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ITS ALL WRONG

THE CORPORATION AND TRUST SYSTEM IS CONDEMNED.

No Longer Government Of The People By The People, For The People—Soulless Corporations Bind Us Hand And Foot To Their Will.

One of our foremost Canadian writers in political economy, in discussing the American situation as long ago as 1887, said: "Within the last generation a danger to American liberty has manifested itself, in the power of wealth concentrated in the hands of a few."

Now if this blindness on the part of the American public be true as regards the past, it is true no longer. The public, or part of the public at least, are waking up to the danger that threatens their political liberty.

So great and far-reaching has the power of corporations become that the United States senate that controls legislation is itself controlled, almost wholly, by these corporations.

Says the Canadian writer, quoted in the beginning of this article, who is dealing with this question in his celebrated work, "Politics of Labor": "Look at the great monopolies—the trans-continental railway lines—the coal companies—the manufacturing combinations, the telegraph corporations, the land-grabbing rings, and the landlords, who own block upon block of property in the heart of the great cities—the capitalists, who by a stroke of the pen can raise the price of the necessities of life, and we might also add that these different interests mentioned are often directly controlled by the same men; i.e., the owners and operators of the railroads often also own and operate the telegraph, and are also the owners not only of vast tracts of land, but also, very often either directly, or indirectly by means of furnishing the funds to organize companies or by becoming themselves, by means of their agencies, an integral part of such companies they own block after block in the business, and therefore the reins for the business man and farmer, also practically fix the price the farmer shall pay for the farm he uses. In virtue of the fact that this set of men has monopolized all the available wild land, they also, frequently organize into companies under other names, fix the price he shall receive for his grain, and after it has all been bought up, these same men fix to a large extent, the price the consumer shall in turn pay these companies for this same grain. And these same companies, under other names, composed, let us not forget, very often with some slight modifications and additions, of these same men, fix, when the farmer becomes hard-pressed in the necessity for purchasing machinery, etc., fix, we assert, the rate of interest, and the other terms upon which many of the trust and loan companies take a mortgage upon the farm. And after the farmer loses his farm, they also fix the price he shall pay in rent for his house in the city when he gravitates to the city in search of a job.

Said one of the city teachers to the writer of this article recently, rents are simply dreadful in the city of Toronto. Two and even three families, often finely-cultured, respectable people, are crowded together into one house; houses that a very few years ago were very seldom occupied by more than one family. Said the writer, "How is that! Why don't they build more houses?" She replied, "Why don't you understand! It is a company. They have bought up all the available rental property, not only the houses, but the available vacant lots as well. And they control the building operations. It pays them better to get a big rent for a few houses than a small rent for a large number of houses. And the people of the city are perfectly helpless. They have got to submit to the company's terms."

Now, if this be true of our own city of Toronto, it is doubtless

JOHN MITCHELL

THINKS LABOR ADVANTAGES ARE WITH AMERICANS.

Conditions Enable Workmen In States To Work Faster, With Greater Nervous Energy—Condition Is Better In Some Ways In Europe.

Kingston, Oct. 3.—(To the Editor): John Mitchell, the well-known labor leader, who conducted the negotiations for the miners in the great strike some time ago, is now making a tour of Europe for the purpose of investigating the condition of labor there. He has written a series of very readable letters giving his impressions of the condition of the laboring man in Great Britain and Europe, which have appeared in a number of the leading United States and Canadian newspapers. In letter No. 12, of this series, summarizing the result of his investigations, he contrasts the condition of the American workman with that of his European brother, and unhesitatingly states that nearly all the advantages are with the American. He says in part:

"In comparing the material situation of the American workman with that of his European brother, the material situation of the American workman is far superior to that of his European brother. Although wages, hours of labor, and general conditions of work are far from satisfactory in the United States, the situation of the American workman in these respects is better than that of the European workman. Wages measured both in money and in what money will buy, are higher in the United States than in England, and are much higher in the United States than in Germany, France or Belgium. The working day appears to be slightly longer in the United States than in England, and somewhat shorter in the United States than in Germany, France or Belgium. The intensity of work is much greater in America than in any of the countries named. There is less idling, less dawdling, less 'softheadiness' and more precision and activity in the work of the average American than that of the Englishman, Frenchman, or German. The productivity of labour is also far greater in the United States. The average American workman produces in a day much more than his European brother, and the higher wages which the American workman receives are, therefore, often compatible with a lower cost of production than is possible in Europe. This greater output of the American workman is due to the fact that, owing to his better nourishment and better training as well as to his better education, he is able to accomplish more and work with greater muscular and nervous energy. Moreover, the higher wages of the American workman constantly stimulate the employer to introduce labor-saving machinery and to effect economies which are not at the expense of the workman. In addition, the great natural resources of the country and the larger and more efficient manner in which industry is organized in the United States, permit the American employer to pay higher wages without entailing a greater cost, which fact should be borne in mind when estimating the advantages and disadvantages under which the American workman labors.

In Europe as in America, one constantly hears the statement that the dearth of the American workman does not go further than the shilling of the Englishman, the mark of the German, or even the franc of the Frenchman or Belgian; in other words that the cost of living is in proportion to the wages earned. Nothing could be further from the truth. The standard of living of the American workman is far from what it should be in a country of surpassing wealth and great natural resources, but it is higher than the standard of living in England, and much further advanced than on the continent. The European workman spends less on living because he has less to spend, and he receives less of the comforts and luxuries of life than does the American workman. He lives on less money, but he lives also on less food. He has fewer clothes, and they are of poorer quality, and his lodgings, with some exceptions, are much worse."

"On the continent also relations between employers and employed are not so favorable as in the United States. There are, perhaps, fewer strikes, and there may even be less direct friction, but in these countries the workman whether unionist or non-unionist, is not accorded the social position which he enjoys in America, and his organization is not, as a rule, recognized or dealt with. Even in England, the independence of the workman appears to be very much less marked than in the United States. In our country, the workman is a free man, while the English workman is a slave."

"In no country—not even in England—do the working classes possess the same opportunities for voicing their ideas and ideals as in the United States. In our country most of the trades unions publish journals, supplemented by scores of other labor papers, which many of the great cities daily are distinctly friendly to the cause of unionism and devote many columns to labor news. In England, on the other hand, the larger newspapers do not spare any space to the doings of the workmen or their representatives, and both in that country and on the continent there seems to be a dearth of intelligently directed appeals to the working classes."

Such statements as these, coming as they do from an expert advocate of the rights of the laboring man, should give our Canadian workmen food for thought. His lot as compared with that of his European fellow workman must be acknowledged to be greatly superior, and should make him have a care lest he should through unjust demands bring about an influx of workmen from across the Atlantic who would probably be willing to work for very much smaller wages. In only a few particulars, Mr. Mitchell says the European workmen better off than those of this country, these being in the case where it exercises no absolute control over the workmen, in the provision made for the wives of working-

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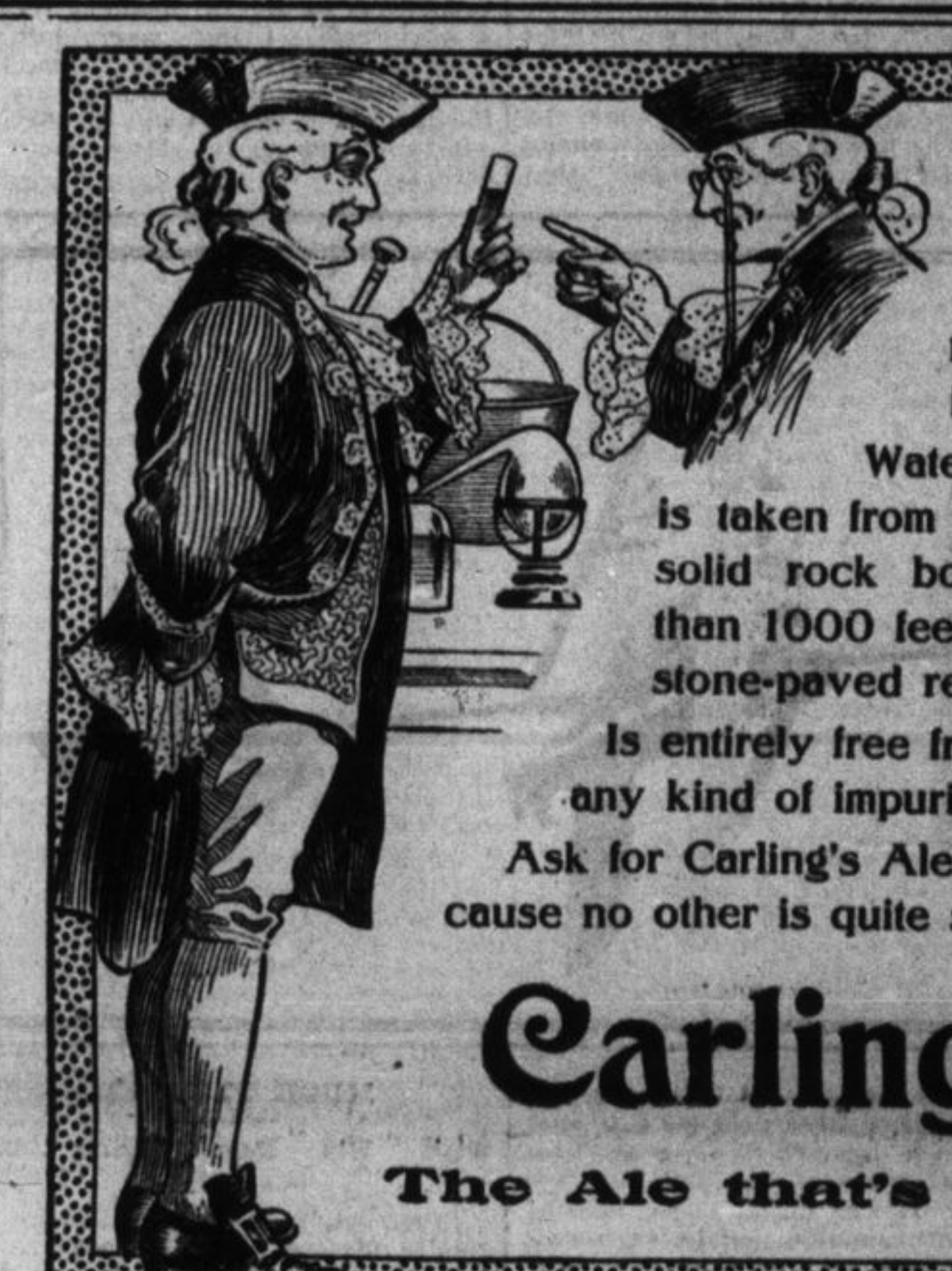
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