

terests in which are involved a considerable degree of wealth, leisure and influence, are quite clearly expounded by accepted authorities. These are the adjustments of competitive trading. The textbooks declare, and most well-informed people understand, that with trade set free from artificial restrictions, legal as well as illegal, its profits would be automatically fixed by competition at a point yielding merely a fair return for the labor employed therein.

There remains to be patiently and persistently demonstrated the equally vital truth that with production set free from artificial restrictions, mainly legal, competition would with like certainty maintain wages in all classes of labor, mental, moral, manual and mixed, at a rate approximately a just return for the actual contribution, in goods or other satisfactions, which each laborer makes to the aggregate of current production.



With the social pyramid thus righted up, its broad base of human units firmly established on the earth—their nourishing mother—the eternal forces that govern the activities of men would operate but to the perpetuation of its serene and blest security.

ELIZABETH P. ROUNSEVELL.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

THE ROOSEVELT SEIZURE.

Duluth.

Rampant inconsistency is the humor of this Roosevelt seizure. Because they want tariff reduction, the multitude is clamoring for Roosevelt, who never bent a finger for tariff reduction. Because they want progressive policies, thousands are shouting for Roosevelt, who jumped to the head of the procession by stepping on the face of the man who gave form to progressive tendencies. Because they demand that the people shall rule, State after State is turning to Roosevelt the unconditioned and the absolute, who but four years ago had only a guffaw for the great Commoner's appeal, Shall the people rule?

In which rampant inconsistency, the multitude is showing itself superbly consistent. La Follette, who led the forlorn hope, does not represent the people. Roosevelt, who was dandling Aldrich and Cannon when that standard was raised, represents the multitude exactly. Taft, who blindly prosecutes the trusts to an inconsequential finish, does not represent the people. Roosevelt, who rails against bad trusts but who would not hurt business, is their proper spokesman. Bryan, a majestic voice crying in the wilderness, does not represent the populace nearly so well as Roosevelt bawling from the house-tops.

The people are disgusted with that which is rep-

resented in politics by Lorimer and Penrose and Smoot. Nobody is assailing that crew quite so vociferously as Roosevelt. Not La Follette, who advocates physical valuation of railroads and certain other measures. Not Bryan, who declared himself upon the subject of train robbers some eight years ago and has since then other matters to attend to. Both of them are able men but neither has Roosevelt's genius for seizing the mood of the moment—being seized by it. Men of their type would drive out darkness by letting in sunlight. It may be good philosophy but Roosevelt's is the more acute psychology. He contrasts black and white. Sunlight does not contrast darkness but conflicts with it. Nevertheless black contra-suggests white and not sunshine. And in certain phases of vision more is to be accomplished by pointing to black than by proposing more light. In cleaving to Roosevelt the multitude is strictly logical.

The Minnesota Republican convention is an exact illustration of the seizure and its logic. Roosevelt as usual carried the day, La Follette had a handful, Taft was nowhere. The Roosevelt platform consisted of the plank, We want Roosevelt, first, last and all the time. The La Follette minority, obtaining representation on the resolutions committee, proposed several planks, of which the majority accepted one for preferential primaries and another for a corrupt practices act, but rejected that for the referendum and recall and that other for physical valuation of railroads. Of the rejected planks one is fundamentally democratic, the other tends to constructive legislation.

That is logical and consistent. The people have not reached conclusions on fundamental democracy except where campaigns of education have been carried on for years, as in Oregon. They have not agreed upon a constructive policy except where a campaign has been carried on for years, as in Wisconsin.

The multitudes who are pressing to Roosevelt's standards are not ready to assemble about a program; they rally to an outcry.

Programs presuppose patience. The Roosevelt seizure is the incarnation of impatience.

J. S. P.



THE OLD HEBREW JUSTICE.

St. Louis.

Even with most sincere efforts to reach the high plane of true justice, and, as far as possible, to aid in applying the ideal in practice, we often find the best intentions of worthy moralists beset by errors and unconscious harmful slips.

Is it because we are too prone to feel secure as to the unassailability of our judgments on which we base our further reasoning? This may be the case, though we be aware that inaccuracies must invalidate our argument.

The rate of progress in the constant changing of social systems must needs be slow, so slow that most of the stages of the gradual evolution towards better things are unheeded and, therefore, remain unknown. It is then easily possible that much that is actually given to our view is subject to misconception and misinterpretation. It is imperatively

demanding that, when periods of time long past are under consideration, the sense or quality of historical perspective be brought to bear upon the records to enable us to even partially understand things and events that appear fore-shortened in the halls of time.

Patience, not impulsiveness, sympathetic searching for truth and not bitterness over present wrongs, accuracy and not snap judgments are also needed.

We have had innumerable instances, and have them still, in the using of biblical statements as evidence favorable or otherwise, when the real meanings are torn or twisted to suit the argument of the moment. Every one is acquainted with this custom. Though the Bible is still published almost daily, yet it is no modern work, and should be carefully read as ancient literature, with all the safeguards that critical analysis can provide to better understand it. We have thereby, at least, a means of reaching more satisfactory conclusions regarding probable significances. For instance, the old Mosaic law so often quoted, "Eye for eye and tooth for tooth," is subjected to different interpretations, most of the time quite wrong. In a recent issue of the Public (May 17, page 461), an editorial contains this comment: "Queer mixed ideas those old Hebrews had. They were intensely, savagely religious," etc.

It is with the object of showing the opposite view concerning this law to be true, that it contains the element of humaneness and is the expression of a spirit far from savage, that this is written.

Though this law is hoary with its age of 2,500 years, yet in our present time, in our own wonderful land, we can show in certain sections traces of survival of barbarous feud customs, for the upholders of which this law if invoked and enforced would prove to be a great civilizing factor as well as a boon. To more fully appreciate this point, permit me to quote from the Encyclopedia Britannica (Article "Vendetta"):

The term applied to the custom of the family feud, by which the nearest kinsman of a murdered man was obliged to take up the quarrel and avenge his death. From being an obligation of the nearest, it grew to be an obligation on all the relatives, involving families in bitter private wars among themselves. It is a development of that stage in civilization common to all primitive communities, where the injury done was held to be more than personal, a wrong done to the whole gens. . . . The custom still survives in Corsica in its complete form, and partially in Sardinia, Sicily, Montenegro, Afghanistan, among the Mainotes of Greece, the Albanians, Druses and Bedouins.

When we remember that the last named were always near neighbors of the ancient Hebrews we find that instead of following the custom of their days, of continuing the avenging of one death by the successive deaths of his avenger and all retaliative avengers until one clan or the other was wiped out of existence—the old law of "one life for one life" meets at least with modern civilization's idea of fair and even justice.

We might go further and say that this "savagely religious" people antedated by many centuries the modern world's ideas of ordinary justice. We have but to call to mind that it was but in comparatively recent times the habit in England to punish highway robbery with hanging and financial insolvency by imprisonment of the debtor.

Now let us turn to the full text of the old code and read: "Thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." The nicety of the gradation here indicates the predominance of the spirit of fairness and justice.

What of the conditions regarding justice today? How cheaply human life is rated by our jurisprudence and court practice is the cause of shame and agony to all who desire the betterment of our affairs. How the "wealthy malefactor" escapes punishment and the poor alleged or real criminal is made to suffer the law's penalty, is a thread-worn story. Our railroad directors, our trust-forming manufacturers, our mine operators, who are morally responsible for the safety of their employes, evade their responsibilities with impunity. It is therefore but fair to revert again to the ancient spirit, so widely misunderstood, so as to note the high plane of the humane reached by it.

Dr. Felix Adler once remarked:

The idea of Hebrew justice is constantly exemplifying itself by justice towards the fatherless, and the widow, and the orphan, and the poor. Justice is so closely allied with mercy that the Hebrew word which means righteousness has come to mean charity. Justice and mercy are blended together.

Did not Henry George show us that the first historical case of non-recognition of vested rights in land is to be found in the old Mosaic code? Are the lofty individual and social ideals of an Isaiah yet comprehended by the world? If the cock-sure critic of the Old Testament lacks this sense of historical perspective before alluded to, what may he not find when he literally interprets the New? How will he defend the author of the "Law of Love" when he says: "Think not that I came to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter against the mother," etc.

Yet long, long before his day there was the preaching of Isaiah, that teaches the ideal so far from realization in our own late times: "Go, wash ye; make ye clean; put away evil from your hands. Cease to do evil; learn to do good."

I. L. SCHOEN.

NEWS NARRATIVE

The figures in brackets at the ends of paragraphs refer to volumes and pages of *The Public* for earlier information on the same subject.

Week ending Monday, May 27, 1912.

Presidential Politics.

Of the 42 district delegates from Ohio to the Republican national convention, 32 are reported to be for Roosevelt and 10 for Taft. Six delegates at large are to be chosen at the State convention on the 3d. Since the Ohio primaries the Taft-Roosevelt fighting has centered in New Jersey. [See current volume, page 488.]