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OBSERVATIONS.**The Young Man's Epoch.**

A few months ago Richard Croker said, in one of his few communicative and epigrammatic moments, that owing to trusts and commercial combinations the youth of the land no longer had a fair chance to earn a living. This is a misleading statement. This is the day and this the hour of the young man. All older men who have tried to get jobs can testify that everywhere the young man blocks their way. Fifty years ago, young men were just as brilliant but they had not the same opportunities. The young man Schwab with a newspaper-attested salary of a million dollars a year, would have been an impossibility in the earlier period. Competent young men are scarce. With the mills and factories running overtime, with electricity filling all the nooks and crannies of heretofore waste space, young men with technically qualified hands and heads are more in demand than ever. Proof of this was shown at the recent annual commencement exercises of the Stevens Institute of Technology at Hoboken, New Jersey. Out of forty graduates only a dozen were present to receive their diplomas. President Morton explained that the twenty-eight other young men had been offered lucrative and responsible positions within a month of commencement and had departed to begin their professional duties at once. He added that the whole forty could have secured positions also if they had chosen to consider the propositions which had been made them. The tremendous expansion of the last five years requires the energy and professional skill of all the young men this country can produce, Croker to the contrary, notwithstanding.

The president and joint creator of

the largest railroad combination in the world is said to be prejudiced against old men. After a man has yielded up the overwhelming impetus and energy of youth, inspiration and invention often fail and the young man who is waiting for his job sometimes gets it. He has a much greater chance of displacing his superior than the youth of fifty years ago had. Then, the young man did not expect to make a fortune before he reached the age of fifty. Now he makes up his mind that the times are opposed to the advancement of young men unless he acquires a competency while the fires of youth are still alight. The trusts and the organizations of capital stimulate production. They have also economized the cost of production to such an extent that the competition of America is the most serious commercial problem which England, "the mistress of the seas," is studying now. The market for our products, indefinitely extended, means increased production to supply that market and the employment of more men to handle the products. It is often charged against the trusts that by combining plants and destroying competition they have thrown a very large number of men out of employment. It was undoubtedly true at one time. The overwhelming expansion of the market due to an economic system of production has made it possible to enlarge the market and compete with England. There is a growing prospect, if the present conditions continue, that no truthful, industrious man will for long be out of a job. Immediately consequent upon the organization of the trusts the price of labor rose. The strikes, based on a demand for higher wages, are a proof of this. During the hard times, a period of restricted production, there were no strikes. But as soon as the demand for labor is imperative, as soon as the market is expanding at an unprecedented rate labor demands its share of the profits.

Considering all these things it is easy to prove, a priori, that the demand for a keen intelligence has never been so great. Richard Croker is not an economist. In the minds of his followers he is anything he pretends to be. They come to him with all sorts of problems, though a blacksmith can regulate a watch quite as satisfactorily as Mr. Croker can answer questions which involve economic elements. His range is bounded by the limitations of the political market of New York city. When confronted by the actual growing demand for the services of young men, his lecture on the subject and his statement that the demand for them is decreasing, is demonstrably inaccurate.

The Bartley Case.

After serving four years and one month of a twenty years' sentence, ex-state treasurer Bartley has been paroled by Governor Savage. Just

before the treasurer was arrested he began paying back into the state treasury the money which the people elected him to take charge of. He proposed to continue paying it back but when he was arrested the payments ceased. It is supposed that Governor Savage has paroled him hoping that a temporary and restricted freedom will induce the man who is still a prisoner of the state, to assist the state officers in recovering a part of the half million dollars that was not returned to the treasury of Nebraska during Bartley's administration. Before receiving a pardon Mr. Bartley should tell the Governor who were the creditors of the state from whom he was receiving ten thousand dollars a day when he was arrested. If he is pardoned, while still remaining silent on this point, the Governor will be censured by all frank, unprejudiced minds. And the pardon of Bartley will become a campaign issue of greater importance than his defalcation immediately after the disclosures which followed his arrest.

Mr. Bartley succeeded to an office that had been conducted for years for the enrichment of politicians. The state funds entrusted to the care of the state treasurer were placed in this bank or that one for the interest they paid the treasurer and also to secure the influence of the favored banks for the second term campaign of the treasurer. Mr. Bartley did not originate the system, but he acquiesced in and adopted it. Actually he was no better and no worse than the ordinary politician who expects to make a very good living, which means more than his salary, out of a public office. The treasurer under discussion incurred the liability of a sentence to the penitentiary by placing the funds in his care in depositories undesignated by law. Other Nebraska state treasurers who now walk the streets did the same thing, but they were not succeeded by a treasurer elected by another party, as Mr. Bartley was. Bartley is popularly supposed to have converted to his own use about one half million dollars. Really part of that sum was already lost when he assumed the office. It was represented by certificates of deposits in flimsy banks. Nevertheless, such is the etiquette existing between the new and the old treasurers of the same party that in every previous biennial settlement the new treasurer receipted to the old treasurer for this paper as though it was money. Between a populist and a republican treasurer there are no strict rules of etiquette and Meserve, the populist treasurer, refused to play, as all the other treasurers had, that certain certificates of deposit were money. Besides, Mr. Bartley had added to the sins of his predecessors and made some eccentric and unauthorized loans. The hard times had stopped the free circulation of money and it was impossible for Bartley to make a settlement with his successor. Then

he was arrested and finally sentenced to the state penitentiary for twenty years, an excessive sentence, considering how corrupt were the traditions of the office he held and that all his predecessors had sought to enrich themselves, regardless of the law, and had escaped without even the expressed contempt of the people who elected them. The forty-five months which this man has spent in prison is in partial atonement not alone for the money he stole himself, but for the administration of the treasurer's office by his predecessors. The people were thoroughly exasperated and the sentence of Bartley to twenty years in the state's prison reflected the impatience of a people repeatedly wronged, robbed and betrayed. Stoically, silently, he has borne his cumulative sentence, although it has been bitter and humiliating to so proud a man. But it seems to me his punishment should continue until he makes all possible reparation to the people from whom he has stolen half a million dollars.

The old Jewish idea of atonement by sacrifice is not obsolete. To the sacrificial lamb it is absurd to keep alive so old a custom. But vicarious punishment is visited upon a criminal now-a-days who is convicted of a crime at the end of a sequence of like crimes committed by men no less vicious, but who have escaped. We demand a sacrifice for sin and the first man caught must expiate his own crime and the crimes of the fugitives who have fled from punishment. The twenty years' sentence visited upon Bartley is in the way of an Israelitish atonement. He is guilty as charged, but if he had been the first offender, if his crime had not entailed such severe consequences upon so many innocent people, judging by the law of parallelisms, he would have escaped with a lighter sentence.

Contemporary Justice.

Justice tempered with too much mercy is cruel to the unaccused, to the helpless, to men consumed by hatred for some one whose life they would take if it were not for the certainty of punishment. Punishment for breaking the laws of nature is swift, and meted alike to the rich and the poor. If Mr. Pierpont Morgan fell off a precipice he would break his neck and crush his bones as completely as though the fallen body were that of a tramp. But if Mr. Morgan killed a man the chances are that he would not be hung for his crime. So long as a man's treasure is large enough he is not likely to be hung for the commission of the most atrocious crime, that is, if he lives long enough, after its commission, for the lawyers to reach him. When an enraged mob gets hold of him first, rich or poor, it is likely his doom is sealed, and that he will die by fire or strangulation. Barring accidents, it is safe for the very rich to indulge in