

to be announced in these piping prosperous times. The other was proclaimed by some of the steel mills eastward of Chicago. In that case, as in the case of the cotton mill operatives, wages had been reduced after the presidential election, before being increased; but whereas the cotton mill operatives are to get their former rates of pay with the first increase, it will take yet another increase by those steel mills to put their workers in that position. Mysterious are the ways of McKinley's prosperity! A third wages increase was announced on the 1st of March. It was to take place in the steel mills of Illinois and Wisconsin. By this increase the wages of the common laborers are to be advanced one whole cent an hour—ten cents a day!

How absurd to assert upon the basis of such facts, that the working people of this country are prospering. It is a bald pretense. If further proof were required, it is to be found in the interest rates. "Never in the history of the country," begins a financial report in the Chicago Tribune, "was there so much money to loan as now, and never before were the rates of interest so low." And then the report specifies prevailing interest in the leading cities from New York to San Francisco, varying from 4 per cent. in the former city to 7 in the latter. These are low rates. But so far from proving that the country is prosperous, they go to prove the reverse. When interest is low, and capital—for it is not money, but capital that is offered—is begging for borrowers, the situation can have but one meaning, and that is that it does not pay to borrow capital and put it to use. To say that wages are low and laborers are hunting for work, would be an indication of hard times. To say that interest is low and capital is hunting for borrowers, is indicative of the same thing. Both conditions, in fact, exist. Labor, like capital, is plentiful and hunting for employment; while wages, like interest, are low. And

that is what Mr. McKinley and the parasitic monopolists call prosperity!

Horrible stories are reported from Europe of a recently discovered traffic in human skin. Jewelers who serve the rich leisure classes admit that they have made ladies' belts and card-cases from this material, and tanners say that they have recently prepared quantities of it after the fashion of alligators' and monkeys' skins, while women boast of the possession of articles manufactured from it. One sensational London correspondent cables a report that "nicely tanned human skin recently formed a novel though considerable portion of the trousseau of a fashionable bride." The skin is procured from bodies of the unclaimed poor, which have been turned over to scientific institutions for dissection; and to own articles made of it is a fad. A horrible story, indeed; not so much, however, on account of any injury to the poor which it suggests, as of the degradation of the rich which it implies.

To work up the skin of the dead poor into belts and card cases for the morbid rich, cannot hurt those whose bodies have supplied the material. Neither their nerves nor their emotions are any longer sensitive. What does hurt, is the working up, while they live, of their sinews and blood and sweat into comforts and luxuries for the rich who do nothing in return. We are told that there is great anxiety among the American rich to establish a titled aristocracy in the United States. Not one with empty titles, like the French; but one like the English, with titles that are united to power and wealth. And it is certain that the growing custom among the rich of leaving most of their property to the oldest son, has this ambition for its impulse. The rich are striving to strap themselves tighter to the backs of the living poor; and if, incidentally, they find amusement in owning curios made of the skins of the dead poor, that only goes to show the contempt as well as indifference which they cultivate toward the

classes that support them. But if the living poor are forced to give their lives to the idle rich, what harm can it do them if, after they die, their skins be taken also?

It is remarkable, the increasing resemblance between the tory party of England and the tory faction of the republican party of the United States. Not only is each at work with fire and sword conquering the dark peoples of the world "for their own good," but even in the matter of making national deficits each is running a race with the other. With a war revenue law, in addition to nearly enough proceeds from war bonds to pay for the war, the United States is nevertheless spending more than its income, and will soon have a magnificent deficit of a hundred millions or so in dollars. This deficit is to be modestly rivaled by the English tories. It is now considered as tolerably certain that there will be a deficit in the English accounts for the year of a million and a half in pounds. Small though that is, by comparison, yet the English tories may take heart of hope. If McKinley with increased revenues can run his government behind a hundred million dollars in two years, Salisbury may yet largely lessen the difference between that and only seven millions.

As to the proposed methods of making up their deficits the English and the American tories are again congenial spirits. In England as in the United States, the consumption of the poor, not the accumulations of the rich, is to be made to shoulder this "white man's burden." The old thunderer, the London Times, tory through and through, looks to a tax on grain and sugar. And of such are the taxes which our own tories impose. Taxation of the masses by the classes and for the classes is the principle of government upon which American McKinleyism and English toryism meet as upon common ground.

No one has yet been able to interpret the mystery of Dewey's urgent