

Terry Castle on
Vivian Maier

An Essay
by Saul Bellow

Rebecca Solnit:
End This War!

HARPER'S

HARPER'S MAGAZINE/FEBRUARY 2015 \$6.99

THE RUIN OF THE WEST

How Republicans are plundering our public lands

BY CHRISTOPHER KETCHAM



CAPTIVE MARKET

Why We Won't Get Prison Reform

BY MICHAEL AMES

THE DAY OF THE SEA

Bolivia's Dogged Quest to Reclaim Its Lost Coastline

BY ANNIE MURPHY



"Still Life with Lobster," a photograph by Daniel Gordon, whose work is on view through May as part of *Secondhand*, an exhibition of found and constructed photography, at Pier 24 Photography, in San Francisco.

joined. We certainly are not learning or teaching adequately the arts of forming parts into wholes, or the arts of preserving the formal integrity of the things we receive as wholes already formed.

Without this concern and these arts, our efforts of conservation are probably futile. Without some sense of necessary connections and a competent awareness of human and natural limits, the issue of scale is not only pointless but cannot even enter our consciousness.

My premise is that there is a scale of work at which our minds are as effective and even as harmless as they ought to be, at which we can be fully responsible for consequences and there are no catastrophic surprises. But such a possibility does not excite us.

What excites us is some sort of technological revolution: the fossil-fuel revolution, the automotive revolution, the assembly-line revolution, the antibiotic revolution, the sexual revolution, the computer revolution, the "green revolution," the genomic revolution, and so on. But these revolutions—all with something to sell that people or their government "must" buy—are all

mere episodes of the one truly revolutionary revolution perhaps in the history of the human race, the Industrial Revolution, which has proceeded from the beginning with only two purposes: to replace human workers with machines, and to market its products, regardless of their usefulness or their effects, to generate the highest possible profit—and so to concentrate wealth into ever fewer hands.

This revolution has, so far, fulfilled its purposes with remarkably few checks or thwarts. I say "so far" because its great weakness is obviously its dependence on what it calls "natural resources," which it has used ignorantly and foolishly, and which it has progressively destroyed. Its weakness, in short, is that its days are numbered.

Having squandered nature's "resources," it will finally yield to nature's correction, which in prospect grows ever harsher.

We have formed our present life, including our economic and intellectual life, on specialization, professionalism, and competition. Certified smart people expect to solve all problems by analysis,