

Chancellor MacLean.

Judge Dundy continued to the May term all the criminal cases not otherwise disposed of, before the federal court commenced its session in this city. So I did not answer before Judge Shiras this week to the charge of "impeding the course of justice." Prior to this Judge Dundy dismissed the order re-

quiring me to show cause why I should not be attached for contempt. At the outset Judge Dundy was for packing me off for Sioux Falls forthwith. The extension of the time during which I may enjoy equal privileges with Mr. Outcalt as a free man, is, it is needless to say, most warmly appreciated.

THE EDITOR.

THROUGH COLORED GLASSES

In the January Nineteenth Century there appears by far the strongest magazine article of the month,—"The Ugliness of Modern Life," by Ouida. The article is marked by pessimism and even hopelessness,—but it is the pessimism and hopelessness of a stern reality. It draws vivid contrast between the life of man today, and the life of man in other ages. It shows him today as a mere peg in an immense machine,—the machine of commercialism, of money-getting. It tells how men, thousands and millions of them live and eat and sleep and die—and nothing more. How they live pent up in great ugly tenement houses, with no sight of the clear sky and green fields of smiling nature. It tells how all aestheticism, all beauty, all soul is being bartered for a mess of pottage,—for pounds and shillings and dollars and cents. It recites the hopelessness, the slavery of the workman's life, and tells of the tightening bands which year by year bind him closer to a life of subjugation.

All this it contrasts with the beauty and color and animation,—with the naturalness, of mediaeval and ancient life. It tells of wayside shrines and bands of pilgrims, of spinning wheels and oaken chests, of the cobbler sitting placidly in his doorway, independent and free, in the glad sunlight communing with nature and loving the world,—all gone, and forgotten. Gone, and replaced by the ugliness and hopelessness of today.

I quote from the closing paragraphs: "Is the end worth the means?"

"Is modern trade in truth such a god-head descended on earth that all the loveliness of earth and air, of sky and water, should be sacrificed to its demands?"

"We hear ad nauseam of the gains of modern life, of what is called civilization; does no one count its costs? It might be well to do so. It might act as a corrective to the inane self worship which is at once the most ill-founded and the most irritating feature of the age. Perhaps other ages have in turn adored themselves in like manner, but there is not in history any record of it. Its prophets, heroes, sages, each age has either admired or execrated; but I do not think any age has so admired itself as the present age, which has its prototype in William of Germany standing between two sand banks, and thinking himself greater than Alexander because his engineers have succeeded in cutting for him a ditch longer than usual....."

"Every invention of what is called science takes the human race further and further from nature, nearer and nearer to an artificial, unnatural and dependent state,

"One seems to hear the laugh of Goethe's Mephistopheles behind the hiss of steam, and in the tinkle of the electric bell there lurks the chuckle of glee with which he sees the human fools take as a boon and a triumph the fatal gifts he has given.

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? What shall it profit the world to put a girdle about its loins in forty minutes when it shall have become a desert of stone, a wilderness

of streets, a treeless waste, a songless city, where man shall have destroyed all life except his own, and can hear no echo of his heart's pulsation save in the throb of an iron piston.

"The engine tearing through the disembowelled mountain, the iron and steel houses towering against a polluted sky, the huge cylinders generating electricity and gas, the network of wires cutting across the poisoned air, the overgrown city spreading like a scurvey, devouring every green thing like locusts-haste instead of leisure, miasma instead of health, mania instead of sanity, egotism and terror instead of courage and generosity,—these are the gifts which the modern mind creates for the world. It can chemically imitate every kind of food and drink, it can artificially produce every form of disease and suffering, it can carry death in a needle and annihilation in an odor, it can cross an ocean in five days, it can imprison the human voice in a box, it can make a dead man speak from a paper cylinder, it can transmit thoughts over hundreds of miles of wire, it can turn a handle and discharge scores of death dealing tubes at one moment as easily as a child can play a tune on a barrel organ, it can pack death and horror up in a small tin can which has served for sardines or spotted herrings, and leave it on a window sill, and cause by it towers to fall and palaces to crumble, and flames to leap up to heaven, and living men to change into calcined corpses; all this it can do and much more. But it cannot give back to the earth or to the soul the sweet mild freshness of the morning."

In all of this, despite its pessimism, there is food for wholesome thought. For it is true. And more than that,—for all its horrors, it tells but a half truth. It tells of loss of beauty and loss of independence,—but it only hints of the awfulness of physical and moral degeneration. It does not tell how the festering evils which were formerly but the trade marks of "nobility"—Heaven save the mark!—are today the common traits of the common people. It does not more than mention the spread and awful growth of scrofula—and of that which is worse and more shameful by far than scrofula. The horrors of madness, paresis, steadily growing, are but hinted at. The awful sickening decline of manly strength and vigor and of womanly fitness,—the "Mene-Tekel, Upharsin" scrawled on the walls of humanity's Temple of Hope,—of this the article tells but little.

And of moral degeneration,—worse even than physical, because its cause, more is hinted than said. Yet a sentence tells it all. The purity which was once the portion of young manhood is lost and gone. All the imps of hell and infamy are sapping the vigor and destroying the manhood of the future,—and in Lincoln, as well as elsewhere, they pay the people, or the people's representatives for the privilege. Judas who sold his Saviour for thirty pieces of silver and then had the good grace to hang himself, was pure in the sight of God when compared to the people of today who sell their children's purity and moral character and utilize the proceeds to teach drawing and the mul-

tiplication table. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul."

H. E. NEWBRANCH.

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