

The tories of Great Britain, driven to desperation by the need for revenue caused by the enormous expenses of their indefensible war in South Africa, are turning for relief to the great American bunco game of a protective tariff. To sweeten the pill they advise the working classes that by this means cheap Yankee goods can be kept out of the English market. Their scheme, like the common law, is the perfection of reason. The Yankee is to be made to pay the expenses of the South African war, through so high a tariff upon his goods as they come into England that he will keep his goods out rather than pay it and so leave the British market to the British workingman! How a tariff which yields revenue can protect the workingman, or one which protects him can yield revenue, the tory claquers do not venture to explain. What they want is to get revenue by making the common people pay it in higher prices on the imports they buy, thereby relieving the income tax payer and saving the great landlords; and if by constant repetition they can make the British consumer believe that the Yankee will pay the tax, and the British workingman that this will protect him, the job is done. Let the British "beggars" who have fought, fought, fought, also pay, pay, pay, is the motto of tory statesmanship.

Two weeks ago (page 705) we called attention to newspaper reports which quoted Prof. Jenks, of Cornell university, as saying at a Chicago banquet that Providence intended the many to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. In commenting upon this we refrained from characterizing the sentiment as Prof. Jenks's, for the expressed reason that his language might have been misreported. So we made the report an occasion for pointing out what is undoubtedly true, that the comfortable classes do very largely entertain the notion that the "inferior" classes have been providentially provided for them as hewers of wood and drawers of water. We

are glad now to be able authoritatively to state that our suspicion of bad reporting was correct. Prof. Jenks writes us, under date of February 25, that the report was—mistaken with reference to my opinion regarding the "hewers of wood and drawers of water." I said that that had been the opinion of very many people in different periods of the world's history. I myself was inclined to combat that opinion, and to show how our public schools could prevent that being the case. Modern inventions have done much to prevent it.

We do not agree, and in support of our objection we might cite authority, that modern inventions have done much to raise the working classes above the necessity of being "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the privileged. But that is another story.

A published interview with Mr. Roosevelt's guide upon his strenuous lion-hunting expedition in Colorado, gives some suggestive indications of Mr. Roosevelt's notions of fun. Every lion the party killed was first treed. After being hit he fell off his perch, and "then the fun began." Here is the guide's description of it:

The lion, mind you, is handicapped. He is fatally wounded and he is stunned by his fall. But the dogs are on him as soon as he reaches the ground, and I must say I have some of the best fighting dogs in the lion hunting business. Often a lively fight followed, for, under the circumstances, the lion will fight and he generally sells his life for all it is worth. Into this fight Roosevelt entered, and ended the fight by locating the lion's heart with his hunting knife. Dangerous? Well, not very. This is the way it is done. Any hunter knows it is safe. I should not have permitted Roosevelt to expose himself to danger had he been so disposed, which he was not.

One would suppose there might be as much strenuous fun in knocking down and stabbing a stuffed cat. But there would be nothing bloody about that.

ON OPTIMISM AND PESSIMISM.

"Pessimism is a vulgar form of atheism." In this epigram a popular clergyman has expressed an undeniable truth. But there is a species of optimism, which, worse than vulgar atheism, would justify the retort

in paraphrase that optimism is a refined form of devil worship.

Optimism, as commonly understood, is a spurious thing. So far from being a living protest against atheism, it is nothing better than mental and spiritual indolence. "Things always have come out right, and they always will," laughs your contented optimist, as he turns his back upon the task the Lord offers him.

He thinks of God as a miracle worker, who makes brick without straw, and improves the condition of mankind by means of omnipotent fiat instead of human cooperation. Said the lazy farmer one beautiful May day, standing upon his front stoop and looking out over a fallow field: "If God wants a crop of corn in that field, he will grow one; if he doesn't, he won't; whatever is to be will be, and where's the use of my plowing and planting? Nay, I believe in the goodness of God, and will go to the circus and enjoy myself, while he makes a corn crop for me." The lazy farmer was a true type of your everyday optimist.

It did not occur to him that God is rational, and works in human affairs through human channels. He did not realize that although God giveth the increase, some Paul must plant and some Apollos must water. Instead of resting his faith in God, as he in his pagan ignorance supposed, he was resting it upon an irrational fetish.

Precisely so with most of the optimists who joyously proclaim their faith to-day. In their philosophy everything is for the best, and will come out all right in the end. God in his goodness will bring the increase, whether a Paul and an Apollos plant and water or not. Too lazy mentally to think, too lazy spiritually to act, they make contentment a virtue and denounce as pessimists all who disturb their serenity by preaching against injustice. It is not for your spurious optimist to consider indications of social decadence, nor to work for social improvement. Leave all that to God. To doubt the certainty of progress is to doubt him.

Are we as a nation breaking away from our democratic moorings and