

## Hard Times.

If the cry be true that we hear coming from the lips of our fellowmen - merchants, farmers, mechanics, and capitalists - it must certainly be true that our lot was cast at an unlucky moment. Hard times, no money, give me credit, are expressions too often repeated by the merchant because there is no cash trade; by the farmer because prices are low; by the mechanic because there is no employment in his avocation; by the capitalist because he did not realize all that he expected from his wild speculation.

The necessaries of life are abundant, yet we hear the dismal cry of hard times on every Kansas guffyr that comes to our ear. The United States is richer to day than it was a generation ago, not only in accumulated national wealth but in proportion to the people. The laborer works harder, the merchant strives more efficiently, the capitalist makes more blood curdling speculations,

yet they find life's necessities hardly within their reach.

The financial storm which of late has swept so pitilessly over the commercial world, has like all other calamities produced reflection in producing ruin. But still we go headlong into business from depression, over a certain trail and down we go again. We are constantly gaining a higher rate of speed in going this circuit, and the time may be close at hand when we shall have such an enormous momentum that in going around a sharp curve we shall fly the track and descend into the bottomless pit below. Why these storms should continue to occur is a question to be answered by the present generation.

The causes are numerous and intricate. The late Rebellion cost us millions of dollars and created a debt on which we are still paying interest. We have not yet fully recovered from the shock - and the South has not yet recovered so as to add anything to the

national wealth. The Americans are an extravagant race, and waste the materials of living with a most lavish prodigality. According to a Frenchman there is enough food wasted every day in the U. S. to feed the French people. Sudden inflation of paper currency was a cause of extravagance. There seemed to be no end of money. Immense speculation adventures have taken place. Some say that speculation has produced hard times by causing over production and this causing a cessation of demand. This is all fictitious prosperity. According to Henry George - "increased speculative land values cut down the earnings of labor and capital, and check production." This seems to be the main cause of these periodical industrial depressions to which every civilized community seems increasingly liable.

Every politician and every alliance stump speakers have their special causes for hard times. Some say

we only need cheap labor like Eng-  
land and then we can develop our  
resources. They do not look through  
the veil that hides the English labor-  
er in Liverpool, Glasgow, and New-  
castle, and see men and women,  
childhood and age in all their  
misery and degradation. Another  
says repeal the debt law and we shall  
be a happy people. Yet another says  
do away with national banks and we  
will be all right. All these complaints  
prove most surely that something is  
ailing our present mode of hand-  
ling money.

Many people cry for more money to  
be put in circulation. They have the offen-  
sive and yet ennobling idea that money  
can be made with printing presses  
as easy as can a newspaper except  
that the job would be finer in some  
respects. They should remember that a  
nice piece of paper with a promise  
to pay printed on it is not money.  
Again if we just cease producing for  
a time till we use up the surplus

on land, we shall be ready to produce again. It is not poverty but the embarrassment of riches that troubles us, they say. But if stopping for a little while would raise prices, why could we not stop for a longer period, and probably if we all traveled for our health for ten years we should most certainly be on an elevated air line to fame and fortune. If a few only are to stop, these must be supported while not laboring, and who will do this. No, there is too much idleness among us now. It may be that some trades are overworked but many are behind the front line. Suppose there were an over production, an enormous over production, clothing, furniture, carriages, fuel, medicines, and everything was to be had for the mere asking. Every body would be idle with a fat living. Would these be hard times? I don't think many would complain. In fact it would be the most perfect condition attainable, and the nearer we can

ought to this by working, diligently to add to the national storehouse, the sooner we shall see - and fully realize that good times coming.

Every body work. If not at work, get at it, and keep at it. The result will be that many will have to go West and many more will have to leave city life for the country. For many years the tide has been toward the city, and the time is now when the tide should ebb to its former position. It would be a most radical remedy for these bad times if the unemployed multitudes of our cities were transformed to productive labor on the farm.

All that we call progress, civilization, well being, and prosperity - depends upon industry - diligently applied, from the culture of a barley stalk to the sculpturing of the statue that enchants the world. The wrong man in the right place is a detriment, and a curse of modern society - and we surely have ex

amples of such when we see young  
 men loafing about the streets, get-  
 ting credit to obtain the obnoxious  
 meat to squeeze between the teeth  
 and then perch themselves on a  
 dry goods box and squirt tobacco  
 juice in the five directions of a star  
 fish. They say the farmers also cry  
 "hard times" as well as the city people.  
 That may be true but the farmers have  
 had many luxuries and indulged  
 too freely. The easiest way to tide  
 over a depression is to produce  
 what you eat and wear by your  
 own exertion. The farmer does this  
 and the sooner and more efficient  
 we do the same so much the better  
 for mankind.

Our nation has been waiting for  
 a revival of trade and those good  
 old times often spoken of, but these  
 can come only through industry and  
 frugality - diligently applied. "Worth  
 makes the man, and the more a man  
 is worth the worthier he is." As  
 long as wealth is the one domi-

nant aim of the majority of the people - a desire not so much to create wealth by productive labor as obtain it by speculative ingenuity; and as long as wealth and poverty are the heaven and hell of this round sphere, so long shall these frightful calamities continue to occur and why wonder at it.

H. V. Rindley.