

a century the land in some parts of New York has increased in value a hundred-thousand-fold, from \$30 per acre to \$3,000,000 per acre, a recent sale on the corner of Pine and Nassau Streets realized nearly \$2 per square inch equivalent to nearly \$12,000,000 per acre. The increase of the land value in that city last year was upwards of \$40,000,000. With Chicago increasing 100,000 in population yearly, New York 70,000 yearly, Buffalo 25,000 yearly, we have an increase of land value in these three cities alone approximating \$100,000,000 annually.

Here we have the two great movements of values, labour products ever declining, while the values of lands, mines and forests are ever advancing. While labour comes to market with its products ever cheaper, it must meet an obligation ever increasing to the claimants of unearned increment. This is the great severing force that is ever exalting one part of society into excessive fortunes and dooming industry to a despair of penury.

The currency question has nothing whatever to do with this force of cleavage. It would operate under the very best currency that men or angels could devise, and the adoption of 16 to 1, or any other number to one, would do nothing to correct it.

The atrocious doctrine of McKinleyism, that a blockade of the ports and a stoppage of trade will cure the social evils, is so utterly absurd that another generation will look back in amazement at the present-day worship of false financial gods. Forty million people standing on that piece of dirt called Britain will ruin us if we trade freely; but if they come and stand on this piece of dirt called the United States, then let the trade with them be absolutely free, the freer the better, it will be an enormous blessing. Such is the absurd contradiction of McKinleyism. It is the religion of dirt.

In the unearned values that come to the natural opportunities through the presence of population, nature furnishes a storehouse of wealth from which taxes can be equitably drawn. Their method of taxation has everything in its favour, compelling everyone to contribute according to the advantage he draws from the community. If this value is not put in the public treasury then it acts as an incentive to speculation, and effectually subjects labour to an everlasting tribute. If labour, therefore, will not have free trade, coming with its hands laden as a cornucopia of plenty, offering an exchange of enrichment for enrichment, then it must submit to a free tribute, to support the regal splendours of an Astor or a Westminster.

Neither a McKinley nor a Bryan will lead the people from the wilderness into the promised land, a Moses has yet to come.

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## The Schools and Common Christianity.

THE question of religious instruction in the Public Schools is still to the front, not only in the matter of Manitoba, but also in connection with those of our own Province. The late influential deputation from the Anglican Synod to the Ontario Government is but another indication of what the writer of this article has more than once in the columns of this journal said; this question will never down until some conclusion is reached as to a common Christianity which, containing the root principles thereof, may be safely and effectually taught to the children. That the writer dreams of discovering that common Christianity so as to commend his views for general acceptance is not to be thought of for one moment; "every little helps," however, and his little he hopes to contribute. The special trend of the considerations now to be presented is this: The endeavour to find a common Christianity by the elimination of the politics and doctrines peculiar to the sects has been illustrated by the story of the Russian nobleman who, across the wide steppe, was being pursued by wolves: serfs, children, at last wife, were one by one thrown out, to stay for a little the hungry pack, and when at last alone he reached the village, even his horses left a prey, he asked, "What have I done? All gone, nothing left!" I purpose to ask whether a residuum worth retaining remains, all sectarian enrobing being thrown away. In this endeavour the patient reader is asked to remember that the enquiry is not as to a perfect representation of Christianity, but a common Chris-

tianity such as the schools may teach. A correspondent deprecates leaving out of what is named the Apostles' Creed the article, "He descended into hell," forgetting that whatever opinions may have prevailed, three centuries' work was done by the churches without it forming part of the common Christianity. There are some who see no hope of a consensus until all agree to eliminate from *baptizo* every possible meaning but "immerse." No real progress can be made in the mind of others without either a central authority at St. Peter's See, or in a church that has preserved its historic continuity. No view by others would be permitted of the Incarnation but one that recognized the subtleties of the Nicene Creed, and thus on *ad infinitum*. More truth than we are disposed to admit may lie in the following sentence from an address of the late Prof Stuart Blackie:—"I cannot be very far from the truth when I say that the teaching of the theologians consists mainly in a systematic course of unconscious sophistry, by which the students are trained to use Scripture as a repository of fencing tools to ward away any attacks that may be made on a traditional dogma, popularly accepted as infallible." Nor will I profess to leave out all traces of the personal equation, but shall minimize it to the utmost of my ability, and see if the residuum reaches the zero point.

Confessedly Christ is the foundation and centre of Christian teaching; as certainly may it be assumed that in the four gospels and the teachings of the epistles we have all that as ultimate authority must be accepted as the record of His life and work. Has Christ any central truths to teach? One fundamental truth He assumes: God. He never attempts proof of the divine personality, He reveals concerning "the Father." The Fatherhood of God is surely no barren residuum; "but not distinctively Christian," some may say. No? I do not find it in Islam, nor in Hindoo pantheism; but even should it be foreshadowed in other than purely Christian dogmatics, we may gladly recognize the witness God gave to Himself in doing good, giving rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling men's hearts with food and gladness; moreover:

"Though truths in manhood darkly given,  
Deep seated in our mystic frame,  
We yield all blessing to the name  
Of Him that made them current coin."

I take the Fatherhood of God as a distinctive Christian truth.

Further, Christ takes this truth of the Fatherhood of God and applies it: "Ye are brethren"; and that brotherhood becomes broader and deeper than ever dreamt of before. The Jew was taught to love his neighbour; but neighbour was Jew written in capitals; the Roman upheld the majesty of law, and even-handed justice, but he that sought protection thereunder must needs possess the right to utter *Civis Romanus sum*; Greece claimed confederacy among Greeks, the world was barbarian. "All nations" were to be brought under discipleship to the Gospel-teaching; and in place of the enquiry "Who is my neighbour?" men are taught the rather to seek the opportunity of being neighbour to any that are needy. From this kinship, reciprocal duties spring; truthfulness, honesty, love; the law of self-sacrifice—Christ Himself being the great example—taking the place of self-seeking. From this "residuum," what lessons of mercy, purity, spirituality arise! Mere ethics, some friend impatiently exclaims. True, but is not religion ethical? Only these distinctively Christian ethics, for such I claim them to be, are not founded upon the ground of expediency, benevolence, or even the right for the right's sake; but "Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." That personal relation of the individual to a personal living, loving God, which must be at the root of all true religion, is the religious basis of Christian ethics, and is the ground presented by Christ. I call this distinctively Christian, and they who walk accordingly not far from the Kingdom of God. And I further submit, that be this residuum little or much in the esteem of any, we have abundant foundation therein for true character, and ample room for advanced instruction in those things that pertain to godliness.

But would you not teach the Incarnation? Some friend may say, The Incarnation would teach itself if Christ were allowed to put His own truths to the children. Let the Master speak in His own words; what else of truth the denominations have, and they all are spelling out some right principle, can be readily left for strictly denominational