

We have full confidence that if the right kind of men shall tackle this problem in the right spirit, plans will be readily evolved that will give real relief without a suggestion of pauperism or mendicancy, and that will prove of tangible benefit not less to those who receive than to those who seem to give it.

#### REPORT ON THE GREAT STRIKE.

Two days ago our telegraphic columns contained a synopsis of the report of the Federal Labor commission relative to the great railroad strike, including the recommendations of the commission for legislation on the part of Congress. Today the full text of the document has been received by mail. These recommendations are certain to occasion much grave discussion throughout the country. They advise Congress to enter a new field of legislation, and undertake to regulate by statute matters that have heretofore been regarded as beyond the scope of legislative power or authority, especially under a government based upon a constitution resembling that of the United States. They deal with vital and delicate questions of constitutional law, and are of a nature to carry dismay to the heart of an old-school strict constructionist of the American Constitution.

Little if any objection will be raised against the recommendations of the committee which look to arbitration and conciliation between railroads and their employees. Anything which Congress can do to provide agencies that will be able to accomplish results by such means will probably meet with almost universal endorsement. In Massachusetts there exists a commission which is a sort of tribunal having authority to investigate strikes and lockouts and report findings and recommendations. While neither employer nor employee is legally bound by the action of this body, great moral weight usually attaches thereto and public opinion is very likely to condemn that side of the labor controversy which refuses to acquiesce in the recommendations made by this court of arbitration. The recommendation of the Federal Labor commission that other states follow the example of Massachusetts in this regard will meet with general approval.

But the proposition which is urged by the commission, that Congress provide means for adjusting differences between railroads and their employees which shall be similar to the provisions of the interstate commerce law for settling disputes between shipper and carrier, reaches the vitals of the whole matter. Questions as to the authority of Congress under the Constitution to do this, and as to how such a law could be enforced, at once spring up. This is really a plan for compulsory arbitration, a subject which has excited thought and discussion among the most profound minds of the age, without resulting in any solution of the problem that has been deemed practicable.

For example, a union of railroad employees refuse to work for the wages offered them, and strike. The case is brought before a court, an investigation is had, and a

decision is rendered requiring the men to resume work. How can such a decision be enforced? By what means can a crew of railroad men be compelled to operate a train if they object to so doing? Only by the infliction of penalties, such as fine and imprisonment. May then the civil power, under the American Constitution, fine and imprison a man for refusing to follow an employment which for any reason is distasteful to him? On the other hand, shall labor unions be permitted to inflict upon the country the stupendous damage, financial and otherwise, which results from extensive strikes and boycotts?

It would seem that an era has been reached in the progress of civilization when the welfare of the race, if not its very perpetuity, demands legislation of a character different and more far-reaching than has heretofore been known. The suppression of anarchy, which is growing so fast in many countries, involves difficulties and legislative problems very similar to those connected with the prevention of strikes; but self-preservation is the first law of society as well as of the individual. The French Chamber of Deputies has recently led out in the enactment of laws more drastic than modern times have known under any except the most despotie of governments, and the example thus set will probably be followed in other countries, even in this, with modifications more or less marked.

But can nations save themselves by means of their own laws? No. To escape the dangers and destructive upheavals that threaten them they must obey laws that have originated in a wisdom superior to man's. Society in civilized lands has outgrown its former self. The printing press, the genius of the mechanical inventor, the triumphs of science, and other agencies of change, have wrought such transformations in the social world that the race must obey the laws that insure its welfare in its new state, or it must suffer either extinction or a relapse into barbarism. Forces are operating in our age which can no more be checked by human legislation than the north wind can be by the school boy's kite with which it toys. Society must conform itself to the currents of those forces, or be engulfed. This means that pride and selfishness must be checked, and that a broader Christianity must be conformed to than that which prevails in the world now. In other words, the Gospel must be obeyed by such portions of the human race as would escape the perils that hang over all the world.

#### A CHURCHMAN POLITICIAN.

Careful readers of the newspapers have no doubt noticed that there is a vast amount of talk as to how the people of New York shall show their appreciation of the labors of Rev. Dr. Parkhurst in the smashing of Tammany. It is universally admitted that to him is due more credit for the complete defeat of the odious organization than to any other man or all other men combined. During many months he made unrelenting war on municipal corruption in the national metrop-

olis with scarcely a friendly official or newspaper to aid him. But the reward of his perseverance came at last; and in the terrible disclosures of the Lexow investigation, he was not only vindicated, but the moral effect was so tremendous that the people rose in their might and whipped the offending party out of public office almost to the last man. No more signal instance of the individual accomplishment of a great purpose in so short a time was ever given. Peter the Hermit himself scarcely did as much against lesser obstacles in the very strongholds of Christian enthusiasm. While Dr. Parkhurst knew he had found a plague spot ripe for probing, he was met at every hand with ridicule, and hampered by shrewd opposition. But reforms once instituted do not go backward; and as the light began to penetrate the region of official rotteness, even defenders of the blight withdrew with very shame, until the exposure was at last able, with merciless thoroughness, to lay the hideous evil wholly bare.

And now, as has already been hinted at, the question with New Yorkers is, how shall the reformer be rewarded, how shall the great good which he has wrought be commemorated? There is not a politician nor a paper that does not recognize his splendid services. Without exception the better elements of the community agree that what was done has been well done; and all are full of gratitude. Some propose a monument to the man himself; others, the free gift of a tabernacle or church in which he may continue his catholic labors of watching and warning against evil; others again suggest the building and endowment of a home under his name for unfortunates; a score of other plans are mentioned, and one admirer modestly suggests that no other memorial is needed than the public determination to profit by past experience and keep the great city henceforth clean and free and pure from the vile abuses he assailed.

The point in the whole matter which possesses most interest to the News, and probably to News readers also, is that up to the present no one has risen up in angry criticism of the church for having interfered in politics. The reverend gentleman not only thundered his own wrath against Tammany from his own pulpit, but, following his brave example, a dozen or more other ministers made that monster of iniquity the text for their discourses Sunday after Sunday, and especially the Sabbath prior to election, when almost every preacher in New York took up the refrain. Surely there was politics in all this; for if the advice was to strangle and stamp out Tammany, it was a direct appeal for the success of the opposing ticket. "Church influence" was not only openly exerted, but it was expected and is now applauded. The opinion appeared to be general that men who stand as ministers of righteousness have the right to views and the expression of them, even in the matter of city and state government. It was suggested that this was more than a privilege; it was a duty. There was not even an intimation that in the matter referred to they were guilty of "pernicious parti-