

climates whose softness is popularly supposed to be enervating. The truth would seem to be that adversity and hardship may sometimes afford an opportunity for the display of great virtues, but cannot create them.

That there is a lurking distrust of the soundness of the theory of disadvantages is shown by the fact that men are unwilling to carry it into practice. The self-made millionaire, though he may commend poverty to the employee asking for an increase of pay, does not set his own son to sweeping his office or running errands. The man who educated himself by a slow and painful process in the face of great obstacles, not only sends his sons to the greatest colleges and universities in the world, but sometimes endows such institutions in order that others may enjoy the advantages which he has missed. If the doctrine which is so glibly preached is true, these men, instead of being benefactors of the race, are doing an injury to their children and to posterity. In their hearts they feel that the doctrine of handicaps is not sound. The mass of mankind, in this case, practice better than they preach. On the housetops they praise poverty and the blessings of a friendless childhood: in their workshops and offices they are toiling like beavers, saving, paying life-insurance premiums, in order that their children may not enjoy the inestimable blessing of beginning life poor. There is no need, therefore, to persuade men to clear their minds of this particular form of cant. It is a harmless self-delusion. It does not poison their lives.

Another phase of it, perhaps not quite so innocuous, is the theory that in the poor man's life there is more real comfort and health than in that of his rich neighbor. A poor man is supposed to thrive upon plain food, while the unhappy millionaire gets dyspepsia by gorging himself upon

luxuries. The man who is shrewd enough to accumulate a large fortune is thus, by inference, compared to the foolish boy who spends his sixpence upon penny tarts. Now this is arrrant rubbish; wholesome food is dearer than stuff that breeds dyspepsia. Good cookery is dear, and bad cookery cheap. You may pay a dollar in one restaurant for a very plain dinner: you may pay a dime in another restaurant for a "square meal" composed nominally of the same articles. The man with the dollar pays, not for the privilege of gorging himself on viands with outlandish names, but for cleanliness, a white tablecloth, good cookery, wholesome and nutritious meat, fresh vegetables instead of stale, butter instead of oleomargarine. Everything that conduces to health is dear. Good plumbing is dear; good ventilation is dear; warmth in the winter and coolness in the summer are dear. Fresh air and sunshine, which are described in optimistic literature as among the common blessings of life, are expensive luxuries for people in great cities. Of course there is plenty of air and sunshine—somewhere—just as there is perhaps an abundance of unoccupied land in Mars. To the men and women who work in factories and live in the stifling rooms of tenement houses in New York, all this talk about the abundance of fresh air and sunshine in the universe is as much of a mockery as the offer of a Torrens title to eligible building lots in the aforesaid planet. There is a kind of poverty which admits of health and happiness; it is the ideal poverty of the novels, wherein the interesting hero and heroine are consigned to a modest cottage by the sea, with a pittance of three hundred pounds a year, which they eke out by painting pot boilers and pestering hard-headed editors with limping verses. The mass of mankind would willingly sing the praises of poverty on such terms,