

The Louisiana Democrat.

"The World is Governed Too Much."

HENRY L. BLOSSAT, Business Manager.

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THE RAJAH'S TREASURE.

An Interesting Story of a Soldier's Gratitude.

(Written for This Paper.)



The shades of evening had fallen over the turbulent and swiftly-running waters of the river Hooghly, an offshoot of the mighty and sacred Ganges, but the hush and quiet which in most places follow the close of day were here wanting, for the bark of

jackals in the jungles which lined the banks, the shrill shrieks of nocturnal birds as they winged their flight over the muddy stream, added to the hum of human voices which were wafted from the City of Palaces, combined to produce a series of sounds that grated harshly upon the ear of a stranger.

A myriad of lights shone from the native boats, as they darted hither and thither between the shipping and the shore.

On one noble ship, the quarter-deck and rails were brilliantly illuminated by scores of gayly colored lanterns, while beneath the "after" awning two long tables groined beneath the weight of the most luxurious and delicate viands of the east.

As the steward of the vessel, assisted by several native caterers, completed the arrangements for the banquet the captain emerged from his cabin and walked toward the gangway. He was just in time to greet a party of ladies and gentlemen whose boat he had heard touch the side.

It was a motley procession that poured over the rail.

There was the European merchant in conventional evening dress, accompanied by wife and daughters arrayed in the richest attire.

Then came the Hindoo banker, stately in his magnificent robes and turban, glittering with costly gems. Next followed the Mohammedan, perhaps a little less gaudily dressed than his predecessor, yet presenting a fine appearance, while the Parsee in his long, conical, bishop-shaped hat, flowing cloak of figured satin, and wide silken trousers, came next to the feast to do honor to the American captain.

Each guest was followed by his own servant, whose duty it was to wait on his master, and him alone. To a novice the arrangement at table would have seemed very strange, but in this land of caste it excited no comment. Each seat took their allotted places at the festal board, while before the group of Hindoos were laid utensils that had never been touched, save by people of their own kind, and the contents of the various dishes were wholly of the vegetable kingdom and had not been defiled by contact with the hand of either Musselman or Christian.

"There is one matter that puzzles me, captain," observed a fine-looking European gentleman, who was seated at the left hand of the host, "and that is why you, an American, should have named this floating palace of yours 'The Rajah's Treasure'! It certainly sounds oriental, and is very pleasing to our ears."

"It is, indeed, oriental," was the reply, "and the reason for the ship bearing this name is because my possession of her is due to an oriental; that is, primarily."

"It may not be fitting for me to relate the narrative at this time," began the captain, apologetically, "for it might call some unpleasant memories to many of my respected guests, as it touches upon the dark days of India which you all so well remember."

"The Capt. Sahib need have no fear of wounding the feelings of his servants," remarked one of the Hindoos present.

"Then I will tell you," went on the captain, "for it is an interesting story. I was a poor orphan lad in my own country, and was forced to turn to the sea as a means of livelihood. Slowly, very slowly, I crawled up the ladder of my chosen profession until I reached the position of chief officer, and in such capacity I have visited these shores many times.

"It was on one voyage when I had become almost discouraged and begun to feel that I was destined to live and die a failed that something most singular happened to me. On leaving Boston with a cargo of rice for this port the captain informed me that we had among our men a man whom he had allowed to work his passage to Calcutta, remarking at the same time: 'He is one, I think, who will be better days, and I wish you would make things as easy for him as the discipline of the ship will allow.'"

"Captain, I pray you," broke in a military-looking gentleman who was seated on the speaker's right hand, "do not continue."

"But, colonel, our friends are anxious for the story," was the reply, which, however, was heard only by a few present. Then aloud: "At the first opportunity, when we went to sea, I had a long talk with the man who had taken this means to reach his home in the east. That he was a true gentleman I saw at a glance, and was much interested in that part of his history which he saw fit to reveal to me.

"I shielded him from the hardships of a sailor's life as much as lay in my power, for I felt grieved to find a man fitted to fill an exalted position brought to such a strait and that to my circumstances over which he had no control. The seamen, however, did not take kindly to their more delicate shipmate, and I am afraid that many times during the passage, unknown to me, he succeeded in making his life miserable. One night when about a week's sail from the mouth of the river Hooghly, I was startled by the cry of 'man overboard!' and hurrying to the rail of the vessel, I looked over the side, and saw

A BILLION-DOLLAR COUNTRY.

The Republican Legislation for Extravagant Expenditures.

The plan outlined by Representative Forney, of Alabama, for the reduction of appropriations by the next congress is encouraging in the extent that it shows an appreciation of the need of retrenchment. This may be a billion-dollar country, as Secretary Foster suggests, but the people will not accept the greatness of our resources as an excuse for unnecessary extravagance. But when it comes to pointing out where retrenchment is possible, the outlook is not so flattering as could be desired.

The mischief done by the Fifty-first congress is in many particulars irremediable, especially so long as we have a republican president and a republican majority in the senate. Many republicans have boasted with great unctious that the tariff cannot be reduced for ten years at least. This may turn out to be a delusion; but it is beyond dispute that the reckless legislation of the last congress has committed the country to a vast expenditure of money for years to come. The cost of congress is not to be estimated by the billion of dollars which it appropriated. To put its cost at that sum is to take a most inadequate view of the situation. Its most pernicious activity was exerted in the passage of general laws, calling for great appropriations, at once, but still larger sums for the future.

This remark is particularly applicable to the pension legislation of the last congress. Under previous laws the pension bureau was so conducted that the expenditures were increasing rapidly. New legislation was enacted, which will increase pension appropriations to an extent that prudent men shrink from an endeavor to estimate. An idea of the rate of increase may be had from the statement of Commissioner Baum that over five thousand certificates were recently issued, the first payments on which will amount to nearly six hundred thousand dollars. This rate, if maintained, means an addition of thirty-one million dollars per year to the pension charge, and the work is expected to go on for many years yet. But it is to be observed that the present work is not satisfactory, and is only mentioned as good work for the present force. There is to be an increase in the number of clerks, however, and then the task of giving pensions to everybody may be greatly expedited.

How far the granting of pensions has outrun expectations is shown by the experience of the treasury in the payment of the pensions due on the 4th of the present month. Treasury officials were somewhat embarrassed to make the necessary provision to meet them, as they discovered the commissioner of pensions had estimated the sum needed at nineteen million dollars, when, in point of fact, twenty-six million dollars were needed. The money necessary to meet the drafts was not ready for some days after they were due, and the government paper was saved from dishonor only by the fact that many of these drafts are not presented promptly. This, of course, was foreseen; but a similar incident, we are informed, never happened before in the history of the government.

Meanwhile, in other matters the treasury gives unmistakable evidence that the "billion-dollar country" has been subjected to demands that strain its resources. After protesting over and over that there would be plenty of money to pay the four and one-half per cent bonds at maturity, the treasury proceeds to perfect arrangements to extend more than half of them at a reduced interest, incidentally boasting of the high credit which renders this possible. But the credit of the government was not in issue. It was a question of cash, not credit. A claim of having cash enough to pay a note is not supported by proof of credit enough to renew it. At the same time the payment of other appropriations is postponed by quibbles—a common device of debtors who are hard pressed. Such is the unenviable position to which a billion-dollar country has been brought by a billion dollar congress, and the worst has not yet come.

The next congress will have to retrench wherever retrenchment is possible, but with all that it can do in that direction it will not be possible to keep down appropriations to anything near what they were under the last administration. It will not be practicable to repeal much of the vicious legislation of the last congress, which calls for large sums of money. Small leaks may be stopped here and there, but the big ones are for the present out of reach. The country will have plenty of leisure in the future to reflect what an expensive luxury is a billion-dollar congress, even to a billion-dollar country.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

WANAMAKER'S EXPLANATION.

A Document That Has a Very Familiar Sound.

Everyone who read Mr. Wanamaker's explanation of his connection with the Keystone bank troubles must have been struck by its resemblance to Senator Quay's explanation of his relation to that treasury "secret" before which "republicans were to stand dumb." In both cases there is a wicked partner who has to take all the blame. In both these cases the wicked partner is dead, and cannot be heard. In both cases there is a joint speculation, in which the wicked partner behaves badly, and leaves the good man to make up a deficit. In both cases, too, the "agreement is verbal." Says Mr. Wanamaker:

"During 1887, to the best of my recollection, upon the belief that Mr. Lucas was a rich man, and the knowledge of his investing in various enterprises as a capitalist, I told him of my great desire to assist in preserving the independence of the Reading railroad property, and that I thought that the purchase of certain holdings of the stock that were held by parties inimical to the reorganization would be profitable and useful, and I invited him to join me in such a purchase on joint account.

"The agreement between us was verbal and to supply certain sums of money, as I called for them, and I deposited the same to my personal account in the Keystone bank, in accordance with the agreement, from time to time I drew

PITH AND POINT.

—Spats—"Let me tell you what I know." Hunker—"Go ahead. It won't take so long as to tell what you don't know."—West Shore.

—What a wheelman most dreads is rising ground, especially the kind that rises up and strikes him on the top of the head.—Detroit Free Press.

—And His Friends Pretend to Believe It.—Tom—"Phil is only a pretender." Jack—"What are his pretensions?" Tom—"He pretends he is a man."

—Ward—"Why did you bite that dollar you loaned me—to see if it was good?" Randall—"I wasn't biting it; I was kissing it good-by."—Harper's Bazar.

—Where is Blivins?—"He went to Europe, and I hear took Paris green." "What! Committed suicide?" "No. He took Paris as green as any American could take it."—Light.

—Ambiguous.—Sharpson—"Hear about our friend Ham? Drew the \$10,000 prize in a lottery last week and has gone into the cigar business. Lucky stroke, wasn't it?" Philatz—"Yes. One actor less."

—Wife (to her husband, who is writing a note of invitation to a dinner)—"Now, Karl, don't forget to invite Prof. Warzig. He is so very ugly that the very sight of him will spoil the appetite of all the other guests."—Schleiss's Zeitung.

—Enough to Cry For.—Sprigson, who has a poultry-keeping neighbor, says if the latter's rooster is a descendant of the one that made Peter weep when he crowed he doesn't wonder that poor Peter wept bitterly when he heard him.

—Yankee Blather.—"I feel like a wood-pile after a hard winter, your honor," he murmured, as he rose from the bench and faced his accusers. "How's that?" kindly inquired the judge. "All used up, your honor." "Sixty days to recuperate," smiled the court, and it came to pass.

—I was pleased to call that cake of yours a perfect symphony, as you may remember," said young Mr. Fitts, about two hours after dinner. "Well, dear?" "I want to revise the expression; I feel now as though I had swallowed a whole Wagnerian opera."—Indianapolis Journal.

—Dashaway—"I have an old coat I think you might wear, Uncle Jasper." Uncle Jasper—"I see obliged, sah. Is dat coat a sack? I ain't got much use for a tail coat, sah." Dashaway—"Why, what's the matter with a tail coat, uncle?" Uncle Jasper—"Um! Mighty unhandy, sah, getting over fences."—Clothes and Furnisher.

—And Jennie Blushed.—Old Gentleman—"Where is that book called 'Don't?' Anyone know?" Bobby—"I think it is in the parlor. You were reading it last night to Mr. Spoodnyke, weren't you, Jennie?" Jennie—"Why no, Bobby. Why, do you think so?" Bobby—"Cause I heard you say 'Don't' a good many times."—Boston Herald.

—The Kiffel hat for evening wear; The youth who hums the score; The nervous chump who kicks your chair—But the most annoying, altitudinous and colossal nuisance is the chattering idiot, male or female, who keeps up a chatter of rapid conversation right through the three acts, and who is, without doubt—

The most unmitigated bore. —Washington Post

SHE WANTED A LETTER.

An Old Lady's Queer Habit of Calling at the Post Office.

"There is a little old woman," said the man at the general delivery window of the post office, "who comes every day to ask if there is a letter for her. She never gets one. She comes up and looks through the window in a frightened way. Then she asks nervously: 'Is there a letter for me?'"

"I know her name, you know, from hearing her pronounce it so often."

"Nothing to-day," I answer kindly, for I feel sorry for her. She walks off and stands in a meditative way. Coming back she says: 'You are quite sure there is nothing?'"

"Quite sure."

"It's Browne, you know, with an e—B-r-o-w-n-e."

"Yes, I know."

"And Mary Stevens Browne, with an e?"

"Yes."

"I thought you might have forgotten it."

"No, no; I remember your name very well."

"Well, if you are sure there is nothing, I guess I will go. Good day."

"The day I asked her where the expected letter was coming from, she looked at me with startled eyes."

"I don't know," she said, simply. "I'm sure I don't know; but you see if a letter should come for me from anywhere I should want to get it right away. I wouldn't like to find that there had been a letter here for me, and that I did not receive it."

"Then you aren't really expecting a letter?"

SINGLE TAX DEPARTMENT.

I am inclined to think that these two questions are the most difficult ones a single tax advocate is called upon to answer:

(1) Are there not unearned increments in other things besides lands?

(2) Can not a tax upon land values be shifted?

When I say these questions are difficult, I mean that it is not always an easy matter to convince, even intelligent people, that buildings, e. g., do not increase in valuation as population increases; or that on land values is unlike most other taxes, i. e., can not be recovered from some person other than the one upon whom it is levied. However plainly single tax men may see these truths, it must be borne in mind that the ultimate adoption of the single tax proposition depends upon the conversion of our opponents, or at least those of them who are thoughtful, to our views. I offer the following suggestions, not as containing anything original, but as possibly helpful in certain emergencies:

In the first place, it ought to be understood that when we assert that there is no unearned increment in anything except land, we are stating a general truth. We are not denying that there are fluctuations in the values of labor products or of land. But while increase of population is accompanied by no increase in number of natural opportunities, it is accompanied by a more than proportional increase of labor products. Consequently, while the price of land tends to rise, that of labor products tends to fall. If a person starts from, say, Portsmouth, N. H., and proceeds to the summit of Mount Washington, he will frequently find himself going down hill before he reaches his destination; but, upon the whole, his ascents will amount to more than his descents by several thousand feet. It seems to me that his progress inland is a fair illustration of the course of land values in most, if not all, civilized countries; and his return to the seashore likewise illustrates the mode of the decline of the values of labor products.

The writer had the following instance brought to his notice as an example of unearned increment in a house:

A man leased a lot of land for a period of ten years at the rate of \$100 per year. On this lot he erected a house costing \$3,000, from the tenants of which house he received during the first year \$150. But population began to increase in that vicinity, and the second year he received \$300 from his tenants, and the year after \$400. Had not that house increased in value, and was not the increased value due to increase of population? Now, the average assessor and the average real estate dealer know that the house was not worth any more, in fact not quite so much, at the end of the third year as it was when first erected. They know that if the house had been destroyed during the third year, that it could have been replaced for \$3,000, unless building materials and the wages of labor had meantime varied appreciably. They know that no insurance company would insure the house for any more than it would cost to replace it, or if a company did do so it would not keep its contract. But there are many intelligent people who have to have these things distinctly pointed out to them. Clearness of statement and frequency of repetition are essential to the removal of doubt upon such points as these. Sarcastic, spoken or printed, does not do one bit of good.

Prof. Seligman, I think it was, cited the improvement of wine in quality as it grows older as a case of unearned increment, and I have heard the same citation made more than once since the meeting at Saratoga last September. It does not seem to have occurred to the man of letters, and possibly it has not occurred to others, that he might as well have called attention to a hill of growing corn as a case of unearned increment. The farmer brings certain elements into juxtaposition, and leaves nature to do the rest. It is generally considered that he earns about all he gets out of a cornfield. The producers of wine do precisely the same thing in contact with a press of some sort, the juice in contact with a vessel, and the vessel in contact with a cellar or other storehouse. Labor makes the press, the vessel and the storehouse, the ultimate object of all which appliances is to retain the wine in a position where it may be affected by natural forces or processes. Probably wine producers are of the opinion that their product in the end "costs about all it comes to."

Congressman R. G. Horr recently cited the case of a colt's developing a 2:13 gait as an example of unearned increment. But horsemen know that colts of uncertain pedigree do not often develop that rate of speed, and that the training of a trotter is a task which few men are equal to.

But it is not my purpose to attempt to meet all the instances of alleged unearned increment to which my attention has been called. I merely wish to remark, as in the beginning, that while it may be plain enough to us single tax men that there is no unearned increment except in land, nevertheless, it is not so plain to other people, and it behooves us to deal with every alleged instance of such increment in other things in a careful and thorough manner, above all, avoiding even such faint suspicions of sarcasm as the writer may have already laid himself open to in the course of this article.

As to shifting the tax on land values, it ought to be understood that the proposition that such tax can not be shifted is a general one, as is likewise the proposition that a tax imposed upon an article in the course of production can not be shifted. Nobody, so far as I am aware, asserts that under no circumstances whatever can a tax upon land values be shifted, or under all circumstances a tax upon, say, houses can be shifted. The tendency of taxes upon land values is to remain with the person upon whom they are first fall, and the tendency of a

tax upon houses is to rest finally upon the user of a house.

If a tenant rents a piece of land subject to taxes, he will have to pay those taxes, and if the valuation of even the bare land is raised before his lease expires, he will usually have to bear the consequent increase in taxes. But by making a lease subject to taxes, the tenant is for the time being the virtual owner of the land. On the other hand a tax upon an empty house can not very easily be shifted, and other exceptions to both propositions might be added.

But generally speaking, if there is an increase in taxes upon houses, capital employed in building must do one of two things—either itself shoulder the increase, or charge it over to occupants, i. e., consumers of houses. If capital accepts the former alternative it must content itself with smaller returns. But it was receiving, presumably, no more than the average return before, and rather than receive less it will look for investment in some other direction. But if the increased taxation is to be charged over to the consumer of houses, practically the consumption of houses will decrease, i. e., people will try to content themselves with less expensive or narrower quarters.

The first effect of the increased taxation might be, consequently, a rise in the rental value of inferior houses, and a decline in the rental value of superior houses; but upon the whole, there is a decreased demand for houses, and, consequently, capital lacks encouragement to invest in that sort of production. After awhile, the increase of population will have so far outstripped the production of houses, or existing houses will have so far worn out, that house rents will rise, and the owners of houses will begin to collect the increase of taxation from tenants in the shape of increased house rents. Capital will then begin to be invested more freely in the production of houses, because it can now count upon receiving the average return. This same explanation will apply to all other products of labor besides houses. Taxation of labor products discourages production, and decrease in production ultimately causes rise in prices.

Taxation upon land values can not discourage the production of land. On the contrary, it so, so to speak, increases such production. It causes some land, at least, which was being held for an advance, to be offered at a lower price, and if the tax were so adjusted as to amount to all, or nearly all, of the annual rental value of bare land, all land now held for a rise would either be improved by present owners or offered for sale.

I am aware that this has been stated before, at least the substance of the preceding paragraph; but I do not recollect having seen in *The Standard* any very elaborate attempt to explain just how increased taxation upon labor products in the course of manufacture finally tends to rest upon the shoulders of the consumer in the form of increased prices.—H. J. Chase.

THE PENNSYLVANIA LAW.

Mr. H. C. Lea, a prominent merchant of Philadelphia, has written a letter to the Pennsylvania legislature vigorously protesting against the passage of a bill to list and tax personal property. Mr. Lea is a large owner of real estate and a very small owner of personal property, which makes his letter all the stronger. He says:

"As a heavy taxpayer I have naturally given the subject of taxation some thought for many years past, and my conviction is settled that real property is the surest and fairest basis on which to levy the public revenue. It can not elude the assessor, as the great bulk of personal property can; its value can be estimated with reasonable accuracy, and is not subject to violent or sudden fluctuations. The difference between land at \$25 an acre and \$25 a square foot is simply that the latter is surrounded by capital and business, while the former is remote from these sources of value. Of all classes in the community, the land-owner is the one most interested in having capital and business untrammelled to earn the largest profits. He gets, sooner or later, his share in those profits, and it is suicidal for him to drive away that which alone gives his land its special value over government lands in the territories."

The bill provides for a complete inventory of the personal effects of every person, firm and corporation, including household furniture and tools, and then provides that the inventories shall be printed and distributed to all the taxpayers, so that each one may play the spy on his neighbor and see whether he has made a true return or not. As there are 225,000 taxable persons in Philadelphia, the lists would fill several volumes, so that each person would have a small library presented to him every year at the public expense, consisting of a detailed statement of everybody's assets and liabilities.

Where the Single Tax Would Fall.

One wouldn't think that the area of New York city and Brooklyn was larger in 1880 than that of Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Kansas combined. Well, it isn't in superficial area, but when it comes to the value of the two areas, it is much larger, as is shown by the figures. The total for the two cities in that year was \$1,149,406,282, and for the six states \$1,101,952,049. This fact was brought out by William Bloch in the *Ozage county, Kas. Times*, to show that the really valuable lands that would have to bear the burden of taxation under the single tax would not consist of farm lands at all, but of the immensely high priced lots in our cities. The new census (for 1890) will probably show that the land values of New York city and Brooklyn have increased in the last ten years sufficiently to necessitate the adding of a couple or three more states to the list prepared by Mr. Bloch.

Wherever you find land relatively low, you will not find wages relatively high; and wherever land is high, you will not find wages low. As land increases in value, poverty deepens and pauperism appears.

—At Anson, Me., a black bear walked up to the house of Daniel Abbott, looked in at the sitting-room window, and then proceeded to inspect the pig-pen and sheep-fold.

—New York city consumes between two and three million eggs every day. They are drawn not only from New York state, but from several of the neighboring states and half a dozen western states, including Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Iowa. The first-named state is said to produce a larger number of eggs than any other state in the Union.

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MARK FROM THE TOMBS A DOLLAR FUL COME!

"Ye living men, come view the ground Where ye must shortly lie!" —Puck.

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WANTON DOWNING.

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