

Socialist methods may be best understood on all hands from reading chapters xviii and xix of Henry George's "Social Problems," and chapter xxviii of his "Protection or Free Trade."



The Last Argument in a Bad Cause.

When bad eggs are used for arguments in any cause it is a sign not only that the cause is as bad as the eggs but also that those who thus defend it know how bad it is. From which it may be judged how poorly the land monopolists of Missouri feel that they are making out in their efforts to convince farmers that it would hurt them to have their improvements and personal property go free of taxes. The place was a school house near Cedar Gap, Missouri. The time, August 24, 1912. The speakers for the Missouri tax amendments whose oral arguments brought the bad-egg reply, were John Z. White of Chicago, and Judge Pittman and R. Gratz Brown of Memphis. But the egg-throwers were not farmers. They were hoodlums from a neighboring town. And they "took to their heels" as soon as they had done the job in egg-oratory for which they had apparently been hired by land monopoly interests.



Labor Cost.

One of the large facts proved before the Stanley committee of Congress in its investigation of the Steel trust, cannot be too strongly or too often emphasized. The committee's report puts it in these words: "A most important economic fact brought out and too often overlooked is that the true measure of a man's work is the tonnage produced per man per day, and not the mere amount of wage paid. The true economic unit is the tonnage produced per man, and not the wage paid per man." This is essentially true of every other industry, as well as steel production. The number of bricks laid, the yards of cloth woven, the pairs of shoes turned out, etc., etc., and the wages per unit (quality of work considered, of course), determine the cost of labor. For that purpose the statistics of *time wages* are not at all significant. Yet Protection statistics of labor cost are based upon time wages and not upon wages of production. When statistics of wages of production, in contradistinction to time wages, are considered, it will be found that in all industries appropriate to our natural conditions, *American wages are the lowest wages.*



And American wages, when subjected to that

test, fall with increased productive power. An illustration in connection with the steel industry is given in the Stanley report—"Report No. 1127, 62nd Congress, 2nd session, House of Representatives,"—at pages 126 and 127. The labor cost of producing pig-iron in Pennsylvania fell from \$1.25 a ton in 1902, to 82 cents a ton in 1909. Yet the realized value of the pig-iron output was \$15.64 a ton in 1902, whereas it was \$17.44 in 1909. In other words, wage-workers in 1902 got \$1.25 for producing only \$15.64 worth of pig-iron, and in 1909 only 82 cents for producing \$17.44 worth. In 1909 they produced \$1.80 more in pig-iron value than in 1902, and for 43 cents less in wages. For every additional dollar's worth of product which they turned out, their wages fell a quarter of a dollar.



THE THRESHING FLOORS OF ETERNITY.

All of the great philosophies of life conceive of Time as only an eddy in the currents of eternities; we are living in and working in That which Is—forever and forever.

All of the greater prophets and seers love the symbol of the Threshing Floor, where the wheat and the chaff are separated. It remains in literature, as the sword and a thousand other things remain, because it eternally sets forth the truth behind the fact, the hope beyond the event.



The reason why history must ever be written over, and told in the light of new comprehension, is because of the dust and the noise of the Threshing Floors of eternity. After awhile the wheat is swept together, the chaff is winnowed and cast out; millions of great reputations perish in an hour; men recognize another Liberator, and for a moment there is a silence on earth and in the heavens. Then is it understood that, as in the shaving of Shagpat, the Destinies have at last shaped The Event.

Once the hidden, the ill-read issue was human slavery, and for some seventy years every man and woman in America was being sifted to the uttermost though they knew it not, on that mighty Threshing Floor. When the dust cleared, we saw Lincoln and Garrison and Whittier, and a little group who had stood fast, had kept the faith, had worshipped the Truth behind the Veil.

On a greater Threshing Floor, under wider skies, all the children of men, far and near, are being hammered even now; and when the dust

clears, though that may be generations hence, history will have to be re-written, for it will then be plain that one of the all-including Events has culminated at last. Then the historian will say: "As once the unconscious test of the life and value of each individual was his or her real attitude towards human slavery, so now (as at last we can perceive) the unconscious test these hundred years has been, *ultimate democracy*—in other words, one's real attitude of mind towards all natural resources and all other people.



Then, once more, in an obscure corner of the Threshing Floors of eternity some one will ask a question, will utter a protest against ancient wrong; and a little dust will rise, and earth will begin to tremble with its new-found problem, and before the ink is dry on the last page of the re-written histories, they will have become monuments of error, as another dawn begins to broaden over the world.

But now, in 1912, the dust and noise of the uncleaned Threshing Floors are everywhere, day and night; and each one of us, from hobo to billionaire, from jail-bird to emperor, must be flailed, sifted, winnowed.

CHARLES HOWARD SHINN.



DIRECT LEGISLATION.

Direct legislation embraces three main processes known as the Initiative, Referendum and Recall. The Initiative is the proposal of a law by the people, the Referendum is the submission of a law to the people, the Recall makes it possible for the voters to oust public officers who prove recreant to duty.



There is a confused impression in the minds of many that the choosing of rulers is the substance of freedom and self-government: that a people who elect their lawmakers are really making the laws. It is this wrong impression which breeds that spirit of disinterest which is manifest in marking the ballot. We very often hear voters say that it makes little difference to the great majority how the ballot is marked, that one set of office-seekers will turn out as bad as another. In other words, that there is no choice between the candidates.

The exercise of the right of suffrage does not constitute self-government. The selection of a Governor is not governing, any more than the selection of a captain is commanding, or the choice

of an organist or pianist is playing. The choice of a legislature is not self-government any more than the selection of a jailor or the choice of a jail is freedom. An apprentice may be allowed to choose the master to whom he is to be bound for years, and a lunatic or minor who is deemed incapable of governing his own affairs may, nevertheless, have the privilege of selecting the guardian who is to govern him. A people may elect their rulers and yet live under an absolute despotism.

This was true in old Rome when the king was elected by the whole body of citizens. It is true now of the Western Fulahs in Africa and the Kamtsadales in Asia, who elect their chiefs, but after election must obey the head man's orders. It is true in many of the cities of America, where the people go to the polls year after year in the fond delusion that they have a voice in the administration of public affairs, whereas in reality a ring of rascals holds the city in its grasp. Whichever nominee the citizens may vote for, the ring will rule the same as before; enacting its private purposes into law, pouring the public moneys into its purse, filling appointments with its creatures to perpetuate its power, and controlling the city for its plunder, regardless of the interests or the wishes of the people.

This is true in the nation and the States as well as in the cities. The rule of a Congress or legislature that does the will of a railroad or syndicate of gamblers in opposition to public opinion and the good of the commonwealth, is a despotism as truly as ever the rule of a Tarquin or a Caesar was. Napoleon himself, the arch-despot of modern times, was elected to his imperial power.



Direct Legislation is not so dangerous as present-day political bosses would have us believe. There is method in their madness. What is proposed is merely to get back to pure democratic government, that is, so far as it may be deemed practicable. Back to the town-meeting principle of government, where every man has a personal interest in shaping the politics of his city, State and Nation. What is wanted is a *popular* government as against the present *delegated* government, which has proved unsatisfactory.

Senator Bourne of Oregon well puts it when he says, "The Initiative and Referendum is the keystone of the arch of popular government, for by means of this the people may accomplish such other reforms as they desire. The Initiative develops the electorate because it encourages study of principles and policies of government, and affords the originator of new ideas in government an op-