

**ECHOES**  
OF THE  
**SUNSET CLUB**

# ECHOES OF THE SUNSET CLUB

COMPRISING

A NUMBER OF THE PAPERS READ,

AND

ADDRESSES DELIVERED,

BEFORE THE

SUNSET CLUB OF CHICAGO,

DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS.

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COMPILED BY W. W. CATLIN. *comp*

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## PREFACE.

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Through the courtesy of the gentlemen represented here I am permitted to present to the public a few of the papers read before the Sunset Club during the past two years—and one or two articles which were prepared but, for some reason, not submitted at the Club meetings.

With a few exceptions these "talks" have not been revised at all, appearing here without correction. The general discussions indulged in at the meetings are not given here, because of lack of space to give them in full—and to give them in part would not be satisfactory.

On pages 3 to 7 will be found several extracts from an article in *The Chicago Herald* of April 26, 1891, which will probably be of interest to those readers of this modest volume who are not familiar with the aims and objects of the Sunset Club.

W. W. CATLIN.

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## "THE NOTED SUNSET CLUB OF CHICAGO."

The following extracts are from an article which appeared in *The Chicago Herald*, Sunday, April 26, and are reprinted through the courtesy of the publishers:

The now notable Sunset Club of this city has just completed the most successful and profitable season it has experienced since its organization two years ago this spring. Its limited membership of 1,100 is completely filled; the subjects under discussion have proved of absorbing interest; the meetings have been largely attended, and as an educational factor the club has grown to exert a most potent influence, that, with each recurring season, is sure to become more powerful and widespread. \* \* \*

The object of the Sunset Club has already been outlined. The requirements for membership are simple: Any genial and tolerant fellow may become a member on approval of the Executive Committee. The programme pursued by the Club is a dinner every other Thursday at 6:15 o'clock, followed by short talks upon the topic previously announced by the secretary. The only expenses incident to membership are an annual assessment of \$2 for stationery, printing and the like, and \$1.50 for each dinner of which the member partakes.

NO PRESIDENT, NO PREACHING, NO DUDES.

A newspaper wag has termed the Sunset Club "an unprincipled Club" because there is a total lack of rules, regulations, by-laws and a constitution, but after reading the subjoined "declaration of principles" as formulated by "Father" Catlin, this would seem to be a misstatement. They are as follows:

No Club House	No Accounts	No Profanity
No Constitution	No Defalcations	No Fines
No Debts	No By-Laws	No Stealing
No Contribution	No Stipulations	No combines
No President	No Long Speeches	No Parliamentary Rules
No Bores	No Dress Coats	No Personalities
No Steward	No Late Hours	No Dudes
No "Encores"	No Perfumed Notes	No Mere Formalities

No Preaching	No Gamblers	No Meanness
No Dictation	No Dead Beats	No Vituperation—
No Dues	No Embezzlers	Simply
No Litigation	From Foreign Retreats	Tolerant Discussion
		And Rational Recreation.

While there are no parliamentary rules followed, there are one or two simple rules enjoined from which there can be no appeal. Paramount among these is that which positively prohibits any member from being called upon for a speech. There may be famous guests present at a meeting whose views on the subject under discussion would be eagerly heard by the assembled members, but no one may ask the chairman to request any individual in attendance, be he guest or member, for an expression. It may seem discourteous, but the rule was made so that no member might be forced into speaking on a subject with which he was perhaps unfamiliar, yet who might consider himself bound to rise and say something, often irrelevant, thus absorbing much valuable time. After the two leading speakers have attacked the chosen subject from both sides, any member or guest may speak as the spirit moves him, but no one may be selected by the chairman for this purpose. \* \* \*

THE NAPOLEON OF THE SUNSETTERS.

\* \* \* The duties of the secretary are onerous and are purely a labor of love, for Mr. A. A. McCormick, the present able and popular incumbent of that position, will accept no emoluments, although the Club has repeatedly offered to make the office a salaried position. But the gentleman is wise enough to see that to accept pay would have a tendency to defeat many of his plans that now redound to the good of the Club.

Under the existing circumstances, upon the secretary devolves the entire arrangements for each meeting, with the single exception of choosing the subject for discussion, which is in the hands of a committee. \* \* \*

The subject being decided upon, the next and most difficult work is to arrange for the speakers who shall discuss both sides of the question. The names of these gentlemen are never announced in advance, so that the members often meet in total ignorance of the identity of the two leaders who are to take part in the discussion, the subject of which has been previously announced. Experience has shown that this plan heightens the curiosity of the members and greatly aids in the interest of the gatherings. \* \* \*

IT TEACHES HUMANITY TO ALL.

That its meetings have a wonderfully humanizing effect is certain. When men of pronounced anarchistic and socialistic views, whose personality is unknown outside their immediate following, but whose names are familiar to every newspaper reader, are seen at the Sunset Club gatherings, and their more conservative brethren are thus brought in direct contact with them and see that, like themselves, these leaders are real human beings, faulty in judgment, mayhap, but terribly in earnest, it engenders a

certain respect in their hearts that in no other way could have been attained. Let any serious trouble arise to-day in Chicago in which men of opposing views are pitted against each other, and a solution of such difficulty would be far easier now and in the future than could have been possible prior to the organization of the Sunset Club. \* \* \*

PRINCIPLES, NOT PERSONALITIES.

Personalities are rarely indulged in at the Sunset Club gatherings. This was never better exemplified than at the meeting when the Red Flag was the subject of discussion. It was the best attended dinner the Club ever had, and when the discussion was opened an intense feeling was developed, the speakers on both sides showing by their earnestness how deeply they were stirred. And yet throughout the evening not a single personal invective was offered on either side. It was a question of principles, not persons, and the self-command exhibited by the speakers was most admirable.

The effect of the dinner-table talk that precedes the discussions is seen in the broadening charity entertained by the members toward those of opposite faith. This amicable exchange of views is a great educator in many ways; it provides not only recreation and development but a platform that is absolutely unrestricted, save for personal invective. A vote is never taken among the members following a discussion. The sentiment may be as 99 to 1, and yet that solitary member is never made to feel how very lonesome he is in his opinions. If converts to a question are made the result is never publicly known. The germs of truth are sown and if they take root and flourish it is well; the opposition may never realize how badly it is worsted. \* \* \*

WHY THE LADIES ARE FRIENDLY TO IT.

The Twilight Club of New York (after which the Sunset Club was largely modeled) restricts its speakers to five-minute talks, but the Sunset has improved on this plan by allowing each leader twenty minutes to present his views, after which a general discussion is invited, each speaker being limited to eight minutes. The dinner is usually over by 7:30; cigars are then lighted; the chairman announces the names of the leading speakers, and promptly at 9:30 the meeting adjourns. By closely adhering to this rule the gatherings never become tedious, nor do the ladies find any objections to a Club that brings its sessions to a close at an hour that permits the members to return home in time for family prayers. \* \* \*

All sorts and all conditions of men belong to the Sunset Club. Anarchists, socialists, single-tax men, democrats, republicans, mugwumps, sons of America, Europe, Asia and Australia, agnostics, athetics, christians and free-thinkers are alike enrolled on its membership list. It is the only Club of the kind in Chicago where all meet on a level. At the dinner tables one may see a learned divine touching elbows with a fervid follower of the red flag, a railroad magnate hobnobbing with a labor agitator, a financial potentate side by side with the lowly clerk. Its discussions have

the effect of making the radicals less radical and the conservatives more liberal in their views. It is the broadest organization in the world, and as its founder truthfully observes is "the only Club where men of the widest, opposite and most radical views meet on the same platform and discuss questions in which they take a vital interest without once displaying any bitterness or descending into personality."

WORKING FOR THE GOOD OF THE MAJORITY.

The Club never passes resolutions. It aims to discuss living subjects of vital interest to the people, and in this way really performs the work of a citizens' committee. There is no partisanship in the Club; the object is to arrive at what is best for the good of all and the discussions look solely to this end. \* \* \*

An idea of what has been discussed by the members of the Sunset Club since its inception may be gained by scanning the titles of a few of the subjects over which the Sunsetters have lovingly lingered. A dozen or so are selected and given here: "Speculation, Its Use and Abuses;" "Party Allegiance;" "Single Tax;" "Socialism;" "Anarchy;" "The Sunday Question;" "Our Public School System;" "Newspapers, Their Rights and Duties;" "Subsidies and the Tariff;" "Strikes and Lockouts;" "Pensions, Civil and Military;" "Ballot Reform;" "Money and its Functions;" "Our Jury System; How Can It Be Improved?" "Municipal Civil Service Reform;" "Foreign Trade and Reciprocity," and many more of an equally interesting nature. It can be readily seen that not the same set of members are in attendance at each meeting. Different subjects call out different people, and in this way the interest is constantly changing, as the topic attracts or repels the hundreds of members. This is one of the secrets of the Club's success and of its constantly increasing membership.

As the founder of the Club so pertinently puts it, "No man can attend the meetings of the Club for one year without becoming a better citizen, more liberal in his views, a deeper thinker, more tolerant of the judgment of others and more alive to his own weaknesses and defects. It is a grand educator, where men of originality may freely air their views and be certain of a respectful hearing."

And to belong to this Club there are no restrictions. In the humorous language of Secretary McCormick:

Any genial man,  
If he chooses, can,  
When he pays his dues,  
Join and air his views.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN, the poet and critic, speaking of the Sunset Club in a letter to its Secretary, A. A. McCormick, says:

"I am impressed by the thoughtful and really significant character of the discussions. The Club is plainly not only an educator in the matter of

social intercourse and relaxation, but in the most vital questions and problems of the day."

He closes the letter with the following quatrain as a suggestion for a motto for the Club:

At set of sun one lone star rules the skies,  
Night spreads a feast the day's long toil has won:  
Eat, drink, enough—no more; and speak, ye wise;  
Speak, but enough—no more, at set of sun!



ablest men within its borders. It can secure that service by pledging to our rising generation its faith and honor, that he who serves his country in any distinguished way, whether in literature, or art, or statesmanship, or war, shall not come to suffering and want in his old age.

The principle of the pension is not charity. It is not bounty. It is justice and honor. And this rule, which applies as well to the military as to the civil service, would keep from the list every man who is not worthy to be the associate on the roll of heroes with honorable men. I scorn the military pension when given to a man who has no good claim to stand side by side with the brave man who imperiled his life in the battle's front for the defence of his country. Let us make the pension roll, both civil and military, a roll of honor and dignity and glory.

Nor is it to be feared that such a civil service pension as I advocate can be seriously abused, because the country takes nothing on trust. It awards him a pension only for something worthy which he has done. And when by some great achievement, no matter in what field, one has reflected honor and glory on his country and made it forever his debtor, what else should the country do than say to him: You shall at least be saved from the disgrace of beggary in your old age. Folly in the public service is too expensive for the American people. They can indulge in many luxuries, but not in long-continued folly, such as we have pursued in withholding just rewards from public benefactors. Why is it that the demagogue is so much to the front everywhere in American public life? He is a man to whom neither salary nor pension is any object. He thrives by the vile arts of corrupt politicians. The scoundrel who gets into public office for the purpose of thriving by theft, cares neither for pension nor for salary. He is able to take care of himself in such a position without resort to either. But if our people would have a higher and better service they must seek it. They can have it only by pledging their honor to reward the faithful service of those who can serve it best. Let this be done, and we shall realize what it is to have a government of the people, by the people, that is by the very best of the people, the very flower and genius of the people. I do not think there is anything now before the American people which so much involves their welfare, which would do so much to insure the perpetuity of our free institutions, as a thorough and enduring reform of the civil service. And I believe that reform to be impossible without the aid of the Civil Service Pension.



## THE STATE; ITS FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES.

BY C. S. DARROW.

The idea of the State had its birth in that instinct of man that draws him irresistably to his fellow man. Before man reached his present position, while he was yet a brute, there was planted in his nature a certain instinct, the influence of which he could not avoid, that caused him to associate with others of his kind. The very life of mankind and the continuance of the human race depend upon the strength of this instinct. If we could imagine that in some mysterious way the human race should be dispersed over the surface of the globe, each one given an equal piece of ground, its members would instantly commence a slow and painful pilgrimage to come together once again as they are now. They would build again the villages and the cities of the present time; man would unite with man and form the same sort of organizations, the same sort of society, that exists all over the world, in different forms, to-day, because nature has decreed that in no other way can the human race be preserved; it is only possible to save its life when men congregate in communities, as they do now. So long as man chooses to unite with his fellows, he must recognize the fact that if he would live with others he must be willing to observe such rules of conduct as will allow others to exist by his side. In no other way is it possible for men to dwell together. If I were transported to the midst of a mighty forest, or some great plain, there, solitary and alone, I might exist independently of all other people; yet, in my isolated condition, I would be the abject slave of the powers of nature; it would require my whole time and strength to gain a precarious livelihood, and even then a few short years would see the end. But, if I seek to unite my strength with that of my fellow men, if I seek their aid and co-operation in the struggle of life, then must I submit to be bound by such rules, whatever they may be, as will allow others to exist as well as me.

When I do this to a certain extent I free myself from the powers of nature; it becomes easier for me to live; I can obtain the food, clothing, and shelter that I need, to better advantage than when wandering alone in the midst of the forest or the plain. But I must submit to certain restrictions, the restrictions that are necessary to allow a number to dwell together in unity and peace.

I expected that the gentleman who preceded me would have said something about the doctrine of *laissez faire*. Those who believe in our present State; those who believe no State whatever; generally speak of this. It seems to be the foundation stone of certain schools of political economy. The doctrine of *laissez faire*—let alone, let every one do as he wishes—leaves the government with few functions or with none. From the time when man first stretched out his hand to unite with his fellows, until to-day; from the time when he made the first rude and barbarous law, even though it were the law, "Thou shalt not kill," from that time onward no man has believed or practiced the doctrine of *laissez faire*. The doctrine is inconsistent with any law whatever. The only individual who has the logical right to advocate it is the man who says that we should look to the laws of nature and nothing else; and that no individual has the right to make a law to govern any other individual in the world. If you say that society, in its aggregate capacity, has the right to make any law whatever, you can only support that claim of right upon the ground that because of it society as a whole is better off; and when you have said that you must go one step farther and say that any law, any organization, any rule of action, that conduces to the life of the whole is within the province of the State, and properly its function.

We have had various ideals of the State. There have been those who have elevated the policeman's club and said: "Behold the State"—the State which our sons and daughters should obey, respect and love—but, from the days of Socrates and Plato until now, the greatest and the wisest and the best have not mistaken the police powers of the State for the State itself.

We are told that sometime in the future co-operation may be possible. The course of civilization is toward co-operation. The course of civilization is from the time when every man's hand is turned against his neighbor, toward that time when each is seeking by every effort he can put forth, not only his own good, but the good of all the rest. It may be slow, it may be a long and toilsome journey, but all we claim is, that slow as it may be, it is the course of civilization, and that the time will come—unless civilization be a lie—when the strifes, bickerings, and warfare that now exist among men will be melted and fused into the gentle and humane forces of co-operation and mutual aid.

Why should the State have any powers whatever? Suppose the gentlemen in this room should represent a state organized for a certain purpose. If I raise my hand, armed with a dagger, to kill my brother, what reason, what *right*, has any other gentleman in the room to interfere? Why should you do it? Is it not my inalienable right to do with my own hand what I will? Has anyone the right to prevent it, excepting him who might interfere for his own defence? What right have you at the further end of this room to stay my hand when I seek the life of my fellow at this end? You have just this one right—just this one reason—that society never knows whose turn may come next. You know that if society does not interfere, if you do not stay my hand, that all the rest may suffer one after another, and thus all become the abject slaves of the most power-

ful. Society has the right to organize to prevent any individual member from usurping a power that is detrimental to the whole. You may trace all the police powers of the State back to this common source. I care not if it be the simple law, "Thou shalt not kill," in the end it will be found to rest upon one reason and one alone, and that is that the whole community may best be served by the enforcement of that rule. Any law that subserves the common good, any human regulation whatsoever that is for the interests of the race, has the same basis, no more, nor less, than all other laws that man can possibly devise.

I would that I might picture to you two views of the State. I wish that I might picture them so plainly that they would leave a lasting impression on your minds. Two views of the State that we find existing side by side in the life of the present—for the civilization of to-day, is made up of the good and the bad of the past as well as the aspirations and hopes of the future. I would picture one ideal of the State with the school room filled with happy children, learning to be wise and useful citizens of the State that is to come; with the library that is bringing culture and peace and joy to all the citizens of that State; with the parks laid out for the pleasure of the whole people of that State; with magnificent roadways made for your comfort and mine; with the Postoffice, transacting the business of the State; with other business institutions which are as much the proper function of the State as any that it now performs. I would picture to you another view of the State, a view that was painted on the canvas of that wonderful artist Verestchagin. He pictured the State as some men see it; the State of the believer in *laissez faire*; the State of him who believes that the function of the State is to say, "You must," or "You shall not." He depicted it in three scenes. The first was the State of Ancient Rome. The cross with its victim upon it; the blood trickling to the earth. He pictured the State of India, with men lashed at the cannon's mouth, waiting to be scattered to the four winds of Heaven. This was the State of India, which the children of that land were called upon as a sacred duty to love and to admire.

He pictured the State of Russia. In a bleak plain, while the snow is falling, a scaffold has been erected, upon which human lives are taken. That is the State of Russia which the Russian people are asked to venerate, love and obey. We have a portion of that state in America too. We have a portion of the new and a portion of the old; a portion of the good and a portion of the evil. Not long since the State of Illinois erected a scaffold in the City of Chicago, and they led up its steps a poor, weak, ignorant boy, a child of African descent; of that race which has in all ages received persecution and cruelty from men of our color and our race, a boy who never knew the State, a young boy who in all the darkness of his childish life had never known the pressure of a kindly hand, or the tones of a gentle voice. The State of Illinois laid its hands upon this boy but once, and then it strangled him to death. The State of the future will look at him (no matter what his crime), and they will say: "Before you arraign him at the bar of justice, find what the State has done for him? You shall fulfill your obligations to the boy before you take his life."

Go out into the highways and byways, meet those who have never known happiness, who have never known instruction, who have never known the sound of gentle voices, and give them a chance for their future and their life.

Gentlemen, the two ideals of the State are inconsistent. Abraham Lincoln one said that freedom and slavery could not stand side by side, and so I say that the school room and the gallows were never meant for the same land or the same age.

If we would build the State upon the broad foundation of intelligence, of reason and of justice, we will leave the school room where it is and broaden and enlarge the functions of the State. But if you expect that through the coming years men and women and children shall be kept in line by the policeman's club, or the fear of the gallows, then we have no room for the school room, the library or the public park.

Gentlemen; the ideal of the State, that it is *not* the policeman, that it is *not* the jail, that it is *not* the court house, that it is *not* the police power, is old. It has been indorsed, as I have said, by the wisest and the best men that have ever lived. The wisest and the greatest, and the most humane have lent their energies and their lives to this cause. You may find amongst its believers and supporters, amongst those who have shared this higher ideal of the State, Socrates, Plato, Buddha, Jesus, Hugo, Carlyle, Emerson. The good and great of every age and land have never yet mistaken the police powers of the State for the State itself.

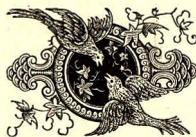
One would think, from some things that gentlemen say of the State, that it is a superior being, standing beyond us, with a club raised above our heads to strike us when it will. One would think it was superhuman. But, gentlemen, it is not. The State is the men and the women and the children who compose it. The State is the good thoughts, the gentle deeds, the worthy actions of all who make it up. The State is you and I and every other individual who lives within it.

The other day I saw some men erecting a building. I looked and thought I beheld the emblem of the State. I saw surrounding the structure as it rose, a scaffolding upon which the workmen stood; a scaffolding which was plainer to the view than all else; a scaffolding made of rough boards and scantling, unattractive to the eye. But within it I saw growing, brick on brick, stone on stone, a magnificent edifice, to be the future home of men and women and children who should live within its walls. I fancied I saw the believer in the doctrine of *laissez faire*, who looking at the building mistook the scaffolding for the structure within; who mistook the rude instrument with which the workmen were enabled to perform their labors for that structure itself, the structure that should shelter from cold and storm, and give comfort and happiness to its inmates; they mistook the rough exterior for the edifice that should be the future home of men and women and little children, giving joy and happiness to those beneath its roof. But for me there was no mistake. I saw the emblem of the State. I saw that scaffolding like the police powers of the present, like the jail and the club and the court house, and the criminal statutes of to-day. I saw its use in building up the grand and beautiful home of

humanity. I looked at it growing toward the heavens, and I said, "How can men make a mistake like this?" I thought that one day when the last stone shall be placed upon it, when the walls shall be frescoed, and the building is complete in all its beauty, then this scaffold will fall to the earth and rot away; and so, gentlemen, the State of the future, that State that has been growing through all the ages of the past; that State which is growing to-day; that State upon which the best men of our race have left their imprint; that State commenced back in the ages when man in his ignorance and weakness first reached out his hand to feel the sympathetic touch of his brother man; which has been growing, day by day and year by year down all the centuries until now; that State will only be complete in the days to come when all the people shall be welded and fused into one homogeneous mass, and when men shall dwell together as harmoniously as the stars pursue their course in the heavens above. In that day when the State shall be complete, when order shall come out of chaos, when no longer the strong and the great shall trample on the weak; when even the smallest and the poorest of these little ones shall have an equal portion, when the State shall be completed, then the scaffolding upon which we have been working, within which we shall have erected this glorious temple, these laws, barbarous as they are to-day, but which enable us to construct the State of the future; this scaffolding will fade away, and the stately structure of the future State will stand in all its beauty, in all its grandeur, in all its perfection, and be the sheltering home of all.



On the other hand a right which all papers seem to assume, to dominate the intelligence of their readers, has not in this country any existence. In Old England the *Times*—the “Thunderer,” they call it—is conceded this right, and people over their lie awake with a splitting headache, and their minds a prey to anxiety, wondering and fearing what the Thunder-r-r-er will have to thunder in the morning. The Thunderer for all of us over here, could go to thunder. It seems strange that people should care much about it. Over here if a paper doesn't say what we think, we invest another cent, and buy a paper that will say it, and say it as if it meant it. If you have money enough you can get a paper to express your views to a nicety, so the street car men tell me.



## WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR CRIMINALS?

BY JUDGE J. P. ALTGELD.

No man can examine the great penal system of this country without being astounded at its magnitude, its costs and its unsatisfactory results. There are in the United States upwards of 2,200 county jails, several hundred lock-ups or police stations; between fifty and sixty penitentiaries, with work-shops, machinery, etc. The first cost of the erection of all these buildings and shops has been estimated at upwards of \$500,000,000, which is dead capital, the interest at 5 per cent upon which sum alone will annually amount to \$25,000,000. To this must be added the sums annually appropriated out of the treasury to feed the prisoners, pay the officers, judicial and executive, and keep up and maintain all of these institutions, which sums have been estimated at upwards of \$50,000,000, to say nothing of the costs paid by the accused; there are in addition to the many thousands of policemen and detectives, about 70,000 constables in this country, and about as many magistrates. There are upwards of 2,200 sheriffs, and in the neighborhood of 12,000 deputy sheriffs. Then come the grand juries, petit juries, judges and lawyers; next the keepers and their numerous assistants for all of these prisons. Making about a million of men, partly or wholly supporting their families from this source, and as I am on the list I may speak with freedom and say that as a rule they are comfortable, are anxious to hold on, and ready to defend the system which gives them and their families bread. As a rule keepers of prisons like to see their prisons well-filled.

A glance at this system almost suggests the question whether society has any other object to care for, or mission to accomplish, than simply to maintain this machinery. Looking at its workings we find that there are in the neighborhood of 75,000 convicts in the various penitentiaries. As the average sentence is about two and a half years the whole number on the average is, therefore, renewed once every two and a half years; so that there are in the neighborhood of three-quarters of a million of men, living in our midst who have had a penitentiary experience. We next see that upwards of 5 per cent of the entire population is arrested by the police and other officials every year; so that there are about three million people

arrested and "run in" every year. Assuming that one-third of them are what are called "repeaters," that is, have been arrested before, it would still leave two millions who are for the first time each year broken into what may be called a prison experience; and yet, notwithstanding the vast army of men employed, the millions annually expended, the numerous arrests, the large number imprisoned, crime is said to be increasing, and our whole penal system is pronounced to be a failure both in this country and in Europe, where they have similar systems.

And the question is asked by thoughtful men: What shall be done? Society must be protected. If the present system is a failure what shall we substitute? It has been but a few years since the general public gave this question any consideration. Heretofore the only remedy ever suggested or thought of was the application of brute force. In all of the past centuries, and in every country on the globe, methods of punishment for the prevention of crime have prevailed which were the embodiment of brutality and of fiendish cruelty. The prisoners were often transformed into either raving maniacs or wild beasts, while the keepers of prisons became fiends in human form; and in all times, and in every country on the globe, this system of human torture was a failure. Brutality never yet protected society or helped humanity. There was a time in England when men were hanged or burned for trivial offences; but instead of deterring, the very shadow of the gallows seemed to produce a crop of fresh offenders, and the glow of human embers invited new victims to the stake.

One difficulty with our system is that it proceeds on the idea of expiation, that is, paying for having violated the law. In feudal times every violation of law was a source of revenue to the feudal lord, or to the king. The fine was paid to him, or whatever penalty was paid, went to him, the more serious of offences being followed by a confiscation of property. The imposition, then, of a fine was one of the means employed by the strong to plunder the weak. Now we have advanced until theoretically we declare that crime should not be a source of revenue, and that it is only for the protection of society that punishment can be inflicted; yet when we come to impose penalties, we proceed upon the theory that if the offender pays for or expiates the violation then that ends all. He can go right on and violate the law a second time and if he pays the penalty all is wiped out. Instead of inquiring into the history, the environment and the character of the offender, and then applying a treatment which will in reality protect society, we simply fix a price upon each infraction, and we treat those who are not vicious, but have been unfortunate, and have been guilty of some slight offence in almost the same manner that we treat the vicious who have been guilty of graver offences; and we put both in a condition in which it is next to impossible for either to make an honest living when they have been once imprisoned.

I desire to consider the subject rather from a practical than from a theoretical standpoint. The first important question that arises when we are brought face to face with the workings of our system, is, where do these people who are arrested, all come from? What is the environment which produces them? As we have not the time to inquire extensively into home

conditions, or the training of the youth, we will start at once at the point where they are first brought to our view, and that is in the Police Court, and we will soon see where they come from.

The report of the Superintendent of Police of Chicago, for the year 1888, shows that in that year the police officers of Chicago alone arrested and carried to the lock-up 50,432 people, 40,867 of whom were males; 9,565 of whom were females. The great majority of them were under thirty years of age; nearly 9,000 were under twenty years of age; a little over 30,600 of them were American born; the others were made up of various nationalities. The same report shows that 10,263 were common laborers; 18,336 had no occupation; 1,975 were house-keepers. Some of you may ask: What were these people arrested for, and what was done with them? Well, the same report shows that upwards of 15,000, or nearly one-third, were discharged in the Police Court, because it was not proven that they had violated any law or ordinance; and out of the whole number arrested only 2,192 were held over on criminal charges. The rest were fined for a violation of some ordinance, generally on the charge of disorderly conduct. The police magistrate having no power to try a charge of crime or grave misdemeanor, it follows that every case of that nature had to be sent to the grand jury; and I repeat that out of the whole 50,000, only a little over 2,000 were held over; and the records of the Criminal Court show that of these more than two-thirds fell to the ground because no offence could be proven.

Bearing in mind that those arrested were young; that they come from the poorer classes, from those who are already fighting an unequal fight in the struggle for existence, I ask you what effect do you suppose the act of arresting them upon the street, possibly clubbing them, then marching them to the lock-up, and shoving them into a cell, what effect did all this have upon the 15,000 who were not shown to have been guilty of any offence, who had violated neither law of God nor statutes of man? They were treated while under arrest as if guilty of highway robbery. Did this treatment strengthen them and make them better able to hold their heads up, or did it tend to break their self respect—to weaken them? Did it not embitter them against society and a system which had done them this wrong? Will they not feel the humiliation and degradation as long as they live; and will that very treatment not mark the beginning in many cases of a downward Criminal career?

But we will follow the subject a little further. You are aware that when a fine is imposed in the Police Court, if it is not paid the defendant is taken to the House of Correction, that is, the Bridewell, which for all practical purposes is a penitentiary. It has for many years been in charge of Mr. Charles E. Felton, who is one of the most experienced and most intelligent prison managers in the United States. In his report for that year, he says: "In the year 1888, the number of prisoners was 10,717. The average daily number imprisoned was 764½. The average duration of imprisonment was but 26 1-10 days. Of the above who were received during the year all save 96 were convicted for petty offences, the executions under which they were imprisoned showing their offence to have been chiefly disorderly conduct, or other violation of municipal or town or village ordi-

nance, mere petty misdemeanors, punishable by fine only, the imprisonment being the result of the non-payment of the fine."

Reflect upon this a moment, 10,717 were imprisoned during the year, and out of this number only 96 were convicted of Criminal offences. The others, in the language of Mr. Felton, were guilty of mere petty misdemeanors, punishable by fine only, and they were imprisoned because they could not pay this fine. Of these 10,717, 1,670 were women and girls.

Speaking of their social relations, Mr. Felton's report says that 2,744 were married; 7,184 claimed to be single; 2,121 had children. It also shows that nearly 4,000 had no parents living; upwards of 1,600 had only a mother living, and 822 had only a father living, showing that one-half were without proper parental supervision.

Several years ago Mr. Fred L. Thompson, Chaplain of the Penitentiary at Chester, Illinois, made a personal inquiry of 500 convicts in regard to their early environment, and the result showed that 419, or upwards of four-fifths were parentless, or without proper home influence before reaching 18 years of age. Also that 218 never had attended school. Mr. Thompson sums up an interesting report in these words: "I have come to the conclusion that there are two prime causes of crime, first: *The want of proper home influence in childhood*, and second, *the lack of thorough well disciplined training in early life.*" I will only add, it is the boy and girl who grow up on the streets, or amid squallor and misery at home, whose path seems forever to wind toward the prison door, and whatever system will train the youth, or will let light into the hovels, cellars and garrets where children are growing up, will reduce the ranks of Criminals.

The fact that all save 96 of the inmates of the Bridewell for that year, were there because they could not pay a fine, shows that they came from the poor, the very poor—the unfortunate. And as they had not been charged with any serious offence, and as the treatment which they got in the Bridewell in 26 1-10 days would not build up or strengthen character; could not educate the mind or train the hand, and inasmuch as the treatment there, as in all prisons, of necessity tends to weaken self-respect, and as all of these had to go out of the prison absolutely penniless and friendless, for they were sent there because they were penniless and friendless, I ask what were these people to do when they came out? What could they do to make an honest living? Take the 1,670 women and girls who were sent there because they had not the money with which to pay a small fine, and had not a friend upon earth to pay it for them, can any of you suggest what they could go at when they were turned out of the Bridewell, and found themselves on the corner of Twenty-Sixth Street and California Avenue? There was absolutely nothing left for them except to go back to their old haunts, go anywhere they could get something to eat, and a night's lodging. And the prison experience they have had only degraded them, weakened them, and sunk them lower into depravity.

The same may be said of the men and boys confined there. The city is full of men who have not been imprisoned, and who during a large part of the year can get nothing to do. It was estimated that this winter there were 60,000 men in Chicago out of employment. This being so, what show

is there for a boy, or a young man, coming out of the Bridewell to earn an honest living? And if imprisonment in the Bridewell has not helped them, but on the contrary, has, as a rule, injured them, wherein has society been benefited by the fact that it imprisoned 10,717 people on an average of 26 1-10 days because they had committed trivial offences? But some of you will ask, well, what have you to suggest? Society must be protected. We must preserve order. To which I reply, unquestionably, society must be protected at all hazards, and we must preserve order and protect life and property. But I insist to begin with, that it is unnecessary to arrest and lock-up people who have committed no offence, merely to preserve order. That the 15,000 who were not shown to have committed any offence in that year should never have been arrested and "run in" by the police; that arresting them neither tended to protect society nor to preserve order, but was a wrong, in many cases, an outrage, for which society in the end must suffer; that the trouble is, that there has grown up in our police force a feeling that their efficiency is to be determined largely by the number of people they run in, which is all wrong. Again, police officers too frequently feel that when they have arrested somebody that it is then incumbent upon them to make a case against him, and hence are reckless in their swearing; so that it frequently happens that juries in Criminal Courts decline to give much credit to the testimony of a policeman. Policemen should feel that their standing is not to be determined by the number of people whom they may happen to arrest, but rather from their ability to preserve law and order; to protect life and property, by making but few arrests.

I am satisfied further that of the 28,000 who were fined in the Police Court, the greater majority had better been let go, the offences being so trivial that in fact it would have been better for society in the long run if no arrest at all had been made.

Then in my judgment, we should adopt here a system which has been in operation in Massachusetts for over ten years, whereby the city is divided into districts, called probation districts, and in each district there is appointed a probation officer, whose duty it is to visit the prison every day in his district; get the name of the prisoner; go to his residence; see his family; acquaint himself, so far as is possible with the history and character of the prisoner, his home influences and general environment, and if it is found that he is not vicious, and if the charge against him is not of such a heinous character as to require that he be confined, the probation officer recommends to the justice or to the judge, as the case may be, that if the accused is guilty, instead of sentence being pronounced, the case be continued from term to term, for the period of a year, sometimes more. This done, he is released; the probation officer assists him in getting employment, where this is practicable, assists him with counsel and advice, keeps a supervision over him for the period of a year, requiring him to report from time to time, and if he does not do well, the probation officer orders him arrested, and he is then sentenced.

This system has been in operation in Boston for upwards of ten years. The city of Boston was divided, as I understand it, into three districts, and

I have here the reports of the probation officers covering a period of ten years. In one district during the year 1888, there were 1,139 prisoners taken charge of by the probation officer. Of this number twelve ran away, or about one per cent. Fifty-two had to be surrendered because they did not do well; but all of the remainder did well, led sober and industrious lives. During ten years in one district, 7,251 prisoners were taken charge of by the probation officer. Of this entire number during the ten years only 107 ran away, a very remarkable fact, which is to be borne in mind in considering the best method of dealing with people who have violated the law. Only a little over one per cent. ran away. Of the 7,251, 473 had to be returned for sentence. All the remainder did well. I will simply say that the results in the other probation districts of Boston were of the same character.

In speaking of the saving to both the prisoner and to society by this method of treatment, the officer reports that had the lowest sentence possible been imposed, the aggregate time of all the prisoners which would have had to be spent in prison during the ten years would have amounted to 1,715 years, which was saved to society and to the accused, while the saving in expense to the public by not imprisoning amounted to many thousands of dollars per annum. The fact of having an intelligent and humane man acting as probation officer, visiting the home of the accused and assisting his family with counsel and advice, can scarcely be over-estimated; in many cases it will save not only the children but also the parents from a criminal career. One of the probation officers of Boston, in speaking of those who were saved from imprisonment in his district, says: "Generally they have since lived good, orderly lives, and have been a blessing to their families, and where they were married kept their homes from being broken up, and their children from being sent to charitable institutions. In many cases they have changed from lives of vice and crime to become good citizens."

If we were to make our system what the law really intends it should be, and that is, protect society against crime, and would put a stop to the practice of arresting and breaking into prison experiences those who have been guilty of no offence, and would, further, put a stop to the practice of running in all who may have been guilty of some trivial offence, and would apply the Massachusetts system of probation in cases where the officer felt it could be safely done, for in many cases it could not be done, we would so greatly reduce the number who would have to be sent to prison that they could then be detained, not for 26 1-10 days in the Bridewell, or from one to three years in the Penitentiary, and not under the conditions that exist now in our prisons, where reformation and instruction is almost an impossibility; but they could be detained until, in the judgment of a competent board, the accused had acquired such habits of industry and had developed sufficient strength of character to go out and make his way in the world; and then he should be assisted in getting a position, so that he would not at once find himself penniless, friendless and homeless. They should be sent to prison on an indeterminate sentence, nearly in accord with the system that has now for a number of years been in vogue in the Elmira prison in the State of New York, where prisoners must remain at

least a year, and can be kept a number of years if in the judgment of the Board it is not safe to let them at large. Here prisoners go through a regular course of instruction, having regular hours of labor, and the treatment is of such a character as is calculated to develop and build up the man. And the management, instead of knowing nothing about the man, as is the case now with us, is put in possession of his whole history, all the information that can be gathered in regard to it, and whenever it becomes satisfied that the man can with safety be given his liberty, the management first secures him employment, and exercises for a period of at least six months a sort of general supervision over him. If he does not do well they can take him back. If he loses his place they assist him in getting another; and if he does well for a period of a year, he is discharged. And at different times men who had been discharged and then suddenly found themselves out of employment, rather than beg or steal, voluntarily came back to the institution and asked to be taken in until they could get another job, and here again, there were scarcely any desertions by those who were on parole.

Under such a system as this, hardened and dangerous Criminals would not be set at liberty every two or three years, as they are now, to go out and prey upon society; but they would be kept confined until they could be safely set at liberty; while, on the other hand, the good intentioned who had got into trouble would not need to be confined behind brick walls until they became hardened, stolid, brutalized and desperate, as is now the case.

In addition to this there should, in my judgment, be given every convict in prison an opportunity to earn something over and above the cost of keeping him. I know this involves difficulties, but none but what can be overcome. He should be not only permitted to earn something, but he should be required to earn something to carry to his credit before he is again set at liberty; so that when he leaves the prison doors he will have something to sustain him for a while; and this should not be paid him at once, but in installments, so that he cannot lose it at once; or if he has a family to support, he not only should be permitted to work but required to earn something while in prison for the support of his family.

You will see by such a system as I have outlined, the number we would have in the end to imprison would be greatly reduced; and these, too, could be so separated that the great majority could be set to work, if necessary, outside of the prison. They could farm; could be made to work the roads; could be made to do any kind of work, because the temptation to desert would then be practically taken away. I must say, however, that the temptation to desert is not so great at any time as many people suppose.

Major McClaghrey, who was for many years Warden at the Joliet Penitentiary, several years ago told me that he was then carrying on a small farm near the Penitentiary and working it with convicts, and they had had no trouble at all upon this point, and that he had repeatedly urged the State to buy him three or four hundred acres, and said if they would do so he could work it with the prisoners, and could raise not only what was needed for his institution, but for other State institutions, and that he had no fear at all of desertion.

If that is true at present, then under a system whereby the prisoner was made to feel that he was doing something for himself, instead of simply wearing his life out for the benefit of some wealthy contractor, very little would need to be feared upon that point, and the number of prisoners who were serving long sentences, and who were considered dangerous, and therefore to be kept at work in the prison, would be so small by the time they were divided up among the various industries which are now carried on inside of the prison, the number in each industry would be so small that we would hear no more about prison made goods coming in competition with free labor. The question of prison labor would solve itself.

We would thus save thousands of boys from a prison experience, and a possible criminal career. We would put an end to the practice of degrading and breaking down women and girls by repeated imprisonments for trivial offences, which never does any good. We would prevent the really vicious and hardened Criminals from being turned loose upon society every year or two. Both the convict and society would be the gainers.



## WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR CRIMINALS?

BY CHARLES E. FELTON.

Thanking you for the compliment of having invited me to address you, and appreciating your wish that I confine my remarks to the time limit—twenty minutes—I will not make an extended introduction.

There is a distinction between sin and crime and misdemeanor; still, an affinity exists between each. Adam sinned; Cain killed his brother—committed crime; and we may have driven a horse across a bridge, in this would-be rapid-transit city, faster than a walk, or on a boulevard at a rapid pace, and subjected ourselves to a liability to imprisonment, had we been arrested, and not paid the fines imposed.

Criminals are born *and* made. Those who were born Criminals are not much at blame. Those who are *made* Criminals are more accountable; still, often, the cause is, the neglect of their parents in caring for and properly developing them in their youthful life. The people, however, must protect themselves against both classes. I remember a child, many years ago, with mother in prison, and not sufficiently aged to creep, who would steal and secrete a thimble or a spool of thread, if placed near by, and your eyes were not watching its action. You would find the article nicely secreted under, or within the folds of, the child's dress. The mother was a shop-lifter, by profession, and was imprisoned three several times, a year each, and had three children born to her while in prison. Topsy like, they were *born* wrong. Later, they were Criminals. Hereditary taint is difficult to eradicate. The proverbial "black sheep" is generally but the reproduction of one of like color "away back," not always. We pay special attention to the breeding of animals, keeping their pedigrees, but none to the breeding of man, regardless of genealogy, or of the effects of our neglect. The result is, with animals, the production of improved stock, for reason of our care; with man, the production of defects—mental, moral, and physical—for reason of our neglect. It is not altogether how the twig is bent, the parental root of the tree must be of the right species. You may improve the shape of an oak; but even by grafting, it will not produce the lusciously-flavored tropical orange. Nor will the orange tree, in an unfavorable climate or environment, produce acceptable fruit. Apply this to man.