## PROBLEMS OF REFORM

## A Masterful Address by R. S. Thompson, Great Economic Writer.

A Powerful Appeal to Reason, with a View to the Bettering of the Conditions of Humanity.

The True Cause of our Nation's Financial Distress---Why the People Mourn and How to Heal Their Woes.

The Money and Labor Problems are Moral lars, he will have nothing. So wise Problems as well as the Saloon Question

A Great Speech, Full of Instruction and Inspiration to the Common People.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen of the convention: If there are any present tonight who have come with the expectation of being entertained with a lot of funny stories, I give them fair notice that they will be disappointed; and if that is their sole object they will waste their time in remaining. Life is short and my time too valuable for perpetrating a lot of jokes which you work shall therefore be more that of

horrible, while I paint word pictures of the drunkard's home and the drunkard's woe-if they have come expecting to have their flesh creep as they hear the blows fall on the quivering flesh of the drunkard's wife-they have come to the and registered a vow never again to preach a gospel temperance sermon while 240,000 grog shop doors stand

It is the deacons and not the drunkords I am after now.

Neither shall I attempt to prove to wrong. It is well to assume that an out of the temple; but my work tonight is of a different kind. is a man in your state who does not know that the liquor traffic is wrong you howler. I have done some calamity howling in my time, but for the past should send him promptly to some asylum for the feeble minded. I hope there are none present who are ignorant | ted it with a grace and ability that leave of the fact that the liquor traffic is wrong; I like to talk to men's heads, but not to cabbage heads.

Neither is there necessity for my advising Nebraska prohibitionists in regard to their duty on this matter. The position of the party on this question is pated by the republican howls of the so plain that the newspaper man, though a fool, need not err therein. The various schemes which have been devised to sidetrack the party, such as constitutional amendments, local option, nonpartisan anti-saloon leagues, etc., have themselves been sidetracked, and are rotting on the rubbish heap while the great prohibition engine with truth as its headlight, and perseverance at the throttle, keeps steadily onward along the main track of destruction to the traffic, through a party pledged to that

But I am glad to be with you in this convention where you have assembled to nominate men to take the reins of government in order that they may guide that government in the ways of justice, equity and righteousness.

The time has come when men of hearts and brain Must rise and take the misdirected reins Of government, too long left in the hands Of allens and of lackeys. He who stands And sees the mighty vehicle of state Hauled through the mire to some ignoble fate, And makes not such bold protest as he can

And I trust that you here are Americans in the fullest and noblest sense of the word; Americans bearing our starry flag of liberty and fully resolved that it shall not be made a flaunting lie nor wave its protecting folds over injustice and oppression. You are here as Americans, to stand jealously for the great American principle of human equality and for the preservation of equity in government and righteousness in law.

And if these principles are to be maintained and our mighty vehicle of state is not to be hauled by demagogues and is possible. plutocrats and rumsellers, through the mire of corrupt politics to the ignoble fate of complete destruction, then you men of hearts and brains must rise and take the misdirected reins of government. They have been left too long in the hands of aliens and lackeys. Too ong have the great alien financial which we shall travel, and for too long es of Europe directed the road have such lackeys as Benjamin Harrison, Grover Cleveland, John Sherman and John G. Carlisle held the reins and

driven as they were directed by these alien lords of land and money.

It has been well said that he who

I am convinced that I am not standing tonight in the presence of cowards or bigots or fools, but in the presence of men of hearts and brains, who are able to reason, and ready to follow reason wherever it may lead; men who are ready to lay aside former prejudices and inherited ideas and view the present sit-uation in the white light or reason and

My efforts tonight, therefore, shall not be to awaken your sympathies, or stir your emotions, or arouse your indigna tion but to appeal to your reason, that we may reach a reasonable conclusion me to spend nearly a week, and travel as to the present condition of the counnearly a thousand miles for the sake of try, its causes and the remedy. My

might read for yourselves in your last collater of facts and figures than that of the impassioned orator on the platform. I shall present facts, reason out conclu-If there are any present who have sions and leave your own honest hearts come to indulge in a morbid taste for the and sturdy sense of justice to make the

Not that I would for a moment suggest that there is not need for the impassioned orator, or that sympathy and indignation have no place in these great reforms. He who can look over this land and see the wreck and ruin which is wrought; who can hear the wail of wrong place. I closed my career as a the widow and the cry of the starving temperance lecturer several years ago child, who can put his ear to the ground and hear the tramp of marching millions seeking for work and proffered a prison, begging for bread and told to keep off the grass-he who can see and hear all propped open by four million christian this and not have his sympathies awakened and his indignation aroused has not the spirit of the Christ who wept at the grave; denounced in language too strong to be used in our churches today, you tonight that the liquor traffic is es and for a pretense make long prayers,

> I do not come before you tonight as a two years our republican friends have taken the task off our hands and execunothing to be desired.

If there had ever been any doubt that the country under years of republican rule had gotten into bad condition, that its business, its morals and its finances were honeycombed by corrupt legisla tion and were ready to crumble at a touch that doubt would have been dissipast two years. They have looked upon the ruin they had wrought and lifted up their voices in lamentation and could not be comforted. They would have you believe they are n ourning over the troubles of the people, but they are mourning for the offices because they have them not.

So they will enable me to shorten the work of pointing out.

EXISTING CONDITIONS.

The country morally, socially, industrially, financially and politically is in state of unrest.

There have been industrial wars and rumors of wars and political earthquakes in divers places. For years the country has been in a condition of chronic industrial insurrection.

Hungry and desperate men have set at defiance authority, municipal, state and national. In a time of alleged peace we have seen the troops of state and nation called out again and again. Many of us are becoming quite familiar with the drum's discordant sound parading round and round and round.

We have seen the streets of our cities reddened with the blood of our fellow citizens and seen the heavens aglow with the flames of incendiary fires. have seen the soldiers wearing the uni- ments of a widow, entered the police form and bearing the flag of the nation the sympathics of even the most care-ful and conservative people have been streets night and day since Sunday, and with the mob and against the govern-ment. There must be something radi-with the hope that some kind

Our American people are above all

When they begin to lose respect for their own government, the creation of their own hands, it is evident that some one must be dragging the mighty vehicle of state not only through mire but through quicksands and that a most ignoble fate awaits it unless men of hearts and brains shall quickly arise and take the misdirected reins of goyernment; and yet we are told that our country is prosperous, and the figures court, and the Black Maria, and police-

in the race.

When the average man hears that the wealth of the American people is five thousand dollars per family, on an average, he naturally concludes that the wealth of the average family is five thousand gollars, but he misses it. If one man has a hundred million, and nineteen thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine have nothing, the wealth of the twenty thousand will be five thousand dollars per family, on an average, but the average family will not have five thousand dollars—it will have

If one man has an income of a million a year, and five hundred and ninetynine others have nothing, the income of the whole six-hundred will be nearly seventeen hundred dollars, on an aver age, but the average man will not bave men task about the average wealth and the average income of the American people and create the impression that the average citizen is in good circum-stances and increasing in wealth from year so vear-but it is not true.

At the oeginning of the civil war, notwitnstanding the unequalizing in-nuemoe of slavery, the wealth of the nation was distributed among the peo-Die with some approach to equality in proportion to ability and industry. A mi.conaire in those days was as scarce as an nonest politician is today. Paupers were so rare that public provision or the care of the poor was almost unpublic charities of today, not because the people were less charitable, but be-cause there was little need for charity. The word tramp, as a noun is not in Webster's old dictionary. At that time the average wealth was

about \$2,500 per family and the average family wasprobably the possessor of nearly that amount.

Now we have something less than two hundred thousand families owning an average of a quarter million per family and thirteen million families owning an average of a thousand dollars per family, so that the average family in this country today is the one owning a thousand dollars.

We now have princes and palaces by the thousand, and paupers, hovels and tramps by the million. We have men who can build a seven hundred thousand dollar stable for their pet horses, pay three hundred thousand dollars for a pleasure boat, furnish their houses with solid silver bath tubs, in which they cannot wash their sins away, spend a million-representing the life work of a hundred men-on a wedding feast, and pay ten to fifteen millions apiece for titled husbands for their daughters. What see we on the other hand?

That my republican friends may not be exhaulted beyond measure 1 quote from that iridescent republican states-man, John J. Ingalls. In January 1891, when the republicans had every branch the McKinley bill, Mr. Ingalls said on the floor of the U. S. senate: "A million American citizens, able and willing to work, are homeless tramps starving for bread." Mr. Ingalls was not referring to the professional tramp, nor to the aged or infirm, for he specifies that this million men were able and willing to work, yet, starving for bread.

A million American citizens repre sents a population of five million people, absolutely destitute of the means of subsistence and depending on precarlous charity to preserve their undesir-

The sharpness of the line between the affluent and the poor cannot be better illustrated than in two newspaper dispatches sent out from New York on the same day, Listen to this.

New York, Dec., 4, 1894.-Mrs. Drinkwiler gave a poodle dog tea party yes-terday afternoon at her palatial residence in this city. It was in honor of the birthday of her favorite poodle dog. Her dog wore for the occasion an elegant diamond necklace costing several hundred dollars. Very ornate printed invitations were displayed to the poodle dogs and pugs in good society. When the hour for the party arrived, the street in the vicinity of the receiving residence was thronged with grand equipages in which the lucky canines rode in state warmiy wrapped in silk and satin blankets, richly embroidered in lace and gold, with a coat of arms appearing on most of them. Each dog was accompanied by a liveried col-ored attendant and all the paraphernslia of aristocratic rank. The poodles and pugs sipped milk from golden saucers. The subject of f hospital was discussed. The subject of founding a dog

And here is the other on the same

New York, Dec., 4, 1894.—Mrs. Ella Morgan found a little girl baby in the hallway of No. 218 W 64th street, Tuesday night. It was taken to the matron of police headquarters. At noon Wed-We nesday, a woman dressed in the garstation; she was wet through and leanreceived with hoots and peers by our ed for support against the railing as own citizens, and strange to say it has she burst into tears and told Capt. in nearly every case been evident that Smith that she was the mother of the cally wrong when such a state of affairs hearted person would find it and is possible. She would have fainted from weakness had she not been supported. The Capt. sent out for some food and when the unfortunate woman revived she was taken to the Yorkville court. She will be committed until she is strong enough to look for work when she will be permitted to go out and starve herself

> Alas, that flesh and blood should be so cheap and gold should be so dear.

somemore.

Diamond necklaces, gold saucers, silk blankets, fine carriages, liveried servants and hospitals for poodle dogs,

Three million homeless, starving, unemployed, Tramping, naif naked, in a land of peace, Where plenty heaps her stores and gold abounds

And golden harvest tributes never cause, Ten million crouching on the frightful-brink Of the dark precipice of sname and want. Home: gone, nopes dead, and faith in God grown weak Before the woives of hunger flerce and gaunt.

And twenty millions more with white itps set, And tense nerves strained to bursting with

the stress Of the unequal contest waged by gold On human rights and homes and happin Insatiate Greed with roober fingers clutched On sixty millon gasping human throats. Thou law protected outlaw, high enthroned, Who on the all pervading ruin gloats.

Dare you still trust your graven Gods of gold? Dare you still heap lit goteen gains the highe And careless tread above the smouldering min Where slumbers retribution's awful fire?

Can you not catch the warning of God's wrath in the sad wall of want, the cry for bread, The piea for work, the prayer of famished lips The ghastly faces of your victims dead?

Such are a few of the conditions, conditions not thrones which confront us. But could I keep you here until the silver goddess of the night had paled before the coming of the golden god of day, I could not picture unto you a millionth part of the misery and wretchedness and hopelessness and degradation and servitude and vice and crime over which floats our starry flag of liberty, and which crouches and and covers in the shadows of our marble palaces of pride, farms mortgaged, farmers who have spent their lives in honest toil to provide a home for their declining years finding their hard earned homes hopelessly in the clutches of the mortgage shark, business men confessing that it is impossible to do business on christian principles and succeed and watching with wakeful eyes each change in market. Manufacturers trying to deal honestly with their employes but threatened with bankruptcy if they do. Workingmen laboring for less than living wages, and in daily fear lest their employment shall be taken from them ond their families starve. Other multitudes of men who have ceased to fear and ceased to strive for success because they have ceased to hope and have set-tled down to salien despair willing to be paupers and parasites and breeding a race of paupers and parasites to prey upon the society which they feel in

some way has wronged them.

Scores of thousands of innocent women and girls compelled to choose starvation and a life of shame and taught by the cruel lash of hunger and cold that the virtue of womanhood is the only thing which always has a market value. Hundreds of thousands of children turned upon the streets to live by beggary or theft and to grow up to be tramps, loafers and criminals. It is estimated that in England a million

lives were lost by starvation, suicide and crime as the result of the financial policy of contraction which followed the Napoleonic wars, and it is more than probable that the loss of life in this country in the last thirty years of the government and the country was resulting directly or indirectly from basking in the undimed effulgence of our financial policy has not been less nan that We are confronted with a condition

in which every man is pitted against his brother man; with a condition in which one man's gain is some other man's loss. The working man stands in daily dread lest some other shall get his job, or if out of employment watches the chance to get some other man's job, or if he hears of some place rushes to capture it lest some other man get shead of him. Every man in securing mitted, but they have been carrying a job for himself knows that in so doing in their hearts for years a bitter sense he is shutting out some other man. The merchant who would succeed in business must drive his competitor to the The railroad that would pay dividends must draw away the business ruptcy. Our business and commercial than they.

And if these conditions continue of other lines and force them into bankpremacy at the expense of others. Every man's hand is against every other man; each one seeks to advance by climbing on the shoulders of another climbing on the shoulders of another and to build his fortune ou the ruins of business men for you will be the ones some other fortune. It is a race for to suffer. In their blind rage their success in which every man who would win must do so bp tipping up his competitor and one man's gain means another man's loss. Our civilization under our present system has become the

of selfishness. A DANGEROUS CONDITION.

I wish to impress upon you most dition. We are living over a volcano of discoatent, that is liable at any moment to break forth and devastate the country. There are millions of people in this country who are hungry and it is the most difficult matter in the world to satisfactorily expound principles of ethics to hungry men and still more difficult to expound them to men who have hungry wives and bab-There is a good deal of apprehension

about the dangers that may arise from the wild harangues of the red-mouthed anarchists which Europe is dumping on our shores. And there is cause for apprehension. Let a man tramp the streets all day in search of work getting a rebuff at every door. Let him return to his home to find the cupboard empty, the grate fireless and his wife and little ones crying with cold and hunger. Put some anarchis-tic document in that man's hand and he is ready for "treason, stratagem and spoils." He is ready for the dynamite bomb and incendiary torch. He is ready to raise a rict on the street and loot a bakery. He has lost hope in God and faith in man. He has nothing to lose, if arrested and sent to jail his condition will be more endurable than tramping the streets begging as a tween a fi chairity of his fellow men that which question. belongs to him of right, the opportunity to earn an honest living by honest shall not steal" he laid down the whole steady job with fair wages; give him a home of his cwn paid for by his own labor, kive him protection in his rights, a certainty of being able to support himself and leave something tion will be a moral question.

In the companion of the companion of

justify wrong.
Granted. But it is conditions and

not theories we are considering tonight. This world is peopled at present with men and not with angles.

With all our boasted educational in-

No trust officer hunts up the children of the slums and sees that they go to church. Hundreds of thousands of children in America are growing up in ignorance as dense as if they lived in darkest Africa. The only school they have a chance to attend is the saloon. And this great mass of ignorance and suffering and desperation is producing a rapidly increasing dangerous ele-ment. Unless something is done this ment. Unless something is done this spin, yet verily I say unto you that element will soon be strong enough to deluge our land in blood and test to its bank account like one of these. utmost the fabric of our government.

Beware the Israilite of oil who tore
The lion in his path, when poor and blind
He saw the blessed light of heaven no more
Shone of his noble strength and force to grind
In prison, and at last led forth to be
A ponder for Philistine reveiry,

Upon the piliars of the temple laid
His desper to hands and to its overthrow
Destroyed aimself and with him those who ma
A cruel mockery of his sightless wee
The poor bind sieve, the scoff and jest of all
Expired, and thousands perished in his fall.

There is a poor blind Sampson in this land Shorn of his strength and bound in bands steel
Who may, in some grim revei raise bis hand
And shake the pinars of this commonweal
Till the great temple of our ilberties
A shapeless mass of wreck and rubbish fles.

You may denounce this class as vicious, but it is none the less dangerous behause it is vicious. You may condemn it as ignorout, but it is none the less dangerous because it is ignorant. You may declare it is unreasonable, but it is none the less dangerous because it is unreasonable. You may say that they will injure themselves as well as others. Sampson destroyed himself in the downfall of the temple, but that was no consolation to the Philistines when the stones bagan to fall on their heads.

These men are vicious and ignorant because of the conditions which have made them so. They are dangerous ecause they are vicious and ignorant. Society has made the condition and society is liable to suffer from the rerults. These men have taken . no course of training 1a political economy, they have had no education in social committed somewhere, and that they

are suffering from it. They feel that. When earth produces free and fair The golden waving corn,
When irrgrant fruits perfume the air
And fleecy flocks are shorn,
White thousands more with aching hearts
And stog the cease loss song,
We starve, we die, or give us bread
There must be something wrong.

They can not reason out who has injured them or how the injury was comof injustice and wrong and it is rankling and burning and getting more bitter and deeper, until it is taking on the form of hatred for society, hatred for law, hatred for government,

until the explosion comes-an explosion compared to which the Chicago riots were but a firecracker, God pity motto will be, "When you see a head hit it," and they wont stop to consider whose head it is. "When you see property destroy it." And they wont der our present system has become the go into any close examination of title highest development of the barbarism deeds to see whose property it is.

The Carnegies will not suffer, they will be off in their palaces in Scotland. The Pullman's will not suffer, they But you, careful, honest, conservative business men-who have been suffering from the same conditions which have created these ignorant and vicious classes, you will have to bear the brunt of it. And on you will rest the restoring order out of chaos, suppressing rioting and tumult and of rescuing your country from the ig-noble fate to which you are now allowing it to be dragged. Oh! my fellow the fact that.

The time has come when men of hearts and

You have already too long left them in the hards of aliens and of lackeys. You have already far too long left them in the hands of an alien money power and political lackeys. Neither must we forget for one moment that the problem envolved in this matter independence. is in the highest possible sense of the word,

A MORAL QUESTION.

I grow disgusted over the insuffer-

When God Almighty said "Thou

labor. But give that same man a foundations of the financial problem. Until that edict is repealed stealing tion whether one portion of the com-

tion of wealth is claimed by some to be twenty billions of dollars.

In the last thirty years we have doubled our population and quadrupled our wealth in proportion to the population has been doubled. The accumulated property of the country, that which we have produced in secess of consumption, is over \$5,000 per family, on an average. If the estimated annual production of twenty billions is correct, our annual income is nearly \$1,700 per family, on an average. And there is nothing under the shining sun that can lie like an average. The devil could not keep in sight of it, and even John Sherman would come Gut second.

The secural second could be supported by the second could not keep in sight of it, and even John Sherman would come Gut second.

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The secural second in the proposition of wealth in proportion to the population has been doubled. Tramping, naif naked, in a land of peace, as immoral to deprive working men of that which they have earned as to make ill have upon a locomotive. He that which they have agata will have upon a locomotive. He that which they have earned as to will be a faithful patriotic citizen, ready if need be to isy down his life on his farm as to rob a whole nation of his farm as to rob a whole nation of his farm as to rob a whole nation of the fertile lands and preclus minute of the fertile lands and reclus minute of the people are plundered and pauper shall be begone to the second will be a faithful patriotic citizen, re crush him down so low that he has nothing to lose and you make a demon of him ready to kill and destroy.

There are multitudes of men in this condition, and you would tremble if you could hear their expressions of reckless desperation and of wild hattred of all existing institutions. I have heard such expressions from men who are looked upon as faithful, honest law-abiding citizens.

You may say that wrong will not the forms of law to rob you of your home I am a thief. And if you secure the passage of a law which will enable me to rob some other man of his home you are a thief. And if you and I having the power to prevent it, stand by and allow laws to be enacted which will allow some Wall street sharks or Lombard street jugglers to rob a million farmers of their homes, we are particeps, criminis with the aw-abiding citizens.

You may say that wrong will not there no mes, we are particeps, criminis with the thieves and before the moral laws are equally guilty.

And I hold and defy any one to de-

ny the truth of the propositions that whenever any one is compelled by law or by conditions created by law to part with that which belongs to him for less than it is worth he is robbed, and ignorance in this country. The man who has to work tweive hours a day at exhaustive toil; has little strength or inclination left to study "Darwins Descent of Man" or Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations" or Baxter's "Saints Rest."

No trues to "Bax but to still be committed or tolerated is a moral question. or tolerated is a moral question.

And the magnitude of the robbery

that has been committed is beyond the comprehension of man.

It has been demonstrated by careful calculations that of the entire wealth of this nation, three-fourths or nearly fifty billion dollars worth is in the posession of a little plutocrat company of less than two hundred thousand men. These men toil not, neither do they

They did not produce the wealth, for they are not the producers. It is the product of the labor of the great masses of the people, the manufacturers and merchants, and miners and

fishermen, and farmers and doctors, and teachers and workingmen and women generally.

This plutocratic class did not get this wealth by giving full value to those who produced it for having produced nothing themselves, they had nothing to give and as those who produced it have practically nothing it is avidence they received nothing it is

evidence they received nothing.

This immense, this incalculably great amount of wealth has been taken from the people by gambling in stocks and grain, by money corners, by the tariff, by land monopoly and by skillful manipulation of the finances

of the country.

I have spoken only of the amount of which our people have been robbed by the plutocratic class of America. Of how many millions and billions they have been plundered by the plutocrats of Europe, through subservient American legislation the Omniscient Lord alone can tell. But this much we doknow that foreign noblemen own today in fee simple twenty-five million acres of our best farming lands and hold mortgages which amount to ownership on a hundred million acres more and we never received anything from them for it. We know that they own nearly all our breweries, and every one of our McKinley tin mines, and a large number of our protected iron tactories, and at least half of our railthey have had no education in about the situation, they cannot analyze the situation, but they know that there has been an awful wrong and trijustice we know that in the thirty years from 1862 to 1892 the balance of trade in our favor of which we hear so much was \$649,780,785. That is the merchandise we sent abroad was worth that more than what we received from abroad. And in addition to that our exports of corn and bullion in the same period exceeded our imports by \$812,471,969 so that the total amount of merchandise and coin which in that period we have sent abroad and for which we have received nothing is

\$1,462,252,754. These robbers are not responsible to our laws but their robberies have been committed under our laws through the connivance of the political lackeys in whose hands we have committed the reins of government.

Whether we shall permit our people which this government was created to protect to be plundered by aliens through such political lackeys as Benjamin Harrison, John Sherman, Grover Cleveland and John G. Carlisle, I insist is a moral question. But there is a deeper, darker side to

this matter. As a result of this plundering and pauperizing of our people we are demoralizing, degrading and dehumanizing them.

Poverty and the fear of povert makes men mean, tricky and disho est. A business man recently said in answer to a question that it was pracprofoundly tonight the fact that our will be enjoying the breezes in their answer to a question that it was pracpresent condition is a dangerous conmansions in the Thousand Islands. tically impossible to conduct business in accordance with christian principles and avoid going into bankruptcy. The man who has the fear of financial disaster hanging over him is driven to do mean, tricky and dishonest things until his sense of honor and honesty is terrible and costly responsibility of blunted. As a consequence we find our whole commercial system honeycomed with dishonesty and sharp practice, and winked at as busines neces-The effect grows still worse as we

countrymen, at this dawning of the descend the social ladder. There is anniversary of our nation's independ- nothing not even the drink habit ence I would once more press upon you which so degrades and brutalizes a man as hopeless, helpless, uninvited poverty. When a man loses hope of ever being able to better his condition brains
Must rise and take the misdirected reins of he loses heart and ceases to try. He becomes a pauper because he is compelled to be, he remains a pauper because he chooses to be. Every time a man is compelled to depend on charity to receive as alms that which he should have been able to earn by his labor, you take away his manhood and

A workingman in your city loses his job today. He starts out to tramp your streets in search of another; he meets rebuff at every door. Each day able cant about the distinction be- he tramps he becomes shabbler and tween a financial question and a moral dustier and seedier, and less likely to get a job. At last, his money all gone he conc'udes to go to some other town. He has no money with which railroad fare, so he walks and you call him a tramp. He has no money will be an immoral act and the ques- to buy food so he stops at farm houses and begs a crust-perhaps he gets it, dares not reason is a coward, he who will not reason is a bigot and he who cannot reason is a fool.

Seem to bear out the assertion. We are one of the wealthiest nations on the face of the globe. Our annual production are worth more than womanhood and the anarchists will have no more in
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