

than it had at the opening of the last parliament, and only one more than it had when that parliament dissolved. The original ministerial majority was something like 160, but losses at by-elections subsequently reduced it to 129, at which point it stood when the dissolution was proclaimed and the ministry went into the elections for popular indorsement. All the returns from the elections are now in, except from the Orkney island district; and they give to the ministerialists 400 seats, and to the opposition 269—a majority for the ministry of 131. But as the Orkney district is regarded as safely liberal, the final result will be a majority of 130—one more than at the dissolution. Under the circumstances this is a moral defeat for the ministry.

The elections had been called at a time when fetich patriotism could be best appealed to by the jingoes. They fell just upon the heels of the terrible victory over the Boers. They had been called, moreover, at a time when the old registry lists were still in force. Thus thousands of opposition voters who had changed their residences were disfranchised. Had the ministry called these elections three months later, when the new registry list will be in force, a fairer expression of opinion and a more disastrous result to the ministry would have been probable. For another thing, the elections were called late in September, and voting began early in October, so that the opposition had no opportunity to make an effective campaign. Finally, the liberal party was in a state of demoralization. Without any generally accepted leadership, with some of its most noted men declared imperialists, with others too timid to meet the jingo issue squarely, and with defeat admitted at the outset, it was in no condition to rally an opposition. Yet the ministry, with all these disadvantages resting upon the opposition, was but barely able to hold its own. Though it retains the substance of power for a time, it has secured nothing which can under the

circumstances be regarded as a popular endorsement.

Mr. Bryan's Madison Square speech of 1900 contains a discriminating passage regarding wealth which should be carefully read and conscientiously studied. It is as clear as crystal and as true as gospel. "We are not opposed," he said, "to that wealth which comes as the reward of honest toil." With this observation goes the implied assertion that Mr. Bryan is opposed to that wealth which does not come as the reward of honest toil. And there you have the whole story. When some get without earning, others must earn without getting. Unearned wealth, therefore, is plainly condemned. He who is not opposed to accumulations of unearned wealth is of logical necessity opposed to accumulations of earned wealth.

Several well-known wealthy people have accorded interviews to the New York World relative to great fortunes. They are John D. Rockefeller, Russell Sage, Andrew Carnegie, John Jacob Astor, D. O. Mills, Henry Clews, Chauncey M. Depew, William C. Whitney, Helen Gould and Hetty Green. None of the fortunes which these names stand for is an honest one. Not that the owners themselves are necessarily dishonest, though some of them are not free from suspicion on that score. The Rockefeller and Gould fortunes are notoriously corrupt, while Chauncey Depew laid the foundations of his as an Albany lobbyist when the New York legislature was saturated with lobby corruption. But these are secondary considerations. Whether the over-rich get their fortunes by personal dishonesty or through dishonest institutions makes no difference to the great masses of the people who lose accordingly. From that point of view, the vital question is not whether the fortunes are built up with the intention of stealing, but whether they are earned. And not one of the fortunes named has been earned. All

of them represent mere power to levy tribute. Yet the owners of these fortunes complacently talk about holding their fortunes in trust! If fortunes are a trust, then the socialists are right, and the public should choose its own trustees and hold them to account. But this idea of trusteeship is in truth only an apology for a custom that no one can defend. It is one form of Tolstoy's thought when he said that the rich would do anything for the poor except to get off their backs. Only one of these fortune owners, however, ventures to ornament his assumption of trusteeship with a touch of commonplace hypocrisy. He, of course, is Rockefeller. "God gave me my money," he says, "and I give it," etc., etc. Plutocratic blasphemy would make God answerable for much; but the American people are not yet so far degraded by poverty in the midst of wealth as to believe that God bribed legislatures and courts, entered into corrupt contracts with railroads to ruin business men, sowed bankruptcy and misery broadcast, and cornered natural oil pools and deposits of iron, all to give money to John D. Rockefeller.

Bryan's speech on the text, "Is the young man, Absalom, safe?" in which he argued that opportunities for young men in business are fast closing down, has evoked no end of denials from men who haven't yet felt and who refuse to observe the closing down process. All these men are confident that there is still room for young men at the top. Of course there is. And there always will be. For old men die, and younger men must take their places. But that is not the point that Mr. Bryan raised. It isn't a question of whether some young men of extraordinary strength of intellect or weakness of conscience or both can climb over the shoulders of their fellows up to the few high places in the business world. The problem relates to the average young man. What are his chances of moderate success in business. And the only possible answer is that his

chances are distinctly declining. The alternative that confronts everyone in business life is great mastership or dependent servitude. Those who do not achieve the one are in imminent and increasing danger of falling into the other. And the difficulties in the way of achieving great business successes are becoming constantly greater. Business may be likened to a race. The prizes for winners are richer than ever; but more and more are the winners those contestants who have phenomenal powers. And just as the prizes for success become more tempting do the penalties of mediocrity become more general and dreadful. There is indeed room at the top; but everywhere else business is crushingly crowded, and he who would climb to the top must be intellectually able and morally willing to make mounting blocks of his brethren.

Ohio, a state that Hanna rules, has a law upon its statute books which makes it a crime, punishable with imprisonment from one to three years, for any man who refuses work to beg outside of his home county. This law has just been sustained as valid by the supreme court. It should be noted that the law is almost identical with the labor laws of England which followed the plagues, and which history has branded as infamous. What is meant by refusing to work? It means refusing to work for the starvation wages that prevail. And this is a crime in Ohio if followed by begging outside of the home county of the beggar. If, for example, a workman, refusing to work for Mr. Hanna in Cleveland upon Mr. Hanna's terms, should hunt for work upon better terms in another county, and failing to find it should beg a meal of victuals to help him on his way, he would be guilty of a crime for which he could be imprisoned for not more than three years nor less than one. Such were the provisions of the infamous labor statutes of England. Their purpose was to force laborers to work at starvation wages.

The effect of this Ohio statute is the same.

It is a significant fact that the same judges who upheld that labor statute at Columbus this week, rendered a decision at the same time in favor of the tobacco trust upon a question of corporation privileges within the state. We make no reflection upon the integrity of the judges. Possibly they were obliged to decide both cases as they did. The serious significance of the juxtaposition is not what it may imply with reference to the Ohio judiciary, but the threatening suggestion it embodies of a social development under which power and privilege are strengthened under laws that build up trusts by first making beggars of men and then making criminals of beggars.

Ex-Attorney General Frank S. Monnett, of Ohio, is a welcome addition to the new democracy which is developing under the magnificent leadership of Bryan. Mr. Monnett might have been worth \$400,000 and be an honored office holder under the Hanna party had he been willing to accept a Standard Oil bribe. As attorney general of Ohio he was prosecuting the Standard Oil trust for a plain violation of a state law. To head him off he was first offered this rich bribe. Had he accepted that and left the trust alone Hanna would have renominated him. The trust would in that case have been safer under his administration than under that of a new man. But as he refused the bribe and continued his fight against the trust, it became necessary to Standard Oil interests to displace him. Accordingly, Senator Hanna, who controlled the republican convention of Ohio, named another candidate, and the Standard Oil trust has been molested in Ohio no further.

In commenting, on page 337, upon Gov. Roosevelt's Labor day speech at Chicago, in which he urged the improvement of life conditions so that "as nearly as possible each

man shall receive the share to which he is honestly entitled and no more," we heartily commended the sentiment, but said:

But Mr. Roosevelt has given no earnest of his own belief in this exalted and exalting sentiment. He is himself a beneficiary of life conditions that give him annually a much larger share of the world's annual earnings than he is honestly entitled to, in consequence of which others have less than they are honestly entitled to. No blame attaches to him for that. But what does he propose by way of changing these conditions? Nothing. How, then, do we know that he believes in the sentiment he phrases?

An objection is raised by the Fairhope (Ala.) Courier to so much of this comment as absolves Roosevelt from blame for being a beneficiary of unjust conditions. The Courier's objection is a common one among social reformers, and one which seems to us to be as thoughtless as it is common. Believing it to be thoughtless, we do not argue it, but content ourselves with asking the Courier or any other objecting paper or person to explain, thoughtfully and with a consciousness of responsibility, what Mr. Roosevelt could or ought to do to divest himself of his unjust share of the world's earnings. Mind, we do not ask what he could or ought to do as a citizen. We have already explained that a citizen ought to try to get his fellow citizens to join him in abolishing the social institution—landlordism—which makes unjust wealth distribution not only possible but unavoidable. What we wish to know is, What can he do simply as a landlord, as a beneficiary of "unearned increment"—what can he do that would amount to anything more than a transfer of his unjust share from himself to others whose right to it would be no better than his own? The question is not how he can be charitable, but how he can be just.

In Hawaii the republican party of Hanna and McKinley is excellently well represented by the Pacific Commercial Advertiser, published at Honolulu. The issue of September 25, 1900, lies before us. It is so rich in