III

CERTAIN WHOLESALE ASPECTS OF MAN-MAKING

§ 1

With a skin of infinite delicacy that life will harden very speedily, with a discomforted writhing little body, with a weak and wailing outcry that stirs the heart, the creature comes protesting into the world, and unless death win a victory, we and chance and the forces of life in it, make out of that soft helplessness a man. Certain things there are inevitable in that man and unalterable, stamped upon his being long before the moment of his birth, the inherited things, the inherent things, his final and fundamental self. This is his "heredity," his incurable reality, the thing that out of all his being, stands the test of survival and passes on to his children. Certain things he must be, certain things he may be, and certain things are for ever beyond his scope. That much his parentage defines for him, that is the natural man.

But, in addition, there is much else to make up the whole adult man as we know him. There is all that he has learnt since his birth, all that he has been taught to do and trained to do, his language, the circle of ideas he has taken to himself, the disproportions that come from

unequal exercise and the bias due to circumambient suggestion. There are a thousand habits and a thousand prejudices, powers undeveloped and skill laboriously acquired. There are scars upon his body, and scars upon his mind. All these are secondary things, things capable of modification and avoidance; they constitute the manufactured man, the artificial man. And it is chiefly with all this superposed and adherent and artificial portion of a man that this and the following paper will deal. The question of improving the breed, of raising the average human heredity we have discussed and set aside. We are going to draw together now as many things as possible that bear upon the artificial constituent, the made and controllable constituent in the mature and fully-developed man. We are going to consider how it is built up and how it may be built up, we are going to attempt a rough analysis of the whole complex process by which the civilized citizen is evolved from that raw and wailing little creature.

Before his birth, at the very moment when his being becomes possible, the inherent qualities and limitations of a man are settled for good and all, whether he will be a negro or a white man, whether he will be free or not of inherited disease, whether he will be passionate or phlegmatic or imaginative or six-fingered or with a snub or aquiline nose. And not only that, but even before his birth the qualities that are not strictly and inevitably inherited are also beginning to be made. The artificial, the avoidable handicap also, may have commenced in the worrying, the overworking or the starving of his mother. In the first few months of his life very slight differences in treatment may

have life-long consequences. No doubt there is an extraordinary recuperative power in very young children; if they do not die under neglect or ill-treatment they recover to an extent incomparably greater than any adult could do, but there remains still a wide marginal difference between what they become and what they might have been. With every year of life the recuperative quality diminishes, the initial handicap becomes more irrevocable, the effects of ill-feeding, of unwholesome surroundings, of mental and moral infections, become more inextricably a part of the growing individuality. And so we may well begin our study by considering the circumstances under which the opening phase, the first five years of life, are most safely and securely passed.

Food, warmth, cleanliness and abundant fresh air there must be from the first, and unremitting attention, such attention as only love can sustain. And in addition there must be knowledge. It is a pleasant superstition that Nature (who in such connections becomes feminine and assumes a capital N) is to be trusted in these matters. It is a pleasant superstition to which, some of us, under the agreeable counsels of sentimental novelists, of thoughtless mercenary preachers, and ignorant and indolent doctors, have offered up a child or so. We are persuaded to believe that a mother has an instinctive knowledge of whatever is necessary for a child's welfare, and the child, until it reaches the knuckle-rapping age at least, an instinctive knowledge of its own requirements. Whatever proceedings are most suggestive of an ideal naked savage leading a "natural" life, are supposed to be not

only more advantageous to the child but in some mystical way more moral. The spectacle of an undersized porter-fed mother, for example, nursing a spotted and distressful baby, is exalted at the expense of the clean and simple artificial feeding that is often advisable to-day. Yet the mortality of first-born children should indicate that a modern woman carries no instinctive system of baby management about with her in her brain, even if her savage ancestress had anything of the sort, and both the birth rate and the infantile death rate of such noble savages as our civilization has any chance of observing, suggest a certain generous carelessness, a certain spacious indifference to individual misery, rather than a trustworthy precision of individual guidance about Nature's way.

This cant of Nature's trustworthiness is partly a survival of the day of Rousseau and Sturm (of the Reflections), when untravelled men, orthodox and unorthodox alike, in artificial wigs, spouted in unison in this regard; partly it is the half instinctive tactics of the lax and lazy-minded to evade trouble and austerities. The incompetent medical practitioner, incapable of regimen, repeats this cant even to-day, though he knows full well that, left to Nature, men over-eat themselves almost as readily as dogs, contract a thousand diseases and exhaust their last vitality at fifty, and that half the white women in the world would die with their first children still unborn. He knows, too, that to the details of such precautionary measures as vaccination, for example, instinct is strongly opposed, and that drainage and filterage and the use of soap in washing are manifestly unnatural things. That

large, naked, virtuous, pink, Natural Man, drinking pure spring water, eating the fruits of the earth, and living to ninety in the open air is a fantasy; he never was nor will be. The real savage is a nest of parasites within and without, he smells, he rots, he starves. Forty is a great age for him. He is as full of artifice as his civilized brother, only not so wise. As for his moral integrity, let the curious inquirer seek an account of the Tasmanian, or the Australian, or the Polynesian before "sophistication" came.

The very existence and nature of man is an interference with Nature and Nature's ways, using Nature in this sense of the repudiation of expedients. Man is the tool-using animal, the word-using animal, the animal of artifice and reason, and the only possible "return to Nature" for him--if we scrutinize the phrase--would be a return to the scratching, promiscuous, arboreal simian. To rebel against instinct, to rebel against limitation, to evade, to trip up, and at last to close with and grapple and conquer the forces that dominate him, is the fundamental being of man. And from the very outset of his existence, from the instant of his birth, if the best possible thing is to be made of him, wise contrivance must surround him. The soft, new, living thing must be watched for every sign of discomfort, it must be weighed and measured, it must be thought about, it must be talked to and sung to, skilfully and properly, and presently it must be given things to see and handle that the stirring germ of its mind may not go unsatisfied. From the very beginning, if we are to do our best for a child, there must be forethought and knowledge quite beyond the limit of instinct's

poor equipment.

Now, for a child to have all these needs supplied implies certain other conditions. The constant loving attention is to be got only from a mother or from some well-affected girl or woman. It is not a thing to be hired for money, nor contrivable on any wholesale plan. Possibly there may be ways of cherishing and nursing infants by wholesale that will keep them alive, but at best these are second best ways, and we are seeking the best possible. A very noble, exceptionally loving and quite indefatigable woman might conceivably direct the development of three or four little children from their birth onward, or, with very good assistance, even of six or seven at a time, as well as a good mother could do for one, but it would be a very rare and wonderful thing. We must put that aside as an exceptional thing, quite impossible to provide when it is most needed, and we must fall back upon the fact that the child must have a mother or nurse--and it must have that attendant exclusively to itself for the first year or so of life. The mother or nurse must be in health, physically and morally, well fed and contented, and able to give her attention mainly, if not entirely, to the little child. The child must lie warmly in a well-ventilated room, with some one availably in hearing day and night, there must be plentiful warm water to wash it, plenty of wrappings and towellings and so forth for it; it is best to take it often into the open air, and for this, under urban or suburban conditions at any rate, a perambulator is almost necessary. The room must be clean and brightly lit, and prettily and interestingly coloured if we are to get the best results. These

things imply a certain standard of prosperity in the circumstances of the child's birth. Either the child must be fed in the best way from a mother in health and abundance, or if it is to be bottle fed, there must be the most elaborate provision for sterilizing and warming the milk, and adjusting its composition to the changing powers of the child's assimilation. These conditions imply a house of a certain standard of comfort and equipment, and it is manifest the mother cannot be earning her own living before and about the time of the child's birth, nor, unless she is going to employ a highly skilled, trustworthy, and probably expensive person as nurse, for some year or so after it. She or the nurse must be of a certain standard of intelligence and education, trained to be observant and keep her temper, and she must speak her language with a good, clear accent. Moreover, behind the mother and readily available, must be a highly-skilled medical man.

Not to have these things means a handicap. Not to have that very watchful feeding and attention at first means a loss of nutrition, a retarding of growth, that will either never be recovered or will be recovered later at the expense of mental development or physical strength. The early handicap may also involve a derangement of the digestion, a liability to stomachic and other troubles, that may last throughout life. Not to have the singing and talking, and the varied interest of coloured objects and toys, means a falling away from the best mental development, and a taciturn nurse, or a nurse with a base accent, means backwardness and needless difficulty with the beginning

of speech. Not to be born within reach of abundant changes of clothing and abundant water, means--however industrious and cleanly the instincts of nurse and mother--a lack of the highest possible cleanliness and a lack of health and vitality. And the absence of highly-skilled medical advice, or the attentions of over-worked and under-qualified practitioners, may convert a transitory crisis or a passing ailment into permanent injury or fatal disorder.

It is very doubtful if these most favourable conditions fall to the lot of more than a quarter of the children born to-day even in England, where infant mortality is at its lowest. The rest start handicapped. They start handicapped, and fail to reach their highest possible development. They are born of mothers preoccupied by the necessity of earning a living or by vain occupations, or already battered and exhausted by immoderate child-bearing; they are born into insanity and ugly or inconvenient homes, their mothers or nurses are ignorant and incapable, there is insufficient food or incompetent advice, there is, if they are town children, nothing for their lungs but vitiated air, and there is not enough sunlight for them. And accordingly they fall away at the very outset from what they might be, and for the most part they never recover their lost start.

Just what this handicap amounts to, so far as it works out in physical consequences, is to be gauged by certain almost classical figures, which I have here ventured to present again in graphic form. These figures do not present our total failure, they merely show how far the

less fortunate section of the community falls short of the more fortunate. They are taken from Clifford Allbutt's System of Medicine (art. "Hygiene of Youth," Dr. Clement Dukes). 15,564 boys and young men were measured and weighed to get these figures. The black columns indicate the weight (+9 lbs. of clothes) and height respectively of youths of the town artisan population, for the various ages from ten to twenty-five indicated at the heads of the columns. The white additions to these columns indicate the additional weight and height of the more favoured classes at the same ages. Public school-boys, naval and military cadets, medical and university students, were taken to represent the more favoured classes. It will be noted that while the growth in height of the lower class boy falls short from the very earliest years, the strain of the adolescent period tells upon his weight, and no doubt upon his general stamina, most conspicuously. These figures, it must be borne in mind, deal with the living members of each class at the ages given. The mortality, however, in the black or lower class is probably far higher than in the upper class year by year, and if this could be allowed for it would greatly increase the apparent failure of the lower class. And these matters of height and weight are only coarse material deficiencies. They serve to suggest, but they do not serve to gauge, the far graver and sadder loss, the invisible and immeasurable loss through mental and moral qualities undeveloped, through activities warped and crippled and vitality and courage lowered.

Moreover, defective as are these urban artisans, they are, after all,

much more "picked" than the youth of the upper classes. They are survivors of a much more stringent process of selection than goes on amidst the more hygienic upper and middle-class conditions. The opposite three columns represent the mortality of children under five in Rutlandshire, where it is lowest, in the year 1900, in Dorsetshire, a reasonably good county, and in Lancashire, the worst in England, for the same year. Each entire column represents 1,000 births, and the blackened portion represents the proportion of that 1,000 dead before the fifth birthday. Now, unless we are going to assume that the children born in Lancashire are inherently weaker than the children born in Rutland or Dorset--and there is not the shadow of a reason why we should believe that--we must suppose that at least 161 children out of every 1,000 in Lancashire were killed by the conditions into which they were born. That excess of blackness in the third column over that in the first represents a holocaust of children, that goes on year by year, a perennial massacre of the innocents, out of which no political capital can be made, and which is accordingly outside the sphere of practical politics altogether as things are at present. The same men who spouted infinite mischief because a totally unforeseen and unavoidable epidemic of measles killed some thousands of children in South Africa, who, for some idiotic or wicked vote-catching purpose, attempted to turn that epidemic to the permanent embitterment of Dutch and English, these same men allow thousands and thousands of avoidable deaths of English children close at hand to pass absolutely unnoticed. The fact that more than 21,000 little children died needlessly in Lancashire in that very same year means nothing to them at all. It

cannot be used to embitter race against race, and to hamper that process of world unification which it is their pious purpose to delay.

It does not at all follow that even the Rutland 103 represents the possible minimum of infant mortality. One learns from the Register-General's returns for 1891 that among the causes of death specified in the three counties of Dorset, Wiltshire, and Hereford, where infant mortality is scarcely half what it is in the three vilest towns in England in this respect, Preston, Leicester, and Blackburn, the number of children killed by injury at birth is three times as great as it is in these same towns. Unclassified "violence" also accounts for more infant deaths in the country than in towns. This suggests pretty clearly a delayed and uncertain medical attendance and rough conditions, and it points us to still better possibilities. These diagrams and these facts justify together a reasonable hope that the mortality of infants under five throughout England might be brought to less than one-third what it is in child-destroying Lancashire at the present time, to a figure that is well under ninety in the thousand.

A portion of infant and child mortality represents no doubt the lingering and wasteful removal from this world of beings with inherent defects, beings who, for the most part, ought never to have been born, and need not have been born under conditions of greater foresight. These, however, are the merest small fraction of our infant mortality. It leaves untouched the fact that a vast multitude of children of untainted blood and good mental and moral possibilities, as many,

perhaps, as 100 in each 1,000 born, die yearly through insufficient food, insufficient good air, and insufficient attention. The plain and simple truth is that they are born needlessly. There are still too many births for our civilisation to look after, we are still unfit to be trusted with a rising birth-rate. [Footnote: It is a digression from the argument of this Paper, but I would like to point out here a very popular misconception about the birth-rate which needs exposure. It is known that the birth-rate is falling in all European countries--a fall which has a very direct relation to a rise in the mean standard of comfort and the average age at marriage--and alarmists foretell a time when nations will be extinguished through this decline. They ascribe it to a certain decay in religious faith, to the advance of science and scepticism, and so forth; it is a part, they say, of a general demoralization. The thing is a popular cant and quite unsupported by facts. The decline in the birth-rate is--so far as England and Wales goes--partly a real decline due to a decline in gross immorality, partly to a real decline due to the later age at which women marry, and partly a statistical decline due to an increased proportion of people too old or too young for child-bearing. Wherever the infant mortality is falling there is an apparent misleading fall in the birth-rate due to the "loading" of the population with children. Here are the sort of figures that are generally given. They are the figures for England and Wales for two typical periods.

Period 1846-1850	33 8 births per 1000
Period 1896-1900	28 0 births per 1000

5.8 fall in the birth-rate.

This as it stands is very striking. But if we take the death-rates of these two periods we find that they have fallen also.

Period 1846-1850 23 3 deaths per 1000

Period 1896-1900 17 7 deaths per 1000

5.6 fall in the death-rate.

Let us subtract death-rate from birth-rate and that will give the effective rate of increase of the population.

Period 1846-1850 10 5 effective rate of increase

Period 1896-1900 10 3 effective rate of increase

.2 fall in the rate of increase.

But now comes a curious thing that those who praise the good old pre-Board School days--the golden age of virtuous innocence--ignore. The Illegitimate births in 1846-1850 numbered 2.2 per 1000, in 1896-1900 they numbered 1.2 per 1000. So that if it were not for this fall in illegitimate births the period 1896-1900 would show a positive rise in the effective rate of increase of .8 per thousand. The eminent persons therefore who ascribe our falling birth-rate to irreligion and

so forth, either speak without knowledge or with some sort of knowledge beyond my ken. England is, as a matter of fact, becoming not only more hygienic and rational, but more moral and more temperate. The highly moral, healthy, prolific, pious England of the past is just another poetical delusion of the healthy savage type.]

These poor little souls are born, amidst tears and suffering they gain such love as they may, they learn to feel and suffer, they struggle and cry for food, for air, for the right to develop; and our civilisation at present has neither the courage to kill them outright quickly, cleanly, and painlessly, nor the heart and courage and ability to give them what they need. They are overlooked and misused, they go short of food and air, they fight their pitiful little battle for life against the cruellest odds; and they are beaten. Battered, emaciated, pitiful, they are thrust out of life, borne out of our regardless world, stiff little life-soiled sacrifices to the spirit of disorder against which it is man's preeminent duty to battle. There has been all the pain in their lives, there has been the radiated pain of their misery, there has been the waste of their grudged and insufficient food, and all the pain and labour of their mothers, and all the world is the sadder for them because they have lived in vain.

§ 2

Now, since our imaginary New Republic, which is to set itself to the making of a better generation of men, will find the possibility of improving the race by selective breeding too remote for anything but further organised inquiry, it is evident that its first point of attack will have to be the wastage of such births as the world gets to-day. Throughout the world the New Republic will address itself to this problem, and when a working solution has been obtained, then the New Republican on press and platform, the New Republican in pulpit and theatre, the New Republican upon electoral committee and in the ballot box, will press weightily to see that solution realised. Upon the theory of New Republicanism as it was discussed in our first paper an effective solution (effective enough, let us say, to abolish seventy or eighty per cent.) of this scandal of infantile suffering would have precedence over almost every existing political consideration.

The problem of securing the maximum chance of life and health for every baby born into the world is an extremely complicated one, and the reader must not too hastily assume that a pithy, complete recipe is attempted here. Yet, complicated though the problem is, there does not occur any demonstrable impossibility such as there is in the question of selective breeding. I believe that a solution is possible, that its broad lines may be already stated, and that it could very easily be worked out to an immediate practical application.

Let us glance first at a solution that is now widely understood to be incorrect. Philanthropic people in the past have attempted, and many

are still striving, to meet the birth waste by the very obvious expedients of lying-in hospitals, orphanages and foundling institutions, waifs' homes, Barnardo institutions and the like, and within certain narrow limits these things no doubt serve a useful purpose in individual cases. But nowadays there is an increasing indisposition to meet the general problem by such methods, because nowadays people are alive to certain ulterior consequences that were at first overlooked. Any extensive relief of parental responsibility we now know pretty certainly will serve to encourage and stimulate births in just those strata of society where it would seem to be highly reasonable to believe they are least desirable. It is just where the chances for a child are least that passions are grossest, basest, and most heedless, and stand in the greatest need of a sense of the gravity of possible consequences to control their play, and to render it socially innocuous. If we were to take over or assist all the children born below a certain level of comfort, or, rather, if we were to take over their mothers before the birth occurred, and bring up that great mass of children under the best conditions for them--supposing this to be possible--it would only leave our successors in the next generation a heavier task of the same sort. The assisted population would grow generation by generation relatively to the assisting until the Sinbad of Charity broke down. And quite early in the history of Charities it was found that a very grave impediment to their beneficial action lay in one of the most commendable qualities to be found in poor and poorish people, and that is pride. While Charities, perhaps, catch the quite hopeless cases, they leave untouched the far more extensive mass

of births in non-pauper, not very prosperous homes--the lower middle-class homes in towns, for example, which supply a large proportion of poorly developed adults to our community. Mr. Seebohm Rowntree, in his "Poverty" (that noble, able, valuable book), has shown that nearly thirty per cent. at least of a typical English town population goes short of the physical necessities of life. These people are fiercely defensive in such matters as this, and one may no more usurp and share their parental responsibility, badly though they discharge it, than one may handle the litter of a she-wolf.

These considerations alone would suffice to make us very suspicious of the philanthropic method of direct assistance, so far as the remedial aspect goes. But there is another more sweeping and comprehensive objection to this method. Philanthropic institutions, as a matter of fact, rarely succeed in doing what they profess and intend to do.

I do not allude here to the countless swindlers and sham institutions that levy a tremendous tribute upon the heedless good. Quite apart from that wastage altogether, and speaking only of such bonâ fide institutions as would satisfy Mr. Labouchere, they do not work. It is one thing for the influential and opulent inactive person of good intentions to provide a magnificent building and a lavish endowment for some specific purpose, and quite another to attain in reality the ostensible end of the display. It is easy to create a general effect of providing comfort and tender care for helpless women who are becoming mothers, and of tending and training and educating their children, but,

in cold fact, it is impossible to get enough capable and devoted people to do the work. In cold fact, lying-in hospitals have a tendency to become austere, hard, unsympathetic, wholesale concerns, with a disposition to confuse and substitute moral for physical well-being. In cold fact, orphanages do not present any perplexing resemblance to an earthly paradise. However warm the heart behind the cheque, the human being at the other end of the chain is apt to find the charity no more than a rather inhuman machine. Shining devotees there are, but able, courageous, and vigorous people are rare, and the world urges a thousand better employments upon them than the care of inferior mothers and inferior children. Exceptionally good people owe the world the duty of parentage themselves, and it follows that the rank and file of those in the service of Charity falls far below the standard necessary to give these poor children that chance in the world the cheque-writing philanthropist believes he is giving them. The great proportion of the servants and administrators of Charities are doing that work because they can get nothing better to do--and it is not considered remarkably high-class work. These things have to be reckoned with by every philanthropic person with sufficient faith to believe that an enterprise may not only look well, but do well. One gets a Waugh or a Barnardo now and then, a gleam of efficiency in the waste, and for the rest this spectacle of stinted thought and unstinted giving, this modern Charity, is often no more than a pretentious wholesale substitute for retail misery and disaster. Fourteen million pounds a year, I am told, go to British Charities, and I doubt if anything like a fair million's worth of palliative amelioration is attained for this

expenditure. As for any permanent improvement, I doubt if all these Charities together achieve a net advance that could not be got by the discreet and able expenditure of ten or twelve thousand pounds.

It is one of the grimmest ironies in life, that athwart the memory of sainted founders should be written the most tragic consequences. The Foundling Hospital of London, established by Coram--to save infant lives!--buried, between 1756 and 1760, 10,534 children out of 14,934 received, and the Dublin Foundling Hospital (suppressed in 1835) had a mortality of eighty per cent. The two great Russian institutions are, I gather, about equally deadly with seventy-five per cent., and the Italian institutes run to about ninety per cent. The Florentine boasts a very beautiful and touching series of putti by Delia Robbia, that does little or nothing to diminish its death-rate. So far from preventing infant murder these places, with the noblest intentions in the world, have, for all practical purposes, organized it. The London Foundling, be it noted, in the reorganized form it assumed after its first massacres, is not a Foundling Hospital at all. An extremely limited number of children, the illegitimate children of recommended respectable but unfortunate mothers, are converted into admirable bandsmen for the defence of the Empire or trained to be servants for people who feel the need of well-trained servants, at a gross cost that might well fill the mind of many a poor clergyman's son with amazement and envy. And this is probably a particularly well-managed charity. It is doing all that can be expected of it, and stands far above the general Charitable average.

Every Poor Law Authority comes into the tangles of these perplexities. Upon the hands of every one of them come deserted children, the children of convicted criminals, the children of pauper families, a miscellaneous pitiful succession of responsibilities. The enterprises they are forced to undertake to meet these charges rest on taxation, a financial basis far stabler than the fitful good intentions of the rich, but apart from this advantage there is little about them to differentiate them from Charities. The method of treatment varies from a barrack system, in which the children are herded in huge asylums like those places between Sutton and Banstead, to what is perhaps preferable, the system of boarding-out little groups of children with suitable poor people. Provided such boarded-out children are systematically weighed, measured and examined, and at once withdrawn when they drop below average mental and bodily progress, it would seem more likely that a reasonable percentage should grow into ordinary useful citizens under these latter conditions than under the former.

It is well, however, to anticipate a very probable side result if we make the boarding out of pauper children a regular rural industry. There will arise in many rural homes a very strong pecuniary inducement to limit the family. Side by side will be a couple with eight children --of their own, struggling hard to keep them, and another family with, let us say, two children of their own blood and six "boarded-out," living in relative opulence. That side consequence must be anticipated. For my own part and for the reasons given in the second of these

papers, I do not see that it is a very serious one so far as the future goes, because I do not think there is much to choose between the "heredity" of the rural and the urban strain. It is nonsense to pretend that we shall get the fine flower of the cottage population to board pauper children; we shall induce respectable inferior people living in healthy conditions to take care of an inferior sort of children rescued from unhealthy disreputable conditions--that is all. The average inherent quality of the resultant adults will be about the same whichever element predominates.

Possibly this indifference may seem undesirable. But we must bear in mind that the whole problem is hard to cope with, it is an aspect of failure, and no sentimental juggling with facts will convert the business into a beautiful or desirable thing. Somehow or other we have to pay. All expedients must be palliatives, all will involve sacrifices; we must, no doubt, adopt some of them for our present necessities, but they are like famine relief works, to adopt them in permanence is a counsel of despair.

Clearly it is not along these lines that the capable men-makers we suppose to be attacking the problem will spend much of their energies. All the experiences of Charities and Poor-Law Authorities simply confirm our postulate of the necessity of a standard of comfort if a child is to have a really good initial chance in the world. The only conceivable solution of this problem is one that will ensure that no child, or only a few accidental and exceptional children, will be born

outside these advantages. It is no good trying to sentimentalize the issue away. This is the end we must attain, to attain any effectual permanent improvement in the conditions of childhood. A certain number of people have to be discouraged and prevented from parentage, and a great number of homes have to be improved. How can we ensure these ends, or how far can we go towards ensuring them?

The first step to ensuring them is certainly to do all we can to discourage reckless parentage, and to render it improbable and difficult. We must make sure that whatever we do for the children, the burden of parental responsibility must not be lightened a feather-weight. All the experience of two hundred years of charity and poor law legislation sustains that. But to accept that as a first principle is one thing, and to apply it by using a wretched little child as our instrument in the exemplary punishment of its parent is another. At present that is our hideous practice. So long as the parents are not convicted criminals, so long as they do not practise indictable cruelty upon their offspring, so long as the children themselves fall short of criminality, we insist upon the parent "keeping" the child. It may be manifest the child is ill-fed, harshly treated, insufficiently clothed, dirty and living among surroundings harmful to body and soul alike, but we merely take the quivering damaged victim and point the moral to the parent. "This is what comes of your recklessness," we say. "Aren't you ashamed of it?" And after inscrutable meditations the fond parent usually answers us by sending out the child to beg or sell matches or by some equally effective retort. Now a great number of excellent

people pretend that this is a dilemma. "Take the child away," it is argued, "and you remove one of the chief obstacles to the reckless reproduction of the unfit. Leave it in the parents' hands and you must have the cruelty." But really this is not a dilemma at all. There is a quite excellent middle way. It may not be within the sphere of practical politics at present--if not, it is work for the New Republic to get it there--but it would practically settle all this problem of neglected children. This way is simply to make the parent the debtor to society on account of the child for adequate food, clothing, and care for at least the first twelve or thirteen years of life, and in the event of parental default to invest the local authority with exceptional powers of recovery in this matter. It would be quite easy to set up a minimum standard of clothing, cleanliness, growth, nutrition and education, and provide, that if that standard was not maintained by a child, or if the child was found to be bruised or maimed without the parents being able to account for these injuries, the child should be at once removed from the parental care, and the parents charged with the cost of a suitable maintenance--which need not be excessively cheap. If the parents failed in the payments they could be put into celibate labour establishments to work off as much of the debt as they could, and they would not be released until their debt was fully discharged. Legislation of this type would not only secure all and more of the advantages children of the least desirable sort now get from charities and public institutions, but it would certainly invest parentage with a quite unprecedented gravity for the reckless, and it would enormously reduce the number of births of the least desirable

sort. Into this net, for example, every habitual drunkard who was a parent would, for his own good and the world's, be almost certain to fall. [Footnote: Mr. C. G. Stuart Menteath has favored me with some valuable comments upon this point. He writes: "I agree that calling such persons as have shown themselves incapable of parental duties debtors to the State, would help to reconcile popular ideas of the 'liberty of the subject' with the enforcement as well as the passing of such laws. But the notions of drastically enforcing parental duties, and of discouraging and even prohibiting the marriages of those unable to show their ability to perform these duties, has long prevailed. See Nicholl's History of the Poor Law (1898, New Edition), i. 229, and ii. 140, 278, where you will find chargeable bastardy has been punishable in the first offence by one year's imprisonment, and in the second, by imprisonment until sureties are given, which thus might amount to imprisonment for life. See also, J. S. Mill, Political Economy, Bk. II., ch. ii., for extreme legislation on the Continent against the marriage of people unable to support a family. In Denmark there seem to be very severe laws impeding the marriage of those who have been paupers. The English law was sufficiently effective to produce infanticide, so that a law was passed making concealment of birth almost infanticide."]

So much for the worst fringe of this question, the maltreated children, the children of the slum, the children of drunkards and criminals, and the illegitimate. But the bulk of the children of deficient growth, the bulk of the excessive mortality, lies above the level of such

intervention, and the method of attack of the New Republican must be less direct. Happily there already exists a complicated mass of legislation that without any essential change of principle could be applied to this object.

The first of the expedients which would lead to a permanent improvement in these matters is the establishment of a minimum of soundness and sanitary convenience in houses, below which standard it shall be illegal to inhabit a house at all. There should be a certain relation between the size of rooms and their ventilating appliances, a certain minimum of lighting, certain conditions of open space about the house and sane rules about foundations and materials. These regulations would vary with the local density of population--many things are permissible in Romney marsh, for example, which the south-west wind sweeps everlastingly, that would be deadly in Rotherhithe. At present in England there are local building regulations, for the most part vexatious and stupid to an almost incredible degree, and compiled without either imagination or understanding, but it should be possible to substitute for these a national minimum of habitability without any violent revolution. A house that failed to come up to this minimum--which might begin very low and be raised at intervals of years--would, after due notice, be pulled down. It might be pulled down and the site taken over and managed by the local authority--allowing its owner a portion of its value in compensation--if it was evident his failure to keep up to the standard had an adequate excuse. In time it might be possible to level up the minimum standard of all tenements in towns and

urban districts at any rate to the possession of a properly equipped bathroom for example, without which, for hardworking people, regular cleanliness is a practical impossibility. This process of levelling-up the minimum tenement would be enormously aided by a philanthropic society which would devote itself to the study of building methods and materials, to the evolution of conveniences, and the direction of invention to lessening the cost and complication of building wholesome dwellings.

The state of repair of inhabited buildings is also already a matter of public concern. All that is needed is a slow, persistent tightening-up of the standard. This would ensure, at any rate, that the outer shell of the child's surroundings gave it a fair chance in life. In the next place comes legislation against overcrowding. There must be a maximum number of inhabitants to any tenement, and a really sane law will be far more stringent to secure space and air for young children than for adults. There is little reason, except the possible harbouring of parasites and infectious disease, why five or six adults should not share a cask on a dust heap as a domicile--if it pleases them. But directly children come in we touch the future. The minimum permissible tenement for a maximum of two adults and a very young child is one properly ventilated room capable of being heated, with close and easy access to sanitary conveniences, a constant supply of water and easy means of getting warm water. More than one child should mean another room, and it seems only reasonable if we go so far as this, to go further and require a minimum of furniture and equipment, a fire-guard,

for instance, and a separate bed or cot for the child. In a civilized community little children should not sleep with adults, and the killing of children by "accidental" overlaying should be a punishable offence. [Footnote: In the returns I have quoted from Blackburn, Leicester, and Preston the number of deaths from suffocation per 100,000 infants born was 232 in the first year of life.]

If a woman does not wish to be dealt with as a half-hearted murderess she should not behave like one. It should also be punishable on the part of a mother to leave children below a certain age alone for longer than a certain interval. It is absurd to punish people as we do, for the injuries inflicted by them upon their children during uncontrollable anger, and not to punish them for the injuries inflicted by uncontrolled carelessness. Such legislation should ensure children space, air and attention. [Footnote: It is less within the range of commonly grasped ideas, it is therefore less within the range of practical expedients, to point out that a graduated scale of building regulation might be contrived for use in different localities. Districts could be classed in grades determined by the position of each district in the scale of infant mortality, and in those in which the rate was highest the hygienic standard could be made most stringent and onerous upon the house owner. This would force up the price of house-room, and that would force up the price of labour, and this would give the proprietors of unwholesome industries a personal interest in hygienic conditions about them. It would also tend to force population out of districts intrinsically unhealthy into districts intrinsically

healthy. The statistics of low-grade districts could be examined to discover the distinctive diseases which determine their lowness of grade, and if these were preventable diseases they could be controlled by special regulations. A further extension of these principles might be made. Direct inducements to attract the high birth-rates towards exceptionally healthy districts could be contrived by a differential rating of sound families with children in such districts, the burthen of heavy rates could be thrown upon silly and selfish landowners who attempted to stifle sound populations by using highly habitable areas as golf links, private parks, game preserves, and the like, and public-spirited people could combine to facilitate communications that would render life in such districts compatible with industrial occupation. Such deliberate redistribution of population as this differential treatment of districts involves, is, however, quite beyond the available power and intelligence of our public control at present, and I suggest it here as something that our grandchildren perhaps may begin to consider. But if in the obscurity of this footnote I may let myself go, I would point out that, in the future, a time may come when locomotion will be so swift and convenient and cheap that it will be unnecessary to spread out the homes of our great communities where the industrial and trading centres are gathered together; it will be unnecessary for each district to sustain the renewal and increase of its own population. Certain wide regions will become specifically administrative and central--the home lands, the mother lands, the centres of education and population, and others will become specifically fields of action. Something of this kind is to a slight

degree already the case with Scotland, which sends out its hardy and capable sons wherever the world has need of them; the Swiss mountains, too, send their sons far and wide in the world; and on the other hand, with regard to certain elements of population, at any rate, London and the Gold Coast and, I suspect, some regions in the United States of America, receive to consume.]

But it will be urged that these things are likely to bear rather severely on the very poor parent. To which a growing number of people will reply that the parent should not be a parent under circumstances that do not offer a fair prospect of sound child-birth and nurture. It is no good trying to eat our cake and have it; if the parent does not suffer the child will, and of the two, we, of the New Republic, have no doubt that the child is the more important thing.

It may be objected, however, that existing economic conditions make life very uncertain for many very sound and wholesome kinds of people, and that it is oppressive and likely to rob the State of good citizens to render parentage burthensome, and to surround it with penalties. But that directs our attention to a second scheme of expedients which have crystallized about the expression, the Minimum Wage. The cardinal idea of this group of expedients is this, that it is unjust and cruel in the present and detrimental to the future of the world to let any one be fully employed at a rate of payment at which a wholesome, healthy, and, by the standards of comfort at the time, a reasonable happy life is impossible. It is better in the long run that people whose character

and capacity will not render it worth while to employ them at the Minimum Wage should not be employed at all. The sweated employment of such people, as Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb show most conclusively in their great work, "Industrial Democracy," arrests the development of labour-saving machinery, replaces and throws out of employment superior and socially more valuable labour, enables these half capables to establish base families of inadequately fed and tended children (which presently collapse upon public and private charity), and so lowers and keeps down the national standard of life. As these writers show very clearly, an industry that cannot adequately sustain sound workers is not in reality a source of public wealth at all, but a disease and a parasite upon the public body. It is eating up citizens the State has had the expense of educating, and very often the indirect cost of rearing. Obviously the minimum wage for a civilized adult male should be sufficient to cover the rent of the minimum tenement permissible with three or four children, the maintenance of himself and his wife and children above the minimum standard of comfort, his insurance against premature or accidental death or temporary economic or physical disablement, some minimum provision for old age and a certain margin for the exercise of his individual freedom. [Footnote: An excellent account of experiments already tried in the establishment of a Minimum Wage will be found in W.P. Reeves' State Experiments in Australia and New Zealand, vol. ii., p. 47 et seq.]

So that while those who are bent on this conception of making economy in life and suffering the guiding principle of their public and social

activity, are seeking to brace up the quality of the home on the one hand, they must also do all they can to bring about the realization of this ideal of a minimum wage on the other. In the case of government and public employment and of large, well-organized industries, the way is straight and open, and the outlook very hopeful. Wherever licenses, tariffs, and any sort of registration occurs there are practicable means of bringing in this expedient. But where the employment is shifting and sporadic, or free from regulation, there we have a rent in our social sieve, and the submissive, eager inferior will still come in, the failures of our own race, the immigrant from baser lands, desperately and disastrously underselling our sound citizens. Obviously we must use every contrivance we can to mend these rents, by promoting the organization of employments in any way that will not hamper progress in economic production. And if we can persuade the Trade Unions--and there is every sign that the old mediaeval guild conception of water-tight trade limitations is losing its hold upon those organizations--to facilitate the movement of workers from trade to trade under the shifting stress of changing employment and of changing economy of production, we shall have gone far to bring the possibilities of the rising operative up to the standard of the minimum home permissible for children.

These things--if we could bring them about--would leave us with a sort of clarified Problem of the Unemployed on our hands. Our Minimum Wage would have strained these people out, and, provided there existed what is already growing up, an intelligent system of employment bureaus, we

should have much more reason to conclude than we have at present, that they were mainly unemployed because of a real incapacity in character, strength, or intelligence for efficient citizenship. Our raised standards of housing, our persecution of overcrowding, and our obstruction of employment below the minimum wage, would have swept out the rookeries and hiding-places of these people of the Abyss. They would exist, but they would not multiply--and that is our supreme end. They would be tramping on roads where mendicity laws would prevail, there would be no house-room for them, no squatting-places. The casual wards would catch them and register them, and telephone one to the other about them. It is rare that children come into this world without a parent or so being traceable. Everything would converge to convince these people that to bear children into such an unfavourable atmosphere is an extremely inconvenient and undesirable thing. They would not have many children, and such children as they had would fall easily into our organized net and get the protection of the criticised and improved development of the existing charitable institutions. [Footnote: "I wonder whether there is any legal flaw in the second section of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act of 1894, which may have been specially aimed at beggars with offspring. It is specially punishable to beg having an infant in their arms, quite apart from teaching the infant in question to beg. Or is this law insufficiently enforced through popular apathy?"--C. G. STUART MENTEATH.] This is the best we can do for those poor little creatures. As for that increasing section of the Abyss that will contrive to live childless, these papers have no quarrel with them. A childless wastrel is a terminating evil,

and it may be, a picturesque evil. I must confess that a lazy rogue is very much to my taste, provided there is no tragedy of children to smear the joke with misery. And if he or she neither taints nor tempts the children, who are our care, a childless weakling we may freely let our pity and mercy go out to. To go childless is in them a virtue for which they merit our thanks.

These are the first necessities, then, in the Making of Men and the bettering of the world, this courageous interference with what so many people call "Nature's methods" and "Nature's laws," though, indeed, they are no more than the methods and laws of the beasts. By such expedients we may hope to see, first, a certain fall in the birth-rate, a fall chiefly in the birth-rate of improvident, vicious, and feeble types, a continuation, in fact, of that fall that is already so conspicuous in illegitimate births in Great Britain; secondly, a certain, almost certainly more considerable fall in the death-rate of infants and young children, and that fall in the infantile death-rate will serve to indicate, thirdly, a fall no statistics will fully demonstrate in what I may call the partial death-rate, the dwarfing and limiting of that innumerable host of children who do, in an underfed, meagre sort of a way, survive. This raising of the standard of homes will do a work that will not end with the children; the death-line will sag downward for all the first twenty or thirty years of life. Dull-minded, indolent, prosperous people will say that all this is no more than a proposal to make man better by machinery, that you cannot reform the world by Board of Trade Regulations and all the rest of it. They

will say that such work as this is a scheme of grim materialism, and that the Soul of Man gains no benefit by this "so-called Progress," that it is not birth-rates that want raising but Ideals. We shall deal later with Ideals in general. Here I will mention only one, and that is, unhappily, only an Ideal Argument. I wish I could get together all these people who are so scornful of materialistic things, out of the excessively comfortable houses they inhabit, and I wish I could concentrate them in a good typical East London slum--five or six together in each room, one lodging with another, and I wish I could leave them there to demonstrate the superiority of high ideals to purely material considerations for the rest of their earthly career while we others went on with our sordid work unencumbered by their ideality.

Think what these dry-looking projects of building and trade regulation, and inspection and sanitation, mean in reality! think of the promise they hold out to us of tears and suffering abolished, of lives invigorated and enlarged!

[Endnote 1

I am greatly obliged to Mr. J. Leaver for a copy of the following notice:

"DEATHS OF CHILDREN FROM BURNING.

"TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS.

"Attention is drawn to the frequency with which the death of young children is caused owing to their clothing taking fire at unprotected firegrates. During the years 1899 and 1900 inquests were held on the bodies of 1684 YOUNG CHILDREN whose death had resulted from burning, and in 1425 of these cases the fire by which the burning was caused was unprotected by a guard.

"With a view to prevent such deplorable loss of life it is suggested to Parents and Guardians, who have the care of young children, that it is very desirable that efficient fire-guards should be provided, in order to render it impossible for children to obtain access to the fire-grates.

"E. R. C. BRADFORD,

"The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

"Metropolitan Police Office,

"New Scotland Yard,

"January 28th, 1902."]