

### THREE DANGERS.

THERE are strong impulses in human nature that make war against society and that tend to subvert the social order. Self-love and benevolence are the central forces of human life; both are essential to progress and happiness, but they are always in conflict; individual and social welfare is secured only when they are brought into harmony. They are like the centripetal and centrifugal forces of the solar system. These forces are, so far as our measurements can ascertain, perfectly balanced; therefore, we have the rhythm and harmony of the heavenly bodies. When self-love and benevolence are perfectly balanced in human conduct, we shall have on earth the beginning of the thousand years of peace. All the mischiefs that students of social science seek to prevent or to cure arise from the excess of one or the other of these forces.

No doubt misdirected kindness is a source of much physical and moral evil. Many children are ruined by the exaggerated unselfishness of their parents—the parents undergoing all the hardships and making all the sacrifices; the children growing up in greedy indolence, always ministered unto and never ministering; so going out into life helpless and selfish, with their powers undeveloped and their characters spoiled. Another excessive development of the same principle is seen in the sentimental philanthropy and the indiscriminate almsgiving by which paupers and criminals have been propagated on a grand scale.

But the evils arising from an excess of goodness have been small when compared with those arising from selfishness. These last are, by eminence, the unsocial evils. Pure egoism is the antithesis of society. Its impulse is to get everything and give nothing in exchange for it; while, as Herbert Spencer says, "the universal basis of coöperation (and therefore of social life) is the proportioning of benefits received to services rendered." The selfishness which sets this law at naught is the source of all crimes against the person and property, and of all those evils which directly tend to the disintegration of society. Of these there are a multitude; but the three of which I wish to speak are—the vice of intemperance, the causes that directly assail the family, and the practice of gambling. I shall not undertake to show how they may be counteracted; I wish simply to point out the manner in which they tend to undermine and subvert the social order.

#### I.

THE evils of intemperance furnish a topic sufficiently hackneyed; but I wish to deal with an aspect of the question that is somewhat less familiar. I am not discussing the rule of abstinence; nor denying that there may be a legitimate use, dietetic or even convivial, for alcoholic beverages; nor considering the question as a moralist, nor as a physiologist: I would simply call attention to the unsocial effect of the drinking habits now existing among us. Let it be admitted that many persons use alcoholic beverages without being injured by them; with that form of use we have nothing to do; we are dealing now with *intemperance* in the strict sense of the word—with that use of ardent spirits which is on all sides admitted to be excessive and injurious. When a man uses alcoholic liquors in such a way that his property, be it large or small, is rapidly diminished, and he goes every month a little nearer to want and dependence; when he uses them in such a way that his physical and mental energies are impaired, and his power of caring for himself and those dependent on him is sensibly lessened, all will allow that his use of them is pernicious. The harmful effect upon the individual does not need to be dwelt upon; it is the effect upon the common weal that we are now considering. It is plain that one who has a surplus, large or small, and who consumes it in indulgences which yield no benefit to himself nor to any other person, violates the fundamental law of society. The surplus thus consumed would have served him, and those dependent on him, in future sickness or infirmity sure to come; the destruction of this surplus brings him to the verge of pauperism, and makes it probable that the time will come when he, and perhaps others whom he ought to support, will be a charge upon public or private charity. In short, such a waste of savings reduces the waster to that condition in which, as soon as he is overtaken by sickness or misfortune, he will be able to make no proportionate return for the services that he will require. But society depends, as Mr. Spencer tells us, on the ability and disposition of the individuals composing it to make such a proportionate return. If all men were in the condition to which this man has reduced himself, society would be impossible.



What is true of one who wastes a surplus that he has earned or inherited, is equally true of one who consumes upon this unnatural appetite all that he earns beyond what is necessary to sustain life, so that he never gains a surplus, and always lives on the edge of pauperism.

Still more unsocial is the conduct of one who spends on this indulgence more than his net income, incurring bad debts for the necessities of life to his landlord, his grocer, his tailor, and thus devouring the savings of his thrifty neighbors.

Still more unsocial is the conduct of one who ruins his health by his drinking habits—thus not only disabling himself for self-supporting industry, but entailing upon his offspring enfeebled and morbid physical constitutions, predisposing them to insanity or vice or pauperism or crime. If, at the same time, the home in which these children are being reared is so squalid or so disorderly that there is small opportunity for them to learn those lessons of self-respect and self-restraint by which men and women are fitted for citizenship,—so that by environment as well as by organization they are crippled and degraded,—the unsocial effects of this vice will be set in a still stronger light. And when, as the result of such drinking practices, the man is often led to direct encroachments upon the persons or the property of his neighbors, the fact that he has become an enemy of society scarcely requires further demonstration.

Now, consider how many thousands of our fellow-citizens there are of whom most, if not all, these things are true. As a direct consequence of the use of alcoholic liquors, they are wasting their surplus, or failing to gain a surplus; by their failure to fulfill their contracts, they are devouring the gains of their neighbors; they are ruining their health and bequeathing physical and moral disorders to their children, and entailing upon society that curse of curses, hereditary pauperism; they are appealing to their neighbors for charity, and crowding the hospitals and the almshouses; they are committing assaults, robberies, murders,—all manner of offenses against the public peace and welfare.

Look at the subject from another point of view. The official reports of the United States Government show that at least six hundred millions of dollars are expended in this country every year for alcoholic liquors. That a considerable portion of this is used productively, in the arts, and innocently, or without any social injury, for drinking purposes, may be admitted.

Let us concede that one-half of it is used in this way. Half of all this amount must

then be expended in such a manner as to produce those very effects of which we have been speaking. That is to say, we are paying out every year three hundred millions of dollars in the purchase of want, and pauperism, and vice, and disease, and insanity, and crime. So much money ought to procure a large quantity of these staples, and it does. Nobody can deny that we get our money's worth.

Look at it from another point of view. A low estimate puts the number of persons engaged in the sale of liquor at five hundred thousand. We have admitted that these persons render some service to the community; let us admit that half of the number would be required to dispense the amount of liquor that could be consumed without social injury. We have left an army of a quarter of a million liquor-sellers, to whom we are paying three hundred million dollars every year. Society is rendering to them a pretty valuable service. What service are they rendering to society? They are devoting their energies to the destruction of society. They live wholly upon the ruin of their fellow-men. The whole tendency of the employment for which society pays them so large a sum is to reduce their fellow-citizens to those conditions of want and disease and moral degradation in which society becomes impossible. We are safe in characterizing this as a highly unsocial proceeding.

I have not intended any exaggeration in these statements; I believe that I have kept far within the truth. Neither have I any nostrum for the cure of this disease, nor any faith in those most commonly advertised. My own belief is that the roots of this evil run very deep, and that it will take many generations to eradicate them.

Nevertheless, it is well for all students of human welfare to keep distinctly before their minds the unsocial effects of intemperance—the large number of persons who, through this vice, become violators of the organic law of society, either as its burdens or as its foes.

## II.

LET us now consider those unsocial forces that make war upon society by assailing the family. The monogamous family, formed by the union of one woman with one man, and by the increase of children born to them, is the structural unit of modern society. Whatever may be the political unit, the family is the social unit. Society is an organism. Now, as a physical organism is formed not of atoms nor of molecules, but of organized cells, in like manner the modern social organism is composed not of individuals, but of households.



What the earlier forms of society may have been I do not undertake to say; but it is almost certain that monogamy is a late product of the social evolution. Late or early, it is by most philosophers admitted to characterize that society whose type is the highest and whose foundations are the firmest.

Mr. Herbert Spencer, in his "Data of Ethics," tells us that "tribes in which promiscuity prevails, or in which the marital relations are transitory, and tribes in which polyandry entails in another way indefinite relationships, are incapable of much organization. Nor do peoples who are habitually polygamous show themselves able to take on those high forms of social coöperation which demand due subordination of self to others. Only when monogamic marriage has become general and eventually universal, only when there have consequently been established the closest ties of blood, only when family altruism has been most fostered, has social altruism become most conspicuous."

Mr. Bagehot, in his "Physics and Politics," shows how the training of the family fits nations for survival and conquest. "A cohesive family," he says, "is the best germ for a campaigning nation. In a Roman family the boys, from the time of their birth, were bred to a domestic despotism which well prepared them for subjection in after life to a military discipline, a military drill, and a military despotism. They were ready to obey their generals because they were compelled to obey their fathers; they conquered the world in manhood because as children they were bred in homes where the tradition of passionate valor was steadied by the habit of implacable order. And nothing of this is possible in loosely bound family groups (if they can be called families at all), where the father is more or less uncertain, where descent is not traced through him. . . . An ill-knit nation, which does not recognize paternity as a legal relation, would be conquered like a mob by any other nation which had a vestige or a beginning of the *patria potestas*."

In another place he says: "The nations with a thoroughly compacted family system have 'possessed the earth,'—that is, they have taken all the finest districts in the most competed-for parts; and the nations with loose systems have been merely left to mountain-ranges and lonely islands. The family system, and that in its highest form (the monogamous form), has been so exclusively the system of civilization that literature hardly recognizes any other."

These witnesses testify from a point of view strictly scientific; they are not the slaves of tradition; they only repeat the verdict of

history. The fact that the monogamous family furnishes the highest type of the social organization—the one most favorable to stability and strength and peace—is beyond the denial of intelligent men.

The dependence of the physical welfare of society upon the maintenance of the family is easily explained. Even the physical vigor of the people is likely to decline under any other system. Population would decrease by the substitution for monogamy of either polyandry or polygamy; and the physical nurture of young children can be provided for in no other way so well as in the monogamous family. As a matter of history, polyandry has commonly been based on the practice of destroying female infants, or of selling them after they are grown into foreign parts; while polygamy is ordinarily the consequence of fierce and constant wars in which the males of the population are largely destroyed. Both these forms of domestic life seem, therefore, to grow out of conditions in the highest degree unsocial.

But it is not chiefly for its physical existence and welfare that society depends on the family. It is for the cultivation of the moral qualities that fit men for association with one another that the family is indispensable. "Monogamy is doubtless the Creator's law," says Professor Roscher, "since only in monogamous countries can we expect to find the intimate union of family life, the beauties of social intercourse and free citizenship." The passages which I have quoted from Mr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. Walter Bagehot emphasize the importance of the family as a training-school in which discipline and the habit of subordination and the unselfish sentiments and habitudes are acquired. Without these virtues society is impossible, and there is no school for the cultivation of these virtues that compares with the monogamous family. We are beginning to discover, in our charitable work, that it is better to place the children who are the wards of the State in families than to rear them in asylums and refuges; since a home which comes considerably short of the ideal is a better place for a child to grow up in than the best public institutions.

Since, therefore, the family in its present form bears to society a relation so vital; since, in Mr. Spencer's words, "those high forms of social coöperation which demand due subordination of self to others" are only taken on by those who have been trained in the family, it is evident that any force assailing the sacredness or the security of the family must be, in the highest sense of the word, an unsocial force. By so much as the permanence of the family is disturbed, by so much



is the bond of society weakened. An increase of the proportion of the people who do not live in families means an increase of public peril, a decay of social virtue, a diminution of the common weal.

Unfortunately, it is quite impossible to deny that this institution, on whose health the social order depends, is now suffering a considerable loss of respect and power. There are yet in the land hundreds of thousands of safe and happy homes; but the proportion of our population who do not live in families is steadily increasing. That this must be true is made evident by two startling facts: first, that the proportion of marriages to the population is rapidly decreasing; second, that the proportion of divorces to the number of marriages is rapidly increasing. Fewer families are formed; more families are broken up.

The statistics of Massachusetts relating to this subject are more complete than those of any other State; but, so far as the facts have been gathered in other States, substantially the same tendencies appear. We may take Massachusetts, therefore, as a fair sample; and we find that in that commonwealth the population increased between 1860 and 1880 forty-five per cent., while the marriages increased only twenty-five per cent. In 1860 there was one marriage to every 99 persons; in 1880 one marriage to every 114 persons.

The number of divorces, meanwhile, increased from 243 in 1860 to 600 in 1878 (I have not the figures for 1880), one hundred and forty-five per cent. In 1860 there was one divorce for every 51 marriages; in 1878 there was one divorce for every 21 marriages. Massachusetts is the best of the New England States in this respect; in all the others the proportion of divorces to marriages is much larger than in Massachusetts.

It is not possible to add to the significance of these figures. They are the numerical expression of a force that is assailing the foundations of society. Fewer families, smaller families, an increasing number of families disbanded by divorce—this is the ominous record. A much smaller proportion of our people are now living in families than was the case twenty-five or fifty years ago. This means less discipline of the young; less self-restraint among young and old; less training in the virtues of industry and sympathy and helpfulness and self-sacrifice. It means, also, a greater exposure of the young and the weak to temptation, and greater opportunities of vice. Part of what it signifies is seen in the fact that while twenty years ago the number of illegitimate children annually born in Massachusetts was less than three hundred, the number now born every year exceeds

eight hundred. The population has increased, meanwhile, only about forty-five per cent.

It is not necessary to infer from these figures that the era of national dissolution has set in. On the whole, the world is growing better; but in this current of moral progress there are eddies, and we are just now in one of them. Therefore it becomes us to take our bearings.

Some reasons for this state of things readily suggest themselves. The effect of the popular social philosophy, which during the last quarter of a century has greatly exaggerated individualism, has been alluded to in a former article. The sacredness of personality has been exalted, and the relations and mutual obligations of persons have been overlooked. Most of our talk has been of rights, not much of duties or of services; and the consequence is a disinclination to assume the responsibilities and to make the sacrifices involved in the family relation. With this intellectual cause must be reckoned an economical cause, the effects of which are visible on every side. The large system of industry which masses the population in the cities and the great manufacturing centers affords, if I mistake not, an explanation of many of the facts which we have been considering. Economically, this modern system, by which capital is aggregated in vast amounts and laborers are congregated in great multitudes, is, no doubt, an improvement over the old system; it enormously increases production, and multiplies the wealth of the nation. But socially and morally the system has not yet justified itself; it requires considerable modification to make it serve the social interests of the community.

What are the facts? In the cities and in the large manufacturing villages great numbers of laborers of both sexes—more than half of them young women—are gathered together. Many of them come from the country; the growth of the cities at the expense of the country consists largely in the removal of the young men and women from the farms to the cities and the factory towns, where they find employment in the mills and the shops. Here they are thrown together rather rudely in their work; the boarding-houses where most of them spend their nights and their Sundays afford them none of the restraints of a home; their evenings are wont to find them on the streets and in cheap places of amusement. The wages of these operatives, especially of the females, are, as a general rule, very small. In a table showing the wages paid in forty-four different mills in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, I find that the average wages paid to women was \$6.10 per week, and to female children \$3.41. I



am sure that the average weekly earnings of females over fifteen years of age, in our factories, box shops, button shops, brass-works, and so forth, would be less than five dollars. Out of this those who do not live at home must pay for board and room, washing and clothing. What a pinching life this must be can be easily imagined.

In the same communities where these girls are employed are numbers of young men of their own social grade, and of grades a little higher, to whom marriage and the possession of a home seem, in the present state of society, a distant and not always a desirable prospect.

Such are the conditions — the herding together of operatives, male and female, in places remote from their homes, with low wages and strong temptations. The moral fruits of such an exposure are not likely to promote the founding of permanent families; the character and habits developed in such an environment are not the best outfit for happy wedlock.

Another feature of the life we are considering is its lack of permanence. Owing to strikes, failures, changes of business, operatives are continually flitting from one place to another. Such instability of life discourages the forming of families, and often results in scattering those that are formed.

I am convinced that it is to the industrial conditions which I have now in an inadequate way outlined, that much of the neglect and deterioration of family life is due. There are manufacturing communities in which these evils have been largely overcome, through the intelligence and good-will of the employers of labor. They may be overcome everywhere. But the unsocial forces that are undermining the family, and thus assailing the life of society in its most vital part, are generated to a considerable degree by the selfishness which too often characterizes the administration of capital. They will not be counteracted until employers cease to think of labor simply as a commodity, and begin to understand their responsibility for the moral and social welfare of the people by whose labor their fortunes are gained.

### III.

BUT by far the most dangerous of the unsocial forces now threatening the destruction of society is the gambling mania. It is probably true that there is less of what may be called social gambling now than there was one hundred years ago. In the days of Queen Anne and the Georges in England, and in our own revolutionary times, gambling was a common

diversion in what was considered the best society; men like Fox, Pitt, and Wilberforce, at one time or another in their lives, plunged deeply into its excitements; it was scarcely disreputable at that time, on either side of the water, to play heavily for money. Of late years this has not been true, though the signs are that the practice is just now becoming more prevalent in fashionable society. The fascinations of poker are, if I am rightly informed, beginning to be confessed in many polite circles.

Lottery gambling, also, in spite of all the measures taken to suppress it, still holds its own pretty firmly, and especially among the poorest classes. The amount of money squandered by poor laborers, by negroes more than by any other class, in the policy-shops of our chief cities, is said to be very large. Gambling-houses of all sorts, recognized as such, are commonly suppressed in well-ordered communities; here and there in a city moral sentiment is too weak to cope with the abomination, but weakness of this sort is universally regarded as a reproach. Such places exist, of course, in all our large cities; but they generally hide themselves. The social injury resulting from those forms of gambling to which I have now alluded is, no doubt, very great. Tens of thousands of our young men, for whom great sacrifices have been made, on whom the future welfare of households depends, are ruined by them every year; most observing persons are ready to repeat from personal knowledge sad stories of the wreck of fortune and character. But the injury done to society by those forms of gambling that are recognized and undisguised is trifling when compared with the damage done by that form of gambling which wears the mask of business. Those are the pimples on the skin; this is the corruption in the blood.

This kind of gambling is sometimes called speculation; but speculation it is not, in any proper sense of that word. To buy property of any sort and hold it for a rise in its value is a legitimate business transaction. Speculation, when it hoards the necessaries of life, may often be a heartless and injurious business; it may, on the other hand, have beneficent results, putting money in the hands of producers in the dullest times, carrying over an unsalable surplus, and thus equalizing the pressure of supply and demand. "To buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market" may sound like an extremely selfish maxim, and the man who has no higher principle of action will not attain to any heroic virtue; nevertheless, society can have no quarrel with him. Buying and selling may be selfish business; but buying and selling is a wholly dif-



ferent operation from gambling; and a very large share of the so-called commercial operations of this land to-day is not buying and selling at all, but simply and only gambling.

All legitimate commerce consists in an exchange of values. If I buy goods of a merchant, there is an exchange of money for merchandise; the merchant desires the money more than the merchandise; I desire the merchandise more than the money. It is simply a transfer of property, by which each one satisfies his wants. If I employ a physician to attend me in sickness, or a music-teacher to instruct my children, or a laborer to clean my carpets, there is still an exchange of values. I give my money for the services of the physician or the music-teacher or the laborer because they are valuable to me; they give me their services because they want my money. But when one man bets another that a certain card has such a face, or that one horse will trot a mile in fewer seconds than another, or that wheat will sell for so many cents a bushel thirty days from date, and the loser pays the bet, what exchange takes place? The winner gets the loser's money; the loser gets nothing at all in exchange for it. This is gambling. The gambler's business is simply this: to get money or other property away from his neighbors, and to give them nothing whatever in exchange for it. Whatever money or other property any man wins in gambling some one else loses; by as much as he is enriched some one else is impoverished; for all that he has got in gambling he has given no equivalent. Other people have parted with the money that he has gained, and he has given them for it no merchandise, no service, no pleasure, no accommodation — nothing whatever. This is the nature of all gambling; and it is easy to see that it is egoism in its most virulent form — the precise kind of egoism that renders society impossible. If "society is produced," as Carey says, "by an exchange of services," gambling is the antithesis of society.

There is a striking passage from "The Study of Sociology," in which Mr. Herbert Spencer discusses the nature of gambling. He is pointing out the shallowness of the treatment generally given to this subject by moralists. "Listen," he says, "to a conversation about gambling, and when reprobation is expressed, note the grounds of the reprobation: that it tends to the ruin of the gambler; that it risks the welfare of family and friends; that it alienates from business and leads into bad company — these and such as these are the reasons given for condemning the practice. Rarely is gambling condemned because it is a kind of gratification by which pleasure

is obtained at the cost of pain to another. The normal obtainment of gratification, or of the money which purchases gratification, implies, first, that there has been put forth effort of a kind which, in some way, furthers the general good; and implies, secondly, that those from whom the money is received get, directly or indirectly, equivalent satisfactions. But in gambling the opposite happens. Benefit received does not imply effort put forth; and the happiness of the winner involves the misery of the loser. This kind of action is, therefore, essentially anti-social."

And this is precisely the kind of action followed by all those persons who practice what is called speculating in margins,— that is, betting on the future value of stocks or produce. It is useless to try to disguise the real nature of these transactions; they are simply gambling, nothing more nor less. What is the difference between the gambling practiced at a faro bank and the gambling practiced by those persons who buy and sell margins? One man bets another that ten thousand bushels of wheat will be worth so much at a certain future time; if it is selling in the market at that time for less than the price named, he agrees to pay the difference; if it is selling for more than the amount named, the other shall pay him the difference. Neither party owns a bushel of wheat; there is no transfer of merchandise; there is simply a transfer from the one man's pocket to the other man's pocket of the money won in the bet. Oil and corn and pork, and all the great staples of agriculture, are employed in the same way by the gamblers; so are all the stocks of great railroads and steam-ship companies and manufacturing companies and mines. Men who never own any of these kinds of property spend their lives in gambling in them, or, rather, about them,—betting on their future prices, and doing their best by such reports, true or false, as they can circulate, and such influences, good or bad, as they can bring to bear, to raise or lower these future prices, so as to make them correspond to their bets.

To say that gambling in margins is as bad as faro or roulette is a very weak statement; it is immeasurably worse. It is far more dishonest. The gambler in margins does his best to load the dice on which he bets his money. It is, moreover, far more injurious. By this practice values are unsettled; business is often paralyzed; the price of the necessities of life is forced upward. The poor man's loaf grows small as the gambler's gains increase. Every cent made by this class of men is taken from the industrial classes with no compensation. This must be so, because



they live and grow rich, although they perform for society no service whatever. The men who play in the gambling-houses only rob one another and such innocents as they can lure into their dens; the men who bet on margins on Broad street and State street, and in the Boards of Trade, rob the whole country; every man who buys bread, who burns oil, who rides a mile in a railway car, pays tribute of his earnings to the treasuries of these gamblers. How many are there of them now operating in this country? How large is their aggregate income from this source? I have seen a recent estimate which puts the amount of which the "lams" are shorn in the New York stock market alone at eight hundred million dollars a year. I do not vouch for this; it seems to me an extravagant figure. But everybody knows that the men who gamble in margins are a great multitude, and that there are not a few among them who count their gains by millions and by tens of millions. All this is plunder. The gambler's gains are all plunder. He may be a pillar in the church; he may hobnob with college presidents, and sit on commencement platforms, and be pointed out to the young men with notes of admiration as one of our merchant princes, but he is a plunderer; all his goods have been gained by the spoiling of his neighbors; it is not by cooperating with his fellow-men, but by preying upon them, that he has obtained the wealth that renders him an object of worship.

From whom is this plunder extorted? Most of it comes from the pockets of venturesome people in city and country, who have heard that money is made by speculating in margins, and who risk and lose their savings, great or small — the fruits of legitimate industry. The fleecing of these "lams" affords the gamblers a great revenue. Another part of their spoil is won as the result of cunning combinations, in which the courts have sometimes been induced to join, and by which the prices of valuable stocks (sometimes ironically called securities) are forced up or down to suit their purposes, the conspirators buying when the innocent and helpless owners are frightened into selling at a sacrifice, and selling when unwary investors are tempted into buying an inflated stock. This is something worse than gambling; it is sheer robbery. And people who hold up their hands with horror at the rantings of a few crazy communists, sit by and suck their thumbs while operations of this sort are going on.

It is not often, however, that the gamblers are able to make use of the courts in spoiling their victims. A Canadian judge lately threw out of court a suit brought to recover a debt

owed by one who had lost in betting on margins, because it was nothing but a gambling debt. Similar decisions have been given in several of our own courts. The fact that such transactions are contrary to law and to public morality would be affirmed by any respectable jurist.

It is amazing to witness the dullness of the public conscience upon this matter. The evil has called forth but faint reprobation. I am ready to believe that multitudes of men who follow this nefarious business are but dimly sensible of its real nature. A practice so widespread, and against which the reputable classes raise so little objection, may well have seemed to ambitious young men innocent and legitimate. What Mr. Spencer says about the inadequacy of the treatment which the whole subject has received from the teachers of morality is profoundly true. A young man who had been graduated recently from one of our best colleges told me the other day that the only ground on which his teacher in ethics taught him to condemn gambling was that it substituted an appeal to chance for the exercise of reason and judgment. One might as well make the wrong of stealing to consist in the habits of indolence which it encourages in the thief. Gambling is, indeed, ethically of the same nature as stealing, and is to be condemned for the same reasons. Socially and economically, the gamblers of a community sustain to its industrial system precisely the same relation as do its thieves. It is a hard word to say, but it is the exact scientific truth; and it is high time that somebody said it.

One would like to know how often and how distinctly this truth is enforced in the leading pulpits of New York and Chicago and Boston, and the other great cities where business gambling is most prevalent. We hear occasionally of clergymen who bet on margins; nobody believes that this is a common practice among ministers; nevertheless, it may be doubted whether this class of our public teachers have borne witness, as they ought to have done, against the iniquity. One or two of the secular papers have treated it intelligently and vigorously; but the press in general has dealt with it but gingerly. In a newspaper controversy concerning a governor's private stock operations, the belief that he was addicted to such practices did not discredit him much in the opinion of most of the journalists; the only question was whether he had slaughtered his friends in the fray, or whether he had used other people's money in the transaction. I do not undertake to condemn or to justify this governor; I am simply referring to the general tone of the public



press in discussing the charges against him, which seemed to admit that it is all right for a governor to gamble, provided he gambles fairly. Clearly there is need of a great deal of elementary teaching on this subject, in order that a public sentiment may be created which will deal with the evil in an effective way. Those men who follow the business must be made to see that gambling, in its many phases, is the parasite of commerce, the corrupter of youth, the evil genius of our civilization, and that every man who follows the trade is as truly an enemy of society as if he went about picking his neighbors' pockets or setting their harvest fields on fire.

THAT these three maladies which assail the national life are necessarily fatal need not be asserted, but it is not well to conceal from ourselves the truth that they are dangerous. Over against these anti-social forces are the pow-

ers that make for unity: the intelligence and conscience and benevolence of a people among whom the Christian ethics is yet, we may hope, something more than an obsolete sentiment; the love of equity, not easily extinguished in the breasts of Anglo-Saxons; the steadily growing feeling of a common interest; the vast combinations of industry and commerce that are wholly inoperative without confidence and good-will. All these are mighty, and they will prevail in the end against the evil. Of their triumph on this soil, in the life of this nation, we must not, however, be so sanguine as to neglect the supply of the conditions on which alone these remedial and constructive forces will do their work. For we must remember what Professor Roscher says, that in this case the patient is also the physician; and that the cure depends on the clearness of his intelligence and the firmness of his will.

*Washington Gladden.*



## TOPICS OF THE TIME.

### Republican Institutions and the Spoils System.

THERE is no time in the progress of a reform when it is more necessary to insist upon its correct principles than during the period in which it is becoming fashionable. The ardor of those who have supported it from conviction naturally cools a little at the public success with which apparently it is meeting; while those who espouse the cause for selfish reasons are likely, from the same motives, to wish to assume its active advocacy and direction before the public, with more or less consequent risk to the integrity of its success. Such is now the case with the cause of Civil Service Reform. Within a few years it has advanced from a following which, with equal safety, could be flattered within national platforms and snubbed without, to a firm support among thoughtful and unpartisan men who know that they hold the balance of power in the nation, and who are not afraid to exercise it. At the same time the shrewder politicians see that in the fight between the spoils system and the merit system the former must eventually go under, and they are looking out for their own interests with amazing zeal. It is especially important at this stage of the reform that the exposition and defense of the new system shall not be confided to those men, of either political party, who have

been recently insisting that it is unpractical or unrep-  
 ublican. The chief interest which the American people will have in the next Presidency, after that which concerns the personal character of the candidates, will lie in the treatment of the patronage of the Executive. We believe that it is being more generally perceived that the one fundamental reform of importance—without which the judgment of the country on any other question cannot be arrived at—is the thorough, general, and permanent divorce of politics and patronage. This is the people's reform, and through it alone may they hope to realize the aim of the Constitution, by the reëfranchisement of the voter.

That in this restoration of power to the individual the reform is fundamentally republican, is a doctrine which needs continually to be set forth. Opponents of the merit system tell us that republican equality requires that all citizens should have an equal chance to hold office, and that a system of appointment based on examination and probation, and requiring in candidates a degree of knowledge above the ordinary, is an aristocratic system, which ought not to be permitted in a free nation like this. Moreover, they maintain that a tenure of office during good behavior, or anything approaching it, would also be unrep-  
 ublican, since it would restrict the offices to a small number of