

able that there will be many censors who will think the most effective answer is the "cut out." Whatever may be thought of the Socialist as a constructive critic, as a destructive critic he is a past master. He can kick a hole through a rotten tub as easily as the next one—even if he is a little slow about mending it. When, therefore, he puts his incisive indictments of social and industrial conditions on the screen they will hurt; and the sharpest smart will come from the consciousness that they are true. The best way to provide against the abuse of a little brief authority at a future time is to lay a restraining hand upon the censors of today. Bureaucratic judgments as to what is proper to send through the mails, or what is permissible in public speech, have no place in a free country; and the sooner the mistaken zeal of the censorially inclined is frowned upon, the briefer will be the train of evils that follows in its wake.

S. C.



Again, Trust-Busting.

What good will it do for Congress to create a commission with power to inquire into all commercial relations that are harmless, and leave it helpless in the presence of the only thing potent for evil—special privilege? Will the Interstate Trade Commission at the very best do more than "regulate" the stifling prisoners in the Black Hole of Calcutta? Discipline them it may, and reduce them to an orderly procession, so that each may get his breath of air as he passes the window. But what sort of solution is this of the economic problem? Is there a man in this day so fatuous as to think Labor and Capital can be kept at peace in the Black Hole of Privilege? The irrepressible conflict in the industrial world is not due to the fact that some business men are so much shrewder than others, or so much more unprincipled; it is due to the fact that they are fortified by legal privilege; and so long as that legal privilege remains, all regulations and restrictions will be in vain. So obvious a fact appeals little to the statesman who is bent upon relieving the victim without disturbing the beneficiary. He will come ultimately to the true remedy, but he must first try all the wrong ones.

S. C.



Colorado's Agitators.

"The law has given us power, we are going to maintain it, no government dare take it from us, and whoever will not submit must leave our domain." This is in substance, though not in words, the statement of their position filed by Colorado's

mine owners with the congressional committee. It is quite natural that they should take such a position. It is the attitude always assumed by a privileged class, confiding in its might, and blind to any possibility of overthrow. It is well that it is so. The abolition of Privilege would be a far more difficult task were its holders less inclined to flaunt their power, and more inclined to be moderate in its use. These mine owners have done much to open the eyes of many hitherto blind to the wrong of the monopoly of nature's bounties. They have done much to show the need of government action to remedy this wrong. "The real agitator is the conservative," as Dan Beard, artist and author, truly said. Colorado's mine owners are splendid agitators.

S. D.



On Dangerous Ground.

"If the State will not furnish to owners of property the protection to which they are entitled it is left to them to defend themselves and their property by whatever means they can find." This is part of a public statement made in behalf of the Rockefeller and other Colorado mining interests. Is the position assumed justifiable? Is the action outlined right? If so, then these mine owners invoke a radical principle on which others may as rightfully act. There are natural rights which neither State nor Nation at present protects, rights which are violated by grants to favored individuals of such privileges as those on which these complaining interests base their power. That is why this nation is a land of poverty as well as of progress. That is why we must contend with all the vice, crime and misery resulting from poverty or the fear of it. May those suffering from the neglect by government to guard their rights take the correction of these evils into their own hands? If not, how can the mine owners' threat be justified? If so, what may be done with the mine owners' privilege?

S. D.



The Landlord's Power.

A legal excuse for suppressing free speech in Tarrytown, New York, has been found. F. R. Pierson, president of the Village Trustees, explains it this way: "We haven't a single foot of unoccupied land in town that the community owns. The title to our streets is not in the Trustees of the Village, but is held by the abutting property owners. The rights we have in the streets are merely easements covering the right of traffic to pass over them. New York owns its streets, the property owners own ours. We have no squares, parks, or

public places." So, in spite of all Constitutional guarantees, men may only say on the highways of Tarrytown what its landowners permit to be said. Trustee Pierson calls attention to a practical illustration of despotic power in this country which landlordism confers. Henry George suggested the possibility of such tyranny as one reason why landlordism should be abolished. Now Trustee Pierson—unconsciously probably—confirms his reasoning. He makes clear that the most extreme possibility of land monopoly, preventing the exercise by landless men of any natural right, is not merely theoretical. Tarrytown will serve as a horrible example of what land monopoly can do.

s. d.



Wages and Efficiency.

The minimum wage idea receives novel support at the hands of H. A. Millis, in the *Journal of Political Economy*, where it is claimed that a minimum wage would benefit employer as well as employe, because it would compel both to adopt more efficient methods of production. Manufacturers, the writer holds, often fall into and continue slovenly methods of production when labor is cheap, and will not of their own initiative adopt improvements that will permit of the payment of higher wages. When, however, wages are arbitrarily raised, as they would be under a minimum wage, law, the employer would be compelled to adopt better methods or go out of business.



This is the very point made by the trade unionist. Raise wages to a living point and business will adapt itself to it. To advance wages twenty-five per cent does not necessarily mean paying twenty-five per cent more for labor. It means in most cases improvements in method that soon meet the increase in wages, and often result in cheaper labor than before. High wages stimulate discovery and invention, and make the cost of high priced labor cheaper than low priced labor. A business that must depend upon low priced labor, either in the form of child labor or Oriental labor, rests upon a false basis. Wages constitute Labor's share of production, and must in all reason advance as production advances; but too often contented Labor means indifferent Capital. Hence, as long as we persist in maintaining an unnaturally restrained system of industry it will be necessary for Labor to arbitrarily advance wages from time to time, not alone as a means of obtaining its share of increased production, but as a spur to lagging Capital. s. c.

WHY LABOR ORGANIZATIONS EXIST.

Labor unions have been Labor's only weapon against organizations which have been more tyrannous and longer established and are deserving of as much denunciation.

That labor unions exhibit many of the weaknesses and worse, which their progenitors, i. e., organized capital, have possessed, is but natural, but should not excite a capitalist.

Labor unions will some day disappear, but probably no one will be able to kill them off. They are unnatural, just as other conditions in capitalist quarters are, and both will have to go along together until they can both together commit hari-kari.

In the meantime the "ceaseless conflict" to which Lincoln referred must doubtless continue. Adding to this conflict is very poor business and business men had better forget as much of the crimes of labor unions, and the crimes of organized capital as they can and get along with labor as well as they can until economic conditions are such that Labor can deal with them on something like an equal footing, and will not have to try and enforce its demands by strikes, dynamite, etc.

Fundamental to all of the above are, of course, some notions of what the remedies are, but that's another story and a long one.



But bring facts like these to the attention of the bitter opponent of existing trade unions and how does he reply? Here is what a very active and prominent one had to say:

"I know that you act from the best of motives but you do not realize the falsity of your position and the harm that is sure to grow out of it in case your expressions are extended to the ears of volatile and wilful men.

"The laws of this country provide for equal opportunity and protection for every man, and when a few men band together and parade the streets and attack other men who want to work, and destroy property because they can't rule it, the time to settle the question is *right then and there*, and not have a lot of soft heads excusing them over and over again, until they think they have a right to do these things.

"Perhaps I might add that I am in sympathy with organized effort, not alone among workingmen but also among other men who may perhaps work with their minds, as well as their bodies. I insist, however, that one law shall apply to them