

...Lorenz and His Methods...

So much attention has been directed to the doings of Dr. Lorenz, the Vienna surgeon, that The Commoner readers may be interested in a description of his methods printed in the New York Press and written by Victor Smith. Mr. Smith's article is as follows:

Some call him LO-RENZE, some LO-rens, some LAW-rens, some LAH-rents, some Lah-RENTS. It makes no difference. The Viennese is no giant. I expected to see a Goliath. He was a very tender little street Arab, playing the violin for crowns and florins. The exercise of fingering the strings must have given his left hand its power of manipulation in bloodless surgery.

In his immaculate white toga he looks less like a butcher than many eminent masters of the scalpel and saw. His arm, bared to the elbow, is brown and hairy. His wrist is flat and broad, a wrist for strength. His hair, once reddish-brown, genuinely Cisleithan, is fringed with white. His beard is not nearly so big and bushy as it appears in his pictures. His modest habit of looking down has given his neck a forward set and his shoulders a stoop. He is neither imposing, impressive nor commanding.

You would not turn to look at him a second time in the street. In the operating theatre 400 eyes critically observed him. The benches, made of structural steel, slate and gaspipe, are in tiers so steep that their occupants presented an almost vertical wall of faces.

A few well-gowned, middle-aged women were there, besides half a dozen clean-cut, white-capped, white-aproned nurses. The visiting women may have been doctresses. Dr. Virgil P. Gibney, who is as strong as a bull moose and as hardy as a red roller in a steel mill, made a bluff and hearty master of ceremonies. When he escorted Dr. Lorenz into the pit there was an enthusiastic round of hand-clapping, which being ended, he said swinging his arm in a half circle: "Gentlemen (and ladies): HE needs no introduction!" Dead silence followed. The good doctor had almost overlooked the women. Dr. Lorenz addressed "Gentlemen" only, taking no notice of the women.

After a short preface he read from a formidable mass of typewritten copy. Dr. Lorenz's first subject was brought in upon a table by two white-robed attendants and transferred from that to the operating table. It looked like a corpse of a little girl. Her hair seemed very black and her skin very white, excepting her face, which was flushed. Her stertorous breathing beneath the ether cone, held by a young doctor, indicated the fast approaching end of her struggle against the anesthetic. Presently, with a sigh, she passed into that state of temporary death which knows no pain. Then Dr. Lorenz, remarking quietly, "Gentlemen, we have no time to lose," laid down his manuscript and set to work.

At times I felt like shooting the Viennese. It was beyond my belief that a delicate, crippled, sick child could hold together under the fierce twisting, bending, stretching, hauling,

crushing and wringing of two powerful men—Lorenz and Mueller. It was like a breaking on the wheel. It was like a crucifixion. To follow the demonstration required every ounce of moral courage and will power that I possess. And those critical surgeons sat there with happiness lathered on their faces. Fifty of them were past 45; the rest, about 150, were between 25 and that age. To look at them you would have believed them capable of more concern at a cat fight.

Dr. Lorenz speaks fair English, but is hard to follow. His demonstration was tedious because of his effort to explain the minutiae of every detail. His thirty minutes seemed as many hours to me, because I feared he might kill the baby. At last the climax. Did you ever try to break a hambone across your knee, or across a billet of wood? There was a round-edged piece of maple on the table, about the size of a brick. When the child's hip was placed upon this, and Dr. Lorenz, one hand on the abdomen, the other on the thigh, laid all of his 195 pounds thereon, it was evident that something must give way. Even those blasé surgeons leaned forward expectantly and ceased for the moment looking so weary and satiated. Then came to every ear a sound as of a man throwing his ankle out of joint, and we all knew that the poor little cripple's awful deformity was cured. The head of the femur had entered the cup-shaped cavity of the acetabulum, which had been denied it since birth. And those surgeons who looked so tired of life actually clapped hands and said "Bravo!"

Dr. Lorenz could have finished the demonstration in five minutes had he so desired. But the labor is terrific. It is a simple matter of hands and fingers and weight. The Viennese was greatly exhausted. It makes an ordinary person feel queer to see this man correct in a few minutes deformities that have existed for years, and that by the mere "laying on of hands!" The Viennese is no hypnotist, mesmerist, or worker of miracles. He pretends to no divinity. But wouldn't you rather have his hands than all the millions of little old Carnegie?

Dr. Mueller works like a Trojan and seems never to tire. His enthusiasm never flags. The instant Dr. Lorenz's hands drop after the completion of the diarthrosis Dr. Mueller summons half a dozen nurses and proceeds to place the subject in plaster. His method is a liberal education in the plastic art. His rapidity is a marvel. The poor little thing's legs and body are hermetically sealed, so to speak, the limbs nearly at right angles to the body, in which position they are to remain for six or seven months. How on earth the child recovers from the bruising and awful discoloration of the tissues is to me a mystery. If I were so abused my sufferings would be acute for many days—without plaster. Imagine your pain in a vise! Gods! Imagine the anguish of a child on recovering from the ether and its utter helplessness in suffering!

Before the plaster sets Dr. Mueller cuts certain openings with a hook-billed knife, and does it with so free a hand that I tremble lest the blade go too deep and butcher the child. But he knows his business. He is a master workman. Dr. Lorenz explains, while the plaster is being put on, that the child will be able in a few weeks to amuse itself by pushing across the floor a small table or chair on rollers sitting on either and using the feet as propellers. I suppose that is nearly the limit of amusement for months. Above the belt its move-

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Dr. Lorenz has all along insisted that a patient who had been successfully treated should be instructed to walk without crutches, so that the limb could get a chance to develop naturally as soon as possible and sustain its own weight. He thinks too much dependence can be placed on crutches, and while demonstrating yesterday he told a story.

"When I was in Salt Lake City," he said, "I was called downstairs in the hotel to see a case. There sat a girl about 16, weeping, and an older brother was also in tears. I asked what the trouble was, and she said that two years ago she fell and hurt her hip and had had to use crutches ever since. I examined her later in a hospital and found not the slightest trace of injury. She had pain when she fell, two years before, and started to use crutches, and after that imagined she couldn't get along without them. I threw them away and told

her to walk and she did. That is the only miracle I have performed in America."

Indecent Politics.

The high rates imposed by the Dingley act have had the excuse of being made so for purposes of trading in reciprocity. But now that they are well fastened upon the country, modification through reciprocity is denied. This is not statesmanship. It is not even decent politics. It is trickery of a pretty low order. The so-called friends of the tariff can be depended on never to revise it except in an upward direction. Revision will have to come, if at all, through the so-called enemies of the tariff, who, after all, are likely to prove its best friends.—Springfield Republican.

Those who are most likely to forget favors already granted never fail to bear in mind the favors they expect to receive.