

unopposed by definite organization; and the future conditions, to be better than the present, must be directed by organized unselfishness, or it is to be feared that the law that "like causes produce like effects" will operate once more, and the present state of fox-and-wolf society be perpetuated. And in so speaking, I have no intention of injuring the feelings of the selfish person, if he be irredeemably selfish, with no thought or care for others; we may be sorry for him, but have no right to blame him; he is probably as broad-minded and open-hearted as he knows how to be, and, like all of us, has been raised in a scientifically constructed a hot house of selfishness as the inventive genius of several thousand years has been able to design.

If a socialist, and still so from absolutely selfish reasons, and no others, he may yet be made useful to the cause, if socialism brings about a proper organization. Should he desire to dominate the movement or, perhaps, endeavor to absorb all the emoluments to be obtained—a contingency not likely to arise for some time to come—he should be gently but firmly assisted to step down and out.

But I think the utterly selfish man is something of a variety. In most of us some chord can be found that will vibrate to the universal harmony of sympathy, and not the least work of socialism should be to locate that chord, and bring it within reach of the notes most suited to it.

Of its very nature, selfishness is destructive. It stands alone, and is blown over by a gale; it walks on the streets, meets with its double, and both get hurt; it tries to go through a gate both ways at once, and the bodies it uses are crushed; it is one continually revolving kaleidoscope of turmoil, collision, separation and chaos. Leave it alone, and its tentacles extend as those of the cancer or leprosy, imperceptibly, but steadily and surely, until the whole vitality has been absorbed, and, in endeavoring to gain strength and lengthen its life, it expires, and is dissipated along with the unfortunate victim in which it took up its abode.

It loves to be alone; it is at home in the garret and in the cellar; in huge stone buildings with barred doors and windows; it walks with a shuffling gait

along the alleys and narrow streets; it has a furtive, startled glance or the glare of a wounded beast of prey; it cares not for the merry laughter of little children, or the buoyant mirth of youth; in the past it has nought but regrets; the present affords no pleasure; the future presents for it, only the hope of lust and gain—it is a devil fish extending its foul arms in all directions feeling for its prey; it is a vampire feeding on its own vitals—living a curse, dying a hideous nightmare of the past.

But brought into the light of day, and placed in contact with altruistic intelligence, it droops its head, not only displaying its inferiority, but recognizing its own despicable meanness.

There are some selfish to such a degree that they declare they take pride in being mean and sordid; but place them in a group less stunted than themselves and they will endeavor to cover up their selfishness and, so far as their dwarfed natures will permit, attempt to place themselves, for the time being at least, in harmony with the better element in which they find themselves.

Pointing out in a mild way the canker-worm, where selfishness predominates, in such a way as to show the selfish that they are found out and considered inferior in so far as they are selfish, will, I believe, do much to eliminate what is the greatest curse of modern civilization. Selfishness is of the nature of beasts of prey, and in so far as men consider themselves above the lower animals, just so much less should be their selfishness. It is a moral disease perhaps, possibly a mental one, but there are many other existing to-day that are much harder to cure in the ordinary case, though having much less serious results if left unchecked. That it has not been checked so far is apparently due to the admiration and adulation that have been heretofore bestowed upon the granddukes and archbishops of selfishness.

The symptoms of this universal cancer have been treated as the disease, up to the present time, and as a consequence the disease is in no way disturbed. Let at least one aim of socialism be to eliminate selfishness; the former cannot permanently succeed while the latter is dominant. But the question will probably