

CURRENT TOPICS

JOHN BURROUGHS, writing in Harper's Magazine, disputes the claim that any of the lower animals is capable of thought. After recounting many interesting tests, Mr. Burroughs said: "Animals have keen perceptions—keener in many respects than our own—but they form no conceptions, have no powers of comparing one thing with another. They live entirely in and through their senses. To all that inner world of reflection, imagination, comparison, reason they are strangers. They never return upon themselves in thought. They have sense memory, sense intelligence, and they profit in many ways by experience; but they have not soul memory or rational intelligence. All the fundamental emotions and appetites men and the lower animals share in common, such as fear, anger, love, hunger, jealousy, cunning, pride, curiosity, play; but the world of thought and thought experience, and the emotions that go with it, belongs to man alone. It is as if the psychic world were divided into two planes, one above the other—the plane of sense and the plane of spirit. In the plane of sense live the lower animals, only now and then just breaking for a moment into the higher plane. In the world of sense man is immersed also; this is his start and foundation; but he rises into the plane of spirit, and here lives his proper life. He is emancipated from sense in a way that beasts are not."

ACCORDING to a statement made by Dr. Thomas Darlington, commissioner of health, the city of New York loses \$23,000,000 annually through tuberculosis. Speaking before the summer school conducted by the New York charity organization society, Dr. Darlington said: "Estimating the value of a single life at \$1,500—not necessarily a high estimate—and taking only those lives between 16 and 45 years, the loss of life in this city alone from tuberculosis mounts up to the startling sum of \$23,000,000 annually. The general sanitary conditions are still bad in New York, and the inflow of immigrants, who must be educated in right living, is constantly increasing."

THE medical officer of the London, Eng., school board has made an interesting report, in which he points out that "word deafness" and "word blindness" are two remarkable defects found among the school children. This officer recommends the creation of special schools for defective children where speech of a normal kind is taught and where clear articulation is insisted on. The London correspondent for the Chicago Inter Ocean quotes from this officer's report as follows: "To a considerable number of children reading and writing beyond the most rudimentary attempts seem almost impossible of acquirement. Many of these have marked mental feebleness; others seem scarcely amiss in many respects. The want of literary ability is probably more general than is supposed. There are many cases of inability to recognize words, or to spell anything like the words dictated, while at the same time the child has fair to good faculties in other respects, such as mental arithmetic."

SOME typical cases are given by the London medical officer and there are described by the Inter Ocean correspondent as follows: "The following lines were dictated to a boy who can do any ordinary arithmetic, but is totally word blind: 'The drinks were ale and mead, drinks which were made in dark English forests with fermented honey.' The boy wrote as follows: 'la hase us erans and krsut erans was locts boath in hast Enitsh lous ins harest lacnt.' Three years later, when earning 18 shillings a week, this boy correctly wrote in arabic figures the sum £583,121 2s 11 3-4d from dictation. When asked to write the sum in words, he wrote: 'Soed oein dnuted edboth snita anerount,' signed his name, 'Ted Smith.' Another reads: 'It has three birds in it' as 'To see—best in to.' He mistakes the letters C and S constantly. He quickly and correctly does difficult sums in mental arithmetic, and can describe with great minuteness any scene he has witnessed; his memory is only bad for word symbols. His intellectual processes are carried on entirely in pictures, and the visual word center seems entirely wanting. Another boy, who does his school work well and can draw, 'letter blind,' and can not tell a single letter

in his name. A fourth has a wonderful faculty of observation and excellent reasoning powers, but can not remember how to make the signs 1, p, 7 and 9.

REPRESENTATIVES of the packing house strikers at South Omaha have said that if the strike continues much longer and the packers obtain from the federal courts extraordinary writs against the strikers, that the latter will insist upon an enforcement of the criminal clause of the anti-trust law. A newspaper dispatch from South Omaha under date of July 26, says: "Union men of South Omaha will have their day in court from the present indications. Before bloodshed begins they will use the law, if possible. There are strong reasons to believe that the union men will endeavor to enforce the criminal clause of the anti-trust law and prevent the packers from further raising the price on their products. This movement, if seriously intended, is being made quietly and with the utmost precaution. That it is contemplated is a certainty, for within the last twenty-four hours representatives of the independent packing house movement have been in the city conferring with the strike leaders and their friends."

GOVERNOR MURPHY of New Jersey recently complained that other states than New Jersey were making bids for the organization of trusts. As is well known, New Jersey is the home of the great trusts, the laws of that state being framed so as to make a trust organization decidedly easy, and comfortable for the organizers. A writer in the Boston Globe says that even Massachusetts is showing a disposition to rival New Jersey. The Globe writer adds: "The amount of stocks and bonds incorporated in New Jersey consolidations seem almost incredible. At least 25 consolidations could be mentioned, involving an avowed capital of nearly \$2,500,000,000, which have been formed since Jan. 1, 1899, and only those are included that have \$10,000,000 or over of capitalization. No reference has been made to such concerns as the Amalgamated copper company, with a capital of \$75,000,000; the American woolen company, with a capital of \$65,000,000, or the American cycle company, with a capital of \$80,000,000. In fact the total capitalization which has been consummated in that state would be almost past finding out."

THE organization of a trust in New Jersey is a very simple affair. The New Jersey methods are described by a Boston Globe writer in this way: "Five wealthy men from Wall street can go to New Jersey and announce that they have a patent worth untold millions. They then can issue, after incorporation, stocks and bonds upon their own rating of their own property. The real value of their patent may be but \$40, but as long as they say it is worth \$40,000,000, it has to go for that. They have an arrangement in that state known as the 'annual franchise tax.' Stripped of all subterfuge this device means that if a trust is once organized and wishes to continue business, it can do so by paying a beggarly few thousand dollars yearly into the New Jersey state coffers, through the franchise tax clause in the state's incorporation laws."

IT IS pointed out by this same authority that the policy of dealing gently with the corporations is nothing new in New Jersey for men as far back as 1791 went to that state for incorporation. No less a personage than Alexander Hamilton is said to have organized in 1791 a corporation called "the contributors to the society for the establishment of useful manufactures," with the modest capital of \$1,000,000. The ball thus started has been rolling ever since. It is further shown that the trusts pay nearly all the expenses of the commonwealth and that even the courts appear to aid legislation favoring the trusts. Pointing out that other states have gone into the trust business, the Globe writer asks: "When will an aroused national intelligence make all states ashamed to loose these bogus and predatory corporations upon their helpless neighbors?"

IN THE federal court at Omaha, the attorneys for the packing house strikers applied to Judge Munger for a modification of the restraining order. Judge Munger declined to make the

modification, but explained: "Orders are often construed to different purposes. But in law they must be construed as applying to the language of the bill of complaint. This order is not to prevent anyone from doing anything he has a legal right to do. I do not think there is anything in the order, which if properly construed contains anything objectionable. There is nothing in it which prohibits a lawful gathering or meeting ordered for the legitimate duties of peace. The court does not think picketing for observation is unlawful, unless for purposes of violence afterward. The court does not think the law is any different today than it was at the time of the Union Pacific decision. There is nothing in the order that will prevent the strikers from doing legal acts. Nor can it be construed as to prohibiting different unions from acting within their legal rights." C. J. Smyth, attorney for the strikers, says that he regards the order on its face as one of the most sweeping ever issued in the United States. He adds, however, that Judge Munger's explanation has the effect to modify the order so far as concerns its original interpretation. It was announced July 27 that Judge Munger had gone on a fishing trip and attorneys for the packers stated that they had asked that another judge be asked to enforce Judge Munger's order. Of course, it was admitted that the "other judge" would interpret Judge Munger's order and the interpretation might differ considerably from that placed upon it by Mr. Munger himself. The packers claim that the order has been violated by the strikers and that they will probably ask that citations for contempt be issued against a large number of working men at South Omaha.

REFERRING to the claim made by the republican national platform that "a democratic tariff has always been followed by business adversity; a republican tariff by business prosperity," the New York Times presents some interesting reminders. The Times says: "The republican party came into power in 1861; this clearly fixes the period in which the comparison between the republican and democratic tariffs and their consequences must be made. Since that date there have been a half dozen times of great depression in business which were accompanied by enough excitement of the public mind to be called panics. The first occurred in the spring of 1861, and was due wholly to the impending contest with secession. The second occurred in 1866-1867, when the number of failures ran up to 2,780, and the liabilities of failed concerns to \$96,666,000. In 1873 there was a third depression, which has become memorable in our history, when the failures reached 5,183 and the liabilities the then unprecedented amount of \$220,499,900. Five years later there was a fourth interval of stagnation and disturbance, when the number of failures nearly doubled and the liabilities again increased, this time to \$234,383,182. In 1884 the fifth depression caused the record of failures to reach almost the same figures. Finally in 1893 we had the appalling total of failures at 15,542 and the total liabilities at \$346,779,889."

COMMENTING upon the above showing, the Pittsburg Post says: "We are glad to see special attention called to the situation in 1877, the most disastrous of all, for it is well remembered in Pittsburg. It was the year of the railroad riots and general strikes. It was the year the state was covered by a standing army and citizens were shot down in the streets by scores. It was the year of a republican tariff, a republican president, a republican congress and a republican governor and state legislature, as well as a republican panic in business and industrial circles."

THE census bureau of the department of commerce and labor has issued a bulletin relating to the negro population of the United States. From this bulletin facts are compiled by a writer in the Atlanta Constitution as follows: "In the south negroes are about one-third of the population, both in the cities (30.9 per cent) and in country districts (32.6 per cent). Since 1840 the increase in the negro population of the south has been less rapid than that of the white population. During the past decade the negro increase in the country districts was only about two-thirds that of the whites, and five-sixths in the towns. The center of the negro population is in DeKalb