

"Good" Men Not "Half Bad."

Mr. William C. Whitney used to carry stocks on margin for prominent politicians, giving them the profit if the stocks rose and standing the loss if the stocks fell. This is one of the simplest masks for bribery, the politicians "earning" their bribes by getting public franchises for the bribers—Mr. Whitney's group in this instance. The facts have been divulged by Mr. H. H. Vreeland, president of the Metropolitan Street Railway Company of New York, who was one of the Whitney group, and who corroborates Mr. Ryan's testimony as to the use of half a million of their "swag" to defeat William J. Bryan, whom they feared. It is in the face of such revelations that the proposal is calmly made to divest franchise giving in New York of the protection it now has from referendum requirements. But only "good" men are now engaged in the public utilities business, we are assured. Well, William C. Whitney was a "good" man in those stock-carrying days. They are all "good" men—until they are exposed. Even then the remaining "good" men consider the exposed ones as not "half bad."

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Industrial Education.

Probably every one who has thought upon the subject favors industrial education; but it is doubtful if many appreciate the point at issue between contending factions in the industrial education movement. Yet the issue is a simple one. It is whether the public school systems of this country shall educate intelligent and useful citizens by means in part of industrial training, or whether they shall by that means become an agency for flooding the labor market with uneducated youth skilled in narrow mechanical specialties. As a labor unionist might define the issue, it is whether the public schools shall give children a broad industrial education, or merely supply local factories with good enough material for strike breakers. And his definition would be in substance correct.

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There is significance in the fact that school boards favor the narrow specializing that would flood the labor market, whereas educators favor a broad industrial apprehension and knowledge, as distinguished from mere skill in narrow specialties. As a rule, however, school boards are cautious about making their class preference known. But there is no such caution in the make-up of James W. Van Cleave of the National Association of Manufacturers. In an interview in the

Chicago Inter-Ocean of the 11th—probably received from the New York Sun—Mr. Van Cleave tells with much frankness how his organization expects to overthrow labor organizations by means of this subversion of the public school system. Listen to him:

Right at our hand is an opportunity to raise up more and better mechanics than the apprenticeship system ever furnished, namely by attaching a manual training department to every public school of the primary grade in the United States. In this department let every boy from the age of 9 or 10, to 14, give an hour every school day to the use of tools employed in the more important mechanical trades, under competent instructors, and make the attendance compulsory on each boy.

It is usual to advocate industrial training in the interest of the boy, though with only more or less candor. Mr. Van Cleave advocates it candidly in the interest of organized employers. If every business man were as candid, the public would have a better understanding of the motives which have impelled business organizations of late to take an exceptional interest in the public school system.

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An Erroneous Allusion.

In an editorial on the present hard times (p. 77) which appeared three weeks ago, we spoke of the discharge of mill hands in New England by scores of thousands. The allusion was to the wholesale reductions of wages reported by the press dispatches (p. 39) and should have read: "Over against this perfunctory optimism we find as a hard fact that mill hands by scores of thousands are having their wages reduced in New England."

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Death of Juan Tejada.

In the East and in Cuba the name of Juan de Dios Tejada, who has just died after a long and painful illness, was well known to a wide circle which included a great many followers of Henry George. An engineer by profession, he had made several inventions, one of which, a system for the utilization of power and heat from highly explosive substances, is said to give great promise of achievement. A few years ago he received a gold medal from the Academy of Inventors at Paris for his works on calcium carbide and its applications as acetylene gas. He was a member of the American Society of Engineers, of the Smithsonian Institution and of the Geographical Society. But he was not so abjectly wedded to material progress as to be indifferent to economic adjustments and industrial morality. He

was a fervent single taxer, thoroughly conversant with the subject both on its fiscal side and in its ethical aspects. Those who knew him personally would doubtless say of him that he would have his name remembered rather for what he did to propagate the doctrines of Henry George than for any other service to his kind.

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WHAT IS CHEAP LABOR?

"Cheap labor" is a term that circulates as widely as "sound money," and with a certain stripe of patriots is almost as popular. But what is it?

Is it the man who works for the smallest amount of money per day, or is it the man who produces the most wealth and gets the least of it?

Which is the cheapest, measured by any scale or standard you wish to use? Which is the cheapest to himself, his employer, or the country in which he lives? Is it the man lowest down in the scale of intelligence and education, unskilled in craft, art or science, whose labor parallels that of the mule or any other beast of burden in its limited productiveness, and who produces so little that it takes nearly his whole product to keep him alive and at work?

Just how cheap this man is, was shown by chattel slavery, where several hundred slaves and a thousand-acre plantation were necessary to keep one white family in comfort and luxury. Where, under such a state of society, could you find a single millionaire, to say nothing of several thousand of them as in America to-day?

Verily, these are not cheap laborers. They do not produce enough surplus wealth to warrant calling them cheap.

The cheapest laborers in the world are the best and most efficient, not the worst and least competent. Not the man who comes nearest to being an animal, but the animal who comes nearest to being a man. It is the skilled, educated, inventive, ingenious, resourceful laborer who is by long odds the cheapest laborer in the world. The man who produces the most wealth and gets the smallest per cent of it, this is the cheapest man, incomparably so. It is the man who kneads into his muscular activities the most gray matter; this is the quality of man who more than any other makes the millionaire class in America.

This very skill is capitalized into the hundreds of millions, and if this skill were to vanish in a night, the bulk of the so-called wealth of the rich would be gone in the morning. There is a very narrow margin between gilt edged securities and waste paper,—a margin about the thickness of the

average human skull, which, thanks to radiating education, is getting thinner every day.

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Where else in the world, or at what time in its history, save now, could a crop of millionaires be raised every month, and sometimes every day, on a "bull" stock market? Irrigated brains beat irrigated land to a frazzle when it comes to raising rich crops; and a turn of the market costs the garnerers not one single worthy effort, which shows what an unworthy thing is the stock market of to-day.

England raises no such crop, nor does Germany, nor France. Great, productive, and industrially progressive as those countries are, no such effect obtains, save in the United States. Why? Simply because we have here the cheapest laborers in the world. They make the most wealth, and get the least of it; the difference goes to privilege, for the law distributes wealth.

Great is the law, the monopolist's sole reliance, his first and final refuge and his haven of rest. Where is the pauper laborer of Europe or far off Cathay, who can out of a single sheet of steel make a finished bath tub in six minutes (as is done by six men in Detroit and Toledo, aided by those children of genius, hydraulic presses and dies), or six days, years or centuries for that matter; where is the pauper labor that can compete with the screw machine, punch press or automatic machine of any description?

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If we need a tariff to keep out of the country cheap goods made by cheap men in other parts of the world, do we not need some other kind of law to prevent the production of still cheaper goods made by still cheaper men (because more efficient) in this country? If the one can threaten the country's prosperity, surely the other can destroy it; and yet so inconsistent is the protectionist that he will hold up his hands in horror at the thought of abolishing the tariff, and never see in labor saving machinery an infinitely greater menace to the American workingman's prosperity.

Protection is stupidity gone to seed; it is converted, perverted and inverted paternalism. Nor is this the worst feature of this stormy, choppy sea of economic cross purposes.

We speak of the poor laborer in America and the pauper labor of Europe; in both cases work and poverty are associated on both sides of the pond, and so firmly is the gaze of the poor working man of America fixed upon the pauper working man of Europe that he loses sight of the vast