

Such transactions are incidental to and incurable under the system of private ownership of public highways, and this is the reason why "passengers cannot be carried for two cents a mile," and why the tariff on freight rises. In private enterprises where there are no patents, prices cannot be raised; so water in stock quickly leaks out. But in railroading, the franchises that create private monopolies of rights of way and terminals are like patents; they hold the water in. The customer must buy. He cannot "go to the store next door." Consequently prices can be raised arbitrarily and the watered stock be made good. Then why should otherwise sensible men approve of turning these rights of way and terminals over to private ownership and management?

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Wealth and Honesty.

Mr. James H. Eckels is ever prompt at defending swollen fortunes and fortune swelling. He even goes out of his way to do it, as if he held a brief for the swollen fortune interest. His last effort was in a speech at the national meeting of school superintendents at Chicago on the 25th. Mr. S. Y. Gillan of Milwaukee had attacked the dishonest rich for cheating public schools, whereupon Mr. Eckels came to the rescue of the over-rich and "unco guid" with the assertion that in the vast majority of cases the same honesty is applied in the gaining of large fortunes as in the running of schools and the teaching of children. With all the revelations regarding the acquisition of large fortunes that have recently appeared, Mr. Eckels should have been more cautious in his statement. When swollen fortunes are spoken of, those of Rockefeller, Rogers, Harriman, the insurance confidence men and the like are brought to mind, and these men were not honest. But the idea that swollen fortunes are dishonest has more than a personal application. Implying that the ethics of fortune-hunting are dishonest, it indicates that owners of these fortunes may be unconscious of dishonesty because they fail to realize the dishonesty of their ethical standards. The idea penetrates still deeper. Owners of large fortunes may be honest, but their fortunes dishonest. The man who owns a valuable privilege, valuable because it diverts the earnings of others from them to him, may be personally conscientious. Nevertheless, his income is essentially plunder. In the course of his defense of swollen fortunes Mr. Eckels thought it alarming that the accumulation of wealth is considered abhorrent. What might not have been his alarm had he overheard the founder of Christianity when He said

that the rich shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven? This was a pretty strong intimation that in the Christian philosophy fortune-hunting and honesty are incompatible. Perhaps Mr. Eckels would have said what he said in his Chicago speech: "People who criticize swollen fortunes unconditionally make themselves look foolish and ridiculous to men of the great business world," for "they show their absolute shallowness and lack of knowledge of the conditions underlying modern business transactions"! Some of the rich inhabitants of Palestine are reported to have held that opinion of the Disturber whom they crucified.

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Mayor Johnson's Free Street Cars.

Telegraphic interviews with Tom L. Johnson, Mayor of Cleveland, disclose the ultimate purpose of his long and at last successful fight for three cent fares in Cleveland. This victory he regards as "a big step" toward what he really wants—free street car service. He has worked and fought for three cent fares, not merely because there is an economy in this reduction, but because "it is two cents nearer nothing than is five cents."

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This is no new notion with Mr. Johnson, nor is it a borrowed one. In one of the newspaper comments on it, Edward Everett Hale is credited with having likened cars on the streets to elevators in buildings, ten years ago. This is very likely, and it does credit to Mr. Hale's good sense. But if the question of authorship should ever become important, Mr. Johnson's claims to priority can be traced back at least fifteen years and probably twenty. His argument has been that just as the elevator gives value to the upper stories of buildings, so the street cars give value to the more remote sites of the city; and therefore that the users of the benefited city sites, who (like the users of the benefited building stories) pay their car fare in their rent to the landlord, should not be required to pay it over again to a street car operator any more than the building tenants should pay for elevator service to the operator of the elevators. The analogy is perfect and the argument impregnable.

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Every person who pays rent, whether for a house or a flat, has to pay higher rent for the same living accommodations if he has the benefit of good street car service than if he has none. The street car service enables his landlord to raise his rent. If, owning his home, he is both landlord and tenant, he could as landlord let to another tenant for

higher rent, and therefore is as tenant paying a higher rent. Reflect upon these facts and you find that the value of the street car accommodation is reflected in the value of city sites, just as the value of the elevator is reflected in the value of the upper air which modern buildings pierce. Mayor Johnson's contention consequently is that the custom of charging street car fares is wasteful and burdensome. He would doubtless also say that it makes the wrong person pay for street car service. The persons who ought to pay for such service are not the passengers who as somebody's tenants pay again in higher rent, but those who are enabled by the better street car service to exact the higher rent.

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The Acquittal of Shea.

At last the Shea conspiracy case (p. 1066) is ended. Mr. Shea and his teamsters' union associates have been acquitted. Only two jurors were for conviction at the start, and these quickly yielded to the other ten. The prosecution was utterly without merit. It was instigated and maintained both in court and in the trust newspapers, for private business ends. The prosecuting lawyer was hardly more than nominally a member of the prosecuting officer's staff. He was the private attorney of the business interests that instigated the prosecution. And the prosecution itself, while nominally for a blackmailing conspiracy to injure the business of a mercantile firm, was in fact for the criminalization of sympathetic strikes. It failed, first because there was no credible testimony of blackmail, and second because the jury would not place sympathetic strikes under the ban of the criminal law.

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A curious thing happened after the trial. Three or four labor leaders who had been accepted as informers, had sworn to transactions calculated to prove that the strike was in furtherance of pecuniary objects, that brutal violence had been resorted to deliberately by the strike leaders, that they themselves had participated in these criminal purposes and acts, that no promise of immunity had been made them, and that having pleaded guilty they expected to be imprisoned. Now, it is true that the jury refused to believe these informers (some of whom were shown to be convicted criminals), in so far as their testimony incriminated the men on trial. But that was no reason for exonerating them upon their own pleas of guilty. Although the men on trial were acquitted, these informers were guilty on their own pleas. If the indictment described a crime, they stood before

the court self-convicted of that crime. Yet the prosecuting attorney, failing to convict the innocent men, exonerated these guilty ones. This may be the law, for the prosecuting attorney did it; presumably it must be the law, for the judge allowed it. But what kind of law is it that permits guilty men, men guilty of crime upon their own confession in open court, to go free because a jury would not believe their testimony against other men?

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Death of William M. Hinton.

Word comes from San Francisco of the death of William M. Hinton, the printer who had so much faith in Henry George's "Progress and Poverty," while it was yet in manuscript, that he assumed the financial responsibility for manufacturing the first edition. In his printing office in San Francisco both he and George set some of the type, and among the regular compositors was James H. Barry, now the proprietor and editor of the Star, who, in a tribute in the Star to the memory of Mr. Hinton writes: "I set type for 'Progress and Poverty,' and am both proud and ashamed of the fact—proud that the book has commanded the thought of the world and awakened the consciences of millions of men, but ashamed I didn't know that it would; didn't know that the then almost unknown printer, Henry George, had clearly pointed the way to industrial freedom, and would ere long be known as the 'Prophet of San Francisco'; didn't know that the book I wondered if anybody would read, although they might buy it for 'sweet charity's sake,' would be translated into every civilized language, be used as a classic and text-book in colleges, and make the hitherto dismal science of economics as fascinating as a novel by a master. I didn't know these things would come to pass; but Mr. Hinton did; and said so at the time. I then felt sorry for the 'old gentleman,' as his employees affectionately styled him. I thought that personal friendship was the cause of his optimism and enthusiasm. When, two or three years later, I read 'Progress and Poverty,' it was a revelation to me, and has been an inspiration ever since. I am not exaggerating when I say that but for William M. Hinton the publication of the book might have been delayed many a year."

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Ye Ancient "Standpatter."

Lord Bacon asked a question of the "standpatters" of his day, the echoes of which should not fall upon unwilling ears in our own time: "Things alter for the worse spontaneously, if they