

## Contemporary Thought.

THE chief requisites for beginners in journalism may be summed up thus:—

1. A good English education. Learn first to write English; I mean plain, straight, quick Saxon, sturdy and lithe as a sapling. Let your Latin and Greek adornments come in afterwards. Study the history of the world, of the United States and Great Britain and Ireland; and study everything else that you conveniently can. Drill yourself in writing swift, sharp, vivid yet graceful accounts of everything that comes under your notice, putting it picturesquely but never at the cost of clearness and brevity. Colleges do not teach this art.

2. Common sense.

3. Good judgment of the relative importance of subjects.

4. Obedience, patience, punctuality.

5. In spite of attaining to all these virtues, do not be a prig. However much knowledge your brain may hold, never do or say anything which will lead the wise to charge you with being touched by the malady known as "big head." Conceit, the wise it call.

That there may be exceptions to these rules is true enough. There are good journalists who are not well educated, patient, or in any way humble. But I am speaking of the ideal journalist; and it will not do for the novice to model upon the exceptions.—*Geo. Parsons Lathrop, in the Chau-tauquan.*

In a recent number of a religious periodical there occurred the following sentence:—"There can be no question as to the abstract proposition that land is not a proper subject for private ownership; that labour alone creates wealth, and labour does not create land."

It is obvious from the appearance of a statement like this in a publication of high standing that many worthy people are half ready to accept Mr. Henry George's theory of a common ownership in land. They are not ready, perhaps, to sanction his scheme of ruthless confiscation, but they are saying to themselves that at bottom his theory is right, and they are wondering whether land cannot ultimately be restored to the community, to which, it is said, it rightfully belongs. My purpose, therefore, in reply to the proposition so confidently affirmed by the writer I have quoted, is to make good the following points:—

1. That land, no less than other things, is a proper subject for private ownership.

2. That labour alone does not create wealth.

3. That labour creates the conditions that make land wealth just as much as it creates the conditions that make other things wealth.

And, in continuance of the subject, I hope to how—

4. That the greater part of the land is now practically held by the community, for it enjoys in common all that the land produces.

5. That the confiscation of the rental value of land by means of taxation would in the main be a confiscation of the proceeds of labour.

6. That unearned increment in land, of which much is said, is no more hurtful to the community than other forms of unearned increment.

7. That the accomplishment of Mr. George's purpose would be destructive to the best interests of the community.—*From "Some Points in the Land Question," by Oliver B. Bunce, in Popular Science Monthly.*

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY possessed all the personal advantages which make a primrose path of life. His delicate beauty, almost feminine in character, was in itself a passport in an age which set an extravagant value on good looks, and preferred that they should not be too massive. But this maidenly aspect, in Sydney as in Milton, belied a very vigorous and manly temper, as Pyraeas was concealed under the garb of Zelmane. Nor did Sidney ever allow himself to be browbeaten on account of the bloom of his complexion. When he was only two-and-twenty, Elizabeth sent him as ambassador to Don John of Austria, who received him with condescension, as being somewhat startled that the Queen of England should send such a boy to Philip II.'s generalissimo. But Sidney contrived to show him his mistake, and soon after we find him not knowing what tribute to pay to this "extraordinary planet," and proving his appreciation of Sidney by treating him with more honour and respect than any of the Ambassadors of other States. It was the same everywhere. There is no doubt at all that he was marvellously fitted to fill the most precarious posts in the world of diplomacy. And it is noticeable that where cool judgment was needed, while Raleigh always failed, Sidney always succeeded. It does not seem that he took any interest in politics. His prognostics of events in his letters are as incorrect as they could possibly be. His strength lay in personal intercourse with men who held the reins of power. He knew how to please them and secure their confidence, and even when they were the enemies of England he did not seem able to help leaving them Sidney's friends. It was not like Elizabeth's usual cleverness to distract the possessor of this extraordinary gift to other fields. The man who had more tact than all the rest of her Court should have been restrained, against his own preference, from becoming a soldier.—*Contemporary Review.*

In Rome, under the empire, wealth at one pole was a symptom of misery at the other, because Rome was not an industrial state. Its income came from plunder. The wealth had a source independent of the production of the society of Rome. That part of the booty which some got, others could not have. No such thing is true of an industrial society. The wealth of the commercial cities of Italy and Southern Germany, in the middle ages, was largely in the hands of merchant-princes. If one were told that some of these merchants were very rich, he would have no ground of inference that others in those cities must have been poor. The rich were those who developed the opportunities of commerce which were, in the first instance, open to all. What they gained came out of nothing which anybody else ever had or would have had. The fact that there are wealthy men in England, France, and the United States to-day, is no evidence that there must be poor men here. The riches of the rich are perfectly consistent with a high condition of wealth of all, down to the last. In fact, the

aggregations of wealth, both while being made and after realization, develop and sustain the prosperity of all. The forward movement of a strong population, with abundance of land and highly developed command by machinery over the forces of Nature, must produce a state of society in which average and minimum comfort are high, while special aggregations may be enormous, misfortune and vice being left out of account. Whatever nexus there is between wealth at one pole and poverty at the other can be found only by turning the proposition into its converse—misery at one pole makes wealth at the other. If the mass at one pole should, through any form of industrial vice, fall into misery, they would offer to the few wise an opportunity to become rich by taking advantage of them. They would offer a large supply of labour at low wages, a high demand for capital at high rates of interest, and a fierce demand for land at high rent.—*From "What makes the Rich richer and the Poor poorer," by Professor W. G. Sumner, in Popular Science Monthly.*

THE report of the Royal Commission on the depression of trade and industry in Great Britain is by no means as discouraging a document as many expected it to be. The investigation made by the Commissioners was thorough, and it seems to have been impartial. They have found out that during the twelve years of depression which has been so generally lamented and which has excited so many fears neither the volume of trade nor the amount of capital invested therein has materially fallen off, though the latter has in many cases depreciated in value. Many will be surprised to learn that during the whole of this period of depression year by year the accumulation of capital has been proceeding at a more rapid rate than the increase of population, and that there are indications which show that the country has been, in spite of every drawback, advancing in material prosperity in other directions. In proof of this the Commissioners refer to the statistics of pauperism, education, crime, savings banks, etc. There has been a falling off in foreign trade, but this has been more apparent than real, for the shrinkage in values show a less amount of money for a given volume of trade. For instance, the aggregate foreign trade for 1883, if valued at the prices of ten years previously, would have amounted to £861,000,000 instead of £667,000,000. There has been no diminution during the period of depression of the aggregate of commodities produced by British capital and labour. There has been one exception to this state of British industries. The agricultural interests of the country have suffered greatly during the hard times. The products of the soil have materially decreased in quantity, and the prices received for them have fallen off greatly. "The steady fall in prices," say the Commissioners, "has of course affected the agriculturist even more seriously than the diminished yield of the soil." Sir James Caird estimates the loss of the purchasing power of the classes engaged in or connected with agriculture at £42,800,000 during the year 1885, and the loss in several of the preceding years must no doubt have been equal or even greater than this. This immense loss continuing so long has doubtless had the effect of deepening the depression in Great Britain.—*Montreal Star.*