

of the duty. Thus you can see that every man, woman and child in Canada is affected by the greed of the great corporations. Thus you see your indifference hurts not only yourself, but your neighbors and millions whom you can never know. You are your brother's keeper; your indifference is hurting him and your duty to him demands that you fight and fight manfully.

The last, and I believe the strongest factor in favor of an industrial system is the general acceptance of the idea that a man's business is his own and that no one has a right to interfere. This is not so. The business of the great corporations is the concern of all. These corporations are but the creatures of the people, whom they are supposed to serve. A corporation is a creation of the land. It exists by sufferance of the representatives of the people. Besides, who makes a corporation? Who buys its products? Whose money pays its dividends? The people's. Let there be no mistake on that point, it is our money.

I believe we should have some way of making these monsters treat us fairly.

This idea of interference in another man's business is not revolutionary, rather does it lie at the very foundation of our government. The people, through their representatives have a right to control and check these parasites, whose millions are stolen from us.

#### Liberties Restricted

Our government assures to every individual life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Liberty is liberty only so long as that liberty does not interfere with the liberty and happiness of some other. For having assured liberty to everyone, as soon as some person encroaches on the liberty of some other, the state automatically and by right steps in and restricts the liberty of the first.

These great corporations are persons in the eyes of the law, and are privileged under, and bound by the laws made for individuals. Like persons, liberty is theirs only so long as the exercise of that freedom does not act to the detriment of others. As soon as their exercise of liberty begins to affect the people at large to constrain their liberty and make their pursuit of happiness more arduous, then it is right that the people, through their representatives, should step in and to a certain extent, deprive them of the exercise of their freedom.

Some will deny that these corporations injure the people. I say that every corporation that charges unjust or exorbitant prices for its products injures them. You may say one need not buy their products, but how could any man of you farm without the products of the International Harvester Co.? The self-binder and threshing machine, which were a curiosity and a luxury to our fathers, is a necessity today. We are forced to buy, in spite of our boasted liberty, at an outrageous price, from robbers, who hold us up and rob us in the light of day.

#### The Duty of Governments

This, to some of you, may sound like a radical idea, striking at the very foundation of our national and economic existence, but it is not. It is merely the statement of your national progress during the last fifty years. During the last century, countless things, considered just during the centuries before, have come to be considered unjust. In dozens of cases, the law has stepped in and told a man what he shall or shall not do in his business.

When a man puts up a block in a city the civic authorities come to him and tell him how thick his walls must be; how many fire-escapes he must have and where. All this is done to safeguard the inmates and you say it is right; the law should protect the people. Indeed it should, but fifty years ago the opponents of such legislation claimed that if people did not want to take chances with an unsafe building, they need not work in it nor use it. We do not hold that idea now.

We do not even stop when safety from accidents is secured. The civic authorities tell the owner how many bath and toilet rooms he shall put in. They compel him to provide ventilation and light. Fifty years ago, the owner would have objected to such interference and would have found many to uphold him.

Our laws reach the mine-owner and tell him he must not allow any laborer

of his to stay underground in his mine longer than eight hours at one time. Fancy the mine-owner replying, "If the man does not want to work ten hours, let him go elsewhere."

#### Insurance Investigation

Do you remember the Armstrong investigation into life insurance in New York three years ago? Following that upheaval, the State law-makers strode into the offices of those gigantic companies and told their officers what they should give their policy holders for their money and what they should do with the funds in their charge. The Federal authorities keep an eye upon the banks in this country and specify where and how they may invest the money entrusted to them.

The railways are the strongest, most arbitrary and independent, industrial organizations in the world. Yet they too must yield. They cannot give rebates to favorite customers; they cannot give passes to those whom they would propitiate. They cannot discriminate between patrons, between long and short hauls. Not only are they forbidden to do things which would injure the community, but they are obliged to do things to benefit the people. They must put up loading platforms and stockyards where they are needed. They must furnish cars to farmers on an equal footing with the elevators.

#### Man's Business not his Own

I could go on for hours giving instances to prove that a man's business is not always his own business.

These are but a few feeble steps in the right direction. What we need is some power, great enough and courageous enough to prevent the soulless corporations from overcharging us for the necessities of life. Some power to fix a fair and reasonable price and compel those robbers to abide by it.

I hear some of you say that is sacrilege, confiscation, anarchy. But it is not so. It is but a continuation of the idea before. Not only is it right in theory, but it is even now being practiced. Listen to these. In cities, cab and bus fares are fixed by law. Toledo, Ohio, has fixed the prices the street railway may charge. After a five years fight, the fare is now three cents.

In Virginia a railway company may only charge at the rate of two cents per mile for carrying passengers between stations in the State. In Georgia the rate is  $2\frac{1}{4}$  cents, in Illinois  $2\frac{1}{4}$  cents. When it was first proposed to fix railway rates by law, a howl went up from the offices that could be heard round the world, "Confiscation, Revolution, Anarchy." Yet they had to give in and the world goes merrily on to-day.

A few years ago, a combination of all the ice-dealers in New York was effected and the prices were raised to an excessive degree. The City and State of New York stepped in and compelled the ice-barons to reduce the price to a reasonable figure.

Nearly every light and power company in existence has a string to its charter, giving the grantors power to reduce prices after a certain time.

#### Elevator Curbed

Elevators are allowed by law, to charge only  $1\frac{1}{4}$  cents per bushel for passing grain through their spout for the farmer.

The amount a farmer may charge for feedings a stray beast is fixed by law.

Any one of you can add instances, but these few will show you it is not radical nor unjust, nor new for our government to interfere and rescue us from those whose only concern is to get our money for as slight a return as possible.

If we can tell the railway how much it may charge for carrying a passenger, why can we not tell it how much it may charge for hauling our grain? If we can fix the price the elevator may charge for handling our grain, why not tell the manufacturers how much they may charge us for a binder? If the law fixes the price of your feed and care for a stray animal, why should it not fix the price of flour?

#### Moral Courage Needed.

It will need the best efforts of every person in Canada to free us from the chain with which we are bound. It will take the courage of martyrs to withstand the slurs and ridicule of their agents. It will take our greatest skill to match the arts which our oppressors will use

against us. And finally we will need the persistence of a prophet to rise triumphant from the defeats and discouragements which are sure to beset us.

In face of this who can say that Patriotism is not needed? Patriots with greater courage and strength than any before, must come forth, and indeed they will come, to fight, to suffer and finally to conquer.

Many of you may perhaps wonder why I am saying this. I speak on behalf of no political party, nor any particular movement now on foot. I wish to help to pave a way for a movement that is

sure to come. I try to overthrow the old idea, that whatever is done in a line of business is right; to overthrow the belief that a man's affairs are entirely his own. In its place I would substitute the idea that the many are of greater importance than the few; to lead some of you to the belief that State interference on behalf of the people is right and fitting, so that when some leader will arise and bring forth a plan for the relief of our evils, he will find behind him a strong public opinion, a wave of sentiment great enough to carry him and his plan to victory.