

### Hay-Foot, Straw-Foot.

Big Business has been accustomed so long to implicit obedience that it is little wonder it should "get off on the wrong foot" when the People's mandate begins to be heard. First it is tariff reduction; then "currency" reform; next it will be abolition (more or less) of patent monopoly; and bye and bye—well, it is a good beginning anyway. It is an inspiring sight, this raw recruit in the army of the Common Good, stepping along at the word of the Commander-in-Chief, the President of the United States himself. Some day the raw recruit will be a well-trained, obedient, and efficient soldier-boy. For the present it is hay-foot, straw-foot, hay-foot, straw-foot—an inspiring sight indeed!

HARRY W. OLNEY.



### Where Does the Farmer Come In?

Seldom has the irony of fate been more dramatically manifested than in the case of the American farmer? Upon his broad and patient shoulders has rested the protective tariff system. He was far removed from the immediate benefits, but he was so emphatically assured they would reach him that he unquestioningly supported the system. Keep out foreign goods, said the manufacturer, and I will pay high wages to the American workmen, and they will buy of the American farmer. And as an evidence of good faith the high tariff advocate put duties on grains, meats, and dairy products. It never occurred to the farmer that the fact that foodstuffs were going out while manufactures were coming into the country might result in a different effect from the same cause. The effect upon American wages may be read in the recent strikes and labor investigations.

Meantime, however, the country settled up, a home market for farm products appeared, prices began to advance, and the farmer seemed destined at last to reap where he had so long sown. But a change came over the country. High prices for farm products became associated in people's minds with the high cost of living, and the very thing which the protectionist had promised became the one thing to be removed. Thus, at the moment when the protective duties became operative, they were withdrawn. Will he profit by the experience? Other measures are urged for the removal of oppressive conditions, and the farmer is again brought forward as a sacrifice. He is told that the proposition to exempt improvements from taxation will victimize him for the benefit of the city property holder. Will he repeat his former folly?

s. o.

### Missouri's Uninformed State Agricultural Secretary.

The secretary of Missouri's State Board of Agriculture, Mr. Jewell Mayes, bitterly opposes the Singletax. He advocates continued taxation of improvements on farms, livestock, crops and other labor products in preference to increasing the tax bills of holders of unused lands and of corporation franchises. Strangely enough, in taking this position he declares that he is "devoting his time largely to the upbuilding of agriculture in Missouri." Just how agriculture is to be built up by increasing a farmer's taxes in proportion to his industry Mr. Mayes does not explain. He seems instead to be favoring a system that penalizes upbuilding of agriculture. Perhaps he is not aware of the fact that more land values are in city lots, mining lands, utility franchises and unused lands generally than on farms tilled by their owners. If he had this information he would realize that under the Singletax the tax bills of working farmers would be materially cut down. At the same time if he does not have this information then how much knowledge concerning agricultural conditions is the secretary of the Missouri State Board of Agriculture required to have?

s. d.



### Ford and the Labor Problem.

It may surprise some people to learn that Henry Ford has not solved the labor problem, nor made any approach toward doing so. Mr. Ford makes this quite clear in his latest reported announcement. Therein he declares his intention to regulate the manner of living of his employes. He thus announces himself as a despot—a benevolent despot, undoubtedly—but a despot nevertheless. Of course his employes won't like it. They might not object to friendly advice, but every man with any self-respect must feel inclined to resent dictation from his employer concerning matters that do not concern the latter. But they will probably submit. They will arrange their domestic affairs in accord with Mr. Ford's wishes, not as they themselves would have them. They will do this because they are not free men. The fact that they submit to his wishes in this matter shows that they would in other matters. The same system that confers despotic power on Mr. Ford can and frequently does confer power on masters who are not so benevolent. It is not within the power of any employer to solve the labor problem. Nothing can do that short of the destruction of legalized privilege. "What can the rich man do to improve the condition of labor?"

is a question to which there seems no other answer than that of Henry George: "He can do nothing at all except to use his strength for the abolition of the great primary wrong that robs men of their birthright. The justice of God laughs at the attempts of men to substitute anything else for it."

S. D.



### COINCIDENCE OR CONSEQUENCE?

On the night of April 18 the "Breadline," New York City's most characteristic "exhibit," stretched nearly a thousand feet along the sidewalk turning the corner of Eleventh street and Broadway.

It has become an institution; and as do all institutions performs a function vital to the community in which it exists. Several hundreds of men stood, two by two, awaiting the signal to march. We had forgotten time and place, in contemplation of the spectacle, until the boom of the midnight chime of Grace Church startled us and sent a bracing quiver through the "line." Grace church windows saw it all; have seen it every night since it began. The north end of the line extended past the door of a restaurant on Broadway—a restaurant distinguished by a glaring uniform of white enamel, that is known to travelers from one end of the land to the other. The restaurant is popularly understood to be the latest enterprise appropriated by the Rockefellers, to find employment for surplus capital.

There may be nothing more than an accidental coincidence in the merely local proximity of these three factors; but their economic and social relation is as evident and unequivocal as that of the upper and nether millstones and the grist that sifts between them. A grim, a tragic pantaloone set Fleischman's restaurant so near to Rockefeller's; but a more grisly Mephisto put them both under the eaves of that fane where its votaries partake in His remembrance of the body of their Lord—while, nightly, sheltered from the idle gaze of the curious by midnight shadows, the hungry hundreds slink from unnumbered kennels to get the bread of charity.

And people are beginning to talk. They are asking how much longer these men, and the multiplied thousands they represent, will continue to "take it lying down." These questionings are heard afar, even in the cloistered offices of a National Civic Federation. Immediately, professional secretaries become energetic, a definite campaign is begun to silence questions, to limit the

exercise of free speech, of a querulous, inquisitive sort. The press, the pulpit, the school, the court with its retinue, all fall into a line, until one wonders where the Breadline begins, or which end is the beginning. Is it a coincidence or a consequence?

WESTERN STARR.



### THE PAST DANGER AND A FUTURE ONE.

Welcome indeed was the news that mediation in the Mexican trouble had been offered and accepted by both sides. That President Wilson accepted the proposition was a matter of course. An administration committed to a policy of justice and good will could do no less. There was not the same confidence concerning Huerta. But since he has also consented there seems to be a reasonable prospect of settling all differences with him without further bloodshed.

In the meantime it would be well to take precautionary measures against further efforts to involve us in war. It is intolerable that medieval notions of national honor or dignity, on the part of such an official as Admiral Mayo, may bring about a war. Naval officers, whatever their rank, should no longer be permitted to take such a stand as Mayo took at Tampico.

But it would also be well to adopt precautions against possible stirring up of trouble by others than admirals. With the outbreak of trouble came an insistent demand from the jingo organs that a criminally aggressive war be waged, not against Huerta alone, but against Mexico. They demanded nothing less than obliteration of the international boundary. What influenced this demand was well put some weeks ago by Herbert Quick: "Owners of great newspapers are also the owners of great estates in Mexico, which will be tripled in value the day the Stars and Stripes wave over the land." Mediation of the pending dispute is a disappointment to these interests. With such great financial gains in view is it reasonable to believe that they will make no further efforts to involve us in war? It does not seem so. If at any time in the future some Mexican leader should act in a way to indicate that he is inviting trouble, it would be well to consider whether he may not have entered the service of these American interests. Owners of papers which raise the loudest shouts about patriotism may not be too patriotic to incite foreign insults to the flag. Just as patriotic gun makers of Germany were found to have incited anti-German feeling in France, so there may be patriotic American newspaper own-