

## CHAPTER II

### PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND MORAL DETERIORATION

WHO that has looked at a Japanese dwarfed tree in a porcelain pot has not wondered how it lived and developed in its diminutive, gnarled form? The secret is simple. It was starved and tied. The earth in the pot was impoverished and the branches were held in unnatural positions by heavy wires. Hence the tree's growth was slow and twisted.

So Privilege stunts and twists the masses of men physically, mentally and morally. While overnourishing a few, it starves and distorts the many. As privilege grows, its evil influence extends, and the people as a whole deteriorate.

The much-discussed British Blue Book containing the report of the Inter-Departmental Commission on Physical Deterioration, while not conceding the fact, as from some quarters persistently charged, that the British people are physically deteriorating, points out a variety of causes operating to produce such a result. All the causes may be brought under a single head — poverty. Poverty crowds people together in great cities. Poverty subjects them increasingly to excessive tobacco, alcoholic, morphine and kindred habits. Poverty keeps up infant mortality, despite the generally lessened death-rate.

And what causes poverty? Privilege. The privileges of a few are subjecting the mass to a poverty that manifests itself in these ways.

Does not this British Commission report give us here in new America, with our institutions that are seemingly so beneficial to the healthy growth of a people, warrant for serious introspection?

Mr. Robert Hunter estimates that there are in the United States in fairly prosperous years no less than 10,000,000 persons in poverty. This is something more than an eighth of our total population. He means people underfed, underclothed and poorly housed.<sup>1</sup>

Those given to fine distinctions may say that the word "poverty" is loose and indefinite. Yet there can be no room for doubt that in face of our obviously multiplied power to produce wealth there is an increasing per capita public, semi-public and private expenditure for charity. Nor is there room for doubt that there is not a lessening, but an increasing, number of insane; not a lessening, but an increasing, number of suicides; not a lessening, but an increasing number of criminal cases of all kinds, and a rapid development of the brutal side of human nature.

From what does all this proceed? Not from a sufficiency of the satisfactions needed to meet the wants and common human desires, but an insufficiency. That is, poverty. It means privation, want, suffering, loss of personal independence, insanity, suicide, crime.

How can these be avoided when human beings are packed so closely together in our cities? There are approximately 80,000 tenement houses in Greater New York. They shelter about two thirds of the city's population. In one square mile in the lower East Side of Manhattan

<sup>1</sup> "Poverty," p. 337. Mr. Hunter points to the fact that, aside from the huge army of public paupers, there are over 2,000,000 workingmen employed only from four to six months of the year; about 500,000 male immigrants arriving yearly and seeking work in the very districts where unemployment is greatest; nearly half the families of the country propertyless; over 1,700,000 little children forced to become wage-earners when they should still be in school; about 5,000,000 women forced to work, of which 2,000,000 are employed mostly in factories and mills.

Borough 600,000 human beings are jammed.<sup>1</sup> Here the people are stowed away as if all the country-side had been driven in by an army of envelopment.

Rev. Dr. Behrends, describing the block bounded by Canal, Hester, Eldridge, and Forsyth streets (lower East Side) says: "In a room 12 by 8 and 5½ feet high, it was found that nine persons slept and prepared their food; . . . in another room, located in a dark cellar, without screens or partitions, were together two men with their wives and a girl of fourteen, two single men and a boy of seventeen, two women and four boys — nine, ten, eleven and fifteen years old — fourteen persons in all."

Can virtue withstand the temptations and weaknesses of such conditions? Would it be anything short of a miracle if "red-light" dives and less miserable brothels did not flourish in such surroundings? What Miss Frances A. Kellor has to say in an account of her investigations in employment agencies brings a flood of testimony. When in a certain instance it was hinted that the supposed situation was not in every way desirable for a young girl, the woman proprietor shrugged her shoulders and said: "I don't care for what purpose you want her. I give you a girl for a waitress — you do what you please with her when you get her there." Says Miss Kellor: "Only too often did we find old, gray-haired women and young wives and mothers sending into such places, without hesitation, their own countrywomen, who, but for them, were friendless in a new country, and when they knew they would come back physical and moral wrecks and utterly unfitted for any

<sup>1</sup> In the block on the lower East Side bounded by Second and Third streets and Avenues B and C, the Federal census of 1900 found 4105 persons. This is as large a population as any town in the State of Delaware contains, save one — the capital city, Wilmington. In a block on the middle West Side, bounded by Amsterdam and West End avenues, Sixty-first and Sixty-second streets, the Federation of Churches and Christian Organizations by careful canvass in the summer of 1904 found 1029 families in actual residence and 83 vacant apartments. The total population was 3797 souls.

honest work. . . . Figures can only be approximate, but it is no exaggeration to say that in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago, about seventy-five per cent. are not averse to sending women as employees to questionable places, and from forty to sixty per cent. send them as inmates, obtaining their consent where possible."<sup>1</sup>

When it comes to trying to live by making children's dresses at the rate of 35 cents a dozen or children's aprons with ruffles and sashes for 45 cents a dozen, vice holds out new allurements. Women are compelled to enter bread-winning fields hitherto given up solely to men.<sup>2</sup> And positions are too often accepted where, if the regular pay is low, it is understood important extras may be earned "in other ways."

The public of New York has recently been aghast to find that it had in its "red-light" dens, with their "cadets" or procurers, their thin young girls and their brass checks, a horrible species of Oriental slavery. Yet it is a slavery not arising from innate depravity. Nor is it imported. It is made by social conditions. It is a fruit of poverty, and that in the metropolis of our country.

In the city of Cleveland, Ohio, not long since a disreputable house was raided by the police. The inmates were arrested. Among them was a woman, who, because she could not pay the fine imposed, was sent to the workhouse. When she had there worked out all but \$26 of the fine, an offer was made by a woman acquaintance to lend her that sum and thus enable the prisoner to regain her liberty. The offer was refused. This surprised the workhouse officials, who reported the case to the mayor of the city, Tom L. Johnson. He questioned the prisoner, asking why she did not take her liberty. "I want my

<sup>1</sup> "Out of Work."

<sup>2</sup> "American women never manage the outward concerns of the family or conduct a business. . . . No families are so poor as to form an exception to this rule." De Tocqueville, in "Democracy in America," Vol. II, p. 259.

liberty," she replied; "but if I borrow \$26 to wipe out the amount of fine still against me, how shall I repay it? At present I have no other way of doing so than by going back to the old business. It would take fifty-two times at 50 cents a time to meet the debt. I prefer to stay and work off the \$26 here in the workhouse!" The mayor pardoned her.

Such a case is isolated only in its particular form. It belongs to a great class of cases. As I pause in my writing my eye falls upon a newspaper item telling of the arrest and the holding under bail of \$100 for trial, of a New York sweat-shop clothing merchant for employing little Rosie Lindenbaum of 235 Sixth Street. Rosie said she was fifteen years old, but she had no certificate showing that she was of legal age to work. Rosie's mother came before Magistrate Ommen and said: "My little girl is the sole support of myself, my husband and five children at this time. If she is taken from her work, the little bread that we have will be taken from us." The inspector told Magistrate Ommen that they found the children eating crumbs, the only food in the house.

Tragedies of this kind are too common nowadays to receive more than passing thought from us. Nothing seems so cheap as human flesh and blood among the poor of our great cities. And now and then comes a pronouncement from a court of law that emphasizes this. One such was made by William G. Gummere, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New Jersey — New Jersey, the great trust-incorporating State. A child had been killed in a street railroad accident in Jersey City. The parents brought suit for \$50,000 compensation. Justice Gummere ruled that a child's life is financially not worth more than \$1 to its parents. By that ruling the jurist became popularly known as "Dollar-a-life Gummere." After stubborn fighting in the courts, and taking the case to the highest tribunal in the State, Justice Gummere was overborne and \$1000 awarded the parents of the dead

child.<sup>1</sup> This was more in keeping with the early usage in this country by which, as has been cited, Dr. Adam Smith tells us a child was estimated to bring to its parents "before it could leave their house £100 above all expenses of its rearing and keep."<sup>2</sup>

Now, while in new countries it is always the fact that marriages occur early and are very fruitful, and while Dr. Franklin reckoned eight births to a marriage in America, as against four in Europe,<sup>3</sup> yet it also is true that generation is active in conditions of dense population where poverty rules. This seems to indicate the natural law — that Nature endeavors to multiply the human stock where the latter is sparse or where hardship and disease threaten its discontinuance. The law seems to be proved by the fact that we have before noticed (Bk. II, Chap. IV) that there is a lowered birth-rate among the body of people who live in circumstances of ease, and a yet further lowered rate among the very rich, so far as may be judged to be the natural order and aside from the increasing preventive practices.

Adam Smith illustrates by conditions in Scotland the phase of the matter most clearly.<sup>4</sup> "Poverty," says he, "though it no doubt discourages, does not always prevent marriage. It seems even to be favorable to generation. A half-starved Highland woman frequently bears more than twenty children, while a pampered fine lady is often incapable of bearing any, and is generally exhausted by two or three. Barrenness, so frequent among women of fashion, is very rare among those of inferior stations. Luxury in the fair sex, while it inflames perhaps the passion for enjoyment, seems almost to weaken, and frequently to destroy, the powers of generation."

<sup>1</sup> *Abram Graham vs. Jersey City Consolidated Traction Company*. Case came into court April 10, 1896. Justice Gummere made his ruling July 20 following. Appeal was taken and the case was settled November 11, 1901.

<sup>2</sup> "Wealth of Nations," Bk. I, Chap. VIII.

<sup>3</sup> "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind and the Peopling of Countries," Franklin's Works, Bigelow Edition, Vol. IV, p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> "Wealth of Nations," Bk. I, Chap. VIII.

And continuing, Dr. Smith says: "But poverty, though it does not prevent generation, is extremely unfavorable to the rearing of children. The tender plant is produced, but in so cold a soil, and so severe a climate, soon withers and dies. It is not uncommon, I have been frequently told, in the Highlands of Scotland for a mother who has borne twenty children not to have two alive. . . . In some places one half the children born die before they are four years of age; in many places before they are seven; and in almost all places before they are nine or ten. This great mortality, however, will everywhere be found chiefly among the children of the common people, who cannot afford to tend them with the same care as those of better station. Though their marriages are generally more fruitful than those of people of fashion, a smaller proportion of their children arrive at maturity. In foundling hospitals, and among the children brought up in parish charities, the mortality is still greater than among those of the common people."

This may well be used to describe conditions in the United States. In the rural regions and in the poor quarters reproduction is rapid; among the classes of ease and wealth much slower. And of those children born to the latter a very much larger proportion are protected from early death than those born among the poor. One of the most pathetic sights of a great American city is the number of little rough wooden coffins to be seen in the public morgues awaiting interment in the public burying grounds. The last place where the poor will stint is at a funeral, yet such is the depth and extent of poverty in Greater New York that more than eight and one half per cent. of all the people who die in the five boroughs are buried in Potter's Field at public expense. In the boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx the Potter's Field interments approximate ten per cent.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These figures do not show the full extent of this phase of poverty, since they do not include the Jewish dead who are taken to the morgue,

Of this ten per cent. a dreadful proportion consists of babies, whose flickering little lives are snuffed out in the fetid atmosphere of poor quarters. Infancy and early childhood have a heavy battle for life in New York, even under good circumstances.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt that a very large proportion of these early deaths are directly or indirectly due to poverty.

It is a fact too well attested for dispute that tuberculosis and other virulent diseases of the slum quarters of our cities have yielded materially to the treatment, not of removing patients to other places and climates, but simply by improving the physical environments to which poverty had sentenced them. A very large part of the post graduate hospital work in New York City is along this line, with a remarkably high percentage of cures.

There are some who call themselves optimists who shut their eyes to all this and say that if the rich are richer, the poor are richer, too. They point to the large funds in the savings-banks — more than \$3,000,000,000, and 7,000,000 depositors for 1903, averaging more than \$400 to the depositor. But just as the investigation made by the Massachusetts Labor Bureau in 1873 revealed the fact that persons not wage-earners were depositors to at least one half the total amount in the savings-banks of that State at that time, so similar examination now would reveal all over the country a similar ownership of these savings. As the Massachusetts investigation showed, wealthy people use

but are there rescued by the Jewish societies and are interred elsewhere. Nor do they include the large number of public paupers who would go to Potter's Field but for the burial insurance placed on them by certain undertakers who find a profit between the small amount of such policies and the still smaller expense to which they are put in getting the dead bodies a private interment. Singularly enough, those almshouse inmates who have such burial insurance on them, miserably small though the sum be, regard themselves as superior to those who do not have it. They draw attention to the fact. It amounts to a badge of aristocracy among the public paupers.

<sup>1</sup> Of the total of 78,060 deaths in the whole city during 1904, the babies under one year of age numbered 16,125, and under five years, 25,543.



savings-banks to escape taxation and the care of their investments. They deposit for themselves to the full limit and open accounts for members of their families and also as trustees.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, the pessimist says with self-righteous asperity that the poor are not provident. As well talk of frugality to him who faces famine. And if economies were effected in their mode of living by the whole class of struggling poor, that would only mean that they would sink to lower levels of competition. The savings effected from the new economies would be forced from the poor in the rivalry for employment. General wages would fall correspondingly with the general benefit derived from the general frugality. Not long ago the United States Government with some success conducted experiments in the Department of the Missouri to show that soldiers can be well nourished by an expenditure of only five cents a meal. In New York City a few benevolent people have established "People's Kitchens," at which two-cent meals are served. Well, what of it? Suppose the whole nation were to economize to this basis. The body of the workers would lose the benefit of it. Reduced in the standard of living to the rice-eating basis of the Chinese, the wages of American workmen would, through undercutting for work, come down to the Chinese rice-eating level. Individuals alone following such a course would be lifted from the mass. But we are not considering isolated cases. We are considering the whole.

If in the present state of "cut-throat" competition for employment, when the great storehouse of Nature is locked away from the mass of labor, to effect general industry, frugality, integrity, virtue and sobriety is only to keep the poor enslaved by poverty, what use is there to try? That is the supreme question. Because there seems to be no reply explains why young girls sell their bodies at the low dance halls, the "red-light" dives and the outwardly more

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Bolton Hall's "Free America," p. 47.

decent appearing places that, like leper spots, infest the neighborhoods of the poor. It explains why men seek forgetfulness in drink; why 148 saloons are to be counted within an area of 514 by 375 yards in one swarming spot in New York.

The wonder is not that there is so much sin and drunkenness and shame under such circumstances, but how it is there is *so little*. For virtue and innocence and honesty and cheerful courage are to be found there to a surprising degree. They are, indeed, heroic in extent and form. But this does not argue that such hardships are good for the training of human beings. It proves only what hardships multitudes will survive.

"In one judicial district in this city," says a New York newspaper, "there have been more evictions within the last three months than have occurred in the whole of Ireland during the same period." It is a matter of official record that more than twenty thousand evictions occur in that city each year.<sup>1</sup> This one cold fact outweighs a thousand vainglorious Fourth of July orations about the Nation's progress.

None will gainsay that the public and private expenditures for charities have enormously increased within the last score of years. Yet beggars are to be met with every-

<sup>1</sup> A curious group of eviction cases grew out of the determination of one Elias Russ, owning the tenement house at No. 6 Goerck Street, to demand fifty cents a month extra rent for every baby on the premises after the beginning of March, 1905. The building was occupied by 30 families, who boasted of 150 children. The tenants refused to pay the increase. Dispossession writs were served. Mrs. Frederick Friedmann, one of the tenants, loudly cried: "What is it you would do? Should I turn my first-born, Isaac, into the street, stab Rachael, strangle Moses, shoot Rebecca, drown Mira, poison Nathan, throw Lizzie from the roof, or hug the twin babies to death? Oh! monster of a man!" The tenants, with many of their children, went in a body before Justice Worcester of the Thirteenth Municipal District Court to protest. Mrs. Fannie Frank became one of the spokesmen and declared, "The landlord is against the Scriptures which bid men multiply." The justice gave the tenants a stay until the following Monday, by which time they were to decide either to pay the increased rent demanded or to find other premises.

where on our streets. Thomas Jefferson said that the occasional beggar to be seen in the cities in his time were usually foreigners who had just come over and had not yet obtained a settlement. Subsistence, he said, was "easily gained" in this country then.<sup>1</sup> Charles Dickens, when he came to America more than half a century later said, "A beggar in Boston would be like a flaming sword."

Yet Salvation Army circulars now speak of providing 3,000,000 beds annually for the poor in the United States.

The advent of the model twenty-five-cent-a-night lodging houses erected by the California millionaire, Mr. D. O. Mills, and bearing his name, were hailed as a godsend to the poor. But they have proved high-priced to those who can afford to pay only ten and fifteen cents for a night's lodging. More than the poor really frequent these Mills hotels. A friend who lived at one of them for a time to study its occupants told me that the feature that most surprised him was the number of silk hats that issued forth in the morning. These hats are worn by business men who are struggling to keep up a bold front by day, and who are constrained by night to practice the extremes of economy.

Each night for twenty-seven years a line has formed in front of Fleischmann's Vienna Bakery at Broadway and Tenth Street, New York. Each man in that line has received half a loaf of bread and a steaming cup of coffee. The line has not shortened with years. If anything it has lengthened. Other free bread and coffee lines have been established, and one of the most popular of the daily newspapers gave night food to thousands last winter.

The most alarming form of this kind of charity is the feeding of school children. For many years it has been observed and commented on by public school-teachers in the poorer districts of New York that a large percentage

<sup>1</sup> "Notes on the State of Virginia," Jefferson's Writings, Ford Edition, Vol. III, p. 239.

of the children attending were underfed — some actually weak and sick from hunger. Mr. Robert Hunter, whose work in the University Settlement and other organizations for helping the poor gave him means for ascertaining the facts, startled public complacency by announcing that 70,000 children in Greater New York arrive at school “underfed and undernourished.” Inspector H. M. Lechstrecker, of the State Board of Charities, on investigating, reported that out of 10,707 school children, only 1855, or less than one fifth, began the day’s work with adequate breakfast. Over 1000 children never had for their morning meal more than bread only or coffee only, and nearly 500 came without any breakfast at all. The Salvation Army at once opened food stations for school children and actually has close to a thousand every morning in attendance. It is quite apparent that as soon as the poor get somewhat inured to this new form of degradation in free America, the number of school children dependent upon charity for one or more meals daily will be not one thousand but many.

And then we shall be confronted by the question up in London: Whether the public school system should not include the feeding of the children? <sup>1</sup> Sir John E. Gorst, commenting upon the London experience (*North American Review*, July, 1905) recites what is of prime significance, “A large portion of the feeble-minded children, culled as unteachable from the London schools, actually recover their mental powers under the influence of a generous diet.”

Last Christmas Hon. Timothy D. Sullivan, Member of Congress from the Eighth New York District, member of the Executive Committee of Tammany Hall and Bowery

<sup>1</sup> At a National Labor Conference in Guildhall, London, on Jan. 20, 1905, the Lord Mayor (Alderman John Pound), welcoming the delegates, and Sir John E. Gorst, M.P., in the chair, it was resolved by acclamation that state maintenance of children is the necessary corollary of compulsory education.

saloon-keeper, distributed baskets of provisions and crisp greenbacks among five thousand of his political vassals and hangers-on.

Does this indicate free, independent politics? Or does it reveal the rottenest kind of rotten boroughs?

Accompanying it, we see the wide extension of the habit of tipping, which but a few generations ago Americans, especially those in the West, would have indignantly spurned. Now the tip is accepted with servile humility, and often its not-coming is practically resented. De Tocqueville wrote, "I never saw a man in the United States who reminded me of that class of confidential servants of which we still retain a reminiscence in Europe, neither did I ever meet with such a thing as a lackey: all traces of the one and the other have disappeared."<sup>1</sup> For, said the keen-eyed Frenchman, going at once to the reason, "at any moment a servant may become a master, and he aspires to rise to that condition. The servant is therefore not a different man from the master. Why then has the former a right to command, and what compels the latter to obey? The free and temporary consent of both their wills. Neither of them is, by nature, inferior to the other. They only become so for a time by covenant. Within the terms of this covenant, the one is a servant, the other a master. Beyond it, they are two citizens of the commonwealth — two men."

This does not describe present conditions among us. While social environments are molding some into obsequious, servile lackeys, they are driving others to suicide, to insanity and to all manner of crime.

Professor Frederick L. Hoffmann's investigations for the information of one of the large insurance companies find that the numbers of suicides is great and progressive. In fifty of the principal cities of the United States the suicide rate for the eleven years of 1893 to 1903, inclusive, was

<sup>1</sup> "Democracy in America," Vol. II, p. 220.

16.30 to every 100,000 inhabitants; in 1903 it was 18.39.<sup>1</sup> Mr. George P. Upton of Chicago, for years one of the recognized authorities on the subject in America, last year published a table showing 77,617 cases of suicide reported in the newspapers of the country.<sup>2</sup> Poverty, with all that it means, is a sufficient cause.

And it is a sufficient cause for the growth of insanity. The statistics of the insane outside the precincts of the public and private asylums are scarce and hardly reliable, since there is a natural tendency to hide it wherever possible. Yet the number of insane in the asylums is on the increase, and is greatest among those of highest temperament, who are most quickly distracted by the savage battling for a living.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. V. H. Podstata of the Dunning Insane Asylum for Chicago is reported to have stated that in his judgment one in every 150 of that city's inhabitants is insane. Dr. H. N. Moyer, the eminent alienist of that city, is more moderate. He thinks that the insane of Chicago number one to 400 of

<sup>1</sup> In New York (Boroughs of Manhattan and the Bronx) the rate during the period of 1892 to 1902, inclusive, was 21.6 per 100,000; in Hoboken, just across the Hudson River, 27.14; in Chicago, 23.64; in St. Louis, 25.87.

<sup>2</sup> "The Facts about Suicide," *The Independent*, New York, April 7, 1904. Among other things, Mr. Upton says: "Between the ages of ten and twenty-five, suicides of women are more numerous than those of men. It is one of the saddest features of the case that suicides of women are increasing faster than those of men. Half a century ago five times as many men committed suicide as women. A quarter of a century ago the proportion was three men to one woman. During the last three years the ratio has been about 2½ to one. Another sad feature of the suicide situation is the increasing number of children who kill themselves. These suicides are almost without sufficient cause, and sometimes without any."

<sup>3</sup> Official reports for Washington, District of Columbia, give 217 cases for the year ending June 30, 1899; 247, for 1900; 283, for 1901; 336, for 1902; 290, for 1903; and 373, for 1904, with indications that those for 1905 will quite equal the figures of the preceding year. These figures include only those patients sent to the Government Hospital for the Insane by the municipal authorities, and not patients sent by the United States Government from the soldiers' homes, army and navy, etc. Nor do these figures include such cases as recover before a formal hearing. It appears probable that if the temporary aberration cases were included, they would increase the foregoing figures about ten per cent.

the population; in New York, one to 340; in Boston and New England, one to 320. "There is no doubt about the cause of the increase of insanity," he observes. "Poor food, poor homes, with no sun and bad air, improper clothing, worrying about the rent, drive people crazy."

Whatever will produce these results on the more sensitive will brutalize the more stolid. Behold the development of the brute nature in a long catalogue of manifestations, ending with woman beaters and the ruthless trampling upon the weaker sex by men in car and steamboat accidents.

Jefferson said that within the space of ten years he had not heard of a single highway robbery in any of the States, except in New York and Philadelphia immediately following the departure of the British army, some deserters from which infested "those cities for a time."<sup>1</sup> How odd this now sounds, when tramps are scattered all over our country, even through the newest of our States, and thieves infest our cities; when every manner of crime known to poverty is to be met with in our legal procedure, and when special courts have been created for child-offenders.

Thievery of every sort and description, from stealthy filching to house-breaking, bank blowing and train-robbing, is to be found generally upon our criminal court calendars. Train robbers are nowadays hunted and shot down like wild beasts. Some of the railroad and express systems centering in Chicago announced subsequent to a couple of hold-ups that a dead train robber is worth \$1000, and that they will give that sum to the man that does the shooting. One of the officials of the Burlington Railroad is reported to have stated, touching this: "All of our conductors and trainmen carry revolvers, and we are encouraging them to do so, and to learn to shoot straight. I am in favor of a concerted action on the part of the railroad managements and express companies which shall have for

<sup>1</sup> Letter to M. Clavière, Paris, July 6, 1787, Jefferson's Writings, Ford Edition, Vol. IV, p. 402.

its object the hounding of train robbers to the ends of the earth."

The activity of burglars is notorious. Little boys and little girls engage in hold-ups. And behold the cool deliberation marking some of our highway robberies! Edwin Tale, twenty-five years old, an athlete and a member of the Fourth New Jersey Volunteers during the Spanish War, was arrested in Chicago for holding up a man. He said in confession: "I rode on the elevated trains between eleven P.M. and one A.M. When I saw a man who looked easy to rob, I got off the train ahead of him and lay in wait."

Criminal gangs flourish in particular localities until their too brash operations at last raise such a public outcry as to cause them to be routed out by the police. For that matter, it is too plain to be ignored or denied that the police organization itself in the greater cities is made largely *particeps criminis*. Many police chiefs, superintendents, inspectors and captains, not in New York alone, but in most of the cities, have, with but brief interruption, regularly demanded and regularly received heavy blackmail as the price of blindness to vice and crime.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> What fosters the police blackmail evil is the policy so prevalent in this country of late years of using criminals to catch criminals. This makes a back-door connection between the police and what might be called "the instituted criminals." It is told as illustrative of this connection that a certain judge complained at New York Police Headquarters that he had had his pocket picked while crossing Brooklyn Bridge, and had lost his watch, the number of which he gave. A detective was put upon the case. A few hours later report was made to the judge that he must have been mistaken; that he must have lost his watch somewhere else; that the department had means of locating every watch stolen on the bridge during the last forty-eight hours and that no watch bearing the number he had given was among them!

It is furthermore a solemn fact that corruption money is actually used by the Police Department and the District Attorney's Office in New York City to get evidence against infractors of the liquor laws and against disreputable houses. On file in the Controller's office in New York may be seen the approved and paid bills of "plain clothes men" and "special detectives" for clothing outfits, theater tickets, suppers, carriages, wines and women. Controller Edward M. Grout early in his administration



It is true that the infraction of puritanical sumptuary laws, which is made a penal offense, is the cause of many arrests. Yet, being on the statute books, they should be obeyed. And it should be the duty and practice of the law's municipal servants to see to their enforcement. But it is seriously and credibly charged that while the arrests in the city of Philadelphia for the year 1903 amounted to the enormous number of 75,699 cases, a great number of most serious cases of vice and crime were overlooked by the police for blood-money.

The ratio of arrests in Philadelphia for 1903 was one person out of every seventeen of the population.

That is exceeded by New York and Chicago only in the greater gravity of offense. The cases of four young men in the latter city illustrates the nature of these crimes. Gustav Marx, age twenty-one; Peter Niedermeyer, age thirty-two; Harvery van Dine, age twenty-one; and Emil Roeski, age nineteen, acting together, committed eight murders and at least one hundred hold-ups. The most significant fact in relation to these young men was that they were American born, and belonged to what many might regard as middle-class families. They but imitated those driven to such things by poverty, or the fear of it.

And if present tendencies continue, we shall soon have among us a horrible practice which has caused such grave scandal in England — the crime of murdering children for the insurance placed on their lives. Not only have such atrocities been detected of late, but also cases where men, without their knowledge, were insured for a few hundred dollars, and then mysteriously died. A series of such cold-blooded crimes occurred recently in Bayonne, New Jersey, one of the commercial and industrial suburbs of New York City.

made a vigorous and indignant public protest against this use of public moneys, but the District Attorney's office and the Police Department said the practice was necessary, and discussion of the matter soon dropped; but not the practice, which has continued.

Mr. S. S. McClure shocked the thoughtful of the country by quoting, in *McClure's Magazine*, for December, 1904, a summary of statistics on murders and homicides throughout the country, collected by the *Chicago Tribune*, and covering twelve years ending 1902. These figures seemed to prove that in 1904 there were four and a half times as many murders and homicides for each million of people in the United States as there were in 1881.

"Oh, well, but," comes the reply, "the thing is explained by the fact that latterly there has been a little more systematic publication of murders and homicides." But why should newspapers pay more attention to such things now than they did a dozen years ago? And how explain away the increasing murders and homicides on the court records?

An experienced magistrate, Recorder John W. Goff of New York, told me not long since that in his judgment the course of crime in this country is not only toward more frequency and gravity, but that it is changing its old hot impulsiveness, openness and directness, for cold calculation, secretiveness and deliberate intention to strike without being discovered. This progress and difference he attributes mediately and immediately to extending and deepening poverty.

Not a few are ready to charge any disadvantageous developments among us to immigration — to the "foreigner." But this would imply that murders and homicides are more frequent in foreign countries than here, which is not the case.<sup>1</sup>

What John Stuart Mill wrote years ago has singular applicability to us in this country now: —

<sup>1</sup> Mr. McClure says that, taking the census for 1900 as a basis, from only one country sending us emigrants — Russia, which sent us only  $\frac{1}{3}$  part of all that came that year — was there a higher murder and homicide rate than in the United States. And even in Russia the rate but slightly exceeded ours. The remaining  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the immigrants came from countries no one of which has half as many murders and homicides per million population as we have. See *McClure's Magazine*, December, 1904.

If the bulk of the human race are always to remain as at present, slaves to toil in which they have no interest, and therefore feel no interest—drudging from early morning till late at night for bare necessities and with all the intellectual and moral deficiencies which that implies—without resources either in mind or feeling—untaught, for they cannot be better taught than fed; selfish, for all their thoughts are required for themselves; without interests or sentiments as citizens and members of society, and with a sense of injustice rankling in their minds, equally for what they have not and what others have; I know not what there is which should make a person of any capacity of reason concern himself about the destinies of the human race.<sup>1</sup>

Does not this suggest why the President of the United States is now attended by more or less of a body-guard? Behind the fear is something more real than a phantom. Four years ago a President was killed by a young man who called him a despot. The assassin, Leon F. Czolgosz, was twenty-eight years old, and a native-born citizen, his birthplace being the Western city of Detroit. He had attended the public schools at Alpine, Michigan, and had received a fair instruction in the common branches. He worked in various cities of the country. He was the son of an honest, hard-working father and an earnest mother, and the brother of a United States soldier in the Spanish War. But for all this he had seen trusts and monopolies and combinations rise and exalt some to great power, while the masses of the people were reduced to an intensifying competition among themselves for a living. He became what the Socialists call "class-conscious." He confusedly said to himself that the working masses are getting so little of the fruits of production because another class is "exploiting" them. And he became so far "class-conscious" that he forfeited his life to strike a death-blow at the Chief Executive of this Nation. That Chief Executive, he believed, was not really the servant of all the people, but the creature of some.

I do not understand that this confirms those of the Lom-

<sup>1</sup> "Principles of Political Economy," Bk. II, Chap. XIII.

broso school who assert that a criminal "type" has been established in this country, and that that "type," by mere generation, is reproducing and multiplying itself. To my understanding it rather upholds the view brilliantly set forth before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, by Dr. Edward A. Spitzka of New York,<sup>1</sup> that there are now social conditions in the United States that engender most of the crimes. For there are hordes of American men, women and children, who, like Longfellow's outcast in "The Legend Beautiful," gaze

With that terror in the eye  
That is only seen in those  
Who amid their wants and woes  
Hear the sound of doors that close,  
And of feet that pass them by;  
Grown familiar with disfavor,  
Grown familiar with the savor  
Of the bread by which men die.

Man is made up of a threefold nature, mental, physical and moral. If the physical man starves, the mental and moral man must die.

When employment is made artificially scarce, as the existence of privilege is making it, some of our people must suffer poverty. They must deteriorate physically, mentally and morally. Then ignorant, unthinking, vicious, volatile mobs must supplant the body of intelligent, upright, self-respecting, patriotic American citizenship; and "mobs in great cities," observed Jefferson, "add just as much to pure government as sores do to the health of the human body." As Privilege extends its control, the forces of deterioration must extend, until the whole community will directly or indirectly become infected.

<sup>1</sup> Meeting at Philadelphia, Dec. 28, 1904.