairnies clean.
Christ counts that tolling mother
Far grander than crowned queen.

I looked and lingered, and sickened
At each fetid waft of smell,
From the underground shops in the base-
ment,

Deep—dark as a dungeon-cell.
The buyers so poverty-stricken—
So unwholesome the goods to sell.

Then I heard the skirl of the bagpipes,
As the Seaforths marched down the long
hill.

Poor tools of our "Empire-builders,"
To hunt, burn, slay at their will.
Ah, Cain is killing his brother!
And Jacob is robbing still!

Soon the pipes sounded faint in the dis-
tance,

The kilts wagged far down the brae,
And my heart rose in sorrowful anger
At my country's folly to-day.

"O curse ye Imperialism,
Curse it deeply," I heard it say.

O women of dear old Scotland!
I call you to think and say,
If thousands of Scottish children
Shall in closes and wynds decay.
If wrong shall triumph for ever,
And the helpless be trod in the clay.

O, my sisters beyond the Atlantic!
Ye too have your part to play.
Ye too have your children's Ghetos—
Slums with overwrought mothers to-day.
Think—the hopeless grind of the millions
Must cease—would women but say:
"All monopolies, wars, shall perish."
O, hasten that great, glad day!

JANET CAMPBELL.
Dunbartonshire, Scotland.

"What is a synonym?" asked a teach-
er. "Please, sir," said a lad, "it's a
word you can use in place of another
if you don't know how to spell it."—
Sacred Heart Review.

THE STRUGGLES FOR FREEDOM
AND REFORM IN THE NINE-
TEENTH CENTURY.

An extract from the Baccalaureate ad-
dress delivered at the University of
Georgia, June 18, 1902, by Edward M. Shep-
ard, of New York.

Was all this wisely and best done,
done at the best time and when the
world was truly ready? Surely no
one can say that. If here and there
the harmony were false, neverthe-
less the one long dominant note was
true. Neither historian nor philoso-
pher nor economist, after making
every allowance for blunders and
crimes and shames and the mistakes
of fanaticism or an unripe wisdom,
will fail to say that throughout it
all the one effective triumphant spir-
it was that of elementary democracy.
Te Deums of popular rejoicing in
that century were not long sung over
conquests or more victory. Con-
science in time played its part. The
anniversaries which it celebrated
and which the world still remembers
to celebrate were those of Indepen-
dence, Freedom, Peace. Its incon-
sistent glories were short lived; its
other wreaths of laurels are in dust.
Can you recall one recurring day of
joy or thanksgiving which the cen-
tury has bequeathed us which is sa-
cred to the cause of wealth or pow-
er? Not one. But are we, the heirs
of all the wealth and power begotten
of this piercing and ruling spirit of
liberty, to give red letters in the
calendar of our country to days
commemorative of conquest or of
the triumph of wealth or physical
power?

QUEEN AND LANDLORD.

In Sir Edward Russell's book, "That
Reminds Me," occurs the following:

"On one occasion her majesty was
speaking to a gentleman of high situ-
ation, when she said: 'I don't like the
—'s,' (referring to a landed family).
'Why, ma'am?' 'Oh, because they are
very bad to their tenants, and many
of their cottages are in a horrid state;
and if anything else is done by any
tenants, at their own expense, to im-
prove their condition, the first thing
the —'s do is to raise the rent upon
them.' It may well be supposed that at
this the gentleman who was honored
with this conversation rather smiled.
He said: 'Well, I am only glad, ma'am,
that you sympathize with the afflic-
tions of tenants.' Whereupon the
queen said: 'Oh, I am a tenant my-
self. I hold —'s, (naming a place of
her majesty's), from Mr. —, of —,
and I have made many improvements.

and every time I have made an improvement my rent has been raised.'

"Then the gentleman her majesty was talking to laughed outright, and the queen's own eyes began to twinkle as he said: 'Well, ma'am, let me say that this that you have now complained of underlies and is the basis and secret of the whole Irish question, and the whole crofter question. It is rather amusing to find your majesty suffering from a grievance as a crofter.'

"Then her majesty laughed very much. 'I can only say,' he added—with something better than courtliness—'I can only say how good it is to find you sharing in the afflictions of the poorest of your subjects.'—London Daily Chronicle.

THE SYMBOL IN OUR MIDST.

It is sufficiently discreditable that there should have been, as there unquestionably has been, a reaction against the festivities of Christmas, a disposition to pooh-pooh them and to tire of them. But it is even more discreditable that this tendency should have been chiefly remarkable among that very class, the hyper-cultivated and aesthetic class, which professes to desire above all things the beautifying of human life by symbol and ritual and the revival of legend. What is the use of their yearning after flowery pageantries and old-world dances when they have a solid ancient tradition still plying a roaring trade in the streets in the month of December, and they think it vulgar? What is the use of their gathering fairy tales, like gold, from Scandinavia and the Ganges when they are in the heart of a fairy-tale, and to them it only smells of sausages? What is the use of Mr. George Moore digging in Irish cairns for lost gods if he does not hang up his stocking and cheer when the pudding is set alight. Of course I do not know that he does not. I hope, with trembling, that he does. But clearly it is an example of the very worst kind of worship of mere accidental remoteness that aesthetic culture does not realize the beauty and the glory of Christmas. It is the best distinction, perhaps, between the false mysticism and the true that the false has to travel far to find its mysteries. In one case the secret of all is hidden in the Temple of Isis; in the other it is hidden also in a Primitive Methodist chapel. In one case a spiritual wind blows in the deserts of Egypt and on the moun-

tains of immemorial India. In the other the wind bloweth where it listeth, and on a night not far distant from this day may suddenly swing open all our doors and strike our bells into madness.—London Speaker, of December 13.

TWO MESSAGES TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

Most of us fail to read the annual messages of our presidents, preferring to let our favorite journalist read and summarize them for us. If skilled in his calling, he will express, concerning them, views so nicely attuned to our prejudices that we readily adopt them for our own, and state them thereafter with oracular wisdom. This is rather a reprehensible practice in a democracy of which every citizen is supposed to be an equal partner in the government, who should at least read for himself the annual report of the general manager, but since the presidential message has come to be merely the vehicle for a peculiarly cheap sort of political buncombe, delivered at interminable length, citizens may be excused from reading it from any sense of duty. It is not the duty of a citizen to read the fulminations of the chairman of a party national committee.

Intelligent people stop reading editorials when they find the editor of their daily newspaper ascribing better crops in Kansas to the happy results of the election of a Republican Congressman in Texas, or, if he be of opposing political faith, charging the misery of the victims of Chicago sweat-shops to the robber tariff; but not all people are intelligent, and so the editorial pages of partisan newspapers, and the messages of partisan presidents find some readers, and even admirers. President Roosevelt's latest message was the archetype of the party document as sent forth from the white house, sounding no note of revolt against the dominant powers in the party, with whom at one time it appeared the "strenuous" president would lock horns on reciprocity with Cuba, on trust regulation, and on the rather indefinite but still promising programme of "shackling cunning." The note of personal independence is stilled. The broncho buster is busted.

A 13-year-old boy during the same week issued a far more vital, more impressive, more compelling message to the American people. A stunted little fellow, he is leading a life more

strenuous than anybody who shoots for sport, writes for diversion and holds high office purely as a patriotic duty ever dreamed of. This lad, his father killed by one of those "accidents" which are about as accidental in coal mines as snow is in a Dakota winter, works in a breaker at Scranton. Winter and summer he is at his post at seven in the morning, and toils his ten hours daily. Before him all day slides and rumbles along a stream of coal and worthless rock. His eye must be sharp to see and his fingers quick to grasp and throw out the slate and other impurities, for a foreman is watching him and his fellows, and the discipline of the breakers is not merciful. If you have a 13-year-old boy about the house, look at his hands and think what the swift thrusting, for ten hours daily, of those fingers into a stream of jagged rocks, half the year covered with snow and ice, would mean. Look into his bright eyes and fancy them peering all day through a mist of coal dust that after an hour or two makes his face like a black-amoos—and what it does to his lungs the doctors in the anthracite region tell with more realism than is needed here. Look at his chest and shoulders, which it is your joy to see expand and develop to manly proportions, and try to fancy what shape they would assume if he sat bent far over at the waist, reaching eagerly forward for ten hours daily. If your imagination is vivid and will not recoil from a picture of wretched and tortured boyhood, you may conjure up the figure of a breaker-boy at an anthracite mine.

One of these boys was called before the distinguished commission which is trying to find the line of exact justice between the claims of the United Mine Workers and those of the operators of anthracite mines. The line is not there, of course. It is so far beyond the claims of the miners, so far beyond anything that they in their poverty and simplicity ever dreamed of, that it cannot be brought—to use the lawyers' phrase—within the purview of this commission. But in the course of proving that the miners' demands come nearer justice than the conditions which the operators would maintain, the lawyers called this boy to the stand.

Yes; he knew the nature of an oath, he said. God would kill him if he lied there. He worked in the breakers. It was hard work. His fingers often hurt and his back ached. Sometimes the foreman pulled his ears if he sat up to