

voting" bill for men, a measure that does away with all property qualifications and gives to every man a vote, and to no man more than one. Next in order, naturally next, politically next, and inevitably soon thereafter will come genuine suffrage for women—not several votes apiece for rich women, but one vote apiece for all women as for all men. Then will political democracy be ushered into Britain to hasten the coming of that industrial democracy already so swiftly on its way.

A. L. G.



Historian Todd's Mistake.

Not altogether accurate is the account of the railroad strike of 1894, in the Chicago Record-Herald and Inter Ocean of May 11, by John Howard Todd, A. B., and member of the Illinois Historical Society. Mr. Todd says: "One of those indicted was Mr. Debs, who was found guilty and sentenced to serve an imprisonment of six months." Such a statement imparts the impression that Mr. Debs was tried on his indictment found guilty by a jury and sentenced in accordance with a statute defining the punishment to be inflicted under the circumstances. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Mr. Debs was indicted, but he was neither tried, nor found guilty on the indictment. The only basis for Mr. Todd's assertion is the fact that Debs, in addition to being indicted, was charged with violation of an injunction by Federal Judge Woods who, acting as judge, jury and prosecutor, convicted and sentenced him. Later, Debs and his attorneys endeavored to secure a trial on the indictment and were refused. Such a trial, unlike the injunction proceedings, would have been before a jury and there would have been opportunity to cross-examine witnesses. They consequently felt confident not only of acquittal, but of exposing the prejudice of Judge Woods and the outrageous injustice of his course in the contempt proceedings. Apparently the district attorney felt the same way, for he insisted on annulment of the indictment and dismissal of Debs. The judge must have seen matters in the same light, for he upheld the district attorney. So Mr. Debs' conviction and sentence was clearly one of those abuses of power which so frequently disgrace both federal and state courts. Mr. Todd owes it to his position as historian to correct the false impression given.

S. D.



Philanthropy versus Law.

It may seem churlish to question the wisdom of the man who sets out to help the people, instead

of removing the barriers that prevent the people from helping themselves; but when the two policies are contending for a hearing, and charity is offered instead of justice, sentiment should give way to reason. A few months ago the whole world was agog over the proposition of an exceptionally successful manufacturer to raise the wages of his men arbitrarily; that is, without regard to the market price of labor. He would establish a minimum wage of five dollars a day. The pulpit and the press met the proposal with loud acclaim. "See," they cried, "what the rich do for the poor. Away with the carping critics. Here is the solution of the labor problem."



That the action of this kindly disposed manufacturer was purely philanthropic, and not based upon justice, soon became apparent. Scarcely had the world ceased to marvel at his generosity than it was startled by his meddling with the private lives of his employes. They must do this, omit that, and live thus and so; all of which conduct was dictated by the ideas and opinions of the successful manufacturer. His workmen might differ in their ideas, and their conceptions might be better founded than those of their employer. That did not matter. They must subordinate their opinions to his, on pain of forfeiting their claim to the five dollar minimum wage. How many yielded, and how many stood for their right of individual expression is not recorded; for the press is given to publishing benefactions, and neglecting to record the results. But this can be taken as fact: Men yield their individuality only under compulsion. The manufacturer dared to encroach upon the private life of his employes only because he had the power. He was giving them something over and above what they could rightfully claim; and for that largess he demanded the subjection of their will to his will. And the men, knowing they were in receipt of this benevolence, were brought face to face with the alternative of yielding their individuality, or surrendering the largess.



And now that all this upsetting of the verities has occurred, the press dispatches announce another move of the benevolent manufacturer. The company is laying off men during the "slack season" at the rate of a thousand a week. But the paternal interest continues. Those who are unable to find other jobs by the end of the month will be helped to places on farms. Of what avail is the five dollar minimum to the man who is laid

off? He is not without some comfort, however, for he can do as he pleases—till he gets another job. But what of the successful manufacturer? When the demand for his product was ahead of his capacity he practiced philanthropy; when his capacity exceeded his orders he fell back upon business principles. That his spectacular plunge would end thus, was evident to all who realize that society is controlled by natural law, and not by individual whim. A powerful man, falling into the water, may make a great momentary splashing, but if he knows not how to swim he will drown the same as a weakling.



Had our successful manufacturer's head been equal to his heart, he would have seen that his benevolence was possible only with men making equal profits. It is financially impossible for the average business man, under present conditions, to follow his example. It is not that the minimum wage of five dollars is extravagant, but that the burden of privilege laid upon business crushes all but the exceptional, and keeps the profits of the successful close to the margin. Philanthropy may or may not induce others to follow its example of liberal pay to its workingmen; at best only exceptionally favored ones can imitate it. But the removal of monopoly from the business world, and the freeing of the natural bounties of nature will so stimulate industry that wages will rise far above the minimum of five dollars a day. And the wage then received by laborer will be his by right, and not by charity, and he will be free to repel any encroachment upon his individuality.

S C.



Possibly Innocent Men May Be Punished.

If it is true that it is better that ninety-nine guilty men escape than that one innocent man suffer, then there seems no question but that a pardon should be granted by the President to Frank M. Ryan and other iron workers convicted in 1912 of conspiracy and now refused a new trial. It may be that nothing occurred during their trial that—from a lawyer's point of view—would justify setting aside the verdict. But there were some questionable happenings, nevertheless. One of these was the unusual haste in hurrying the prisoners to the penitentiary before their application for a stay of sentence could be heard. The promptness with which a special train was furnished to take them from Indianapolis to Leavenworth may have been but a coincidence, but had it not occurred there would be less cause to doubt

the fairness of the trial. There seems to be nothing in these circumstances to justify a new trial if one takes the strictly legal view which a court usually takes. But there is much in them to make one feel that the desire to get the men behind the bars was not altogether due to zeal in behalf of justice. If the men are guilty such methods need not have been used to secure their punishment. The fact that they were resorted to makes the fairness of their trial doubtful. The refusal of a new trial prevents clearing away of that doubt. If compelled to serve their sentences the possibility is great that innocent men may be penalized. Only a pardon can now prevent that possibility. S. D.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

LAND MONOPOLY IN CALIFORNIA.

Los Banos, Calif., May 7.

On last Friday, May 1, I addressed a farmers' meeting at Ceres, a town of about 250 population in the heart of the Turlock Irrigation District. They are getting petitions signed asking the directors of the irrigation district to call an election so that the Turlock District may adopt the land value system of taxation—the same as is in use in the Modesto and Oakdale Districts. They postponed their meeting so I could be there on the 1st. About 125 farmers were present. They favor exempting improvements from taxation. Even those who asked questions said they favored putting all of the tax on the value of the land. From Ceres I went to Fresno. John H. Meyers is located there. Through him I got a meeting of friends of our movement and organized a Home Rule in Taxation League—Fresno Branch. Ernest Klette was elected president.

I am returning to San Francisco on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley. Land monopoly has run rampant here. Miller & Lux, a cattle and wholesale butchering firm of San Francisco, own 533,000 acres of land in three counties—Merced, Madera and Fresno. I stopped over in Firebaugh, then in Dos Palos and this night in Los Banos. In these towns Miller & Lux monopolize everything—butcher shops, banks, lumber yards, general merchandise stores that deal in almost every kind of goods and supplies, town water works and many other businesses. I was told by one of their vaqueros or cowboys that all the employes are paid \$30 per month and have to work 60 days in a month.

In order to keep a supply of hobos or cheap laborers in the country Miller & Lux have maintained what is called the "Dirty Plate Route" for many years. They feed all the weary walkers who come to their ranches on the leavings of the different meals. These poor fellows must eat off the dirty plates. The "Dirty Plate" is the symbol and sign of the land monopolists' slave. The lands of Miller & Lux extend for about 65 miles, in this valley from Mendota to Newman. Their ranch houses and "camps" are many miles apart, so, if they did not keep up the "Dirty Plate Route," cheap laborers would never come near them.