

\$1,000,000, were it not for the other fact that the customs receipts for June one year ago were in excess of those receipts for the preceding May by much more than \$1,000,000—by nearly \$5,000,000.

Here is a comparative statement, taken from the treasury reports, of customs receipts for the four months ending with June in both years—1897 and 1898:

	1897.	1898.
March....	\$22,833,856 46	\$15,450,431 94
April	24,454,351 74	14,193,976 99
May	16,885,011 55	13,466,534 17
June	21,560,152 36	14,555,729 11

This comparison is full of food for thought to Mr. Dingley's dupes. In 1897 the Wilson law was in force until the latter part of July. Consequently the table to the left, above, records Wilson law receipts from tariff duties; and as the Dingley law had been in operation seven months when the first item of the table to the right, above, was originally recorded, that table gives a fairly good idea of the qualities of the Dingley law as a customs revenue raiser. It will be seen from these tables that the Wilson law realized in March, over \$7,000,000 more than the Dingley law; in April, over \$10,000,000 more; in May, between \$3,000,000 and \$4,000,000 more, and in June, over \$7,000,000 more. There was a tremendous miscalculation on the part of Mr. Dingley.

But wretchedly as the Dingley law has failed as a revenue raiser, its failure as a prosperity breeder is worse. A great hue and cry about prosperity is made by the organs of monopoly, but everybody knows that there is no prosperity. Times are as hard to-day as they were a year ago; and a year ago they were as hard as the year before. There has been no substantial improvement since McKinley's election, though good times were due on the following day, according to the "advance agent's" posters. Wages have not been raised, though strikes against reductions have been frequent. Failures in business have been less, but failures had already reached the max-

imum. Some lines of business, those that are affected by the war, have experienced improvement, but business on the whole is still depressed. It is no easier to get employment, nor are the opportunities for investing capital profitably at all improved. Would capital be rushing to Washington for three per cent. bonds if opportunities for profitable investment were inviting? Prosperity, indeed; it is to most men the kind of prosperity that the hen enjoyed upon the invitation of the fox.

In opposing subsidies to private charities, the secretary of the Illinois board of public charities has made a sensible observation. "Private charity," he said, "is a favor. Public charity is properly not charity at all, but the demand of a right on one side and the recognition of that right on the other." This is strictly true. What the public does for the unfortunate is something to which as members of society they are entitled. The public poorhouse or hospital is no more a charity than the public school. In maintaining it, the public are no more favoring the inmates than they are favoring householders, when they maintain a police force. On the contrary, they are performing a duty. And if they perform that duty grudgingly, or so as to make it appear like a favor, or in such a spirit as to degrade or humiliate the inmates, they are derelict. It is equally true, on the other hand, that private charity, of the organized sort, is a favor. For that reason it has no legitimate place where obligations are reciprocal. It serves only to pauperize the poor and make pharisees of the rich. It is utterly devoid of reciprocity. The secretary of the Illinois board, whose name, by the way, is Frederick Howard Wines, was entirely right in opposing public subsidies to private charities. If individuals wish to maintain charities, that is their affair; but public funds are for public, not private use, and every diversion of such funds to the support of private charity shops is a misappropriation.

Ohio and Pennsylvania coal operators complain that West Virginia coal is driving the Ohio and Pennsylvania product out of its natural market. Even Columbus, the capital of Ohio, is said to be receiving West Virginia coal. This anomalous condition of the coal market is attributed to discrimination in railroad rates. Col. Rend, of Chicago, who is at the head of one of the largest firms in the Ohio and Pennsylvania districts, says that certain railway officials "are interested in West Virginia mines, and are enriching themselves and ruining the roads they control." This, being interpreted, means that these railroad officials have diverted coal traffic from its natural course by making losing rates to coal mines in which they themselves are interested. Though their own railroad interests may suffer thereby, their coal interests more than make up the loss. But their associate stockholders in the railroads are defrauded without recompense, and their coal mining competitors are unfairly deprived of natural markets for their product. This is an old trick of railroad officials. They often make fortunes by running their roads for the purpose of crowding competitors in side businesses of their own. It is one of the great facts which tell against private ownership of railroads. Railroads are highways, and highway rights should be equal. But they cannot be equal under private ownership. Discriminating rates are characteristic of such ownership. Only by public ownership of the roadbeds and competitive operation of trains can discrimination be prevented.

Amendments to the city charter of St. Louis are to be voted upon on the 12th. We find among these proposed amendments certain provisions for paying for street improvements which are of interest to taxpayers everywhere, and which the small property owners of St. Louis will be wise to consider carefully before approving. It may be that the present system of paying for street improvements in St.

Louis is more inequitable than the one proposed, but it is doubtful. For the streets proper, the plan proposed, is to charge one-fourth of the total cost to the land fronting the street, each parcel of land to pay in the proportion of its frontage to the aggregate frontage; and three-fourths upon all the property in the improved district, each parcel to pay in the proportion of its area to the aggregate area. For sidewalks, the whole cost is to be charged to the abutting land, each lot paying in the proportion of its frontage to the total frontage.

Such a system of meeting the expense of street improvements would discriminate against owners who were least benefited. It might happen, of course, that a street improvement would increase or maintain the value of all abutting land at the same rate per front foot and the same rate per square foot, in which case this system would not be inequitable as between abutting owners; but the probability is that land would be affected in value by street improvements out of proportion to its size. A corner lot, for instance, might be very much increased in value by a street improvement, or diminished in value by neglect to improve, whereas an inside lot might not be much affected, comparatively, by either. Yet, under the St. Louis proposition, each would pay very nearly the same assessment, if of the same size. Such a system, though not so bad as some others, is nevertheless vicious.

The ideal system for paying the cost of street improvements is to assess all the land of the community, whether it abuts the improvement or not, in proportion to its value. Then the assessment falls wholly upon land whose value is increased by the improvement, and in proportion to the increase. Land which is not benefited pays nothing. This system is simpler, as well as more equitable, than any other. The only objection to it is that it would hurt land monopolists.

At the national convention of women's clubs at Denver, Mrs. A. P. Stevens, of Chicago, advocated plans for the prohibition of night work by women and children, and of the employment of children of tender years, besides propositions for the limitation of hours of women's and children's labor. The temptation to legislate for the regulation of private conduct is very great, when so much misery is produced by a condition which is thoughtlessly spoken of as competitive. But this condition is not in truth competitive. It is monopolistic, the very reverse of competitive; and restrictive laws, such as Mrs. Stevens proposes, though they may bring temporary relief, will in the end intensify monopolistic conditions and introduce worse suffering than they relieve. Women and children would need no such legislative protection, if husbands and fathers were free to enjoy their natural and social rights in the community. The energies of those who see the oppression of women and children, need to be concentrated upon securing natural and social rights, not upon applying soothing lotions. This is not to say that soothing lotions are useless if they harmonize with radical remedies. But restrictive legislation is not a soothing lotion of that kind. It is in conflict with radical remedies. Restriction is not a cure for restriction. The famous homeopathic principle has no application to social sickness. What is required to secure human rights and so distribute comforts, is not more restrictive legislation, but less—much less. The less of it we have, the less monopoly there will be. The more real competition, the more freedom.

It is not often that fundamental and far-reaching distinctions are happily phrased. But the San Francisco Star, the ablest weekly paper of the Pacific coast and the only honest one of large circulation, is entitled to the credit of having done this in at least one instance. "The trouble with socialists of all grades," it says, "is that

they advocate 'get them work,' instead of 'let them work.'" By "socialists of all grades" is meant not only socialist agitators and socialist professors, but also that miscellaneous lot of well-meaning people whose idea of solving the labor question is to "get men work." That idea is, indeed, the core of pretty much all socialistic fallacies. Working men are assumed to be helpless mortals, who cannot live without work and cannot get work for themselves. Therefore, we must "get them work." Such is the burden of the socialistic song; and the thorough-going socialist, who is "not afraid of his horses," proposes to have us "get them work" through the government. The thorough-going socialist would be right if his premises were true. If we concede the principle that the workingman must have work got for him, we must admit that the government ought to get it. If it cannot get work for its workingmen it ought to make work for them. Better by far that the government should make work for its workingmen than that they should starve upon its hands, or, driven to desperation, should make work, and hot work at that, for the government. But the principle itself is false. Workingmen need no one to "get them work." All they need is that we shall "let them work." Take down the legal barriers which shut labor out from natural opportunities—from the closed mine, the fallow farm, the virgin forest, the monopolized railway line, the vacant building lot—abolish these obstacles, and no one need ever "get men work." When in that way we "let men work," they will get work for themselves.

The black wife of the black president of the black republic of Hayti, who is described as a dignified and intelligent woman, gives a different account of her country from the sneering ones which we so often hear of Hayti. At the same time she makes a comparison which is worth thinking about. She insists that "no matter what people may say to the con-