

**POPULAR PROGRESS; THE
CAUSE OF AGRICULTURAL
AND INDUSTRIAL DEPRESSION,
AND THE REMEDY**

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Popular progress; the cause of agricultural and industrial depression, and the remedy by
Thomas Donohoe

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THOMAS DONOHOE

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POPULAR PROGRESS

THE CAUSE OF AGRICULTURAL AND
INDUSTRIAL DEPRESSION,
AND
THE REMEDY.

BY
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PREFACE.

Are the ebb and flow of our prosperity produced by accidental causes, or is there something radically wrong in the industrial system, which produces such general and long-continued depression in a country of such vast resources?

Every good citizen must grieve to behold desolation spreading through this fair land, in the wake of that insatiable monster, "hard times," that has been devouring the substance of the poor and has crushed out many a feeble life; and his heart must yearn for the day when prosperity shall again smile on the toiler's task and bring happiness and comfort to his home.

That there has been a great deal of suffering in the land is a lamentable fact, too often ignored by state and national authorities, because there has been no general clamor for relief; and as poverty in the eyes of society is a sin or a crime, people would prefer to suffer in silence rather than make known their weakness or guilt.

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When a plague sweeps over the land, marking its path with suffering, with ruin and with death, the sympathy and the generosity of a noble people are aroused, and all the skill and intelligence that money can procure or that authority can compel are brought into play, to bring relief and restore health to the land. The industrial plague, known as "hard times," is more insidious in its nature, more mysterious in its origin than any physical epidemic; yet, it is no less far reaching in its effects and disastrous in its results. The physical plague will mark its victims with outward and unmistakable symptoms of disease, but the industrial malady merely marks the gaunt features of its prey with the lines of want and care, or clutches the heart, and stifles every outward evidence of shameful weakness.

The two great political parties have promised that the adoption of their principles would bring a penacca for all our ills, and would even restore healthful conditions to the land, but hope too long deferred has wearied and made sad the hearts of a patient people.

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If we can discover the true cause of our malady, it should be within our province to effect a cure.

The land yields immense food crops; so abundant, in fact, are these crops some years that it does not pay to harvest them, and they are allowed to rot in the fields, or our consuls and merchants seek a market in foreign countries for the surplus products that cannot be sold at home; and all this time strong, able-bodied men with willing hands, often skilled in special callings, are starving in sight of plenty. Our manufactures, mines, etc., like the land, turn out more products than can be consumed; yet, there are hundreds of thousands of idle hands, but they have no work and can get no money to buy the comforts, or even the necessaries of life.

This country should not only be the land of plenty, but also the home of peace. Isolated from the great powers of the world by immense tracts of ocean, and with a smaller neighbor pursuing kindred interests on her northern border, she need not fear any external enemy, and should not have any internal foe. People govern

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themselves, at least in theory, and make their own laws; and if prosperity can be controlled by government or law, then the remedy is within easy reach.

When men see plenty all about them, of which they are denied a part, and luxury in which they cannot share, though they may be able and willing to toil for a pittance, they cannot be in love with conditions which seem to cast all nature's favors at the feet of the few. These men may have families, may have little ones at home looking for the coming of the bread winner, "bearing his sheaves," and then want will breed discontent and incipient rebellion.

Shall the strong protect and help the weak; or is warfare the natural condition of man, and the brute struggle for the survival of the fittest the ultimate destiny of the race? As this is the age of reason, all disputes should be settled by appeal to the higher intelligence, and in no land should this be so easily effected as here where the governing power is in the hands of the people. Rumblings of discontent may be heard, but they are only the bellowings of brute force, manifest-

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ing by dumb, but intelligible appeal, the revolt of the great army of toilers against the injustice of the present industrial system. Anarchy, too, and socialism, favored by disturbed conditions, like dark clouds, may be seen above the horizon portending storms and destruction.

This country has passed through many great crises in her history, but the good sense and patriotism of her people have rallied to her cause and have enabled her to triumph. The proper province of Government is to promote the welfare of its people, not indeed by providing happiness, but by placing within the reach of all the means of procuring happiness for themselves by their exertion and toil. If conditions have arisen which tend to limit the means of procuring a livelihood, and thus exclude a large portion of citizens from the pursuits of happiness, it is the duty of Government to re-adjust those conditions to the requirements of the public welfare. This is not paternalism; it is justice.

The author has sought to point out the facts and to suggest methods of relief; and if this little work only serves to throw some light upon