

## CHAPTER VIII.

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### TRUSTS.

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THE scholarly pastor of Plymouth Church, Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, in a recent sermon, strongly denounced the brutal and destructive methods by which trusts have been created. He said:

When some Samson of industry uses his superior wisdom to gather into his hands all the lines of some branch of trade while others starve, he is like a wrecker who lures some good ship upon the rocks that he may clothe himself with garments unwrapped from the bodies of brave men slain by deceit.

In every manufacturing state in the Union, deserted factories or mills can be seen. The grass grows in front of the doors, and boards are nailed over the windows. Useful machinery, which cost the labor and thought of hundreds of men, lies rusting inside. And what is worst of all, scores of little cottages, built out of the savings of industrious mechanics, stand empty around each factory, while their owners are tramping the streets of some great city, hunting for the work they were robbed of by the trusts.

The displacement of workmen through these organizations has been enormous. Where will those men find re-employment? It is stated by drummers that recent combinations have thrown into idleness 35,000 of their number. What will these men do? Few of them have a trade, and such as have, would, on seeking to re-enter it, find it overcrowded.

The trusts are thus forcing into public concern the question of the right of their victims to work, and they are likewise rivet-

ing attention upon the methods by which they achieve their marvellous "success."

Some of them have captured more of other people's property in a year than all the burglars in America. The cleverest lawyers are in their pay, and it is charged that even judges act as the quiet partners of these lawless brigands of industry. There is scarcely a crime against property rights which has not been committed by them.

Read Henry D. Lloyd's unanswerable book, "Wealth Against Commonwealth," and you will see that the Standard Oil Trust was built up by a daring series of crimes, which, if the law had been impartially administered, would have landed its promoters in the penitentiary. Their methods of competing have amounted in some cases to downright confiscation; and scattered throughout this country are men who were once prosperous, and who are now discouraged bankrupts through the legalized burglary of the remorseless Oil Trust.

Mr. Lecky, writing of the methods by which the enormous fortunes of American financiers have been gathered together, says:

Nowhere else have there been such scandalous examples of colossal, ostentatious fortunes built up by reckless gambling, by the acquisition of gigantic monopolies, by a deadly and unscrupulous competition bringing ruin into countless homes, by a systematic subordination of public to private interests, by enormous political and municipal corruption.

By means of the outrage known as watered stock, the most unreasonable profits have been taken from the people. Instead of a moderate return for invested capital, these corporations have demanded and obtained a higher percentage than any Shylock ever dared to ask.

Says Prof. Herron:

Watered stock is a *method of high treason*, by which corporations forcibly tax the nation for private profit, and by which they annually extort millions



from American toilers and producers. It is as essentially a system of violence, spoil and robbery as would be the overrunning of the nation by Tartar hordes, laying hands on whatever they chose to take for their own. Although a large part of American industry is organized by this system of watered stock, and we consent to it tamely and ignorantly, it is yet the worst historic form of indirect usurpation and tyranny; and it renders our national wealth in large part purely fictitious.

#### THE NEW INCURSION OF BARBARIANS.

Henry D. Lloyd says:

If our civilization is destroyed, as Macaulay predicted, it will not be by his barbarians from below. Our barbarians come from above. Our great money-makers have sprung in one generation into seats of power kings do not know. The forces and the wealth are new, and have been the opportunity of new men. Without restraints of culture, experience, the pride, or even the inherited caution of class or rank, these men, intoxicated, think they are the wave instead of the float, and that they have created the business which has created them. To them science is but a never-ending repertoire of investments, stored up by nature for the syndicates; government but a fountain of franchises, the nations but customers in squads, and a million the unit of a new arithmetic of wealth written for them. They claim a power without control, exercised through forms which make it secret, anonymous, and perpetual. The possibilities of its gratification have been widening before them without interruption since they began, and even at a thousand millions, they will feel no satiety and will see no place to stop. They are gluttons of luxury and power, rough, unsocialized, believing that mankind must be kept terrorized. Powers of pity die out of them, because they work through agents and die in their agents, because what they do is not for themselves.

Of gods, friends, learnings, of the uncomprehended civilization which they overrun, they ask but one question: "How much?" "What is a good time to sell?" "What is a good time to buy?" The church and the capitol, incarnating the sacrifices and triumphs of a procession of martyrs and patriots since the dawn of freedom, are good enough for a money-changer's shop for them, and a market and shambles. Their heathen eyes see in the law and its consecrated officers nothing but an intelligence-office and hired men to help them burglarize the treasures accumulated for thousands of years at the altars of liberty and justice, that they may burn their marbles for the lime of commerce.

Said Mayor Swift, of Chicago, in an address given on December 28, 1896, to the wealthy commercial club of his city:

Talk about anarchy! Talk about breathing the spirit of commercialism! Who does it more than the representative citizens of Chicago? \* \* \* Who bribes the common council? It is not the men in the common walks of life. It is you representative citizens, you capitalists, you business men. When have they come to the front, either individually or collectively, and inveighed against this manner of obtaining franchises? When did they come to the front individually and ask of the common council to demand adequate remuneration for the city? Never to my knowledge.

#### THE MENACE OF IRRESPONSIBLE WEALTH.

In the growing power and rule of irresponsible wealth lies the great danger, possibly the only danger, seriously threatening our Republic to-day.

Patriotism must be something more than fire-crackers, tin horns and loud-mouthed declarations that "we can lick everybody." *No man is truly patriotic unless he is doing his utmost to make the conditions of life not only tolerable and enduring, but pleasant for those around him.* Every thoughtful man in this city, and in the country at large, knows that to-day we have thousands upon thousands of good loyal citizens, who are denied the right to work for a living, and are forced into all sorts and conditions of poverty and degradation by this fact; while, on the other hand, we have a spectacle of the great throngs, who, because they were either born with a gold spoon in their mouths, or superior cunning and strength, are in peaceful possession of idle millions, which they contemplate with selfish indifference, while their brothers starve. In view of the fact that the starving brothers are in the main voters, and consequently part of the body politic, I cannot but believe that this condition of arrogant indifference on the part of irresponsible wealth is to-day the dangerous element in our national life. Wealth certainly carries with it the responsibility of good citizenship — certainly no man is a good



citizen who devotes his days to piling up wealth, in order that he may say, "This is mine," while he is indifferent to the suffering, starvation and degradation of brother-men all around him.

#### NO RIGHT TO SO LARGE A SHARE OF THE SOCIAL PRODUCT.

To quote from Washington Gladden's book, "Tools and the Man:"

I maintain that no man can accumulate property, in a social order like that in which we live, without incurring a heavy debt to society,—a debt that is by no means discharged when he has paid his taxes. Our fortunes as well as our characters, are due in no small part to our environment. Those who have amassed property in this generation have done so by the use of a vast system of social and industrial machinery, which has been furnished to them without money and without price. They are the heirs of all the past ages of discovery, of invention, of study, of experiment, of organizing intelligence.

Society has brought all these enormous gains down through the generations and laid them at their feet. All these methods of communication, swift and cheap, by which time is multiplied and space is annihilated, all this wonderful utilization of natural force in machinery; all this mechanism of exchange so intricate, and yet so beautiful in its action; all these systems of industrial organization,—what is all this but the costly and magnificent provision made by society for the use of the individual? It is only because this provision has been made that large gains are possible to honest men. In no past time could property be accumulated by honest industry and enterprise as rapidly as it can be to-day. There were rich Romans, but their gains were gotten by rapine or extortion. There are rich Americans, too, whose wealth is mainly plunder; but there are many others who by fairly legitimate means have acquired large possessions. This they never could have done had they not been the beneficiaries of a social and industrial order in which everything was made ready for their hands.

As King C. Gillette says in "The Human Drift:"

The equal right of individuals to the products of nature and the benefits derived from progress, is based upon the fact that the ever-present progressive condition of mankind is founded upon the efforts of all past generations and not upon present individual effort. Man only builds upon the foundation of accumulated intelligence, and has no moral right to claim special privileges for himself from the benefits arising from this foundation of thought, which

is an inheritance to humanity at large, and should descend with equal justice to every individual.

The individual cannot separate himself from the race, past, present and to come. He is not only "part of all he has met," but part of all that exists, ever did exist or ever will exist. Society as we have it to-day is the result of all the effort and all the accumulated intelligence of the past.

#### THE USELESS CONTRIBUTION OF THE CAPITALIST.

When challenged as to the legitimacy of their holdings of such an enormous share of the nation's wealth, our capitalists — or at least such of them as concede the right of the public conscience to inquire into their methods and as to their holdings — allege that they themselves are the producers of everything; that it is *their* intelligence in organizing and directing labor; *their* acumen in determining the public wants; *their* initiative, and *their* generalship which keep the wheels of commerce turning and the wants of the public satisfied.

But in the evolution of the competitive system, the capitalist plays a less and less part in the direct control of industry. The skilled, practical man with money invested in a productive enterprise is a smaller factor than ever before. The capitalist has become a mere financier — a mere investor of money. His ignorance of the details of a business in which he is invited to invest his money is no bar to the investment. He knows that skilled superintendence is in the market for purchase just as corn and potatoes are; and it is upon the skilled foreman and superintendent that he depends for the return to himself of the profit which he demands as the price of his investment. His sole function has become that of using the withheld wages of other men in previous enterprises for the opportunity of withholding further wages from new men in a new enterprise. He plays no useful part whatever. He is as unnecessary as the fifth wheel of a wagon. As a class, he must become extinct. It is a scientific fact that the less effort a plant or an animal needs to put forth



in order to secure its food supply, the greater and swifter will be its degeneracy. Nature says to her creatures: "Work or die!" Mere ownership is not work — not social service. It is as absurd to support a man in idleness, because he has great possessions, as it would be to pay a man a pension because he has a large mouth.

And, therefore, we need not become unduly alarmed when capitalists, in answer to the threat to call them to account for the disproportionate share they take of the nation's product, threaten to remove their capital to South America or China. We know that when it goes, it will leave the country and all its real wealth behind it. When James I, in one of his numerous disputes with the officials of the city of London, threatened to remove his court to Oxford, the Lord Mayor cleverly replied: "Provided only your Majesty leave us the Thames."

To quote from "Problems of Modern Industry," by Sidney and Beatrice Webb —

Either we must submit forever to hand over at least one-third of our annual product to those who do us the favor to own our country, without the obligation of rendering any service to the community, and to see this tribute augment with every advance in our industry and numbers, or else we must take steps, as considerately as may be possible, to put an end to this state of things. Nor does equity yield any such conclusive objection to the latter course. Even if the infant children of our proprietors have come into the world booted and spurred, it can scarcely be contended that whole generations of their descendants yet unborn have a vested interest to ride on the backs of whole generations of unborn workers.

#### A BELIEVER IN TRUSTS.

It may be a surprise to you to hear me say that I believe in trusts, but I do. In the fierce warfare of our competitive system, that was never intended for anything but wild animals, I see nothing to save us from final destruction but some form of trust. The only trouble with the trust, as at present conducted, is the fact that it is not large enough to take us all in on a basis

that will let everybody live. But I see in it an indication of the growing social movement toward collectivism. I believe in brotherhood; so do the makers of the trust. They believe in brotherhood for the fellows that are in the trust; I believe in the brotherhood of all men. The trust is the Great American Brotherhood (limited). We shall yet learn to utilize the trust by amending the title, leaving off the last word. Of course, there is no moral purpose in the minds of the men who organize these trusts, but the final result of their work will be to build up an orderly and scientific system of business, which society, for self-preservation, will be obliged to appropriate.

The trust is preparing the way, showing society the great benefits that may be derived through association in industry, both in production and distribution. Any combination of capital or any organization of men which has for its object the saving of useless labor is a blessing. For example, when a dozen companies producing the same article join their forces, it becomes possible to send one man out to sell the product of the organization where twelve men were required before the companies were consolidated. An invention that lightens the burden of the world's toilers and makes it possible for one man to do the work of twelve is called a "labor-saving machine." Does it matter whether the machine is made of wood and iron or composed of organizations and associations of men? If the result is the same it is a labor-saving machine. In this sense the trust is a labor-saving machine. The fact that the owners of the trust capture all the profit produced by the labor-saving machine does not affect the truth of this statement. That is the peculiar tendency of the modern "captain of industry."

#### DESTRUCTION IMPOSSIBLE AND REGULATION FUTILE.

In the beginning of this chapter I touched upon the distress and misery caused by these industrial monsters.



As great as the sum of this distress has been or may yet be, there is no remedy immediately available — there is no cure this side of collective ownership. Destruction of the trust is not to be thought of. The trust is an economical development, strictly in the line of progress toward the elimination of competition. We cannot afford to take a backward step toward the individualistic method of production. We cannot do it if we want to. World forces of tremendous impetus would oppose us. The talk of smashing the trust is idle. The department store is a trust. Smash it and you have the single-line dealer. Why not go farther and smash him and give us peddlers? You cannot separate these great aggregations into their original parts. Like the primitive cells that now are the constituent members of a complex body, these parts have become welded into a social organism and cannot be rendered back into their original form.

Thirty-five years ago I saw a mob of teamsters trying to destroy the first pipe line ever built for the transportation of oil. They feared that the pipe line was an "attack upon their craft." The movement for the destruction of the trust rests identically on the same moral and intellectual basis as the rage of a mob against a pipe line or elevators or labor-saving machinery generally, and I predict that it will have the same result in the end.

If destruction is impossible, what is to be said of regulation? Plainly that the trusts cannot be regulated — that in turn they invariably regulate the regulator — and further, that even if we could control them by certain limitations to their activities, we should be merely patching up temporarily a broken and dying system, certain to collapse in the near future, and therefore that all our efforts would be wasted. To declare for regulation is to declare that we must provide further plans to allow the individual to proceed peaceably in the business of private profit-getting. In a thousand ways we have proved by the costly sacrifice of treasure and countless human lives the impotency of law to control organi-

zations of men gotten together for purposes of gain, unmindful of the fact that it is the purpose of business to outwit law, and of the more important fact that even much of what is called legitimate business is in constant violation of heaven's law, of the divine law of Right. For example: we hear much about "legitimate profit." All good people will agree that a man has a right to "legitimate profit," which means the legal profit, and that is nowhere defined, so far as I know, except in the business of money lending, and in that field it is constantly violated in the most flagrant manner by almost every sort of money-lender; but in the ordinary domain of business — commerce, industry, trade — a "legitimate profit" means all the profit one can get, and the inadequacy of laws, rules, regulations, contract stipulations, agreements, checks, balances, to control business men whose appetite has once been properly whetted for profit is so proverbial as to be a matter of the commonest notoriety.

I have said that the trust cannot be regulated, and few things in this world seem to me so plainly evident. In many states laws have been made to suppress them, but they go merrily on; no effort has been spared to enforce these laws, but the trusts are still multiplying. The interstate commerce laws are against pools of railroad earnings, and such trust-like methods. The members of the Interstate Commerce Commission, a group of high-minded men, have for a dozen years been doing their utmost to regulate the transportation business of the country and make the railroads obedient to the laws of the land. Yet the tenth annual report of that commission practically confesses the laws a failure, alleging that wherever a case was found against the railroads, the courts invariably found a way of escape for the offenders.

This is not because the men composing the trusts of our country are lawless or law-defying any more than the rest of us, or because all the judges are venal; it is because of the unscientific



quality of a system predicated upon the idea of individual success that seeks first to encourage the individual to build himself up at whatever cost and then undertakes to enact laws to prevent the accomplishment of the very thing that we are all saying that every man has a right to do. In other words, we are all exhorted to strive for success, and so long as the measure of success is only mediocre, the law does not attempt to interfere or inquire particularly into the methods; but as soon as one of us has made a real good success, that is, as soon as we have succeeded in capturing the streets of a city, a railroad across the continent or a system of them, or of corraling the supply of oil, coal or beef, thus putting a city, state, nation, or the world under tribute to one man, then the rest of us seek to make laws to prevent that kind of success.

A striking contribution to the proof that regulation doesn't regulate is found in a recent speech of Martin A. Knapp, the present chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission. In the "Chicago Times-Herald," August 8, 1899, he is reported as having spoken as follows:

I undertake to say that if the worst enemy of the railroads whom you can name were elected President of the United States, and if he should pack the Interstate Commerce Commission with the worst Populists of the land, those men would never dare to do the reckless and indecent things which the managers of railroads themselves have done. Can you name any five men so ignorant, so prejudiced, so inimical to the common interests of the country that they would upset the commerce of the country and demoralize rates and business in the way the railroad men have done by putting in the rates that now prevail to the seaboard by way of Galveston from the Missouri River? Would they let the Missouri River rate be as low as the Chicago rate? Would they allow flour to be carried from Minneapolis to the Atlantic cheaper than from Chicago? In such things the railroads are making a fearful misuse of their power.

In the face of this striking indictment (for I fancy that Mr. Knapp's idea of a Populist is the equivalent of the common idea

of an Anarchist), I am sorry to say that Mr. Knapp's hope of relief seems to be in more law. We absolutely ignore the fact that in making laws to provide for a few men to use all of the rest of the men of a city, state, or nation, as mere instruments out of which the few shall make profit, we are violating the fundamental law of equal rights provided for in the conception of our government, provided for and demanded in the constitution of every man — the right of equal opportunity with every other man; that in arranging for the private ownership of great public utilities and seeking to protect private owners in the exercise of special privileges, we are planting a poison at the very foundation of the social and economic structure which, if not removed, will destroy the institution itself. This evil cannot be corrected by more law or by any process, except such processes as are calculated quickly to bring to the people the right to own themselves, the right to the use of every public utility without the paying of private profit to any man or set of men. Hence I do not believe that even temporary relief can be secured for the people by any plan that proposes to evade the inevitable.

#### NO HOPE IN PALLIATIVES.

I really wish that I could see some hope in palliatives, but I cannot. We have been dealing in social economics with an arithmetic that was wrong at the base, an arithmetic in which sometimes two and two would make four and other times would produce other results. We now know that with such an arithmetic there is no hope of correcting mathematical calculations at all, and this seems to me to be our situation to-day with reference to the question of providing for the people who are thrown out by the organization of trusts and the failure of the competitive system.

The one difference in the present situation as against that of previous years is found in the fact that a different set of people



are now added to the army of the unemployed. They are the people who have been occupying positions of responsibility, more or less, as managers, superintendents, salesmen, commercial travelers, etc. In the past these men have been mainly among our contented citizenship; they have been drawing good salaries, while their employers have been making large profits; they have spoken flippantly of the "agitators" as Anarchists, Populists, Socialists, etc. "Hobo," "tramp," and "bum" have been the butt of much ridicule and often the subject of cajolery at their hands, while the army of the unemployed has excited no feeling within them but one of contempt. "Any man can get work who will hustle for it," is a common saying that I have heard from these thoughtless brethren, when I have attempted to plead the cause of "the man out of work."

This reinforcement to the army of the unemployed will prove a valuable factor in solving our social problems. These men have been trained in the art of business; many of them are in possession of valuable secrets of "private business," and so long as they drew good salaries, could ride in parlor cars, eat good dinners and smoke fine cigars, and if the "house" settled the bill they were content. But the situation is changed; now that they are unwilling members of the army of the unemployed, they know more than they did; they have been brought with a dull thud to a realizing sense of the idea of brotherhood; as a consequence, they are already in large numbers getting into the "head push" of the agitation, reinforcing the ranks of those who are protesting against things as they are in the interest of things as they ought to be; they are a valuable ally to the forces of reform; their experience, education and knowledge will now be turned to good account; will, indeed, be delivered to their fellow-men in the form of true patriotism; they will come to understand that there is no peace for a part unless there be some peace for all, and realizing that "no man liveth to himself," will contribute to the salva-

tion of their fellow-men, and by saving their fellows, will save themselves.

I wish I could see some shorter way by which relief could be brought to the wronged peoples, but as "there is no royal road to learning," so it may be truly said there is no cross-lots way to a just social order; there is no way, indeed, except through spreading the idea of love as law until the oppressed peoples shall find a way for their own deliverance through the realization of the sacred relation of brotherhood, through the conscious understanding that every man's welfare is dependent upon the well-being of every other man. I see no escape from the strain and agony and distress that surround us in our present everyday life; but just the joy of knowing that there is a way of escape, that the present conditions are not permanent; just the joy of believing that in these states is to be wrought out the divine scheme of deliverance for the wronged and oppressed, not only of our own land, but of the entire race, and of knowing that it is to be brought about by the realization of the conception of patriotism that will recognize love as the proper basis of the state — just this joy is a sufficient recompense for a life-time of sacrifice and struggle in the service of such a cause. To this joy and to this reward, to the work of spreading this new conception of government, I invite the patriots and the lovers of liberty, not only in America, but in all lands.

#### WHAT TO DO.

What, then, shall we do with the trust, with the continually increasing army of unemployed thrown out by these organizations? I reply, we must organize government (society) in the interest of all, for the good of all, so that we may utilize the economic benefits of the trust.

*The problem which now confronts us is not to prevent the formation of trusts, but to bring about an equitable distribution of the*



*savings effected by those organizations* — savings which we may term the increment of associated organization.

Under the present system, this increment goes, in the form of increased profits, to the individuals who form the trust. Now, this is obviously wrong, for any advantage which accrues from a more perfect utilization of the forces of nature or from a more economical application of human labor, should belong, not to any individual or number of individuals, but to society as a whole. The profit that accrues to the organizations known as trusts, by reason of the economic production that arises from associating ten or more companies together, does not belong, in any ethical sense, to those who compose the trust. The profit is only made possible because the people are here, the cities are here, and the means of transportation and communication are here and available. Neither the cities nor the earth have been created for the benefit of the trusts. It is clear that the earth and the "natural opportunities" that have resulted in building cities, highways, railways and commerce, were created for the benefit of all alike. This profit that arises is a social product and a social saving, belonging, of right, to the whole mass of the people. To destroy the trust is to destroy an improved method of organization and sacrifice the social benefits made possible by it; to "regulate" the trust, if at all possible, is to clog its machinery, limit its savings and increase the amount of useless, conflicting labor in the world.

There is only one way in which the difficulty may be solved, and that is for society, that is, the municipalities, the states, and the nation — to absorb and own the trusts. We must leave off the word "limited" from the Great American Brotherhood that I have referred to, and own and operate the trust for the benefit of the people, as we now own and operate the post-office trust.

The movement toward municipal ownership, toward public ownership, toward co-operation of every sort, indicates the chan-

nel through which the people are to come into possession of their own. When they are thoroughly enlightened, they will simply retake in a perfectly orderly way the properties that have passed out of their hands and become private possessions, usually through the practice of deception and fraud.

#### THE POST-OFFICE TRUST.

We point with exultant pride to the splendid work that is wrought by that socialistic enterprise of our government — the post-office. What higher tribute to the integrity of the army of helpers in this work could there be than is found in the cold figures of the post-office reports?

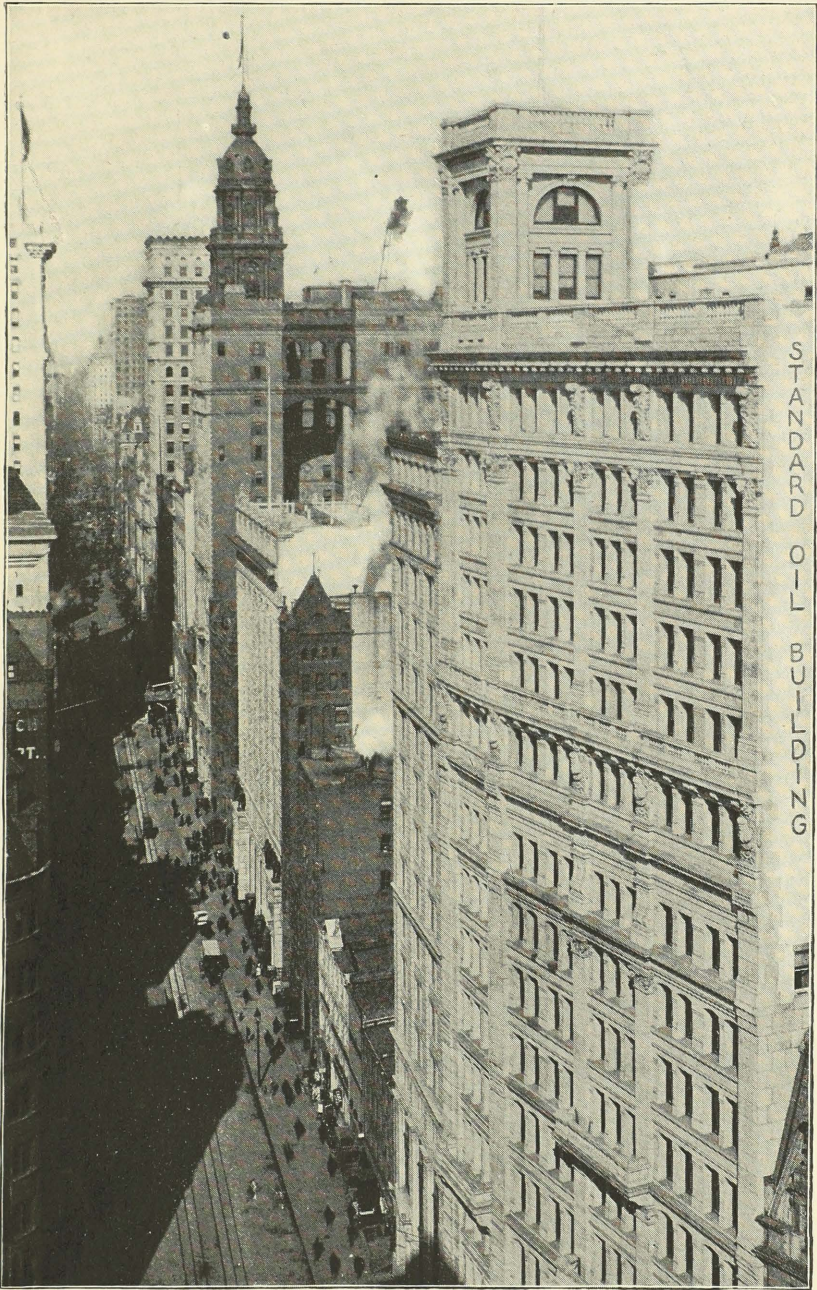
Millions of letters, packages and parcels, containing in the aggregate priceless treasure, are transmitted from one end of the continent to the other, from the great cities to the country cross-roads and obscure hamlets, with hardly the loss of a penny.

What devotion to high and noble purposes, what faithfulness and worth of moral character are portrayed in these facts! And what impudence and dishonesty are displayed by the charge, so often repeated, that the business of the government cannot be managed as honestly as the business of an individual or corporation!

Let the reports of the post-office department give the lie once and for all to such base and groundless accusations. The post-office is the best organized, most efficient, reliable and satisfactory business institution in the country. It treats rich and poor alike. The Standard Oil Company may get rebates from the railroads, but it gets no special privileges from the post-office. The perfumed letter of the millionaire and the post-card of the pauper travel in the same mail-bag. There still survives liberty, equality and fraternity among letters.

Sixty years ago Sir Rowland Hill began his agitation for penny post in England, announcing that the government could

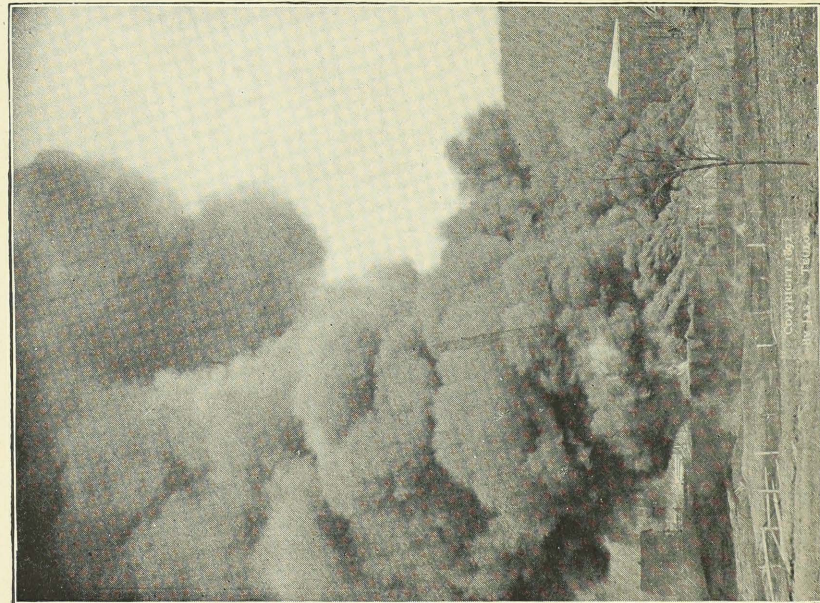




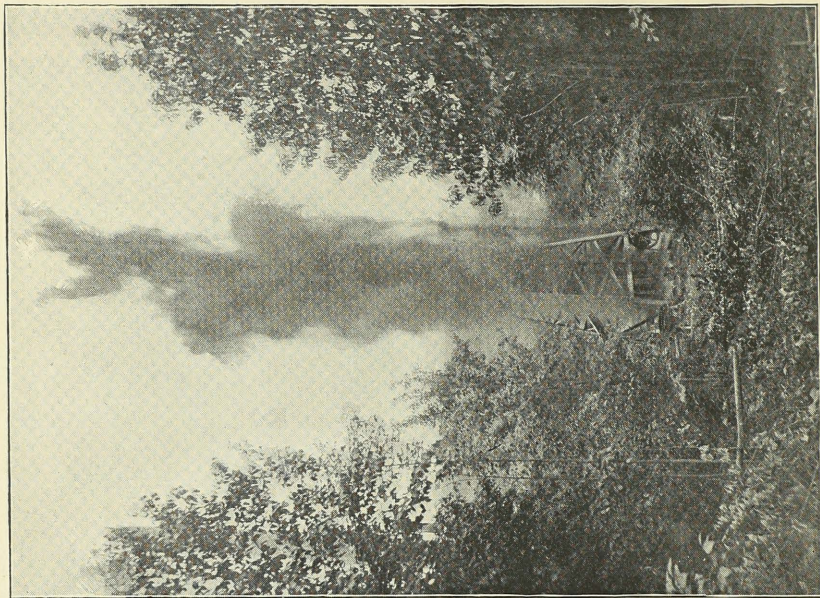
ILLUSTRATIVE PICTURE.

The methods of the Standard Oil Company are the methods of "business."  
(For early history, see Author's Autobiography.)





By permission of Jas. A. Tenlon.  
A 30,000 BBL. OIL TANK ON FIRE, PENNSYLVANIA OIL REGIONS.



THE "FLOW" FROM AN OIL WELL JUST TORPEDED.



carry a letter from John O'Groat's to Land's End for one penny. At that time the transmission of letters was in the hands of a few private individuals, and the cost of carrying a letter from London to Liverpool was one shilling. We can hardly comprehend the historical fact that the sweeping proposition of that great and good man was realized within a few years from the time when he began the agitation.

His proposal was at first met with ridicule, with stolid indifference and active opposition. It was called the hare-brained scheme of a dreamer. Tories prophesied that it would plunge the government into debt, and overwhelm it with new responsibilities; but Rowland Hill persevered until the nation discovered that he was right.

#### AN IMMINENT CHANGE FOR THE BETTER.

The disposition of the trust here proposed, may seem to many a consummation for the distant future. But it may come in our own generation. That clever English writer, the author of "The Social Horizon," says:

Imagine if you can that a hundred years ago some preternaturally far-sighted social leader had thought out all the details of our post-office organization, and had predicted that by the close of the nineteenth century every parish of the United Kingdom would have been brought within the scope of it. Suppose he had foretold that the government of the day would have had a permanent staff of about 64,000 people, besides another 55,000 employed by local postmasters; that in every important village, ever so remote, there would have been a post-office official, receiving and distributing letters, post-cards, books, circulars, and newspapers, receiving and paying cash, and keeping strict account. Imagine that he had foretold that on every country road from Land's End to John O'Groat's, messengers would have been jogging along with valuable parcels and orders for money and bags full of letters, many of them containing cheques and bank notes — that altogether the packages thus conveyed would have numbered, throughout the kingdom, over two thousand five hundred millions in the year; that in addition to all this, this one government department would have insured the people's lives, and banked



their money, and granted annuities, and issued licenses, and over and above it all would have managed a vast and complicated system of telegraphs, largely of its own creation. Why, how simply ridiculous the thing must have seemed to people who knew that the very seats of justice in the metropolis of the empire had only just been purged of the grossest corruption.

If so crazy a prophecy had been made and anybody had thought it worth while to pay serious attention to it, what a host of objections might have been raised. Just think of the capital you would want. How could it possibly be made to pay? How could you keep the accounts of 20,000 post-offices dotted about all over the kingdom? Think of the pilfering and speculation you would have to contend with; only consider the patronage you would be placing in the hands of the higher officials; look at the opportunities for jobbery and corruption you would be affording, and of the political power such an organization would give to those who had control of it.

And then how would you manage it? Where would you find your trustworthy and competent officials? How could the government, sitting in London, exercise any sort of control in the remote villages of western Ireland or northern Scotland? No, No, the thing is preposterous. If you could make all men honest and disinterested, conscientious and public-spirited, entirely devoted to duty and the public welfare, it might be possible, but so long as human nature is what it is, depend upon it such a fantastic scheme is utterly impracticable.

But here it is, all working so smoothly, and, upon the whole, satisfactorily, and with so little practical difficulty, that when it is proposed that, in addition to all it has in hand already, the post-office shall take over the telephones, or set up a system of express messengers, or of special delivery of letters, the very last thing anybody thinks it necessary to ask is, "Can the department manage it?"

Prof. Seligman, of Columbia University, says:

In all media of transportation and communication there seems to be a definite law of evolution. Everywhere at first they are in private hands and used for purposes of extortion or profit, like the highways of mediæval Europe, or the early bridges and canals. In the second stage they are effected with public interest and are turned over to trustees, who are permitted to charge fixed tolls, but are required to keep the service up to a certain standard; this was the era of the canal and turnpike trusts or companies. In the third stage the government takes over the service, but manages it for profit, as is still the case to-day, in some cases, with the post and the railway systems. In



the fourth stage, the government charges tolls or fees only to cover expenses, as until recently in the case of canals and bridges, and as is the theory of the postal system and of municipal water supply with us at the present time. In the fifth stage, the government reduces charges, until finally there is no charge at all, and the expenses are defrayed by a general tax on the community. This is the stage now reached in the common roads and most of the canals and bridges, which has been proposed by officials of several American cities for other services, like the water supply.

#### EVEN THE CONSERVATIVES SEE ITS PROBABILITY.

It is singular that so conservative an organ as the New York "Tribune" should see how inevitably the organization of trusts leads to the conclusion of the necessity of their public ownership. In an editorial on April 27, it says:

The capitalist and captain of industry in these later days has set himself to demonstrate that the theories of the Socialist are sound. After some centuries of adherence to the principle that individual competition brings the best results and the greatest progress for the individual and for society, suddenly many thousand employers and capitalists rush out of business, give up the positions they occupy and the plants they own in order to avoid competition, and set themselves to prove that society can be best and most cheaply served, and the workers and managers from highest to lowest can get better returns, if all productive work in each branch is performed by a single centralized body controlling prices and wages at pleasure, abolishing agents and middlemen, restrained by no competition and responsible only to society as a whole. If this theory is true, does it not follow as a matter of course that society as a whole might better take possession of the plants and control the business and absorb for itself the profits of production or the gains by cheapening production, at its pleasure?

The philosophy of the competitive period in human development has been sustained by the most rapid and healthful progress ever known thus far, but the Socialist answers that better yet is attainable. Grant that this past stage of development was necessary, its best fruitage is a higher stage in which the costs and the losses of individual competition can be avoided, and in each branch of service all can freely do their best for the benefit of all. Abolish the spur of competition, driving each to seek the latest inventions and the best devices, for they have been secured. Take from traders and manufacturers



the intense pressure of battle against each other, and give all of them a sure profit for a regular service to society. Let the multitude of employees be also emancipated from the tyranny of competition, which closes some works and drives others to reduce wages, and let them all have their regular pay for service to society, increased by the elimination of the losses through competition. When experience proves, as the Socialist holds it will prove, that the greatest progress and the highest conditions yet attained are not comparable to those to be attained by abolishing competition, then no man but an idiot will question the wisdom of society, as a whole, taking control of all the processes of trade and industry, and the harmonious adjustment of all, with power to cheapen products or enlarge profits in each, as may best serve the general welfare.

If the modern combination proves that competition is no longer a benefit, but a curse; that individual struggling for success is no longer needed to evolve the best inventions and devices and bring them into use; that the monster corporation can work more cheaply, and at the same time more wisely and ably in handling many establishments of different kinds, far apart and under different circumstances, than the individual owners who have created them; that it can prevent the frequent stoppage of the weaker works while the stronger continue to thrive; that society no longer needs any defense against monopoly, because the monopoly must always cheapen in order to enlarge business, and that workers, consumers and employers will all gain by elimination of competition, then, indeed, the Socialist has only to demand the logical completion of the journey. There will be no sense in leaving the big corporations to blunder along, sometimes losing and sometimes hurting society by un wisdom, when society itself can appropriate their plants, direct their labor, make and bear its own blunders and pocket its own gains.

#### THE COMING TRUST — THE AMERICAN PEOPLE (UNLIMITED).

In this, as in every other chapter, I have sought to show the failure of competition, and the necessity and inevitableness of a system of collective production and distribution. I have tried in the foregoing pages to apply a broader view to the trust problem than that of those men who would harass these organizations by legislation that experience shows cannot be enforced, and that, if it could be enforced, would but palliate our evils and miseries. The real thing to be remedied is the immorality that permeates



our economic system, that springs from the idea of seeking individual success at the expense of others.

There is just one way by which we shall be able to overcome the trusts, that is, through something better for the people, and that is the Big Trust, the Co-operative Commonwealth, the trust that will take us all in, by all and for all. That is the trust that I am trying to break into.

This ideal is coming; it is coming through the realization of the truth that love is to manifest itself in law. Men are striving to get together; business is to be friendship and government will be love. The growing discontent with our inadequate distribution of the good things that we produce in such lavish abundance, the great increase in organizations of all sorts — fraternal lodges, brotherhoods, trusts, monopolies of all sorts — indicate a world-wide movement towards a better, more just, more honorable and more enduring social relation. The trusts over which we who are not in them have expended much righteous indignation, are really harbingers of better days. It is revolt from competition. Men want to love one another and are determined to love one another even in business, and because it teaches the lesson of co-operation, we shall yet come to see that the trust, which is a combination affording the maximum of production with the minimum of cost, is one of the most striking, wonderful and permanent features of the world's progress. The fight against it is as unwise and foolish and futile as the battle against labor-saving machinery, as is shown in the countless failures that have already been made to enforce legislation against this concrete example of the world's progress. The trust is here, and here to stay. There is but one way in which we can overcome it, that is, we must own it; we must all be in the trust, as we are all in the post-office trust, and as we must all eventually be in the telegraph trust, the railway trust, the flour trust and in every form of trust whereby through the organized love of the



municipality, state, and nation, we can minister to one another better than we can in our individual capacity.

In this way shall we learn to appreciate and to demonstrate the Golden Rule applied to government. Then shall we have realized the dream of the founders of this republic and

Man to man the world o'er  
Will brothers be, for a' that.