

God and the people. He recently delivered an address before the Reform Club of Fitchburg which contains many thoughts worth laying to heart among the others this:

If the mass of the people are determined to secure a change for the better, that change, time being given, will be accomplished. If they are indifferent, it is impossible for superior power, through the exercise of that power, to secure a change that shall possess practical value.

And this:

The only governments that possess the means of perpetual life and the only governments that deserve to live, are what may be called home rule governments, in which the people are consulted as to what shall be done; governments in which they have the power to limit expenditures and to name the source of taxation, and the extent to which the resources of the people shall be taken for public purposes.

After elections there is generally so much excusing and explaining that the frank expression of George Bernard Shaw is quite refreshing. Those who know Mr. Shaw's literary work will not be surprised; but his outspoken assertion that his defeat as candidate for the London county council is due to personal unpopularity must be amusing to politicians. Speaking of the result he said:

I do not account for it. It is a perfectly simple record of the fact that after my six years of progressive work for the citizens of South St. Pancras on their borough council they so thoroughly disapprove of me and mistrust me that they have given my opponents the most splendid victory in the whole battle.

The facility, according to the first clause of an old epigram, with which questions can be asked, is exemplified by the International Economist for June. This flourishing business periodical quotes one of our paragraph editorials which refers to a native uprising in Africa (p. 113) and in which, after explaining that the object of the uprising is "Africa for the black man," we ask: "And why not? If we have 'America for the white man,' why not 'Africa for the black man?'" Thereupon our commercialistic contemporary

wants to know "how we could have 'America for the white man,' without an almost total disregard of a logically prior tenet, 'America for the Indians;'" and if we follow out this idea how we could have civilization. This question is supposed by the astute questioner to be a solar plexus blow at what he regards as "the fountain head principle of the single tax." In fact it gets nowhere near to the single tax. Moreover it implies that The Public stands for "America for the white man," whereas the paragraph in question was intended simply as a comparison to illustrate, through a look at "ourselves as others see us," the utter absurdity of that wretched slogan of race exclusiveness. We shall add a word with reference to the International Economist's unwarranted assumption that we might answer its rather puerile question by demanding that "justice be done though the heavens fall." The heavens are in danger of falling not when justice but when injustice reigns. Justice is a law as immutable in morals as the law of gravitation is in physics, and it must be treated with similar respect. Our motto, therefore, is not "Let justice be done though the heavens fall;" but "Let justice be done lest the heavens fall." We suggest to our recklessly inquisitive contemporary with the commercial eye that there are better things even in a commercial world than cent-per-cent.

Bolton Hall writes of a reprehensible habit which he finds reformers addicted to. "Twice within the last ten days," says Mr. Hall, "I have received papers containing articles written by earnest and energetic reformers containing 'statistics.' One of them states that 'we allow the few men who control our steam railways to take annually \$550,000,000 above the fair return of interest on actual capital invested.'" The Interstate Commerce Report of 1902 shows that in 1900 the net income above operating expenses was only about \$580,000,000. In 1903 it was \$600,000,000. Upon calling the

attention of one author to some of these reckless figures he wrote me that he had taken them 'from an article in some newspaper' and that he did not know anything about them, but that they were good figures, and that the article would have a large circulation." By way of comment Mr. Hall adds: "In my judgment economic reforms of any kind, and chiefly the single tax, is strong enough not to need a bolstering up by reckless statements and statistics, as one would expect from Carroll D. Wright. I ask for the publication of this, because the evil is a growing and disgusting one." We cordially agree with Mr. Hall. One of the irritating phases of economic discussions is reckless misuse of statistics. Carroll D. Wright and the plutocratic scribblers who copy from him are especially culpable. He and they are also especially dangerous, for they usually lend some weight of expert authority to what they say. But this vice is a bad one for reformers to imitate. It is bad for them personally, and it is bad for any cause they champion. Thomas G. Shearman used often to quote, "figures won't lie, but liars will figure," and we suggest that this species of figuring be left to the experts who invented it.

In the decision of the United States Supreme Court nullifying the Cleveland 4-cent street car ordinance which was adopted under an administration preceding Mayor Johnson's, there is more reason for satisfaction than appears upon the surface. A contrary decision would, indeed, have been more desirable; for that would have cleared the way for passing and enforcing an ordinance for 3-cent fares, something which this decision prevents. But the decision makes it perfectly plain to the people of Cleveland that in renewing the street car franchises now nearly expired, they will be absolutely bound to a 5-cent fare if they allow the renewals to be made on that