

so. This increase in 1906 over 1905 was \$400,000,000, and in 1905 over 1904, it was \$480,000,000. Thus the development of New York city, by all its inhabitants, finds expression in an enormous advancing value of the natural site of the city; and those few mortals who happen to "own" that site are thereby enabled to exact tribute from the toil and sweat of all the rest. What is true in this respect of New York is equally true, though in less spectacular figures, of every other city and even of every village. The owners of the sites levy unearned tribute upon the workers. How long will men and women professing to have a moral sense, continue to defend or blink at this manifest iniquity?

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#### **Mrs. Sage's Endowment.**

In providing the financial foundation of \$10,000,000 for an institution for "the improvement of social and living conditions in the United States" the widow of the late Russell Sage discloses a more beneficent and rational purpose than is usual in endowments of this character. She says, in explaining her object, that not only will the establishment and maintenance of charitable agencies come within the scope of the institution, but that it contemplates the investigation and study of "the causes of adverse social conditions." Few results of real value may probably be expected from these investigations. For the persons likely to manage and direct them are likely to concern themselves quite exclusively with protecting the beneficiaries of "adverse social conditions" in the continued enjoyment of the profits thereof. Consequently, suggestions of milk-and-water remedies for social wrongs are the best that can, at first, be expected from the Sage institutions. But the fact that Mrs. Sage does in her endowment throw the door wide open for thorough work, encourages the hope that in time profound investigations will be made and radical remedies proposed.

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#### **The Negro Vote.**

It has taken our Negro fellow citizens a long time to realize that the Republican party has slipped its old democratic moorings and is drifting in the muddy waters of plutocracy. But they are beginning at last to see. The New York Age, one of the oldest and strongest journals of the race, announces its discovery in plain speech. "The politicians we have known and with whom we have been in active sympathy," says the Age, "with here and there a discordant note, for the past quarter of a century, with the policies that

they have stood for in party management and in the conduct of the government, have passed out of active control of Republican politics, in the State and the nation." Verily, this is a truth that ought to be universally understood. The Republican party has ceased to be the American democracy of the '50's and '60's and '70's. It has become a mere political machine for the uses of great corporate interests.

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An appreciation of this is expressed by the Age when it continues: "New issues, of an entirely different character from those we have been used to consider as the basis of party allegiance, have given place to other issues, upon which each man in his place will be called upon to decide as to what he considers best for himself and for the Republic, and in this decision determine, as a matter of course, what his political affiliations in the future will be." As to what the Negro citizens shall do in these circumstances, to which they are but just awaking, the Age offers no advice as yet. But it is sanely certain that "they cannot do in the future as they have done in the past without wrecking their citizenship." There ought not, however, to be any great difficulty in deciding. In many cities and in some States in the North, Negro voters hold the balance of power in politics; and if they would use it for the protection of the civil and political rights of their race they would soon make it effective. It would be futile to form a race party. It would be folly to go bodily from the Republican into the Democratic party. But if they should give their support to one party or another as it shows a disposition to be genuinely democratic, regardless of race, in its principles and policies, they would find the support of their race eagerly sought for by both parties.

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### **CLEAR THE WAY FOR HUMAN PROGRESS!**

It is a self-evident proposition, one which no man will dare to challenge, that nothing—absolutely nothing—should be permitted to stand in the way of human progress. And yet, when you come to details, to the particular things that bar the progress of society, a perfect bedlam of voices arises in defense of them.

But nothing shall stand in the way of human progress!

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The Past was the possession of our fathers, the

Present is ours, and the Future will be theirs who inhabit it.

To assume the right to bind the next generation by the enactments of the present is not only to discount the intelligence of the future; it is also to attempt to place an impediment in the way of progress.

The criterion of truth is the intelligence of To-day. The Present is the judge of all the Past. To-morrow will sit in judgment upon To-day. Either this, or "Human Progress" is an empty phrase. How can progress take place except by rejection of the things that be, for something better?

One of the great obstacles to social progress is the deliberate endeavor of men to bind the Future by the sanctions of the Present. But it is obvious that such endeavor would be ridiculed out of countenance by a society that comprehended the conditions necessary to human progress; for how can the Future progress from the sanctions of the Present without discarding them?

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Nothing but Truth is worthy of reverence. In the realm of custom, age is, *prima facie*, a mark of credit. But centuries of unbroken usage—custom—all run back, down-grade, to inexperience and comparative ignorance. To-day is the ripe fruit of all the past. Ours is the most enlightened day that yet has been. Our knowledge equals the recorded knowledge of the ages, plus the added knowledge derived from our own experience.

Human law is, at best, only an attempt to interpret the divine law of nature. At worst (and most human laws are of this class) it is a studied attempt to subvert the divine law. The society of to-day has the right to challenge the validity of any human enactment whatsoever, and to repeal such as do not meet with its approval.

Either that, or the idea of human progress is a delusion—for we cannot progress from a thing without leaving it behind.

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There can be no exception to this rule.

Society has in the past asserted its right to unmake kings and kingdoms. English society is at this moment preparing to unmake a lot of lords. Presently that same English society will unmake the laws which have for ages past secured the land of England to those lords. For the laws which secure the land, with its increasing value, to a limited number of individuals are the chief obstacle to human progress.

There is one certain stupendous Fact, which looms prodigiously above all other facts of human knowledge in the realm of sociology, and that overshadowing Fact is—that the earth is the equal and absolutely unalienable heritage of all men.

To deprive the humblest man, even the penniless beggar in the street, of his equal share in the earth is robbery, and none the less so because it is done under the sanction of law, and of ages of custom.

The earth belongs to all men equally. It has been confiscated by individuals, through the conspiracy of kings, lords and law-makers. But society is about to brush aside this obstacle to social progress.

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Is it not true that most human laws are studied attempts to subvert natural law—justice?

Look upon the State and national legislatures at this moment. All the forces of society are taxed to their utmost to drive the lawmakers into enacting an honest law, purely and effectively in the interest of the public. And even when the legislature does apparently yield, it is generally learned, later, that some obscure "joker," or ambiguous phrase, word, or mark of punctuation, cheats the public out of its hopes.

Take, for instance, the Illinois legislature at this time (the first of March). Not a thing has been done so far this session. Why? Because the lawmakers do not intend to pass an honest law if they can help it. As all experience teaches, they intend to delay until the last moment, and then ignore, or pass, measures in the hurry and tumult of the closing days of the session, when they will go back to their constituents with the old threadbare plea in extenuation that under the circumstances mistakes were unavoidable.

Meantime, hardly a law has been enacted purely in the public interest, but scores in the interest of special privilege—subversive of social justice.

The more vicious the law, the more difficult it is to repeal it. The kind of men who dominate legislation would look upon the repeal of a just law merely as the undoing of that which they had not been able to prevent; but the repeal of a bad law would be a direct personal affront to them.

Of course, many of our legislators are honest men; some of them are both honest and able; but what avails the spotless honor and the matchless abilities of, for instance, a Senator Hoar, when the majority of the Senate is bent upon the exploitation of the Philippines? Or when the great

majority of Congress has closed the bargain for the betrayal of their country into the hands of the financiers, what avails the integrity of a Thad Stevens, coupled with the peerless virtues of a Lincoln?

In the latter case the traitorous bargain was carried out to the letter, and, in spite of all the powers of the American Republic, its people were mercilessly plundered throughout a generation of time, to enrich the men who shaped the financial legislation of America during the Civil War. In the former case, the wheels of American commerce rolled on, crushing the life out of the Filipino Republic, and gathering tribute from her people to enrich the men whose influence successfully defied the patriotic tears and holy entreaties of that venerable Nestor of American statesmanship, George F. Hoar.

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Enough! We have learned the lesson at last, that irresponsible legislatures will not enact good laws nor repeal bad ones. It is this conviction on the part of the American people that has driven them to demand the Initiative and Referendum—the power to enact laws or to repeal them when the legislature fails to respond to the public's demands; or betrays its cause in legislation.

When the people have resumed their sovereignty, nothing—absolutely nothing—shall stand in the way of human progress!

EDWARD HOWELL PUTNAM.

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

### THE NEW ZEALAND OF THE NORTH

(See page 1013.)

Sejerskov v. Hjallesø, Denmark, February 22.—I am glad to say that our work for free trade and common land in Denmark, begun twenty years ago, is now showing results. We have now a fairly strong movement on foot for the taxation of land values, and our Henry George League has some two thousand members and several able officers. We have translated Henry George's chief works, and I think I may safely say that in no other European country are the name and ideas of Henry George better known, although of course "the heavy end of the beam has not been lifted yet," nor is it likely to be in our time.

In many ways we may be said to be ahead of you, in spite of our aristocratic-plutocratic Upper House, and many other drawbacks—too long a list to enumerate.

Compared with America "protection" is rather moderate with us, and what is more—the bulk of the populace in town, and especially in the country, have proved immune to all infections with protectionistic germs. Denmark is one of the very few European

countries where the only change in fiscal policy that could be thought of is towards freer trade.

Moreover, all waterworks, gas-plants and the like are communal property with us, and so are the railways (with similar or even more favorable results than in Sweden, results described lately in *The Public*). So too are telegraphs, telephones, etc.; and only the street railways in the metropolis are not yet taken over by the community (but undoubtedly that will be done soon, without any opposition worth mentioning).

Besides this, co-operation on a strictly democratic base puts every small farmer in a position as favorable with regard to purchases and sales of products, as the biggest. (More than 90 per cent. of our butter manufactories are co-operative, and the majority of our bacon factories as well.) But, of course, all these good things augment the value of our land, and consequently the indebtedness of the producers. So land value taxation is with us the one thing needed.

He who has enlisted in the ranks of the workers for freedom and right often must feel depressed in mind when seeing how ineffective are our arguments, how infinitesimal the effect of our best-aimed shafts. Still, broadly speaking, I think we could here in Denmark, in spite of all our exasperating slowness and the tenacity of our hoary vested wrongs, with some chance of success aspire to become "the New Zealand of the North."

JAKOB E. LANGE.

## NEWS NARRATIVE

To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

Week ending Wednesday, March 13, 1907.

### Ernest Howard Crosby Memorial Meeting.

Cooper Union hall in the city of New York was crowded to the doors on the evening of the 7th, with men and women who went there to give expression to their affection for the memory of Ernest Crosby (p. 1139). The committee of arrangements included representatives of the following organizations: Social Reform Club, People's Institute, Manhattan Single Tax Club, Anti-Imperialist League, Whitman Fellowship, Filipino Progress Association, East Side Civic Club, Brooklyn Central Labor Union, Central Federated Labor Union of New York, Nurses' Settlement, Outdoor Recreation League, Society for Italian Immigrants, Vegetarian Society, Emerson Club, Dr. McGlynn Memorial Association, Brotherhood of the Kingdom, University Settlement, Women's Henry George League, and Manhattan Branch Dickens Fellowship. Lawson Purdy acted as chairman. The music consisted of singing by the choir of St. Thomas's Church. Letters were read from many prominent men who were unable to be present, among them Count Leo Tolstoy, W. J. Bryan,