

ills that flesh is heir to, Henry George does not assert, nor has he ever asserted, it. He does believe that the land monopoly is the greatest of all monopolies, and that it should be the first attacked; but the social benefits to be derived from an introduction of the single tax are so numerous and so far-reaching that even a partial enumeration of them seems indeed like setting up a claim for a panacea.

And here is Mr. Dickson's solution of the social question: "The remedy is restraint, pruning, regulation, not confiscation." But this, instead of being a remedy, is exactly what we have been doing for centuries. No! decidedly other measures are necessary.

First of all, we must stop the restraining, pruning, regulating work of those unjust laws which take from one to give to another; which in violation of the spirit of our Constitution create a privileged class. And after that we must give all the same opportunity to that element *land*, which is as much a matter of necessity to man as air. This will be doing justice; and this the single tax on land values will accomplish, by killing land speculation and practically restoring the land to the people, without disturbing security of titles or tenure.

William S. Kahnweiler.

NEW YORK.

Country Roads.

THE average country road as at present maintained and repaired is a constant source of unnecessary expense to taxpayers and an almost constant vexation to travelers. At its best the dirt road is good for only a few months in the year, and those months the time when the farmer — the man most interested in good country roads — is using his horses on the farm. In the fall, winter, and early spring, when the great bulk of teaming is to be done, the roads are in bad shape, except when kind Providence sends a snow that makes "good sleddin'." Bad roads mean small loads, and small loads mean to the farmer proportionately small profits. I know many and many a farm where the saving in time from hauling larger loads, the saving in wear and tear of horseflesh, wagons, and harness, would over and over again pay for the increased initial cost of a good macadam road.

Made of the best dirt obtainable, applied under intelligent supervision, and kept in order with proper road-making tools, the dirt road never is entirely satisfactory. What, then, can be expected of the quality of roads made of the material most easily obtained, applied by men ignorant of the first principle of road-making, working without proper tools, and supervised either by men equally ignorant, or not at all?

The true remedy for poor dirt roads is good macadam; but with no greater expenditure of money than now, the present roads might be vastly improved. The road tax should be paid in cash: the system of loafing out the tax under pretense of "working the roads" should be abolished. This money should be expended under the immediate supervision of one man for each township, selected for a knowledge of road-making, and put under bonds for the faithful performance of his duties. This would introduce into the system the element of responsibility, which is sadly lacking at present, and to the lack of which are due many of the abuses of the present methods. One man hiring his labor where he pleased, and paying cash for a day's

work, would get considerably more done for the money than a dozen or fifteen roadmasters working out the tax in conjunction with their neighbors and fellow-farmers.

Proper tools should be provided to work with. Road-scrappers are almost unknown in many country districts, and plows and shovels are the tools most commonly used. Very good road-scrappers can be bought to-day for only two or three times the cost of a good plow, and two men, two horses, and a road-scraper will do the work of an equal number of horses and ten men with plows and shovels, and do it better.

Only the best obtainable materials should be used in repairing the roads — gravel when possible, and when not, the dirt most nearly approaching it in quality. The use of "gutter-wash," sods, and stones larger than two inches in diameter should be forbidden. I have seen roads, "mended" with sods, that were for weeks impassable at any gait faster than a walk, and I have seen holes in the road-bed filled with large stones that were a nuisance for years.

The roads should be worked at proper times. The need of the dirt road is little repairs often made. The common practice is to do almost all the work just after "corn-planting." This is wrong, for two reasons: it is too late for the best results, and too much is done at one time. Six inches of earth or gravel will make a far better road if put on in layers of, say, two inches at intervals of a month or so, than will the entire amount applied at once. Just as soon as the roads are settled in the spring, and before they have become dry and hard, the scraper should be put to work leveling and filling the ruts worn during the winter, and slightly rounding the road-bed towards the center. The ground being still moist, and not compact as at the usual time of doing this, the work can be done more easily and rapidly and the road will pack better. Later, a light coat of earth or gravel, to be followed by another when the first becomes packed hard, and this in turn by a third if possible. Lastly, in the fall the entire road should be gone over to see that all gutters and bridges are free, that the road may not be washed out by winter storms and spring rains. All mudholes of course should be filled promptly at all times so that no water may stand in the road, and loose stones should be removed at least once a month.

The usual time for cutting brush — August — seems right, but some reform is needed in the way of doing it. The brush should be cut close down to the ground, and not, as often is the case, cut a foot or more above it, leaving long unsightly stubs to sprout the ensuing spring. It should be piled at once, and burned when sufficiently dry. Under the present system I have seen brush cut, left as cut, the next year's growth cut over the top of that, and the resulting tangle abandoned the third year.

With some such system as this I have sketched, the application to the road work of the business rules which govern every progressive farmer in the conduct of his farm, with the work done under the supervision of a responsible man, done at the proper times instead of whenever convenient, with the proper tools and with a proper quality of earth, by men who were compelled to give a day's work for a day's pay, the dirt road could be made not good, but vastly better than it is. But at its best the dirt road is a costly one to repair:

its only redeeming feature is its comparative initial cheapness, and in the long run repairs even this up. Country communities are apt to complain of the first cost of the macadam road, while annually spending millions of dollars and moving countless tons of earth, without having good permanent roads.

R. A. Learned.

The Iowa Experiment.

"How is prohibition working in your State?" is the question oftenest asked the Iowa man abroad. The inquirer as he listens to the story his question invites usually wears upon his face a peculiar expression which translated into words would read, "I acquit this man of intent to mislead, but my private opinion is, he's romancing." A rather skeptical acquaintance of mine in the East recently said to me, "Your story of empty jails, flourishing schools, and homes of thrift and comfort that were not there before, sounds like one of Washington Gladden's fascinating dreams of an ideal 'Christian League'; but don't you think you'd find it rather difficult to verify your statements with facts and figures drawn from official sources?"

Leaving to others the picturesque features of the subject, let me lay before the readers of THE CENTURY a few suggestive "facts and figures drawn from official sources"—some of the results of an investigation suggested by my practical friend's inquiry.

Permit me to say, in passing, that Iowa, far from being "a commonwealth of temperance cranks," as an Eastern journal has it, is a commonwealth of "plain people"—to borrow a phrase from Lincoln; people who do their own thinking, and have their own way of doing, and are daring enough to believe that some things can be done which the wisdom of the conservative East pronounces impossible. Taking advantage of the fact that we have no great centers of population to dictate our policies and load us down, we of Iowa have applied to the State as a whole the identical theory for handling the social evil known as the saloon which Georgia and Illinois apply to counties, and which New York applies to townships; namely, the theory that the majority shall determine whether the evil shall be tolerated and controlled, or prohibited. At a non-partisan election held in the summer of 1882, the question of prohibition *vs.* toleration was submitted to the people, and the voters of Iowa, by thirty thousand majority, declared they had no longer any use for the saloon. But the constitutional amendment which then carried had not been properly submitted, and was by our Supreme Court declared invalid. A disappointed majority then turned to the State legislature for relief, and in the spring of 1884 a prohibitory law was passed. The legislatures of 1886 and 1888 sustained the law and strengthened it by amendments. Thus steadfastly have the people sustained the prohibition, anti-toleration method of handling the saloon.

"But you will not deny the fact that there have been saloons in Iowa during all these years of prohibition? You cannot truthfully say there are no saloons in your State at the present time?"

The outlawed saloon does still linger on our borders; still maintains a precarious, characterless, hole-in-the-wall existence in many of our cities; but its social and

political prestige is gone, and in at least 70 of the 99 counties in the State there cannot be found an open saloon.

Seven years have elapsed since the voters of Iowa formally withdrew their sanction from the saloon. Five years have passed since the voters of Iowa, through their representatives, outlawed the saloon. Is there anything in the present situation to warrant a return to the toleration policy? Let us turn to the figures and see what they say on the subject.

I am indebted to Hon. Frank D. Jackson, Secretary of State, for advance sheets of the "Official Register of Iowa" for 1889. From this source, and by comparison with reports of other years, I discover that the total expense of the counties of Iowa, "on account of criminal prosecutions," was in 1882, the year in which the prohibitory amendment carried, \$401,431.18. In 1883 the total expense of criminal prosecutions was reduced to \$361,173.78. In 1884, presidential year, there was a slight increase in criminal expenses. In 1885 and 1886, years marked by the return of the outlawed saloon and a consequent reign of lawlessness, there was a large increase, the total in the year last named being \$421,024.31. In 1887, the year following the passage of the Clark (enforcement) law, the criminal expenses were reduced to \$282,877.66; and in 1888 they aggregated \$300,424.06 for ten months.

Compare the record of "leading crimes" in 1888 with the same in 1882. In 1888 there were 94 convictions for assault, 13 for breaking and entering, 47 for burglary, 13 for forgery, 13 for gambling, 42 for keeping a gambling-house, 148 for larceny, 9 for murder, 6 for manslaughter, 190 for keeping a nuisance, 59 for selling intoxicating liquors; total, 634. In 1882 there were 188 convictions for assault, 18 for breaking and entering, 78 for burglary, 30 for forgery, 14 for gambling, 41 for keeping a gambling-house, 215 for larceny, 14 for murder, 1 for manslaughter, 658 for keeping a nuisance, 25 for unlawfully selling intoxicants; total, 1282—more than double that of 1888.

A few weeks ago I met Warden Barr, of the Anamosa Penitentiary, on his way to Fort Madison with a carload of prisoners, under orders from Governor Larrabee to take these men from the State quarries to the State shops. I learned that the transfer was ordered in response to a loud call from Warden Crossley, of the Fort Madison Penitentiary, for more hands to enable him to comply with certain contracts for labor into which the State had entered with certain manufacturers. The circumstance led me to write Governor Larrabee for information as to the comparative number of prisoners in our penitentiaries this year and in previous years. From our chief executive I learn that the monthly average of prisoners in the two penitentiaries in 1886 was 696; in 1887 it was 667, and in 1888 it was 607. On the last day of September, 1888, the end of the fiscal year, there were but 535 prisoners in both penitentiaries. I am informed by those who have investigated the subject that no other State in the Union, unless it is Vermont, has as small a percentage of convicts as has Iowa at the present time.

But, going back to the counties, what say our judges? Here is a small pamphlet containing the answers of forty-one district and superior-court judges to a number of questions put to them by Governor Larrabee, one of the inquiries being as to the expediency of re-