

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"I believe," said Brown, "that every man is directly responsible for all debts made by him, and that no man has a moral right to contract a debt to be paid by a future generation. If I borrow a thousand dollars to improve my property it would be unjust to expect my grandson to pay the money back again; that thousand dollars ought to be paid back by me and not by him. If I have no prospects of paying it back during my lifetime, I ought not to borrow it. I have no right to saddle my grandson with a debt which he did not incur. It is true that the money went to improve the property which he will eventually hold, but it is also true that he had no voice or vote in the spending of it. For all I know to the contrary, the property would perhaps be worth as much or more to him if this thousand dollars had not been expended upon it at all. In any case the money was not borrowed or spent with his consent and he should not be called upon to pay it. If he should repudiate a debt under such circumstances I don't believe any body would find fault with him."

"I don't know what you're driving at," said Gaskill, "but I'll tell you this, that if anybody came along and presented a note to me signed by my grandfather and made payable by me that he'd stand a good chance of being kicked out of the house. I don't believe that any sane man would pay a debt of this kind. I don't believe that he should pay it, neither could any man collect a debt of this kind in any court of law either here or elsewhere; the whole thing is so ridiculous that it ain't worth talking about."

"Is it?" said Brown. "Perhaps before we get done with it you will find it serious enough, not only to talk about, but also to think. Now, you're pretty certain about what you'd do if anybody came to collect a debt from you which had been contracted by your grandfather. I can also imagine what pet names you'd call the old gentleman for giving somebody or other what you would call a 'mortgage on your life,' and the endearing terms you'd use to the man who came to collect it. There are no two ways about you, oh no, but all the same you not only pay debts contracted by your forefathers but you actually mortgage the labor, the energy, the life of your children for generations to come. You don't do so individually, but men do this in their collective capacity as a nation. What else is the public debt? Was it contracted by us? Was all of it contracted by us and will it all be paid by us? Are we not continually borrowing more which future generations will have to pay? This action on our part is unjust, is criminal to our descendants whoever they may be, just as the action of our forefathers who first created this debt was a crime perpetrated on us. No living man or set of men have a right to contract a debt which is to be paid by future generations, and any nation would be more than justified in repudiating any or all of such debts."

"That time is fast approaching," said Phil. "Throughout the States this question is being discussed by all sorts and conditions of men. You must understand that money is a measure of value, and people begin to realize that in equity and justice to all it should be a fixed and not an elastic measure. A foot rule was twelve inches yesterday, is twelve to-day, and will be the same to-morrow. The same with a pound weight or a gallon measure; their capacity is fixed. Not so, however, with the dollar. To-day it means twenty pounds of flour, to-morrow only eighteen or less; yesterday it meant a bag and a half of potatoes, to-morrow only a bag, and so on. Then these people argue that when the national debt of the United States was contracted the purchasing power of the dollar was

many times less than what it is to-day, and they contend that the bondholders should not receive more than what the value of their dollar was when the debt was originally contracted. Then there are others who hold that the men of 1861 had no right to contract a debt which should be paid by the men of 1891 or those of the year 2000, and they are for repudiating this unjust obligation which was incurred without their sanction. They rightly hold that the people of the United States and its government are security for the payment of the face value of United States bank notes, which the men of 1861 could have had without the payment of interest, and because the government issued bonds which cannot and do not have any better security than this, and which not only are interest-bearing but which also stipulate that the interest on them is payable in gold, they say that the country was deliberately handed over to the money power, in the hands of which it has been ever since. When you remember that the first issue of greenbacks was a full legal tender for all debts, public and private, and whose value never depreciated, and then note the subsequent action of a corrupt Congress which made future issues a full legal tender for all debts except customs duties and interest on bonds, this contention seems to be well grounded. It was this clause, which did not recognize greenbacks as a legal tender in payment of customs duties or interest on bonds, which enabled the shysters of that time to force the price of gold up to 280, and thus to effectually rob the American people. They had to have gold to pay the duty on imports and the interest on their bonds, and the robbers who had 'cornered' the gold were in a position to get their own price for it. This same system of robbery is enacted in a greater or lesser degree in every country, and until recent years was considered the correct thing by all classes. The rich were enabled to grow richer by it, and the poor were too ignorant to realize that it was a cleverly designed piece of scoundrelism, and hence all were content. However, the conviction is growing that national debts are not only an injustice to coming generations but that our whole currency system is designed to enable capitalism to sap the life blood of the nation. The men who demand 'that interest-bearing bonds, bills of credit, or notes shall never be issued by any government, but that, when need arises, the emergency shall be met by issue of legal tender, non-interest-bearing money,' are becoming more numerous day by day. The currency question is a part of the labor problem, and the settlement of the one must necessarily bring about a settlement of the other.

BILL BLADES.

SLAUGHTER OF GIRL BABIES.

Two Hundred Thousand of the Innocents Killed Every Year in China.

In China tens of thousands of recently born girls among the poorer classes are thrown out to perish, and at Shanghai I saw a tower formerly used to facilitate this infanticide, says Dr. Joseph Simms, who has recently returned from an extended trip of the Flowery Empire. It is practiced in every part of China, but especially in the interior and in the Loes-district. As soon as we get many miles from the coast it is quite usual to see near a joss house or place of worship a small stone tower from ten to thirty feet high, with no door, but a hole in one side, reaching into a pit in the center.

The children that parents wish to be rid of are thrown into this hole, and quicklime soon consumes the little forms. It is said that the priests take charge of this cruel work. It has been estimated that every year nearly 200,000 female babies are brutally slaughtered in the empire. One Chinaman being interrogated about the destruction of his recently born girl said, "The wife cry and cry, but kill allee same."

In every large city in China there are asylums for the care of orphans, supported and conducted by foreigners, who save yearly from slaughter tens of thousands of female infants. At Han-Kow, which is 600 miles inland, I visited a Roman Catholic orphanage for children that have thus been cast out to perish. Mother Paula Vismara, the lady superior of

this institution, informed me that she had received seven that day, and one day thirty were brought in.

Of course these had never been consigned to a baby tower. Sometimes they are found wrapped in paper and left at the edge of the river. Sometimes they are buried alive by the father, but while yet living are dug up by some one else and brought to this institution. Several women are employed by the mother superior in looking after the little victims. Upward of a thousand are received every year. Many of them, of course, die soon after from the exposure and neglect they have suffered though being abandoned, and many are boarded out by the institution in the town.

Those who accept the charges have to bring the children once a week for inspection, and then, all being right, they receive the pay for maintaining them. This is an Italian charity, and one of the most estimable in China. During the twenty-three years of its existence it has saved the lives of, say, 25,000 to 40,000 children, of whom a fair proportion have grown to womanhood. It received considerable support from the European residents at Han-Kow, of whom there are about 120.

Those children who remain within the premises of the institution are fed and clothed, and when old enough, taught to sew, make lace, knit stockings, and do other useful work. They never know where they came from or who their parents were. When they are four years of age their feet are bandaged, according to the general custom of all classes in China, to keep them small, as that increases their chances of marriage.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Some Artists Who Make Money.

Miss Woolley, of Wilkesbarre, Pa., who is a pupil of the School of Industrial Art, earned \$500 in ten weeks from her carpet designs. Other students have also met with success in the same school. Miss Esther Kline, of the same city, designed a pattern for matting, sold it to an agent for a Japanese firm, and had the satisfaction of seeing it reproduced and brought back to this country to sell.

Clara M. Heath, a resident of this city, had a linen design accepted by a firm in Dundee, Scotland. Wall paper patterns designed by Emma Humphrey, of Waterloo, Ia., and Hattie C. Bickford, of Oshkosh, Wis., have been reproduced by the local trade and greatly admired.

Helen M. Greenleaf, of Evanston, Ill., found a market for her delicate floral pattern in Carlsbad, and hopes to be able to own a tea set one of those fine days of that china, with her own wild roses growing round the edge. These free hand drawings give the student an average of thirty dollars each.

To be sure, it is up hill work for most of the scholars. For instance, during the holidays Miss Humphrey sold a design for silk and received fifty dollars, although forced to accept ten dollars a few months before for a drawing she considered very fine.—New York World.

A Socialistic Commonwealth.

Sir Charles Dilke, in the June Forum.—The Australians are state socialists, and although their new constitution proposes to recognize the independence of the States in a far higher degree than that in which it has been allowed to exist in Canada, yet it vests the virtual control of the whole railway system of Australia in the federal power, which will be a shock to your American minds, whether north or south of the Canadian border line. * * * The great majority of Australians have confidence in the power of the State to do much for the people, and in the wisdom of its exercising its power. You in the United States, the Canadians across their border, the continental government, are far behind even old England in this respect, and it would be of advantage to the world that Australia, which is much before us all, should have the opportunity of putting its doctrines into practice upon the largest scale.

RUSSIAN SUPERSTITION.

How Small Pox is Propagated Among the Poor and Ignorant People.

Last October small pox broke out in the Poodzhskiy and Povienetskiy districts of the Government of Olonetz, on the coast of Lake Ladoga. Since then the plague has spread throughout the region and is still unabated. In the villages and towns where the scourge has appeared 10 per cent. of all the children up to the age of 12 years have died, mostly such as had not been vaccinated. A large percentage of adults have also died. The medical and the administrative authorities are doing all in their power to resist the evil, but the prejudices of the common people are against them. These prejudices are very curious. The people of Olonetz regard small pox (Ospa) as a divinity to be propitiated and not angered. They call it "Ospa Ivanovna," or "Ma. tooshka (little mother) Ospa"—appellations which imply profound respect. Since vaccination is a means to oppose it, they believe that it would be a sin to be vaccinated, and

try to avoid the operation by all possible means. As soon as a person gets stricken with the disease all the children of the village are dressed as nicely as their parents can afford and taken to his house to pay their respects to Ospa Ivanovna. They take cakes and fruit to the house of the invalid, which they deposit on a table placed by his bedside for the purpose. Then they kiss the sick person on the mouth, and sit around him for some time talking and partaking of the food they had brought with them, or of the other victuals which the host provides. Sometimes children are brought from a distance of twenty versts (seven versts are five miles) to salute Little Mother Ospa in this wise. As long as there is small pox in the house the rooms must not be cleaned, and the inmates may not wash themselves or change their garments. No rough expression or curse may be pronounced in a house where there is a small pox patient. If such an expression escapes involuntarily from the lips, the offender must forthwith kiss the invalid by way of propitiating Ospa Ivanovna. No medicine is given to the patient, but he must be bathed in hot water twelve times during his illness. The presents which the children bring must be left on the table by his bed-

side for visitors to partake of. These superstitions are deeply rooted among the peasants of the entire region, and serve to propagate the disease despite all efforts made by the more cultivated.

He—Then you reject me? She—I'm sorry, very sorry, but I must. He (desperately)—Then there is only one thing left for me to do—that's all. She (anxiously)—Oh, what do you intend to do? He—Propose to somebody else.

A quick witted workingman was resting in his cabin when a stranger entered without knocking, upon which this brief dialogue took place: What do you want? Nothing at all. You'll find it in the jug where the whiskey was.

Dinny was inspecting a pack of cards in a back room known to but a few of the inmates. After a rigid examination he said to the proprietor: Moriarty, what is them marks on the back of the cards? Oh, them is fly specks, was the reply. Well, begor, you have some high toned flies here, said Dinny, for they don't fresco anything but kings and queens.

It is rumored in England, says La Presse, that Lord Mount-Stephen will be the next Governor-General of Canada.

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