

capacity for the occupation selected by or forced upon the individual by external circumstances.

This point plays a decisive role in regard to business application and business energy of the most differing classes of people and is often the reason why the individual is not able to fill his place satisfactorily, and why he suffers on account of his occupation so as to quit it or soon end in ill-health or breakdown under it. Physical incapacity is the general cause of sickness incurred in the pursuit of one's employment. No instrument is fit for all classes of work, and no material for every instrument. If it be not well selected it will soon become dull, soon break. It is well known that everyone is not adopted to be a physician, a sailor, a soldier, a discoverer. Many who might have succeeded in their callings in life have failed because of the physical handicap. It is not necessary to elaborate these ideas to show that through such incapacity many a life amongst the more cultivated classes is threatened, endangered, or destroyed, or loses its hold, and falls into line with the "intellectual proletariat." Much of what we have to discuss concerns these classes. There are conditions injurious to health incident to every or nearly every calling requiring certain physical qualifications to offset them. This is especially so in the work of the laborer, in the narrower signification of the term; here we see the many trade conditions injurious to health, many of them characteristic of and specifically incident to particular trades—conditions of which trade-pathology has much information, and against which trade-hygiene should protect.

We now face an important point of view of our subject, the choice of occupation.

It does not seem to me to be necessary after what has been said to expatiate on the hygienic significance of a proper choice of employment. It plays unquestionably an important role as a cause of involuntary unemployment, and is amongst the sources of the social misery of a part of the working classes. Insurance against sickness protects in an insufficient manner or temporarily only against the physical results of physical incapacity for an occupation, especially as this incapacity does not always mean sickness in a physical sense, or sickness as defined by the laws relating to insurance against sickness. Physical in-

capacity predicates frequent, in fact, continuous change of location—the incapable workman is discharged and seeks again and again the employment for which he is unsuited until he succumbs. A remedy or at least an improvement in conditions might be devised and prevention might be offered to great social wrongs.

The dangers to which everyone exposes himself in the pursuit of certain occupations or trades are known; they are investigated and studied by pathologists who deal with the conditions of professions and trades. But these dangers to health are not known to the man who devotes himself to an occupation. It has also been demonstrated that certain physical characteristics signify slighter resistance to these dangers, that such characteristics predispose to contracting sickness, that the man who has this predisposition exposes himself to disproportionately greater danger than another in pursuit of any particular employment. Apart from deficient muscular strength, apart from general physical infirmity, it is only necessary to call to mind the often distinctly recognizable predisposition to tuberculosis. For example, a man predisposed to tuberculosis, enters an employment in which dust is raised, and, without taking into consideration the fact that he endangers his fellow workers, infallibly succumbs. The man physically unfit for such employment, however, knows nothing of this predisposition nor of his infirmity—he has besides no opportunity nor reason for informing himself about it before he feels signs of weakness, when in most cases it is already too late.

The remedy may follow two lines: Either by proper instruction about an occupation and its dangers, or by possible proper information about the worker's own constitution and physical fitness for the occupation by means of a thorough medical examination; at all events, by selecting the physically suitable and directing them to the several classes of employment.

What opportunity is there for realizing this and in what manner can it be brought about? The school offers the best opportunity, both for instruction and for the medical examination suggested. Mischler, speaking on the first day of the session of the Austrian Institute for Assisting Labor at Vienna (1907), has already complained of the unregulated, unintelligent choice of