

lessly juggle dollars to fetch public plunder?

A long dispatch from Newport, published in the daily papers, discloses the highly important news that Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish was about to be cartooned in a local periodical; that Mr. Stuyvesant Fish went to a lawyer for an injunction, but was assured that an injunction would not be "feasible;" that Mr. Stuyvesant Fish thereupon consulted the chief of police; and that the chief of police "succeeded in convincing" the editor that he had better omit the cartoon. Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish appears to have been engaged somewhat ostentatiously in reminding the general public, by her widely advertised social extravagances of the frivolous era of the aristocracy of France which preceded the guillotine. Mr. Stuyvesant Fish is to be congratulated upon having induced the chief of police to "convince" the local editor. But Mr. Fish's lawyer must have been an old fogey if he advised against the feasibility of an injunction. To be sure the law as it exists and the precedents as they are would justify his advice. But so would it have been with a labor injunction less than 20 years ago. Yet corporation magnates are now able to get labor injunctions galore. They had ingenious lawyers to represent them and "progressive" judges to respond. Mr. Fish's lawyer should have risen to his opportunity. He might have brought a suit in chancery against the Newport editor. On the ground of the residence of the parties in different States he might have brought this suit in the Federal courts. In the bill in equity he might have alleged that his client's property rights were imperiled by the threatened cartoon and have proved it by the affidavits of detectives. And thereupon he might have moved for an injunction with a restraining order pending the argument of the motion. By pursuing this course Mr. Fish's lawyer might have won the commendations of some future Supreme Court Justice, in a paper before some bar association or other, for having enabled a progressive judiciary to improve the libel laws so as to make them preventive instead of merely penal.

SOCIAL ANALOGIES.

A Boston daily newspaper recently devoted a goodly portion of its first page to Mr. P.'s denial that he ever called Mr. R. "a laborer." The scare headlines of the article left the impression that both of these political contestants, and the interested public at large, considered the term "laborer" a libelous epithet. From this it may be inferred that the general public is not yet awake to the fact that every man must socially fall under one of three classifications. He is either a laborer, a beggar or a thief.

In resenting the term "laborer" as libelous, Mr. R. probably had no idea of calling himself either a beggar or a thief, and it is equally certain that Mr. P. was not astute enough to clearly perceive the all-inclusive triune choice. It would seem as if ordinary intelligence would spontaneously arrive at this division of the social body into "laborers, beggars and thieves," but alas! times have not radically changed since John Stuart Mill wrote that "on any matter not self-evident, there are ninety-nine persons totally incapable of judging it, for one who is capable; and the capacity of the hundredth person is only comparative, for the majority of the eminent men of every past generation held many opinions now known to be erroneous and did or approved numerous things which no one will now justify."

How may we account for such flagrant misconceptions of fundamentals as makes a man thus insist upon being ticketed in terms of a "devil's advocate?" If we but realize that thought-force is no exception to the universal rule, "all nature moves along the line of least resistance," we shall have the nucleus of the explanation.

Out of the ethical night wherein might made right came deeply graven channels into which the cerebral fluid gushed all too easily. The mailed fist which held aloft the torch of rapine and plunder wrote with its fire the word "right" against the social blackness of the long night. The cowed populace saw the new handwriting on the wall and noted in the sweat of their own faces and the ache of their own bones that the "superior"

class did not labor. The continued arrogation of superiority by these brawling loafers established among the masses a thought-habit, a physiological line of least resistance, by virtue of which it became intellectually easier in terms of sheer force-units to look upon labor as degrading than to stem the firmly set current of opinion in an opposite direction. Thus by a parsimony of thought has come down to our own time the error that labor is degrading. True most of us have driven the heresy out of our cerebrum only to find it dragging its serpent length through our subconsciousnesses like some superstition which dominated the formative period of our lives and has since been reasoned down.

We have the advice of no less an authority than Voltaire to begin polemics with a definition of terms. Let us consider for a moment just what we mean by the words "labor" and "laborer."

At the very outset it seems advisable to make a distinction too often overlooked. Labor may be either personal or social. The single savage on a desert island scratching with naked fingers in the sea sands for edible mollusks labors in a personal but not in a social sense. The fat plutocrat lolling lazily on his silken cushions labors thoracically as he draws his apoplectic breath or changes with his hands the position of a gouty leg, but the effort is not a social labor.

The body physical is a very close analogue of the body social. When the physical body is in perfect health every organ to the farthest cell labors socially. When an organ begins to labor merely individually, disease at once sets up its kingdom and we call the rebellion by various names, all of which might be summed up under the term "organic selfishness" or hypertrophy—a sort of physiological trust which stifles, in whole or in part, the competition of the other organs for their just part of sustenance.

The Morgans, as social cells, are in an advanced stage of elephantiasis; while the Rockefellers as social organs have that marked enlargement, resulting from greatly increased absorption without counterbalancing waste, already referred to as hyper-

trophy. Indeed the specially privileged class is rapidly becoming the class of fatty degenerates. The cause is as patent as the trunk on an elephant. These privileged social cells have tapped the great aorta of social life to its utmost limit. They are cancers and tumors that "feed fat" at the expense of all surrounding tissues.

A society, like an individual, has at any one time only so much life, and, as Olive Schreiner has so wisely said, "where one channel runs over, another runs dry." In this thought inheres the most vital of all truths, viz., that as in biology, hypertrophy of the one part implies relative atrophy of some other, so in the social body the piling up of immense wealth in the hands of a few, the tapping of the great arteries of commerce by the special privilege of a few favored cancers, inevitably results in the more or less complete devitalization of the other organs of the social body. They whose ignorance of life permits them to believe that the race is best advanced by the massing of the corporate wealth in the hands of a few in order that they may, by an enlightened philanthropy, judiciously give back to society a little of their thieving, should sow the seeds of cancer in their own weak vitals in the hope that when the said cancer gets powerful enough at the expense of the other tissues it will suddenly change its nature and revivify and re-strengthen all the organs which it starved that it might gormandize and grow great.

The absolute truth of this analogue needs to be insisted upon to prevent the partially imbecile from thinking these cancers wax great by their internal productivity, and not by sapping the blood intended for other social tissues.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.

If the strength of a chain be measured by that of its weakest link, he does well who judges of the grandeur of a nation by the social status of its lowest stratum. Where the laborer, the real producer, is a slave, economic or chat-

tel, the mighty chain of Christian civilization, with its nineteen ponderous links, is somewhere held together by a wisp of thread. The sentimental optimism of the purblind cannot save it. The fashionable mould into which each college pours the intellectual jelly of our young men can but slightly postpone it.

Cursed be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursed be the social lies that warp us from the living truth!
Cursed be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursed be the gold that gilds the straitened forehead of the fool!

It is not a social labor, then, for the heart, as if imagining itself a captain of industry, to steal itself into fatty degeneracy, nor is it social labor when a scheming Standard-Oil brain saps the blood that was intended for its stomach. These are merely cases of physiological trusts in the body personal endowed with the special organic privilege of levying tribute upon everything within the skin.

In this connection we may perhaps be pardoned for calling attention to another instructive biological fact bearing upon the subject in hand.

When protoplasm becomes bioplasm, when a tiny bit of it begins to whirl itself away from the parent mass, if one may be allowed the term, it acquires an individual existence inbounded by its own viscosity, but limited without only by the confines of nature.

Later, segmentation sets in, and we have two protoplasmic cells each acting and reacting upon its environment, and each, so far as the other is concerned, forming a part of that common environment. The saying "self-preservation is Nature's first law" is but a popular way of asserting that all Nature, even to the lowest cell, tends naturally to take to itself the largest possible portion of its environment which it can use in its own upbuilding. In the higher domain of ethics we say the same thing, thus: "Power is the most corruptive of all influences."

When, however, protoplasmic segmentation has progressed to the stage where there is a large society of cells it will be readily seen that the

most immediate environment of any cell is the other cells of the same society. Here, then, begins the struggle and the counter-struggle; the struggle of each to absorb as much as possible, and the counter-struggle of the other to do the like, which becomes, under natural conditions, a bar to the hypertrophy of either; and this process of cellular competition is the exact correspondent of social competition.

For an organ to live near a great artery may be, under improper conditions, the exact analogue of a man living by a railway under similar unjust conditions. The pathological condition in which certain capillaries are able to secure an unjust and discriminative over-service from the great circulatory trunk lines results in a vascular hypertrophy ending in what is called varicose angioma; just as railway discrimination, dishonest schedules, rebates and a service specialized in favoritism lead to those dread tumors in the political body of which the Standard Oil Trust, the Steel Trust and the other great predatory commercial carnivora are alarming examples of social decay, doubly dangerous in that the disease has reached the stage where its toxin, in barter for endowment, is redistilled by the so-called educational institutions, into an opiate intended to narcotize into inaction any individual capable of sane thought.

Even now the soul of true Americanism, hasheesh-drugged in commercialism, slumbers in its long hempen drunk. Better had it been for Uncle Sam had the hemp been knotted about his neck as a martyr than that its tinctured, gold-laden slime should trickle inanely down his throat into a stomach bent only on an undemocratic, disorganizing and tumid expansion. The passage from Washington to Roosevelt is an intellectual trip that turns the healthful soul stomach-side out.

In the lives of most earnest thinkers there inevitably comes a time when the crying political ignorance of the masses is so borne in upon them that they instinctively exclaim: "Down with this absurd autocracy

of noses; up with the standard of grey matter! Better the rule of the enlightened few than of the ignorant many. Let us have a suffrage of weight instead of the absurd suffrage of numbers. Let us measure citizenship, not count it."

There are few social pitfalls more seductive than this one. It promises the unwary foot a security of tread that not only disarms suspicion but converts assurance into gross negligence.

It is customary on the part of those who think differently to waste time in raising bars to the practical conduct of such a system—as: "Who shall decide who is enlightened and who not?" "What shall be the test?" "What will you do with the 'uneducated' whose social perceptions are excellent and the 'educated' who have no real social perceptions of any kind?" etc., etc.

We may safely dismiss all such considerations if we correctly perceive a single natural law—the one above referred to as instanced in the common sayings: "Self-preservation is Nature's first law" and "Power is the most corruptive of all influences." The very tendency that enables a cell to exist at all is a tendency which will inevitably cause it to trench upon the existence of neighboring cells if not curbed by external influences. To this law the social cell is no exception. The very vis viva which a candidate uses to secure his office, he will tend subsequently to use as a vis inertia to keep out the adversary who would unseat him.

Is not the law simple enough? Does the monkey develop a prehensile hand only to let go of things? The strength which secures is father to the strength that retains. From the struggle with others for equality to the struggle against others for supremacy is but a short step, and toward this goal Nature invariably extends a man's foot and as invariably he makes the stride if similarly extended feet do not crowd him back.

What, then, in this light, becomes of the plea for the government of the many by the enlightened few? Simply this. It is seen to be a plea, made usually in the best of faith, which would result in the exploitation of

the many in the interests of the few, without even the assurance that the aforesaid few would, in the last analysis, be the most enlightened. Free competition is as absolutely essential to the social, as it is to the bodily, cell.

That there is an apparent heavy wastage here, as in commercial competition, is only another way of showing what anyone of sense ought to perceive, viz: that the "economy of Nature" is profligate. Our great common mother is a wasteful world-housewife. On every hand she employs tragic forces to accomplish farcical results. Her horn of plenty, the Universe, has no taper toward its lower end.

As a corollary of this belief in the rule of the so-called enlightened few, we have the service of the so-called ignorant many, and this brings us, by another route, back to the question of labor, individual and social.

When the economic slave protests against the long-enforced and arduous toil,—the incessant routine of which is making a mere machine of him, and the reward whereof is the pittance necessary to a continuance of the struggle,—it is customary to show him how hard his master labors. True, it is admitted that the master's labor is not enforced, and that the returns are much larger. Sophistry is taxed to its breaking point in the attempt to show that, by some weird alchemy, an ounce of blood which rushes to that little commercial maelstrom known as the financier's thinking bulb deserves a thousandfold the reward of a pint of the red life-fluid gushing through the brawn that wields the pick. The subconsciousness of the race subscribes to this position, without, for the most part, even so much as asking itself, Why?

Let us remedy at least that defect. Why? What constitutes just claim to reward socially considered? Is it not the rendition of social service? If so, should not the reward run *pari passu* with the service? It is because of the fact that man has advanced in the precise ratio that he has mixed his brain with his work,—because the brain of one man has often accomplished the labor of thousands of men, that so many of us have come

to look upon brain work as so immeasurably superior to brawn work, utterly regardless of their respective social results.

Nor is this all. Society has been cajoled by privilege into another grave mistake,—that of looking upon individual labor as if it had a social value and merited a social reward. Thus it comes about that those fatty degenerates of society known as "financiers," "industrial captains" and the like, rotting themselves into tumid hypertrophy by cupping their environmental tissue at every pore, are yecept "laborers worthy the largest wage," when, for the most part, they should be muled by society to the uttermost limit of convention. They only labor socially whose production benefits society.

This proposition falls into two portions. First, there must be production. Second, society must derive a benefit from it.

Under the first head it should be remarked that gamblers, whether in Wall street, at Monte Carlo, or the more commonly detected thieves who rob with a jimmy instead of an act of legislature, are not producers in any economic sense. There is a vital distinction between translation and production. He who surreptitiously removes my piano does not deserve the wage of a piano maker. This sounds self-evident, yet how many of the great business names to whom the largest of rewards is, for the most part, ungrudgingly yielded, designate men whose whole effort is to juggle like another Houdin, with the labor of others until the product of that labor's effort is deftly landed upon the servante of their own selfishness.

Take the second part of the proposition. Where labor is actually performed by these privileged classes does society always derive a benefit therefrom? By no means. What would a farmer think of a horse which, with the aid of a modern mowing machine, could not cut hay enough to feed himself? Would he consider him a farming benefit? It would not alter the case though he mowed twice that of any of his fellow beasts of burden if his inordinate appetite still showed a deficit. The

bee that garnered two portions of honey and consumed ten would socially be the equivalent of eight drones in the hive and would probably die as many deaths were they necessary to stop the deficit. If now, the bee gathered ten portions of honey and hoarded them for his own gluttony outside the hive, would he be any the less a social drone?

Society is properly constituted on the principle of a reciprocal gain between the whole body and each individual. The plutocrat, therefore, who labors entirely for himself, or who draws from society more than he gives to it, is a social drone. If, then, one must cut more grain than he consumes, what is to be said of those whose wealth and whose consumption is beyond the power of any mortal to legitimately produce? Are they not drones in the social hive?

He whose consumption disorganizes product at the rate of a hundred thousand dollars of value a year, whose labor is he expending? Can it possibly be his own? Is he not tapping the social reservoir? Be sure of it.

Man's powers are limited and these so-called "giants of finance" are usually men of peculiarly limited attainments. Examine the money kings of to-day and in nine cases out of ten,—and oftener than not the lonesome decimal, too,—their success is traceable less to the ability they possess than to the honesty they lack. It was not merely that others did not see the road they traveled, but that they held the goal as insufficient reward for the slough of filth and degradation through which they must wade to attain it. On the theory, so often asserted, that all men are purchasable, it may be said that it did not offer them their price. Compared with such the future monopolist was a cheap and insignificant fellow. Too much emphasis cannot be laid, at this juncture when great wealth makes little heads assume balloon-like proportions to the popular eye, upon the fact that the acquisitive, money-making intellect is of a very low order, and that such cheap success quite as often follows lack of conscience as it does stress of ability.

He labors socially then whose pro-

duction, minus his consumption, shows a net gain of which society secures the benefit.

He is a social drone whose consumption does not leave a balance of production which finds its way into the social sinking fund.

As a laborer he is the greatest benefactor the ratio of whose production to his consumption shows the largest gain to society.

It is the money drones that sap, en passant, the reward which society would confer upon labor as they also take, in process of rendition, the larger part of what labor intends for society.

If you would have better things, look to the fatty degenerates.

MELVIN L. SEVERY.

NEWS

Week ending Thursday, July 23.

The traction agitation in Chicago (p. 229), which has taken a slant that bids fair to affect most seriously the problem of municipal ownership throughout the United States, has advanced another stage.

Notice was served by the city authorities on the 17th upon the receivers of the insolvent company, which came immediately from the superintendent of streets and read as follows:

You are hereby notified that all permits issued to the Chicago Union Traction Company to do any work or make any repairs upon any street, alley or public belongings to the city of Chicago will be revoked July 30, 1903.

The date mentioned in this notice derives its significance from the fact that it is on July 30th that the street franchises here in question expire, unless "the 99-year act" is valid. It was explained at the time by Edwin Burritt Smith, the special counsel for the city who advised this notice, that it had not been given for the purpose of precipitating hostilities, but simply to preserve the status of the city pending negotiations for settlement. "Permits are issued," he said, "to street railway companies as a matter of course, and this notice is for the purpose of making the city's case clear."

The response to the notice from the city quoted above, was a restrain-

ing order from Judge Grosscup, of the United States Circuit Court, whereby the city of Chicago and all its agencies are forbidden to interfere with the receivers in their present "peaceable and exclusive possession, operation and enjoyment" of the street railways, equipment, appurtenances and franchises claimed by them, in respect to the street railway system belonging to either the North Chicago City Railway Company, or the North Chicago Street Railroad Company, or the Chicago West Division Railway Company, or the West Chicago Street Railway Company, or operated by the Chicago Union Traction Company as their lessee. This restraining order is to be in force until the further order of the court, and the time fixed by the order for a hearing upon a motion for an injunction to the same purport as the restraining order was July 27th. In consequence of that proceeding the City of Chicago is supposed to have been brought within the jurisdiction of the Federal courts.

These are the circumstances under which the whole matter, so far as open hostilities are concerned, has been postponed until next Winter. Arrangements for this postponement were made between John S. Miller, as counsel representing Judge Grosscup and the receivers on the one side, and the counsel for the city on the other. On the 20th the arrangement was confirmed by the city council. Under this arrangement, the hearing of the motion in the United States court for an injunction against the city is postponed until November 30th, without prejudice to the existing rights of either party. Of course the restraining order remains in force meanwhile. A similar arrangement was made also on the 20th between the city and the Chicago City Railway Co., which (p. 198), is not involved in the Federal court litigation. These postponements are publicly stated by all parties to be for the purpose of affording time for negotiations with a view to an amicable settlement; and the city law department announces that when the time comes for argument on the motion for an injunction, if no settlement has been made in the meantime, the city will contest the controversy to the limit, beginning with attacking the jurisdiction of the Federal court and proceeding step by