

free trade he demands for them can be achieved regardless of international agreement. If our government makes American farmers trade-free to buy what they want of Canadian producers, the Canadian government will be forced by home influences to make Canadians trade-free to buy what they want of American farmers. And therein is the value, the only value probably, of President Taft's reciprocity agreement. Adopt it, and the whole plundering protection system which separates this country from Canada in the interest of monopolists in both countries will crumble as surely as a Holland dyke would if so much as a pin stream were allowed to run through.

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Good Politics.

"Say nothing, but say it strenuously." Guess who's been through our town.

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An Iniquitous Doctrine.

In the third of our series of letters from China, in *The Public* of April 7, there is at page 319 a brief but pointed reference to the continued imposition by the British government upon the Chinese of the opium evil. That opium story, long and sad and devilish, discloses in simplest form the utter wickedness of the doctrine of "vested rights" as opposed to natural rights—to the plain garden variety of "square deal" if you shy at "natural rights." When a wicked source of profit is once recognized by government—the opium trade by the British government, for instance—the doctrine of "vested rights" demands that this source of profit be not cut off by government without full compensation for prospective profits. Consequently, unless the whole people be taxed to compensate a few for their loss of a ghoulish commerce, the ghoulish commerce must continue indefinitely.

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Whether its profits are moral, or secured by laws that foster vice, that sanction slavery, that grind the poor, that exploit workers nominally free, and that honeycomb the land with working children's graves, is all one under the doctrine of "vested rights." Such vice must continue to be fostered, those slaves must continue slaves, the poor must be content to be plundered, workers nominally free must submit to exploitation and think of God as having made them for it, and their babes must be slaughtered—all this, generation after generation in perpetuity, unless at some utopian period human sympathy animates the prosperous strongly and widely enough to win their consent to buying

off the aggressors. Such is the doctrine of "vested rights." Could a more infamous theory of human relationships be invented anywhere outside of hell?

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Property interests, whatever they be, which have no better defense in law or ethics or morals than that doctrine of "vested rights," ought not to survive and cannot survive. With the development of intelligence those interests will have to go, compensation or no compensation. Fathered in the past by able and cunning greed, and mothered by general ignorance, they are maintained today lazily by the unthinking and defiantly by the crooked in thought. With the development of moral and self-defensive intelligence in the mass, they must give place to property interests that depend, not upon the doctrine of vested rights for title, but upon useful work.

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TOM L. JOHNSON'S PUBLIC SERVICE

The public service of this self-consecrated man whose wasted body has now returned to the earth whence it came, was in its principal features a municipal service. Distinctively, he was "Mayor Tom" of Cleveland.

But the consecration call and his cordial response occurred long before he became Mayor; and from that hour steadily until his death—at a cost, too, that even his most intimate friends may hardly know—public service was his dream of the night, his vision of the day, and the work of his life.

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Tom L. Johnson served the public when he reluctantly resumed the money-making career which his higher call had decided him to abandon, because Henry George advised him that he owed his faculties in that respect to the cause, uninviting to almost every man of wealth, which he had espoused.

He served the public when he joined in the repugnant game of partisan politics, playing it as it had to be played, in order that he might in Congress promote the fortunes of the same cause.

He served the public when in Congress he brought to light the plutocratic tax regime of the District of Columbia; when he spurned appeals to consistency on the floor of the House by denouncing Protection as a fraud which, though he profited by it as a business man, he would not stand for as a Congressman; when he used his Congressional "leave to print" for franking Henry George's "Protection or Free Trade" broadcast, as