

provement they strive for, the small corruptions they would abolish, are as nothing compared to the basic wrongs from which after all most of these lesser wrongs spring. The hope to rid ourselves by jailing offenders is a childish delusion. But, as we say, it is of momentary advantage to some Lexow, Raines or Jerome. Maybe these investigations have their uses as civic spasms. But history tells how little lasting are their effects.

THE shallowness and superficiality that characterize these futile investigations into various systems of municipal corruption, the regularly recurring fanfare which makes front-page news, serve no useful purpose, and the suspicion grows that they are not meant to serve any. No hint is forthcoming from any one starting or controlling these investigations as to what should be done about it. With more than half of the population in want or in fear of want the division in part of this population into a dependent class on one side and a predatory class on the other is inevitable with all that flows from it. Hereafter it will be well for those appointed to take part in such investigation to consider not whom it is intended to discredit, but for whose particular glorification it was designed. In short, cui bono?

AS there is a superficiality wide-spread in current reasoning so in phraseology. We have been wondering who are the "economic royalists" referred to by Mr. Roosevelt to describe a group not clearly identified. We concede that they may be undesirable but who are they? What do they represent? We were a little puzzled by the term Tories whom we linked up with the little pants presser in Jersey City and those who would make him a member—a rather insignificant one, it seemed to us—of what Professor Tugwell calls "a disciplined industry," all industrialists, great and small, being so many bad little boys to be whipped and sent to bed.

ONE of the ablest democratic leaders who has "walked out" is Joseph B. Ely, former governor of Massachusetts. In an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* of July 4 he gives his reasons for refusing to support President Roosevelt for reelection. He does not realize the significance of much that he says—that we fear is obvious. It is even a little exasperating to find him stumbling over the truth and then shying away from it—quite unintentionally, we believe.

HE quotes Jefferson as follows:

"A wise and frugal government which shall restrain men from injuring one another, which shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvements, and shall not take from the mouths of labor the bread it has earned."

Mr. Ely comments as follows:

"That was the ideal—the American ideal of political and economic freedom. That was our heritage—the greatest heritage ever received by any people in the world's history. And during the years we have neglected our heritage. We have allowed it to be violated. In the rush to conquer a new continent, in the concentration necessary to build up the greatest industrial nation the world has ever seen, we have failed to guard against encroachments on our freedom."

DOES he really sense the significance of the following:

"No, there will be little said about the real underlying issue. That will have to wait for another four years—perhaps longer. But sooner or later, it must be faced and the answer must be given."

YES, indeed the answer must be given. In another part of his article he says:

"We were not visited by these destructive forces because we believed in political and economic freedom. Ample proof can be found in the fact that the depression is world-wide, whereas political and economic freedom, unfortunately, is not."

GOVERNOR ELY has placed his foot on the first step of the threshold. He has knocked at the door. No one with voice comparable to his in weight and influence has come so near to indicating the real problem. We thank him. Will he now go on from where he has stopped? It is but a little way; his words unlike the ballyhoo to which we have been accustomed to listen mean something. He may not know all it means—we suspect he does not. But he hears the ringing of the bells in the steeple; he knows the direction and will find the church.

IT may be well to elaborate somewhat on the message of Governor Ely to the American people, so that our readers may sense its importance. He says: "We cannot have a planned economy under the American system." Governor Ely is one of the few men whose opposition to the Roosevelt programme is really important. He sees that something more is required than the defeat of the administration and the New Deal. He sees that to guard against a recurrence of another four years of un-American experimentation it is necessary also to defeat the insidious forces which working from without have determined the character of much of our legislation. He seeks to restore what he calls "a free economy," but he has his own idea about that and he is very positive that there is a real underlying issue, a problem to which sooner or later "an answer must be given." He therefore goes beyond the merely negative criticism of Roosevelt which is common enough, but advances to occupy what is the real battleground of the future.

flower. Drought and flood may intervene, cold and frost wither the blossoms, but deep down beneath the surface works still the eternal urge. The analogy that is suggested in the seed growth of the vital earth holds good of every moral truth that has its seed-time of planting and its certain and ultimate harvest.

The Superstition of a Street

WHEN superficial thinkers seek to picture real or imaginary abuses in our economic system they resort to symbolism. They are in the habit of referring to Wall street as if it included nearly all the evils to which we are subject. This attitude of mind we have ventured to call "the superstition of a street." There is a fatal facility in this mental process that makes the segment of the picture stand for the entire canvas.

Wall street is no more representative of economic conditions in any real sense than Minetta Lane. It is true that here is carried on the financial business of a number of powerful oligarchies, including that of the "international bankers" whom Father Coughlin is accustomed to villify. Here are the homes of the Morgan, Mellon and Rockefeller interests. But here too are the infinite variety of productive enterprises, in the smooth functioning of which our vast network of trade and commerce depends. And little originates here that is not inherent in the economic conditions of the country and the world.

We have monopolies; monopoly is a fact. Many of those who profit by it do business in Wall street as they do in other parts of the country. Legitimate and illegitimate securities are dealt in here as elsewhere and it would not alter the situation one iota if Wall street should disappear overnight. All that is baneful in American economic life would continue.

It is true that financial and industrial groups influence legislation and mould the character of government, not only as they exist in Wall street but as they exist everywhere in this broad land. Wall street is typical of the good and bad, the true and false economics that govern the wide ramifications of national and international business.

We hear much of the "money changers." Who are they? We know of a few in Washington who changed the dollar to 59.06. But Wall street opposed the change. What is "money changing" anyhow? We believe it is the legitimate banking function which concerns itself with foreign exchange, drafts, checks, etc., all of which facilitate business. Nor may we criticize the capitalization of privilege, for it is there to capitalize.

We hold no brief for Wall street. Some of the friends of privilege congregate there. But why not attack privilege? Is it not a fact that most of the business of Wall street finds its real stumbling block in the capitalization of land values which holds its place in any balance sheet and drops towards zero with every depression. Such

values are only hopes accompanied by fears and are the basic unsettling influence of the market.

This we can depend upon, that those who mistake symptoms for causes and talk about Wall street are honestly mistaken or are indulging in pure demagoguery. Besides, such teaching conceals the true source of our troubles in setting the hounds on a false scent.

We Appeal For A Little Discernment

THE Henry George School of Social Science is doing wonderful work. Its remarkable growth is a matter for fervent congratulation. But let us remember that there is no superlatively best among the activities for the furtherance of the cause. We think sometimes that because of the phenomenal growth of the School we are prone to lose sight of the value of other activities.

Prior to the School, apart from but cooperating with the School as one of its activities, reaching a clientele the School cannot reach, is the Schalkenbach Foundation. We wonder how many of our friends stop to consider this. The Foundation is estopped by its charter from indulging in political activities. Even if it were not so, wisdom would dictate this course. It could not reach the kind of men and women it reaches if its course were political. Great credit should be given to its early founders in the organization chief among whom are Messrs. Hennessy and Root, for their work in building up the prestige of Henry George in subtle and persistent efforts to contact editors, professors and leaders of economic thought, as well as educational groups. This neither the School nor the ordinary Henry George Organizations could successfully do. No political organization could forward the kind of contacts of which columnists like Leslie Eichel and the articles from Dun and Bradstreet agencies are the fruit. Henry George people have not understood the work of the Foundation from 1926 to 1935. Given the limited amounts the Foundation has had to work with it has carried on the war on a broad front.

The debt owed by the movement to the Schalkenbach Foundation is incalculable, as those familiar with its history know.

THE methods by which a trade union can alone act, are necessarily destructive; its organization is necessarily tyrannical. A strike, which is the only recourse by which a trade union can enforce its demands, is a destructive contest.—PROGRESS AND POVERTY.

WHAT a noble income would be that of a Duke of New York, a Marquis of Philadelphia, or a Count of San Francisco, who would administer the government of these municipalities for fifty per cent of present waste and stealage!—SOCIAL PROBLEMS.