

the two sections as the conspirators, to suit their own purposes, have asserted, and even done their best to excite. We do not like the Southerners less for the gallantry and devotion they have shown even in a bad cause, and they have learned to respect the same qualities in us. There is no longer the nonsensical talk about Cavaliers and Puritans, nor does the one gallant Southron any longer pine for ten Yankees as the victims of his avenging steel. As for subjugation, when people are beaten they are beaten, and every nation has had its turn. No sensible man in the North would insist on any terms except such as are essential to assure the stability of peace. To talk of the South as our future Poland is to talk without book; for no region rich, prosperous, and free could ever become so. It is a geographical as well as a moral absurdity. With peace restored, slavery rooted out, and harmony sure to follow, we shall realize a power and prosperity beyond even the visions of the Fourth-of-July orator, and we shall see Freedom, while she proudly repairs the ruins of war, as the Italian poet saw her,—

* "Girar la Libertà mirai
E baciare lieta ogni ruina e dire
Ruine sì ma servitù non mai."

It is a pleasure to know that Mr. Lincoln had the satisfaction of reading the "North American" essay. As it was, according to the custom of the day, unsigned, he wrote to the publishers, instead of to the author, concerning a certain point in his policy which had been criticised and which he wished to explain. This letter, which was dated January 16, 1864, appeared in the next number of the Review. It was characteristic of Lincoln to think only of the benefit of so notable a demonstration in favor of the cause to which his life was dedicated. "Of course," said the President, "I am not the most impartial judge; yet, with due allowance for this, I venture to hope that the article entitled 'The President's Policy' will be of value to the country." How like him to add—"I fear I am not quite worthy of all which is therein said of me personally."

Several of the leading American poets have shown their appreciation of Lincoln in verse or prose—either during his life or since his tragic death. Indeed, an interesting study could be made of the tributes and allusions to the great Liberator by the principal writers of the country. Such a study would not omit mention of Stedman's sonnet on Lincoln's death, and his poem on the cast of Lincoln's hand, a part of which was reprinted in the December CENTURY, of Dr. Holmes's memorial hymn, of Whitman's two poems on the death of Lincoln, or of Stoddard's stately and pathetic ode, and his sonnet published ten years ago in THE CENTURY. During the war the relations of Bryant with Lincoln were, perhaps, more important than those of any other of our poets with the President. Bryant had met him first when Lincoln was a Captain in the Black Hawk war,—and had presided at the Cooper Union meeting where the Western statesman delivered his now famous speech. Lincoln was Bryant's choice as a candidate as against Seward, and in personal interview as well as by letter and editorial, he encouraged, advised, and criticised the Lincoln administration throughout its existence. At Lincoln's death Bryant wrote the noble threnody which is familiar to all readers of American poetry. But we think it will be found that the literary record of Lowell in connection with Lincoln is more remarkable than that of any other of the distinguished authors of America.

* "I beheld Liberty go 'round,
Kiss every ruin joyfully, and say
'Ruins, if so must be, but Slavery never.'"

The Injustice of Socialism.

SOCIALISTS themselves maintain that their system alone is equitable, and that the present industrial methods are all wrong, since they lead necessarily to inequality in wealth and power and in the means of happiness. The object of socialism is to put an end to these inequalities, and to found a society in which all would fare as nearly as possible alike; and this, as socialists maintain, would be truly equitable and just. But when we inquire into the fundamental principles of their system, we find the element of justice conspicuously absent. Their main principles are the ownership of all means of production by the State, and the payment of all workmen according to what is assumed to be the rule of justice. This rule is expressed in the formula with which all students of the subject are familiar, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." According to this rule, a man of superior talents or creative genius would receive no higher recompense than the most inefficient workman, and, indeed, if the latter had a larger family, he would apparently receive more. The obvious intent of this rule is to prevent men of superior abilities from rising above the mass; and socialists proclaim that the privileges of higher intelligence must fall with the privileges of wealth and birth.

Such being the law of recompense in the socialistic system, let us see how it accords with the principles of justice as commonly understood among men. To determine this, we must inquire how a man would be recompensed for his labor if he worked all alone for himself. Suppose a man on a desert island, like Robinson Crusoe, with no goods of any kind except what he could cull from the bosom of Nature or produce by his unassisted labor. In this case it is plain that his wealth and prosperity would depend on the ability and energy with which he worked. If he tilled twice as much ground, he would raise twice as large a crop; if he contrived a way to kill game, he would have its flesh to eat; if he laid by a store of food for the winter season, he would have enough to eat, and if he did not, he would suffer and perhaps die of hunger; if he invented tools of various kinds, he could produce vastly more goods for his own use than he could without them; and, in short, the rewards of his industry would depend on the intelligence and enterprise with which he labored in his own behalf. If we suppose two or more men, each living on his own island, their comparative gains would depend partly, indeed, on the natural resources of the several islands, but mainly on the comparative skill and energy of the men themselves. This truth is abundantly illustrated in the life of nations. Why are Americans and Englishmen richer and more prosperous than Russians and Turks, and these latter more prosperous than Hottentots and Maoris? Clearly because of the greater intelligence and skill and the higher moral qualities of the more prosperous races; so that both of individuals and of nations it is true that, when working in their own behalf, they are recompensed according to their abilities, and not according to their needs.

Since a man is recompensed according to his ability when working for himself, he ought to be recompensed on the same principle when he works for society; for

otherwise he will be deprived of the natural reward of his labors. On the other hand, society itself would suffer an injustice if it paid the incompetent or inefficient workman a large salary simply because he had a large family dependent on him for support. Thus the socialistic principle that every man ought to work for society according to his ability, but be paid according to his needs, is palpably unjust; and this of itself is sufficient to condemn the system, even if otherwise desirable.

It may be said, however, that all socialists do not hold the principle here attributed to them, but that some of their number would recompense every man "according to his deeds." It is admitted that this rule has some advocates among socialists, but its adoption in a socialistic state would be practically impossible. For in the first place, there is no means of ascertaining the value of a man's deeds, except by competition, which the socialists abhor. The only way to determine who are the most efficient servants of society is by giving each man a chance to do his best, and this means individualism, and competition among men for employment and public favor. But again, if it were practicable under a socialistic system to recompense public servants, such as all men would then be, according to their deeds, this would be directly opposed to the main object of the socialists, which is to abolish inequality. If men are to be paid according to their deeds—whether regard is had to the value of the deeds or to the difficulty of performing them—it is obvious that some men will receive a vast deal more than others, and this will bring back the reign of inequality. It is true that the more highly paid workers could not invest their earnings in the form of capital as they now do—they would spend them in personal enjoyment; but this would only make the inequalities more glaringly conspicuous. If one man received ten thousand dollars a year for his services and another only one thousand, the former would have his spacious mansion, his costly furniture, his luxurious dress and equipages, and all the pleasures that a large income gives, just as rich men do now; and the poorly paid man, if of an envious disposition, would feel the same jealousy and discontent that such men now feel. It would be impossible, therefore, in a socialistic state to adopt this method of payment; and thus there is no escape from the flagrant injustice of paying a man according to his needs, while requiring him to work according to his ability.

If, now, we consider our existing society, we shall find that in it men are recompensed for their labor, partly, indeed, according to their opportunities, but mainly according to their abilities. That this is true in the great majority of cases is certain, however strongly excited orators may assert the contrary. It is conspicuously true in the case of nations, whose differing prosperity and power is almost wholly due to

difference in their mental and moral qualities, notwithstanding the difference in their natural resources. It is also true in the main of individual workers of almost every class. The skilled and efficient laborer gets higher pay than the inefficient and the lazy, and the professional man higher pay than the ordinary laborer. So among capitalists and business managers the most successful are, as a rule, those who invest their capital most prudently and manage it with the greatest skill and discretion. Only the higher kinds of intellectual workers—the great thinkers, moralists, and others of that order—fail to get pay in proportion to their work; but their case is exceptional, and they are few in number.

"English as She is Taught."

NOTHING could be more amusing than the unconscious humor of "English as She is Taught," in this number of THE CENTURY, yet where is the thoughtful reader whose laughter is not followed by something very like dismay? Here are examination papers taken from many schools, evolved from many brains; yet are they so like in character that all might be the work of one puzzled school-boy struggling with matters too deep for him.

Undoubtedly many of these children have been poorly taught, and poorly taught in the same way, but the trouble lies back of indifferent teachers, and even back of indifferent or ambitious school-boards. It rests upon us all as a people. We are too heedless of detail, and too ambitious for number or size or appearance. We know too little of thoroughness; we demand impossible things; naturally, one of the things we get is the result embodied in "English as She is Taught."

Every conscientious teacher can tell how he is hampered by his overruling school-board or constituency. Sometimes it may attempt to guide; more frequently it suspects. His individuality is stamped out; his freshness of method and organization is distrusted. He knows that too many subjects are taught in a superficial, hap-hazard way, but he can make no change, for the genius of the people is against him. He knows that his assistants are working without adequate direction or organization; but his own hands are too often tied. Too often, too, the teacher is untrained and heedless,—often a mere sojourner in the school, preparing for other things; often the creature of a board dominated by a political or a sectarian majority. We need trained and enthusiastic teachers; unbiased, unpolitical, and carefully chosen school-boards; less ambition and more thoroughness; less of the *what* and more of the *why*; less immaturity striving to appear mature, and less ignorance masking itself under assurance. But the question arises: Who is to teach the American people this?

