

ORSON IN COUNCIL.

(Suggestion to the Peace Conference.)

Came Orson out of the forest once; the farmers gripped their guns,
They blated their horns for neighbor aid, and sheltered their tender ones;
They never were fond of Orson erst, for some he had clubbed and clawed,
And the stoutest of all and the heaviest armed were shy of his walks abroad.

His hand, or his paw, you scarce knew which, and the difference was not great
As regards the name, when on your arm or your skull you felt the weight,
Still was not worst in its plumb-down stroke, but he had one awful hug—
When it clamped you once about the ribs, you would judge your grave was dug.

And less than ever they now rejoiced, at the sight of his healthy figure;
For every time he had shown his head, he was grown a trifle bigger;
More tall in stature, and huge of bulk, more wise in his move and look,
And strange, he had taken to all their ways, and was often found at his book.

So, just when a tempest of fire through all their line was about to break,
Old Orson bowed, and he cleared his throat, and in sweetest of growl he spake:
"Good friends, we have tussled many a bout, and I guess you will hardly think,
If I mention a scheme for a quiet life, it is fear that makes me shrink.

"It seems to me, there is much blood spilled, for any good it has been;
We come to about the same at last, with the loss and the woe and sin.
Suppose we agree for awhile to lay our clubs and our guns aside,
And see if we don't far better thrive? At least it might be tried."

Then what an uproar those dear hearts put up at the strange propose!
There were some who called it a civil thing, and were rather inclined to close:
"Well, how if we try? the Bear of late shows many a hopeful sign;
No cause in the blood against it; look at his brother Valentine."

But the others hooted, and howled aloud, "No trusting the brute, for me!
He ripped me, once;" and "He mauled me, twice;" "He is mischief-bound you'll see."
And Orson, whom not one could shake, nor they all could bring to ground,
It was cleverer far to keep in arms, than to make for peace all round.

COMMERCIAL GRAVITATION.

When Charles Kingsley became a professor in Cambridge University he foolishly undertook to prove that there was no such thing as an inexorable law of Nature. He held that even the law of gravitation was not the rigid and universal sort of thing Newton had supposed. "If I choose to catch a stone," he argued, "I can hold it in my hands; it has not fallen to the ground, and will not till I let it. So much for the inevitable law of gravity."

It is with some such foolish sophistry many of us are attempting to ignore the great law of commercial gravitation that is creating the so-called trust movement. Kingsley forgot that the inevitable laws of gravity, at which he sneered, continued to pull the stone towards the earth

while it was in his hand, and would keep on pulling until he dropped it, even if Nature had to wait till death relaxed his grasp. In like manner the reformers and legislators who are dogmatizing against the right of capital to combine are forgetting the inexorable law that forces such combination, and that will keep on forcing it until all artificial barriers are removed. It is as foolish to deny this law as to deny that there is a law compelling water to run down hill.

Why not cease fighting the eternal law and concentrate our efforts upon regulating its action. We do not try to stop the Mississippi from running to the sea, though it does at times overflow its banks and do great damage. We simply build levees to prevent the needless and ruinous inundation. But when we try to legislate against all capitalistic combinations we are doing the same sort of thing as if we attempted to build a dam that would stop the whole Mississippi. It is as impossible to prevent such centralization of capital in a free country as to prevent unconfined water from centralizing in the ocean. Both are impelled by a law that is stronger than any human law.

There is no wish to deny the evils that accompany the present concentration movement. The rascality and certain disaster of overcapitalization have been pointed out many times in these columns. The illicit use of power to force railway discriminations has been denounced for the unmitigated evil it is. For these and other sins the trusts will justly suffer, and will drag down to ruin many an honorable concern when the day of reckoning comes. But in so far as these companies are seeking to fleece the stock speculator or to play the highwayman with the railroads, they are lawless and not law abiding things. The point to remember is that these are the exception and not the rule—that the vast aggregate of centralized capital is acting with legitimate motives and under an inexorable law.

From the beginning of civilization it has been the natural tendency of industries to grow and of capital to combine. Not an argument now hurled against the trust but was used with equal force a century ago in England against incorporated companies. We have now lost all fear of stock companies, but are alarmed over the combination of such companies. Yet this latest development is as natural and inevitable as the earlier, and in time we shall learn that it brings the solution of many a knotty question. Fighting the mere bigness of these combinations is foolish. Our American industries have been expanding steadily ever since their smallest beginnings in colonial New England, and the great trading combinations of the present day have been evolved by natural processes of growth. You may as well try to butt down a twenty-foot wall with your head as to hurl yourself

against the natural forces that are causing centralization of capital.

It is time to drop hysterics and take a fearless and honest look at these supposed commercial bogies. There is absolutely no indication that the trusts will reduce wages; on the contrary, they have raised wages. Nor is there any proof that they will raise prices. If any of them try it, there is a natural law of competition that will soon destroy them. The sins of inflated stock must be suffered for, but the dupes who get caught deserve no sympathy. The vital fact is that centralized capital is a healthy and normal phase of industrial development and has come to stay.—Chicago Dry Goods Reporter.

SILVER.

The dawn of the day when silver shall be sold at \$1.29 an ounce all over the world is breaking. The smelter syndicate and refiners' combine have put up the beautiful white metal since March, 1899, more than the Bryan syndicate raised it in the last three years. Together the Bryan-archists and silver mine and bullion owners make a formidable political party. They attempt to direct the policies and administer the government of the American republic. They may possibly succeed in 1900!

CONSERVATISMS.

Pseudo or traditional conservatism rebels against the word of the "living God" while it upholds that of the dead gods of tradition.

Civilization comprises the institutions and methods evolved by man for his individual preservation through social organization.

Culture, though a result of civilization, is often a parasitic attachment and in the way of progress.

Progress and civilization are identical. Progress is the improvement in methods of self-preservation of one period and people over and against another period and people.

Institutions or methods which may be life-saving, or supporting to inability, are invariably detrimental to the race.

Altruism and humanitarianism are toll-gates on the road to progress.

Traditionalism is constantly in the way of civilization.

Ethics is the science, morality the art of self-preservation.

The brotherhood of man is an absurdity but an intelligent utilitarianism the basis of individual salvation.

Religion is the intelligent consciousness of the unity and inseparableness of all things and one's self as an individualized entity in the eternal solidarity. Religion is attachment to the whole as a part of self.