

own thoughts. "What a day they would have if I had the making of it!"

"Just so, Mairi," said Murdoch, gently. "And afterwards—"

"Afterwards!" echoed Mairi. "They'd be happy afterwards."

"Like the people in your fairy tales," said Murdoch, looking at the picture of Henry George again. "But life *isn't* a fairy tale. Your happy people would soon be miserable again—unless, of course—" he broke off, looking as if he saw no one. "There is a way, of course, but it is steep. This man," he added, pointing to the portrait, "has shown it—or at least the path to the first summit. He has a torch. He has lighted it, and now he holds it aloft. But the people that stumble, can they see it? Ah! What is this?" he exclaimed, as the sound of hurrying steps fell on his ears. "Here is news, surely!"

A terrible knocking drowned his voice. A moment later the door burst open, and a man rushed in waving something in his hand.

"It's all right!" he shouted. "They'll be freed tomorrow. The prisoners will be out. Hurrah!"

The house rang with joyous shouts, and Mairi cried "Hurrah!" louder than anyone.

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CURRENT BELIEF IN PREDESTINATION.

For The Public.

The newspapers report that a baby was born to Mr. Waldorf Astor, son of William Waldorf Astor, on March 23. This baby is English, having been born in London. Its father was born in New York, but when the grandfather abjured his American citizenship and became a naturalized British subject, his family became British subjects with him. The baby's father, it is announced, will run for Parliament at the next election.

Although this baby is English, it was predestined before its birth to enjoy a princely income derived from a forced levy on the workers of New York City, who contribute several millions yearly for the support of its father and grandfather. In one sense this is not a voluntary contribution, being forced by the laws of New York. In another sense it is a voluntary contribution because the workers of New York consent to such laws remaining in force.

For my own part, I do not consent. The annual income which, under existing conditions, this baby is predestined to receive from the State of New York is very much larger than the annual tax on tea which King George tried to levy on the American colonies before the Revolution. The people of those days refused to pay into the King's treasury an annual tax of a few thousand pounds; the New York people of these days have

not such high strung, patriotic notions. They consent to deprive their families of the luxuries, and even of the comforts and necessities, of life in order to send a few millions annually across the ocean to support the English Astors in magnificent luxury. It is one of the strangest and most unaccountable acts of free born American citizens.

Laws which compel the workers of New York to support a privileged number of people, either English or American, in unearned luxury and splendor, are contrary to natural justice. Therefore they cannot be beneficial to mankind. By the term "workers" I mean laborers, mechanics, employers, business men and all others who carry on the business of the country by their industry and enterprise.

For centuries millions of the human family labored under the fatalistic belief that people before they were born were predestined to an eternal existence in hell or heaven, as the case might be, without regard to their conduct here on earth. That foolish notion was finally banished from the minds of men, on the ground that it interfered with man's free agency.

But as a people we still cling to a belief in predestination concerning earthly affairs. We consent to the idea that the Astor child is justly predestined before its birth to a life of unearned luxury, and the poor man's child to a life of undeserved poverty, although this belief runs counter to the doctrine of free agency for human beings on earth. Predestination in matters spiritual was a horrible doctrine—an abomination in the sight of the Lord; so it is as to temporal affairs.

For one, I reject predestination both as to heaven and earth. I regard it in every case as contrary to God's will and God's justice. Man should be free from the thought or fear that before he was born he was condemned to an eternity in hell; otherwise he may lose his incentive to a good life and good deeds. He should also be free from a like belief or fear as to the affairs of earth. But unfortunately we force the belief on him by the presence of existing facts. Let all have equal opportunity in life, and the horrible belief in earthly predestination will vanish from the minds of men, as in the case of that predestination which referred to heaven or hell.

GEORGE WALLACE.

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THE FARMER AND THE SINGLE TAX.

S. H. Howes, of Southboro, Mass., in *The Rockland (Me.) Opinion* of April 2.

At first thought it might appear that the tax on land values would bear heavily on the farmer, as it is quite natural to think of him as a landowner. Please note, however, that the proposi-