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Excerpt from

An Introductory Address
ON
THE MEDICAL ASPECTS OF SOME
SOCIAL QUESTIONS

Delivered before the Forfarshire Medical Association on October 13, 1911

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An Introductory Address

ON

THE MEDICAL ASPECTS OF SOME SOCIAL QUESTIONS.

GENTLEMEN,—It is possible—nay, even probable—that on such an occasion as this our thoughts are apt to be reminiscent of the past, rather than expectant of the future. It is my intention to-day to seize the opportunity which your kindness affords me in order to ask you to look forwards, rather than backwards.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The present is so full of social projects—some of them of a truly adventurous kind—that it is well for—nay, incumbent upon—us to consider whither we are going. Closely connected with such thoughts is the question whether the world, as a whole, is improving. In spite of the material progress and luxurious habits of our age, we often feel it necessary to ask ourselves if the accumulated wealth which has been heaped up in this country during the past century is to be taken as evidence of greater health of our nation. We must endeavour to ascertain whether our success in amassing riches has brought any real improvement in the condition of the people. It seems in my humble judgment that such subjects are at least open to debate, and it has been borne in upon me (who cannot in any way be regarded as *laudator temporis acti*) that, in some respects, we are really in no better condition than we were before.

Our great aim, as belonging to the medical profession, is to do what we can for the good of all. We are all members of

one body politic, and, whether we believe in the principles of Individualism or of Socialism, we desire the welfare of the people at large—*salus populi suprema lex*.

In the remarks about to be made, let me make it quite clear that they are addressed by a working man to other working men. We are in the habit of speaking of those who labour with might and main as "working like blacks." Assuredly the medical man who desires to fit himself for the performance of his duties, and who is reasonably successful in his aims, may justly be regarded as working like ten blacks.

It will be difficult in this address altogether to steer clear of politics; but even if a political bias should show itself, there will certainly be a total absence of any attempt to impute unworthy motives, or to impugn the personal sincerity of any of the politicians from whom we cannot fail, as men of science, to differ.

It must also be premised that in entering upon any consideration of the subject which is to occupy us we must, above everything, avoid all that savours of flippancy. Professing, as we do, the healing art, which leads us to spend our lives, as it were, "in sight of the very Gate of Eternity"—as my dear old friend, Sir William Gairdner, expressed it in one of his most beautiful addresses—we shall always approach such matters in the reverent spirit of men engaged in a holy calling. Righteous indignation or noble rage we may well feel at the sight of wrongs, or the sound of lies, and when stirred in this way we would be false to our better selves if we held our peace; this is quite other than the satirical cynicism of the light-minded.

The advance of democracy is steadily increasing the influence of the working man, and signs are not wanting that he will use his power. We may well believe that he will employ it, on the whole, wisely. It is evident that he will not much longer support the longshore loafer, the sturdy beggar, and the professionally unemployed; it is likewise clear that he is tired of witnessing the sentimental pauperising of the picturesque (and often criminal) alien, as well as the reprehensible toleration of all types of our own home-grown Weary Willies. How to prevent the increase of the unemployable is a matter which many intelligent artisans have discussed with me.

We need not, in my opinion, fear the swelling waves of democratic thinkers in our country. Judging by the past, the modes of social and political thought in the future, with

some temporary aberrations from time to time, will return to sane channels. The strongest discipline that this country ever had was that under the Commonwealth. Many of us feel that it were well for our country to enjoy—if such a phrase may be employed—something of the kind again. It is our bounden duty to use such influence as we have with our other working brethren to help them to use their power in the right direction. There is a general rule, to which few exceptions can be found from the study of history, that no nation can retrace its steps. It therefore behoves us to use our best endeavours to see that the direction in which we are tending is along the lines of safety.

Before taking up the topics upon which you will allow me more particularly to dwell, it seems necessary to make a few preliminary remarks regarding a subject which has been and will be much in our minds.

NATIONAL INSURANCE BILL.

Criticism of the National Insurance Bill is rendered somewhat difficult by a sincere sympathy with most of its declared aims. Many of us on the introduction of the Bill welcomed it as an attempt to lead a large proportion of our population to make provision against the accidents of life; this has notoriously been left undone in the past. We would have wished to have gone further in some directions, particularly in making provision for the widows and children of deceased workmen. We rejoiced, nevertheless, to think that a serious attempt was at last being made to introduce a contributory scheme of national insurance, in which those in whose interest it was introduced should be taught the benefit of self-help.

But most of us have been led to view the Bill with suspicion, on account of its preposterous sections in respect of medical benefits. The amazing proposal that attendance should be rendered by the medical profession on terms, under the circumstances, almost gratuitous, to voluntary insurers of unlimited wealth, was in itself enough to make any reasonable being suspicious of the sanity of its author. Under the unanimous pressure of common-sense, this attempt to foist the well-to-do on us as recipients of charity has already faded away like the snow on a dyke in the morning sun.

The *income limit* of those now suggested as entitled to medical benefits is still a vexed question. The original proposal, after the elimination of the voluntary clauses, dealt severely, as usual, with the unfortunate payer of income-tax. The clauses proposing to enact that all those who do not pay income-tax should enjoy medical benefits was, we have been told, due to the fact that the wit of man was unequal to the effort of devising any other basis. What a humiliating confession of political incapacity and legislative ineptitude! In the storm and stress of medical criticism, the suggested solution is to leave the determination of the question to the local authorities. Does such a suggestion bear any mark of real statesmanship? It is only a compromise, and a feeble compromise; it would undoubtedly have been far wiser from the first to have suggested a scheme of graduated payments for medical assistance.

Little need be said about *freedom in the choice* of a doctor. Such freedom was demanded by everyone. We have not yet reached a belief in equality of intellect. The Hibernian Socialist of the ancient chestnut put the matter in a nutshell when, to his leading statement: "One man is as good as another," he added, in a burst of confidence, "and sometimes, indeed, even better."

Few words are required in regard to the absolute necessity of *adequate medical control*. Sufficient medical representation upon all committees is, and must be, the basis for all efficient medical service. This, also, has been conceded as the result of powerful medical representations.¹

Most of the points which have been referred to may be, let us hope, regarded as mainly of historic interest. It will not do, however, to slacken our vigilance, as in Committee, or on its third reading, some of the discredited clauses may, perchance, find their way back again, and until the Bill has

¹ The hopes expressed when this address was delivered with regard to the amendments to the National Insurance Bill have been almost entirely disappointed. Of all the points in respect of which the medical profession insisted on modification only one has been yielded—that allowing free choice of the doctor; it was so obvious that the nation would tolerate nothing else that we have no reason for any particular gratitude on this head. As the Bill in its present condition is an outrageous violation of the justice we have every reason to expect at the hands of the State, there is nothing left for us but to decline, in the most absolute way, to take part in carrying out any of its provisions. There can be no doubt that in Scotland we shall be able to stand fast in passive resistance to intolerable tyranny.—G. A. G.

been thoroughly mended or completely ended we must be on our guard.

To us there is one gratifying feature. The discussions which have been held have not only taught us our power but shown our solidarity. Many of us here have engaged in agitation, forced upon us by the dangers to which numerous colleagues have been exposed. It has indeed been a matter of heartfelt gladness that we have stood, and shall stand, shoulder to shoulder in the crisis of our profession.

General Criticism of the Bill.

In thinking over schemes for the good of the people one of the humorous yet touching scenes in the twenty-second chapter of the third book of Sterne's masterpiece will probably present itself to many of you :—

Pray what's the matter? Who is there? cried my father, waking, the moment the door began to creak.—I wish the smith would give a peep at that confounded hinge.—'Tis nothing an' please your honour, said Trim, but two mortars I am bringing in.—They shan't make a clatter with them here, cried my father hastily.—If Dr. Slop has any drugs to pound, let him do it in the kitchen.—May it please your honour, cried Trim, they are two mortar-pieces for a siege next summer, which I have been making out of a pair of jack-boots, which Obadiah told me your honour had left off wearing.—By Heaven! cried my father, springing out of his chair, as he swore—I have not one appointment belonging to me, which I set so much store by as I do by these jack-boots—they were our great grandfather's, brother Toby—they were hereditary. Then I fear, quoth my uncle Toby, Trim has cut off the entail.—I have only cut off the tops, an' please your honour, cried Trim.—I hate perpetuities as much as any man alive, cried my father—but these jack-boots, continued he (smiling, though very angry at the same time) have been in the family, brother, ever since the civil wars :—Sir Roger Shandy wore them at the battle of Marston-Moor.—I declare I would not have taken ten pounds for them.—I'll pay you the money, brother Shandy, quoth my uncle Toby, looking at the two mortars with infinite pleasure, and putting his hand into his breeches pocket as he viewed them.—I'll pay you the ten pounds this moment with all my heart and soul.—

Brother Toby, replied my father, altering his tone, you care not what money you dissipate and throw away, provided, continued he, 'tis but upon a siege.—Have I not one hundred and twenty pounds a year, besides my half pay? cried my uncle Toby.—What is that—replied my father hastily—to ten pounds for a pair of jack-boots?—twelve guineas for your pontoons?—half as much for your Dutch draw-bridge?—to say nothing of the train of little brass artillery you bespoke last week, with twenty other preparations for the siege of Messina: believe me, dear brother Toby, continued my father, taking him kindly by the hand—these military operations of yours are above your strength;—you mean well, brother—but they carry you into greater expenses than you were first aware of;—and take my word, dear Toby, they will in the end

quite ruin your fortune, and make a beggar of you.—What signifies it if they do, brother, replied my uncle Toby, so long as we know 'tis for the good of the nation?—

My father could not help smiling for his soul—his anger at the worst was never more than a spark:—and the zeal and simplicity of Trim—and the generous (though hobby-horsical) gallantry of my uncle Toby, brought him into perfect good humour with them in an instant.

Generous Souls!—God prosper you both, and your mortar-pieces too! quoth my father to himself.

Here we have the whole gist of the matter—so long as we know it is for the good of the nation. It must be owned that it would be a hard task to find any resemblance between the demagogue orator and one of the most delightful characters of English classical fiction. There is, however, one aspect which the rampant politician and the genial soldier have in common. As the military operations of the latter were above his strength, so are the financial adventures of the former beyond his ability.

In a recent communication the author of the Bill has made a statement which throws a painful light upon the reason for its introduction. He tells us that its object is not to teach the people how to help themselves in any noble efforts, but simply to help themselves out of other people's pockets. In case there should be any suspicion of a parody let me give his exact words:—

The Insurance Bill provides that for every 4*d.* paid by the workman he shall receive benefits worth 9*d.* To aid the workers' contribution a sum of £17,000,000 per year is to be subscribed by the employers and tax-payers.

It is difficult to find phraseology adequate to meet such an admission as this.

But this doctrine of plunder is in itself based upon falsehood. The statement that for every 4*d.* paid by the workman he is to receive benefits of the value of 9*d.* is absolutely and grotesquely untrue. Every penny will in the long run be paid by himself. The specious inducement offered to the electors to vote for candidates of the same political complexion as the author of the Bill is a grotesque travesty of the truth. This, indeed, is now generally understood, and it is beginning to be recognised that the proposed legislation, if it requires such commendation, although containing some principles to which we all assent, must have a basis of hopeless immorality. When we reflect upon the crafty ways and the shifty tricks of this legal luminary we

may well envy the inhabitants of Utopia. You remember, with a wide tolerance of most men, they drew the line at lawyers. In the Second Book of Sir Thomas More's famous work you will find it stated :—

Furthermore they utterlie exclude and banishe all attorneis, proc-tours, and sergeauntes at the lawe: whiche craftelye handell matters, and subtelly dispute of the lawes. For they thinke it moste meete, that every man should pleade his own matter, and tel the same tale before the judge that he wold tell to his man of law. So shall there be less circumstance of words, and the trueth shal soner come to light, whiles the judge with a discrete judgement doethe waye the woordes of him whom no lawyer hath instructe with deceit, and whiles he helpeth and beareth out simple wittes against the false and malicious circumventions of craftle children.

Two Great Dangers to the Profession.

Many of us in Scotland have spent time, and energy, and money in struggling against some of the clauses which would be disastrous to the medical profession. In regard to a good many of these provisions, concessions have been promised by the author of the Bill, but it is absolutely necessary that we should watch over its progress. If placed on the Statute Book as an Act it can only be brought into operation with our sympathy and assistance.

To the members of our profession there are two great dangers. It is possible, on the one hand, that the emoluments of a large number of our brethren may be so reduced as to render conditions of life too hard for the successful prosecution of medical practice; and, on the other hand, that a new and subordinate class of practitioners may arise, who have neither the instincts nor the education of the present generation. We earnestly hope that neither of these contingencies may arise. We glory in our medical brotherhood, and have good reason to do so. The discussions on the Bill have taught our profession its power, and have shown its solidarity. If we remain as at present, shoulder to shoulder, the Government must come to terms with us and alter the obnoxious clauses of the Bill.

IMMIGRATION.

There are important matters with which Parliament has been engaged within recent times, with which it is even now

occupied, or with which, before long, it must concern itself. Along certain definite lines, in respect of these subjects, we should, in my judgment, use our influence in order to assist social progress. To some of these let me now ask your attention.

As regards the health of the people, let us begin at the beginning, and the obvious commencement is with the addition of inhabitants to this country. For generations we have been the refuge and asylum, not merely of the political exiles, but of the criminal outcasts of other countries. It is high time that this should be put an end to. An Act was passed some years ago regulating the entrance of undesirables into this country; but it is very largely a dead letter, and we still remain the dumping-ground of the rascality of the world. We should learn a lesson from our children in Canada and our brethren in the United States. They do not accept with an equanimity, possibly benevolent, but certainly facile, the entrance of every criminal, lunatic, and degenerative derelict from other countries. They are perfectly right, and the wisdom of their stern regulations is more and more manifest every year.

We have to admit that we are a people of mixed blood; but we need not try to be more mongrel than we really are. We used to be at least a white race, but now there are far too many black and brown and café-au-lait complexions in our streets. It would be a decidedly hopeful indication did we see some more pride of race manifest amongst us to-day. It cannot be said, however, that there is much indication of a growth of common-sense in these directions amongst a nation like ours which seems positively to welcome the introduction of goods manufactured in foreign prisons, to the detriment of our own workmen at home.

EUGENICS.

In this century it is probably inconceivable that any nation can ever attain to such a scheme of marriage as is depicted in the Fifth Book of the Republic; but we can use mouth and pen in order to further the propagation of our race only along lines dictated by common sense. We must admit that, in such questions, there are enormous difficulties. Heredity and environment are both at work in the forma-

tion of character, physical as well as psychical. It is part of the study now termed Eugenics to inquire into and sift out the facts connected with these subjects ; and we must remember that in this study we have not merely scientific problems, but we have social duties.

It is probable that each one of us now present is a believer in the doctrines of Weismann. Although the principles he has enunciated are most helpful to us in our conceptions of many phases of evolution, it must be allowed that they in the meantime somewhat increase our difficulties in the way of practical application. The general result, however, is to increase our hopefulness that, by improving the environment, we possess the means of elevating the race. The persistence of the germ plasm, and its independence of all accidental circumstances, furnish cheerful anticipations, could we but have the power of removing the organism from evil surroundings.

One of the most admirable illustrations of this subject is to be found in a very interesting address on the Eugenics Question and its Limitations by Macalister. Macalister prosecuted an inquiry concerning all the marriages in Liverpool between couples both of whom were deaf-mutes and discovered 62 such unions. From these marriages there resulted 219 children, to say nothing of a large number of grandchildren, and there was not a deaf-and-dumb child in the whole of these descendants. He tells us also that in the further investigation into the histories of the children in the Liverpool School for the Deaf and Dumb, where for 15 years records had been kept regarding the parents of those afflicted by these affections, the surprising result was discovered that there had been no deaf-and-dumb child whose parents had been deaf and dumb in the whole of that period. Such facts as these show us how persistence of type in the germ plasm tends to a hopeful view, provided the individual is placed in a satisfactory environment.

We now know how much may be made of Mendelism in breeding certain physical characteristics ; but we know nothing of what will lead to the production of higher types. This has been exceedingly well put in an admirable address, "On the Aim and Scope of Eugenics," by Sir James Barr :—

The difficulty is to know what characters lead to the elevation of the race ; but if we do not know all the characters we want, we do know many of those which we do not want, so we should begin our campaign by eliminating the undesirables, the idiots, the imbeciles, the insane,

the useless wastrels, the professional pauper, the habitual drunkards, the habitual criminals. There are, of course, certain criminals, such as the burglar, the highwayman, and the forger, who are very clever, and if we are breeding for intelligence it might not be well to exclude them. Many of these men are misdirected geniuses, much more clever and often more honest than your company promoter. Some of these men might make or produce an excellent Chancellor of the Exchequer; scarcely one of them would stoop to a hen-roost, and nothing short of a jeweller's shop or a bank would tempt some of them.

How are we to set to work in order to make use of the forces of heredity and environment? Although the former is largely beyond our control, we may take advantage of our knowledge so far as it goes in order to see that only those who have inherited, and who are likely to transmit, healthy characters are to be the parents of the race of the future. With this end in view, let us segregate the undesirables of every kind in labour colonies, let us treat them with firm kindness, but let us see that they do not give hostages to fortune. It is often held that the practical difficulties are overwhelming, and that it is impossible to carry out such a scheme as this. Plans of this kind have, however, been adopted successfully both in America and on the Continent. There is at least one labour colony in America which costs the community less than half a dollar—about eighteenpence—a year for each inmate, and there is a similar institution in Switzerland, which is entirely self-supporting. Such facts as these point the way for useful legislation in our own country.

We must set our faces against the union of good and pure women with depraved and vicious brutes—this is, indeed, a libel on the lower animals—in order to reform them; or, with decadents and degenerates, in order to develop and elevate them. Some of you will probably remember a series of six plaster casts that used to adorn the retiring room of Professor Laycock in the University of Edinburgh. Two of the casts were taken from a man and a woman who had been inmates of one of the county asylums. The directors or managers of the institution, in their supreme wisdom—or in their benevolent altruism—thought that the two obvious degenerates would either work better, or that they would be more happy, if they became husband and wife. They were married; and the four other plaster casts represent the four offspring—each of which, in a descending series, became more simian, or degenerate.

The celebrated case of "Ada," whose surname has been judiciously hidden from the gaze of the curious, is a terrible instance of the production of the criminal type. Ada was the progenitor of something like 1200 individuals, of whom at least 1000 were criminals, or lunatics, or paupers, or prostitutes, or drunkards. It has been attempted quite recently to prove that the unfortunate Ada was not as black as she has been painted; but the facts are undoubted—that nearly 85 per cent. of her numerous descendants were hopeless degenerates.

Much may be said for the old monastic and conventual system. The frail Ada might have done well either in the choir or in the kitchen of a sisterhood of perpetual adoration; while the elusive Crippen would have been far better occupied as a gardener or even a cellarman in some working order than in exercising his misdirected energies without guidance and restraint. It is to be remembered that even the best of us may be faulty in practice—albeit sterling in principle. You remember how Samuel Johnson, in speaking of his great friend, Dr. John Campbell, makes the remark:—

Campbell is a good man, a pious man. I am afraid he has not been in the inside of a church for many years; but he never passes a church without pulling off his hat. This shows that he has good principles.

In another part of the same charming work the ponderous Doctor once more speaks of his good friend as—

A man of good religious principles, though I am afraid he has been deficient in practice. Campbell is radically right, and we may hope that in good time there will be good practice.

And yet again, this time after the death of his friend:—

I loved Campbell; he was a solid, orthodox man; he had a reverence for religion. Though defective in practice, he was religious in principle

If the practical outcome in the case of even the best of men falls so far short of a correct standard, what can we say of the worst of them?

Some of our friends are not in favour of the idea that the weak should be taken care of and that the wicked should be kept from working mischief. They believe that Nature should be allowed a free hand—that we ought to trust to the

survival of the fittest. They are of opinion that debauchery and disease should be allowed to carry out their work of extermination without hindrance. They tell us that we are hopelessly wrong in rescuing the unfortunate inebriate from the gutter, instead of allowing him to snore away his life in a hard frost or in a sleety storm. Our good friends of this way of thinking (and many of them, it may be said, are most genial and kindly souls) altogether forget that the survival of the fittest is not necessarily the survival of the best.

If we are to enter upon any socialistic legislation we must do it thoroughly—half measures are of no use. The better classes of our fellow working men are now much concerned about social problems of this kind, and we who exert wide influence upon large numbers of them should consider well how we are to use it for further social reform. The supreme importance of a healthy stock; the marriage in the prime of life of the highest types of our fellow men and women; the due performance of every paternal and maternal duty—such are, it seems to me, the most pressing social responsibilities which we have to impress at the present moment upon our lay brethren.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT.

In respect of the education of the people, we have, as medical men, for a long time wisely taught the absolute necessity of caring for physical development and bodily health. The early correction of inherited or acquired defects is an aim worthy of our best endeavours. The system of school inspection by medical officers now affords a basis for concerted action. The healthy training of the body is the only foundation on which the healthy development of the mind may be built. All methods of training the muscular system are of practical utility.

One of the best courses open to us is to emphasise the usefulness of military training, which at once tends to the health of the body and to fitness for defence of the country. Many of us now present here must have regretted that, when the old age pensions were instituted, the legislature did not make it necessary that those who are, in 20 years or so, to receive those pensions, should have performed the elementary duty of being thoroughly drilled. When we

look at the Territorial Force of to-day we find it is composed of the same types of men with public spirit as those who constituted the Force which it has superseded. Would that it were extended ! One of the most hopeful features of the present day is the institution of the youthful scouts of both sexes. They, and the school cadets, somewhat raise our anticipations for the future.

Again, general emulation in games is vastly better than standing around gazing at a professional combat by hired gladiators, where the spectators render the mental atmosphere as lurid as they make the ground filthy. Each of the spectators would certainly be much better employed in some healthy game, or in a walk in the country, than in betting and swearing and spitting while watching a contest of professional performers.

INSTILLATION OF SOUND IDEAS IN CHILDREN.

We should like to see the existence of high ideals, even in infant schools. The example of our brethren in the United States is entirely admirable. From their earliest years the children are taught to have pride in their country and love for their flag. Many of us who have spent long periods away from our native land know well what a warm rush of feeling arises when we catch sight of "the old rag." All of us delight in seeing it waving on the breeze. One of the weakest acts of our present Prime Minister was to discourage the hoisting of our flag upon our public buildings on Victoria Day.

Our children in Canada, and probably in every other Commonwealth, Dominion, or Union of the Empire, can teach us lessons in this respect. Just the other day, on the declaration of the results of the elections in Vancouver, an excited alien seized one of the British ensigns adorning a building, tore it down, and danced upon it in the mud. He was immediately the centre of an interested crowd. Forced upon his knees, he was compelled to offer the most abject apology to the flag, and thereafter, before being allowed to seek retreat, he was obliged to sing "God Save the King" three times from beginning to end, prompted by word and deed ; he then received a somewhat forcible dismissal. It is doubtful whether such an incident in this country would arouse more than a shrug of the shoulders.

In the cities a love of rural life may well be inculcated. Some of you may have read the interesting work of Canon Horsley upon his labours amongst the poor in London. He has done a great deal of loving work for the children by sending them out to enjoy holidays in the country. He tells a pathetic story of one youngster whom he met on his return from a day in a beautiful country place. On asking the boy how he enjoyed it, he was astonished to get the reply that it was "beastly"; and when pressed for a reason for this opinion the boy said there were "no rows, no fights, no funerals—no nothing."

It often seems to me that the schools of to-day do not foster the acquirement of gentle manners as well as was the case with our old parish schools. On speaking, not merely to schoolmasters, but to inspectors of schools, upon this matter, they have told me that it is the fault of the present system; that the schoolmaster is not expected—nay, he is even forbidden in many instances—to take any interest in, or to influence the conduct of, the children out of school hours. If this be the case, what can we expect of many of the children living in the dens of our great towns? Once, not very long ago, a benevolent old lady met a small boy, who was a member of a children's fresh-air holiday expedition. She stopped and said kindly to the little mite: "I suppose you are one of the fresh-air children?" His reply was startling to the poor old lady. What he said was: "Not so very damned fresh neither"!

Is it too much to expect that before the children leave school they should not only be brought within the influence of refining agencies, but that they should also be subjected to patriotic impressions? It seems to me that they never can be too young for the instillation of sound views. We must use all our influence in order to impress on each and all within our sphere of influence that there are no rights unaccompanied by duties: no privileges unattended by responsibilities.

PRACTICAL BEARINGS.

What are the practical bearings of these points on the treatment of the medical aspects of social questions? The reply is easy. We have to answer to our fellow-citizens

and to the Commonwealth for our conscientious discharge of every trust reposed in us. One of our duties is to speak what we believe to be the truth, frankly and fearlessly.

Much of our work is in direct opposition to the obvious tendencies of nature. We labour day and night to compel the unfit to survive. Undoubtedly the ordinary dictates of humanity demand this course. The common-sense of humanity, nevertheless, does not suggest that the unfit should be the parents of the future race.

Just four weeks ago Lord Rosebery took occasion to ask, in his brilliant rectorial address, whether we are not in danger of becoming a "spoon-fed nation." He is not alone in his fears. The belief is entertained, not only by the lovers of our land, but by those who cannot be looked upon as particularly friendly. In his later years, that man of blood and iron, the late Prince Bismarck, remarked contemptuously, "England! Pooh! England has run to flesh." Is there no truth in his powerful gibe? We are striving to make the bed of everyone too soft. We attempt to construe crime as a symptom of disease. We labour to rescue the unfit from extinction. We encourage our degenerates to flourish. We stimulate the breeding of hooligans. We even unite our lunatics in the bands of holy wedlock.

If the sturdy old individualism by which our nation was fashioned is to be superseded by a brand-new Socialism, let us see to it that the new order is, as far as may be possible, based upon scientific principles. By all means let us persevere along the fruitful lines of public health reform followed during the last two centuries—improving the dwellings and bettering the conditions of the working men. Above all, let us care for the children not merely by providing them with education, but also with food when necessary.

To one point you will perhaps let me, in this place, briefly refer. It is assuredly a foolish arrangement to allow the tainted offspring of the criminal classes to sit side by side with the innocent children of the respectable artisan. This is another cogent reason for segregating the criminal and the degenerate, and for State rearing of their offspring when they unhappily have any.

By using all our influence in such directions we can greatly aid social reform, and certainly it will be better for this country if we can carry out such improvements. Progress can never be attained by allowing the alien to crowd out our better-class workmen; by favouring

the free entry of foreign goods—especially those manufactured by the criminals of other countries, whom we therefore assist to maintain—or by enacting crushing taxes upon the land, so that it is impossible to sustain a healthy population upon it. No, the British workman is already showing signs that he is tired of such futile expedients ; and if we can help him with the result of our wide experience we shall be doing our best for the future of our nation. We have, no doubt, many different ways of regarding such problems, and most varied methods of solving the questions before us ; but our aims are one—the elevation of the race.







