

general knowledge is important. Perhaps we might call publishing a learned trade. It would be difficult for a man to hold relations with books so intimate as are those of a publisher without becoming a man of information. When, therefore, clear-headed publishers, in a matter pertaining to their own business, adopt a theory and use arguments whose only logical result is communism, there is occasion for inquiry into the soundness of our theories of property.

The tendency we are marking is but another illustration of the warping influence on the understanding of an injustice long practiced. Just as the confiscation of Irish estates, the plundering of monasteries, and the capture by privateering expeditions of richly laden Spanish caracks, tended to obscure the sense of property-right in the English of Elizabeth's time, so has the long-continued injustice of our copyright law warped the public conscience itself, until the simple principle of ownership of that which a man has produced—the groundwork of all property-holding and commercial civilization—can no longer be applied to the highest products of diligence and intelligence. We have been told that copyright is not a natural right; but that it is good public policy to remunerate an author, and that the most practicable way of paying him seems to be to give him a monopoly of the sale of his book for a limited term of years in his own country. Of course under this formula the author has no rights. We only pay him because we think it wise to encourage him. The foreign author is another affair; we may make all we can out of his works, since no public policy obliges us to "encourage" English writers by paying them for their labor. We have thus rigged a very nice and plausible bit of unadulterated communism, under which we can do as we please with the painfully wrought product of a scholar's life, and snap our fingers in the face and eyes of the ten commandments.

The phrase is ingeniously worded—the words "public policy" and "monopoly" are handled with skill—and, like other communistic utterances, the formula has, at first sight, a seeming fairness. But a homely old English proverb reminds us that goose and gander may be eaten with the same sauce. A principle which has so many possible applications as this should not be confined to men of letters. It is so big with blessings to mankind that it would be a sin to give authors a copyright "monopoly" of its inestimable benefits. It ought to work both ways, in school phrase. A. has written a book, after years of thought. It is the ripe fruit of his life. He has spent money in collecting a library preparatory to its production. He has traveled far and observed much. The book represents his time, his money, his intelligence. B., who is a publisher, says: "I do not grant you any ownership in this book. But it is probably good public policy to remunerate authors, and I propose to allow you a monopoly of the sales for a limited term of years and over a limited area of territory. In all other countries and beyond a certain period, the book-trade and the public will enrich themselves at your expense and drink to your health out of the profits derived from your toil." B., the publisher, at length builds a house, into which he puts, in differing proportions, just what A. put into his book, namely, time, money, and thought. It is now the turn of A. to speak philosophically: "I also

recognize the fact that it is good public policy to remunerate the man who uses his time, his money, and his intelligence. There seems no better way to recompense one who has built a house than by giving him a partial monopoly of it for a limited time. I propose that the parlor, the kitchen, and two sleeping chambers be granted to you for twenty-eight years. The remainder of the house belongs to whoever can first succeed in occupying it, and after your monopoly expires, you having been sufficiently remunerated, the house will belong to the public."

But we are told that copyright is not a natural right. If by that is meant that in a "state of nature" there was no such thing as copyright, one may grant it. There could be no need for copyright until the modern facility for multiplying copies made it possible for unscrupulous people to make unjust profits out of another man's toil. In a "state of nature," or barbarism, there are no well-defined rights of property. The Indian hunter must divide his newly killed deer, according to well-known rules, among those who arrive after it is killed; to each his portion, in the order of his coming. Barbarism is communism. Every lazy man in a village of wigwags can claim food from the store of any provident tribesman. Thus barbarism perpetuates itself by refusing to industry its natural recompense.

As civilization advances, the house comes to belong to the builder, the fish to him who caught and dried them, the corn to the household that planted betimes, and at length the intellectual offspring of intellect is also secured to the producer. The logic of civilization is inevitable—either the rule of property in what a man makes is universal, or it should be wholly abolished. Some of our intelligent and upright publishers made haste to recognize this fact, frankly and fully, before the vulgar and sweeping piracy of the lowest rank of book-venders partially shifted the interest of the reputable houses to the right side of the scale. If a book does not belong to him who wrote it, then a horse does not belong to him who bred him, or a ship to him who built it. The question is not between the author and publisher, but between civilization and barbarism, sound economy and communism. Either copyright is the author's honest and equitable right, or the beer-garden philosophers are the angels that proclaim the millennium of general division and redistribution.

The treaty now being agitated is the half loaf better than none, but until American publishers and English publishers—who have been as unwilling to see the whole truth as those upon this side—recognize the fact that a man's right to the work of his brain is something deeper than a question of trade and expediency, there will be no just and final settlement.

A Forgotten Obligation to the Ministry.

A LARGE obligation sometimes puts out of sight a smaller one. There is an incidental service rendered to society in this country by the Christian ministry, which is more likely to be forgotten than the obligation due to them for their own immediate work.

Emerson has somewhere said that quiet and studious lives are the chief corrective of a money-making

age. Now, the life of a minister can hardly be called a quiet one, and it is not always possible to the busy pastor to lead a studious life, in the general sense of that term. And yet, the kind of life usually led by ministers is, beyond question, the most efficient antidote to a money-making spirit that our society knows. The minister is often the one man in his circle who stands for something higher than mere getting. We know well enough that there are divers kinds of men in the ministry. There are those who go about seeking fat pastures for the shepherd, and those who speculate in something besides metaphysics, and there are clerical sponges. It is impossible that any profession should fail to get its share of men who fall below the standard of their calling. But, speaking generally, the Christian ministry sets up a light-house in each community, by giving to it a man whose life indicates that there are other ends of living than the gross one of getting and keeping. "Let us not for the sake of living lose what men should live for," was written in Latin on the banners of one of the regiments that fought under Cromwell. And this is what the life of a minister says to those about him: "Let us not, in our haste to accumulate, forget those things which make accumulations valuable."

For, while the ministry stands for religion and morals, it stands also for culture and knowledge. The man of business has no time, or thinks he has none (which comes to the same thing), to know what is going on in the world of thought. But his minister knows, and conversation with the minister reminds him that there is, even here below, a world above that world of things in which he is so busy. Historical and scientific knowledge, and the humanizing influence of literature, sift through the pulpit to the people. If the ministers in America had never mentioned Darwin's theory of the evolution of the human race, large bodies of people would have known no more about the storm of debate that raged in the upper air than they know of a cyclone going on in the sun. The pulpit is not an arena for free discussion, it is true,—the debate is generally one-sided,—but it is a never-closed channel for the diffusion of knowledge, and a continual reminder that above the sphere of things in human life, is a sphere of thought.

In the country village, the minister is not so exclusively an authority as he was in the old days, when he was usually the only liberally educated man in the town. But he is a source of intellectual enlightenment; his conversation or that which is dropped incidentally in his sermon, stirs the mind of some lad with curiosity. Books are mentioned of which the boy has never heard, and dim vistas of knowledge open up before his eyes. The hills that stand about the town seem too strait for him, the humdrum of life too narrow. He, too, will study, and will know of these things whereof the parson speaks. And so another is presently added to the ranks of educated men, by the contagion of culture. This is the history of the intellectual awakening of many of our great men. The minister touched them with admiration for his superior information, and they straightway got a Latin grammar and began to push at that narrow door of knowledge.

It is the fashion to accuse the ministry of a certain reluctance to receive new ideas—a reluctance that inheres, perhaps, in all professions with long-standing tra-

ditions. But after all reduction, who shall tell the debt we owe it for its educating influence? It is not a small matter that every Sunday thousands of discourses by educated men are given in all parts of the country. A profession that counts many of the finest minds, and has the attention of so large a proportion of the people, cannot help stimulating exceedingly the intellectual life of the nation. If we leave out of sight its religious work, and even its moral teaching, the debt we owe the ministry for its influence on the general education of the people is incalculable.

When Frederick Oberlin, in his half-barbarous parish in the Vosges, planted schools, taught the people to build bridges, and substituted good French for their miserable *patois*, he did a work that has rarely been accomplished in the life of an individual man. But it was typical of what, in a large and diffused manner, and partly by indirect methods, the clerical profession is doing for our social life. The minister is often the center of interest in education in a community, and he sometimes brings with him a higher standard and better methods than have before prevailed. The constant interchange of educated ministers from one part of the country to another, is one of the influences that has kept our language from splitting into widely divergent dialects. For, in how many towns is the minister's speech the standard.

To confess this obligation to the clerical profession, is to remind us of the additional responsibility which the possession of a minister's influence involves. The secular education of the minister, so influential on those about him, ought to be broadened, his historical knowledge should be full, his scientific information fresh, the culture of his literary taste considerable. A wider education for the ministry means a larger general culture for the people. It is even possible that the nasal quality of voice by which so many of our people bewray themselves, might be quite done away with in time, if we could have two generations of ministers trained to speak the mother-tongue with full and sonorous utterance. Not that ministers are worse offenders in this regard than the rest of us, but as a class they have more influence. Again, if ministers generally understood the principles which underlie approved educational methods, there would be a more rapid improvement in schools, for their public spirit and enlightened interest in education are beyond question. But in urging these additional responsibilities upon the clergy, we are only recognizing the force of the old French maxim, *noblesse oblige*. If nobility imposes extraordinary obligations, so does influence.

The Good-natured Man.

GOOD-NATURE, like the tongue in the anecdote of Æsop, is the best thing in the world, but also the worst thing in the world. In its own sphere it is as divine as the sunshine. If it does not drive the world forward, it saves much of the force that would otherwise be required. It is the great lubricant of human affairs. Oiling the machinery is as indispensable a work as lighting a fire under the boiler, and your true master of men, while he applies driving force, does not spare the good-nature that makes smooth work by decreasing the resistance. The genuine school-master, for example, knows that the best products of