The Louisiana Democrat.

"The World is Governed Too Much."

HENRY L. BIOSSAT, Business Manager. ALEXANDRIA, LOUISIANA, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1891. VOL. XLVI.—NO. 34.

FOR TIME.

Oh! for time, amid life's rush,
To learn the bird's free note;
To list the evening's gentle hush;
To watch fair clouds afloat;
To mark the grace of flowers and leaves,
With a sense of all their sweet;
To ken the charms that nature weaves
In the green turf at our feet.

Oh! for time for thoughtful heed
Of the good e'en we might do,
Of the joy that comes of a loving deed,
Or an act that is just or true;
Out of the night so dark that speeds,
Wherever may be the morn,
On this dear earth, with its charms and needs,
No other day shall dawn.

Oh! for time, in the rush and the race,
To turn our feet aside,
The beauty of earth and sky to trace,
And the charm of ocean wide;
To note in the wild and jostling throng,
Some fellow crushed or driven,
And give our hand as we go along;
This were to well have striven.

—J. A. Kennedy, in Leslie's Weekly.

CAPTURED AN OUTLAW.

While Carrying Glad News to a Ticket-of-Leave Man.

"AH, WILL, the bluecoats have got Bob Fletcher, the bushranger, this time, unless you can stow me away in your hut until they pass."

"How can I give you shelter in the cabin, Bob? You know if the police come they will not even leave the hearthstone unturned in their search."

"Then I'll sit here in your doorway and prepare to give the officers a warm reception," replied the outlaw as he threw himself from the back of his jaded steed, and drawing his revolvers seated himself near the entrance to the rude abode which sheltered the ticket-of-leave man, William Stewart.

"No, no," exclaimed the latter; "you shall commit no murder on these premises. Look, you are armed, and may take by force what I rather would keep from you."

"What do you mean, Will?" asked the robber quickly.

"I mean," replied the other, thoughtfully, "that Black Duke, the fleetest horse between the sea coast and Ballarat, is feeding in the shed back of the hut. Your weapons are loaded, you are a desperate man. How, then, can I prevent you if you see fit to take the animal?"

"By heavens, Will, I understand you," exclaimed the bushranger, as he grasped the hand of the ticket-of-leave man; "and believe me, the time will come when you will have occasion to thank God that you extended me this help;" and the outlaw dashed the rowels of his spurs into the horse's side and rode rapidly away.

Scarcely had the hoof-beats of Black Duke died away than a cloud of dust arose from the direction of the metropolis, out of which soon appeared a company of mounted police. Dashing up to the hut the leader called:

"Ah, Stewart, where is that rascal, Fletcher? Hereabout, I dare say, for there is his horse that we have chased these ten miles."

"Yes, lieutenant, that is the bushranger's horse, but the man has gone."

"Which way? Where? How?"

"He forced the Duke into his service and rode away on his back, sir."

"What?" exclaimed the officer; "did the villain steal your horse? Why did you not shoot him dead?"

"Because I was unarmed."

"A likely story," returned the lieutenant, angrily. "But we must go after him. Two of you remain here, and mind that you do not let the ticket-of-leave man out of your sight. And you," continued the officer to Stewart, "may think yourself lucky if you do not see the inside of the hulks again for this piece of work."

The lieutenant was destined, however, to be unsuccessful, and returned to the sheep-herder's hut empty-handed.

"If I did not think that you were a square man, Stewart," he remarked, as he threw himself from his horse, "I should consider it my duty to take you back to Melbourne."

"Lieutenant," answered Stewart, "I can readily see why it is my conduct

"I'LL GIVE THE OFFICERS A WARM RECEPTION."

looks strange to you; but if you yourself were forced to live here alone in these wilds, you would think twice before you made a mortal enemy of a bushranger."

"Well, well, perhaps I should," replied the officer, "but get us something to eat and we'll say no more about it."

Some six months after the escape of Bob Fletcher we meet him again, but this time he is surrounded by a dozen or more members of his fierce band. Yet all the faces which are lighted by the camp-fire do not belong to robbers; two, at least, are feminine, and one is exceedingly lovely. The ladies are seated side by side on a trunk, while about them are scattered chests and boxes, with their contents of wearing apparel and toilet articles.

Near them, lying on the ground, are three men, their arms pinioned.

"Ladies," began Fletcher, as he approached the two women, "I am sorry to trouble you, but I must take a look into the trunk."

"Oh, sir," answered the younger of the two, "it does contain a treasure; a treasure of countless value, not only to your poor captives, but to another, whose life has, alas, been all too sad."

The maiden took from her neck a golden chain, from which was suspended a key, and handed both to the bandit.

On the top were a few articles of feminine clothing, which the bushranger removed with somewhat more delicacy than might have been expected in one of his stamp.

Suddenly he started, rose almost to his feet, then seized the burning knot from his attendant's grasp, while he exclaimed in a hoarge voice:

"Go join your comrades and tell them to stop all further search for our prisoners' effects. He who disobeys dies by my hand. Go!"

Then turning to his two frightened captives who stood near, the outlaw continued:

"Women, come hither and tell me whose likeness is that," and the robber chief pointed to a large photograph of a fine-looking young man.

"It is the picture of him whom you are this night to despoil of his dearest treasure, proof of the innocence of a crime under the stigma of which he has labored these many years."

"His name, I say; his name!" exclaimed the bushranger.

"It is written in his own hand on the back of the picture."

As the robber turned the cabinet he read: "Yours, with unchanging love, William Stewart."

For a moment the outlaw remained silent, gazing at the signature, then he returned the likeness to its place in the trunk, and to his captives he said in a voice husky with emotion:

"Ladies, I beg you will forgive me for the treatment you have received from me and my band. To the original

"WHOSE LIKENESS IS THAT?"

of that picture I owe my life. A friend of his, or one who could but speak his name, shall ever find safety and kindly treatment at the hands of Bob Fletcher, the bushranger."

Before the two women could recover from their surprise their captor had drawn the keen blade of his knife across the bonds which had secured their fellow-prisoners, and in a voice that rang from tree to tree he ordered his band to replace every article as they had found it, and load all again into the wagon from which they had been taken.

Though much surprised, the robbers did not dare to question the orders of their chief, but obeyed in sullen silence.

As the sun began to gild the tree tops a heavy covered wagon, drawn by two yoke of oxen, halted before the cabin of William Stewart, the ticket-of-leave man.

The sturdy driver was just coiling up the long lash of his whip when he was joined by those who were traveling in his company, two ladies and three men. One of the latter was mounted on a horse whose glossy hair was black as midnight. As the rider drew rein he called in a cheery voice:

"Oh, Will Stewart! Come, I've brought you back the Duke that you so kindly loaned me some months since."

While the outlaw was speaking he had dismounted and assisted one of the ladies to do likewise. It was the younger and handsomer of the two, and as her delicate foot touched the ground she raised her veil, and turning said in a low voice:

"William! have you forgotten me?"

For a moment the ex-convict and the brave girl stood, lost to all the world, when their bliss was broken in upon by heavy hoof-beats hurrying toward them. Looking up the party descried a body of police.

"Ah, Will, you see," coolly remarked Fletcher, "you see they are after me."

"But there is the Duke, man! Mount him and escape," said Stewart.

"No, no, my friend," exclaimed the bushranger. "It must come sooner or later. I will meet my fate like a man." And drawing his weapons from his belt he dropped them to the ground. Then folding his arms across his chest he walked forward to meet the officers.

It was a singular group that breakfasted that morning at the hut of the ticket-of-leave man. Leaving his men to secure their prisoner, the lieutenant hurried toward the sheep-herder, exclaiming joyfully:

"Good news, friend Stewart, good news! We have just received word from England that you were innocent of the crime for which you were transported."

"Ah, lieutenant, you are a tardy bearer of such news. This lady has outstripped you, and captured a bushranger into the bargain."—Boston Globe.

—A Man of Deeds.—Hyde—"Cornerlotte, the real-estate dealer, is a very silent man." Parker—"Quite natural, considering his business. A man of deeds, you know, is seldom a man of words."—Saturday Evening Herald.

THE SOUTH UNDER HARRISON.

Republicanism Killed by the Present Administration.

Taking the figures of 1888, an able statistician in Kansas has figured out a surprising increase of republican strength in the southern states, and his statistics are finding wide circulation in our republican contemporaries, who find comfort in graveyard whistling.

The figures are all right, but it is a characteristic republican habit to go wrong on right figures.

The trouble in this case is that the statistics are compiled from the returns of the election of 1888. The country then knew little or nothing about Mr. Harrison and did not dream of such a revival of the radicalism of the reconstruction epoch as it has seen under his administration in the plutocracy of the McKinley bill; or the shameless fraud of the bullion purchase swindle for the demonetization of silver, and in the bitter malignancy of the force bill, using sectional hate against the southern states as a pretext for putting the control of congressional elections in the hands of a clique of politicians in office in the District of Columbia.

The carnival of corruption during the reconstruction epoch made it impossible for any disinterested and intelligent person residing in the south to be a republican. With the lapse of years this was beginning to change. The people of the southern states are attached to the theory of rotation in office. They grew restless under the long-continued control of one party in their state affairs. They wished a change. Under the Cleveland adminstration they began to believe they could risk a change without danger. With a democrat like Cleveland or such a republican as Arthur in the white house, they were in danger of concluding that, merely for the sake of change, they could venture on putting republicans in office without the danger of having them kept there indefinitely by republican force and fraud.

The Harrison administration has shown them how gravely they were mistaken. It has convinced them that the republican party can never be safely trusted with such power as will allow it to follow its bent and demonstrate its real meaning. Under the Harrison administration, the prosperity of the south has been attacked; the attempt has been made to violently subject it politically, and its agricultural interests, in common with those of the west, have been ruthlessly sacrificed to the plutocracy. As a result republicanism in the south is dead. There may be some few white republicans left, the majority of them in the fastnesses of the mountains and in remote backwoods, where little or nothing is known of the outside world. But there are not enough of them anywhere to make even the nucleus of an effective republican organization in support of such republicanism as that of Reed and Harrison, Dudley and Quay, Wanamaker and Bardsley, Chandler and Lodge.

The entire country has reacted strongly against the radicalism and plutocracy of the republican party under Harrison, and as the southern states have been most fiercely attacked, most seriously threatened by it, the reaction has naturally been strongest there. If the democratic party were to disband to-morrow the republican party would still be unable to carry a single southern state in 1892.—St. Louis Republic.

SAVING AT THE SPIGOT.

Enforced Retrenchment the Result of Reckless Expenditure.

Secretary Foster proposes a material reduction of the clerical force at the New York custom house, as the inauguration of a new regime of economy at the commencement of the fiscal year. Similar reductions in other branches of the government service may be looked for this summer. The treasury is empty, and every dollar of expected revenues will be needed to meet the terrible bills imposed upon the government by the billion congress and the consequences of department extravagance for two years past. It is stated that one thousand census office clerks must go, and a reduction of $150,000 a year will be made in the salary list at the New York custom house. Here comes a snarl between the secretary of the treasury and the collector of the port. Mr. Erhardt makes a vigorous protest against the depletion of his force. However necessary it may be from Mr. Foster's standpoint, it will have a fatal effect upon republican politics in New York city. The turning out of office of a large number of the faithful will have a decided effect upon the coming election. The republican party in this state has never possessed a particle of strength except through office holders, and a wholesale dismissal this summer is sure to produce an effect which will prove especially disastrous to the fortunes of the party in the fall. The ranks of the disaffected, and they are numerous enough already, will be considerably augmented by those dismissals.

The enforced economy on the part of the government places Mr. Erhardt in such an unfortunate position that he may be compelled to resign to preserve his influence with his constituents. He is the first of Republican leaders in New York, and he has taken such a position against Mr. Foster's new regime that he cannot consistently remain in office after his friends have been turned out wholesale. There is no question as to the necessity of the government to reduce expenses. Every department has been run at high pressure since Mr. Harrison took possession of the white house. The ordinary expenses of the government have been increased beyond all precedents, and charges of corruption and fraud have been the rule, not the exception. The billion congress completed the work of the depletion of the treasury. Nothing is left of the large surplus saved by the Cleveland administration. The lesson has been taught to the American people that republican rule at Washington is the most expensive they can possibly experience. They have been cheated in the census, in the pension office, in the land office and other bureaus of the interior department. They have seen the worst legislation by a republican congress that ever was known in the country. They have protested in vain against the deterioration of their industries by an infamous tariff act. They are humiliated by the continued presence of Wanamaker, Raum, Bussey, Noble and Quay in republican councils. It is too late for the secretary of the treasury to mend matters by saving at the spigot. The frightful extravagance and robbery of the last two years cannot be condoned by partial and enforced economy in the reduction of the clerical force of the government.—Albany Argus.

CLARKSON TO THE FRONT.

A Golden Opportunity for the Great Headsman.

The mountains are laboring again, but it is more than a mouse this time. If report knows what it is talking about, it means the rise of Clarkson over the fallen forms of Quay and Dudley. The boss is dead, long live the boss. Though the glories of Quay and Dudley shall glimmer and fade away, the golden aureola that surrounds the brow of Clarkson will shed sufficient light for the republican hosts. We shall still have a shrine to worship at and a saint from whose lips the pearls and rubies shall drop as they scattered the ground when the favorite of the fairy godmother spoke. Long live Clarkson; Clarkson, the cunning and ruthless; Clarkson, the headsman. Though he be no statesman, he is the most useful man in the republican party, and the laborer is worthy his hire.

According to republican standards Mr. Clarkson is entitled to his promotion. If Quay and Dudley are to stand aside, who is so fit as he to uphold the traditions and practices of the republican party? Is he not in thorough accord with them? Can he not handle the funds and divide the spoils to the queen's taste, and does not that put him at the head of the machine?

The country should be proud of Clarkson, together with Quay, Dudley and the others of that school. He is peculiarly a home product. He has risen to power by original methods. Europe has none to compare with him. Mr. Clarkson does not bother his brain with such vain and empty things as theories and principles. His domain is that of the material and substantial. He is the vote getter, the worker on election day and before it. High tariff and low tariff, protection and free trade are nothing to him. He does not disturb himself about free coinage of silver or limited coinage of silver. In his business these things are useless, but when it comes to getting the boys in line, by means of a judicious use of the wherewithal, he is a wheel horse.

The young men of the country should take notice. The old avenues to distinction are no longer worthy of consideration. New standards of statesmanship have been erected. The Clays, the Websters, the Calhouns, the Sewards and the Lincolns have had their day. They have been pretty good fellows in their way, but they were not half as useful as a Quay or a Clarkson. Tom Platt says that he loves Clarkson for the heads that he has chopped off, and it behooves the youth of the land to study in order that they may become choppers themselves in their mature age. Their ambition should not fall short of that high mark.

The democratic party is unfortunate in having no Quays and Clarksons, but perhaps it can get along without them. Such greatness brings with it its burdens, and there are some people who love the old order of things, when fair play was the rule and the boss was unknown. On the whole we are not sorry that Quay, Clarkson and Dudley belong to the other fellows.—Louisville Courier Journal.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS.

—The Ohio democrats accept McKinley and McKinleyism as the issue with something more than alacrity, and put the monopoly tariff, the billion-dollar congress and the force bill conspiracy in the front of the fight.—N. Y. World.

—"We may reasonably expect that the expenditures for pensions will decrease," said Gen. Garfield, twenty years ago. Gen. Garfield may have been a very good soldier, but what are we to think of him as a prophet?—Louisville Courier Journal.

—Raum is about to unload 350,000 pension cases on the various agencies of the country in order to get them disposed of with more celerity. This will please the old soldiers undoubtedly, but the country in general would greatly prefer to see Ben Harrison unload Raum.—Chicago Herald.

—The democratic movement in the west is steady and permanent. It is the result of earnest conviction and it is crumbling down republican strongholds long considered impregnable. The full results of the McKinley tariff have not yet come home to the reckless party responsible for that outrage on American industries.—Albany Argus.

—Financier Foster no doubt fully satisfies the wishes of his friends in Wall street, by his offer to extend the 4½ per cent. bonds after maturity at 2 per cent. What the tax payers demand is that he pay the bonds at maturity and stop the interest altogether. This could easily have been done but for the criminal extravagance and rapacity of the billion-dollar congress.—St. Louis Republic.

—The very downy cushion being prepared by kindly republicans to break the fall of the tumbling Quay has its notable advantages for him whom it is to catch, but deprives the party of the satisfaction of affirming that the malodorous leader was ignominiously ejected because of his misdeeds. People are to be given to understand that Mr. Quay retires against the wishes of his colleagues, and perhaps it is as well so, for no one could ever be persuaded that he would have been expelled as long as there was a chance of his carrying elections, however bad his reputation might become.—Chicago Times.

PITH AND POINT.

—Mamma (from the sitting-room)—"Why are you so still there, Ethel?" Ethel—"Because Jack is still here."

—Bad handwriting isn't always an indication of genius, but it is the only sign of genius that some unfortunate authors possess.—Somerville Journal.

—Bre'r Seeall to Col. Gray—"Why, Ku'nul, whaffo' have yo' got youah pantaloons on backwa'ds foah?" Col. G.—"Why, yo' ignowump chile, to keep dem f'om baggum in de knees, im co'se."

—The Long-Headed Housekeeper.—Clerk—"You say you have five windows and only want four screens?" Customer—"Yes. I want to keep one window open to let the flies get out."—N. Y. Sun.

—Brown—"I don't see Jerry with Miss Charmer lately. You told me he had fallen in love with her." Fogg—"Yes, he did fall in love with her, but her father raised him."—Boston Transcript.

—Watts—"At what age would you say a woman ceases to be fascinating?" Potts—"Before I answer that question tell me how young a boy am I allowed to consider in the case?"—Indianapolis Journal.

—"Your son, I hear, is becoming an excellent landscape painter." "He is." "Does he imitate nature well?" "Imitate nature! He beats nature. He can put colors in a landscape that nature never dreamed off."—N. Y. Press.

—Surprising News.—Jagman—"What was it you told Brown about me that seemed to surprise him so much? Did you tell him I was intoxicated yesterday?" Chapman—"No, I told him you were sober to-day."—Saturday Evening Herald.

—"Don't you think," she said archly to the visitor behind the scenes, "that most of these jokes about ballet girls are rather thin?" "Perhaps so," he replied, much embarrassed. "But then you know it's a pretty thin subject to tackle."—Washington Post.

—"Have you seen the lions in Central park?" asked a New York gentleman of a little boy. "Yes; they are spoiled lions." "Spoiled?" "Yes, spoiled. I saw a little girl throw a piece of bread into the cage, and the lion didn't touch it. He wanted cake I suppose."

—This was a Woman.—Scene—Telegraph office.—"That makes ten words, madam." "Am I not entitled to send two words more?" "Certainly, madam." "Very well, then, have the kindness to put the words "In haste" on the envelope of the telegram."—Yankee Blade.

—A Result of Experience.—"Great heavens! What's that?" exclaimed the new star, darting to one side. "That's only the glare of our new calcium reflector for the transformation scene." "Oh," resumed the actor, much relieved, "for a moment I thought it was the headlight of a locomotive."

—"Well," snarled Mr. Topnoody, "I don't see much difference between an idiot with his mouth open and an idiot with his mouth shut." "And you have such a large mouth, too," murmured Mrs. Topnoody dreamily. And Mr. Topnoody kicked the cat half way across the room.—Detroit Free Press.

—Summer Saunterers—"Is that your son, Mr. Peavine? And only ten years old! He has grown famously." Farmer Peavine—"He's all o' that, Bill is; he's the infamousest boy in these parts." Summer Saunterers (after departing)—"The old gentleman is quite a character." Farmer Peavine's Daughter—"Oh, pa! how could you talk so?" Farmer Peavine—"It's all right, Tildy. It pleases them city folks to get hold of an original character, you know. That little turn of mine tickled them mightily. They'll take the rooms." And they did.—Boston Transcript.

THEY WANTED TO BE TEACHERS.

Specimen Answers Given by Applicants for School Positions.

A correspondent sends us from the far west some evidence that it is not always the school-children who have queer ideas regarding the meaning of words. She has transcribed from several hundred replies to questions given in the examination of applicants for the position of teacher in certain counties of a western state the following. The candidates were asked to define plagiarism. Here are eight of the answers.

(1.) Plagiarism is an occult science. (2.) Plagiarism is the act of plaguing. (3.) It is the state of believing differently from the majority of people. (4.) It is the act of telling falsehoods about an opponent. (5.) It is downright meanness. (6.) It is having the disposition to fight. (7.) It is something made correct by usage. (8.) I do not know unless it relates to the power of witching.

Define pedagogics. (1.) Pedagogics is femail teachers. (2.) It relates to petty rulers. It that case there is something about pedagogics in the history of Europe, also history of the United States and the Bible. (3.) It is the history of one's good or bad deeds. (4.) Pedagogics is an old teacher that's cranky.

What are metamorphic rocks? They are rocks composed of little animals called metamorphoses.

What is the derivation of the word polypus? It is derived from poly, many, and pus, puss, many cats.

What is anatomy? Anatomy is extinct in a dead boddy.

What can you say of the use of pain and pleasure? (1.) Pain is of no use, but it is bad for the health. (2.) Pain gives the physician practice. (3.) Pain tells us that all is not right in the region where the pain is. There are many kinds of pain, enough for every one to have some. Pleasure is useful because it promotes health, it lets us unjoy ourselves while the pains are absent.

Describe the bee. The bee has 2 wings, 4 leggs. It has 1 part at the end of the boddy not the head that is poisenous. He is classed among flies.

Give an account of Horace Greeley. He led the Greeley expedition into the north, turned cannible, eating up their members when provisions gave out.—Youth's Companion.

SINGLE TAX DEPARTMENT.

A SIMPLE, NOT A COMPLEX CURE.

The Unionist, printed at Memphis and edited by the agent of the Farmers' Alliance, says it does not believe that the sub-treasury is a panacea for all our ills. It adds: "Perhaps it will not stand the test of experience as a cure for any of them, but in the absence of a better proposition, and in the face of our overwhelming need we say, take this as a means to an end, try it fairly and squarely, and if it fails let it go down before something better. No one remedy can cure our disease. It is of complex origin and demands a complex cure. A tax on land values may do good, but it is no cure-all. No free trade, nor protection, nor nationalized railroads, nor sub-treasury warehouses, nor any other one proposal will do the work, though there be elements of truth in all. The problem is too complex."

Here is a singular illustration of the methods of thought among many who are disposed to call themselves reformers and who imagine that mere change, without regard to its direction, is to be commended. The evils of which men complain are complex, but it does not follow that the cure for those evils need be equally complex. On the contrary, if we are to reason by analogy, the probability always is that the more complex the disease the simpler is the cure. The tendency among modern students of medicine is to trace almost every disease to a distinctive germ and to assist natural processes in extirpating that germ. The problem that troubles the farmers North, South, East and West, and that presses equally upon the workingmen in the cities, is that of the persistence of poverty in the midst of increasing productive power. The notion that wealth can be created by any pawnbroking device will not bear thorough consideration. We must have for the purposes of civilized life a sufficient supply of currency; but all the currency in the world will not prevent an unjust distribution of the proceeds of labor, if the passive factor in all production is monopolized by those who have the legal power to levy blackmail on the producers. The possession of this power which, while constantly growing, is passing from year to year into the hands of an ever decreasing proportion of the people, is the cause of the misery and despair of the city workman and the rural farmer; and they will find no permanent relief until they cease giving themselves up to stupid ideas and following weak and purposeless leaders, and give their whole minds to determined thought on the problem with which they are thus far merely trifling.

We do not undertake to insist that every man must necessarily be a single tax man; but we do say that any man who presumes to propose remedies for existing evils and to lead discontented men in efforts for the betterment of their condition is absolutely inexcusable, if he has not in all sincerity, with all of the mental power that he possesses, studied the problem so admirably stated in "Progress and Poverty," and found, after such study a sufficient answer to the proposal of a remedy in that book.

These people can not but know that one man claims to have put his finger on the germ of the disease in our body politic and to have shown the way for its extirpation. They know that thousands of men, at least their own equals in intellectual capacity, have, after candid consideration, accepted that remedy. They are, therefore, as honest men, who would avoid being blind leaders luring their followers into the ditch, bound to actually know what Mr. George proposes and by what arguments he sustains his proposal, before they ask people to trifle with palliatives and revamp a discredited herb doctor kind of empirical political economy.

These active mouths and pens, propelled by almost any other motive power than that of deep conviction, honestly earned by persistent thought, are the real enemies to any true reform; and the disposition manifested here and there to get all such people together is due to an absolute lack of fixity of purpose in behalf of any definite and clearly apprehended principle. For our part we regard "Lord" Scully, the typical landlord, as a far more powerful factor for true reform than all the blatherskites between here and the gulf or the Pacific ocean who are urging ignorant men to adopt the first fancy that commends itself to their untrained minds, and to seek through some fantastic remedy a cure for evils that result from our persistent defiance of the natural law of human association, which is as fixed, immutable and, in the long run, irresistable as the law of gravitation itself.—The Standard.

Land and Its Owners.

Two letters in The Standard of May 13 have attracted considerable attention. In one W. D. Ogden, of Baltimore, champions the justice of land ownership, while Mr. Leedom heads his letter "Land Owning a Crime." These men seem to be about as far apart as it would be possible to get, yet I believe both are right, each from his own point of view, while both are wrong, each from the other's point of view. They remind me forcibily of the two men in the fable who met on opposite sides of a sign board. They will not agree until each can see the other side of the board. Possibly I can help them to do that.

All will agree that the continuous private possession of land is essential to its best use, and even more; that such possession is the very foundation of civilization. Whence comes the right of each landholder to the continuous possession of the land he calls his own? All life on earth requires land for its use—land in the economic meaning of the term. Man's presence here confers on him a right to use land. He does not get the right from government; he can not obtain it from society, for government is a creature of man's making, and society is simply a result of man's living with his fellows in close relations. The right of an individual to take possession of and continuously use a piece of land is thus seen to be a natural right independent of governmental enactments or social customs. Governments or societies may acknowledge this right or they may deny it; they can not create nor destroy it.

I agree fully with Mr. Ogden that the private ownership of land, in any sense in which land can ever be owned at all, is perfectly natural and perfectly just; and I will go further and declare that no government, nor society can have any right to claim ownership in any land they are not actually using for public purposes. Governments can have no more right than a private landlord to hold land idle and compel people to pay a price for the privilege of using it. Any man has a natural right to take possession of and use, as long as he pleases, any piece of land that no one else is using, and the only right or duty of government is to prevent others from forcibly dispossessing him. The only natural and just title to land is occupancy and use, and the individual user derives that title not from government nor from society, but from the labor expended by him in taking possession and making improvements upon it. This ownership in the right to peaceably possess and enjoy a part of the earth's surface is just as absolute and just as equitable as is the ownership of the house you have built, the crop you have raised, the cattle you have bred, or the hands and brains with which you labor.

But if I should stop here, my argument would have no more value than the dictum of the anarchist on the one hand and the verdict of the supreme court on the other. This is one side of the sign board. Let us see what is on the other side. What is it that Mr. Leedom calls crime? What is it that is the foundation of landlordism and the all-sufficient cause of most of the poverty and vice and crime that afflict modern civilization? What is it that permits and invites men to get "a legal title" to vast tracts of land and then hold them out of use?

Isn't it the simple fact that we permit the "ground rents"—the "social wealth"—those values that are produced by the community—to go into the pockets of the landowners instead of causing them to flow into the public treasury to meet public needs? Isn't this what Mr. Leedom means when he declares "that private landholding is a monstrous iniquity." Mr. Leedom doesn't mean to say that "private landholding" is wrong in any sense, but he does mean that the private ownership of ground rents is wrong, and with him I think we shall all agree. From this it follows that when society gets wise enough to demand its own wages for public needs, when society ceases to permit private "land owners" to confiscate social wealth for their own private purposes, and thus secure for itself such a fund that it will not be obliged to confiscate private earnings for their social purposes, then and not till then shall we cease to be bothered with that meaningless phrase "the injustice of private owership of land." It isn't "private" ownership of land that we are fighting against at all. We don't propose to change in any way our system of land "tenure." We are fighting against the private ownership of "land values," that is, we are opposed to allowing the "wages of society" to swell the fortunes of the "owners of land."

Thus the whole question comes to this: "Is there a natural source of public revenue? Does society really earn wages enough to meet public needs? Is there a natural and therefore a just system of "taxation?"

To him who has confidence in the justice and orderliness of nature can come but one answer, "Yes."

So we see that in the last analysis it is a "mere" fiscal question, a "mere" question of taxation; but I think some of us will be obliged to broaden our conception of the importance of "fiscal questions" and give a much wider scope to the word "mere."—C. J. Buell, St. Anthony's Falls, Minn.

The Clan Chief Didn't Dare Say It Then.

"Whose property is that hill?" Wordsworth was asked. "Property!" exclaimed the poet, "I never heard that it was anybody's property." There was more sound economic sense in this statement, which the duke of Argyll quoted in the house of lords last night to point out, with astonishment, the poet's gross ignorance of the land system, than in the duke's hour and a half speech. The McCallum More was on the land question in the highlands, and advocating, as usual, the expatriation of the people. Wordsworth believed that the hill belonged to the people; the duke of Argyll holds that the land exists for the landlords. In former times, when the duke's ancestors were chiefs of the Clan Campbell, their land was common property, the clansmen had to be fed and clad as well as the chieftain. If the chief Campbell of that day had proposed to drive the people from their land, to speak of them as stuff—"there was no better stuff than was the stuff of the crofter"—to ship them to foreign countries, he would have had his head cut off with a claymore by way of teaching him a popular lesson on the land question, and setting an example for his successors.—London, Eng., Star.

As for the deduction of a complete and individual right to land from priority of occupation, that is, if possible, the most absurd ground on which land ownership can be defended. Priority of occupation give exclusive and perpetual title to the surface of a globe on which, in the order of nature, countless generations succeed each other! Had the men of the last generation any better right to the use of this world than we of this? or the men of a hundred years ago? or of a thousand years ago? Had the mound-builders, or the cave-dwellers, the contemporaries of the mastodon and three-toed horse, or the generations still further back, who, in dim æons that we can only think of as geologic periods, followed each other on the earth we now tenant for our little day.—Progress and Poverty.