

Country or the United States. The disputants on both sides seem to forget that the same barrier which keeps out the products of the larger factories of other countries may be keeping out, in many cases, the factories themselves. This is certainly the case in regard to any manufactures for which the facilities of production, in the shape of cheaper and more abundant raw material, cheaper labour, cheaper power, etc., are greater in Canada than in the other countries named. A striking illustration of the tendency of such industries to follow the line of least resistance, by seeking the localities which offer the better advantages on the whole, including, of course, free access to the great markets, is just now to be seen in the removal of the great cotton factories of New England to the South. This exodus is rapidly assuming dimensions which are alarming—to the New Englanders. (It is beside the present point, but it is, nevertheless, of interest to note that the movement is bringing to bear an influence in favour of the free admission of Canadian coal to the United States which bids fair soon to become irresistible.) Hitherto though the cotton mills of the South, have been numerous they have been constructed on so small a scale, and have used machinery and methods so inferior, that they have been poorly able to compete with the great New England establishments, manufacturing on an immense scale and equipped with all the latest improvements. Of late, however, the advantages which the Southern mills possess in the shape of a better climate, cheaper material, cheaper labour, etc., have enabled them to push the Northern manufacturers so hard that the latter are, in self-defence, transferring their operations to the South. The movement has already assumed large proportions, and is still gaining momentum. Two immediate results predicted, or already taking place, are the crushing out of the small establishments in the South, and great local loss to New England. The gain to the nation will be such that the United States may make a formidable struggle for first place in the world's markets in this branch of manufacture.

The Unearned Increment.

A notable evolution in economic opinion is marked by an incident which happened a few days ago in the British House of Commons. A Liberal member for one of the electoral divisions of Glasgow proposed a resolution, that "no system of taxation can be equitable unless it include the direct assessment of such enhanced value of land as is due to an increase of population, wealth and growth of towns." This is practically an embodiment of the doctrine laid down fifty years ago that "the unearned increment in the value of land should belong to the community and not to the individual, and is an approach to the "single tax" advocated by Mr. Henry George and his disciples. In spite of the revolutionary character of the resolution its principle was heartily endorsed by Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, President of the Local Government Board in the Rosebery Ministry, and was, after a short debate, adopted by the House of Commons without a division. It is not at all likely that such a principle will come suddenly into operation in all urban localities, but it is exceedingly probable that steps will be taken before long to make land bear a larger share than it now does of local fiscal burdens. The matter has been forced to an issue largely by the action of the County Council of London, and it is quite evident that Sir William Harcourt is favourable to the resolution or his colleague would not have endorsed it.

A New Illuminant.

Scientists, economists, householders and investors are all equally interested in the announcement that a process has been discovered for the cheap production of acetylene, the simplest

of the hydro-carbon gases. Heretofore we have depended mainly for artificial light either on certain hydro-carbons produced by nature in her wonderful laboratory, such as petroleum and "natural gas," or on others produced by the destructive distillation of coal and other substances containing carbon and hydrogen. Not to speak of the inconvenience caused by increasing scarcity of natural illuminants the cost of those made artificially has in the past been a very serious addition to the expense of both house and street illumination. The discovery above referred to is important for two reasons, first that the illuminant is produced by means so simple as to be within the reach of smaller capitalists than those who have so far been engaged in the production of gas and of electricity, and, also, because the reagents made use of are abundant and cheap. The essential parts of the process are (1) the production of calcic carbide by fusing lime with any form of carbon in an electric furnace and (2) the addition of water. The result of the analysis and synthesis which take place is the combination of the calcium of the carbide with the oxygen of the water to form lime and of the carbon of the carbide with the hydrogen of the water to form acetylene. The abundance of carbon, calcium and water relieves us from dependence on coal, petroleum and natural gas, while the excessively pungent odor of acetylene greatly diminishes the danger that now attends the use of illuminating gas. The discoverer of this new process is a young Canadian, Thomas Leopold Wilson, who, like many other inventors, stumbled on the process by accident when he was trying to discover something else.

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Modern Types of Crime.

THE comparatively modern system of insurance against loss by fire and shipwreck, and its still later developments in the direction of life-assurance, have been an incalculable boon to the civilized world. Thousands in every land have thereby been saved from much poverty and suffering which would have otherwise been inevitable. Take the case of the recent conflagrations in this city, and compare the results to the individuals and to the community with what they would have been had there been no insurance companies to divide the losses among thousands or tens of thousands, instead of leaving them to fall upon the heads of the few immediately interested. Nor are the beneficent effects of the system confined to the immediate owners of the burned property. The recovery of large percentages of the losses sustained enables these to re-commence at once the restoration of the buildings destroyed. In this way the indemnity received from the insurance companies is immediately put again in circulation, and will, in a short time, find its way back, in part at least, to the pockets even of the stock and policy holders in the respective insurance companies from whom it originally came for the benefit of the insured property-owners. We do not, of course, mean to imply that there is not in every such case involved an absolute and irrecoverable loss to the community in the destruction of property which cannot be restored. But that is aside from the immediate point of view. So, too, the death of every industrious citizen is a distinct loss to the whole community, whose wealth-producing powers are reduced to the extent of his productive ability, yet the insurance policy which so often saves the widow and fatherless from penury is a most beneficent provision for reducing to the lowest dimensions the pecuniary suffering caused by the loss of the bread-winner.

But there is another and most important side to the shield. Human depravity here, as in other matters, can turn the blessing into a curse. The possibility of insurance, whether of property or of life, constitutes a temptation