

acterize men individually or collectively.

Before we raise the question of the rectitude of their use, however, let us note that vituperative words belong to the class of words having a definite, exact meaning, just as do the words "spade", "sloop", "black", or "blue". Whether one or another uses a spade, or for whatever purpose one or another uses it, it is still a spade, according to design and structure, and cannot be called a spoon or a boomerang without doing violence to the law and purpose of language.

A vituperative word is not one thing when one of us uses it and another thing when another of us uses it. It is not ugly and improper when used by Mr. Dowie to characterize the citizens of New York, and beautiful and proper when used by the citizens of New York to characterize Mr. Dowie. It is not ugly and improper when used by Tammany Hall to characterize the Reform party, and beautiful and proper when used by the Reform party to characterize Tammany Hall and the Democratic party.

A vituperative word is one intended to injure. The synonyms given for it are "vulgar", "scurrilous", "reviling". Under the first two of these synonyms would come such language as has received the name of "billingsgate", from its habitual use in the quarter of London bearing that name. And under the last would come such language, mild in itself, but having the unmistakable spirit of contempt back of it, as the mob used at the foot of the cross of Jesus.

To illustrate again: Suppose a man to have committed murder, and to have been tried and found guilty. A just judge condemns the man in the spirit and language of just censure simply, and pronounces the sentence. With this procedure lovers of simple justice are satisfied. Should a judge undertake to do more than this—to berate and villify the victim—lovers of simple justice would resent it as being in the nature of kicking a man after he is down—in the nature of the contempt heaped upon Jesus after he was condemned and sentence laid upon him. It would make no difference that the sentence was just

in the one case and unjust in the other; the language of contempt would be regarded as equally out of place in both.

Fortunately our courts of justice do not permit this language. But outside of the courts of justice undeveloped natures seek to tip the scales of justice so that they shall deal out injustice, by heaping upon the victim, in addition to the sentence pronounced upon him, such opprobrious and vituperative epithets as "vile", "beastly", "brute", "scum of the earth", or such scornful terms as "Aha, you expected not to be found out, did you?"

Every day the temptation to be drawn into this kind of injustice comes to us. But in times of great general excitement, such as a political campaign, the temptation is concentrated upon large numbers at the same time, and many fall under it then who do not habitually yield to it, yet who are not wise enough to appreciate its real power for harm. In the recent mayoralty campaign in New York both the newspapers and our public speakers, especially the the so-called reform side, lent themselves to this temptation.

The language of abuse, of scorn, of contempt, of hate (to say nothing of coarse and vulgar language) can never be justified in use even towards the "vile", by any believer in the gospel of love rather than that of hate; by any believer in the Golden Rule of "Do as you would be done by"; by any, therefore, who have normal respect for themselves. All such words and phrases savor of the Pharasaic spirit, of the I-am-holier-than-thou spirit. They are anti-Christian, for they are calculated to harm the life of the individual or individuals against whom they are used;—unless, indeed, it can be shown that it is no injury to the life of another to make that life harder to live. For if the judgment pronounced upon the person or party is unjust, added terms of scorn increase the sense of isolation and of being misunderstood. And if the judgment is just, added words of scorn increase the burden of the individual or party conscience, and by inspiring the unfriendliness and enmity that prompts them help to sear or crush out that conscience.

Many so-called religious teachers and others suppose that it does a "sinner" good to berate him. But until it can be shown, somewhere in the physical world, or in some other way made to appeal to our reason, that the greater the pressure that holds a thing down the easier it is for that thing to rise or the less likely it is to be crushed out altogether, we should hesitate to give our credence to the teaching that human souls can rise more easily the more they are pressed down by the contempt and scorn of their fellows, or that they will not be crushed out by that pressure.

In all this there is no wish to raise the question of the truth of the charges brought against persons, parties or movements at which vituperative epithets are flung. That is quite another question. My object is simply to maintain that the words and phrases of reviling used to characterize political organizations and to discount their future possibilities, cannot be justified by any code of ethics or morality that the civilization of our century ought to countenance or have a part in.

LIZZIE NYE NORTHPROP.

EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Washington, Dec. 7.—In discussing in the Philadelphia North American, three months ago, the contest between England, France, Germany, Russia and the United States to see which should have the biggest navy, I said: "The logic of this folly—if the term logic is applicable where such madness prevails—is for each of these nations in their strife for supremacy to go on increasing their navies until every adult male not already enrolled as a soldier shall be manning its warships."

I did not then think that any one could be found to advocate the carrying to its logical conclusion of this fatuous policy; yet the New York Times of November 30 indicates that the reception accorded Hobson on his return from Santiago has induced him to go the "limit" and advocate the logical end of the demands of the navy leaguers. Here is what the Times says:

Richmond Pearson Hobson, ex-commander in the navy, has prepared a bill which he has requested Representative Wiley, of Alabama, to introduce in the house. Its purpose, he says, is to make the United States the first naval power of the world. The bill makes a total appropriation of \$2,750,000,000, a certain portion of which is to be used each year for new ships. Fifty million dollars is made available for the present fiscal year, \$60,000,000 for the next, and so on, increasing

by \$10,000,000 each year up to 1915, when a lump sum of \$1,500,000,000 is made to carry on the programme to 1925.

Such insanity must shock even those heretofore callous to the moral aspect of this "big" navy delusion. Surely Hobson and other blatant advocates of stupendous naval expenditures cannot fail to see that this proposition will inevitably incite European navy leaguers to renewed activity and more ardent exhibitions of their "patriotism!" They will point to this demand to treble and quadruple the size of the American navy as a justification for enormous additions to the navies of their respective countries.

Just think that the United States, which some yet believe to be a real republic and with the idea of liberty still existing therein, which occupies a unique geographical position, absolutely unassailable, invulnerable to attack, should be asked to authorize in one year—1915—exactly ten times the sum spent by the greatest naval power in the world, Great Britain, for the present year! This is the inevitable result of our policy of "benevolent assimilation" and criminal aggression.

The utter recklessness of the Republicans in their worship of the tariff "fetich" was again shown in the speech of Congressman Hepburn, of Iowa, who asserted that "to-day every man in the United States who wants work finds employment in the great labor fields of the United States and at a compensating wage." As the leading newspapers of the country have for weeks been recounting the shutdowns and reductions of wages in nearly all the important industries, it is but fair to assume that Mr. Hepburn must regard the wages paid prior to these reductions as excessive, as more than "compensating."

The shutdowns and wage reductions have been especially numerous since the elections, despite the assertion of Mark Hanna that all the people needed to do was to "let well enough alone," and that the success of Tom L. Johnson would bring hard times. In order to be sure that this result should follow, the New York Central discharged 2,500 men six weeks before the election. Other railroads have since followed suit, while the Steel Trust has announced its intention to reduce its pay roll some \$15,000,000—enough to pay three per cent. upon its total bond issues, and has closed down sufficient plants to throw 25,000 men out of employment.

Of course the Republicans are aware of the falsity of their claims, but the people have displayed such wonderful capacity to be fooled by these assertions that Hepburn, Grosvenor and others consider it safe to put out these ridiculous claims. The Democratic leader, however, loses no opportunity to puncture these statements, almost invariably setting forth the free trade position, although he calls it "tariff reform." I

should feel better satisfied if there were some evidence that his views on the tariff question were shared by all the Democratic members and there were others equally aggressive and outspoken. That this is not so was shown in the debate on the Cuban reciprocity bill, all the opposition to that measure on the part of the Democrats (as well as the Republicans) being based on protectionist arguments.

The committee assignments show that the Speaker has continued the policy of Speaker Henderson, who reduced the Democratic membership on the 16 important committees to six, as against 11 Republicans, thus indicating a determination to use the machinery of the House to the fullest extent to protect "graft" and special privilege. Such changes as have been made in the two great "graft" committees, those on the District of Columbia and on post offices and post roads, offer little assurance that the minority will aggressively and fearlessly expose the general "graft" hidden in appropriations to improve the District of Columbia—in other words, to increase land values—at the expense of the whole nation; nor the immense "graft" contained in the outrageously high rates paid to railroads for transportation of the mails. It is to be hoped that one of the new members of the post roads committee, William S. Cowherd, will show the same courage and determination to expose the railroad "graft" in that committee that he displayed during the last session in opposing a practical gift of some \$4,000,000 to the Pennsylvania and Baltimore & Ohio railroads.

Whether my assignment to the Pacific railroads committee is to be of any use in the fight here for "equal rights to all and special privileges to none" depends somewhat upon whether the democratic Democrats are going to "get busy." It is doubtful whether the committee will ever meet unless business is provided for it by those who can suggest plans, either in the shape of new legislation or of amendments to existing statutes, which aim to check the rapacity of the transcontinental railroads. I shall be glad to have suggestions, also copies of any proposed legislation or resolutions which those who assert the equal right of all men to nature's bounty may send to members representing their district.

ROBERT BAKER.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, Dec. 10.

The special session of Congress (p. 503) ended at 12 o'clock noon, on the 7th, and the regular session began at the same hour. Soon after the opening of the regular

session, President Roosevelt's annual message was received and read. The President also made ad interim appointments, including that of Col. Wood to be major general, upon the theory that there was legally an interval between the adjournment of the special and the opening of the regular session, even though there was no interval in fact.

This Congress is confronted at its opening session with serious conditions in the industrial field. Although the Secretary of the Treasury gives assurances in his annual report that the business crisis in which the country has been floundering (p. 547) has passed, confidence is not restored and employes are still being discharged.

Among the men discharged are some of the officials of the steel trust, whose salaries range from \$10,000 upwards. They were politely notified last week that it will be agreeable to the trust if they secure employment elsewhere by the first of the year. For the most part these officials are men who belonged to subsidiary companies at the time of the absorption of those companies into the trust. A general reduction of wages of the organized workmen employed by the trust is in process of negotiation between the Amalgamated association and the trust. Reductions of about 12½ per cent. have been agreed upon in some of the mills. Cotton-mill workers everywhere are on the verge of a cut in wages, and in New England some 75,000 have already suffered the cut. In the Fox river valley of Illinois—including Aurora, Batavia, St. Charles, Geneva, Plano and Elgin—working hours have been increased from nine to ten, which will result in a strike if the workmen dare face the problem of insufficient employment; and in Chicago the army of the disemployed receives large accessions nearly every day. Reduction of miners' pay in Illinois is under consideration, and in the Pennsylvania region mines are closing down.

Bitter feeling has been engendered in connection with these manifestations of hard times for workingmen, by the published re-