

been faithfully observed by both countries ever since. It provides that the naval forces upon the lakes shall be limited to one vessel for each nation on Lake Ontario, two on the other great lakes, and one on Lake Champlain, no vessel to be of more than 100 tons burden nor to carry more than one 18-pound cannon. This is a beneficent compact and should not be disturbed. Though we might never have war with Great Britain, even if the lakes were as full of battleships as they are of fish, we shall continue to be more secure against war with that country if this peace-fostering treaty holds than if it be abrogated. With its abrogation would come the necessity on both sides for a fleet of war vessels, and after that irritation, and then war. Let us by all means keep both navies off the lakes, and go on cultivating those peaceful relations with Canada which our treaty as to the lakes has helped to preserve for 80 years.

When Mr. Moody was at Evanston he told the parable of the Good Samaritan in his characteristically picturesque style; and in conclusion, with his usual boldness and bluntness, he applied the parable to his audience. "Take some of these fat horses that are standing in your stables here in this town," he said, "and harness them to your carriages, and take three or four poor washerwomen out for a drive; and you stay and take care of their children. You laugh, but that would be to act the part of the Good Samaritan." It is not easy to see, however, how that would be acting the part of the Good Samaritan, unless Mr. Moody means to imply that washerwomen have fallen among thieves. If they are not robbed, there is no reason why the owners of fat horses and nice carriages should take them out riding—not on the basis of the parable of the Good Samaritan. That would not be to relieve a neighbor who had been plundered; it would be a superlatively impertinent act of charity—a thrusting of one's good things upon a neighbor who had not been robbed of his own good things. But Mr. Moody probably feels, what he does not express and probably does not see, that washerwomen have in fact fallen among thieves and been robbed; that they are victims of social injustice. So he likens them to the object of the Good Samaritan's mercy, and the owners of fat horses and fine carriages—pro-

vided only that they give the washerwomen a ride and nurse their children meanwhile—to the Good Samaritan. Let no one jeer at him for this. Rather let them ask him to explain how it is that, in a world so splendidly endowed by the God whose message he professes to bear, washerwomen are in the plight of the man of the parable who fell among thieves. Blessed as was the work of the Good Samaritan, the work of him who had identified the robbers and cleared the highway of their gangs would have been thrice blessed.

One of the recent disputes between the Canadian Pacific railroad and the American roads brought to light a queer fact. It appears that in 1887 the American transcontinental roads agreed to allow the Canadian Pacific to sell tickets from coast to coast for \$7.50 less than the regular rate. This allowance was intended as an offset to a difference in length of haul. Now what would any man of ordinary sense, knowing nothing of the facts beyond this statement, suppose that difference in length of haul to be? Would he suppose that the Canadian Pacific's route was longer or shorter than that of the roads making the concession? Could he possibly come to any other conclusion than that the Canadian Pacific had been allowed by the pooling agreement to charge less because its route was shorter? Surely, such a man would reason in this way: The shorter the haul, the less the expense of carriage; the less the expense of carriage, the less the fare; therefore, the lower fare over the Canadian Pacific implies that its road across the continent is shorter than the competing roads. But he would be wrong. The Canadian Pacific was allowed to carry passengers across the continent for \$7.50 less than the regular fare, not because its route is shorter, but because it is several hundred miles longer. Here is a fact that goes far to confirm the opinions of recent investigators into the mysteries of railroading. It goes to prove that distance is a small factor in the cost of transportation. If the Canadian Pacific can afford to carry passengers several hundred miles farther than its competitors, for \$7.50 less than they charge, they can afford, if distance is an important factor, to carry for still less. In ways like this railroad monopolists themselves are furnishing data for the oncoming movement in favor of the nationaliza-

tion of railroads, and an adjustment of fares in harmony with the post-office principle, which disregards distance.

PROPERTY AND PROPERTY OWNERS.

There is a tendency in connection with discussions of questions of government to regard property owners as having superior rights. Large property owners often assert such rights; small ones echo the pretense as if their interests and those of large property owners were identical; and non-property owners commonly accept the theory with due meekness. An example of this tendency has been afforded in the course of the development of our unpleasant relations with Spain. The issue in this country, as it has shaped itself at the time of this writing, is whether the United States shall recognize the existing Cuban republic as an independent nation, or, without recognizing the republic, shall expel the Spanish government from Cuba, and superintend the erection of a new government there by the inhabitants. The principal argument for the latter proposition, and it has been made by the attorney general himself to the president and the rest of the cabinet, apparently with effect, is that the present Cuban republic does not represent the property owners of Cuba, the prevalent idea among the advocates of the proposition being that Cuban property owners, rather than the devoted men who have been fighting bravely and successfully for three years for Cuban liberty, must be allowed to determine the form of administration of the new government to be set up on the island. When public opinion is stirred by an issue of that character, it behooves the American people, saying nothing of the Cubans, to reflect for a moment upon what is to be understood by property.

"Property is robbery," said Proudhon, and for two generations his name was anathema with the thoughtless herd. And were the thoughtless herd not right in his case? Isn't it a libel to say that property is robbery? A man works hard with his ax all day in the woodlot and at night brings home in firewood the results of his labor. Nobody has lost what he has gained, nobody will lose in consequence of his gain. Why, then, is not that firewood his property? By every consideration of justice it is his, and the man would be outraged in his

rights if his property were denounced as robbery.

The same would be true of a man who, after breaking and cultivating a field, had harvested the ripened grain. That grain would be his property, and, since no one would lose anything in consequence, his property in the grain could not be robbery.

Precisely so with the man, who, unaided, builds a hut. It is his property; there is no element of robbery in it.

Or, if we advance a step, and take an illustration in conformity with complex industrial methods, the result is the same. If a man build a house, cultivate a farm, or pursue any other of the manifold vocations of modern life, voluntarily aided by other men whom he pays for their share of the work all that it is worth—where labor is under no duress, direct or indirect, but everyone is absolutely and in every respect free to accept or reject proffered wages—then the house or the products of the farm or of the other vocation, whatever it may be, are his property as truly and justly as if he had done all the work himself. Indeed, where the labor market is thus free, he must do the equivalent of that work or lack the wherewithal to pay the price for the labor that aids him.

In no sense can property be robbery if it is the result of the labor of the property owner, provided others suffer no loss in consequence of his gain; and if all property were of this character, Proudhon's aphorism would be foolishness.

But there is another side to the shield. The man who works in the woodlot, afterwards, let us say, gives the firewood which results from his labor to a neighbor in exchange for the ownership, as if it were a beast of burden, of the neighbor's child. If in those circumstances that child were property, then in that case property would be robbery. The child would be robbed of its natural birthright of freedom.

So, if parents were allowed property rights in their children from birth to death, then property to that extent would be robbery.

Or, to get a little closer to our own American ideas of property, if the wood chopper gave his firewood to a white man for a negro child, upon an agreement that the negro child should be his property for life, then that property would be robbery, and no human law or custom could make it anything else. True, the woodchopper would have parted

with his wood, a result of his own labor, but he would have bought with it not the result of the other man's labor, thus completing an exchange of labor for labor; he would have bought only an arbitrary power over the future labor of a third person. To recognize his right of property in the negro child would therefore be to deny the negro child's right of property, as he came to maturity, in the products of his own labor. Such property would be robbery.

Again, to take an illustration from the actual civilization of the present time, if the woodchopper gave his firewood to an Indian for a bit of grazing ground near the mouth of a prairie river, and afterwards millions of people sought a livelihood there, building up a Chicago with its varied industries, its deserts of poverty and oases of wealth, thus by their demands for space making the grazing lot annually worth the labor of an army of able-bodied men, property in that lot would be robbery. Whatever the owner might gain through his ownership, others would lose out of their labor. Though the wood chopper had parted with his hard-earned firewood, his property in the lot would be robbery none the less, because he would have bought with his firewood not a product of the seller's labor, but an opportunity to levy tribute upon third persons.

Were all property of this kind, then, Proudhon's aphorism would be an expression of profound wisdom and high morality.

In fact, however, property, as the term is commonly understood, includes both classes of ownership—ownership of the earnings of one's own labor, and ownership of legal power to levy tribute upon the labor of others. It is because the term is used so much in this double sense, even by students of political economy, that we have the prevalent sentiment which recognizes all property as something sacred. Property in the products of one's labor ought to be sacred; but this sentiment ignores the fact that great estates are not that kind of property, and so gives an appearance of sanctity to what is in truth robbery.

In his last work—"The Science of Political Economy," book iv., ch. v. and vi.—Henry George considered this question of property from the standpoint of a political economist. These chapters are among the least completed part of his work, and it is probable that he intended to continue

the discussion at greater length; but what he succeeded in putting upon paper before he died is extremely valuable. "The real basis of property," he says, "the real fundamental law of distribution, is so clear that no one who attempts to reason can utterly and consistently ignore it. It is the natural law that gives the product to the producer." And George shows that he does not here overstate the matter. Subjecting John Stuart Mill's theory of property to an overhauling, he demonstrates that Mill's reasoning, in spite of his utilitarian ideas, and notwithstanding some of his phrases to the contrary, led him on to the doctrine that just property consists only in the fruits of the owner's labor; and that, although unquestioned possession for a reasonable time ought to be a complete title, this does not apply to unjust systems of property since they consist not of one wrong in the remote past, but of a perpetual repetition of wrongs. Upon the indisputable basis that all just property rests upon the natural law which gives the product to the producer, George concludes that this will not sustain property in land. Obviously it will not; for property in land—either in the land itself, irrespective of its improvements, or in its value as land, as location—is in no measurable degree any individual's product. The land is a gift of nature, and its value is simply a scarcity price.

Yet the owners of large plantations in Cuba are referred to chiefly when it is demanded that the organization of Cuban freedom must be satisfactory to Cuban property owners. The owners of city lands also are of course included, but that does not alter the significance of the demand. Property in city land, like property in large plantations, is essentially a mere legal right to levy tribute upon producers. The classes contemplated in the demand are those that live and move and have their luxuries in the sweat of the faces of people whom they contemptuously put in the category of the propertyless. That is to say, the owners of property in the sense in which property is robbery, assume not only to appropriate labor products which others produce, and which are therefore the property of the latter in the sense in which property is not robbery, but they insist further upon governing those whom they despoil, basing their claim upon the very fact of the spoliation. It is in support of this claim, as opposed to a recognition of the independence of

the Cuban revolutionists, that we have been asked by the administration to go to war with Spain. Both from Madrid and from Washington comes the word that the existing Cuban republic is not satisfactory to the property classes of Cuba, and therefore must not be recognized as a legitimate government.

When such an attitude can be assumed by an American administration without exciting instant and general denunciation, it is high time for the people to analyze the conception of property, and to draw the line of demarcation clearly and unmistakably between the property which is and the property which is not robbery—between the property its owners earn and that which they merely appropriate. It is high time, too, to recall that this line is not necessarily determined by human law. Robbery is none the less robbery because it may have conventional sanctions. The final test of property rights is not legislative law, but moral law; and according to moral law that only can be just property which is the product, directly or indirectly, of the owner's labor, and which does not lessen the product of anyone else's labor. All other property is morally robbery.

RELIGION AND DEMOCRACY.

One of the evils of monarchy, an evil of the deep spiritual kind, is illustrated by one of the reports with which the Spanish trouble has burdened the cable. A correspondent tells his paper that the queen of Spain's energy, in advocating defense of the colonial claims of the kingdom, is due to her ambition to hand intact to her son upon his coming of age all the territory that his father left under the Spanish flag. That this correspondent has not misrepresented the queen may well be believed. She undoubtedly regards all Spanish territory and all Spanish subjects as in a way private property, to be passed down from father to son much as a prairie farmer expects to pass down his farm and live stock. Here is a sense of human ownership, or mastership at least, which no pretty words of the paternal kind can quite gloss over.

That monarchy is bad for the subjects, all history testifies, and subjects are renouncing it wherever they feel their power and know how to use it. If they have not always done it in form, as in England and her colonies, they have done it in fact. England is as much a republic as the United

States, in everything but name, and in some things her people enjoy even greater republican freedom than do the people of the United States. But monarchy is bad not alone for the subjects but also for the monarch. No one can grow up and live out his life under the impression that he is a superior being, a chosen one of the Lord, picked out to be a master of his fellow men, entitled to control their freedom and to live upon their labor, without losing as much in character as he may gain in power. Democracy is more closely allied to true religion than we are accustomed to suppose.

PATENT MONOPOLIES.

The United States circuit court of appeals for the New York circuit has just made a decision invalidating the controlling trolley patent. This decision brings again under consideration the crudity of our patent law system, and indicates the urgent necessity for a radical change. It is bad enough that monopolies should be fostered under valid patents, but when they are fostered under invalid ones, the condition becomes insufferable. A change is then imperatively needed. Nor would a beneficial change be difficult to make, aside from the difficulty which always attends the substitution of a good law for a bad one. We have only to consider the real purpose of patent laws, in connection with the evils they have generated, to discover readily a remedy, at least for the evil mentioned above.

The only justification for patent laws is the necessity of some peculiar method for rewarding a peculiar kind of labor—that of the inventor. Under the prevailing system this reward is supposed to be conferred by giving to inventors for a limited period a monopoly of their invention. But actual experience shows that inventors seldom reap great advantage from their monopolies. Other monopolies are so much more strongly entrenched that they hold the inventor at their mercy, and, adding his little monopoly to their big one, deny to the public the benefits, in greater or less degree, of invention. All this could be remedied, measurably at least, by abolishing the monopoly feature of patent laws. If patents for inventions, instead of conferring a monopoly upon inventors, conferred upon them authority merely to collect reasonable royalties, the public could not be deprived of the benefit of inventions.

For the security of the inventor, at the time of issuing a patent, the royalty might be fixed, upon the payment of which any person should be at liberty to use the invention throughout the life of the patent, and after that without royalty. Such a patent, while it would be a better assurance to inventors of the wages of invention, would utterly prevent that monopolization of inventions which under the present patent system has become an evil that cannot and will not be much longer endured. Anyone might then use any patented invention simply upon payment of a reasonable royalty.

Some one has compared President McKinley's economical use of egotistic pronouns with President Cleveland's liberality in their use, quite to the disparagement of Cleveland. His manuscripts bristled, says this observer, with I's, my's, me's, mine's, etc. Very likely Mr. Cleveland was egotistical, but his liberal use of the personal pronoun does not prove it. On the contrary, it suggests lack of self-consciousness. The studied avoidance of that pronoun is better evidence by far of self-consciousness than is even a too free use of it. The man who frequently introduces I's, my's and me's into his writing or speech, when giving his own opinion or telling about matters in which he is prominently concerned, is very likely so absorbed in his subject as to disregard appearances; whereas the man who, in similar circumstances resorts to circumlocution to avoid using the personal pronoun, shows how distinctly present in his own mind is his own personality. This observation may not apply to either McKinley or Cleveland, but it is true in general.

In his appeal to President McKinley against intervention, the Cuban tory who described himself as "President of the Honorable Government of Cuba," objected to falsehoods circulated by part of the American press, and by way of emphasizing his assertion that there is no good faith in them, wrote: "As was said by the immortal Washington, 'Honesty is the best policy.'" That reads like a joke. But evidently it was no joke. Senor Galvez undoubtedly supposed Washington to be the author of the time-honored proverb he quoted, though his own Cervantes had put it into Don Quixote long before Washington was born. Perhaps Washington's veracity in connection with a cherry tree, a