

The vices of a slave are hateful, but we do not blame the slave for them, and we do not praise him for obedience, meekness, abnegation, which are virtues in the free man. Liberty is not only the power of self-sacrifice: it is the responsibility of self-sacrifice too.

There seem to be as yet no free countries in the world; there seem to be only freer countries; and not every citizen of a freer country is a free man. He is a free man if he has the means of livelihood, and is assured in their possession; if he is independent of others. But if he is dependent upon some other man for the means of earning a livelihood, he is not free. Freedom, in fact, which in its highest effect is self-sacrifice, and of the skies, is chained to the earth in the question of necessity, as certainly as the soul is chained to the earth in the body.

The workingman out of a job can have little joy of his vote; and if he is very poor, if he is not making both ends meet, he can hardly will good to others, the sovereign act of the freeman, because he has none to will. It is true that he may rebel, that he may renounce his employment when he has one and does not think himself justly paid; but without the means of livelihood he has no choice except to seek some other employment, and this choice is scarcely freedom.

Till a man is independent he is not free; as long as he must look to the pleasure or the profit of another man for his living he is not independent.

Slavery was none the less an evil because most slaveholders were kind and good people, or because there was now and then a heroic slave. The man who is in danger of want or even in dread of want is not a free man; and the country which does not guard him against this danger and this dread, or does not assure him the means of livelihood, is not a free country, though it may be the freest of all the freer countries. *



TOUT PASSE.

A SUNBEAM, flickering through a garret's gloom,

Provoked the simple prattle of a child.

A widow, listening, crossed the sordid room,

The faded curtain drew, then turned and smiled.

"Mother, those specks of gold!" the urchin cried.

"Those dancing specks of gold are—dust!" she sighed.

—[H. A. VACHELL, in *Overland*.

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