

RAILWAYS AND MANUFACTURERS.

The Illinois Manufacturers' Association is in a good deal better business when it exposes the huge grafting of railroad magnates and asks for legislative interference, than when it opposes the reasonable legislative protection which overworked and underpaid women seek.

For the interests of competitive manufacturers—of all those without special privileges of any kind, whether direct or indirect—are really identical with the interests of their employes. High wages and short hours are as beneficial for unprivileged employers as for their employes; for the "profits" of unprivileged employers are earnings, wages, pay for work, the same kind of compensation that employes get; and the higher the wages of employed workers, within the limits of the social value of their service, and the shorter their hours, the higher also the wages and the shorter also the hours of workers who employ them. Employes and unprivileged employers are in partnership. What is good for either is good for the other. If this seems like a paradox, it is because so few employers are unprivileged that one's ability to think of employment without privilege is clouded.

As most employers have a privilege of one kind or another, they are easily drawn into co-operation with the enormous privileged interests to fight employes, whereas their true financial interests lie in co-operating with employes to fight privileged interests. This accounts largely for the absurd and inhuman fights the Illinois Manufacturers' Association has made against laws for the protection of workingmen from dangerous machinery, and against working women for the reasonable regulation of hours. The Association has been dominated more by the interests of manufacturers who own monopolies and thereby live by exploiting workers, than by the interests of those who earn their own incomes by their own work. There are signs, however, that light is breaking in, even upon the Illinois Manufacturers' Association. One of these signs is its Bulletin No. 10, of April 7, 1909, in which it hints very broadly that legislation is necessary to regulate the capitalization of railways.

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In many respects this is a very remarkable bulletin. Its indictment of railway management is more than the querulous complaint of business men made sore. Although sores are visible, the circular raises a cry of civic principle which, while it sounds queer enough from this source, where business principle and civic principle are not very intimate, is for that very reason, it may be, truly

encouraging. The supposed community of interest between railroad corporations and their workmen is ruthlessly exposed with the example of 18,000 men dismissed from the Burlington service, not because of anti-railroad legislation, but because of grafty capitalization. Interest-bearing bonds having been issued in lieu of stock to the tune of \$220,000,000 for \$110,000,000, that company has been paying double interest for eight years instead of single dividends. "If they had been obliged to pass the dividends on their stock for a year," says the circular, "it would have been no worse than what nearly every manufacturer in the State of Illinois has had to do the last year and a half; but since the stock has been turned into bonds, and watered \$110,000,000, they have to let everything else go to pay the interest," and this, the bulletin adds, "is the real reason that 18,000 men were turned out to shift for themselves or starve," for "the New York bankers must have their interest, whether the employes get any wages or not." Proceeding from that typical instance to others, this manufacturers' bulletin rightly concludes that "modern railroad managers and financiers cannot be trusted to manage their properties for the best interest of the public."

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The implication is pronounced that the people should be directly consulted about railroad capitalization. But better than the implication itself, and better than the concise and sharp exposure of enormous railway graft, is the justification which this bulletin makes for its suggestion that the people should control capitalization. Every essential principle of public ownership is involved in the argument, which we reproduce:

Reckless and unconscionable "financiering" has done a hundred times more to injure the country than all the mistakes of legislators. The State of Illinois could not create a debt of \$20,000,000 to improve the Illinois river and make a waterway between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi until a Constitutional amendment to authorize the debt had been voted on by the people; and public spirited citizens had to subscribe money for the expenses of presenting the question to the people so they would understand it and vote for this improvement. The rings that have controlled the Rock Island "waterway" have added enough bogus bonds and stocks to the capitalization of their various companies to pay the cost of a ship canal that would carry the largest ocean steamers and battleships from the Gulf to Lake Michigan. This "water" is just as much a public debt as the \$20,000,000 of bonds which the State of Illinois has authorized, because shippers and the public will be forever taxed to pay the interest and dividends. The people who pay the interest have no chance to vote on the bond issues of the Rock Island "waterway." They must not interfere, through their

legislatures, with the "business" which creates multimillionaires by mortgaging the resources of the State and the country.

Whether this is only a case of "worm-turning," or is a public-spirited utterance intended to test public sentiment regarding the subjection of rail highways to public control, it is at any rate another encouraging sign of a tendency toward those new lines of economic adjustment which foreshadow new lines of political adjustment.

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HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT.

The world surely "do move." It seems but yesterday that "heredity" accounted for all the ills that the disinherited masses suffer from, and all the goods that their parasites enjoy. The poverty, the vices, the crimes of the poor were laboriously explained with statistics of family history. "Heredity" was a "good enough Morgan" for repulsing every demand upon the exploiters of humanity that they drop their power to plunder. One notable instance of this scientific by-play in the interest of special privileges was the case of the woman thief (vol. iii, p. 740) whose several hundred descendants were all thieves or prostitutes or worse. Their demoralizing environment—an ample explanation if the facts were true—was ignored, and the whole pernicious result attributed to the blood of that woman, which, by the way, would have been indistinguishable by the finest tests of real science from the blood of Queen Victoria. But there is a reaction. Sensible people are beginning to see that the influence of heredity upon vice and crime is by no means so evident as the influence of poverty; and that poverty is allied to heredity about as closely as weather to the Gregorian calendar, and not more so. Such relationship as there may be is conventional and not congenital.

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Even heredity theories of disease—the one influence of heredity that was ever a reasonable inference—is fast going by the board. How fast it is going may be seen by reference to a speech in Congress on the 22d of February last by Herbert Parsons of New York, as printed in the Congressional Record. Congressman Parsons, speaking upon the authority of official investigations and alluding to the health of children, said: "Rich and poor children come into the world substantially on an equality. They are 'created equal.' The inequalities occur after they have arrived in the world." This is his entirely reasonable deduction from a report of the British inter-

departmental committee on physical deterioration, from which he quoted the following:

So far as the committee are in a position to judge, the influence of heredity in the form of the transmission of any direct taint is not a considerable factor in the production of degenerates. Professor Cunningham's views, that inferior bodily characters, the result of poverty and not of vice, are not transmissible, were confirmed by Doctor Mackenzie, who at the outset of his interesting evidence elaborated a distinction between inheritable characters and their environmental modifications, the result of these last being imposed on the individual by his life history and not therefore transmissible to the offspring. Doctor Eichholz was disposed to go further, and sought to explain how some mysterious law of transmitted impulse made for the recuperation of each generation, the unborn child fighting strenuously for its own health at the expense of the mother and arriving in the world with a full chance of living a normal physical existence. This view he supported by the assertion that the number of children born healthy in the worst districts was very great, he himself putting it at not less than 90 per cent. Doctor Ashby thought this was only partially true, as nature too often failed in its effort; and Doctor Mackenzie would not even concede so much, as investigations into the effect of food on guinea pigs during pregnancy had, he said, shown that the embryo suffers in greater proportion than the mother. He quoted the opinion of Dr. Noel Paton that "the nourishment of the maternal tissues seems to take precedence over the nutrition of the fetus." The committee deemed it advisable to hear on this point Dr. Edward Malins, president of the Obstetrical Society of London and professor of midwifery in the University of Birmingham, who thought the testimony of experienced persons was on the whole in accordance with the views expressed by Doctor Eichholz. He would say that from 80 to 85 per cent of children were born physically healthy, whatever the condition of the mother might be antecedently, so far confirming the opinion that nature intends all to have a fair start. Doctor Malins kindly undertook on behalf of the Obstetrical Society to institute an inquiry among the lying-in charities and hospitals in London which should furnish information on these facts; this inquiry is unfortunately not complete. The committee were, however, supplied by the courtesy of Doctor Eichholz with evidence which did tend to establish this conclusion from the medical officers working for the Royal Maternity Charity, and from the Paddington and Kensington Workhouse infirmaries. The committee can not ignore these opinions, though it may well be that the depressing effects of the life struggle on parents are, nevertheless, in some measure transmitted to the offspring. At any rate, some vulnerability toward disease may coexist with a superficially healthy appearance, and granted unfavorable environment the seeds of degeneration are not long in producing a rank harvest. The consolation of the doctrine lies in the encouragement it gives to working for the removal of the causes which are prejudicial to the health of each successive generation, an encouragement which is immensely strengthened by the concurrent testimony of all concerned as to the immediate effect upon growth and develop-