

ished or the lower pay in weekly wages. They will do in the matter what seems most profitable to themselves.

Suppose they take the weekly wages, preferring its benefits and certainties to the greater benefits but lesser certainty and longer delay of payment at the end of the job. Then we have the wages system. But what is it other than a mode of cooperation?

These builders do not sell themselves. They discount the value of their future work for the sake of an immediate trade of what they do for what they want. At the end the houses will have been produced by cooperation, by a fair partnership arrangement, as truly as if it had been a partnership in form. The only difference is that one of the partners buys up the interest of the others in advance, in a free contract which is as beneficial to them as to him. Though he gets something which by themselves trading the houses they might get, yet he does work in effecting the trades which they would have to do in house building to attend to. In other words, he earns what he gets, and they lose nothing that they earn.

Reduced to the last analysis, this wages system is a system under which employer and employes are free cooperators, all sharing in the final result, namely, those things for which the product is traded, the employer's share being compensation for his work in effecting the trades that marshal the materials, for his work in superintending the production, and for his work in trading the product, while the shares of the employes are compensation for their work in putting the materials together without being troubled either to marshal the materials or to trade the final product.

And these shares must be mutually satisfactory, for in free conditions neither party to the hiring contract need allow the other to oppress him. Competition bearing not in only one direction, but, like the weight of the air, bearing with equal force in all directions, maintains an equilibrium of compensation for every worker at the point

of earnings. The wages system, then, in free conditions, is a mode of cooperation which adjusts itself to the satisfaction of all the cooperators by their mutual consent.

#### IV.

Under that natural wages system hired laborers are not commodities. They remain partners or cooperators in production, discounting their demands upon satisfactory terms, in return for exemption from certain kinds of necessary labor. But the fairness and usefulness of this system depends upon the freedom of its environment.

In coercive conditions this natural and most useful mode of dividing labor and distributing its proceeds is degraded into the wages system which socialists justly denounce as a species of slavery. When social institutions foster the monopoly of natural opportunities for labor so that workmen sell their labor in a glutted market because they cannot utilize it otherwise, then the relation of employer and employe ceases to be a relationship of free cooperators and becomes in greater or less degree a relationship of master and slave. It is evident, however, that the seat of the injustice is not the wages system. It is the effect upon the wages system of unfree conditions.

By promoting the monopoly of natural opportunities for production and trade—the soil and the mine, factory and store sites, rights of way for transportation, and the various other facilities which nature provides for labor, and which are more or less included in those enumerated—and by taxing labor in every direction in which it turns for purposes of production, we have generated in place of free competition a jug-handled competition, a competition that is all one sided. Employers and employes do not contract upon even ground. The employer offers his own terms, and the employe must either accept or starve. Natural opportunities being closed by private monopoly, and production being checked by taxation upon enterprise and thrift, the supply of labor tends constantly to outrun the effective demand for labor, and so to maintain a glutted

“labor market.” Competition in these circumstances is like air pressure in only one direction. Laborers are subject to the pressure of competition on their side, but are not protected in equal degree by the pressure of competition on the other. The equilibrium is thereby disturbed and the wages system becomes distorted in consequence into the shape that incenses the socialist and pleases the captain of industry.

It is not the wages system that a discriminating examination into the subject discovers for labor to quarrel with. In itself that system is as natural as breathing. It is one of the useful adjustments of cooperative production, when carried on in freedom. To make war upon it is to distract attention and to divert reformatory energy from the real evil that turns this useful adjustment into an engine of oppression. We cannot destroy the wages system without making men over again, or putting them into governmental strait jacket. We can, if we will, destroy the monopolies which so disturb the competitive equilibrium as to reduce laborers to the condition of dependent and desperate hunters for work, and make freedom of contract between employer and employe a dismal mockery. With the monopolies destroyed, freedom of contract would be restored and the wages system would no longer be oppressive.

## NEWS

Victoria, queen of England, died on the 23d, at 6:30 in the afternoon, London time. The first authentic news of her fatal illness was published on the 18th by her secretary, Sir Arthur John Bigge, K. C. B. He explained that her health had suffered considerably from the strain of last year's events, and that the past few weeks especially had told upon her nervous system, in consequence of which her physician had ordered that she be kept perfectly quiet and abstain altogether from transacting business. At midnight on the 19th her illness became alarming. She was at that time stricken with paralysis, and the

absent members of the royal family were summoned to her bedside at Osborne house, on the Isle of Wight, near Cowes. All hopes of her recovery had been abandoned by the morning of the 21st, when her grandson, the emperor of Germany, arrived. There was a slight improvement in her condition later in the day, so that she was able to take food and to secure some tranquil sleep; but in the early morning hours of the 22d she was reported as only just alive, and in the evening, surrounded by her children and grandchildren, she passed painlessly away. The official report of the cause of her death attributes it to "senile decay." Queen Victoria was in her eighty-second year, having been born May 24, 1819; and had reigned since June 20, 1837. She was possessed of private wealth yielding an annual income of \$1,000,000, over and above her annual parliamentary allowance of nearly \$2,000,000 (£385,000).

The day following the queen's death, the prince of Wales took the oath of office as King Edward VII. It was administered at St. James's palace, in the presence of the privy council, the members of which then swore allegiance to the new king. Later in the day the house of lords and the house of commons also took the oath of allegiance. Upon taking the oath of office the new king made a speech in which he expressed his determination "to be a constitutional sovereign in the strictest sense of the word."

Immediately upon learning of Queen Victoria's death, and before official action by the British government, the governor general of Canada, Lord Minto, with the authority of the Canadian privy council, proclaimed the allegiance of the dominion.

At Washington the solemn occasion of the queen of England's death was promptly recognized by the half-masting of the flags at the public departments and over the white house. The latter mark of respect was an innovation. The white house flag has never before been half-masted upon the occasion of the death of a foreign ruler. Besides lowering the flag, President McKinley addressed a letter of condolence on the 22d to "His Majesty the King." Both houses of congress passed resolutions of respect, the lower house adjourning for

the day, but the senate deciding not to do so.

It was authoritatively reported at the beginning of Queen Victoria's illness that Lord Roberts's inability, when he visited her two weeks ago, to encourage her hopes that the war in South Africa was at an end, had weighed upon her spirits and been the cause of her physical decline which then set in. But Lord Roberts could not truthfully have given her the assurances she desired. The plight of the British in South Africa was worse then than it had been at any time before, and it is worse now than it was then. The reports of the Boer movements are not luminous, as might be supposed, with Lord Kitchener controlling all the avenues of intelligence; but a British proclamation on the 17th reveals some of the dangers of the situation. This proclamation, issued from Cape Town, places the whole of Cape Colony—except the Cape Town, Wynberg, Simon's Town, Port Elizabeth and East London districts—under martial law. Martial law has been proclaimed also in Tombuland, Griqualand East, and East and West Pondoland. Unless the invading Boers were meeting with success in arousing revolts in British territory, this resort of the British to martial law would be neither necessary nor desirable.

Further information regarding the Kitchener reconcentrado policy was furnished by the Associated Press on the 17th from Pretoria. We quote the dispatch:

Boer families and their stock are being systematically brought into convenient centers from all over the country. They are kept in camp and fed. Those who surrender voluntarily are supplied with full rations, and those whose husbands are still in the field are provided for on a reduced scale, which is raised, when the husbands surrender, to a full allowance.

From the American Transvaal—the Philippine archipelago—the only news of the week relates to the legislative proceedings of the president's commission, which is enacting laws for local government. There has either been no fighting, or else reports of it are suppressed. In answer to a request from the war department for information, Gen. MacArthur sent the following official dispatch from Manila on the 17th:

With reference to your telegram of

the 16th, the drunkenness of the army is no more noticeable here than in garrison in the United States. Considering the whole force as a unit, it is probably very much less. In Manila drunken men are very noticeable, as one drunkard in a public place creates an impression among citizens of extensive disorders throughout the whole force, which is not the case. The army is in splendid discipline. The high standard of efficiency is shown by their doing the hardest kind of service in the most faithful, inspiring manner. Houses of prostitution are not licensed, protected or encouraged.

American casualties in the Philippines since July 1, 1898, inclusive of the current official reports given out in detail at Washington to January 23, 1901, are as follows:

Deaths to May 16, 1900 (see page 91) .....	1,847
Killed reported from May 16, 1900, to the date of the presidential election, November 6, 1900.....	160
Death from wounds, disease and accident, same period.....	468
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Total deaths to presidential election .....	2,415
Killed reported since presidential election .....	22
Deaths from wounds, disease and accident, same period .....	132
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Total deaths .....	2,569
Wounded since July 1, 1898.....	2,382

Total casualties since July, '98....	4,951
Total casualties to last week.....	4,936
Total deaths to last week.....	2,554

In the organization of constitutional government in Cuba, some progress is to be noted. The constitutional convention, to which, under orders from the American war department (page 266), delegates were elected by popular vote September 15, last (page 377), and which assembled November 5 (page 487), received a report on the 21st instant from its central committee embodying the constitution proposed by that body for the action of the convention. After the proposed constitution had been read, the convention adjourned until the 24th.

In American politics the work of filling senatorial vacancies, which began last week (page 648), is nearly complete. Senator Shelby M. Culom was on the 23d elected to succeed himself by the legislature of Illinois, his democratic opponent being Samuel Alschuler, the democratic candidate last fall for govern-