

commit suicide, and fewer farmers' wives would go insane." His eyes gleamed, and I knew that, as he would put it, his pulse was going so fast that if it were revolutions of a locomotive wheel it would take only so long to go somewhere.

"And what is your remedy for all this?" asked I, with becoming, if not mock, interest.

"Let us help ourselves to no more than we want at table, buy our eggs a week earlier, drink our milk the day before, eat our bread before it is too dry, and in six months' time there will be a reduced state death rate, more vacancies in the insane asylums, 1,456,608 rosy cheeks where to-day there are that many pale ones—"

Just then the ferryboat's gates were lifted, and as we went our several ways, in the hurry that is characteristic of 7,098,111 Americans out of 8,000,000, I thought that, if all the brains of all the arithmetical cranks were used in place of wood pulp to make into paper, we writers would get our pads for nothing.—Charles Battell Loomis, in *The Century*.

SHALL THINGS BE MORE THAN MEN?

We of to-day tolerate and defend and champion a system of things which decrees that the question of what we shall eat and drink and wear shall be the question of supreme moment for ninety-nine one-hundredths of our population. And the great majority of us, whether in store or factory or farm, in the university chair or in the pulpit, declare our allegiance to a condition of things which gives not the smallest promise of change to something better.

We declare that the question of subsistence must increasingly in the coming years crowd all other questions to the background. We presume to call that a civilization in which are thousands and millions of people who are far worse off than birds and beasts, because they have no sure prospect of having even a subsistence except as it may be given them at the hands of that institution of the devil known as "charity."

We answer every question of Jesus in the negative, and we do it in the name of morality and a religion which we falsely call Christianity. We declare that the life is not more than the food, or the body than the raiment. We hold that men are not of more value than birds and beasts and flowers.

Why, there are any number of dogs that receive better treatment than thousands of men and women and children. There are quantities of alleged women who would scorn to have their

poodles buried in the potter's field, who care no more for their countless brothers and sisters whose emaciated bodies find their burial there than they care for so much refuse.

If the words of Jesus have one scintilla of truth in them, if they are not the senseless drivel of a madman, if the moral and spiritual consciousness which they imply is valid and just, we are conspiring to obliterate all faith and hope from men's hearts, we are attempting to make impossible all faith in a Divine Father and caretaker. We have already accomplished that end for hundreds of men and women.

The supreme end of our commercialism is not men, but things. Men weigh nothing at all in the balance of commercialism, which is the religion of this time. Nothing is subordinated to human life. We do not hesitate in our commercial or political enterprises and policies because of any possible effect they may have on the life or happiness of men.

Factories are not run for the sake of men, but for the sake of things. Indeed, it would be truer to say that men are run into their graves for the sake of factories. Men and women are worked to death—are robbed of all that can possibly make life human or happy, for the sake of making merchantable products.

Railroads are not run for the sake of men, for the contribution they may make to manhood, for the joy and cheer they may bring to humanity, but for the dividends. Our mines and shops and factories and railroads are all of them Molochs to devour the many, that the few may be enriched.—Rev. William T. Brown, of Rochester, N. Y., as reported in the *Rochester Herald*.

THE TAXATION OF LAND VALUES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Apropos of the taxation question, the action of the liberal party in the British parliament in forcing at a recent sitting of the house of commons a vote on the taxation of land values is significant of the direction political issues are taking in that country and may offer an important object lesson here.

Mr. E. J. C. Morton, a writer of reputation and liberal member from Devonport, offered an amendment to the "address," which the house was about to make in reply to the queen's speech. His amendment regretted that the speech contained nothing dealing with the ownership, tenure or taxation of land.

In Devonport, he said, there is a street of 51 houses in which every room is occupied by a whole family. The

people crowd together in their living quarters in order to be as near as possible to their work. "They are decent people, too," said he; "they actually have asked me to say nothing about it, in order that they may not be put to shame." And what is bad for the workingman, he pointed out, is bad for the manufacturer and for general industry; for the evil of which he complains is that the land, and particularly the valuable land of towns and cities, is inadequately taxed, and in many instances not taxed at all, so that a premium is offered upon land monopoly and the burden of taxation is thrown upon production—upon the workingman and the capitalist. He cited one man in Devonport who drew £40,000 a year in rents from the ground alone and did not contribute a sixpence in local taxation; and in London, he said, £20,000,000 a year went into the pockets of a few individuals who were exempt from local taxation.

Sir John Brunner seconded the amendment, saying that examination of the conditions prevailing showed that rich men lived upon land that was lightly taxed and poor men upon land that was heavily taxed.

These speeches stirred up the government, and Mr. Chaplin, president of the local government board; Mr. Arthur Balfour, first lord of the treasury and conservative leader in the house of commons, and Mr. Goschen, first lord of the admiralty, followed each other in quick succession in the endeavor to belittle the Morton amendment. But a score were up on the liberal side in support, among them Messrs. Asquith, Billson, Spicer, Channing (son of the abolitionist), Haldane, Havelock Wilson, W. Redmond, Flynn, Foster, Monro Ferguson, Field and Provand. The honors were perhaps carried off by a member elected to the house at a recent by-election after a big fight and against heavy odds, Fletcher Moulton, who explained to the government the easy method by which it could levy a tax upon the value of land and exempt improvements.

Things got so warm that one conservative, Mr. Bartley, from a London constituency, who had heard from his electors recently, was constrained to rise and urge the government to make some concession to the principle, and some of his associates notified the leaders that they would have to take to the woods and not vote.

The new liberal leader, Sir Campbell-Bannerman, ordered the liberal whips to tell in the division, and made the amendment a party matter, so that when the house divided, not only did all