

its train, and who plainly see the truths of the policy advocated by Mr. Hirsch, and who recognise that times like these demand strong men, may confidently be hoped to result in the successful return of the foremost representative in Victoria of the cause of "Real Free Trade."

### One Man, One Vote.

Every highly developed organism carries with it rudimentary organs, denoting various stages in its development. Sometimes these signs of its previous history have no bearing on its present condition, when, it may be presumed, they may continue for ever. Others, however, are detrimental either to its present well-being or future development, and in that case they will either be cast off or lead to the extinction of the species. These truths, which form some of the fundamental facts of biology, are equally true of social organisms. Our democratic society, in its laws and customs, as well as in the sentiments which animate many of its members, bears as yet strong traces, rudimentary for the most part, of the feudal period through which it has passed. One of the most remarkable of these survivals of a half-forgotten past, is the limitation which various countries place as yet upon the exercise of the electoral franchise. That these limitations are survivals, that they are out of place in our present system, and injurious to its full development, no one, who has even an elementary knowledge of the history of political institutions, can doubt. At first confined to the nobility, clergy, and a few city corporations, the franchise, in spite of repeated extensions, remained virtually confined to a few great landlords. Even as late as 1831 one hundred and fifty persons returned a majority of the House of Commons. The great Reform Bill of that year, for the first time conceded to a considerable section of the people the right to choose the representatives who made laws in the name and on behalf of the people as a whole.

Since that time progress has been made with ever accelerating speed, until, with the exception of women, the franchise is now conceded to all but a very small section of the people of England. Nor would the most conservative of men dare to argue to-day that any other course was possible, or that it is desirable to reverse

it. However hard the Tories may struggle to prevent this historic development from being carried to its ultimate issue, however earnestly they may argue for the retention of the rudiments of the older system, which as yet exist in their innermost heart, they know that, sooner or later, they are doomed to disappearance.

The underlying idea which has caused this extension of the franchise, is so simple and so fundamentally true, that it has never been seriously called in question. Shortly stated, it is that equal duties confer equal rights. As all men have equally to obey the laws, they are also equally entitled to make the laws. No one man can have the right to make laws binding on others; nor can any class of men, whether they claim such a right by virtue of heredity or ability. To concede such a right, would inevitably result in slavery, as it is the mark of slavery.

The advocates of this lost cause in our colony no longer deny the right of all men to take part in the choice of their parliamentary representatives. They confine themselves partly to administrative chicaneries, which exclude important sections of the population, from the practical exercise of the right which theoretically is conceded to them, partly to the claim that some men are entitled to a greater share of the franchise, *i.e.*, to more votes than others. As to the first, it is pleaded that it is impossible to make regulations which would enable voters to record their vote when absent from the electoral district in which they are registered, without grave danger of impersonation. All that need be said on this head is, that if, instead of being shearers and sailors, the people in question were landlords and merchants, the difficulty would be very rapidly overcome. The most blundering of Parliamentary draftsmen could draft a measure within a week which would overcome the difficulty without creating any appreciable danger to electoral purity.

The double or multiple vote for plural property holders is still more unreasonable. The true grounds on which it is advocated are familiar enough. They are, first, that the owners of property are more able and wise than the men who do not own real property; and, secondly, that the men who have a stake in the country ought to have more power than those who have not. The ridiculous nature of this, the only defence of a

specious privilege, becomes, however, apparent as soon as it is examined.

If the possession of landed property, of a stake in the country, is to entitle the fortunate possessors to greater rights than others, it must be shown that the possession of such property burdens them with greater duties, or forces them to render greater services. Yet no one has attempted to show that the property owners have to obey the laws more fully than others, or that they render greater service to the country than others. On the contrary, the laws are administered in a manner which not infrequently results in the opposite injustice, and no one dare deny to-day that the landlords, instead of rendering, receive services at the hands of the community, from which every other class is excluded, and which are extremely valuable. The claim that a stake in the country entitles its possessor to a double franchise is, therefore, as illogical an assertion as any which has ever been raised for the purpose of deceiving public judgment, and cannot be substantiated.

Still more illogical and far-fetched is the claim that property owners are more able than no-property owners, and, therefore, entitled to a double franchise. For if the claim to greater wisdom were true, it would follow that, on the whole, those who possess property of greater value were wiser than those whose property is of less value, and, therefore, again entitled to a higher franchise. The logical outcome of this system, therefore, would be a graduated franchise, which would give to some of the largest property owners thousands of votes. That this, the logical sequence of the argument, has never yet been advocated by the Tory party and the National Association, is the best proof that they themselves are afraid of their guns; that they know the claim, that the possession or non-possession of real property measures a man's wisdom and ability, to be a mere pretence.

There can however be no question as to the desirability of the condition, that the laws should be made by the wisest men in the community. But who is to decide which are the wisest men? It must be done either by the people as a whole, or by a section of the people. If the latter, the question arises, Who is to select the selectors? and we are not a step further in advance. No other rule than that of the people as a whole is possible, and we are compelled to assume that in

the long run a majority of the people will be more likely to select the wisest men to make the laws, than any haphazard minority, whose qualification can be ascertained by no known standard of measurement.

There is, however, still another aspect to this question. Even if it were possible to select a minority of wise men to whom the franchise can be entrusted, is there any guarantee that they would exercise their wisdom in selecting the best law-makers? It must not be overlooked, that while unjust laws must always be injurious to the majority, they can enrich a minority at the expense of the majority. Universal history proves that wherever the franchise has been entrusted to a minority, it has been misused by them for their own aggrandisement at the expense of the people. The fact is, that every people has to choose between the rule of a possibly ignorant majority, or of a certainly corrupt minority. The greater safety always lies on the side of justice, and in this case clearly on the side of an equal electoral franchise for all.

It cannot, however, be denied that under present conditions, equal manhood suffrage carries with it an almost inevitable danger, which arises from the enormous disparity of fortunes. There are two dangerous classes in the community, paupers and millionaires, and both are equally dangerous to the continuance of freedom. The former because they have nothing to lose from any change, the latter because they have too much to lose from resisting a possible change. Jay Gould, who "bossed" the Erie railway system, when asked his political opinions, replied:—"I am a Democrat in a Democratic state, a Republican in a Republican state, but I am an Erie man always." Similarly he would have been an Erie man if the question had been between the continuance of the American Republic, or its displacement by a military despotism. This danger is all the greater because the worst forms of despotism have always been concealed, and will be concealed, under forms of popular election. Fortunately, however, the Democracy of to-day knows the antidote to this danger. Its forces are being directed against the continuance of the laws which create pauperism at the one end and millionaires at the other end of our social system. Upon the removal of these laws depends the orderly development of Democracy;

the establishment of a social state which shall give full and equal freedom to all its members.

### A Hymn for the Dispossessed.

If labour-saving inventions and improvements could be carried to the very abolition of the necessity for labour—what would be the result? Would it not be that landowners could then get all the wealth that the land is capable of producing, and would have no need at all for labourers, who then must either starve or live as pensioners on the bounty of the landowners?

Thus so long as private property in land continues—so long as some men are treated as owners of the earth and others live on it only by their sufferance—human wisdom can devise no means by which the evils of our present condition can be avoided.

*Nor yet could the wisdom of God!*  
By the light of that right reason of which St. Thomas speaks we may see that even He, the Almighty, so long as *Hic laus remans* what they are, could do nothing to prevent poverty and starvation while property in land continues.

How could He? . . . If He were to send down from the heavens above, or cause to gush up from the subterranean depths, food, clothing, all the things that satisfy man's material desires, to whom would all these things belong?

So far from benefiting man, would not this increase and extension of His bounty prove but a curse, permitting the privileged class more riotously to roll in wealth, and bringing the disinherited class to more widespread starvation or pauperism?—"The Condition of Labour." HENRY GEORGE.

O God within that Heaven  
Without a price and free,  
Let not this name of Freeman  
Bemock our slavery;  
The birds among the forests,  
The fishes in the sea,  
The insects in the sunbeams  
Are all that now are free.

Oh save us, Lord of Heaven,  
Save from these Lords of Land;  
With clouds of lies they blind us,  
In chains of law we stand;  
We kneel and pray their purchase,  
In the market place "demand."

They own earth's air and sunshine,  
They own its heavenly rain,  
They own the mines within it,  
They own its floods of grain,  
They own us millions on it;  
We own—our shame and pain.

They sell us with their acres,  
They buy us with their scrip,  
To feed their hounds and fighters  
Our bones of flesh they strip,  
Brand us with name of Freeman  
And then thrust out the lip.

O God, within that Heaven,  
Without a price and free,  
Let not this name of Freeman  
Bemock our slavery;

The birds among the forests,  
The fishes in the sea,  
The insects in the sunbeams,  
Are all that now are free.

Free! free! and free for ever,  
No need to ask Thine aid;  
It was Thy deadly honour  
That has our race betrayed;  
If we were wild beasts, creatures  
Not in Thine image made,  
We'd live or die in freedom,  
Untrapped for this slave trade.

Strong arms of men for labour,  
True hearts to load with trust,  
Deft woman's hands for service,  
And lovely limbs for lust,  
Paid with a leprous garment,  
Paid with a slavered crust—  
Sure for the Godlike in us  
A greater price were just!

O make earth as Thine Heaven,  
Free as Thine Heaven is free,  
Or make us hideous devils,  
And evil utterly;  
Nor leave enslaved Thine image,  
To shock hell with the blasphemy.

SYDNEY JEPHCOTT.

Tintaldra, Upper Murray.

To the long quotation prefixed I must add a note explaining that this is made an opportunity for urging everyone to read the book from which the quotation comes. Let those who have not read "The Condition of Labour" get hold of it by first chance and read, and let those who have read it read it again! It puts the whole position in a form which one can neither misunderstand, controvert, nor forget.

If many were of my mind means would soon be found to print in pamphlet form and distribute broadcast at least half a million copies of the glorious third chapter of that work within a very brief time. It would educate and stir men's minds as lesser men's works can never do, whatsoever grasp of truth they may have.—S. J.

## The Industrial Revolution.

G. H.

Widely varied as are the opinions one hears when social topics are introduced and discussed, one may yet fairly group one's acquaintances under three heads, according to the opinions they hold. First, those who are satisfied with things as they are, who denounce as "faddists" those who would endeavour to introduce changes; who say that the law of supply and demand is fixed as gravitation, and so on. Second, the pessimists, who are enlightened sufficiently to see in what an unhealthy state, socially, the world is, who see how bad things have been in times past, and who conclude that matters will never improve, despairing of success for any efforts towards improvement. The third class (and the most numerous let us hope) consists of those who recognise how far from perfect is the present condition of things, who examine the history of the past, and find much wrong there also; but who think that, as to the future, they can find—

" . . . in some part of their souls  
A drop of comfort."

Judging from the lecture entitled "The Industrial Revolution," which Professor Harrison Moore delivered the other evening, we may assume that he is to be placed in the third group, though it would be difficult at present to decide what position he takes between the two well-marked limits of (1) those who believe that, just to introduce one sovereign remedy, would instantaneously usher in the millennium of

"Delight and liberty, the simple creed of childhood;"

"DON" & PHOENIX DARK TOBACCOES.