



"NIPPED IN THE BUD."

SEVERE PERSON (to Alec Smart, the humorist, just as he enters bookstore) — "Now, sir, before you utter a pun on the title of any of these novels, be good enough to step outside!"

MORE PERPLEXED THAN EVER.

MANY of the readers of GRIP have no doubt read Henry George's recent work, "A Perplexed Philosopher"—meaning Mr. Herbert Spencer. The book is a brilliant and amusing *expose* of Spencer's vain attempt to explain away, in his latest work, "Justice," the unanswerable argument he made in "Social Statics" against the system of private property in land. In the language of the sporting fraternity the great philosopher was most effectually "done up," and it would have been well for his fame had he decided to keep quiet and let the whole thing blow over. Aggravated, however, by the appearance of his argument from "Social Statics" in the form of a campaign document issued by the English Land Restoration League, (he in the meantime being regarded as the honored ally of the Liberty and Property Defence League—the landowner's society) he has rushed into print with a charge of garbling against the issuers of the leaflet. This has led to a spirited controversy in the columns of the London *Daily Chronicle*, and Spencer has only succeeded in making it plain that he is more perplexed and muddled than ever. In order to illustrate this somewhat forcibly we quote, first from the argument he originally made (Social Statics, chap. IX.)

"However difficult it may be to embody that theory (viz. by the co-heirship of all men to the soil) in fact, equity sternly commands it to be done." "But unfortunately," he goes on, "most of our present landowners are men who have either mediately or immediately—either by their own acts or by the acts of their ancestors—given for their estates equivalents of honestly-earned wealth, believing that they were investing their savings in a legitimate manner. To justly estimate and liquidate the claims of such is one of the

most intricate problems society will one day have to solve. But with this perplexity and our extrication from it abstract morality has no concern. Men having got themselves into the dilemma by disobedience to the law must get out of it as well as they can and with as little injury to the landed class as may be."

And next we quote the latest deliverance of this "great thinker," dated August 29th of the present year of grace.

"My argument in 'Social Statics' was based upon the untenable assumption that the existing English community had a moral right to the land. They never had anything of the kind. They were robbers all round. Normans robbed Danes and Saxons; Saxons robbed Celts; Celts robbed the aborigines, traces of whose earth houses we find here and there. Let the English Land Restoration League find the descendants of these last, and restore the land to them. There never was any equity in the matter, and re-establishment of a supposed original equity is a dream. The stronger people have been land-thieves from the beginning, and have remained land-thieves down to the present hour." !!!

Comment is surely unnecessary!

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GRIP is, of course, a friend of science, and deems it a duty and pleasure to advance the cause of invention, and all that sort of thing. He regards Mr. Thomas Edison as a great mechanical and scientific genius, who deserves the applause of the nineteenth century; and whatever Mr. Edison may think it necessary to do in the working out of his ideas, Mr. GRIP feels in duty bound to approve. This is why we do not denounce the prize fight given for kinetographic purposes—and a purse of \$5,000—at the Edison Laboratory the other day by the plug-uglies, Corbett and Courtney, on which occasion the "champion" smashed the other fellow to the full value of the money. If it were not for the foregoing considerations, however, we would certainly call this a disgraceful affair, and we would go on to say that Edison in paying the money for the exhibition, was if anything worse than the pugs, and that his intention to have the whole brutal business fixed up in the kinetograph so that it can be exhibited all over the country for the further demoralization of the people was making a bad matter several degrees worse. But we will refrain from making any such unpleasant remarks, as it was all done in the interests of the noble cause of science.

MR. E. B. Harper, of the Reserve Fund Life, may fully deserve the title he so proudly wears of "The Napoleon of Insurance," but it does not fit any better than "The Wellington of Advertisers" fits Mr. W. J. McMurtry, after the banquets and booming of last week.



"LIVING PICTURES."