

have figured out systems of tariffs and bounties by means of which any country can by observing them enrich itself at the expense of its neighbors. Any person who stops to think sees at once that this is as impossible as perpetual motion; but unfortunately a great many persons do not stop to think. They, like Mr. Mann, accept this false philosophy without question, and set out to apply it. That is, they set up a legal system whose avowed purpose and intent is to secure to their own country more benefits from trade than they confer upon the countries with whom they trade. But the unthinking people of those countries have the same idea, and apply the same system. That is, they seek to secure for their country more than they confer upon others. Manifestly, all cannot succeed. Actually, all fail. And because each does and must fail, disappointment follows, enmity is engendered, and the "armed fight" sooner or later follows.



But if Mr. Mann would turn from the books of his learned exponents of false trade-philosophy and study his own motives and the consequences of the very next purchase he makes—if it be no more than the buying of a newspaper—he will have a complete understanding of the laws of commerce. If he buys the paper as he approaches the railroad station, while there are several newsboys at hand, the price will be a cent. If he buy it after the train has pulled out of the station, when he has access to but one boy, the price will be five cents. Here he has the combination of the motives, the principles and the results of all trade. Does not his heart warm to the little street Arab? And does he not instinctively dislike the train boy? Yet both are human beings, and both are acting from exactly the same motives; that is, to benefit themselves. The difference in the result is due entirely to the fact that one boy is selling papers in a free market, while the other has a monopoly. Trade is as natural as breathing, and needs no more assistance from lawmakers. Congressmen can help trade only by maintaining its absolute freedom; that is, by preventing piracy and all other restraints to the freest possible exchange between one man or woman and any other man or woman in any part of the world. When Congress has established this condition it will have rendered war forever impossible.

S. C.



A True Statesman's Advice.

Some members of the visiting Belgian Commission are observant enough to take note of

other troubles than those which war brings. Thus they commented, in an interview in the Chicago Evening Post, on the—to them—surprisingly large stretches of unused fertile land noticeable on the trip from Montreal to Chicago. They could not see why this land should be allowed to lie idle when there were so many unemployed men seeking work. At least one of the delegation, Emil Van der Velde, saw and suggested a remedy. "These idle lands should be taxed more than improved lands," he said. "That will force them into use." What would he have thought of us had someone told him that that very remedy has long been urged but that so far no legislative body could be induced to apply it? Diplomatic considerations, and the courtesy due a host from a guest, would probably have kept him from openly expressing the opinion such information concerning us would logically create. If the advice of this wise Belgian statesman should help the movement for proper taxation of land values, we will have good cause to look upon his visit as a stroke of rare good fortune for us.

S. D.



A Superfluous Investigation.

Now another investigation of the labor problem and search for the solution is to be instituted. This time it is to be by the Rockefeller Foundation. Before beginning this search, would it not be well for the trustees to inquire whether the subject has not been already investigated? Why not appropriate a modest amount for return postal cards, to be addressed to the various organizations engaged in work of an economic, sociological, political reform or charitable nature, asking them whether the question needs any more investigating and if so, why? For the organization that wants to be helpful in abolishing poverty, there is already available all the information needed to show the way to accomplish that object. To defer taking the necessary steps, on the plea that more investigations are needed, is to lay oneself open to the suspicion of either having failed to learn that sufficient investigations have already been made, or of harboring a strong desire to secure credit for good intentions, and an exceeding reluctance to carrying such alleged intentions out.

S. D.



Blind Men Searching for a Rainbow.

What seems to be the most exquisite bit of grim humor ever perpetrated on a long suffering public is the announcement that the Rockefeller Foundation, which has been endowed by John

D. Rockefeller with \$100,000,000, is to make "a world investigation of the relations of labor and capital, with the object of running down the causes of 'bitter enmities' and searching out the remedy." In making the announcement, the trustees of the Foundation say:

In spirit and method the investigation of the problem will be like that carried on by the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research and other inquiries instituted by the Rockefeller boards. All alike are practical in aim and scientific in method. In the anomalies which modern industrial conditions disclose there is plenty of evidence of social disorder. Labor and capital in their relations to each other too often suggest the bitter enmities and destructive capacities of opposing and contending forces, and too rarely suggest the possibilities of harmonious and united action conforming to the laws of individual and social need. . . . In facing the problem of industrial relations the Rockefeller Foundation is deliberately attempting to grapple with what it believes to be the most complicated and at the same time the most urgent question of modern times.



There are those who will think this the sheerest hypocrisy. As well set the wolf, they will say, to discover why the sheepfold is lean. This may be extreme. It is not impossible that the trustees of the Rockefeller Foundation would really like to see better conditions prevail in social and industrial relations. If a number of learned men can retain a life-long belief in their several religions, Catholicism, Protestantism, Mohamedanism, Buddhism and Brahmanism, or if all Germans can support the Kaiser, while all non-Germans condemn him, is it not possible for a man to be honest, and at the same time to miss the point in the economic problem? Imagine a kindly and indulgent slave owner. He is distressed by the lack of harmony between master and slave, and appoints men with pay to look into the cause. They have a practical aim, and adopt a scientific method. They discover that the slave's chief handicap is lack of foresight. He is improvident and has no heart in his work. He complains of his food, his shelter and his clothing. He is lazy, and provokes the overseer's lash. He drinks to excess whenever he has the opportunity, he gambles away everything he has, and he has little regard for family ties. The committee, after an exhaustive investigation, recommends that means be adopted to awaken the slave's spiritual nature. With proper religious training he may be got to leave off gambling, the use of liquor, and stealing, and be brought to appreciate the Scriptural injunction: "Servants, obey your masters." There would be no questioning of the institution

of slavery itself, of the right of the master to take from the slave all but his bare keep, because to do that would be to interrupt the pleasant relations between the committee and the master.



The Rockefeller Foundation trustees propose to investigate the industrial problem as the medical institute searches into the origin of disease. But will they? The men in the Institute for Medical Research analyze diseased tissue with microscope and test tube, until they find the organism that caused it, and then with greater zeal they search for the means that will destroy the organism without killing the healthy tissue. Each discovery is hailed as an addition to the sum of human knowledge, and a material gain to the race. It brings fame and honor to the discoverer, and gratitude to him who made the work possible. But suppose a discovery of science led to a large pecuniary loss to the wealthy patron; it might then be a question with the discoverer whether he should announce his discovery, and ruin his patron—and so cut off his own income—or retain his secret, and continue his researches.



May this not be the predicament of the Rockefeller Foundation trustees? How long can they prosecute their studies into the industrial problem before they discover that taxes on industry are a burden, that speculation in land forestalls industry, and that monopoly prevents an equable distribution of wealth. And having learned this much will they not grasp the truth that industry will be stimulated by the removal of taxes, that greater opportunities for the employment of labor will follow the putting to use of idle land, and that the discontent of labor will cease with an equable distribution of wealth? But, and this is the great obstacle that lies in the path of the trustees, to proclaim this truth is to condemn their benefactor, and it may be to throw themselves out of a job. For, of all the great fortunes that ever were made none other was ever more dependent upon a privilege granted by the state to an individual. The state has given Mr. Rockefeller exclusive possession of oil and mineral lands, which he has been permitted to do with as he pleased. By using some, and holding the rest idle, he has been able to keep wages down and prices up, while the state has gone for its revenue to the very man who has already been victimized.



The problem is not a matter of persons, but of principle. Efforts have been made by the state