

ies' lines undoubtedly argues greater laxity of management. . . . The experience of Continental Europe points unmistakably to the exercise of greater economy in State management."

3. Political Difficulties of Public Ownership.

The difficulties which would arise in this country, in case the railroads passed into the hands of the public, would nearly all be of a political nature. The European countries have provided for these difficulties by divorcing as much as possible the legislative and administrative powers of the State. Our political system of rapid rotation in office is not fitted for administrative offices, no matter how desirable it may be for legislative and executive bodies. Capable men, when once placed in responsible positions in business management, such as that of the railways would be, should be permitted to remain as long as the business prospered under their management. This would prevent political favoritism. We must also do away with the appointive system in any except the very highest, managing positions, and must depend entirely on a well-devised merit system. The European countries have proved that it is possible to make the railways wholly independent of the party in power, and we can learn a valuable lesson from them.

If the railroads are kept aloof from politics as much as they are in Germany and the Scandinavian countries, we do not need to fear a great body of voters in the government service who would always throw their influence in a certain direction. These fears are merely imaginary, and are used to frighten off people who prefer to let others think for them, from that terrible monster, government ownership. But even if we could conceive of the influence of the railway employees as being thrown entirely in favor of one party, still, this influence would only be but a fraction compared with the past and present influence of the men who have, as beneficiaries of a private monopoly, corrupted all our legislative bodies, from the United States Senate, all the way down through the State legislatures to the town and city councils. This is the political influence most to be feared.

All considered, the political difficulties, while of a more serious nature than any of the other conditions we have investigated, are by no means insurmountable. We can model our railroad departments from Europe; there is no reason why we should be too proud to learn from our sister nations when in this particular case they can teach us a valuable lesson. We can surely do as well as they have done. How inconsistent if we, who boast of being the foremost nation in the world, and the best business men, should not consider ourselves capable of handling our railway system the same as does Germany.

The American people have not yet failed in anything they earnestly undertook. Nor will they fail

when they once realize their duty and their rights in regard to the public highways of their country.

ERIK OBERG.

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P. WEAVER, CLAIMANT.

T. K. Hedrick in *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*.

I am a air-at-law; I meen 2 soo
phor mi phull shair ov adam's vast estait;
mi claim is just—mi relative hee dyed
an made no will—what law kalls "intestait."

now eve an adam, so the bible sez,
they oaned thee earth and thereoff evry frute,
an I, a true desendent ov them 2,
deemand mi proper shair in this mi sute.

itt matters knot 2 mee whut men hav dun
2 wards improving this estait ov mine,
that jumped mi claim without mi phull konsent,
lett them sho enny papers I did sine!

thee earth, thee air, thee water ar three things
thatt no man kan sustane hiz life without,
an thatt is why old adam maid no will,
hee left them 2 us awl beyond a dout.

iff enny man kan oan a bit of earth,
itt's logikal thatt hee kan oan itt awl,
an oaning itt, no other foaks kan live
on itt unless he sez so—att hiz beck an kaw!

itts getting thatt way now, a phew men claim
to oan thee better parts ov awl thee earth,
thee rest ov us must pay them what they ask
as rental, whith IZ awl yore life IZ wirth.

an thatt IZ why thatt I intend 2 soo
phor a division, an deemand account,
I pheer the trustees hav ben krooked, an
perhaps embezzled quite a large amount.

BOOKS

THE LAST WORD ON SOCIALISM.

New Worlds for Old. By H. G. Wells. Published by the Macmillan Co., New York. 1908.

Not a Utopian romance this time, but an exposition of modern Socialism, comes from Mr. Wells's famous pen. The fundamental idea of Socialism, says the author, is the denial that chance rules the world, the affirmation that things social (like things material) are by nature orderly. And the Socialist declares a "constructive design" for society.

This design of the Socialist rests upon two main generalizations. First,—since "the most important of all public questions,"—is "the question of the welfare and upbringing of the next generation." "The ideas of the private individual rights of the parent and of his isolated responsibility for his children are harmfully exaggerated in the contemporary world. . . . The Socialist holds that the community as a whole should be respon-

sible and every individual in the community, married or single, parent or childless, should be responsible, for the welfare and upbringing of every child born into that community. . . . Percentage rightly undertaken is a service as well as a duty to the world, carrying with it not only obligations, but a claim, the strongest of claims, upon the whole community. It must be paid for like any other public service; in any completely civilized state it must be sustained, rewarded and controlled. And this is to be done not to supersede the love, pride, and conscience of the parent, but to supplement, encourage, and maintain it."

And the second generalization is: "The idea of the private ownership of things and the rights of owners is enormously and mischievously exaggerated in the contemporary world. . . . The Socialist holds that the community as a whole should be inalienably the owner and administrator of the land, of all raw materials, of all values and resources accumulated from the past, and that all private property must be of a terminable nature, reverting to the community, and subject to the general welfare."

These two doctrines, misunderstood, give rise to the charges that Socialism would destroy the home and would destroy property. It is the present organization, or rather chaos, of society, answers Mr. Wells, which is destroying the home, and he calls to witness incontrovertible facts. Socialism would restore and cherish it in freedom. As for private property, Socialism "will sustain far more property than the average working-class man has to-day." "Modern Socialism tends to create and confirm property and rights, the property of the user, the rights of the Creator."

What of the past and present of the Socialistic movement? The author reiterates that Socialism is a "developing doctrine." It has passed from its preliminary stage of experimental Utopianism; through the "Revolutionary Socialism" of Marx—"which tends to an unreasonable fatalism" and "narrows the range of Socialism to only the economic aspect of life;" on into the "Administrative Socialism" of the English Fabians; and now in this very decade stands forth in its latest phase as "Constructive Socialism."

This modern "Constructive" Socialist has great tasks before him. He must (1) "do whatever lies in his power toward the enrichment of the Socialist idea;" he must (2) "direct his energies to political reform," that is, "the scientific reconstruction of our representative and administrative machinery;" and he must (3) "set himself to forward the resumption of the land by the community" and go on "with the work of socializing the main public services, by transferring them steadily from private enterprise to municipal and state control."

The whole book is, needless to say, brilliant. Persuasive in argument, reasonable in tone, vivid

in portrayal, enthusiastic in spirit, fascinating in style—all these of course it is. And the unwary reader lays down the book only to rise up and proclaim himself a Socialist—until by some deep and experienced reformer he is made to see that Mr. Wells has led every progressive to acknowledge himself a Socialist by the simple expedient of embracing all progress in Socialism.

ANGELINE LOESCH.

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STEPPING-STONES TO HEAVEN.

Stepping Stones to Heaven. Three Lectures by C. L. Brewer. To-Morrow Publishing Co., Chicago. Cloth, 50 cts.; paper, 25 cts.

"The Gospel of To-Day," "Ignorance," and "The Sex Question," are subjects treated with a refreshing frankness and freedom that might startle and possibly shock the conservative mind or what Mr. Brewer calls the "Mortal Mind," dignified by the capital "M," in contradistinction to Mrs. Eddy, who is satisfied to put her favorite term in the small type, emblematic of its "no account" quality.

Mr. Brewer preaches the gospel of to-day—or, shall we say of to-morrow?—with a cataract rush of anathemas against the old, and panegyrics to the new that would be likely to confound the small-type mortal mind unable to grasp what the gospeller is driving at.

Mr. Brewer is blackly pessimistic regarding the state from which we are slowly evolving. It does not seem to hold the promise even of the glorious vision of the future with which he now and then assures us like this:

One not versed in the ways of God with men would think our foremost teachers given over to psychic riot, and reveling in the delusions of Mortal Mind gone mad. And so, indeed, they are; but under cover of that expanding hysteria the vibrations are going forth that will transform the Mortal into the Immortal Mind and usher us into Celestial Spheres of Cosmic Consciousness. We are now staggering under the cumulative Truth and Falsehood of a million experimental years of mental and spiritual evolution, and the actinic heat of the light that never shone on land or sea is burning away the dross, and they who identify themselves with the dross and make Falsehood their Truth are burning with it.

On the Sex Question our lecturer utters some wholesome and needed truths, at present quite above the range of the ordinary mortal mind in small type. But despite the slave ideals of the past he sees that:

We shall not always sleep nor vegetate as thorn and gum trees walking in misty dream land. When we have been transformed by the renewing of our minds, and our souls have stood upright within us, and come, each to its own peculiar place of power and majesty as a right hand of God, we shall laugh softly at the embryonic folly of the mewling period