Bitter Attack On "the Idle Rich" By Bradley Martin's Brother

[R. E. M., in T. P.'s Weekly.]

It is a very long time since I read through a book which caused me such pangs of disgust, painful emotion, and, again, pity, as did "The Passing of the Idle Rich," by Frederick Townsend Martin (Hodder & Stoughton, 6s net). It is not a dull tome of economical statistics, neither is it the nauseous outburst of an excited person with a grievance. Mr. Martin has his grievance, but it is not one of resentment against others. He burns with a fierce resentment against himself and his class. For quite frankly he tells us that he himself is one of the "Idle Rich," a brother of the American millionaire, Bradley Martin. He does not rant, neither does he lose his head, but page by page, in the most lucid style conceivable, he piles up evidence against the wantonness of modern wealth in the great country of which he is a citizen. One almost weeps for him, sitting middle-aged and alone, directing his attacks against the evil which has spoiled his life and is spoiling the lives of thousands around him, and fearing all the time that the book will fail to reach the people for whom it is written. One loves the writer for his whole-heartedness, one respects his opinions for their soundness.

The Beginning of the Trouble.

"Less than half a century ago the aristocracy of America worked with its hands, labored in its broad fields, ate its bread in the sweat of its brow. The cities were small and inconsequential, and the laws of hospitality far overbalanced the traditions of class. Here and there was wealth, but wealth was shackled to the wheels of Opportunity." Such was the state of affairs in the time of the pioneers of American society. It is not difficult to see how the dread canker took root. A new country, with semi-developed resources, offered the more capable among the community unlimited scope for operation. Fortunes were made, many and great, and wealth was at first respected as being an accurate index to its owner's capabilities. But wealthy fathers died, and their fortunes went to their sons. What need for the sons to work? Was not life a thing to be enjoyed by the fortunate? "It was the magic of gold; it was the poison of idle wealth. It came at first like a little spot on the body of a man. Quickly it spread from limb to limb, and part to part, until in the fullness of time it was a leprosy, following the body of society almost from head to foot. It was the curse of gold, no more, no less—the same condition that laid in the dust the glory of Athens, that hurled to ruin the splendor of Rome, that brought upon Bourbon France the terror of the revolution."

The Effects of the Disease.

Then comes the disgusting account of the excesses to which these vapid idlers go. Story after story is told in monotonous succession, but the very monotony of it gives it its desired effect. We pass on to the next chapter with an after-taste in the mouth that lingers on to the end of the book. I will not quote any of these stories—how monkeys are ministered to by a dozen human beings at the cost of some thousand dollars yearly, how extraordinary dinners are given costing anything from twenty to fifty thousand dollars—we have heard of such things, and they are all to be found in Mr. Martin's book. This only creates the mise-en-scene; I want to get deeper, to the bottom of the plot. What common-sense, industrial community could be spectator of such depravity, such indolent debauchery, as this, without sickening at the sight? America sickened—America's deification of wealth turned to an implacable hatred. Its feelings were voiced in President Roosevelt's memorable and pointed words: "The willfully idle man, like the willfully barren woman, has no place in a sane, healthy, vigorous community."

The Bursting of the Storm.

With this revolution of opinion broke a storm of such proportions that it has not yet ceased though it has done the best part of its work, and will not cease until it has utterly and for ever wiped out the thing which has brought degradation upon America. "Never before in the history of the world has there been anything analogous to the campaign of the American muck-rakers. The progressive forces of French society raged at the monarchy and the church before the French Revolution. But their propaganda took 50 years to gain power and 50 years to accomplish its purpose. The work of destruction here seemed to be done in a night. The pillars of society tumbled. From official statements of the President of the United States down to the output of $10-a-week hack writers, our publications teemed with the products of the popular trade of exposure. Great commercial and industrial institutions were analyzed. National and municipal governments were dissected. Universities and churches did not escape the busy seeker for sin."

The Awakening of Society.

How the eyes of these poor victims of a cruelly indulgent fate were opened! They rushed to explore the workings of the mighty machine whose mission was to rend them. They saw, they were amazed. Some shrank away in fear, others went so far as to add fuel to keep it working. One and all were impressed and many learned the unwisdom of their ways; but not all, for there are some among us who can never learn until it is too late, and some not even then. I believe from what I hear that the author of the book is himself a millionaire; anyhow, he classes himself with the sect which, in the light of a new understanding, he would destroy. This is his fearful indictment of the methods of the culture of the growth: "It is watered with the bloody sweat of labor and the salt tears of bitter poverty and suffering, and is fertilized with the dead bodies of men and women outworn in the grim battle of life. Tended and watched it is by a foul horde of underlings, hired judges in the law, panders in politics, prostitutes in the pulpit, lick-spittles in college chancelleries, Judases in the press, blackmailers in business, and miserable, time-serving parasites, clinging like filthy leeches upon the administrative bodies of the nation."

Where They Are To Be Pitied.

There is another side to the question—the consideration of the temptations of the "idle Rich." It is easy for us to damn them for their follies and excesses, but should we have behaved any better in their position? I doubt it. It is not the fault of individuals, nor is it a matter that can be righted by individuals. The fault is a national and administrative one and the righting must be done by the community at large. These poor hunters after pleasure hunt because it is a disease—not because they ever hope to find pleasure. They do not know what pleasure is, and in their inmost hearts they know they do not know. "Poverty is a bitter thing," said Theodore Roosevelt once, "but it is not as bitter as the existence of restless vacuity, and physical, moral and intellectual flabbiness to which those doom themselves who elect to spend all their years in the vainest of all pursuits, the pursuit of mere pleasure, as a sufficient end in itself." In other words, the "idle rich" are futile. Mr. Martin carries on the theme: "I cannot find it in my heart to condemn as strongly as I should the lapses of the Idle Rich from the paths of virtue, for I know exactly how it is. It is futile. It is empty. It is a restriction of freedom. It is a chain about your neck. I regard futility as the real Nemesis of society. It turns our lives to nothing; it makes of our fairest garden a desert; it robs us, in our very cradles, of our lives, our liberties, and our happiness."

The Dawn of Better Things.

All this dismalness is not too pleasing to the reader, but we get a ray of hope at the end. The moon of wanton foolishness is waning, and in proportion as it grows fainter so does the light over the hills in the east, the dawning light of the sun, of a sensible understanding, grow brighter. To-day many of the sons of the wealthiest are starting to climb the ladder of life from the bottom rung, working at infinitesimal salaries, just to learn to be men, and not glittering, worthless excrescences on the face of the earth. "Give us time," concludes Mr. Martin, "and we shall solve the problems of the age. The makers of America today are, almost without exception, men who have made themselves. That is an American tradition that we shall carry on through the ages. I cannot help but hope, even against the evidence of my own eyes and ears, that this plutocracy which today threatens the very life of the nation can be passed into American history without an epoch-making revolution. Only we of the wealthy class have many things to learn, and we must learn them faithfully, sitting at the feet of the historians."—R. E. M., in T. P.'s Weekly.

CLIFF DWELLERS NOT VERY ANCIENT ACCORDING TO LATE INVESTIGATIONS

Ruins Indicate That Faces of Precipices Were Inhabited Because of Convenience, More Than Through Fear of Enemies.

A preliminary report to the Smithsonian Institution has been made by Jesse Walter Fewkes, who was sent by the Bureau of American Ethnology to examine the prehistoric ruins in the national reserve created in Northern Arizona under the name of the Navajo National Monument. Dr. Fewkes makes these recommendations:

That one of the largest two cliff dwellings in the Navajo National Monument, either Betatakin or Kitsiel, be excavated, repaired and preserved as "type ruin" to illustrate the prehistoric culture of the aborigines of this section of Arizona.

That this work be supplemented by excavation and repair of Inscription House, an ancient cliff dwelling in West Canyon.

That one or more of the ruins in West Canyon be added to the Navajo National Monument and be permanently protected by the Government.

"The Navajo National Monument," writes Dr. Fewkes, "contains two kinds of ruins, cliff dwellings and pueblos. Most of the latter are situated on promontories or on low hills. The architecture of the cliff dwellings is characteristic, their walls being constructed of stone or adobe built against the vertical faces of the cliff. The masonry of these northern ruins is rude, resembling that of modern Walpi. The component stones are neither dressed nor smoothed, but the walls are sometimes plastered. There is great similarity in architecture.

"Naturally, the questions one asks in regard to these ruins are: Why did inhabitants build these cliffs? When were these dwellings inhabited and deserted?

"It is commonly believed that the caves were chosen for habitations because they could be better defended than villages in the open. This is a good answer to the first question, so far as it goes, although somewhat imperfect.

"The ancients chose this region for their homes on account of the constant water supply in the creek and the patches of land in the valley that could be cultivated. This was a desirable place for their farms. Had there been no caves in the cliffs they would probably have built habitations in the open plain below.

"They may have been harassed by marauders, but it must be borne in mind that their enemies did not come in great numbers at any one time. Defense was not the primary motive that led the sedentary people of this canyon to utilize the cabins for shelter.

"Again, the inroads of enemies never led to the abandonment of these great cliff houses, if we can impute valor in any appreciable degree to the inhabitants. Fancy, for instance, the difficulty, or rather improbability, of a number of nomadic warriors great enough to drive out the population of Kitsiel, making their way up Cataract Canyon and besieging the pueblo. Such an approach would have been impossible.

"Marauders might have raided the Kitsiel cornfields, but they could not have dislodged the inhabitants. Even if they had succeeded in capturing one house but little would have been gained, as it was a custom of the Pueblos to keep enough food in store to last more than a year. In this connection the question is pertinent, While hostiles were besieging Kitsiel, how could they subsist for any length of time?

"Only with the utmost difficulty, even with the aid of ropes of ladders, can one now gain access to some of these ruins. How could marauding parties have entered them if the inhabitants were hostile? The cliff dwelling were constructed partly for defense, but mainly for the shelter afforded by the overhanging cliff, and the cause of their desertion was not due so much to predatory enemies as failure of crops or the disappearance of the water supply.

"These ruins are not of great antiquity; some of the evidence indicates that they are of a later time. Features in their architecture show resemblances derived from other regions.

"The Navajos ascribe the building to ancient people, and say that the ruined houses existed before their own advent in the country, but this was not necessarily long ago. Such evidence as has been gathered supports Hopi legends that the inhabitants were ancient Hopi, belonging to the Flute, Horn and Snake families.

"There is no evidence that cliff house architecture developed in these canyons, and rude structures older than these have been found in this region. Whence were the builders of these structures were they brought their craft with them. The adoption of the deflector in the rectangular ceremonial rooms, called kivas, implies the derivation of these rooms from circular knives, and all indications are that the ancient inhabitants came from higher up San Juan River.

"Many of the ruins in Canyon de Chelly, situated east of Laguna Creek, show marked evidence of being modern, and they in turn are not so old as those of the Mesa Verde. If the ruins become older as we go up the river the conclusion is logical that the migration of the San Juan culture was down the river from east to west rather than in the opposite direction.

"The scanty traditions known to the author support the belief in a migration from east to west, although there were exceptional instances of clan movements in the opposite direction. The general trend of migration would indicate that the ancestral home of the Snake and Flute people was in Colorado and New Mexico.

"It is evident from the facts here recorded that the ruins of the Navajo National Monument contain most important, most characteristic and preserved buildings, and that the problems they present are of a nature to arouse great interest in them. Having suffered comparatively little from vandalism, these are among the best-preserved ruins illustrative of the cliff dwellers' culture in our Southwest, and if properly excavated and repaired they would preserve most valuable data for the future student of prehistoric man in North America. It is not necessary to preserve all of the ruins within this area, but it would be well to explore the region and to locate the sites of the ruins that it contains."

The World In 50 Years Three Future Certainties

(Dr. W. H. Fitchett (Australia) in Public Opinion.)

"Never prophesy unless you know," is a very wise aphorism, and certainly in the present brief paper the writer does not propose to talk in prophetic accents. But though human eyes with their limited vision can only see the ripples on the great ocean of time, yet a ripple may be an index to the Gulf Stream. The trend and direction of the great tides—which themselves are in rhythm with the planets—may be guessed from the ripples.

The Optimistic Note.

It is very noteworthy that not a divine but a layman strikes the most courageously optimistic note at the present moment. The rector's desk at St. Andrew's rings with more cheerful accents than most Christian pulpits.

"Momentary shadows," said Lord Rosebery, "are born of a too limited view of things. A wise man may find the clouds lying about him for a moment, but he will raise his eyes to the hills and remember the eternities."

If we assess the centuries we shall find the world is better and happier at the end of each than it was at the beginning. There is visible in the history of the world as Lord Rosebery looks back upon it "a constant movement for the better." All this is perfectly true. Time refutes the pessimists.

Wordsworth's Mistake.

Everyone remembers Wordsworth's sonnet,

"Milton, thou shouldst be living with us at this hour;
England hath need of thee, she is a fen
Of stagnant waters."

Wordsworth was one of the sanest of poets, and yet how time has wrecked this particular bit of his poetry. "A fen of stagnant waters"; could anything be more absurd as a description of England today? Strange new ferments, no doubt, are stirring in the national blood; but they are ferments making for health, not disease.

Revolt Against Armed Peace.

If we may judge the tide from the ripples, some things become reasonably certain. There will, in the near future, be a revolt, both of the reason and the conscience of the civilized world, from the state of armed peace which at present prevails, with its ever-multiplying fleets of Dreadnoughts and its universal training for war. The appliances for war have grown to such a scale that war itself will be recognized as impossible, and the arbitrament of reason will take the place of the clash of fleets and armies.

There must be, next, a steady ascent in the conditions of life for the working class of every type. Two forces join to make this certain. One is the visible growth of class-consciousness among the worker themselves. The sense of a community of interests is running through them like a flame, and it will fuse them like a flame. And since they are, by count of head, the biggest section of the community, and under a democratic system of government a count of heads is the final logic, it is certain that the whole trend of future legislation will go in the direction of a vast improvement in the social condition of the working classes.

Victory of Christian Ideas.

A second force working in the same direction, and profoundly influencing every class of the community, is what may be called the new Christianized conscience which is visibly acquiring authority. Christianity is touching with its strange yet gracious forces the moral sense of the world. It is making cruelty, injustice, and oppression intolerable. The spectacle of the inequalities of human life disquiets it; the mere existence of suffering is felt to be a resistless challenge; and the new Christian conscience stirring in the nation as to these things is a guarantee of social advance in every form.

The average Christian pulpit, curiously enough, is apparently unconscious of the amazing victory which Christian ideas have won, and are winning, in this realm. Some forces at the present moment seem to arrest advance in the organized churches. The churches themselves lack leaders of striking personality; the higher criticism has not reached any certain conclusion of its own, but it has helped to smite with a note of uncertainty—and, therefore, of weakness—the average pulpit. But any pessimism as to the future of Christianity is contradicted by the whole trend of civilization, and by the silent and universal authority which Christian ideals are establishing over human life.

Science and Religion.

Science, again, in a degree — and in forms which are not adequately recognized — is coming into rhythm with religion. Not Tyndale resolving all the phenomena of life into terms of matter, but Huxley declaring that "the one certainty of science is the existence of a mental world," is the true interpreter of the wiser thought of the schools. The proof of the new friendship betwixt science and religion is not to be found simply in such personal incidents as Lord Kelvin's emphatic declaration of the belief in God, or in the spectacle of Sir Oliver Lodge writing a religious catechism for the instruction of parents and teachers. It is revealed in the fact that the new science makes any materialistic reading of the universe impossible. Matter itself is resolved into terms of force.

The Pleiades in the Atom

A generation ago science was busy amongst the immensities; it was pushing back the horizons of the universe; and, as it deciphered what may be called the mathematics of the heavens, beneath the height, the splendor, the ordered and illimitable magnificence thus revealed, man seemed to shrink, and Christianity—which has the greatness of man as its central truth—threatened to become incredible. How remote God seemed, sitting behind His stars! But the new science today finds greatness not in the infinite, but in the infinitesimal. It discovers the Pleiades in every atom. The dust of the earth is as rich in stars as the azure of the heavens. There is a physical eternity packed into a speck of radium.

God in a word—this is the new message of science—reveals Himself in the minute in a word as gloriously as He does in the vast. And if, as science now shows, God can hide such splendors of force in an atom, this gives us, on the authority of science, a new justification to what may be called the scale of spiritual values which Christianity teaches. Bulk is an irrelevance. If God can hide a physical eternity in a speck of uranium, it is credible that He must intend a better kind of immortality for the human mind that can unlock the puzzle of the speck of uranium, and count its rushing particles.

Certainties of the Future.

The certainties of the future, in the judgment of the present writer, are (1) a revolt of the world's common sense against the present system of international politics, with their intolerable burden of fleets and armies; (2) an immense advance in the social condition of the working classes, due to the new political force these classes will derive from cohesion betwixt themselves; and due, in an even higher degree, to the new authority of Christian ideals amongst all classes; and (3) a new authority which Christian faith will take, largely as the result of science, which, like Kepler, will learn "to think God's thoughts after Him." But this new authority of religion may express itself in terms which, at first, the churches may not recognize.

HOW JOAQUIN MILLER RECEIVED HIS FRIEND

[By George Wharton James.]

Who else but a natural man, with a childlike mind, would have treated me as Joaquin Miller one morning when he had invited me to spend the day with him? I determined to make a full day of it, so took one of the early trains and with my camera slung over my back arrived at "The Heights" soon after sunrise. As I walked up the steps I found him still in bed, but hard at work, writing. Before I had time to greet him, he burst forth in a gruff and harsh salute: "What do you mean by coming and bothering me at this early hour of the morning? The desire to write seizes me seldom enough, and when it does, I don't want to be bothered by anyone coming to see me. Go into the garden!"

Now many people would have been offended at a salutation like this, but I knew Joaquin too well to be such a fool. He simply meant what he said and no more. His whole nature was absorbed in giving expression to some thought that interested him, and I came as a disturbing presence. He did not want me and said so emphatically; therefore I withdrew without a word to enjoy the delights of the garden.

But while I was enjoying myself, little by little there had seemed into Joaquin's preoccupied brain the thought that, perhaps he had been discourteous to me. The moment he saw this, with an intenseness, fervor and simplicity as of a little child, he jumped out of bed, regardless of the fact that he wore nothing but pajamas, rushed into the garden, rapidly and silently picked a most beautiful boquet, and then, stalking up to me where I sat eyeing him with unaffected amusement he said: "If you can read what the flowers say, you will see that I am sorry for not having greeted you more hospitably this morning. I love you and am glad to see you, but I am very busy and want to work out what I have in mind. Excuse me for a little while." During this speech, that calm, blue eye of his looked at me with tremulous intenseness of simple trust and affection that brought tears into my eyes, and I thought then, as I have thought many times since, how little people understand this great, big, simple-hearted, bewhiskered boy. There was no more thought of effect in this action than there is in the simplest doings of a child. He had yielded to the generous impulse that struck him, without any more thought of incongruity or ludicrousness than that displayed by a little child who rushes into a crowded reception room in its night-dress, to kiss papa and mamma good-night!

TOLD HER TO REST BUT SHE COULDN'T

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"I suffered from Rheumatism, Neuralgia, Violent Headaches and Palpitation of the Heart," Mrs. Cheff states. "My back ached. I was always tired and nervous and I had weak spells. My doctor told me to just rest, but that was just what I couldn't do, till reading of the cures of others led me to try Dodd's Kidney Pills.

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"Then I took in all twelve boxes of Dodd's Kidneys Pills and now my health is excellent. I recommend Dodd's Kidney Pills to all suffering women."

Thousand of Canadian women will tell you that Dodd's Kidneys Pills are the sure relief for suffering women.

ELECTRICITY-FED PUPILS

In Stockholm the public school officials have been trying a series of interesting experiments in the use of electricity as a factor in human development. These experiments were suggested by the fact that it is possible to force the growth of certain vegetables by means of currents of electricity distributed from powerful dynamos. If vegetable growth can be stimulated and increased by electric influence, why not the human organism in its more susceptible period?

In one of the public schools of Stockholm two groups of children were selected, each group containing 25 pupils, all of them as nearly alike as possible in health, size, weight and mentality. These groups were placed in separate rooms, in which the physical conditions were the same. In one room the ordinary routine was observed, in the other the pupils were exposed to the influence of electric currents.

This experiment has continued for several years and recently a comparative test of the opposing groups was made. According to the report of the officials the children who were subjected to the electric influence exhibited a remarkable superiority over the other group, a superiority that was shown in growth, in weight, in health and in mental ability.

There are skeptics in Stockholm, however, who refuse to accept this experiment seriously, and so the school officials have determined to order further tests. That these tests will be thorough and exact, the high character of the Swedish educators gives full assurance.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

JAPANESE DENTISTRY

Japanese native dentists conduct their business in a manner which would undoubtedly cause any European practitioner to open his eyes in amazement. The victim is seated on the ground, the dentist bends over him, and forces his left hand between the patient's jaws, in such a manner that the mouth cannot be closed. Then he grasps the doomed tooth between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, and with one deft wrench removes it and throws it upon the ground. So great is the skill of these native dentists that many of them are able to remove six or seven teeth per minute. Indeed, their skill is hardly to be wondered at, when one considers the course of preparatory training they are obliged to undergo. A number of holes are bored in a stout plank, and this is fixed firmly to the ground. In the holes are driven wooden pegs, and the would-be dentist has to extract them with his fingers without dislodging the board. This process is repeated with a board of pine wood, and finally with one of oak, and it is only when he has succeeded in extracting the pegs from the oak plank that the Japanese considers himself qualified to practice upon his fellow-men.

German patriotism, as understood by the traders, has manifested itself in a list of prescriptions distributed through the empire. One of them reads: "Never forget when you buy a foreign article that your country is the poorer." Education may in time achieve this substitute for a tariff in America.

AS GOOD AS A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE

Baby's Own Tablets should be kept in every home where there are little ones. They are as good as a doctor; are absolutely safe and can always be relied upon to drive away any malady arising from derangements of the stomach or bowels. Concerning them Mrs. O. A. Wheeler, Northlands, Sask., says: "I have found Baby's Own Tablets an invaluable medicine. I live twenty miles from town and doctor, so am glad to have so reliable a medicine at hand. I consider the Tablets a real necessity in the home and shall never be without them. They have kept my baby well and have made him a bonnie baby." The Tablets are sold by medicine dealers or by mail at 25 cents a box from The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

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