

Two Chums.

EDITOR ADVOCATE:—When I was a boy, I had two chums, as boys will have, you know. One was named Jacob and the other William, and of course, for short they were called Jake and Bill. They were two bright, smart fellows, and their father, who was a very respectable, intelligent, old gentleman, was proud of them and overlooked many of their capers, in which Jake was rather proficient as author and inventor, but Bill was always a willing helper. The boys, though not of the goody-goody, Sunday-school sort, were generally pretty well behaved, but they would indulge in boyish rascalities occasionally, just for fun, you know.

One day, however, they carried the joke a little too far, and the old man got mad at them. He had given each some little chores to do, as he was a great believer in industry, coupled with integrity and economy. He was in the habit of taking a little nap at midday, and waking up on this occasion, perhaps a little sooner than the boys thought he would, he discovered that nothing had been done and the boys were no where to be found. There also seemed to be something else missing besides the boys, and the old man began to call out for them—“Jacob, oh, Jacob!” but no answer. Then he called, “William, oh, William!” no answer. Then again he called “Jacob! Ja-co-b!” Jake, by this time, concluded that it was best to face the music, and he answered “Hello!” from way up in the top part of the house.

“Where are you?” asked the old man.  
 “Nowhere,” says Jake.  
 “What are you doing?”  
 “Nothing,” replies Jake.  
 “Where is William?” queried the old man.

“He’s here too,” says Jake.  
 “What is he doing?” was further asked.

“He is helping me,” answers Jake.  
 At this the old man got his dander up as they used to call it in those days, and went for the boys. He found them in the garret, where they had been drinking his wine and smoking his cigars, which he had missed and which they had “swiped,” as it is called now-a-days. He thundered at them, “You—you, rascals! You—you, scamps! You liars! You thieves! I’ll teach you to be nowhere, doing nothing, and one helping the other fellow at the job, stealing my wine and cigars all the same.” The old man gave them both a good spanking and locked them up in a dark room on a bread and water diet, where they had ample opportunity to study the great questions of integrity and economy.

Now this is exactly the situation of both the old political parties against the people of the United States. For over thirty years past, as far as the people are concerned, both of them were nowhere, doing nothing, and one helping the other fellows at the job, both robbing the people right along all the time. To make a comparison (though it is said these are odious), the above said Jake, the republican party—the author of all the rascally schemes and plots for plundering the people, always had in Bill, the democratic party, plenty of ready and willing helpers, and the old man—the people—have been napping. It is gratifying, however, to notice that the people are now waking up, and that they will give both of the old political parties, the two rogues, who have been robbing them, a good sound thrashing at the polls and banish both to utter darkness and oblivion on next election day, is the earnest hope of your humble helper in the cause of reform.

G. L. WILD.

Washington, October 3, 1894.

The Problem of Charity.

In a paper recently submitted to the American academy of political and social science, John Graham Brooks deals with what he is pleased to term “The Future Problem of Charity.” Like so many of his fellows, sincere, no doubt, but lacking the courage to go to the root of the matter, Professor Brooks merely skims gracefully over the surface of things, never looking into the depths where lies the truth he vainly seeks by gazing at the sky.

“Why,” asks Professor Brooks, “like the green bay tree, does the ‘beat’ flourish among us?” And his answer is a fair specimen of the value of his entire essay: “Chiefly because the public chooses to support him.”

*Post hoc, ergo propter hoc* is the logic of Professor Brooks. The tramp is fed; therefore the tramp exists. Which will be accepted by Mr. Brooks’ admirers as being conclusive, since, if the tramp was not fed and could not steal anything, he would soon cease to exist. But it would surprise both Mr. Brooks and his admirers to discover that as fast as one tramp died off, another would rise up to take his place. Whence would he come? Out of the same conditions which produced tramp No. 1, and which the Brooks school of social economists utterly ignore.

The tramp doesn’t flourish like a green bay tree at all. He is miserable and pinched and cold, but he does exist, and he exists in nine out of ten cases because of conditions over which he has no control. It is not the “future problem of charity” to discover the cure for the tramp. It is the future of justice to do her perfect work and restore to all men their rights in the God-given opportunities now monopolized by the few—the few who listen with delight to Professor Brooks’ essays on some charity to be done in the dimly distant future. That is the sure and only remedy for the tramp.

There is no “future problem of charity.” There is a present problem of charity, for the tramps whom bad laws and the injustice of the past have created, must be cared for while the work of reform is going on. But in the future the kind of “charity” which Professor Brooks has in mind will have given way to something infinitely better—there will be established the law of “equal rights to all; special privileges to none.”—Chicago Times, October 3.

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