

A MODERN GULLIVER.

(For the Review.)

BY BENJAMIN F. LINDAS.

One day while rummaging through the shelves of an old book store I came across an odd looking and moth-eaten volume, the leaves of which were yellow with age. I took it from the shelf, examined it carefully and found it to be an old print entitled, "Depopulation—The only Cure for Poverty," written by Methuseiah in the year 899 of his age.

This was indeed a find. I immediately purchased it and carried it to my room with the greatest care. You can imagine my surprise that evening when upon opening the book a number of loose pages of manuscript filled with an incomprehensible jumble of numbers, letters and odd characters fluttered to the floor. It was undoubtedly a cipher message of some kind, and my curiosity being aroused I determined to discover its meaning. For a time I was completely baffled, until finally I discovered at the bottom of the last page a simple phrase in English that gave me the necessary clue. It read, "As the mind of a politician worketh." I, therefore, started in the middle, and by working towards the opposite ends at the same time came into possession of the almost unbelievable story that I am now going to tell you. A story that had been first related years and years ago by A. Swift Dean. This is the literal translation of the manuscript:

"I had now been home for several years; one day in the early spring while strolling along the beach I met an old mess-mate, and soon, in answer to the old lure of the sea, and the urging of my companion, I agreed to ship the next day on the good ship Polly for a last cruise through the South Seas.

The weather, for the first few days of the voyage, was ideal, but on the evening of the fifth day a terrible storm arose; the waves dashed mountains high; the old vessel groaned and trembled at every plank, until shortly, with a sickening roar and a deafening crash, a terrific wave

washed over the deck; the hull crumbled together like kindling, and the next thing that I can remember, I was in the trough of the raging ocean lying across a broken spar. With daylight the gale subsided; the sun broke through the scurrying clouds, but as far as eye could see no object of any kind broke the dreary expanse of water. I had given myself up for lost, when suddenly in front of me I saw a dark green object rapidly approaching. At first I took it to be an immense green raft; then it began to appear like a wide expanse of tangled seaweed, but when it reached me I found it to be a veritable floating island, and I hastily clambered ashore.

The place seemed completely deserted, but the odd part was that all the natural objects seemed dwarfed and small; the tallest trees scarcely reached to my waist, and I could look over the tops of the highest hills with ease. I had, however, taken but a few steps inland when my further progress was arrested by what had been to me up to this time invisible, a hard transparent substance. I examined this phenomenon closely, and then, for the first time, discovered that this strange island was enclosed in a vast case of glass. This first surprise, however, was as nothing to the sensational disclosure that were soon to be made. Slowly I walked along on the outer fringe of land, and, whether you believe it or not, there spread out before my eyes one of the most wonderful scenes that ever appeared to the startled vision of man. A whole world in miniature; cities, rivers, and plains; out of the chimneys of countless buildings smoke was pouring; through the tiny windows I could see the whirling wheels of the factories; along glistening rails, small toy-like objects were spinning across the open fields drawing behind them boxlike houses from the windows of which protruded the heads of the diminutive people. I walked along fascinated by the ceaseless change of scene until soon I was in a position to overlook what must have been one of their great cities. In the canyon-like streets the people were clogged like cattle, while strange looking vehicles whisked along propelled by some unseen power. In one large section, where like bees in a

hive, the tiny people swarmed, the huddled houses seemed ready to tumble down with decay.

In every respect, save one, these people seemed counterparts of our people, but slung from the backs of each one of them was what looked like a soldier's knapsack from which a tiny hose extended directly over the nostrils of the wearer.

A few days after making these wonderful discoveries, I was walking along the shore on the opposite side of the island when I came upon a small, cave-like opening in the side of a hill, and upon investigation found that it would furnish me an entrance into the country of these little people. I crawled through the opening at once but found that so scant was the air in this enclosed land that, at first, I could scarcely breathe; by standing upright I found that I could reach a better supply of air, and having become accustomed to the rarified atmosphere after frequent visits I was finally able to stay in the case for a considerable length of time.

Almost daily I made land trips through this miniature world, and passed many towns and villages that were scattered over the hills and in the valleys. Whether the inhabitants took me for part of the landscape, or the very hugeness of my bulk made me invisible to them, the fact of the matter is, that I roamed around their world unnoticed and unmolested. Strange to say, the language of these people was my language, and in the rarified air in which they lived I could understand every word that was spoken. I could not help but notice as I trudged past their homes, how down-hearted and discouraged were these little people, and most of them seemed more poverty stricken than any I had ever seen in my own land. A strange history had these tiny folk. From the earliest time they lived in this glass case. The air was brought to them through myriad of tubes that ran to the outer rim and that tapped the earth in every direction. In every community, however, a few prominent citizens controlled the supply of air. Before a house could be built arrangements had to be made with an air lord for a supply of air;

before a farm could be cultivated air supply had to be leased, so that the nitrogen and oxygen, necessary to the growth of the plants, could be supplied. In the cities as the people increased in numbers the price of air went up so rapidly that the unfortunate inhabitants had to huddle together in their tumbling down houses, where they dropped like flies in the poisonous air. I could stride over, what to these people must have been immense distances, ground that as yet was never trod by their tiny feet, but the air lords refuse to supply the air necessary to make it habitable. The packs that I had noticed on the backs of the people were reservoirs which supplied them with air when they left their homes. In fact, so scant was the air supply, that when breathed into the surrounding atmosphere horrid gases were generated that poisoned the whole community—even the great air lords themselves, who held the destiny of these little people in the hollow of their hands. The fair land seemed withering and decaying under the blight of lack of air.

One day as I was walking along the shelf of land outside this case within which the people seemed trapped like rats, I noticed a great hubbub in the public square of the adjoining city. The factories were closed, and the streets were black with people all hurrying toward the square. I crawled through the opening that I had discovered just as one of the little men climbed on a platform that had been erected and began to speak. "Friends he said, "You and I know that we cannot longer stand the conditions under which we live. Everything that we earn must be given up to pay for the use of the air; all that we need is air. If we had it we could live in comfort and luxury; we could till the vacant fields; we could build houses; we could all have homes of our own; we could dispel this pestilential air that is debilitating the whole nation. Why don't we get it? A thin piece of glass is all that keeps us from an illimitable ocean of this precious fluid that will make a garden of our land. Why do we have to pay these air lords for the air? Did they make this air? Are they making it now? And how easy it is to get.

A few well directed blows and the artificial barrier will crumble into a thousand fragments and never rise again."

As he started to speak absolute silence fell upon the throng. Then as the full purport of his passionate words reached his auditors a confused murmur arose. Those on the outskirts of the crowd began to slink down the side streets and alleys. "T'is treason," said one; "Blasphemy" muttered another; "Contrary to the immortal constitution" remarked a third; "Nothing in our union about that" cried a man with a bundle of tools under his arms; "Overturning our precious institutions;" "Subversive of our rights;" "Confiscation;" "Destroying the incentive to save;" these and many other similar remarks I heard as the toilers hurried away, soon leaving the speaker alone in the deserted square.

The authorities must have heard of the uproar, for soon through the streets large posters were displayed announcing that a number of the nation's most prominent citizens would speak that night in the great auditorium on ways and means of alleviating the condition of the poor and destroying the prevailing discontent.

From my vantage point on a neighborhood hill I could see everything that transpired. It was a beautiful night; a crescent moon sent a flood of soft, mellow light over the tiny metropolis. The whole city was astir; crowds poured through the streets, and the hall was soon packed with the late comers massed in the surrounding streets. A hush fell upon the assembly as a fine looking man arose to speak. "Friends" he said, "Unscrupulous agitators have brought distress upon our fair land. Capital has been scared and the men with money have hidden it away. Something must be done to restore confidence; what it is you shall soon hear, and I now present to you as the first speaker of the evening, the Honorable Slippery Loudnoise, one of the wisest legislators from our National House of Play.

The orator was greeted with deafening shouts. His long flowing locks were brushed from his forehead; his massive frame seemed perfectly at ease as he ma-

jestically raised his hands, palms outward, to quiet the uproar.

"Fellow citizens," he began, "I love the laboring man." His full, rich, melodious voice reached to the very edge of the vast concourse, "Let me tell you what this great party of mine has done for this great, grand, and glorious country, and for you, my friends, the finest, most intelligent, most moral, honest, industrious, fair-minded, economical, far-seeing and cultured people upon whom the bright orb of day has ever cast its splendid and refulgent rays." A shrill cheer interrupted him. "Here are a few things that we have done; we said that the workingman shan't be enslaved by the grinding capitalist and we passed a law to keep you from working more than eight hours a day." "I can't get eight hours' work a week" interrupted a shrill voice, but the remark was ignored by the speaker. "We found that the owners of the three mills in this town had combined their offices and were transacting all the business from one office, but monopoly being an abhorrent practice that sets my blood on fire, I stood up in the face of all the world and fought for your rights like a Spartan of old, and now business is transacted from three offices again and three bookkeepers are working where only one worked before!" Wild huzzas rent the air. "Then" he shouted, now worked up into a perfect frenzy, "We passed last year over 7685 laws for the good of the people; we compelled women to cut down the size of their hat pins; we placed a tax on bachelors; we appointed 67 committees to investigate the condition of everybody and everything, and these committees will start to work the year after next if all the members are re-elected; and then, greatest and grandest of all, we have made it a crime, a heinous, criminal crime, for any member of the gentle sex to stray from the paths of virtue!"

"How about the men" shouted someone but he was quickly quieted.

And then with a startling climax, the orator shouted, "The destiny of the nation is safe in the hands of our party" and sank, perspiring, into a chair.

Again the dignitary who was in charge of the meeting advanced to the center of the stage. "Ladies and gentlemen" he said, "The next speaker needs no introduction to you, the secretary of the united, amalgamated and consolidated order for the prevention of unnecessary laziness among the poor workers, will now speak to you."

A solemn visaged man, who, in comparison with his companions, was unusually tall, advanced to the footlights.

"Brothers and sisters" he said, in a long-drawn, high-pitched, peculiar nasal drawl, "I must speak plainly to you; you are to blame for the distress in which you find yourselves. Day after day I go among you and tell you that you should not live five and six in one room, yet you refuse to move from your hovels; I explain to your wives and your girls what food is nutritious, and how it should be cooked, yet on my next visit I find whole families making a meal out of stale bread and evil smelling coffee, and when I retire to my library in the evening I lay my head upon my arm and weep over the perversity of my brothers. I send shoes to your children and every holiday season I send a basket of provisions to all of you; but now you will have to all join hands and contribute something to our society if you intend this good work to go on. Last year I collected \$1800 and I can account for every cent. \$1200 I retained to slightly reimburse me for the time I spend. \$300 I paid for the rent of our offices, \$100 went for stamps and stationery used in securing this money, and every cent of the balance I used to lessen your distress. If you will but let me, I will always be your friend."

Slowly he turned, and gracefully slid into his chair.

I was rather startled by the event that followed this. From a cluster of palms in a corner came the shrill tones of what sounded like a bag-pipes, and with mincing steps, an elderly man, clad in a beautiful plaid kiltie, came upon the platform.

"I was on my way to my bonnie Highlands when I received the invitation to come here tonight and tell my formula for bringing back the good old times and

restoring contentment in the land. I sympathise with you, for once I was a laboring man myself, but the Creator in his infinite mercy gave me great wealth so that I could do good for you. What have I done, you ask? Hardly a village or a hamlet but can proudly point to the beautiful architectural gems, poems in marble and stone, that I have erected as an inspiration for the budding artists and sculptors of tomorrow. I am on my way now to dedicate a magnificent edifice in the mud-hut village of the Hulu Hulu's.

The men of great wealth are few, while the poor number millions, and if you can by your respectful and appreciative demeanor, and your pliant and submissive manners soften the hearts of these opulent ones, they may do as I am doing, and soon you will all be comfortable. One might give you hams with his name stamped on it. A pastry king may give you pies. Another may give you houses as I give libraries. Another may give suits of clothes with the name of the giver worked across the front. In fact, there is no limit to the generosity that may follow, if I can only impress on you the necessity of observing the proper humiliation and respect."

The next speaker advanced rapidly to the speakers stand and without the formality of an introduction began to speak. He was a thin, cadaverous man, with a hawk-like nose, and hard grey eyes. "You all know me," he began, "I am not going to waste any time in telling you what the trouble is—it is caused by your own careless and shiftless habits. You won't pay your rent! Day after day I have to run after you for what you owe me; how do you expect me to build houses, to repair houses, to pay my taxes if you don't pay your rent. I believe in helping others when it doesn't do any damage to me; one of my rules of life is "Never let sympathy run off with your purse" and if you think me hard and mean remember this motto, 'You must be just before you are generous' and when I am just to myself I have nothing left to be generous with. Why one time I can remember I let one of you go two weeks before going after the rent—I was sick. You forget these favors,

for 'Eaten bread is soon forgotten.' You must learn to do without things that you can't get. And you all must work harder and harder; all of you must work; men, women and the children. You must by all means pay the rent. If you are poor it is God's will. Don't you remember the good Book says, 'Well done my good and faithful servant you have been faithful over few things, now I make you faithful over many,' that applies to me. Then it also says, 'the poor ye have always with you,' that applies to you. It is all divine law and can't be changed."

The next, and the last speaker, was evidently the star of the evening. A solemn hush fell upon the assembly. The chairman arose to introduce him and spoke as follows:

"It is our good fortune to have with us tonight, the most brilliant intellect, the greatest scholar, the best trained logician, the crowning star of that glorious array of wonderful minds, that has shed such a luster on our world of letters, art and science; the renowned author and statesman, the Hon. Sir Herbert Artful Dodger, the author of that great work in 57 varieties entitled, *The Unsympathetic Philosopher—Or A Dissertation on the Transcendentalism of Human Vagaries*.

Slowly and deliberately the great man arose; adjusted his long coat; rearranged his tie; brushed back a few scant hairs from his bulging brow; stood in silence a few minutes as if lost in deep meditation and began to speak. "Fellow creatures, or, I might just as correctly say, fellow animals, for that is what we all are, made from the dust and children of the ape. If I could only impress on you the wonderful truths that I have discovered. How we all came from nothing, are nothing, and will finally dissolve into nothing. That all our supposed troubles came from nothing, are nothing, and why should we worry about anything that amounts to nothing. Do you know how this world was made? Not by a Supreme Being as so many of you suppose; not by an all-embracing intelligence. Simply like this: Here is a universe of nothing; small particles of nothing attracted to other particles of nothing causes an immense whirl-

ing as all this nothing seeks a common center; this whirling generates terrific heat and all this nothing is soon a vast fiery globe. As this globe of nothing condenses it throws off other fiery globes; these condense and soon a crust is formed of land and water, from the water creeps the ameba, the protozoon, the shell fish; then follow the reptile, the bird, the mammal and finally man. Some day this vast globe of nothing, with all its crew of air bubbles that we call human being, will crash into another globe of nothing and back to nothing we all will go. Then of what difference does it make whether you have a large supply of what you call good things or not. Everything is but a feverish dream.

"I want to take advantage of this occasion to refute the slanderous statements of unscrupulous critics who accuse me of saying that the air-lords have no ethical right to the air; that they are little better than robbers. Suppose I did use these words, do you think I was speaking of such puny wretches as you? I was speaking of another country that in my imagination I had conjured up. I was thinking of the world as will be millions of years from now. I was simply engaged in the esthetic pleasure of exercising the convolutions of my cerebrum, and deducing from the meditations of my leisure hours the evolutionary finalities that would necessarily result from the conjunction of the *Cerastes horridas*, and the *seratophiallacera*, influenced by the concomitancy of the *Dinosauriea* and the *hypanisognathous Dioscoreacea*. You can see from this lucid explanation that what I plainly meant was that you have no right to take one tube of air from these respectable gentlemen without compensation."

So interested had I become in this little assembly that I forgot where I was, and standing suddenly upright I came in contact with the glassy film that covered the island and it dashed into a million fragments and was carried out to sea by a strong wind. In an instant the whole city was in darkness. I could hear confused murmurs and shouts and cries. I was fearful for what I had done and anxiously awaited the coming of the day to see the

Results of my unfortunate carelessness.

As the first rays of the morning sun brightened the tops of the little houses another wonderful sight was in store for me. It seemed as if the entire country had been transformed over night. People were streaming from the cities in every direction; some were pitching tents on the unused grounds. Others were going father away. Never had I seen such a happy people. The elders romped and tumbled over the ground like little children while the younger ones laughed and shouted as if possessed. In front of the factories were the owners frantically beseeching their former workmen not to desert them; from other buildings large signs were displayed offering fabulous sums to all who would remain and accept the invitation to work. The little puffing toys were spinning along the rails crowded with people, and every where it seemed that an entire nation had been released from bondage and were enjoying a national holiday."

Here a break occurred in the manuscript. But I have often wondered just how these liliputians used their newly found freedom; whether they guarded it as a priceless heritage, or whether they exchanged their glass case for the prison that we have erected for our people with bars of paper deeds.

A BRIEF ESSAY ON LAW.

(For the Review.)

BY CHAS H. PORTER.

All knowledge is relative. Whether derived inductively or deductively all our conclusions are based upon acquired conceptions. If the latter be contrary to right reason the former cannot be faultless. "A conclusion is the absolute and necessary result of the admission of certain premises, and sound premises, together with their necessary conclusions, constitute a demonstration."* For the purpose of correct conclusions nothing is more important than proper conceptions, or sound premises,

for upon them depends the progress of mankind.

It is my purpose here to suggest that possibly our accepted ideas of law are erroneous. If so they are not keeping us in the path of truth and are retarding progress. It is not now my object to trace the particular results of this possible misconception, but merely to state my conception of the law, leaving to others who may have the inclination to make use of it in their own deductions.

There are almost as many conceptions of law as there are relations between animate beings and inanimate things. Montesquieu says,† "Laws are the relations subsisting between it and different beings, and the relation of these to one another." Assuming that the translation is correct, it is incomprehensible why he should use the term in the plural and in the same breath personify them with a singular pronoun. His treatise, however, leaves no room for mistaking his conception of law, which is that of plurality. This conception reduces law to anarchy, separate and distinct laws regulating or governing each special condition. Thus conceived there are divisions of law or laws. Thus we have divine or spiritual laws, of which nothing can be positively known. More or less included in this division are the so-called moral laws. Then come natural or physical laws, or those pertaining to matter and motion. Still another division is that of human laws, a patent impossibility. These embrace numerous subdivisions, such as political or international laws; civil, military, maritime and municipal laws, so that it might almost be said that there are both natural and artificial laws, as well as positive and negative laws. Montesquieu further says that "law in general is human reason, inasmuch as it governs all the inhabitants of the earth." Manifestly, then, this conception of law even though here spoken of as a unity, is something not independent of man, but a part of and in a manner emanating from him, a conclusion which the veriest tyro must reject.

It may be a convenient way of covering up our lack of knowledge to allow such a