

common, simple word. But they will end by giving it up. A generation ago, perhaps ten years ago, a definition would have come easier. Probably it would have taken some such form as this: A man earns what he can get without breaking the law. But this conception is no longer satisfactory. We are beginning to see that this question of earning has its roots deep in the soil of our social life.

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Excellent, and bravo! Every word has the ring of pure gold on a marble slab. But the conclusion we reproduce below, what does that mean? After quoting from Roosevelt's Osawatomie confession the absolutely true deliverance that "every dollar received should represent a dollar's worth of service rendered," the Tribune editorial goes on:

We are beginning to realize nowadays the narrowness of the old theory that one earns whatever one can get under the law, under the rules of the game. We know now that many of us, quite honestly and lawfully, get more than we earn, the difference being that part of our acquisition we are enabled to make because of the co-operation of our fellows, because of that entity called the community or society. And for this surplusage we owe a return in the form of social and civic service at the least.

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What can that mean—not the first sentence, which is fully up to sample; nor the last, which may be better than it looks, a sort of editorial "singe cat;" but the middle sentence? If it, too, is of the "singe cat" species, or a hostage to prudence,—good enough, good enough, and well done. If it implies that co-operation yields a social surplusage distinguishable from individual earnings—better yet. But if it means what some sociologists do mean when they write or talk in that way, that all difference between what workers in social co-operation acquire honestly and lawfully in excess of what they could acquire without social co-operation, is unearned individually—if this is what it means, then the writer responsible for the editorial had better think again at just that point.

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Millions of men in co-operation, with all the varieties of knowledge each assimilates and the skill each acquires, produce immensely more of all the things that each of them wants than they could possibly produce without co-operation; but part of the increase is individual, for the power of each is greater. If one refused to contribute, the measure of the consequent lessening of the aggregate result would be, not his individual power under

primitive conditions but his individual power under civilized conditions. His individual earnings, then, are the value of that contribution, be it more or less,—and it could be easily measured, more easily than the "return in the form of social and civic service" he may "owe." But there truly is a surplusage—as easily measured, too, as individual earnings—and it does result from the "co-operation of our fellows because of that entity called the community or society." As society improves, not only does this surplusage increase, but individual earnings for work also increase. If this is what that Tribune editorial means, then more power to the writer's elbow; if it is not what it means, let the elbow power be turned in on his analytical faculties.

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CONTRASTS, NOT COMPARISONS.

Whenever attempts are made to improve the methods of popular government, we hear from some fine old crusted tory pedant. Histories of ancient Greece and Rome are ransacked for awful examples. Comparisons are drawn, which fail to mention the widely different conditions that existed then from those that exist now. The fact that the principle of representation in governmental affairs was unknown to the ancient world, is ignored.

Modern electoral machinery did not exist in the ancient political systems. The secret ballot with modern safeguards as to registry, casting and counting the vote, insuring secrecy, preventing intimidation, and reducing opportunities for bribery (which are rightly considered indispensable now), were unknown to ancient Greeks and Romans. The ancients had relatively no standard of morality in public affairs. What is now known as public opinion was then a negligible quantity.

There were, of course, none of the modern methods of distributing intelligence, no modern means of locomotion or communication, no mails as we understand the word, and no press.

The existence of slavery in ancient Greece and Rome created institutions, customs, laws, and a situation politically, which should remind us that there was no democracy as we understand democracy. Gibbon, Merivale and Mommsen make plain the demoralizing influence of slavery on Greek and Roman. Americans should be chary, then, of comparisons drawn by the pedantic army which is in alliance with standpat commercial and political interests.

Certain remarks of President Schurman of Cornell made at Silver Lake last summer in opposi-

tion to direct nominations and direct legislation, as inconsistent with "representative institutions," are in point.

What are representative institutions? Should representatives of the people not represent the whole body of the people? If we have representative government why is there a general refusal of representatives to adopt a conclusive method of determining what the will of the whole body of the people on any given question, in any given district, is? Why do party press, partizan leaders and Big Business contributors to party campaign funds fear the real touchstone of public opinion—the referendum?

Is it of the essence of representative government that representatives shall be allowed to guess, and not be accurately informed, as to the public will? Is it essential to republican forms of government that corporation agents in press and in party machine shall alone have the power of informing the people's representatives?

Shall those who refuse to accept the situation be permitted to express their insurgency, or shall they be branded as dangerous demagogues because they demand authoritative expressions of public opinion?

Are republican government and representative institutions to be left to the mercy of party newspapers which suppress information as to the exploitation of the people? to party managers whose puppets in our legislatures easily pass measures in the interest of Big Business and defeat referendum measures? to corporate agents who alone can draft "safe, sane and well considered" legislative acts? to college professors whose prodigious learning prevents their seeing straight or thinking clear?

LEWIS STOCKTON.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

"IT" AT WORK IN OREGON.

Portland, Ore., Sept. 15.

If you have read Lincoln Steffens' article in the September number of Everybody's Magazine, you know what "IT" means. If you haven't read it, read it. Judge Lindsey calls "IT" the "Beast"; other aliases are "Franchise Big Business," "Special Privilege," the "Corporations," the "Money Power," the "Interests," "Capitalism"; and some call it the "Taxing Power," and "Private Monopoly." Whatever you prefer to call it, "IT" is busy trying to undermine and destroy popular government in Oregon, for the simple reason that popular government means "taxing power in the hands of the people," and when the people get the taxing power "IT" is going to have more trouble than it can attend to. Not that the people of Oregon have taken the tax-

ing power, but that under their system of popular government they are able to take it without asking the consent of the legislature, and they are getting ready to take it.

Therefore, "IT" is making an attack all along the line in Oregon on the Initiative and Referendum, the Recall, Direct Primaries, and everything else the people have won in the last eight years.

The attack is engineered, managed and financed by the private owners of public utilities or "franchise corporations."

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The first gun was fired by the Pacific States Telephone Company. The voters had approved a bill, initiated by petition, for a gross earnings tax on telegraph and telephone companies. The telephone company refused to pay the tax. Beaten in the Circuit Court at Portland and in the Supreme Court of the State, it appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States, where the case is now pending, on the ground that the Initiative power in the hands of the people destroys the "republican form of government" guaranteed to every State by the Federal Constitution.

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The next point of attack was in the legislature, in 1909, when that body—alleged to represent the people of Oregon—submitted to the voters a bill to call a Constitutional convention to revise the State Constitution. It was suddenly discovered that the Constitution of Oregon was fifty years old, out of joint with the times. The advocates of a new Constitution do not state wherein the old document needs revision, and ignore the fact that any needed revision or amendment may be proposed by Initiative petition, as has been done at each election since 1902. It is as easy for a corporation as for citizens to have an amendment prepared and circulated for signatures, and then placed on the ballot for approval or rejection by the voters.

However, it is not that the corporations want an easy road to constitutional amendments. What they want is a Constitution that can't be amended without their consent. So they had the legislature submit that bill for a Constitutional convention, with provision for popular vote upon the Constitution that might be drafted by the convention.

It would seem, then, that if the voters approve the bill and order a Constitutional convention, they have it in their power to reject the proposed Constitution if it doesn't suit them. But, as is very evident, the tricksters behind this Constitutional convention scheme don't intend that the people shall have an opportunity to vote on a new Constitution.

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Big Business employs shrewd lawyers who know that in six States, since 1890, Constitutional conventions have made new Constitutions and then "proclaimed" or "promulgated" them without giving the voters an opportunity to express their wishes.

That trick was worked in a particularly flagrant manner in Delaware, Virginia and Kentucky.

Under a law providing that the new Constitution should be submitted to popular vote, the Delaware