

Trusts—The Cause and Cure

PLENTY OF MONEY.

Editor Independent: It is nearly guess work for any one not a stockholder in a trust, to try to explain the cause and the best way to curb or destroy them. Perhaps my guess will come as close to the mark as some others. I guess the first cause of trusts is when a majority of people or firms engaged in any branch of industry desire to escape the hardships of competition. The only feasible way to accomplish this is by combining under one head, with a president and board of directors who have the power to fix prices, both buying and selling, and even shutting down some houses or factories when they see that money can be saved to the stockholders by so doing.

The second cause of their existence is that there are states in this country that allow the organization of corporations large enough to cover the estimated value of all the houses engaged in that particular branch of industry in which a trust is to be organized. The third cause is the failure of public officials to enforce the law. As a cure for trusts, I guess we shall have to have more legislation to provide a more severe punishment for public officers who fail to enforce the law, at the same time making it easier for citizens to bring them into court. A general law governing corporations whereby it will be possible for a state to shut out from its markets corporations chartered in other states. To avoid causing suffering it will be necessary to build and maintain at public expense factories for such commodities as are excluded by passing and enforcing such a law.

If railroads should discriminate against state factories, a little manipulation of shipments using one road entirely where there are parallel roads would have a good effect on the other

roads; if that failed, state railroads would be necessary. From observation among my acquaintances I believe one of the most effective weapons against trusts is plenty of money in the hands of consumers. I have never heard any one, who had the money to buy necessities with, complain of the extortion of the trusts, except those who remember a time when they did not have money to buy with; therefore give us plenty of government money, gold, silver and greenbacks; not by loaning to banks without interest; not by permitting banks to issue asset currency which amounts to the same thing; not by loaning to individuals; or any other method of loaning money; because loaned money has to be paid back, and interest on the principal also, which leaves us worse off than before; and who can borrow money unless he has property; those who have no property must simply do without. Rather let the government undertake to supply every one with work that needs; in that way the money will go directly to those who need it most and the poor will not feel the extortions of the trusts as they do now. GEO. B. BOLT. St. Louis, Mo.

EDUCATION.

Editor Independent: You ask a trust cure; well, here it is: First, the proper education of the people; then the people to issue their own money. Take charge of the railroads, telegraphs, telephones, coal mines, copper, silver, and gold mines; provided, the last two are to be coined free to the mine owners.

To further aid the people, stop this injunction tomfoolery, ballot box stuffing—allow a free vote and a fair count. Kill out millionaires by taxation; when one sells out, break his neck. G. LIGON. Graham, I. T.

Capt. Ashby Replies

Editor Independent: The two criticisms aimed at "Money and the Taxing Power" in your last issue have been called to my notice, and as I have a moment's leisure I will entertain these gentlemen:

The two critics direct their attacks, toward defects of a widely different nature. Mr. Van Vorhis, for his part, does not derive pleasure from my use of certain words and phrases, which grate upon his cultivated literary sense. This does not in the least surprise me. My early education was not by any means what it should have been, nor what I could have desired. In fact I have never set myself up as a literary model. If Mr. Van Vorhis should so far tolerate my uncouth forms of expression, and inaccuracies of style, as to read "Money and the Taxing Power" to the end, I fear his artificial literary teeth will be many times on edge, and that his highly cultivated and susceptible literary nerves will be tortured by the frequent recurrence of a want of literary accuracy, very shocking to people of ultra literary culture. He may, however, by use, become gradually accustomed to my crudities, and by the exercise of proper care, so that none of them shall be permitted to stick in his style, he will come uninjured through the trying ordeal.

So poor, indeed, is my literary taste that I do not feel any appreciable shock from my apparently unlicensed use of the word "incapable." I seem to be content to employ it, as I have done, "along with" some profound thinkers and quite distinguished writers. So stolid, too, are my literary sensibilities that I seem to feel no shock that "theories" advanced, shall come in "collision" with "assumptions" which "are incapable of verification."

As for the definition of "wealth," I supported my statement by the great authority of Mr. Henry George; and although it may be of no consequence to the sticklers for literary culture, that men have been writing for ages, about a thing of which they had no definite idea, I nevertheless thought it worth while to point out the fact. Perhaps I owe an apology for telling the truth.

The other criticism, coming as it does, from one occupying the place of a prophet, raises a different question. This Mr. Bartley, it would seem from his remarks, has glanced through my entire work, although not published, and knowing its contents, by inspiration, announces categorically that some gentleman of his acquaintance in Connecticut, I believe, has told my story much better, and in smaller compass. Mr. B. will never know whether this statement of his is true

or not, because he declares himself to be one at least "in thunder" who does not propose to "wade" in order to learn that which he is confident he already knows. This Amsterdam real estate agent has no moral right to hide his great intellectual electric light as he is doing. It is wicked. It is clear from the glimpse he gives of himself, that no writer upon political economy, from Adam Smith downward, has escaped him; and the utmost their efforts have been able to compass, in his case, is to "amuse" him with "definitions of value." Manifestly the gentleman has had too much, and the fragmentary figures reflected from his mental mirror tell all too plainly of the shattered state of his intellectual reflector.

It is only because I have a little leisure, which I desire to improve by literary gymnastics, that I have noticed these entirely unimportant attacks. W. H. ASHBY.

J. A. Farnsworth, Cashon, Okla.: You have some able writers and I like a great deal that is in your paper; but prosperity has struck me so hard that I cannot afford to take a dollar paper. 25 cents for the Kansas City Star is the only tribute that old party papers get from me. I voted republican 16 years, populist 2 years, and now I am a socialist—government ownership of all monopolies.

Not the "Last Leaf"

Editor Independent: Please send me a specimen copy. You can't imagine how surprised I was to see the name of your paper in a socialist magazine as I had come to the conclusion that all the populists but myself had been "snowed under" in the storms of despotism and jugglery which have visited the country in the last few years.

I thought I'd die laughing when I read in one of those shameless organs of imperialism, what a great blessing it was that the people's party had disappeared without leaving a trace of its existence behind, and in the next page informs its readers that the financial policy of the present is about the shabbiest in the history of the country; that the masses are clamoring for the initiative and referendum; that another "populist fad," the election of United States senators "by direct vote of the people," is certain to become a part of the constitution in the near future.

In an insignificant pamphlet bearing the dubious title of "Sound Currency" a person named Farquahr, referring to legal tender money, says: "It is useless at this time to raise any issue with the supreme court decisions which pronounced the civil war legal tender act constitutional," which is

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equivalent to saying, "If you have no gold to defray the current expenses, you should not engage in warfare under any circumstances, not even to defend democratic institutions from the attacks of petty tyrants."

PHILLIP KELLY.

Danville, Ill.

HARDY'S COLUMN

The two old parties are in just about the condition the two old parties were during the forties and fifties. The whig party was broken in two by woolly heads and silver grays. The democratic party was broken in two by the barn-burners and hunkers. They then had three additional parties, the abolition, free soil and know nothing or native American party. Today the old parties are split, the republicans have the Roosevelt and Rockefeller factions and the democrats have the Bryan and Cleveland factions. The barn-burners and woolly heads united with the three small parties and formed the republican party, the silver grays united with the hunkers and formed the new democrat pro-slavery party. Now the Roosevelt and Bryan faction are near together and with the help of the pops, prohibitionists and socialists could carry the next or second election. Cleveland, Hill, Rockefeller and Pierpont Morgan with all the banks, trusts and corporations could pull together for the millionaires. Millionaires are running the government today as completely as the slave-holders did previous to 1860.

The wife should be made the first heir of the husband to all the property they accumulated after marriage. Then to all property the wife's heirship should be the same as the husband's heirship. We would favor a law prohibiting a husband or wife from having more than one living companion in marriage, whether divorced or not.

H. W. HARDY.

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John P. Shaw, lead and paint manufacturer, Bridgeton, N. J.: Find enclosed for three months subscription, as I wish to take advantage of Capt. W. H. Ashby's work on political economy.

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