

the license system, with discrimination in favour of the lighter drinks. Such is the conclusion to which we are persuaded the rational and practical friends of Temperance everywhere will be led.

IN Major Boulton's interesting history of the Rebellion in the North-West there is a passage which would in itself dispose of the plea of insanity urged on behalf of Riel. It shows that Riel at the last took crafty and selfish precautions to secure to himself immunity from punishment, even at the expense of his confederates. Does a man know that he is doing wrong and breaking the law? That is the only pertinent question. The man who does know that he is doing wrong and breaking the law is sane enough to undergo the punishment, though he may have had a grandmother in a lunatic asylum, or be flighty on the subject of the Millennium; and a man who takes elaborate precautions to escape a penalty must be conscious that he has incurred it. Riel's conduct was very unlike even that of a besotted fanatic, since men of that class are generally reckless of their own safety, believing themselves to be under the special protection of Heaven.

THAT there are defects, and terrible defects, in the economical structure of society, once more, we all must sorrowfully admit. There are defects equally terrible in the structure of society generally, in our bodily structure, in all the things which make up our mortal estate or to which our vision extends, in earth or skies. Creation can be reconciled with Infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness only on the supposition that there is a goal beyond toward which, over vast tracts of time and with ceaseless toil and travail, men and the universe move. This a fatuous optimism alone can deny. Forces which on the whole make for our good are irregular and sometimes mischievous in their action. We have unseasonable sunshine, and we have rain in harvest. The organs and processes of our bodies, though their action is our life, become the seats and sources of disease. It is the same with the body economical. Competition, without which production would stagnate, is often cruel; the accumulation of wealth, which is a blessing in itself, too often takes place unduly in certain centres; property, though it usually represents industry, actual or past, and is thus the fulfilment of a beneficent law, sometimes represents knavery, extortion, or class legislation; speculation, which as a rule is useful in ascertaining and regulating prices, degenerates into gambling and enriches villainy. The inequalities among men in power of producing and accumulating wealth give rise to distressing contrasts; but so do inequalities in intellect and health. Burns repined because other men were rich while he was poor. Other men might as well have repined because they had not his mental gifts or his vigorous frame. In the individual case the inequality might have been rectified, if some rich man would have given part of his wealth to the great poet; but in all other cases it would have remained the same; and even if the rich men of that generation had with one consent given all they had to the poor, as they could not have levelled men's powers of production and accumulation, the next generation would have seen the inequalities as great and painful as ever. These imperfections are the imperfections of nature, they are not introduced by tyrannical capitalists, nor can the socialistic legislator banish them. He might as well undertake to alter by his fiat the constitution of the human frame, and to give it new organs and other vital forces in place of those of which the action is liable to disturbance. Gradually the body economical, like the body social and the body physical, may be improved, by studying and obeying its laws, though not by tearing it to pieces. Gradually improved it has been, as every one acquainted with economical history must know, and the pace of amelioration has been greatly quickened of late years. The parrot cry that the rich are always growing richer and the poor are always growing poorer has been happily met by statistics conclusively showing that the distribution of wealth becomes fairer, that less in proportion goes to great fortunes, that more than ever goes to wages, that the number of persons subsisting in comfort has enormously increased, and that the lot even of the least fortunate is better than it used to be. The fluctuations of trade by which labour sometimes suffers cruelly are being mitigated by the extension of knowledge and by the increasing accuracy of statistics, as the local dearths by which the poorer class suffered in former times have been eliminated by facilities of distribution. The wages of a skilled mechanic on this Continent are not far below the salaries of many professional men who have undergone an expensive education. That the rich as a class are animated by a growing sense of duty towards the poor can hardly be doubted, albeit there is still too much of selfishness and hardness in every sphere; while no trifling percentage of the great fortunes is expended in works of charity and munificence. Nor does a session of any legislature pass without enactments which, though they are not socialistic or preludes to a reign of socialism, as is absurdly pretended, but dictated by

common humanity and justice, are yet specially directed to the protection and elevation of those who live by wages. No class has now any sort of excuse for treating another class as its enemy.

It is assumed by all trumpeters of Labour wars, and the artisans have been largely indoctrinated with the belief, that all wealth is the product of manual labour, that to those who labour with their hands, as its producers, the whole of it rightfully belongs, and that the acquisition of it by any one else is a theft. If labour is not in terms limited to that of a manual kind, the limitation is always suggested, and the sentiment, which is always finding expression in acrid rhetoric, is that all are drones, and deserve to be extirpated, who do not live by the sweat of their brows. Were the doctrine true, there would undoubtedly be a vast wrong demanding redress; nor would there be anything chimerical in attempting to redress it: there is no reason why humanity should supinely acquiesce for ever in a huge system of theft. But the doctrine is very far from being true. Into production there enter, besides the raw material and natural forces, not only manual labour, whether skilled or unskilled, but capital and intellect; intellect being required to invent, to organize, to direct, and to distribute. It is stated, and the statement is perfectly credible, that the Suez Canal Company had expended thirty millions of dollars before the ground was broken by a spade, while the prosecution of the work required the application of mechanical science and organizing power which were the accumulations of intellectual effort carried on through a series of generations. The capital laid out was also subjected to a great risk in which the mere labourer had no share. Ought the Suez Canal then to have been the property of those who dug it with their own hands? When a farmer, having bought land, cleared it, or paid for its clearance by his predecessors, erected farm buildings on it and stocked it, cultivates it with the help of hired labour, is the hired labourer entitled to claim as large a share of the produce as the farmer? Suppose a body of the best of labourers set down without capital of any kind or guiding intelligence in a new country, however teeming with natural wealth, what would they be able to produce? It is a pity that some of these questions, and some political questions also, cannot be settled by limited experiment, without exposing the community to the risks of general change.

FROM Agrarian Socialism we on this Continent have been saved by the diffusion of property in land. The torch of Mr. George's incendiarism has expired in the prophet's own land, like a lucifer match dipped into the Hudson. If there could only be the same diffusion of property in factories and works, or manufactures under whatever form, and in mines, we should have the same security on that side also; and there is no serious danger of disturbance in any field of industry in which there are not congregated masses of artisans. But it is difficult to imagine how this can be brought about unless the hope, to which we have before alluded, that science will provide us with a motor capable of distribution, should be fulfilled. The experiment of cooperative works, if it has not proved abortive, has met with so scanty a measure of success that there can be little expectation of its ever changing the face of the industrial world. The difficulties of want of capital, want of superior guidance, and want of power of waiting for the market and holding out through seasons of depression, appear to be inherent and incapable of removal. The system of cooperative partnership again appears to work well only under very exceptional auspices: generally speaking, the admission of the men to any share in the management, or even to a knowledge of the affairs of the firm in critical times, will always be a very ticklish experiment. It is true that if the men would look deeper into the matter they would see that already they are, if not exactly partners in the special concern, possessors of a partner's interest in the trade, inasmuch as with its prosperity their wages are sure to rise, the action of the Unions being sufficient, in case of necessity, to keep the rate of wages up to the superior limit; but this is not sufficiently palpable to make them satisfied with their lot. Their labour, also, is unfortunately for the most part of a dull, mechanical, and monotonous kind, no man making a complete article, so that none of them have any pleasure in the work of their hands. These things, with the general tendency to demagogism and agitation, not to say to conspiracy, which politics under our present dispensation impart to industry, constitute an anxious situation and portend a stormy future. But history is like the pathway over the Gemmi Pass, always seeming to be closed by some insurmountable barrier, yet always opening out again as you advance. Humanity, however, in the course of history sometimes has, what the wayfarer on the Gemmi path has not, a bad quarter of an hour. We can only console ourselves once more with the reflections that the Conservative forces of the industrial world are strong; that Knights of Labour are restrained at a certain point by the