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It is with the best of good wishes for street car conductors that we congratulate those of Chicago upon the neglect of passengers to adopt a sentimental suggestion by giving them an extra cent when paying fares, as a sort of Christmas "tip." The degrading custom of "tipping" street car men might in this way be easily introduced; and if it once became fixed, these workers would be reduced, as waiters and porters have been, to the level of depending for their pay upon the charity of the public.

The land purchase movement in Ireland is one for the creation of a host of petty landlords in that country, whose little self interests will act as buttresses and buffers for the large interests of the great landlords of England and Scotland. While slightly improving the condition of the tenant class it would not improve that of the still lower grade of working men. Though the former would no longer be rack rented, the latter would continue to be both rack-rented and rack-waged.

A better example of the upside downedness of the university point of view regarding political economy could not be desired than that which Prof. Seligman, of Columbia, exhibited in his paper before the American Economic association last week. He ascribed the passing of slavery in every part of the world to the disappearance of free land. "Morality, indeed, is doing its noble work," he said, "but at bottom lies the disappearance of free land." Therefore, thank God for the disappearance of

free land! But if it is the disappearance of free land that is abolishing slavery, as an economic system, is there much to be thankful for? Slavery can be abolished by the disappearance of free land only because that change forces "free" labor to work for less than the cost of slave labor, which is but another way of saying that it abolishes slavery by substituting one form of slavery for another. Is this anything to boast of? Shall we parade as evidence of economic progress the fact, and fact it is, that whole armies of free laborers would capitalize at less to-day than slaves capitalized at 50 years ago? Professional economists would be better employed if, instead of asking us to cheer because the disappearance of free land (which means a vast monopolization of unused land) has abolished slavery, they were thoughtfully and candidly to explain the effect upon society of abolishing slavery without allowing free land to disappear any faster than it is put to use? Why all this toploftical tomfoolery on the part of professional economists, when they discuss problems that concern the lives and liberties and earnings of the working masses of mankind?

Why President Castro, of Venezuela, is constantly referred to as a rascal it is not easy to explain, unless these references are inspired. Nothing that is generally known of him justifies the imputation. On the contrary, he appears from all that is definitely reported to have played the part of a patriot under extraordinary difficulties and to have played it with great ability and fidelity. Perhaps the explanation may be found in the fact that Castro is the leader of the democratic elements of Venezuela, while the revolutionists there are

plutocratic and have been encouraged and supported in their revolution by financial interests centering in Berlin. In those circumstances, Castro would naturally be unpopular in German court circles; while his unpopularity at Washington and in certain American newspaper offices may possibly be traceable to his abrogation of asphalt grants improvidently if not corruptly made to American syndicates.

Possibly the rush that Germany and Great Britain made upon Venezuela just as Castro had conquered the plutocratic revolutionists may be explained by the fact that German financial interests (maybe British ones also) were interested in reviving the moribund revolution. That would explain the destruction of Castro's little fleet, and nothing else does. It was his fleet that enabled him to transfer his troops so as to hold the revolutionists in check at otherwise inaccessible points. This advantage was taken from him when the allied fleets seized and sunk his ships, and thereupon the revolution was renewed.

The indefensible character of the precipitate attack upon Venezuela is so strongly described by the Boston Journal that no elaboration or further comment could make it stronger. Here it is, in words that should fix the attention and command the sympathy of every American reader:

Let us put ourselves in the place of the Venezuelans. Let us imagine that in the last critical months of our own civil war, when the nation was strained to the utmost to support its armies and maintain its credit at home and abroad, Great Britain and Germany had suddenly delivered an ultimatum at Washington for the immediate payment of the claims of their subjects who had suffered in the progress of the war, and had sent fleets of ironclads to threaten New York and Boston. Would that have been an act of friendliness?

Would we not rather have interpreted it as an act of almost malignant cruelty? Would we have paid those claims, save as we were actually coerced by the muzzles of shotted cannon? Yet Great Britain and Germany are now doing exactly this toward little Venezuela, a nation feeble at best, whose government has spent its last dollar and its last ounce of strength against a formidable insurrection. Great Britain and Germany can crush and humiliate such a government, but they cannot force it to pay gold when it has none. These European powers have nobody but themselves to blame if the belief swiftly strengthens among the American people that London and Berlin are guilty of an act of cowardice and dishonor.

Another weekly paper of the order of the democratic Democracy has proved its right to a place in the growing list. We refer to the Press, of Helena, Montana. Edited with distinctive ability by W. E. Eggleston, the Helena Press is trying to do for Montana what John Stone Pardee's Red Wing Argus is doing for Minnesota, what Warren Worth Bailey's Johnstown Democrat (daily as well as weekly) is doing for western Pennsylvania, what Herbert Welsh's City and State of Philadelphia is doing for eastern Pennsylvania, what the Springfield Republican (daily and weekly) has long been doing for New England, what the San Francisco Star does for the Pacific coast, and what Bryan's Commoner is doing for the country at large. All these papers ring true democratic notes. Against an expanding force like that, the subsidized and shackled press of both parties will not long be able to make headway with public opinion. We are living in stirring times, when democracy and plutocracy are gathering for a terrific struggle, and papers such as these are marshalling the democratic hosts.

Dr. John Bascom, formerly president of the University of Wisconsin, injected into his address before the Wisconsin teachers' association at Milwaukee on the 29th an observation which has drawn from him in a newspaper interview an explanation that is both acute and commendable.

He puts into words a distinction which many thoughtful persons must have felt without being quite able to express it sharply. It is the distinction between the acceptance by educational and religious institutions of gifts on the one hand of unearned money unlawfully obtained and on the other of unearned money lawfully obtained. John D. Rockefeller and Andrew Carnegie were his examples. Being questioned about his address in this particular Dr. Bascom said:

I meant the University of Chicago and its acceptance of the gifts from John D. Rockefeller. When an institution, founded and maintained for the benefit and education of the youth of the public, accepts money which has been gained in direct defiance of the laws and principles laid down by that public, it vitiates its influence on the minds of those students upon whom it is its duty to exert a good and moral influence.

I do not feel the same about Andrew Carnegie's gifts to the colleges and communities at large. He gained his money according to rules which were recognized by the public and by a protection which the public afforded him with its full consent, and though I do not believe it ought to have given that protection, still it made his gains perfectly lawful. Therefore the same stigma cannot be attached to them as to the enormous gains made by the Standard Oil Company.

That distinction is perfectly sound. When men get unearned fortunes as Carnegie has, and as the Astors have, and as every rich man with a legal or institutional privilege has, then fortunes are not stolen by them from the public but are given to them by the public. The public has the power and the right at any time to stop this diversion of its property. If it does not stop it, it is as guilty as the beneficiary if not even more guilty. Of course the beneficiaries can make themselves specially guilty by using their influence to perpetuate the laws and institutions that thus enrich them at the expense of their brethren. But even then the public itself sanctions the wrong, and the profits from it have not the moral foulness they would have if they were extorted from the public against its will by

superior force or abstracted from it by secret fraud.

Not all advice from the old to the young is sound. This is especially so of advice from old and rich philanthropists to ambitious youth on how to succeed in the world. Usually such advice consists of solemn admonitions on the miraculous effects of hard work and honest living, when the cunning sage knows perfectly well that however hard he may have worked and however honestly he may have lived, he owes his fortune neither to his work nor his honesty. He knows, and everyone else knows, that no amount of work and no degree of honesty would have made him rich if he had not become the owner of some kind of "cinch" whereby he could shave the earnings of other people. It is refreshing, therefore, to listen to advice to youth which makes no cunning concealment of the true secret of worldly success. Such advice is given by Dr. D. K. Pearsons, who is editorially described by a Chicago paper as "the sage of Hinsdale." Asked what course he would recommend to a young man starting in life this venerable philanthropist replied:

Get land! Get land! Go out into the northwest corner of Colorado. There are snow-topped mountains spread with tall pines, and there are green valleys and swift-running water. Get land with coal under it. Get pasture land where cattle can be grazed. Get meadow land and tillable land. Buy all you can and hang on to it. Then go to work. Go to stay and do not be disheartened by hardships. Go where there is not a railroad for 60 miles and you have to enter on horseback. The railroad will follow soon, and those who fight hard will come out on top. Another inviting region is in the State of Washington. Avoid the cities and go to the back country and get land. Get tracts up on the mountain side that are heavy with timber and accessible to running water. Take acquisitions in valleys. Mining, agriculture, lumbering, grazing — all branches are full of promise.

For its purpose that is the best advice we have ever seen quoted. It is marred by only one thing. Why the admonition to "go to work"? If work is necessary in order to get or to keep