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MAN'S RIGHT TO THE SOIL. SPEECH OF HON. G. A. GROW, OF PENNSYLVANIA, IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MARCH 30, 1852, ON THE HOMESTEAD BILL.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union on the bill to encourage agriculture, commerce, manufactures, and all other branches of industry, by granting to every man, who is the head of a family, and citizen of the United States, a homestead of one hundred and sixty acres of land out of the public domain, upon condition of occupancy and cultivation of the same, for the period therein specified—

Mr. GROW said:
The bill under consideration, though it only provides for granting to every head of a family one hundred and sixty acres of land on an annual settlement and cultivation for five years, will involve the entire question of the proper disposition to be made of the public lands. With a domain of fourteen hundred and two-thirds millions of acres of unoccupied and unappropriated land, it becomes a grave question what is the best disposition to be made of it—whether to cede it to the States in which it lies, to be disposed of as they think proper, or for internal improvements and school purposes, or to grant it in limited quantities to the actual settler at a price barely sufficient to cover the cost of survey and transfer, with such limits and restrictions as will prevent its falling into the hands of speculators. Passing over, for the present, the first two propositions, I propose briefly to consider the latter.

The power given in the Constitution "to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property of the United States," leaves the mode and manner of disposal entirely to the discretion of Congress; so that it becomes a question merely of sound policy and correct legislation: it is therefore the duty of Congress to exercise it in such a way as best to promote the real and permanent interests of the country.

The chief objection to granting these lands to actual settlers, and the one of seemingly great plausibility, is that they have been purchased by the common treasury of the country; and as each citizen has contributed his share to the purchase money, it is held in justice to one class, who, from their circumstance in life, could not avail themselves of the benefit of the grant; for, but a small portion of those who own farms in the Old States would abandon them for a home in the West, and therefore the grant is unequal and unjust. If there be any natural impediment, or the circumstances of any man be such in life that he is unable to avail himself of the advantages of any particular act of legislation, it is his misfortune, and no fault of the law. If these lands, then, have reimbursed their entire cost, then you do no injustice to any citizen by this grant, unless it be proper for the Government still to hold them as a source of revenue.

By the report of the Secretary of the Interior, made to the last Congress, we find the aggregate receipts from the sale of the public lands, in January 1st, 1850, amounted to \$135,339,092 and the entire cost \$74,937,879

Leaving a net balance of receipts over expenditures of \$60,401,213

Which amount is made up of \$15,000,000 paid France for Louisiana; \$5,000,000 paid Spain for the Florida; \$1,489,768 66 paid Georgia for Alabama and Mississippi; \$4,282,151 12 for Yazoo claims under Georgia; \$35,589,566 for extinguishing Indian titles; \$6,369,838 07 for surveying; \$7,466,241 29 for selling and managing—making the above sum of \$74,937,879.

And, if there be deducted from the balance the \$15,000,000 we pay Mexico for New Mexico and California, and the \$10,000,000 paid Texas in settling her boundary, and every other amount that is properly chargeable to the lands, it will still leave an excess of receipts over expenditures, if the statement of the Secretary be correct. In this calculation it is not proper to include the cost of the war of the Revolution, for that was a war waged for the rights of man and not for land; and even if it was, its cost was incurred and paid by a generation that has passed away. Not should the cost of the war of 1812 be included; for that was a war waged in defence of the dearest rights of the American citizen, and to teach the world that he is secure against violence and wrong while under the protection of the stripes and stars.

While, then, the amount appropriated to the purchase of our domain has been reimbursed from its sales, no citizen can complain that you do him injustice by this grant, for you take from him nothing but what you have repaid; unless it is a higher duty of taxation, and ought to be retained by the Government as a source of revenue. With equal justice and propriety, you might make the grant to the tenant man, if it were possible to be done, the right to till the soil, and prevent the land from falling into the hands of speculators, and divide the soil into quantities of five, and dole it out to groping men according to their ability to pay. What right has the Government to monopolize any of the gifts of God to man, and make them the subject of merchandise and traffic?

But even if it be proper for the Government to look to the lands as a source of revenue, what probability is there of deriving any from them for the next quarter of a century? The Secretary of the Treasury, in his annual report to the last Congress, says: "By the various acts of Congress appropriating the public lands to objects which withdraw them from ordinary revenue purposes, it is quite certain

that for several years to come the Treasury must be mainly, if not entirely, dependent for its receipts upon duties levied upon foreign merchandise.

The warrants yet to be presented under these laws will require 78,922,513 acres, valued \$28,653,140. At the above average of 4,909,247 46 acres per annum, over sixteen years will be required to absorb and satisfy the warrants yet to be issued, an estimated, under the several bounty land acts now in force."

In addition to the above estimate should be added such portions of the 104,827,412.88 acres heretofore granted for certain purposes and consequently remain unclaimed in the market.

And by the land warrant assignment bill, passed a few days since, another large quantity of land is thrown into the market in the form of bounties to soldiers. So that, judging from these estimates, there is no probability of the Government deriving any revenue from the lands for years to come, for the purchaser can buy the warrant at less than the Government price. And, while the receipts from the lands are thus diminishing, the expenses of legislation relative to them are increasing. There are already before this Congress some thirty-five or forty bills asking grants of land to aid in the construction of railroads, the whole length of which is something over nine thousand miles, being almost three thousand miles greater than the entire length of all the railroads now constructed in Great Britain, and a little more than a thousand miles less than those of the United States, and requiring altogether some thirty-five millions of acres of land. On an average it will require at least four days to consider each of these bills, and determine the propriety of its passage. And each day's legislation costs the Government about three thousand dollars. So that near half a million of dollars will be spent this session of Congress in discussing and settling the propriety of making grants of the public lands to railroad companies, and local improvements, with still increasing demands at each subsequent session of Congress; and, while the clause of the Constitution giving the power to dispose of these lands is general in its terms, is it correct legislation, to exercise this power in such a way as to bring it in conflict with other powers of the Constitution? The power of Congress over commerce is to regulate and not to create it. It may therefore improve and make safe the channels of trade that already exist; but by what right under the Constitution can Congress open entirely new avenues or channels? Is it sound policy, then, for the Government to undertake indirectly to do, under this clause, what they would not have the power to do directly? Such being the prospective condition of the revenue to be derived from the public lands, the opinion of Andrew Jackson, in his message of 1823, as to the Government embarking in a scheme of internal improvements, may well apply to the present legislation he says: "Besides the danger to which it exposes Congress of making hasty appropriations, to works of the character of which they may be frequently ignorant, it promotes a mischievous and corrupting influence upon elections, by inducing out to the people the false prospect that the success of a certain candidate will make navigable their neighboring creek or river, bring commerce to their doors, and increase the value of their property. It thus favors combinations to squander the treasury of the country upon a multitude of local objects as fatal to just legislation as to the purity of public men."

The danger and expense of this kind of legislation would be avoided by granting the lands to the settler, while at the same time it would be an advantage to the States, and add revenue to the Government by their settlement. For, from every person that you induce by this grant to settle upon the lands, you derive more revenue than you would by a sale without settlement to a speculator. You sell one hundred and sixty acres for \$200, the interest of which, at six per cent, would be twelve dollars; and that is your yearly revenue unless he be settled. Every man, however, that you induce to settle upon the public lands, by the passage of this act, you make a consumer of the articles imported into the country. And it is by your articles on imports alone, with the exception of a few millions of dollars, that the revenue for the Government is collected. The average amount of imported articles consumed by each person, for a series of years, is estimated at about seven dollars worth.

Calling the average, then, consumed by each person seven dollars, and seven in a family, it would make forty-nine dollars of imported articles consumed annually by each family. And as the average of duties under the present tariff is about thirty per cent, each family of seven would pay to the Government yearly fifteen dollars—three dollars more than you derive from the same quantity of land sold to the speculator without a settlement. The true interest of the Government and the States is not the sale, but the actual settlement of these lands. It is important to the States, for thereby they increase the means of taxation as well as the means of developing their resources. By these grants you would also induce the settlement of lands a long time in market. For though they might be of poorer quality, and not in so desirable a location as some others more remote, still there are many who would take them in preference to going further into the wilderness, though they might not be willing, or if they were, they might not be able to pay the Government price. Man is by nature attached to the scenes of his childhood and the home of his kindred; and while there is an opportunity for a comfortable location for life, he prefers to remain amid the scenes of his schoolboy days, rather than seek a home amid strangers in a strange land. By the settlement of these lands, the objection would remove, in a great degree, the objection made by the land States, that the Government is a proprietor within their limits, but not subject to their jurisdiction or taxation.

But would the passage of this bill induce any person to settle upon the public lands that would not under the present system? We often hear, it is said, that \$1 25 is a small price for land, and any one of us might enter upon a farm out of the public domain, and make a fortune in theory, but not in fact. That may be true in theory, but not in fact; for though the Government sells at \$1 25, that is

not the price the settler, in most cases, has to pay. The speculator has selected the best land and the most desirable locations, so that the settler must pay him an advance of two or three hundred per cent, or take an inferior location, or press still further on into the wilderness. In most cases, he prefers to pay his money and remain within the confines of civilization. But about your cities and in the densely populated portions of the country, wherever there is a surplus population, you will find great numbers of men who are just able to obtain a livelihood, by reason of such surplus, the tendency of which, by its constant competition, is gradually to reduce wages to the starvation point; and therefore they are unable to save from their earnings a sum sufficient to purchase a farm on the public lands and remove their family to it. They give but little thought, however, to that mode of bettering their condition, for they shrink from the trials of a border life, and they have not, and see no prospect of ever having, the means to stop short of the extreme limits of civilization; and thus they grope on in their misery, and perhaps their days in pauperism or crime. Open your public domain, and you induce a large number of this class, and that, too, the better portion of it, to become producers of the necessities of life, instead of mere consumers; and you then place them in a condition to help support the Government, instead of as now being the means, in a greater or less degree, of abstracting from the earnings of the citizens to support your aims and criminal profligence. And, in addition to the amount of imports each family may consume, the market for domestic manufactures is enlarged and extended. The Secretary of the Treasury estimates that each individual consumes, annually \$100 worth of all kinds of products, including trimmings and clothing, seven of which being for imports; some thirty or forty of the remaining \$93 ought, probably, to be set apart for the purchase of articles not manufactured or produced by himself. Thus, in every family of seven you furnish an annual home market to the domestic manufacturer to the amount of some two or three hundred dollars, while they are producing the necessities of life to make the exchange with; and thus add so much to the real wealth of the nation.

But even if the Government could derive any revenue by the actual sale of the public lands, it is neither just, nor sound policy to hold them for that purpose. As long ago as 1832, Gen. Jackson, whose sympathies were ever with the sons of toil, and whose heart was as warm as his will was stern by his intellect penetrating, said in his annual message to Congress on this subject: "It cannot be doubted that the speedy settlement of these lands constitutes the true interest of the Republic. The wealth and strength of a country are its population, and the best part of the population are the cultivators of the soil. Independent farmers are every where the basis of society, and true to all partial and interested legislation on this subject, and to afford to every American citizen of enterprise a opportunity of securing an independent livelihood, it seems to me, therefore, best to abandon the idea of raising a future revenue out of the public lands."

Though the old Hero of the Hermitage is wrapped in his shroud, he is not dead. Such men never die. From the tomb they speak to the living. Though man's life is short and soon passes away, yet the principles he may develop are eternal. But aside from the question of sound policy, the Government has no right founded in reason and the nature of things to make the public lands a source of revenue.

Aware, however, sir, that it is a poor place, under a one hour rule, to attempt to discuss any of the rights of men, for, surrounded by the authority of ages it becomes necessary, without the time to do it, first to brush away the dust that has gathered upon their errors; yet it is well sometimes to go back for the authority of books and treatises—compiled by the men of letters and educated under monarchical institutions, whose opinions and habits of thought consequently were more or less shaped and moulded by their influences—and examine, by the light of reason and of nature, the true foundation of Government and the inherent rights of men. For power everywhere has a tendency to augment and strengthen itself, and in this Government its dangers are two fold—one, that the Federal Government, in its contracting tendencies, may encroach upon the reserved rights of the States; the other, which is common alike to both, is that the Government and States, by their local and special legislation, are constantly encroaching upon the rights of the citizen.

The fundamental rights of man may be summed up in two words, Life and Happiness. The first is the gift of the Creator, and may be bestowed as his pleasure; but it is not consistent with his character for benevolence, that it should be withheld for any other purpose than to be enjoyed, and that we call happiness. Therefore, whatever nature has provided for preserving the one, or promoting the other, belongs alike to the whole race, and each may, of right, appropriate to his own use so much as is necessary to supply his natural wants. And as the means of sustaining life are derived almost entirely from the soil, every person has a right to so much of the earth's surface as is necessary for his support. To whatever unoccupied portion of it, therefore, he shall apply his labor for that purpose, from that time forth it becomes appropriated to his own exclusive use; and whenever improvements he may make by his industry becomes his property, and subject to his disposal. For the only true foundation of any right to property is man's labor. This is property, and that alone which the labor of man has made such. What rights, then, can the Government have in the soil of a wild and unsettled wilderness? Or what right has one man more than another to an acre of unoccupied land to which he may not have applied his labor, and which he may not make more productive and answer the end for which it was created, the support and happiness of the race?

It is said by the great expounder of the common law in his Commentaries, that "there is no foundation in nature or natural law, why a set of words upon parchment should convey the dominion of a land." The use and occupancy alone gives to man, in the language of the Commentaries, "an exclusive right to retain, in a permanent manner, that specific land which before belonged generally to everybody but particularly to nobody."

"As it is man's labor, then, applied to the soil that gives him a right to his improvements—for by nature he is entitled to the products of his industry—so he is entitled to a reasonable quantity of woodland, it being necessary to the full enjoyment of his improvements; for wood is necessary for building purposes, fencing, and fire-wood. Therefore, he becomes entitled out of this common fund to a reasonable amount of woodland, which by an implied conventional agreement among men, each would be permitted to retain in his exclusive possession, as a necessary appendage to his improvements.

And to prevent conflicts, as to what portions are appropriated to each individual's use, it is necessary that this claim should be defined; and this is best to be done by a survey. Therefore, if it is proper that the settler should pay the Government the costs of survey; for the surveys as conducted by the land office is the best and most convenient mode of laying off land.

Besides, he wants his title recorded in such way as not to be compelled to rely upon the memory of men, or be exposed to the dangers of perjury. It is therefore proper that he should pay the necessary expense of the paper title, but for nothing else. As property is the only proper subject of taxation, nor should the Government look to exact else for its support, it has no right to hold the public lands as a source of revenue. It may be said, True, such would be men's rights to the soil in a state of nature; but when he entered into society, he gave up a part of his natural rights, in order to enjoy the advantages of an organized community.

This is a doctrine, I am aware, of the books and treatises on society and government; but it is a doctrine of despotism, and belongs not to enlightened statesmen in a liberal age. It is the excuse of the despot, in encroaching upon the rights of the subject. He admits the encroachment, but claims that the citizen gave up part of his natural rights when he entered into society; and who is to judge what ones he relinquished but the ruling power? It was not necessary that any of man's natural rights should be yielded to the State in the formation of society, he yielded no right but the right to do wrong, and that he never had by nature. All he yielded in entering into society was a portion of his unrestrained liberty, and that was, that he would submit his conduct, that before was subject to the control of no living being, to the tribunal to be established by the State, and with the tacit consent that society, or the Government, might regulate the mode and manner of the exercise of his rights; but why should he consent to be deprived of them? It is upon this ground that we justify resistance to tyrants. And whenever the ruling power so far encroaches upon the natural rights of men that an appeal to arms becomes preferable to submission, they appeal from human to divine laws, and plead the natural rights of man in their justification. That Government, and that alone, is just which enforces and defends all of man's rights, and protects him against the wrongs of his fellow man.

But, it may be said, although such might be the rights of men, yet the Government has right to these lands, and may use them as a source of revenue, under the doctrine of eminent domain. This claim by Government had its origin in the maxim, that whatever was capable of ownership must have a legal and determinate owner. Therefore, whatever was not appropriated by individuals, as it stood in common to the whole State, was vested in the King as its head. Not only was forests, waste grounds, and wrecks, but the sole proprietorship of his empire; and he might grant it to his lords, and deal it out in manors to the favorites of his court. But it is not necessary for me to spend time in noticing the origin of, or the wrongs inflicted on men under this doctrine of eminent domain; for the claim of this Government, so far as this point is concerned, is embraced in the right of discovery. This is a claim, also, upon which the books vest a right to the soil in the King, or ruling power, under whose patronage land is discovered not before known to civilized man. It might be proper that a nation that has sent forth a fleet, and discovered land, should have the direction of the legislation for the government of the men who should settle it—have jurisdiction of the laws of the territory; but how can it acquire rights which man himself cannot acquire by the same process? It is a reasonable supposition, that a man is attached to the Government and institutions of his fatherland; and if the person who first discovers a country were to settle in it, and erect a system of laws, the presumption is that they would be similar to those of the land of their kindred. Therefore, there is a propriety in giving to nations jurisdictions over the men and property of the country they may discover, but not a proprietorship to its soil.

It is only necessary briefly to refer to the facts and history of discoveries on this continent, to show the want of a reasonable foundation for any claims to the land itself by reason of discovery. Spain being the first to encourage voyages of western discovery, was the first European Power to claim any rights to land on this side of the ocean. But as Columbus made his first landing on an island of the Gulf Stream, and saw not the main land of the continent till after it was visited by other voyagers, the right of eminent domain became divided with other nations. John and Sebastian Cabot, sailing under the auspices of England, first discovered the continent of North America, the shores of which, from Albatross Sound to north of Nova Scotia, were afterwards explored by the latter. From that time forth Henry VII claims the proprietorship of the soil, being his right to the land, from ocean to ocean, on the fact that the rocky coast of New England was a subject of the British crown. And this he became the sole dispenser of a vast continent

which his foot never pressed and his eyes never saw.

James Cartier, a native of St. Malo, lands at the inlet of Gaspe, on the shores of Canada, and erects there a shield with the Lilies of France and henceforth a wide, limitless territory is to be esteemed a part of the dominions of France, and subjected to the royal grants of her King.

Juan Ponce de Leon plants the cross on the coast of Florida, and showing to the breeze the crosses and lions of Spain, takes possession of the country in the name of Charles the Fifth. Nineteen years later, Ferdinand de Soto gave to the world the first knowledge of the Mississippi, and sank to his grave beneath its flood. As the fruits of these discoveries Spain claims the Florida. Such is the origin of the rights claimed by France, England, and Spain, to the North American continent; and by conquest and parchment, this Government has taken their title to the territory now composing the United States; that of England by the Revolution and grants to colonial subjects and proprietors; of France by the cession of April 30, 1803, and of Spain by the treaty of February 22, 1819. We became vested, it is true, with all their rights, but they had nothing to convey, save that a subject of theirs was the first to discover land never before, in their own quaint language, "looked upon by the Christian eyes." What kind of a foundation is that upon which to base a right against the happiness of man and the destiny of the race? What is there in the constitution of things, giving to one individual the sole and exclusive right to any of the bounties provided by nature for the benefit and support of the whole race, because, perchance, he was the first to look upon a mere fragment of the creation? By the same process of reasoning, he who should first discover the source or mouth of a river, would be entitled to a monopoly of the waters that flow in the channel—Or he who should first look upon one of the hills or fountains of the earth, might prevent painting man from quenching their thirst, unless this right was first secured by parchment. Why has this claim of man to monopolize any of the gifts of God to man been confined, by legal codes, to the soil alone? Is there any other reason than that it is a right which, having its origin in feudal times—under a system that regarded man but as an appendage of the soil that he tilled, and whose life, liberty, and happiness were but means of increasing the pleasures, pampering the passions and appetites of his liege lord—and, having once found a place in the books, it had been retained by the reverence which man is wont to pay to the past and to time-honored precedents. The human mind is so constituted, that it is prone to regard as right what has come down to us approved by long usage and halloved by grey age. It is a claim that had its origin with the kindred idea that royal blood flows only in the veins of an exclusive few, whose souls are more ethereal, because born amid the glitter of court, and cradled amid the pomp of lords and courtiers; and therefore they are to be installed as rulers and law givers of the race. Most of the evils that afflict our society have had their origin in violence and wrong enacted into law by the experience of the past, and retained by the prejudices of the present.

Is it not time you swept from your statute-book its still lingering relics of feudalism? Wiped out the principles ingrafted upon it by the narrowminded policy of other times, and adapted the legislation of the country to the spirit of the age, and to the true ideas of man's rights and relations to this government?

For if a man has a right on earth, he has a right to land enough to rear a habitation on. If he has a right to live, he has a right to the free use of whatever nature has provided for his sustenance—air to breathe, water to drink, and land enough to cultivate for his subsistence. For these are the necessary and indispensable means for the enjoyment of his inalienable rights, of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." And is it for a Government that claims to dispense equal exact justice to all classes of men, and that has laid down correct principles in its great chart of human rights, to violate those principles, and its solemn declarations in its legislative enactments?

The struggle between capital and labor is an unequal one at best. It is a struggle between the bones and sinews of men and dollars and cents; and in that struggle, it needs no prophet's ken to foretell the issue. And in that struggle, is it for this Government to stretch forth its arm to aid the strong against the weak? Shall it continue, by its legislation, to elevate and enrich idleness on the wall and the wool of industry?

For if the rule be correct as applied to the Government as well as individuals, that whatever a person permits another to do, having the right and means to prevent it, he does himself, then indeed is the Government responsible for all the evils that may result from speculation and land monopoly in your public domain. For it is not denied that Congress has the power to make any regulations for the disposal of these lands, not injurious to the general welfare. Now, when a new tract is surveyed, and you open your land office and expose it to sale, the man with the most money is the largest purchaser. The most desirable and available locations are seized upon by the capitalists of the country, who seek that kind of investment. You settle whosoever wants not to have a preemption right, or to be there at the time of sale, when he comes to seek a home for himself and his family, he must pay the speculator three or four hundred per cent. on his investment, or encounter the trials and hardships of a still more remote border life. And thus, under the operation of laws that you call equal and just, you take from the settler three or four dollars per acre, and put in the pocket of the speculator. Thus, by the operation of your law, abstracting so much of his last earnings for the benefit of capital; for not an hour's labor has been applied to the land since it was sold by the Government, nor is it more valuable to the settler. Has not the laborer's right to complain of legislation that compels him to endure greater toils and hardships, or contribute a portion of his earnings for the benefit of the capitalist? But not upon

the capitalist or the speculator is it proper that the blame should fall. Man must seek a livelihood, and do business under the laws of the country; and whatever rights he may acquire under the laws, though they be wrong, yet the well-being of society requires that they be respected and faithfully observed. If a person engage in a business legalized and regulated by the laws, and use no fraud or deception in its pursuit, and evils result to the community, let them apply the remedy to the proper source; that is, to the law-making power. The laws and the law-makers are responsible for whatever evils necessarily grow out of their enactments.

While the public lands are exposed to indiscriminate sale, as they have been since the organization of the Government, it opens the door to the wildest system of land monopoly—one of the direst, deadliest curses that ever paralyzed the energies of a nation, or paralyzed the arm of industry. It needs no lengthy dissertation to portray its evils. Its history in the Old World is written in sighs and tears. Under its influence, you behold in England, the proud and most splendid aristocracy, side by side with the most abject and debased people; vast manors hemmed in by hedges as a sporting ground for her nobility, while men are dying beside the inclosure for the want of land to till. Thirty thousand proprietors hold the title-deeds to the soil of Great Britain, while in Ireland alone there are two and a half millions of tenants that own no part of the land they cultivate, nor can they ever acquire a title to a foot of it; yet they pay annually from their hard earnings \$20,000,000 to absentee landlords for the privilege of dying on their soil. Under its blighting influence you behold industry, in rage, and patience in despair. Such are some of the fruits of land monopoly in the Old World; and shall we plant its seeds in the virgin soil of the New? Our system is subject to like evils, not so great in magnitude, perhaps, but similar in kind. Let the public domain then be set apart as the patrimony of labor, by preventing its being absorbed by capital, and thus, instead of blessing the race, become its curse. And, while asked to grant these lands to corporations and States, in order to develop the resources of the country, and thereby add to its greatness, let us not forget in what its true greatness consists. We are pointed to the cities and villages that will spring up along the lines of those improvements, as a reason why such appropriations of the land should be made. Every American will rejoice at whatever adds to the greatness and glory of his country. But it is doubtful whether the appearance of greatness that grow up under a system of local and special legislation are to be considered as adding to the real glory of a country.

It is not a sure indication that the people of that country are most prosperous and happy in which you behold the most splendid edifices, the greatest profusion of wealth and concentration of capital. He who bases his opinion of the real happiness of a people upon such evidence alone, is equally foolish with him who, in view of a vast city, judges the condition of its inhabitants by the lofty spire and towering dome, forgetting that beneath those gorgeous structures, in damp cellars, deep in the earth, dwells the most squalid poverty, misery, and woe—while in its steeples are to be seen the haggard and care worn laborer, the over-taxed seaman, and the child trained to beggary and to crime.

If you would raise fallen man from his degradation, elevate the servile from his groveling parasitism to the rights of a dignified man, you must first try to place within their reach the means for supplying their pressing physical wants; that religion may exert its influence on the soul and soothe the weary pilgrim in his path way to the tomb. For it is in vain you talk of the goodness and benevolence of an Omnipotent Ruler to him, whose life from the cradle to the grave, is but one continued scene of pain, misery and want. Talk not of free agency to him whose only freedom is to choose his own method to die. In vain you entreat him to cultivate the intellect and purify the heart whose days are dragged out in procreating a morsel to sustain life, and whose last prayer, as he falls byken-heaved into his kennel of straw, is that he may never behold the light of another day. In such cases, there might, perhaps, be some feeble conception of religion and its duties—of the infinite, everlasting, and pure; but unless there be a more than common mind, they would be like the dim shadows that float in the twilight.

Riches, it is true, are not necessary to man's enjoyment; but the means to prevent starvation are. Nor is a splendid palace necessary to his real happiness; but a shelter against the storm and winter's blast is. If you would lead the erring back from the paths of vice and crime to virtue and to honor, give him a home—give him a hearthstone, and he will surround it with household gods. If you would make men wiser and better, relieve your almshouses, close the doors of your penitentiaries, and break in pieces your galleys—purify the influences of the domestic fireside. For that is the school in which human character is formed, and there its destiny is shaped; there the soul receives its first impress, and man his first lesson, and they go with him for weal or woe through life. For purifying the sentiment, elevating the thoughts, and developing the noblest impulses of man's nature, the influence of a rural fireside and agricultural life are the noblest and the best. In the obscurity of the cottage, far removed from the seductive influences of rank and affluence, is nourished the virtues that counteract the decay of human institutions—the courage that defends the national independence, and the industry that supports all classes of the State.

It was said by Lord Chatham, in his appeal to the House of Commons in 1773, to withdraw the British troops from Boston, that "trade, indeed, increases the glory and wealth of a country; but its true strength and stamina are to be looked for, in the cultivators of the land in the simplicity of lives it found the simplicity of virtue, the integrity and courage of freedom. These true, genuine sons of the soil are invincible."

[SEE 27th PAGE.]