

The disease may exist, the remedy may fail. Capitalists are usually astute and intelligent; and the fact that they select for investment those lines of business which ultimately possess the element of a monopoly of lands or its product, is the best evidence of the truth of his statement concerning economic tendencies. This is the secret of the favor shown to investments in railroads; although by too far anticipating future development, and failing properly to consider future competition on the same lines, such investments generally have not heretofore proved to be profitable. This, likewise is the secret of the vast aggregations of corporate capital and water, which have lately frightened the public mind. Protected by high tariffs on their flank, they have sought to obtain full control of the sources of the mineral products and their transportation, in order to make their monopoly impregnable.

Nor does the rejection of the single tax as impracticable, imply the rejection of other remedies. Under equitable rules the state could discourage the speculation in land even to the extent of extinguishing future, unearned increments by taxation, because in that case, the commercial value of the land would continue to exist, and no injustice would be done to the owner. Corporations are artificial creatures with special privileges, created by the state, and therefore subject to the control of the state. They could therefore be justly subjected to a tax upon their franchises. Their powers could be subjected to limitation and restriction both in the state where they are created and in the state where they do the business; and where they are instruments of commerce between the states, they are subject to the control of the United States.

But whatever be the remedy proposed for existing or threatened evils, it cannot be successful unless the evils are fully understood. Combination alone is not sufficient to warrant interference. It is as old as competition, and has often been instrumental in procuring the greatest benefits. Injury to public or private rights must also accompany it. The remedy must also be adapted to the purpose, and must be applied with a view to the conditions of time and place. Many reforms have failed because, only, they were premature.

A gun loaded with reform carries a dangerous explosive. If well considered, and adapted to remedy an acknowledged evil, it may go straight to the mark and do infinite good. More frequently it bursts the gun into fragments, and blows the gunner into oblivion. A clear instance was the late attempt to reform the standard of values. Some old soldiers like myself are trying to gather up and integrate the fragments of our party; but we have a wholesome fear of the quack, immature, and im-

practicable remedies offered to the people as panaceas for the evils and hardships of life.

JAMES DENTON HANCOCK.  
Franklin, Pa., Aug. 2nd, 1901.

#### ABSENT.

The editor of THE CONSERVATIVE has gone to Colorado as the guest of his son, Paul Morton, and will be absent one week.

#### UNCLASSIFIED.

The Rev. H. J. Wood, of Chicago, is much exercised over the slim church attendance. He complains that theatres, beer gardens and picnics entice away their congregations. There is only one explanation, if the reverend gentleman states a fact. The picnics, beer gardens and theatres are giving an entertainment better suited to the mass of mankind. If the theatres and other places of amusement were giving the same programme, with the same performers without a variant, in a hundred years they would find their box office as empty as the contribution plate. As women get a mild form of excitement in church, by the survey of gowns and millinery, they are able to maintain their interest by change of costume. When she "has nothing to wear" the great superiority of woman as a church goer becomes conspicuous by its absence. Man, having no interest in dress, and the same in the sermon as his wife, goes to the summer garden or fishing. Instead of a constant abuse of the people and other places of resort, it might be well for the church to consider themselves awhile. Instead of complaining of other places, meeting the changed conditions of the world, let them study what changes are necessary in their own methods to draw people into the pews. This is the twentieth century, and the dogmas of the sixteenth, the droning of the platitudes of the seventeenth with hymns of the eighteenth, no matter how adroitly mixed will not be relished by the intellectual palate of today. If some Rev. Wood desires to know just how keenly the public relish an orthodox sermon let him advertise one some week day evening with a dime admission. Fifty years ago the churches had undisputed possession of Sunday. Why have they permitted their competitors for public favor to pass them in the race. The church has either failed in its mission to build up an enlightened, public sentiment, or it has failed to keep pace with the enlightenment it has produced. (If the reverend gentleman is correct that his congregation prefers theatres, picnics and beer gardens.) Never having heard the gentleman, the writer of this religious column is not prepared to pass upon the taste of his congregation.

McClay's book has only enhanced the

love of the American people for the hero of Santiago. But, it has also established the fact that the cowardly slander was approved by the whole coterie of waltzing heroes about the navy department in Washington. The drivelling excuses of lack of memory with regard to the "proof sheets" bear all the ear-marks of the whisky witness in a dry town. "I called for whisky, paid for whisky and drank it for whisky, but cannot remember at this distance whether it was whisky or not, but rather think not." Already the Schley investigation has developed into an exposure of a "naval ring," and it is the ring that today is on trial before the bar of public opinion. With regard to Schley, that opinion is fixed beyond the power of any court. It is the knowledge of this that has led to the impotent rage and vile slander by the Sampson clique. Sampson has shown himself a "prize money admiral" only. The character of the man was shown when, by written letter, he stated that the ability to waltz and make post-prandial speeches should control in promotions instead of bravery and efficient service.

The adherents of the cause of free silver can get much comfort from the fact that Leta, who ruled over Egypt 4,500 years before Christ, wrote a prescription for making hair grow on bald heads. It is said that there are still followers of Leta. Who knows but what 6,500 years from now that the same frantic efforts to create value by law will prevail, as now to grow hair on a bald pate? Next after a man trying to get an audience to listen to a free silver argument, the most pitiful sight in life is a bald-headed druggist trying to sell a hair restorer.

"Dearest Charlie, thou has left us,  
And thy loss we deeply feel.  
It was the oil stocks that bereft us;  
The same would now our sorrows heal."

Or lament the death of Pettigrew, the proud, in some such beautiful lines as these:

Here lies, cut down like unripe fruit,  
That rarest Pop, so gently mute.  
Bold Pettigrew, his voice is still,  
Hushed by the Octopus of Hill.

Or this on the recent mysterious disappearance of J. K. Jones, of Arkansas, into the insatiate maw of the cotton trust.

Cold is the cheek of our chairman so foxy;  
Cheek that bluffed gold-bug and Hanna  
and all;  
We will chuck him in next to our dear old  
friend Coxey,  
And give him a tomb-stone some time in  
the fall.

But why multiply examples, and harrow-up the feelings of the little band of survivors by a long list of victims of the greed of mammon?

T. M. S.