

be a constant effort to secure for the people "a square deal." This can be accomplished, to express the writer's ideas in a very general way, by the withdrawal of special privileges and by public ownership of railways and municipal utilities.

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THE ROLE OF CHARITY

Many earnest people who are sure the world will be made happier by various social and economic reforms are apt to minimize the importance of charity in human affairs. By their panaceas they hope to solve all those sad problems springing from poverty and crime. But with the approach of winter in this keen northern clime we are forcibly reminded that "the poor we have always with us."

No matter what changes may be wrought in methods of distributing wealth the centuries will witness the continued existence of a defective and a delinquent class. The "problem of the unemployed" may not be the same tomorrow as it is today. The application of the golden rule in business and politics may go far toward the removal of poverty and the elimination of crime. A reign of law and justice may give to each man a fairer share of the world's goods. But the weak and laggard, the sick, vicious and defective will not vanish from the earth.

Neither your cure nor mine will ever produce an economic condition that will make it possible for men to say, "I am not my brother's keeper." Even if we grant that laws and customs may give the individual a better chance to obtain a livelihood we must expect that human greed will forever strive to escape the law and leap the hedges of custom. The weaker will go down in the battle of tomorrow as they are going down in the battle of today. Poverty may grow less and less and its shadow may cease to darken all the land, but there still will be a place for charity in a world where human weaknesses and passions continue to produce want, sickness and misery.

There was a time when the phrase "Merry England" was used to describe a nation in which pauperism was unknown. At that epoch the feudal system was in its flower. Individual liberty as it exists today was unknown, but industrial conditions were such that the rich did not grind the faces of the poor and the people were happy and contented. And yet Robin Hood and his merry men detained the wayfarer long enough to relieve him of his purse, and in every part of the kingdom were hospitals and refuges for the sick and suffering, the weak, laggard and defective. For there was still a place for charity.

If there were no place for charity, it is likely that man would become a cold, callous and entirely selfish being. The circumference of love would not be the circumference of the world, but the circumference of the family or more often of the individual.

While advocating reforms and offering remedies for economic ills no man should forget the obligation of loving his neighbor. A mind too much set upon the problem of improving the material condition of men in the mass may and sometimes does ignore the immediate needs of the individual.

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IMPLEMENT COMBINE'S INSINCERITY

The Nebraska and western Iowa retail implement and vehicle dealers have declared themselves as heartily in favor of the president's railway regulation policy. This is a commendable stand to take and might indicate that implement and vehicle dealers are disinterested advocates of the "square deal." At every convention the acts of the harvester trust are aired and sometimes they are condemned, but the implement dealers themselves are not free of the trust taint.

While demanding "a square deal" for themselves, they are unwilling to grant "a square deal" to their customers. One of the closing acts of the 1904 convention in Omaha was the fixing of prices and an agreement to maintain these prices. It was a secret agreement and was not reported in the newspapers. It is quite probable that like action was taken at this year's convention. At all events this is a common practice with the implement and vehicle dealers and is clearly a combination in restraint of trade such as is condemned by the federal law and the statutes of the state of Nebraska.

The attention of Attorney General Brown is called to this defiance of the anti-trust laws. If he should begin action against the implement dealers he might find himself handicapped by the fact that the Nebraska and Western Iowa Retail Implement and Vehicle Dealers' association is an interstate corporation, but in that event the case would be taken into the federal court where it would come under the provisions of the Sherman anti-trust law. The attorney

general has been working to secure what he terms "a free harvest" for the farmers of Nebraska this year by striking down the grain trust. Meantime he might add to the benefit of the "free harvest" by breaking up the agreement among the retail implement dealers to maintain prices illegally fixed.

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WHY THE RAILWAYS ARE HAPPY

Various explanations have been offered for the discontinuance of the railway publicity bureau, which, it is said, has spent \$2,000,000 in an effort to educate the people against the president's rate regulation policy. The consensus of opinion is that the bureau proved a failure, but is this the real explanation of the death sentence which has been passed upon it? To The Independent it seems as though the railway trust has decided that it is unnecessary to influence public sentiment against a policy which has turned out to be little more than a myth, if some of its talkative advocates are telling the truth.

Since President Roosevelt's speech at Raleigh the most enlightening speeches on the subject have been delivered by Secretary Taft and Senator Knox. Both gentlemen promised the railways that the courts could be trusted to fully protect the railway interests. Senator Knox was most explicit. In his speech at Pittsburg on November 3 the senator said:

"No such law could be enacted that could prevent the court, if satisfied that injustice has been done the railroads, from staying the operations of the order upon terms until the court had passed upon the merits of the controversy."

Plainly this was a hint to the railways that they could rely on government by injunction. The inference is that the railways can enjoy any order of the interstate commerce commission no matter how great may be the commission's theoretical powers. All these powers must bow before a federal injunction.

President Roosevelt evidently has grave fears that his plans for rate regulation will fail, for he demanded in his speech at Raleigh that congress pass a little effective legislation rather than a great amount of useless legislation. Whether Taft or Knox share the president's anxiety is not clear, but whether grieved or gratified they have taken the trouble to inform the railways that government by injunction will render rate legislation of little avail.

After Senator Knox had uttered the foregoing words just sufficient time had elapsed to impart their full meaning to the railway lawyers when it was announced that the railway literary bureau would be discontinued. The connection between these two events is not capable of absolute demonstration, but it is most natural to conclude that the railways would scarcely expend another \$2,000,000 for education when convinced that the federal injunction is a much easier and cheaper method of preventing effective governmental control of transportation.

The quiet life proved too galling for Teddy and so he started quite a row with Harry Whitney of Massachusetts, and it must be conceded that the president is still something of a fighter in spite of his billing and cooing with the bird of peace.

Defenders of the national honor are having poor success in defending their own honor. If this thing keeps up plain people will leave New York for Sing Sing to get into a more respectable neighborhood.

As soon as the foreign engineers had gone on record as favoring a sea level canal President Roosevelt said he was in favor of a lock canal. The foreign engineers will wonder why they were invited.

Senator Chester A. Long, of Kansas, thinks he will not support the president's railway policy. Another statesman discovered by the railways.

Secretary Taft says the secret enemies of the canal are delaying its construction. That acquits the open friends of the canal of all guilt.

Perhaps Norway did not become a republic because a very large republic has been setting a bad example.

Now that the Isle of Pines has seceded from Cuba, Long Island should secede from the United States.

The number of casualties among the bosses was great, but bosses possess wonderful vitality and die hard.