

be gone. While all this is what we wish, yet we predict it not because we wish it, but as a rational inference, as it seems to us, from the inherent character of American manhood and the accumulating signs of the times.

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### The Police Spirit.

In perfect keeping with the wanton dispersal by the police of the peaceable public meeting at Union Square last week, is the reply to Robert Hunter's dispassionate comment, which Police Commissioner Bingham is reported to have made:

Robert Hunter! Robert Hunter wants to behave himself, or if he doesn't he may be sorry for it. I'll stand for no inciting to riot. I'll suppress with an iron hand any game of that kind, and it might as well be understood at one time as another. Robert Hunter is one of those hot air pipes that made this trouble. Whenever I think of those wind bags who stirred up this trouble I just want them to know I'll not stand for it.

How can foreigners be expected to distinguish American from Russian police if Bingham is an American type?

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### American Ideals.

It is naively suggested that violent anarchists "should be educated in Americanism." There would be no violent anarchists to educate in Americanism if Americans themselves were more Americanistic.

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### Vacant Lot Gardening.

The "Pingree potato patch," invented by Mayor Pingree, of Detroit, a dozen years ago, is fast becoming an institution for the encouragement of industry and thrift among the disinherited of the earth. It is a simple plan. Owners of vacant lots in cities permit their use for the season for gardening purposes, and persons of charitable instincts contribute tools and seeds. Workers with more leisure than they need do the rest. Under a superintendent's advice they dig and plant and gather, and with such effect as to obtain in money value as high as \$100 or more of market produce in a summer. Whether sold or consumed by the producer, this affords no inconsiderable addition to the worker's income.

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A national Vacant Lot Gardening Association now exists, with headquarters at 56 Pine street, New York. Howard Payson Wild is president. He is supported by Bolton Hall as treasurer and the Rt. Rev. David H. Greer, Dr. Henry M. Leipziger, Dr. M. Allen Starr, Whidden Graham, Rob-

ert Baker, Lawson Purdy, Dr. L. Duncan Bulkley and Miss A. L. Fairfield as directors. Vacant lot gardening is commended by this Association "to the charitably disposed who fear to pauperize the objects of their benevolence," its influence on character and morals being "wholly good, stimulating the spirit of independence and self-help which lies dormant in even the most debased." Experience is said to show that the gardeners "take a keen interest in learning how to plant and cultivate, and are willing to do any amount of work on the soil." The indirect benefits to large families are described as very great. "In a few weeks after going to the farm," says the Association, "the pale, puny children become ruddy and robust, playing in the grass and living healthy, natural lives."

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### The Industrial Depression.

Two large reasons are urged for regarding the industrial depression as at an end. One is the reported fact that money is no longer tight, and the other that business men have adjusted their affairs to lower levels of expenditure. Instead of implying recovery from the depression, both facts indicate its persistence and intensification. The "tight money" of last Fall did indeed spell hard times. But that was because it crippled business men in meeting obligations already contracted. But "easy money" now means no more than that the demand for loans has shrunk, which means in turn that business operations are contracting. And this inference harmonizes with the inference that in adjusting their operations to lower levels of expenditure, business men are promoting hard times instead of ridding us of them. They are thereby diminishing the purchasing power of the people as a whole.

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### The Banking Alternative.

If Walter Wellman's report of an extensive inquiry among bankers may be accepted, there is about to be formed a banking federation of vast dimensions and portentous possibilities. Such a federation would rule the government, from party primary to Presidential election and from local tax assessor to secretary of the Federal treasury, with an absoluteness far transcending the present power of the banking interests. If this is to be the alternative of Bryan's plan for governmental insurance of deposits—and Mr. Wellman makes its mutual deposit insurance feature its strong point—then there is little room for choice. Under Bryan's plan the banks could not combine so completely as to swing the banking interests at

will; under the other their combination would be so complete and exclusive as to turn over the banking business into the control of an impregnable ring. Under his plan the banks could be kept out of politics; under the other they would dominate politics.

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#### Mr. Harmon's Candidacy.

Mr. Judson Harmon, in whose bonnet the Presidential bee buzzes pertinaciously, is reported from Kansas City as having made this shrewd remark: "When I speak with Mr. Bryan, if I speak before him the audience won't hear me, and if I follow him there is no audience left to speak to." What a foolish little bee, then, to keep on buzzing so in Mr. Harmon's bonnet. And Mr. Harmon's little bee is not the only foolish one. Several anxious statesmen might draw a political moral from Mr. Harmon's experience.

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#### Old-Age Pensions.

Pensions for the aged, a policy that is pushing to the front and with which the British government finds it necessary already to deal, presents some practical difficulties and one very important problem of principle. Why should old age pensions be paid out of taxation? That is the question of principle. And it is a difficult question when taxation is imposed regardless of whether the taxpayer earns what he pays, or gets it as a gift from the public; for it seems like taxing some for the benefit of others. But if taxes were imposed only upon land values, the problem of principle would be easy enough. In that case the aged would draw their pensions from ground rent, a common fund in which they are entitled to participate not as a charity but of right. Ground rent, the evident property of the whole community, is now used to pension land owners with. It would be better used as a pension fund for the aged.

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#### Ownership and Regulation.

President Wilson of Princeton University sees "no radical difference in principle between government ownership and government regulation of the discretionary kind." Neither do we. There is no radical difference. The only difference is that government ownership of public utilities would eradicate the evils of private ownership of government, whereas government regulation will intensify them. But regulation has the merit of being a necessary step toward ownership. The people, already aroused to the iniquity of private ownership

of government functions, will probably have to see for themselves the futility of regulation before they go the length of applying the only effective remedy.

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#### PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S POLICY.

The policy of Theodore Roosevelt is the policy of English toryism. Roosevelt would not pass or repeal any law that would take away privilege; all he wants is to control privilege by law.

Secretary Garfield, asking how special privileged classes should be dealt with, gives the Rooseveltian answer: "Subject to a careful control." This is exactly the doctrine of Lord Beaconsfield (Benjamin Disraeli), acknowledged the ablest exponent of English toryism of the century. Speaking of a great corporation in England Lord Beaconsfield said: "Restricted and controlled by the state, so powerful a corporation may be only fruitful of public advantage."

Writing of Lord Beaconsfield a biographer says: "Instead of excusing and avoiding he assumed that a government of privilege rather than that based on rights, is the best possible government. No doubt Disraeli's speeches are the best embodiment of tory principle." Like Roosevelt this man talked much of the welfare of the people, but never of their rights. Beaconsfield on one occasion said he hoped the House of Commons would "sanction no step that has a preference for democracy, but that they will maintain the ordered state of free England in which we live." By "ordered state" Beaconsfield meant the grading of society from the king to the laborer; the existence of classes, defined and controlled by law.

According to Beaconsfield there had been in England "established a society of classes which gives vigor and variety to life." This appears the Roosevelt ideal, for does he not solemnly admonish us that unless we "regulate" privilege it may be abolished by dangerous innovators?—something truly terrible in your tory mind.

Beaconsfield believed in what he called "legislative interference," the same that we now know as "regulation." This is an old tory device and did not escape the notice of Thomas Jefferson. Writing to John Adams in 1816 of English tories, Jefferson said: "Their efforts will be to quiet things by the palliatives of reformation; to nibble a little at pensions and sinecures; to bite off a bit here and a bit there to amuse the people." Precisely what Roosevelt is doing, nothing more nor less.

Jefferson did not believe in regulation, but he advocated "laying the ax at the roots of privilege."