

Extract from A. M. Hutchinson's Novel "When Winter Comes"

ON a Sunday of his honeymoon in London he had conceived with Mabel the idea of a bus ride through the streets—"anywhere, the first bus that comes." The first bus that came took them through South London, dodged between main roads and took them through miles of mean and sordid dwelling houses. At open windows high up sat solitary women, at others solitary, shirtsleeved men; behind closed windows were the faces of children. All staring—women and men and children, impassively prisoned, impassively staring. Each house door presented, one above the other, five or six iron bell-knobs, some hanging out and downwards, as if their necks were broken. On the pavements hardly a soul. Just street upon street of these awful houses with their imprisoned occupants and the doors with their string of crazy bells.

An appalling and abysmal depression settled upon Sabre. He imagined himself pulling the dislocated neck of one of those bells and stepping into what festered behind those sinister doors: the dark and malodorous stairways, the dark and malodorous rooms, their prisoned occupants opening their prisons and staring at him—those women, those men, those children. He imagined himself in one of those rooms, saw it, felt it, smelt it. He imagined himself cutting his throat in one of those rooms.

At tea in their hotel on their return Mabel chattered animatedly on all they had seen. "I'm awfully glad we went. I think it's a very good thing to know for oneself just how that side of life lives. Those awful people at the windows!"—and she laughed. He noticed for the first time what a sudden laugh she had, rather loud.

Sabre agreed. "Yes, I think it's a good thing to have an idea of their lives. I can't say I'm glad I went, though. You've no idea how awfully depressed that kind of thing makes me feel."

She laughed again. "Depressed! However can it? How funny you must be!"

Then she said, "Yes, I'm glad I've seen for myself. You know, when those sort of people come into your service—the airs they give themselves and the way they demand the best of everything—and then when you see the kind of homes they come from—!"

"Yes, it makes you think, doesn't it?"

"It does."

But what it made Sabre think was entirely different from what it made Mabel think.

CLEVELAND statistics for 1920 will show 1,800 new houses and 8,000 new marriages.

THE REVIEW should go to the editorial desk of every labor paper in the country. Who will begin with a contribution to this purpose?

Is the Single Tax Justified by God's Word

I SHALL take my reference from the Sermon on the Mount. The first thought that I wish to establish in the mind of the reader is the fact that Jesus was addressing his disciples—twelve men whom He had selected to promulgate his principles and doctrines on the earth, men who had left all to follow Him, and had accepted Him and his doctrines in so far as they were capable of understanding them. Hence, when He said to them, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," He did not mean conversion or regeneration. But the purpose of the Sermon on the Mount was to instruct them concerning the great doctrines of God's eternal truth and justice. If you will read the 5th, 6th and 7th chapters of Matthew, you will find Him rebuking his disciples for being over anxious about the things that they were to eat, drink or wear. He referred them to the sparrow, the lilies of the field, to teach them that God's bounty was altogether sufficient for the support of all of his creatures, and added, "Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature?" As much as to say, you cannot secure these things by worrying about them. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." I am quite sure that the things promised here are the temporal things, and Jesus was instructing his disciples as to how they might be secured. What He meant by the seeking of God's kingdom and his righteousness was a striving for God's eternal truth and justice to be established on the earth.

I will, likely, cross swords with some of our preachers, when I say, that in order to have God's truth and justice established on the earth, we will have to drag it into politics, filthy as our politics are, and fight for it in the halls of Congress and at the ballot box. For it is being taught from our pulpits that you can't legislate goodness into a man or a nation; that the differences between labor and capital cannot be settled through a readjustment of our industrial system. But it is well to remember that we are living under a system of organic law (or civil law). We cannot hope to have God's truth and justice respected when it conflicts with our code of civil law. Hence we must revise our laws, constantly keeping them in harmony with divine justice.

But, you say, I thought that our laws were founded on the Bible. Yes, they are supposed to be, but really they are not. It would be permissible and legal under our system of civil law for one man to own every foot of land in the United States and compel every other man to pay him tribute for the use of the earth. Do you think that would square with the biblical idea of justice? To be candid about it, we have been letting the devil's crowd shape our industrial destiny long enough. It is time for God's servants to wake up to their responsibility along these lines, if we ever hope to correct the evils that are threatening the destruction of industrial peace in this

country. We dare not call on God to straighten out our industrial tangles, unless we repent and become alive to the interest of suffering humanity ourselves. But suppose we did pray to the Father, and He should multiply the productivity of the soil so that her yield would be two, or even fourfold what it is now, what would happen? Inevitably an increase in the price of land. The landlord only would be benefited, for the increase in production would be swallowed up in rents, and therefore God would be defeated in his attempt to help the poor.

Suppose that you were feeding a flock of swine, and a few in your pen were strong and greedy enough to carry all of the corn into one corner of the pen and fight the rest off, would you increase the fodder while the few piled it up in one corner to rot, or would you provide a safety trough in which to feed your swine, so arranged that none could take out more than he could consume? It is said that a search into land titles would show that the original deeds were written with swords instead of pens, and in blood rather than ink; that they had their origin in the brute triumph of the strong over the weak. Suppose that we should quit taxing our industries and levy a tax or rent on land values in sufficient amount to meet the expenses of the government, would it not be unprofitable to hold more land than one could use? Yes, it would cure the land hog of his greed for more land, and all could have a home of their own, and then "all these things would be added" easily and naturally. Jesus said to his disciples in this same Sermon on the Mount, "Ye are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its savor wherewith shall it be salted?" In other words, I have chosen you and all who may become my disciples hereafter to be instruments in my hands in sowing this old world broadcast with God's eternal truth and justice, but if you have lost your influence among men by failing to exercise it, by whom shall the world be saved? Again He said "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Entirely too many of our preachers and Christian workers have their lights hid under a bushel as regards the question of economic justice on earth. Do you want to see God's kingdom advance more rapidly in the world? If you do, then be a John the Baptist, a forerunner, and help destroy some of the things that are retarding the coming of that kingdom.

W. J. BECK.

WHEN 50 feet on Detroit avenue in Rocky River leases at \$828 to \$1,380 a year for 99 years, how can business pick up quickly? And must not wages fall to allow such rentals to be paid for mere permission to work?—H. M. H.

LAND speculators always on hand at tax conference, for tax on land value cannot be added to rents or prices.—H. M. H.

United States Senator Norris For a Tax That Would Stop Land Speculation

IN a letter to James F. Morton, Hon. George W. Norris, United States Senator from Nebraska, says:

"It would perhaps be impossible to secure the passage of a tax on land. (Mr. Norris here refers to a Federal land tax.) My own idea is that exemption of improvements on land ought to be provided for in the laws of all the States. This would have a tendency to increase the tax on land held for speculation. Under existing laws every person who builds a house, plants a tree or plows a furrow, is penalized by having his taxes increased. However, as I look at it, it is mostly a State proposition."

Who Should Pay the Bonus?

THERE is not the same kind of objection to paying the world war soldiers a bonus that there is to the methods proposed by which it is to be raised. It is so clearly unjust to tax business, already crushed by taxation, that Congress hesitates to try the experiment of adding any more even tho it may help the boys who saved civilization. The boys who went into the American army made this old world of ours a safer place in which to live. Being safer it is worth more as a place in which people may live. This increased value due to this greater safety, does not and cannot show itself in wages to labor, interest to capital or prices of farm products for the simple reason that those things are governed by the natural law of supply and demand. But this increased world safety bought, too, at a price that staggers the human race to pay, did show itself very quickly and very prominently in the price of land. When the American soldier returned from the camp or fields of France, he found not only his job gone, but he found the very land he fought to save from the Hun now in the grasp of speculators who had fenced him off by the very prices that he had made by his sacrifice. In a word, the system which permits private monopoly in the natural resources of the world also permits without hindrance the capitalization by these world owners of every dollar that was paid by the suffering peoples and every drop of blood that gushed forth from Europe's gory fields. It all made the old world safer and worth more, therefore the disinherited must pay more rent and higher prices for a bit of God's earth whereon to build a home.

Why shouldn't those who get the benefit of a world made safe by colossal sacrifice of life and treasure now be called upon to pay those who made it? Clinton (Ind.) *Argus*.

In his interesting romance, "The Count of Monte Cristo," Dumas describes an ugly-looking vacant lot and ascribes its forlorn condition to "the demon of speculation."