

was a well-known character in a Missouri town whose name need not be mentioned here. Bill was a colored boy who roamed the streets at will. One day he found a pocketbook containing \$40, and the owner's name was stamped on the book. But Bill burned the pocketbook and spent the \$40 in riotous living. Of course it was found out, and Bill was arrested, tried, found guilty, and sent to the penitentiary for two years. He served his time, and when he emerged he knew something about making shoes. The day he returned to his home town an old acquaintance met him and asked:

"Well, what did they put you at in the prison, Bill?"

"Dey started in to make a honest boy out'n me, sah!"

"That's good, Bill; and I hope they succeeded."

"Dey did, sah!"

"And how did they teach you to be honest, Bill?"

"Dey done put me in de shoe shop, sah, nailing pasteboard outer shoes fo' soles, sah."—The Commoner.

LEGISLATION THAT HINDERS PROSPERITY.

A tax of \$2.10 on alcohol has made the use of alcohol for fuel and motive power impossible in this country. That tax shuts farmers out from a market for millions of bushels of corn. It denies to this country what in Germany and France are flourishing industries. It thereby restricts the demand, that is, the opportunities for both labor and capital, and therefore helps to produce an artificial condition in which industry becomes, as Lanier said, "war grown miserly."

This is one of countless ways by which the struggle for jobs and a living wage is intensified by foolish legislation. An utterly unjust and barbaric way of levying taxes is responsible for much of the economic stress that drives men into unions. If the burden of taxation were shifted from improvements to land values; if the check which the tax puts upon improvements were removed; if speculation in land were stopped or lessened by the increase in the assessment of land made necessary by the exemption of improvements; if rents were thereby reduced and the double encouragement offered to industrial enterprises of exemption from taxation and cheaper land.—opportunities for both labor and capital would be multiplied and their unnatural antagonism would

tend to disappear.—Rev. H. S. Bigelow.

MAKING A CAPTAIN OF INDUSTRY.

The other day a dead man was elevated to the rank of Captain of Industry. The deceased was a resident of a thriving inland city. Outside of a handful of associates he had been known for a generation (to those who knew him at all) merely as a hard-headed, moderately prosperous business man—one of the large squad of dimly-outlined "substantial men" whose names come in handy now and then to fill out a list of directors. But upon his death it was discovered that he left a fortune running into the millions—and, as a matter of course, he was promptly furnished with a post-mortem reputation to fit the fortune. Two leading newspapers published the personal anecdotes by fellow-millionaires which are everywhere recognized as the proper funeral honors of a departed Captain, and it was discovered that he had been a man of wonderful sagacity, combining infallible judgment of the present and clairvoyant knowledge of the future with impregnable courage and the soundest conservatism. Two men recalled that he had predicted the panic of '93.

As a matter of fact, the deceased had, some 40 years ago—and with the most poignant reluctance—accepted a string of vacant lots in settlement of a claim against an insolvent debtor. The lots were in the line of the city's development. Three-quarters of a million people moved to town. Their presence, their activities and necessities made the lot owner a millionaire. A vast deal of business genius is of this same order.—Saturday Evening Post, of Dec. 16, 1905.

EDUCATIONAL IDEALS.

Extracts from a letter in *Charities* for October 28, written by Mrs. Elsie Clews Parsons.

Our system of education fails, as it often does fail, if it leaves young people without appreciation of the beautiful in nature and art and social living; if it takes away from them, as it often does, too, the childlike habit of living in the present—the secret, more than anything else, of personal charm; if, in short, it turns them out well equipped for life, perhaps, but without the joy of living.

Essential to education is the ideal of productive efficiency. The education of the boy and of the girl is incomplete unless it brings with it the inspiration that leads to production,

not the production that secures only individual satisfaction.

The ideal of productive efficiency in education is coming to be more and more pronounced. Girls are realizing more and more that ability and freedom to work are indispensable to a talent for life. The girl of to-day has oftentimes to resort to makeshifts; but the girl of the future will be a recognized worker. Whether she can work at everything her brother does is and will continue to be a matter of tedious and often sorrowful experimentation, but that she will be expected to become a producer of some kind as soon as the period of her formal schooling closes is, in my mind, a foregone conclusion.

Equally confident am I that there will be no future repining for the old-fashioned girl, for the personality of the new girl will be far more gracious and lovable than that of her predecessor.

DEMOCRACY ON THE MARCH.

Extract from "Das Freie Wort," of Frankfurt, Germany, translated for The Public.

Bad times have begun for the pessimists, who are accustomed to doubt any real progress of the nations and look down with pitying superiority on the reformers who trust in the bettering of conditions. A breeze is blowing through the civilized world, which announces that the winter night is not going to last always and an anticipation of spring has come to many tired hearts, that had already given up hope of seeing the sun shine again. Every new day brings us new proofs that the people have begun to take thought and to try to seek their salvation by determining themselves their fate by their own strength. The people are reaching their maturity and are putting aside their guardians. We have seen with astonishment how France in a few years of struggle has shaken off the rule of Rome; we saw in the last few weeks that the oligarchy has been overthrown, which has so long ruled Great Britain and Ireland, that even the Austro-Hungarian monarchy is thinking of introducing universal suffrage, that Russia, the Mecca of reactionists, is being compelled to make at least the beginnings of a constitution.

The socialists* of all lands are uniting to find means and ways which will make it possible for those classes

*Das Freie Wort is not a socialistic journal.

to aid in determining peace and war, on whom the brunt falls in every war-like conflict. The governments are to be controlled from now on into the smallest detail, all public powers are to render account over what they do and omit doing; this is the deep significance of the great movement which is going through the world. And this movement wishes to put an end to the powers that have come down to us historically, because their time is past; the people themselves wish to rule and they are going to rule.

The holders of power will naturally find it difficult to understand this new world. All innovations which dispossess them seem to them of necessity sinful. The locomotive probably seemed to many a postillion a vile invention, and alizarine-dye seemed to many a planter of madder like an assault on everything that was dear to him. So the pious aristocrats of France think that the dissolving of the concordate is a momentous sacrilege, and the Tories already see England going to pieces, because a few "ancestral" families must release the power from their hands, and many an orthodox Russian "patriot" thinks Russia in the greatest danger, because the autocracy is compelled to begin to make concessions. Time has passed over the postillions and the planters of madder—it will also pass over the "historical" powers, without the sun being extinguished. On the contrary, where progress can exert itself unhampered, it fertilizes everything; whoever opposes it is the grave-digger of all civilization.

THE RELATION OF MUNICIPAL OWNERSHIP TO THE SINGLE TAX.

An address delivered in Yonkers, N. Y., March 11, 1906, by Bolton Hall, and written out from memory by John Spargo.

When people nowadays advocate the idea of municipal ownership they are dubbed "socialists," "anarchists," "communists," and lots of other names, by people who don't understand either municipal ownership, or socialism, or any of the other theories they confound with municipal ownership. Though I advocate the municipal ownership of public utilities, I am not a socialist by any means. I don't believe in socialism, but I do believe in municipal ownership.

If we begin with a few definitions, we shall be the better able to discuss the subject before us, and if we succeed in learning the distinction be-

tween municipal ownership, socialism, anarchism, single tax, and other movements commonly confounded, our time will not have been misspent.

I really have never known two socialists who could agree upon a definition of socialism. That is because they are thinkers, perhaps, for all thinkers are heretics. So they are prone to be like the old Scotchman who, talking of his religious orthodoxy, said that there were only two people in the place who were strictly orthodox, himself and his wife, and then added, "An' I'm nae sae sure about the wife." Socialists believe in general that the system of private ownership and competition of the means of production and distribution is wrong; they want all the great means of production and distribution to become social property.

Communists are different. They go further, and want everything to be shared equally. There have been no successful experiments in communism apart from religion. The early Christians were communists, for we read that they owned all things in common.

Finally, there are the anarchists (called "philosophic anarchists," because the name "anarchist" has been sadly misused, and applied to all kinds of freaks), whose fundamental idea is a belief in man's inherent goodness, and who believe that men naturally incline to do right and that most laws, if not all of them, do more harm than good.

To lump all these people together as many do, is absurd—as foolish as it would be to class Theists and Infidels, Unitarians and Baptists together. They are very, very different.

It is equally absurd to confound municipal ownership with any or all of these things. I may be an anarchist and believe in municipal ownership in some form; or I may be a socialist, but not of necessity. It may appeal to me simply as a matter of hard common sense and not of social theory at all. I may not be able to see why the public which has always laid down its own systems of pipes for the conduct of sewage to the sea, should not lay down its own pipes to carry water, or gas. I may not be able to see why railways should not be highways in the best and truest sense of the word, but that does not make me a socialist. Surely it is proper and right to draw a distinction between the public ownership, and possibly operation and control, of things which are in their nature monopolies, but are subject to free competition. Because I believe that the city of Yonkers should own its own

street railways and lighting plant, that does not compel me to believe the city should run the tailor shops. Then, again, municipal ownership does not of necessity mean municipal operation under a gigantic civil service scheme. That may or may not be included. It may be thought more profitable, and better in every way, to lease the city railways and lighting plant upon short lease terms to the highest bidder who will also insure the best service, as is done now in New York with the ferries. So much for the principle of municipal ownership.

Now there are certain natural monopolies, that is to say monopolies which rest upon the ownership and control of the land. The railroad monopolies, the coal monopoly, the oil monopoly, are but a few examples of this class of monopoly. The single taxer would deal with these first. The land question is the bottom question, for man is a land animal. All that we eat, wear, drink, or use in any way, comes from the application of labor to land. If land is monopolized, labor must be enslaved. If the land question could be solved, most of our other great questions, such as the labor question, would be solved.

Looking around Yonkers to-day before coming to this meeting, I saw slums, hideous and foul tenements worse than any I have seen in New York, in this suburban city of 70,000 people. No doubt people will say, "Yes, we do need a better health board," or, "We ought to have some model tenements," but the trouble lies deeper. If we had no land problem there would be no slum problem [applause]. When I first began to study the land question, it was on account of a report upon the bad tenement conditions in Yonkers, and that was more than 20 years ago. Things have necessarily gone from bad to worse since then, because of land monopoly.

The land question is fundamental to life. All wealth and all capital are drawn from the land. The single tax proposes to restore the land to the people by methods now in use every day in New York city and elsewhere, in the theaters and hotels. If you go to a theater and pay for a seat you pay for its value, according to its position. No matter if you stay away from the show; whether you sleep or stay awake, you pay the same price, and you pay nothing else. In a hotel, if you engage a room you pay according to its situation, and no matter what business you do there, you pay the same amount. Now "seat," "situation,"