

Curtis's absurdly romantic figures, gives in detail the earnings in the better paid soft coal regions of Illinois. Mr. Schilling quotes from the coal report issued by the Illinois bureau of labor under the present republican administration, which shows that the average number of days worked in the fiscal year 1898-99 was 186, at an average wage of \$2.20, making a total annual average of \$409.20. Even this result was produced by the republican labor statisticians of Illinois by taking the average number of days the mines were in operation and not the average number worked by the men. Neither did it allow for powder, fuse, tool sharpening, and so on, which expenses the miners are required to bear. Allowance being made for these omissions, Mr. Schilling concludes that the soft coal miners of Illinois do not average more than their union reports—\$332 a year, or less than \$6.40 a week. Even this low average has been raised from \$240 or less, as Mr. Schilling declares, by the power of the Illinois miners' organization, which within the past three years has forced wages up from that point.

THOMAS G. SHEARMAN.

When Henry George first published his theories regarding property in land, the omniscient American press predicted that these theories would make no headway in public opinion because they would not attract influential support. Since they threatened the fortunes of the rich, it was supposed that none but the poor would turn toward them. Since they were at variance with accepted principles of private property, it was asserted that conservatives would scorn them. Since they challenged the right of private ownership of land, it was argued that only the landless would adopt them. But time has dealt as harshly with these predictions as with more worthy objections that Mr. George's theories encountered when he first put them forth. It has overwhelmed them with the logic of events.

The first wealthy American to defy the false prophets of the press

was Thomas G. Shearman, who died last week and in whose memory this tribute is written. It had been predicted that none but the poor would be disposed to embrace the George philosophy, but Thomas G. Shearman was a millionaire. It had been said that conservatives would turn away, but he was a conservative of conservatives. It had been surmised that only the landless would become converts, but he was a great landed proprietor whose fortune would have shrunk enormously under the application of George's remedy for poverty.

An explanation is due, however, both to Mr. Shearman and to the truth regarding his adoption of the theories of George. Through independent investigation and study of facts and their relations he had already reached many of the conclusions that Mr. George had arrived at from an application of fundamental principles; and his ultimate acceptance of George's philosophy in its completeness was the result of statistical tests of his own. George reasoned for the most part from broad principles, whereas Shearman reasoned inductively from masses of facts.

He was a statistician. But he was a statistician in the best sense. Some statisticians, while good collectors and reporters of figures, lack the logical faculty of drawing legitimate conclusions from the figures they collect. Others have such disorderly minds that they are not even good collectors. But Mr. Shearman's mind was acutely logical, and his statistical conclusions have never been successfully nor even plausibly assailed. It was his proved ability as a statistician that made his work so efficiently supplement that of George when it had finally led him to George's conclusions. He was pre-eminently the statistical leader of the George movement.

Thomas Gaskell Shearman died on the 29th at his home in Brooklyn, from the effects of a surgical operation.

He was a native of Great Britain, having been born in Birmingham, England, on the 25th of November, 1834, nearly 66 years ago. Coming in 1844 with his parents to the United

States he settled in 1857 in Brooklyn, where he was admitted to the bar in 1859.

During the late sixties and early seventies he was a partner of Dudley Field, son of the famous David Dudley Field, under the firm name of Field & Shearman, with David Dudley Field as senior partner or counsel. In this period the noted Erie railroad litigations in which Gould and Fisk figured were managed by his firm.

Upon dissolving his connection with the Fields, Mr. Shearman formed a partnership in 1874 with John W. Sterling, a junior associate in the Field firm, which lasted until his death. It was after this business connection had been formed that he gave his professional services as managing counsel to Henry Ward Beecher, his pastor and friend, throughout the vexatious Tilton-Beecher litigations.

In the midst of an extremely busy life as a practicing lawyer Mr. Shearman took the time to write two legal text books, one on practice and pleadings, in collaboration with a Mr. Tillinghast, and the other on negligence, in collaboration with Amasa A. Redfield. Both books were recognized authorities in their day. "Shearman and Redfield on Negligence" was at one time to be found in every fairly well equipped lawyer's library the country over.

Mr. Shearman's time, always occupied with work, seemed never to be exhausted. He exemplified in the most striking manner his own often-expressed theory that "if you want your work done and done well, get a busy man to do it." His faculty for filling in every hour of the day with work accounts, no doubt, for the great amount of good work he turned out as a statistical economist, while engaged actively in the laborious and multifarious employments of a leading member of a metropolitan bar. An admirer used to say of him that "when his work in his law office had tired him out, he would go home and rest himself poring over tables of statistics.

In economics Mr. Shearman was a free trader, which made him in his later years a democrat in politics,

though from early life he had been a republican. A member of Henry Ward Beecher's church, and naturally a democrat of the Jefferson type, he came into the republican party through the gateway of abolitionism. This association made him at first a protectionist, as it had done with David A. Wells, between whom and himself close intimacy existed, originating in their similarity of views on economic subjects, Mr. Wells being in his opinion more radical than he expressed himself or was generally understood to be; but, like Mr. Wells, he was led by personal observation and the study of statistics to abandon the protection superstition. Going further than Mr. Wells, however, he became an advocate, first of direct taxation as opposed to indirect; then of land value taxation, the single tax, as the only scientific system of direct taxation; and, finally, of the complete George theory of solving the social problem by restoring the land to the people by means of the single tax.

Notwithstanding this unreserved acceptance of George's doctrines—perhaps "confirmation" would be the better word—Mr. Shearman was known as a single tax man "limited" in contradistinction to George, the single tax leader "unlimited." The distinction was made by George himself at a public meeting in the eighties at Cooper Union. It was supposed to mean that whereas George would take for public use in taxation every penny of the annual value of land, his friend Shearman would take only as much as might from time to time be needed. There may have been point in the distinction originally, but it came to have but little significance. Shearman did not, indeed, favor the levying of taxes regardless of the needs of government. Neither, for that matter, did George. But he believed that when taxes were levied upon land values exclusively, all industry being exempt, every community would insist upon increasing taxation for the maintenance and extension of public improvements so long as a penny of land value remained in private hands untaxed. The difference, therefore, between him and George was only one of statement. While George would have increased land value taxation to the lim-

it for the purpose of making public improvements, Shearman would have made public improvements to the limit of land value taxation. Both contemplated the abolition of private profit in land monopoly.

Mr. Shearman's "Natural Taxation," published by Doubleday, McClure & Co., is his principal literary contribution to the economic subjects to which most of his leisure was devoted. He had no toleration for the atheistic notion of the university cult in economics that taxation must of necessity be haphazard—that there is, in other words, no science of taxation, no natural method. He believed that government is natural and that its sustenance is provided naturally. And this book on natural taxation was written to illustrate his views in that respect and by statistical methods to prove his position. Wholly apart from the theory it advocates it is without exception the best American text book yet published on the statistics of American taxation. Other books there are that contain more statistics, but as compared with Shearman's they fail utterly in a logical and common sense marshaling and massing of the statistics they contain. It is in this work that Shearman happily characterizes direct taxation as "straight taxation" and indirect as "crooked taxation," a characterization that is destined to live as long in fiscal history as that of the witty French economist who described indirect taxation as a method of "plucking geese so as to get the most feathers with the least squawking."

Since Mr. Shearman was a large landed proprietor, his consistency in advocating a method of destroying the profits of land owning has in some quarters been regarded as open to question. Exactly why this should make him inconsistent is not quite obvious. One might suppose that a rich man who advocates a public policy because he believes it to be right, though he knows it would destroy the framework of his fortune, could be regarded as eminently consistent, not to say also self-sacrificing. The essence of the criticism probably lies, however, in the fact that while Mr. Shearman was a land monopolist and

profited by it, he regarded land monopoly as wrong.

Those who make that criticism, wholly ignore the insuperable difficulties in the way of individual land monopolists, who, having come to realize the wrong involved in land monopoly would wash their hands of the sin. It cannot be done. The land monopolist who would cease to be one, may do so; but he cannot thereby abolish land monopoly. All he can do is to make others land monopolists in place of himself. Neither can he put an end to land monopoly by refraining from increasing his holdings. He may thereby limit his own powers as a land monopolist, but in so doing he will enhance the powers of other land monopolists. There is no individual escape from responsibility for land monopoly by individual renunciation of land titles. All that any man can do is to use his talents, his fortune and his influence to abolish the system. And this much Thomas G. Shearman did.

The ill-considered criticism not infrequently elicited from him his own response. It was something like this: "I am making money out of land monopoly. I am, therefore, making it at your expense. I will do all I can to help you put an end to the system. If you won't join me in that, it is you and not I who perpetuate it."

To the public objects in which he was interested Mr. Shearman was a systematic contributor; and in emergencies his contributions were equal to the need. He had the rare faculty, too, of being able to say No; he could refuse to contribute even modestly to enterprises which his judgment did not command. And there was no exploiting of his gifts. It was almost literally true in his case that his left hand seldom knew what his right hand had done. Though his money was often in the contribution pool, his name seldom appeared upon the contribution list. Managing committees in movements he sympathized with came to understand the meaning of his quiet request to let him "know the deficit."

An exacting professional career had bred in him habits which in other relations were sometimes misconstrued; a native sensitiveness to the

pride of others put him as a rich man at a disadvantage when associating with the poorer men into whose society his economic convictions often brought him; while his firmness in refusing to support what he could not commend, tended to excite suspicions of his generosity. For these reasons Mr. Shearman was not infrequently misunderstood. But those who understood him knew him to be a man of generous impulses and democratic instincts.

He was one of the few rich men of our time who have linked their names with something better than wealth-getting, and whose memory will be green long after his riches have been dissipated.

AN EXHAUSTIVE REPORT.

Prof. Jeremiah W. Jenks, of Cornell, has investigated the Sugar, Lead and Standard Oil trusts, and 38 other combinations, and has given as a result about 60,000 figures in a report of the Department of Arithmetical Labor.

He adopted a simple plan which he describes as "the statistical method." It consists in asking the various corporations whether they have advanced prices or not. It is gratifying to learn from their own secretaries that not one of them has done either.

Why did no one ever think of this "statistical method" before?

Great credit is due to the diligence and accuracy of Prof. Jenks's clerks, as the figures given, if placed in line, would stretch to 191 yards.

The value of the report would have been greater if the figures had covered the full 200 yards, or if some attempt had been made to separate combinations like the Standard Oil and street railways, which depend upon natural monopolies, from printing, cigar and awning combines, which are open to the competition of any discharged mechanic. Tables of the "average" destructiveness of wolves, lambs and other mammals are interesting, to compositors, but a little exhausting to the taxpayer's pockets.

But Prof. Jenks is a dear old man; you can't help loving him—if you have a monopoly.

BOLTON HALL.

New York.

NEWS

The great anthracite coal strike is still in progress, having begun its third week on the 1st stronger than ever. Less than 5 per cent. of all the miners in the anthracite region were then at work, and during the next two days more went out. Yet it had been widely published on the 27th that the strike had been settled, the employers having conceded their men's demands. This news proved, however, to be only a political canard originating with a campaign literary bureau in New York. Senator Hanna was credited by these reports with having personally, after frequent conferences with the great coal operators in Wall street, induced them to bring the strike to an immediate end. The only basis for this unique exploitation of Mr. Hanna as a "friend of labor" was the fact that on the 27th the anthracite coal operators, at a meeting held in New York, had decided to offer the workmen in their respective mines, as individuals, an advance in wages of 10 per cent. provided they would withdraw from the strike at once. The miners' union was to be ignored.

Having heard reports of this decision, President Mitchell, after a conference with the other executive officers of the general union, instructed each local president in the anthracite region to advise all miners in his district that—

no attention should be given to these reports and that they will be officially notified should any offer of settlement be made. Under no consideration whatever should work be resumed unless authorized by a convention representing all mine workers in the anthracite fields. It is vitally important that all miners stand firm and determined, and not be deceived by those whose interest it is to defeat the purpose for which the strike was inaugurated.

Mr. Mitchell's appeal to the strikers had full effect. The overtures of the operators were ignored by the men as completely as the miners' organization had been ignored by the operators. Pursuant to the operators' agreement the Philadelphia & Reading Coal & Iron company announced on the 30th a 10 per cent. increase in wages, to begin on the 1st; but on the 1st only 7 of its 39 mines started, and they are small affairs and were working short-handed. Similar offers were made by the other

operators in the region, but no attention was paid to them. President Mitchell declared, however, that the officials of the general organization would not require a recognition of that body as a condition of ending the strike; but he insisted that the individual unions must be recognized. An immense mass meeting of strikers was held on the 2d at Wilkesbarre, at which from 25,000 to 30,000 were in attendance. In speaking to this gathering Mitchell promised in behalf of the general organization that the strike would not be called off until a convention of the anthracite miners, at which every colliery in the region should be represented, had so decided.

Some of the state troops, whose appearance upon the scene of the strike was chronicled last week, have been withdrawn. This movement followed a conference between Gen. Gobin, the sheriff and representatives of the mine operators, called at the solicitation of Gen. Gobin. The strikers were not consulted. At the conference the operators were undecided as to the advisability of withdrawing the troops and referred the question to the sheriff, who, unwilling to assume the responsibility of deciding, referred it to Gen. Gobin. Convinced, as he said, that the presence of troops was unnecessary, since there was absolutely no indication of violence on the part of the strikers, Gen. Gobin decided to send away one regiment on the 1st. The Twelfth regiment accordingly left Shenandoah on that day for home.

Other labor troubles are brewing. On the 1st the Logan iron and steel works at Burnham, Pa., reduced wages 25 per cent. and the 3,000 employees threatened to strike. As a measurable offset to this news, however, the steel trust had resumed operations under the new scale of wages. It shut down on the 1st of July (see page 201), throwing 100,000 men out of work, and assigning as a reason the necessity for repairs, readjustment of the wage scale and declining business. It was not until the 22d of September that the scale of wages was readjusted. The men to the number of 60,000 were then allowed to go to work at a reduction. This unsatisfactory resumption was followed by the closing down on the 29th of some of the mills of the Illinois Steel company's plant at Joliet, which threw 1,200 men out of work, the reason