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BY H. W. RATES.

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Per year.....\$2.00
Six months.....1.00

Entered as second-class matter November 5, 1910, at Roseburg, Ore., under act of March 3, 1879.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1911.

MISERS—OLD AND NEW.

America today is governed by its plutocrats—that is, by the very rich capitalists of finance who control the industries—the money trust, says the Medford Mail Tribune.

Any man who devotes his energies to needless and useless accumulations, no matter whether it is sea shells or money, is apt to be a little off mentally. As these capitalists of industries are all engaged in the absorbing occupation of acquiring more money than anyone could possibly use, and despite accumulated millions, amassing still more, it follows that the nation is under the domination of misers—a variety of lunatics.

But the United States is not alone. Every other nation is more or less in the same predicament. Commenting upon this fact, Gilbert K. Chesterton in the London Daily News writes these entertainingly of the misers who really rule:

It is a sign of sharp sickness in a society when it is actually led by some special sort of a lunatic. A mild touch of madness may keep a man sane; for it may keep him modest. So some exaggerations in the state may remind it of its own normal. But it is bad when the head is cracked; when the roof of the commonwealth has a tile loose.

The modern miser has changed much from the miser of legend and anecdote; but only because he has grown yet more insane. The old through the Bible and all strong

miser had some touch of the human artist about him in so far that he collected gold—a substance that can really be admired for itself, like ivory or old oak. An old man who picked up yellow pieces had something of the simple ardor, something of the mystic materialism of a child who picks out yellow flowers. Gold is but one kind of colored clay, but clay can be very beautiful. The modern idolator of riches is content with far less genuine things. The glitter of guineas is like the glitter of hutchinsons, the clink of pelf is like the clink of bells, compared with the dreary papers and dead calculations which make the hobby of the modern miser.

The modern millionaire loves nothing so lovable as a coin. He is content sometimes with the dead crackle of notes; but far more often with the mere repetition of thoughts in a ledger, all as like each other as eggs to eggs. And as for comfort, the old miser could be comfortable, as many tramps and savages are, when he was once used to being unclean. A man could find some comfort in an unwashed attic or an unwashed shirt. But the Yankee millionaire can find no comfort with five telephones at his head and the financial world changing every five minutes. The round coins in the miser's stocking were safe in some sense, the round thoughts in the millionaire's ledger are safe in no sense; the same fluctuation which excites him with their increase depresses him with their diminution.

As the miser gathers gold he cannot eat, the millionaire counts figures he cannot buy or sell. The miser at least collects coins; his hobby is numismatics; the man who collects thoughts collects nothing.

It may be admitted that the man amassing millions is a bit of an idiot; but it may be asked in what sense does he rule the modern world. The answer to this is very important and rather curious. The evil genius for us here is not the rich, but the very rich. The distinction is important; because this special problem is separate from the old general quarrel about rich and poor that runs through the Bible and all strong

problem today is that certain powers and privileges have grown so world-wide and unwieldy that they are out of the power of the moderately rich as well as of the moderately poor. They are out of the power of everybody except a few millionaires—that is, misers.

The things that change modern history, the big national and international loans, the big educational and philanthropic foundations, the purchase of newspaper empires, the big prices paid for pictures, the big expenses often incurred in elections—these are getting too big for everybody except the misers; the men with the largest of earthly fortunes and the smallest of earthly aims.

There are two other odd and rather important things to be said about them. The first is this: That with this aristocracy we do not have the chance of a lucky variety in types which belongs to larger and looser aristocracies. The moderately rich include all kinds of people—even good people. Even priests are sometimes saints; and even soldiers are sometimes heroes. Some doctors have really grown wealthy by curing their patients and not by flattering them; some brewers have been known to sell beer. But among the very rich you will never find a really generous man, even by accident. They may give their money away, but they will never give themselves away; they are egotistic, secretive, dry as old bones. To be smart enough to get all that money, you must be dull enough to want it.

Secondly, the last, the worst point about them is this: That the new miser is flattered by his meanness and the old one never was. It was never called self-denial in the old miser that he lived on bones. It is called self-denial in the new millionaire if he lives on beans. A man like Dancer was never praised as a Christian saint for going in rags. A man like Rockefeller is praised as a sort of pagan saint for his early rising or his unassuming dress. His "simple" meals, his "simple" clothes, his "simple" funeral, are all extolled as if they were creditable to him. They are disgraceful to him; exactly as disgraceful as the tatters and vermin of the old miser were disgraceful to him. To be in rags for charity would be the condition of a saint; to be a rags for money was that of a filthy old fool. Precisely in the same way, to be "simple" for charity is the state of a saint; to be "simple" for money is that of a filthy old fool. Of the two I have more respect for the old miser, gnawing bones in an attic; if he was not nearer to God, he was at least a little nearer to men. His simple life was a little more like the life of the real poor.

Everybody says this, or everybody says that, and everybody does just as everybody says, says an exchange. That is to say, everybody dictates the course of action for everybody, and everybody seems pleased with the arrangement. Everybody is not always genial, friendly or neighborly, because, not knowing everybody, everybody is apt to be a little distant. Everybody often considers that everybody ought to realize and appreciate the superiority of everybody's particular type, but it is a sad fact that everybody can't see it that way. Everybody will admit that this seems a little paradoxical, or queer; nevertheless, everybody knows that everybody is right. Everybody makes the laws for everybody, and everybody obeys everybody's laws sometimes; yet everybody is not always satisfied with everybody's method of obeying or disobeying. Everybody wants everybody's money, and everybody tries to keep everybody out of everybody's strong box; everybody plans to outwit everybody along these lines; everybody succeeds and everybody does not succeed. This principle is what makes business good for everybody. These observations may be taken as truth—they are truth—because everybody says so. Everybody knows it, too.

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DAILY WEATHER REPORT.

U. S. weather bureau local office, Roseburg, Ore., 24 hours ending 3 a. m., Oct. 13, 1911.
Precipitation in inches and hundredths:
Highest temperature.....68
Lowest temperature.....47
Precipitation, last 24 hours......6
Total precipitation since 1st of month......73
Avg. precip. for this month for 23 years.....2.16
Total precip. from Sep. 1, 1911, to date.....3.57
Average precip. from September 1, 1877.....2.15
Total excess from Sep. 1, 1911, 1.42
Average precip. for 23 wet seasons.....31.84
WILLIAM BEILL, Observer.

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Charles Matthews to Henry M. Jullweake, all of lot 15 in block 3, Chadwick Addition to the city of Roseburg. Consideration \$10.

Rev. Charles Wilson Baker spent the day at Sutherland attending to business matters.

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