

Again, would not the Government be able to manage all the farms in the country better than our present farmers do? The Government, of course, consists of eight or ten gentlemen sitting round a table in one of the small cities of the Dominion. But then they are the Government, therefore they know far more about farming than farmers; therefore they could manage the farms far better, and produce more out of them; therefore it would be for the public good if these gentlemen had the whole matter put into their hands. They would only need to open land offices in every county of the Dominion, with sub-offices in every township, to whom all the farmers of these townships and counties would be amenable and responsible. Probably thirty or forty officials in every county would be sufficient. Each of them would have, of course, a staff of clerks under him for the purpose of visiting the farmers and conveying directions as to what seed to sow, what crops to cultivate, what cattle to buy, what ground to drain and clear, &c., &c. By a simple machinery of this kind, which need not cost more than four or five millions of dollars a year, the country would make it certain that the very best results were derived from our land, and so prevent the imperfect results attained when each farmer is master on his own farm.

The same system could be introduced into the villages, towns and cities. It has been demonstrated, so some people think, that it is a vicious plan for men to own the houses they live in, or the stores in which they carry on business. The best results would be attained by putting all the houses, shops, factories, warehouses, mills in the country into the hands of the Government; i. e., that the eight or ten gentlemen in Ottawa shall have the power of deciding who are to occupy all the houses, and what rents they shall pay; who shall carry on the business in the shops and factories, and what business shall be carried on, and to what amount. To enable this to be done properly, another set of officers would be appointed, of whom there might be, we will say, one hundred for a large city, fifty for a small city, ten for a town, and three to five for a village. By this means we could ensure that only proper men, i. e., such men as the Government approves of, would be allowed to occupy houses and carry on business. Under such a system we might expect that failures would be entirely unknown. It would be well worth while, one would say, for the country to pay as much as ten million dollars a year to bring about such a result as this. It might cost more, but if even it did, what are a few millions more or less compared with the satisfaction of having every householder and trader in the country selected and approved by the Government?

Connected with this general hazy notion that the Government always does right, and that the Government knows everything, is the idea that when a Government promises anything it is sure to be performed. This hazy notion subsists in spite of the bitter experience of many persons, just as, although we are frequently abusing the Government for doing wrong, we still cling to the idea that they

could easily manage, say, the dry goods trade and such like things better than merchant. The teachings of experience are of no avail against this deeply-rooted notion. It is of no avail to tell people that the United States once issued tens of thousands of "promises to pay on demand," which 'promises' were unfulfilled year after year, and probably never would have been fulfilled if certain battles had gone the other way. It seems very odd that the rush of a lot of soldiers across open fields or woods, near obscure towns, in certain states, should have such tremendous issues as this hanging upon it; but it had, nevertheless. It may seem news to some people that there are governments now in existence, ruling over populations ten times as numerous as Canada, who have repudiated their "promises to pay" and from whom a creditor could not collect \$1000. But the word GOVERNMENT has such a weird, awful, spirit-like illusion and metaphysical charm about it, means something so tremendous, so transcendental, and profound, that it seems profane to suggest that it consists of nothing more than the aforesaid gentlemen seated at a round table, in a nicely furnished room, in one of the smaller cities of the Dominion.

There are other forms of delusions connected with gentlemen sitting round a table, which we have not space to enlarge upon. But it is clear that such gentlemen themselves, and the general public too, must attach a wonderful importance to the fact of their being so seated. Men who would never presume to have an opinion individually on certain matters of vast and widespread importance, will not hesitate to undertake the direction of such things when they sit round a table. We may suppose it is the table that gives both the confidence and the wisdom, or perhaps it is the table and chairs combined.

THE PRESS, too, is another of those awful mysteries which are so ghostlike in their immateriality, so dread and so potent with the credulous. The man who, when he says: "I think so," (speaking of a matter of which he knows nothing) would be laughed at for his pains, when he writes "We think so" is listened to with a kind of reverential awe, and his words sent travelling round a continent. Here however, we must be careful. The "MONETARY TIMES", says "we." However, when the MONETARY TIMES says "we," i. e. when we say "we," we generally understand the things we are talking about.

We wish our readers sound sense as the best gift with which to enter upon another year.

AN OLD FOOL AND CONTRIBUTOR.

—Here, every man is the son of his own works, and we need no antique code of etiquette nor the musty rules of the Herald's office to tell us whom or what to honor. We know not what the future may have in store for us. Let the event be what it may, it is our bounden duty to prepare for it like sensible men conscious of obligation to humanity. The problem of self-government is being worked out anew with fresh data, and we must do our part in the solution. There are asperities of race, of creed, of interest to be allayed, and a composite people to be rendered homogeneous. —Canada First.—W. A. Foster.

SOCIALISM AND THE ECONOMISTS.

Adam Smith, Adam Smith, are you aught but a myth

When you say, about man's civil rights,
That the old English law—and I praise it
herewith—

Has made property safe, and security strong
For the fruit of man's labor, this too, 'spite
the wrong

Or blunder of government lights?

Why, here's Henry George, at white heat, by
his forge,

Beats his "Progress and Poverty" gong,
Declaring the doctrine—it raises one's gorge
That "there is not, there cannot be, any
just title

To possession of soil." And his further
recital

Is "ownership's bold, big, bare wrong."

Malthus, West and Ricardo, your friends are
pressed hard—o

To abandon your "doctrine of rent"
For the views of the Socialist corporal's—
guard—o

That, while Englishmen's houses their castles
may be,

No square inch of land their possession shall
see,

On "land-nationalization" we're bent!

Ghosts of Bentham and Mill the Elder, be
still!

With your SCHEME OF UTILITY stale,
Proletarian shouts the atmosphere fill;
All Walker's deductions and Atkinson's facts,
David Wells's conclusions, Congressional acts,
To satisfy socialism fail.

O thou jester so gay, M. Francois Rabelais,
Had you communist laws in your mind
When "the robbing of Peter to pay Paul,"
you say,

Is permissible? Nay, the idea you'll seize
With Bacon, "the cure is worse than the dis-
ease;"

They'd be neither to hold nor to bind.

The rich grow more rich, the poor, poorer,
we're told;

The statement's untrue and misleading;
At best a half-truth, worst of lies,—I am bold
To quote Alfred the Poet—don't let us be
frightened,

For the lot of the working class these days has
lightened

In surroundings, hours, knowledge and
feeding.

Montesquieu, Laveleye, believed each in his
day

In respecting *les lois naturelles*;
And His Grace of Argyll has had something
to say,

In line with the reasoning, cogent and good,
Of a sensible Yankee, by name Henry Wood,
On The Reign of Law, ever and aye.

But Natural Laws have no meaning for those
Upon communism, socialism, bound,
They've a quarrel with capital and would dis-
pose

Of it, confiscate, ravish, and compensate none;
"To the Lantern," with RICHES, and when
this is done

The Utopia of LABOR they'll found.

"Laissez passer," the physicists said, "*laissez
faire*;"

They wanted an *impôt un que*,
That is, tax upon land and naught else. But
please say,