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Questions of the Day.

SUNDAY CARS AND CONVEYANCES

In his letter to the Globe on the Sunday Car question, Mr. Stapleton Caldecott incidentally refers to the Searchlight and quotes this paragraph which appeared in the September number.—

"In Toronto Sunday street cars are not permitted to run because it is considered a violation of the moral law, but the use of private conveyances is not so considered—strange logic."

Mr. Caldecott then proceeds to pass comments on it as follows:

"Now I think the strange logic is with the people who cannot distinguish between things that differ. The street cars are a public franchise which the people have a right to deal with—the using of a private carriage is a private matter—and it is simply a matter of gross inconsistency which all must condemn—for man will use his private carriage on Sunday and yet forbid street cars to another man presumably poorer than himself; but individual inconsistency has nothing to do with the merits of the case."

Notwithstanding Mr. Caldecott's statement, that "it is simply a matter of gross inconsistency which all must condemn—for man to use his private carriage on Sunday and yet forbid street cars to another man presumably poorer than himself," it is a deplorable fact, that the most active opponents of Sunday cars, which are quite ready to condemn the use of Sunday cars have not a word to say against the use of private conveyances.

To insist that individual inconsistency has nothing to do with the merits of the case—as between public and private conveyances,—is to advance one code of morals for the citizens, as individuals, and another code of morals for the citizens collectively. If the moral law is violated when cars are used for carrying sixty or more passengers on Sundays, because of the employment of labor, then, it also must be a violation of the moral law, when a private conveyance is used, even though only one ride in it, for is not man and beast employed also?

It makes no difference, whatever, to what use these conveyances be put to, for necessity knows no law. If the opponents of Sunday cars will be consistent, why not condemn all forms of Sunday labor?

We are neither opposing nor defending Sunday cars, but we do oppose the application of two sets of rules; one for the guidance of the individual and another for individuals as a body.

THAT PARADOX.

We affirm it to be unquestioned that there can be no such economic para-



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dox as over-production, and at the same time tens of thousands of our fellow-citizens remaining half clothed and half fed, and who are piteously clamoring for the common necessities of life.—Philadelphia Record.

This affirmation certainly ought to be "unquestioned," but as a matter of fact it is one of the commonest subjects of debate. Leading newspapers all over the States are pointing to the phenomenon of "over-production," as the explanation of the hard times which have furnished the back-bone for the silver agitation, and there are thousands of editors who believe that the explanation exhausts the subject. But of course, the Record is right. The thing is a paradox. It is absurd to talk of over-production until you have a condition of things in which all stomachs are filled, all bodies are clad and all heads are decently sheltered, and there is still a surplus of food, clothing and roofs that nobody wants or needs. That is certainly not the condition of things to-day in the States or anywhere else that we know of. What we really have is just what the Record intimates, storehouses packed with the necessities of life on the one hand, and "tens of thousands of our fellow-citizens remaining half-clothed and half-fed and piteously clamoring" for those necessities on the other. But it is a pity this exceptionally clear-sighted editor stopped short just at the interesting point. He should have explained the paradox. A riddle is only an aggravation if the propounder of it has not the answer at hand. Perhaps the Record man is of the large number who see the paradox quite plainly, but do not know the solution of it; or he may be of that less commendable number who can explain it, but are afraid to speak for fear of offending vested interests.

Let us look at the paradox. All that man needs or can have here below are

food, clothing and shelter. All the luxuries of life fall under one of these three divisions, and the absolute necessities cannot be reduced to fewer than these three. Here then we have vast store-houses galled with these necessary things, and vast multitudes piteously clamoring for them. The first clear point that comes out is this. Something must be kept the goods and the people apart. What is it? Why, that, you say, is simple enough, too. The goods are for sale, but the people can't buy them—they haven't any money. Mr. Bryan proposes to solve the difficulty with free coinage of silver, which will make dollars more plentiful. True, but Mr. Bryan does not propose to give the new dollars away, and it is hard to see how their greater abundance will be any consolation to those who don't own them, to wit, the clamorers afore-mentioned. Whether the dollars be many or few, whether they be gold or silver, they have to be earned by those who would possess them honestly; and the only honest way to get a dollar is to do a dollar's worth of work. So we may wave Mr. Bryan to one side, so far as this paradox is concerned; his free silver policy seems to throw no light upon it at all. But we have incidentally struck a clue to the true answer in that word "work." The reason why "tens of thousands of our fellow-citizens" have not the wherewithal to buy these goods they are clamoring for is that they haven't an opportunity to work and earn the necessary dollars. And why haven't they? The United States needs a tremendous lot of work done in every possible line. The country isn't half finished yet. Every one of its 70,000,000 might work day and night for the next 50 years and yet the job would only be fairly well started.

Why, then, should any of them stand in the market place with idle hands in empty pockets? Because, you say, though there is still much work to be done, they can't get a job. Nobody happens to want to hire workers. This is rather queer, but let it pass. Why, then, do not the idlers go and work every man for himself, why can't each son of Adam do as his original father did? Adam made a very comfortable living, we have reason to believe, and there was no capitalist about to hire him. Surely, with the tools and appliances now available a man of the 19th century could do as well as the first man did! Adam got food, clothing and shelter and enjoyed rude comfort anyway. Why, then, instead of "piteously clamoring" do not these sons of Adam go and produce those things for themselves and let the galled warehouses be hanged? All that a man needs is his own physical force, and raw material upon which to exert the same. The product is wealth in some form, whether it be grain, vegetables, or something else. This wealth he can exchange for dollars, or he can use it up himself just as he pleases. But surely that is the way out of Darkest Penury for every able-bodied man! There is just one practical snag in the way. The man has physical power, and the free use of the same. That is one factor in the production of wealth. But how about the "raw material" on which to exert this power? It is otherwise called land—and it is not free to his use unless he is content to go outside the bounds of civilization. The land is owned, and he can only get access to it on the terms of the owner, which are such as to make access impossible. That explains the paradox. The thing which keeps the goods apart from the thousands who clamor for them is stated in two words—land monopoly.