

course pursued by the "industrials" in this matter is suicidal to their own interests. If the rule be established that railroad property is to be subject to the pillage of any band of unemployed, then capital must necessarily withdraw from such investments, and the chances of obtaining work therein must become correspondingly less.

From whatever point of view this strange movement is considered, it is indefensible, and no real friend of the workingmen can encourage it. As revolutionary in its tendencies it must at last bring the strong arm of the law down upon it; and since it has the effect of destroying instead of creating resources of work and subsistence, the sooner it is brought to an end the better. The country needs peace and union of effort to pull through the wave of depression from which it is suffering, in common with the rest of the world. Revolutionary unrest and riotous agitation among the industrial forces can only defer the era of prosperity which, until these evidences of lawlessness appeared, was just about to burst upon us.

"THE REPUBLIC OF IRRIGATION."

Since Thomas Moore wrote his famous work describing the imaginary island of Utopia, where the enjoyment of the greatest perfection in politics, laws and the like was depicted as bringing man to the highest pinnacle of human happiness, the schemes to bring about this ideal condition probably have increased rather than decreased. Some of these have been of the most impractical character, while others have contained a measure of useful ideas; some have sought to do away with a large proportion of human toil, like the Fruitarians who are now looking toward Hawaii as the place to form a colony where men and women may dwell and subsist on the fruits, vegetables and grasses that nature produces unaided, and clothe themselves only in nature's garb, while others have sought to utilize all the energy of brain life and physical effort available. But as yet the land of utopian bliss is an "undiscovered country" even in prospective to those who work with human forces alone.

The latest scheme containing suggestions of a practical nature that has been put forth as a means of attaining independence and equality, and at the same time securing to all its beneficiaries a competency of this life's necessities, is by William E. Smythe, editor of the *Irrigation Age*, in what he designates "The Republic of Irrigation." Mr. Smythe does not lay claim to being the originator of the chief idea which underlies his plan, but gives credit for the suggestion as coming from what he designates the industrial system of President Brigham Young as it was followed in Utah in early days, when the small farm of 20 acres was settled upon and made, by irrigation and careful cultivation, to produce that which its occupants consumed and also a surplus exchangeable for other property. Mr. Smythe's honor in this connection is his plan for making that system appli-

cable to the Great West, or Arid America as he styles it.

This arid region as he describes it he divides into four sections which present four different phases of the problem. These sections are: First—Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, eastern Colorado and Wyoming; second—western Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Idaho and Montana; third—eastern Washington and Oregon; fourth—California and Arizona. The problem of securing the greatest productiveness from each of these sections he holds has been fully and satisfactorily solved in a process of irrigation suited to each. Within the area described there is to be found, he considers, the remedy for industrial ills that afflict the country, "the one broad field remaining on this continent for agricultural and industrial expansion," where labor may not be only absorbed but rewarded with the means of living, and where "the problem of how to find the highest average prosperity for the common people may be solved."

The details of Mr. Smythe's plan are far from being perfected, though the general plan is outlined. The task of working out these details is yet future, but secondary to the design that is set forth. Some of it is to be accomplished at the next National Irrigation congress. It is proposed to there map out a number of schemes of diversified farming, applicable to different localities, forms of administration for proposed model colonies, plans for economical and attractive architecture, and the best manner of training settlers in methods of scientific and intensive cultivation under irrigation. Mr. Smythe himself promises to undertake to "marshal the brains and the heart of Arid America in order to hasten by downright practical means, the making of the new civilization," and will leave it to be determined "how the results of these labors shall be applied, whether by giving them common publicity or by the creation of model colonies under a business administration to be hereafter developed."

The scheme in brief is to form a vast co-operative movement backed by the sympathy and capital of the country, and the practical experience of the farming community, to locate colonies all over Arid America, and to establish systems of irrigation whereby the land may be brought into cultivation and be made to yield its strength under careful treatment and diversified crops. The farm unit is to be twenty or forty acres, as may be agreed upon, probably the former, and none are to be allowed more. Of this amount each man may become the owner, with all the privileges of water thereto. Taking this general scheme for a basis, Mr. Smythe goes on to say:

No man will ever accumulate a great fortune upon twenty acres, but no man who heeds the Divine injunction, "By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread," will ever be poor on twenty acres of irrigated land scientifically cultivated. The reclaimed areas will be densely populated. The result will be near neighbors and social, educational and religious advantages within the reach of all. The farmers of Arid America will enjoy the sweet, pure life of the country at its best, and they will also realize the most desirable advantages of

neighborhood association. This means a revolution in country life. It will be more like the ideal society of the ancient Greeks than like the dreary, lonesome life of the farming population in the older parts of the United States.

As an argument for the imperative necessity of farm ownership to be with the occupants, and to guard against a monopoly of the soil, it is pointed out that "for more than a hundred years this republic has offered an asylum for those oppressed by pope and king, and yet we are very far from a realization of that quality of independence dearest to the human heart. This is security in the support of one's family. The sharp and sudden business convulsion of last summer, followed by the long period of depression, again taught the world that no man is independent who does not live under his own roof, and support his family from the products of his own acres. In the best sense no man is independent who works for another. He cannot tell at what moment a threat of tariff-tinkering at Washington, the cessation of silver coinage in India, or the collapse of a boom in Argentina or Australia, may render his fancied security in employment a precarious dependence for the support of his family."

Whatever may become of the scheme, and its probable failure or success because of the interest that may be aroused in it and the human element to be operated with, there is much in it to afford thought for philanthropists and statesmen. Arid America is a vast field for intelligent combined labor and satisfactory returns therefor. How it is to be utilized is a problem whose importance has not dawned yet upon the mind of the nation at large. If Mr. Smythe can secure for it a thorough comprehension on the part of the country's leading men he will have accomplished a mighty work. The practical and beneficial nature of many of his suggestions has been established by experience in the arid region. The existing of sufficient interest in his scheme to reduce it to perfect practicability and the securing of aid and material to carry it out are something wholly different in the present temper of politicians, philanthropists, the laboring classes and people generally.

It is stated by the Helena (Mont.) *Independent*, that about three weeks ago Gottlieb Wierzbicki, a tailor, and Louis Chairmack, a shoemaker, left Helena to go to Alaska. Wierzbicki is now in the hospital at Spokane, slowly recovering from three pistol shots in the head, inflicted by his traveling companion. When the men left here Wierzbicki had about \$300 with him, part of which was in drafts. From letters received here by his friends, it is apparent Wierzbicki was shot for the purpose of robbery. The men, on reaching Spokane, had either started out to walk out of town and catch a freight train, or else Chairmack had induced his companion to go with him to the spot where the assault took place. After being shot and robbed Wierzbicki was left for dead. He was found by some people, however, still alive, and taken to the hospital in Spokane, where it was found that his wounds were not very serious.