

pay license fees for serving the public in their particular way. This setback, it is unnecessary to explain, took place in Cleveland. Two ordinances were passed by the Cleveland council, one requiring a license for hucksters and the other for circuses, and Mayor Johnson vetoed both. To the huckster license he objected that such licenses do not serve as a police regulation, but are "an attempt to prevent competition" and withal—

a plan for taxing consumption rather than property, for taxing poverty rather than privilege. It is one of the tricks, so often resorted to by the owners of valuable property and privileges, to avoid burdens which they themselves should bear. While property to the value of \$100,000,000 escapes taxation in this city, it seems to me worse than folly to attempt to levy taxes on small traders.

Mayor Johnson's objections to circus licenses were similar. Both veto messages were reproduced in these columns at page 303. What is quite as satisfactory as these vetoes, is the fact that the city council has now sustained them; not merely by a vote against them of less than two-thirds, but by a large majority vote in their favor. In a council of 22 only 6 members voted to override the vetoes.

What is the explanation of hard times in Germany? She tolerates no money but "sound" money, gold being her standard. According to the Clevelandites, then, Germany ought to be prosperous. She also has a high protective tariff which has been long in operation. According to the McKinleyites, then, Germany ought to be prosperous. But in spite of the gold standard and protection to German industry, Germany is not prosperous. What is the reason? Is it too much wealth, the protectionist explanation? Or is it too little confidence, the "sound" money explanation? Or isn't it either?

When we quoted on page 273 the declaration of the Maryland democratic convention that "such action

must be taken as to prevent the control of the state government from passing into the hands of those who have neither the ability nor the interest to manage public affairs wisely and well," it did not occur to us that the quotation might be ambiguous. But a reader so regards it. He asks whether it refers "to the ignorant poor or to the educated rich." Our correspondent has doubtless observed that the rich as a rule take no more interest in government than tramps do, except as it serves their selfish ends, a degree of civic spirit which even the most degraded tramp manifests when sober. This observation suggests our reader's question, which, it need hardly be explained, is what Artemus Ward would have called "sarkasm." But the sober truth is that the quotation was intended to refer neither to rich nor poor, neither to educated nor ignorant, as such, but to persons of dark color and African descent, regardless of their wealth or intelligence. It exhibits the spirit of one kind of so-called democracy. We wish it were called democracy only in derision.

SOMETHING ABOUT HEREDITY.

Guizot said that men are not satisfied with power alone; that, having gained power, if evil power, their next concern is to justify it upon some theory of righteousness. This was true when Guizot wrote; and it is true now, except that another basis of justification than righteousness has been introduced.

As in Guizot's time, and before, so now, there are pietistic pleaders for divine right; not so much for the divine right of kings as formerly, but; what is essentially the same, for the divine right of millionaires. When nothing better can be urged, these unctuous upper servants of our aristocracy of plunder tell us that God discriminatingly gives great wealth in trust; an amiable exegesis of the camel's-eye parable, which is supposed to silence the protests of the plundered. It at the same time conveniently justifies the "trustees" without

subjecting them to any accountability to their "cestui que trusts."

These pietistic pleaders for the rich and powerful, whose ways and manners were perhaps even more familiar to Guizot than to us, have been reinforced in our day by a nominally hostile but really supplementary school of apologists. Atheistic pleaders for the privileges of the rich and powerful now vie with the pietistic cult in indiscriminately justifying oppressive power, but not upon the basis of righteousness. Being atheists, they do not believe in righteousness. Their justification rests upon the theory that, in the nature of things material, and "there are no other things," social conditions as they from time to time exist cannot be helped. The pietist throws the responsibility for the oppressive power of men confidently upon God; the atheist refers it hopelessly to insentient natural law. The one passes the plundered and oppressed along to divine mercy and a harp hereafter, while the other leaves them to their "unavoidable fate."

One of the insentient natural laws to which the atheist appeals is what he calls "the law of heredity," an appeal in which his pietistic coadjutor, in a spirit of liberality toward "science," not infrequently joins him. The law of heredity is supposed to account not only for physical peculiarities but also for intellectual characteristics and moral qualities. Poverty, weakness, crime, wealth, strength, virtue, vice, are to be accounted for by heredity. Arbitrary power, and poverty in the midst of an abundance produced by the poor, are due, not to social maladjustments, remediable by rational readjustment, but to hereditary influences. The virtuous are good and the criminal are vicious because their blood is tainted. The rich and powerful are so because their inherited intellectual and moral qualities are superior; the poor and weak are so because their inherited intellectual and moral qualities are inferior. And this is a process of the ages. We are almost literally governed by the original pair of monkeys. General progress toward equality or equity, therefore, is possible only as strains of bad blood are

expelled and strains of good blood are cultivated, something which involves patient and painful processes through ages yet to come.

So the social question appears at bottom to be essentially an individual question. It is social only in the sense that the power of society is called in to regulate individual life; only in the sense that a man's religion was a social question in the day of the Inquisition and would be now if pietists could have their way. Here again the pietistic and the atheistic pleader for privilege meet on common ground. As the one justifies evil power by perverted principles of righteousness and the other by perverted scientific conceptions, so the one would have society forcibly impose his devilish piety upon individuals while the other would have it forcibly experiment upon them with his Godless science.

It is the latter, he who rests his explanation of poverty and crime and his justification of evil wealth and power upon heredity, whose plea we wish at this time to consider.

We profess no expert or so-called "scientific knowledge" on the subject of human heredity. We have no vast amount of statistics on hand, some of them useless and others not true, with which to make a show at the round table of the pseudo scientists. Yet suggestions regarding the subject, even from one who is largely ignorant of the statistics to which its advocates refer, who begs leave to doubt some that he is not ignorant of, who disputes the inferences with reference to moral qualities that heredity experts draw from statistics they report, and who believes that in the field of social investigation the doctrine of heredity is sadly overworked—suggestions even from such an unscientific source may be worthy of at least passing consideration.

There is one vast quagmire into which heredity experts seem to sink with astonishing ease and almost incredible unanimity—for scientists. They confuse hereditary influences with influences of environment.

Their star statistics, at least for pop-

ular use, afford an example. These tell of a bad woman who lived a century and a half ago and whose prolific progeny through several generations were all, or nearly all, criminals. Such statistics are absolutely useless to prove hereditary transmission of moral qualities. They do not make even a prima facie case. Indeed, they belong in the same category of proof with the voluminous testimony of persons who hadn't seen him commit the crime which the Irish criminal offered to produce in his defense. These statistics utterly fail to negative the possible—aye, the extremely probable—influences of environment. When a bad woman rears children, who rear children of their own, and so on for several generations, all her descendants being criminals, the theory of vicious heredity can draw no strength from these facts, even supposing them to be facts, unless the environment of the family, which is presumably criminal, was in truth a virtuous or at least neutral environment.

It may be fairly doubted if there has yet been produced a single instance, at once authentic and impressive, of the apparent transmission of moral characteristics from one generation to another, which excludes all reasonable possibility of environment as the explanation. A perfect instance is impossible. For the influences of environment, as distinguished from heredity, begin before birth. If the child, during gestation, were affected by moral peculiarities of the mother, there would be no possibility of determining whether they were caused by environment or heredity; for it is evident that during that period the child may be influenced by environing influences acting upon the mother, through whom it is then being nurtured as truly as it will be later when it clings to her breast. Prenatal influences, in the strict sense of that term, cannot be regarded, therefore, as hereditary influences. The materialistic doctrine of heredity, as an explanation of social conditions, must fall, unless moral qualities are shown to be transmissible through the blood of ancestors, under circumstance which exclude the possible influences of environment upon mothers in preg-

nancy as well as upon the child after birth.

It is conceivable that within limits—a few generations at most—physical defects or advantages are hereditary. It is conceivable, also, that some of these physical peculiarities may produce intellectual defects or advantages; for, as the intellect is dependent upon the brain as its physical implement, it will be more or less efficient according to the adaptability of the brain. Consequently, in an environment in which morality is recognized as expedient, it is conceivable that the possessor of a good physical inheritance would be apt to be moral, seeing that this would pay best; whereas his opposite in hereditary equipment, not having so efficient an intellectual implement, might be immoral, mistakingly assuming that that would pay best. All this is abstractly conceivable. But it is not susceptible of scientific proof, as materialism conceives science, because of the impossibility of gathering authentic statistics of enough instances reasonably free from the influence of environment.

Even if proved, it would not follow that inheritable defects and advantages are transmitted in perpetuity. The blood constantly tends to purify itself. Nature persistently tries to adjust herself to normal, and not to abnormal, conditions. She is always at war with disease, and the blood that would transmit a defective brain is diseased blood, weakened blood, not normal blood. In harmony with natural law, therefore, blood so affected would, and in fact does, either expel the disease and resume normal conditions, or, failing that, give way to the disease and terminate the diseased genealogical line.

Diseased blood is an inheritance only in a very restricted sense. It is not a bequest of the ages. Ingersoll was wrong when he implied that God makes disease catching instead of good health. God—nature if you prefer—makes good health catching in the long run, and not disease. The physical weaknesses of our time, so far from being attributable to remote ancestors, are traceable to virtually contemporaneous violations of natur-

al law, either individual or social, or both. As to blood inheritance of the superior type, nothing is better verified by experience than that if it exists it speedily degenerates.

It is not individual blood, transmitting moral characteristics that makes permanent differences in social conditions. It is the blood of society itself. This blood is not the red fluid of individual veins and arteries. The blood of a nation, a community, or a family is its speech.

Language is the current through which thought is transmitted and upon which institutions are borne. The difference between the waif in the slums and the hope of the palace, between the lower classes and the upper, between nation and nation, is not a difference in blood corpuscles. The physiologist would examine these in vain to find any other difference than temporary disease. But the intelligent sociologist might find explanations of all social differences in the different ideals, the different outlook upon institutions, the different ambitions, the different affections, the different associations, in a word, the different trends of thought, which differences in language indicate. Language is the blood of human association. If a German differs characteristically from an American, it is because they have a different language, and consequently a different thought—one that differs in degree as the genius of the language differs. If a German-American differs, it is because this transfusion of social blood has not been successful. He is still Germanic. The British accent and the American differ in degree as American and British characteristics.

As with nations so with groups. The blood of aristocratic society is its modes of speech and not the red blood of ancestors. It is similar with the argot of thieves. If interlopers in either circle expose their breed, it is not because the blood in their veins differs, but because they do not think in the unaccustomed language.

When one thinks in French, he is a Frenchman, but not otherwise. Carl Schurz, for instance, though of German birth, is an American. He thinks in the idiomatic English in

which Americans think and consequently thinks after the manner of Americans.

Of course in speaking of language as the blood of a people, we speak in metaphor. But all references to the "blood" of peoples are metaphorical. When it is said that Americans are of English blood, this must be a metaphor; for the country is full of Americans who haven't an English ancestor. But they inherit English traditions—through the English language—some of them the democratic traditions of Magna Charta, and some the divine right traditions of King Charles. An ignorant laugh went up once when Gov. Altgeld, German born, appealed to the principles of "our" revolutionary forefathers. But the patriots of '76 were as truly, in the social sense, his forefathers, as yours or mine; for, thinking in their language, he drew inspiration from their principles.

The only inheritance, in the social sense, that any man can have is the inheritance that is transmitted socially by language, as physical life is transmitted individually by blood. In this social blood, and not in blood of vein and artery, we must look for the strain that enervates or the strain that vitalizes social life. Here it is that we shall find the moral taint, the institutional disease, the vicious ambitions or the noble ideals that are capable of indefinite transmission from generation to generation.

We shall not find them here by mere philological examination. That would be to an examination of the blood of society what an examination with the naked eye would be to the blood of the physical body. The examination we mean is sociological, looking beneath the surface of language into the crystallizations of thought it transmits. These are the inherited things, and their transmission is the only kind of heredity that need seriously concern sociological inquiry.

Let us reform the ideals, crystallized into institutional disorder, which the society of to-day has inherited through language from the past and is in danger of transmitting through language to the future, and we may safely leave the problems of

blood inheritance to family physicians, insanity experts, and dabblers in heraldry.

NEWS

The steel strike is still the center of public interest, though nothing exciting or decisive has yet occurred in connection with it. At the time of our last report (p. 297) the South Chicago lodges of the Amalgamated association had, on the 14th, refused to join in the strike, and Mr. Tighe, the official representative of President Shaffer, had revoked their charters. On the 18th it was announced that this revocation had been suspended until the 24th, upon the expectation, presumably, that meantime the lodges might reverse their insubordinate action; but on the 19th President Shaffer announced that the South Chicago men who had remained at work were no longer members of the Amalgamated association, and that if they should strike hereafter it would be upon their own responsibility. On the day of Mr. Shaffer's announcement, the 19th, a dozen or more highly skilled employes of the South Chicago mills followed the example and advice of their district vice president, Mr. Davis, in joining the strike as individuals. This individual action at South Chicago appears to be even more extensive, though most of the workmen who quit work do not avow their motives, but plead illness or other personal excuses.

As organized bodies, however, the local lodges remain insubordinate. They issued an address on the 20th, to labor organizations and the public, in which they explain their position. They claim to have been always union men, and to be conforming to union principles in the present instance, since their refusal to strike is based upon an existing contract with their employers. On that point they make the following statement of facts:

The members of our organization work under a contract with our employers, which is perpetual, unless terminated in a manner provided for in the contract. It is specifically provided that this contract can be broken under no circumstances except by either party to the agreement giving three months' notice of its intention, the notice to be given previous to October 1. A copy of the contracts under which we are now working, as well as every change made in the