

greater one which we have already mentioned. Or, perhaps it would be more accurate to say that its mind was upon some of the results of the fundamental evil. This is especially evident in connection with the reference to bad government in large cities. It is in the large cities that landlordism has attained its greatest strength and produced its worst effects. There it is that land has risen so in value that only the rich can afford to own it, while the great majority have been turned into a tenant class. Out of this condition bad local government is inevitable, and while the condition lasts will be ineradicable. But notwithstanding that the Boston meeting demanded only that the superficial evils with which the country is afflicted be repented before we extend our territory, it nevertheless spoke the word which ought to be, and we believe will be, echoed from one end of the country to the other as the people awaken to a realization of the meaning and an appreciation of the dreadful possibilities of the imperialistic policy which threatens them.

By way of illustrating what we have said as to the exceptional power of landlordism in large cities, let us direct attention to the price which a few feet of land in Chicago brought last week. Mrs. Harriet Blair Borland bought the southeast corner of LaSalle and Monroe streets. Upon the lot there was a building which had been appraised at \$60,000, but cut no figure in the bargain. The lot has a frontage of 50 feet on Monroe street, and 110 on LaSalle street—a total of 5,500 square feet, or less than one-seventh of an acre. Yet this tiny bit of land, which but for the presence about it of the people of Chicago—a lot to the value of which neither the seller nor those of whom he bought had contributed any more than any other member of the Chicago community—brought him \$550,000 in cash. The ownership of that little piece of mother earth was worth to its owner more than most hard-working men could earn in over a thousand years. When

so much wealth may be got by some without earning it, just that much must be earned by others who don't get it; and in any community where a system of distribution, so inequitable prevails, good government is impossible. Good government cannot be founded upon injustice. Every tree bears fruit after its own kind.

Two men in the state of Washington have been sent to jail for contempt of court, the specific charge against them being that as editors of a newspaper they criticised a decision of the supreme court of the state. We are not fully advised of the circumstances, but it is reported that the criticism was published after the objectionable decision had been made. This being so, the punishment of the editors is not only in defiance of law, but is a most dangerous precedent which should be generally and promptly condemned. The power to punish criticisms of judicial proceedings is conferred upon courts in the interest of justice, and not for the personal protection of judges. They have no right to take advantage of their judicial authority to arbitrarily punish their personal enemies or critics. If a judge be publicly criticised in reference to any judicial action which he is about to take, and the criticism be so published as to tend in any way to affect the due administration of justice respecting that matter, the publication is contempt of court and ought to be punished as such. But criticisms of a decision already made are within the right of every citizen. They cannot influence a pending decision. If libelous, they may be punished in the regular way; but whether libelous or not, the court or judge that undertakes to punish them as a contempt of court, thus depriving the critics of a jury trial, and making their accuser also their judge, jury and executioner, is guilty of contempt of the highest law of the land—the guarantee of free speech and a free press and of security from all penalties except by due process of law.

An anonymous writer in Harper's Magazine describes the situation in China in an interesting and on the whole instructive way, but in considering the relations of other countries to that toppling empire he allows his judgment to be affected by the too common notion that selling alone, instead of both buying and selling, is the great economic object of human existence. Arguing the importance to the United States of securing by force new markets for the disposition of our products, he says that "the powers of production of the civilized world have outstripped its powers of consumption, and congestion is only averted by the continuous opening up of new markets and new fields of enterprise in those portions of the earth where the resources of nature and the energies of man still lie dormant." Suppose we concede that new markets are necessary—and really no one, after thought, will deny that healthy, economic conditions require an equilibrium between buying and selling—it by no means follows that we must hunt for new markets in distant climes. We have to-day, within the boundaries of the United States itself, a larger market than all our vast possibilities of production can oversupply.

Every man who wants to work but begs in vain for work to do, is a possible buyer. Every man who works only part of the time because he cannot get full employment, would buy more if he had full employment. Every business and professional man whose income is narrow, would be a better customer if he himself were more regularly at work. To the extent that business is bad with him, he is connected with the army of the unemployed. This army, already large and constantly growing, would buy goods to the fullest extent of its power to labor. It therefore offers a market for American products which is practically unlimited in capacity. Nor are navies and standing armies necessary to open up this market. It begs to be opened up; every man who so

licits employment aches to have the producers of the country export to him. And how easy it would be to open it up! We have only to withdraw those obstructions between labor and land which our laws erect. That done, labor would find employment at hand, and having employment would buy goods to the full limit of its earning power.

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This is clear when we consider that there is no such thing as buying without selling, nor selling without buying, and that in the last analysis what we really buy and sell is labor. Though trade takes the form of an exchange of goods for goods, and more superficially of goods for money, it is at bottom an exchange of labor for labor. Consequently, when labor is to any degree obstructed the affected laborers have less to sell, and therefore they buy less, which diminishes the opportunities of others to sell, and so by further diminishing selling further diminishes buying, until a condition is produced which makes men like the Harper writer, quoted above, suppose that "the powers of production of the civilized world outstrip its powers of consumption," and leads them to infer that "congestion is only averted by the continuous opening up of new markets and new fields of enterprise in those portions of the earth where the resources of nature and the energies of man still lie dormant"—meaning, of course, distant portions, such as the Chinese empire. These men are sound enough in their inference that we must seek relief in those portions of the earth where "the resources of nature and the energies of man still lie dormant." But we need not go to the Chinese empire for that. We can find it much nearer home.

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When it is remembered that the entire population of the United States could be located in the single state of Texas, with over two acres of land to every man, woman and child; when it is known that more than half the area of the city of New York is vacant; when we look over the spreading area

of Chicago and see that even a smaller portion is used; when we consider the unopened mines, the mines that are open but idle, the unworked farming land, and the desirable but vacant spaces which characterize all our towns and villages; and when we supplement these considerations with a reflection upon the unemployed, the unhoused, the unclothed, the hungry, and those who fear loss of employment and hunger and rags and homelessness—when we allow these conditions to come in review before us, how can we for a moment assume that we must force our way into other countries to find the resources of nature and the energies of man still dormant? They are dormant here! at our very doors! in New York, in Chicago, throughout the whole land! And they are dormant not because Americans are too idle to take advantage of American resources, but because American law has wrested those resources from the people and placed them in the miserly custody of favored classes who get their living in the sweat of other men's faces.

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Let our laws but open the way to the ragged to do such work as they can, in exchange for clothes; let them offer but natural opportunities to the hungry to earn their bread in the sweat of their own faces; to the houseless to exchange their labor for the labor of builders; to all to satisfy their wants as nature has ordained, by the application in freedom of their suppressed energies to our monopolized resources of soil, mine, forest, and city lot; let those laws also open the way to them mutually to trade the fruits of their industry, without paying either public or private tribute, each with all,—only let this simple justice be done, and there will be no necessity either real or apparent for forcibly opening up foreign markets for the sale of our products. We shall then have a limitless market at home.

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All that is required to bring about this result is to treat land that is not covered by water as we treat land

which is covered by water. Only last week, in the case of the Illinois Central railroad company against the City of Chicago, a case in which the railroad company claimed that its charter gave it title to certain lands under the waters of Lake Michigan contiguous to the shore, the supreme court of Illinois decided that the legislature has no power to create such a title. Upon this point the court declared that while "it is true that the state holds the title to the lands covered by the waters of Lake Michigan lying within its boundaries," it nevertheless does so "in trust for the people, for the purpose of navigation and fishery." Think of the difference there would be in civilization if it were the law not only that the title to land under water, but to the dry land also is held by the state in trust for appropriate uses, and that the state cannot create a valid title in individuals to anything except what they produce. On Lake Michigan, a fisher may own the fish he catches, but not an exclusive right of fishing; he may own the boat he sails, but not any part of the lake upon which he sails it; and he may own the dock he builds, but not the land under water upon which the piers rest. If in like manner he might own the grain he sows, the crops he reaps, the minerals he extracts, and the buildings he erects, but neither the space within which nor the solid ground upon and from which he sows, reaps, extracts and builds, then the resources of nature and the energies of man in this country would no longer lie dormant. And this distinction between the ownership by men of what they produce, and of old mother earth from which they produce it, could be maintained without interfering with necessary private possession. It could be done by the simple but effectual method of treating ground rent as public property, and all products except ground rent as private property.

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The opposite method, that of allowing individuals besides owning what they earn, to own also the land out of which all men's earnings must be

made, has the effect not only of depriving production of its natural and voluntary markets, and of creating the false impression that the resources of America and the energies of Americans have been exhausted, but it enables foreign countries to conquer this country and subjugate its inhabitants. This they do without force of arms, but the process is all the more dangerous on that account. For instance, an English syndicate has secured an option for the purchase of 33,000 acres of coal land in Tennessee and Kentucky, in the region known as the Jellico district. In a few weeks that syndicate will own the land. Since this can be done with 33,000 acres of coal land in the south, it can be done as to all the land in the United States. To an astonishing extent it has been already done. The amount of wealth that goes out of this country every year, figuring in the official statistics as excessive exports, but being in reality so much tribute to absentees, is enormous. What difference could it make to us if this same wealth were sent to a foreign government, which, having conquered us, required the tribute both to fill its exchequer and as a confession of acquiescence in its suzerainty? None at all. To the extent that foreigners own the land of this country they own the country. That, however, is no reason for forbidding foreigners to buy American land. If America is to be owned at all, it might as well be owned by a few foreigners as by a few Americans. But little difference can it make to those who are governed by lords of the land, whether the lords be foreign or domestic. The real thing is the fact that ownership of the land is essentially ownership of the landless men who must live upon and out of it.

A wholesome decision has been made by the supreme court of Louisiana, in a murder case which had been pushed to trial with undue haste. Owing to notorious miscarriages of justice through the law's delay, a sentiment has been stirred up in favor of summary punishment for crime. So

strong has this sentiment been at times that lynchings have been gravely justified, in the name of good order—God save the mark—and trials so speedy and disregarding of the prisoner's rights as to amount to lynchings, have been demanded by some of the most conservative organs of conservative opinion. It is to be hoped that this lawless sentiment may hereafter be held in check by the very sensible and just decision of the Louisiana court. The crime in that case had been committed on a Sunday, some ten miles from the courthouse. The accused was on his way to the sheriff to surrender, when he was arrested and placed in jail. He was indicted during the week, and four days afterward, one of the intervening days being the Sunday following the crime, he had been tried, convicted, and sentenced to hang. Meanwhile he had been closely confined and his counsel had been occupied during most of the time in the trial of other important criminal cases, in consequence of which there had been no opportunity for conference and preparation to meet the charge or for discovering evidence that might have told in the prisoner's favor. For these reasons the appellate court held that the conviction had been unduly precipitate, and granted a new trial. In doing so the judges explicitly and soundly declared that the constitutional guaranty that a prisoner shall have the right to defend himself and to have the assistance of counsel, is not an empty and meaningless formality.

Somebody has been digging up the pedigree of Lieut. Hobson, and the Albany Law Journal, which has most excellent judgment in its own field, has proved the wisdom of the saw about cobblers sticking to their last, by concluding that Hobson's heroism is due to his ancestry. There are really no grounds for this conclusion, even upon the assumption that heroism, like real estate, is inheritable; for Hobson's ancestors appear to have been lawyers, judges, senators, and such—very good in their line, but

their line was not heroic. Yet if it had been, the Albany Law Journal could hardly justify its remark that the more Hobson's pedigree is studied "the more apparent does it become that true heroes are not mere accidents," and that "noblesse oblige is just as true now as it was 'in days of old, when knights were bold.'" Though Hobson was mentally better equipped than his crew for leadership in the work they jointly undertook, he was no more heroic. Until the lineage of those seven less notable but not less daring men shall have been traced to noble ancestry, Hobson's heroic act cannot be attributed to "noblesse oblige."

It was a significant message which Congressman Hull sent to a company of colored volunteers raised in Des Moines, Ia. The company had elected a colored man for its captain and applied to be mustered into the United States service; and in reply to its application Mr. Hull in his message said: "The war department declares that the captain must be a white man. Settle the matter at once and the company can be mustered in immediately." Why this objection to a colored captain? Was it because the colored captain was incompetent? That may have been, but if so, why object to him on account of color? And why offer to muster in the company immediately provided it would follow a white captain whether competent or not? The objection could not have been for incompetency. It was not a military objection at all, but a social one. Commissioned officers have certain social privileges which they shrink from sharing with men whose color testifies to the enslavement of their ancestors. That this feeling exists is a fact, but why should the war department be governed by it? A better spirit has since been shown with reference to the organization of a body of negro yellow fever immunes in Indiana. Negro officers have been granted to these volunteers. It is to be hoped that this