

Those philosophers who delight to moralize upon the theme of childless women, as suggested by Massachusetts statistics, holding that the sex is degenerating and willfully shirking the chief function nature has imposed upon it, and predicting most dire effects upon the welfare of the nation in consequence, would do well, before they consider the subject closed, to inquire into two things—whether the fault be not as much, or more, that of the head of the family as of the one now bearing the blame, and whether it be not a sign of advancement that women are becoming recognized in the world as something more than mere reproducers of the species. Both branches of this inquiry are worthy careful study, and writers should handle the whole subject very lightly until they have given them thoughtful attention.

It is to be regretted that any member of the delegation from Multnomah county should feel called upon to champion the cause of the opponents of the movement to repeal the clause of the assessment laws allowing deductions for indebtedness. That this is the greatest evil of our present faulty assessment system is too clear to require argument, and that there can never be an honest and complete enrollment of property for taxation as long as that great tax dodging contrivance remains is incontestably true. Just why a member from this county, possessing intelligence enough to know this, and knowing that the general sentiment of his constituents is in favor of abolishing this questionable privilege, should work and talk to prevent it, passes the understanding of those not gifted with a sight of the wires that move him or the hands that pull them.

The legislature of Arkansas has refused to make an appropriation for the purpose of having that state represented at the Columbian exposition and has also declined to appropriate \$50,000 for a state industrial exposition. The grounds of opposition are that the state is too poor, partly from natural causes and partly by reason of a recent defalcation by the state treasurer. Just as long as Arkansas persists in pursuing her past unenterprising course, offering neither industrial nor political inducements for the increase of capital and population, she will remain too poor to take advantage of such opportunities to promote her welfare. There are many in Oregon who think this state "too poor" to be properly represented at Chicago. One thing is certain—if this be not true now it soon will be, unless a radical change be made in our assessment laws. As things are going now, the state will not only be too poor to advertise her resources in a few years, but to pay her ordinary expenses, and that, too, without any official defalcation to charge it to.

One of the most meritorious measures before the state legislature is the one requiring the correct labeling of cans of salmon. Much inferior fish is packed by irresponsible persons and labeled "Columbia River Salmon," with the name of some fictitious packing company attached, and placed on the market as the genuine article, thus perpetrating a fraud upon the public and injuring the salmon packing industry of the Columbia. The proposed law handles this matter in just the right way. It does not interfere with, nor tax, one man's business for the benefit of another—and in doing this is where the oleomargarine, glucose, compound lard, and other restrictive measures of that nature are vicious in principle—but it requires that salmon shall be correctly labeled and sold for what it actually is. It protects the purchaser from imposition and the producer of the genuine article from fraudulent imitation. It is not the province of the law to help one man's business at the expense of another, and if the salmon product be wholesome it should not be taxed nor interfered with; but it is the duty of the law to provide safeguards against fraud, and this is what the proposed law undertakes to perform. This principle might well be extended to many other things. Indeed, a general law requiring all articles of food exposed for sale to be correctly labeled, or, at least, punishing every person guilty of placing fraudulent labels upon them, would be in the interests of consumers and a protection to legitimate industry.

The question of the exclusion of the Chinese has been revived in Victoria, and is receiving much attention. Some time ago the dominion parliament imposed a head tax of \$50 upon all Chinese entering Canada, but this has proved to be no restriction whatever. The same evils that led to the successful opposition to Mongolian immigration in the United States are observed by our neighbors across the line, and they are clamoring for relief. The Australian colonies, also, are eager to be rid of their Asiatic burden. A head tax there much larger than in Canada does not appear to be effective in keeping them away, and there are now 40,000 of them in the colonies. Beyond question Caucasian and Mongolian civilization can not live together in competition. White labor must either descend to the level of the other or be driven out. It is not a question of sentimental race antipathy, but of irresistible laws of nature. If we would maintain the dignity of labor and have the laborer a useful citizen, the head of a family and a valuable integral portion of the body politic, we must preserve him from competition with labor that is servile in its instincts and demoralizing in its tendencies. Doubtless the citizens of British Columbia who recognize and suffer this

evil will have as hard a time convincing their fellow Canadians of the justice of their complaint and the purity of their motives as did the long-suffering citizens of the Pacific coast south of the line. We have, also, another reason to hope they will be successful in their efforts to pass restrictive laws, since it would close the greatest door through which the Chinese now unlawfully enter the United States.

Queer opinions of the nature and duties of a railroad commissioner seem to be entertained by many legislators. Some would have him simply an ornamental figure, with neither duties nor powers; some would have him a walking track inspector—see cartoon on back page—searching for defective frogs; some would have him an autocrat able to tie up every railroad in the state, and some would not have him at any price. A railroad commissioner properly is a special official to whom is delegated the duty of looking after the public welfare in its relations to transportation companies, experience having amply shown that this can not be done through the regular state officials—Governor Penneyer to the contrary notwithstanding. He should be clothed with the power to regular freight and passenger rates, not arbitrarily, but within defined limits and in a prescribed manner; to enforce the laws of the state as applied to corporations through the regular authorities, to see that the roads maintain an adequate and safe equipment, to adjust differences between companies and employees, and in everything guard the rights of the public so certain to be infringed by corporations unless other than the ordinary channels of justice are open for their maintenance. A railroad commission should neither be shorn of the power that will render it competent to accomplish the purpose of its creation, nor should it be clothed with absolute and dictatorial authority. It should be composed of enough members—three or five—to make its acts the result of deliberation, but not enough to make concerted and effective action practically impossible. Such a commission the people want and are willing to pay for.

CALIFORNIA.

I stood, one wild December morn,
In winter's icy lair;
Above were wind-swept mountain peaks,
And barren wastes were there;
Below, enshrined in dark blue hills,
A summer land lay fair.
I stood in that fair summer land,
And gazed o'er ocean's breast,
While down across the crimson bars
Of golden painted west
A mottled gull, on slow, tired wings,
Sailed calmly to her rest.
Again, I stood 'mid orange groves
And tropic wonders rare,
Beside sweet, tender flowers unknown,
Whose fragrance filled the air,
And dreamed that paradise had been
Forever reigning there;
While all the sun's white radiance wooed
A deathless summer calm,
The low, soft zephyrs murmuring kiss'd
Each tall and stately palm,
And poured upon my wayward days
A sweet, seductive balm.

Again, my slow, enfeebled pulse
To nature throbs; once more
I grasp the grandeur of the hills,
The mountains grim and hoar,
And feel the deep, harmonic strains
Of ocean's ceaseless roar.
I heed no more the far off dalls,
Where youth's bright dream was pass'd;
I fear no more the world's grim frown
That held my manhood fast;
For I have found this golden shore
A haven fair, at last.
And so, beside the peaceful sea,
I dream sweet dreams of peace;
The world's wild discord drifts afar—
Its low, sad echoes cease
To mar the hopeful hours that mark
My wandering life's release.

ETHEL.