

THE RIGHT TO WORK

BY KINGSLEY MOSES



A PUPIL OF THE JEWELRY CLASS (SHRIVELED LEFT ARM)

THE idea that crippled or physically disabled men and women have a right to profitable employment and an active share in the affairs and pleasures of the world is a conception comparatively new.

Within the memory of the majority of us it was a fact taken for granted that unfortunates injured in industry or disabled by illness must simply drop out of active life. The future of these unfortunates was nobody's business or particular concern; they were simply swept aside. For such of them as happened to have kindly disposed relatives the future was one of supine and more or less uncomfortable dependence; for such as had no kin—well, there were almshouses.

True, so far as financial relief alone was involved, there was in many cases recourse to the law; as, for example, if the employer had been criminally negligent. But the law is often tardy, always expensive, and sometimes oblique in its judgments, and the poorer folk generally have little faith in its workings. But in many other cases there was, under the prevailing industrial code, no ground for

appeal. In cases of illness not directly to be traced to the invalid's daily employment the situation was entirely and pitifully hopeless.

So these discards of society were shunted aside to provide for themselves as best they might. The world moved on and left them helpless, unable to engage in active labor, ignorant of methods by which they might fit themselves for other lines of endeavor, and, worse than all perhaps, filled with bitterness and resentment against a human system that tolerated such conditions. In their own hearts they were thwarted, miserable, and unhappy; and their attitude was naturally reflected by their families. If only from a practical and economic view-point, it was a bad business.

This particular problem has long been realized and agitated by social workers; but, unhappily, the attention paid to social workers—more or less as a result of the sentimentality of the workers themselves—has been rather desultory and spasmodic. There were so many other things to do. So until the close of the war the movement had generally small impetus.

A few cases will illustrate the problem.

A young railway worker in Syracuse, New York, lost his foot in an accident. The boy was paid his legal amount of compensation by the railway. He attempted to develop himself into a singer, since his experience in the local church choir encouraged him to believe that he might make a living by his voice. But voice training is a long and difficult routine. The boy spent his compensation award, and was still unable to cash in on the value of his musical accomplishment. What then?

A coal miner, forty-two years old and illiterate, lost his leg. He had a wife and several children to support. All his life had been spent in and about the mines. That was his world. Naturally, it was not supposed that he could carry on underground, and he was not mentally keen enough to be fitted for any other work. This man's future, then, was not promising.

In New York a young girl of seventeen was an expert in the manufacture of silk lingerie. In a fall she injured her elbow severely, and an X-ray, tardily taken, disclosed an ugly fracture. Careless treatment resulted in a new formation of bone that prevented her bending her arm. She was no longer able to operate her machine.

Martha Kern, as we shall call her, was at eighteen a lifelong cripple from infantile paralysis. She was confined to her home, and even there could get about only on crutches. There seems small chance for a girl with that handicap.

Bessie Young—again for obvious reasons the name is fictitious—had also been a paralytic. She was a rare case; she had the courage to try to earn a living despite her affliction. But training in millinery work had left her unresponsive and uninterested. Again, fond of children though she was, work as a nurse-girl in private families irritated her nervous condition and made her a not desirable helper. She seemed, through the very misfortune of her condition, barred from lucrative and congenial employment.

Another young girl, whose leg had been amputated, began to brood upon her condition, which, as she thought, barred her from the companionship of young people of her own age. She was acutely sensitive about her artificial leg and extremely loth to go out.

Even more difficult was the case of a man adjudged ninety per cent disabled from terrible burns received in a chemical plant explosion. He was absolutely bald; all his hair had been charred away. His left hand was weakened, his right hand so shockingly deformed that he could only grasp articles as one uses a pair of pincers. His face, as a result of the burns, appeared repulsive. It seemed

impossible for him to find employment. People shrank at the sight of him.

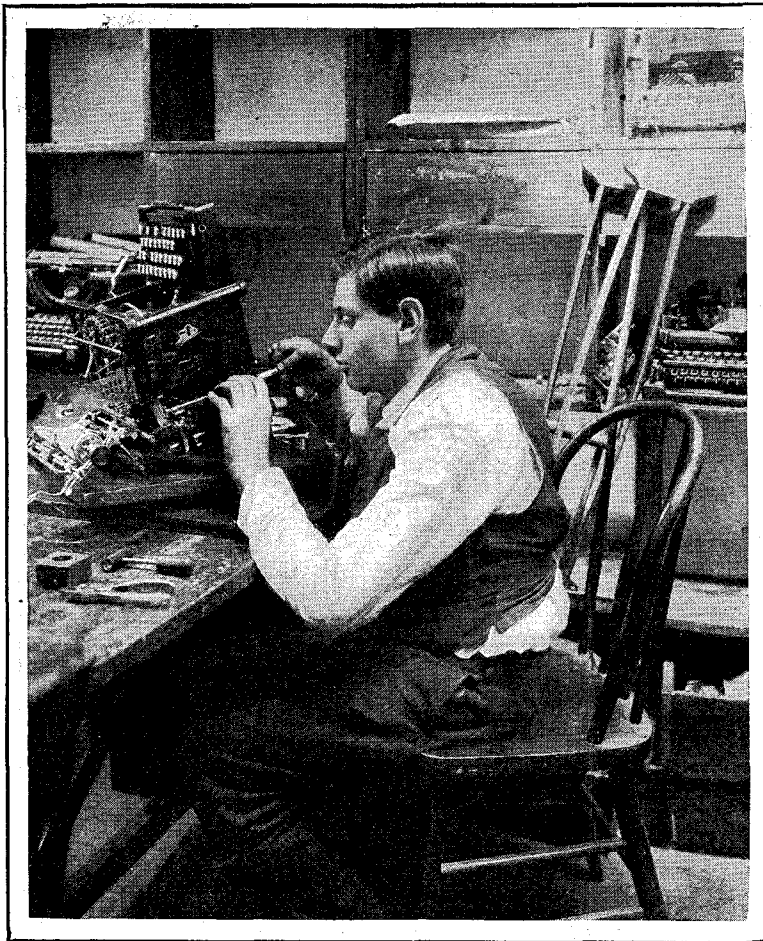
Yet in every one of these cases, through the activities of the men engaged in the work of industrial rehabilitation, a remarkable cure or a material improvement has been effected, and the disabled persons have been restored to profitable and pleasant occupation.

In June, 1920, Congress passed a bill providing for the promotion of the vocational rehabilitation of persons disabled in industry or otherwise and for their return to civil employment. Thus Congress recognized the importance, entirely aside from a Christian or humanitarian point of view, of conserving the country's human resources. People, human beings, were at last to get as much attention as barren tracts of land—for reclaiming useless acres that may prove valuable has long been a worthy and profitable real estate venture.

So, successively, the United States has officially indorsed and provided for: first, vocational education as a regular and normal training for all citizens; second, the obligation to rehabilitate and re-establish its disabled soldiers in civil life; and, third, the conservation of a class which greatly outnumbers our war wounded.

Recognizing the fact that the several States must take a direct financial and intimate interest in this work, Congress wisely provided that a certain sum should be set aside each year for the promotion and maintenance of the project; and that of that sum there should be allotted an amount to each State equal to the amount raised by the State itself. For example, New York provided the sum of \$75,000 and was entitled to \$75,000 more from the Federal Government. In this the Nation has had the co-operation already of more than thirty States of the Union, with the others slowly beginning to follow. California, Indiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, New York, and Pennsylvania are already conspicuous for their activity.

The procedure followed in treating the cases which come to the attention of the State boards is, briefly, first, to determine so far as is possible what the real trouble is with the applicant, and then to discover for what available work the disabled person may best be trained with expectation of reasonable success in that vocation. Very frequently nothing more than a little moral encouragement is needed, and the consequent exercise of the Board in finding the person work. In the cases of the two apparently helpless cripples (the coal miner and the girl embarrassed and self-ostracized on account of her artificial limb) there was, as a matter of fact, no treatment necessary save a little moral bucking up. Taken back into his former employment by the mining company, the middle-aged workman soon learned to get about with almost his old-time agility. And the girl, encouraged privately to dance, discovered that the slow



PUPIL IN TYPEWRITER REPAIR CLASS (HUNCHBACK AND PARALYTIC),
INSTITUTE FOR CRIPPLED AND DISABLED MEN

shuffling which to-day passes as dancing was quite within her powers, took heart, made friends, and is now cheerfully employed as a saleswoman in a pleasant music store.

But in the majority of cases there is a much more serious problem. The sick person has to be cured first, then trained, and finally placed in the right sort of employment.

Too great emphasis cannot be placed upon the latter function of the various boards. Had the young man from Syracuse whose foot was gone been encouraged to persist continuously with his singing, it is extremely dubious whether he could ever have succeeded. Morbid at being a continual drain upon his family and the State, he might easily have lost courage. But, instead of that, when, after training at a barbers' school, he secured profitable employment in that trade, and continued his singing lessons at night, it is easily possible to foresee that he can go on to ultimate attainment.

Then, again, careful scrutiny of the patient's preferences must be given. A hated task is a hard task, badly done. The silk lingerie worker referred to previously loved that sort of labor. Having discovered so much, the Board insisted on treatment for her arm that would return her to the work, where she is now, once more, a success.

The girl we call Bessie Young, who through nervousness resulting from her ailment could not be interested in millinery manufacture or tolerate the exactions of service in a private home, was made perfectly content by employment in a regular day nursery, where at the same time she could exercise her fondness for children and be assured of regular hours and wages. Martha Kern, on the other hand, almost bedridden and incurable invalid though she was, took to millinery work eagerly, and is now not only taking private orders but turning out material for a wholesale house as well.

It is very largely a question of the individual and of careful study of each individual. In the case of the man horribly disfigured from burns neither a return to the old work nor training for some related work was feasible. He was reluctant to mix with his fellow-men because of his appearance; particular and, in a sense, unique occupation had to be hit upon, and then opportunity to engage in that work discovered. Yet even this the Board did, settling the man happily at last in the country, where, with the inheritance of a love for gardening, he was established as a raiser of flowers, which through the co-operation of his wife and young son he was able to sell profitably.

This is the sort of thing that the Rehabilitation Bureaus are doing in those



INFANTILE PARALYSIS CASE TRAINED TO MILLINERY WORK

States which have actually accepted the plan and begun the work. Getting the sick person a job, after first curing him (or her), and then keeping him in the job by co-operation with his employer—that is the foundation of the effort. There is of course much more. Artificial limbs are furnished when necessary; all the required training is given—in some cases even cost of maintenance is paid weekly during the course of training; but most important of all is the choosing carefully of the right type of employment. Without close and intelligent attention to the needs of every applicant all this work might be wasted and profitless. And, sadder even, the roused hope of the sufferer might be dashed so that his subsequent condition would prove more miserable than had been his plight before commencing training.

The Workmen's Compensation Laws, formulated gradually by most of our States and inaugurated in 1912 in those

widely separated localities, Arizona and New Hampshire, quickly followed by Connecticut and New Jersey, provide compensation generally for death or injury resulting from industrial employment, and in the case of injury stipulate the sums payable according to the nature and extent of the incapacity.

But, as Mr. Frederic G. Elton, district director of the work in New York City, points out:

"It is of course pretty generally admitted that compensation does not compensate for an injury; in fact, there is always the danger of destroying the character and work habit of the individual. In making provision only for a monetary consideration to its injured workers the State is not recognizing that the workers are human assets, and that injured workers, like idlers, are liabilities, the maintenance of which devolves upon the State and society.

"Primarily it is necessary to preserve

this contribution and not to permit its decrease. The mere payment of a monetary compensation does not do this. While it may temporarily relieve the individual, it often robs the State of a percentage of the aggregate effort of its citizens, and, as this percentage grows, retards the progress of the State and Nation. Therefore, since it is economically necessary to the progress of the State that the man power be maintained, it would seem that it is an obligation that the State owes to itself to see that each individual when injured is physically and vocationally rehabilitated as far as it is possible, and returned with the least loss of time to his proper place as a worker."

This is the scientific, economic aspect of the endeavor. Its social consequences and possibilities are no less important. In this day of turmoil and in too many quarters in America as well as Europe of violent class hatreds, it is an ill thing to have in any community such bitterly disappointed and thwarted lives as must be the result of negligence in the care of our sick and crippled. The misplaced sympathy of well-meaning friends, self-pity, and ignorance too often turn the crippled man or woman into the devious roads of radicalism. Over-introspective, like Hamlet, they begin to hate themselves and their own maimed and futile bodies. And that hate, like poison gas, spreads out through their immediate families, their friends, and the whole neighborhood. They hold their late employers, their fellow-citizens, the whole of society at large, responsible for their own ailments and misfortunes; and their bitterness inevitably breeds bitterness.

That the movement now so generally adopted and sponsored by the several States as well as by the Nation is appealing to the academic as well as to the business mind is evidenced by Harvard University's inclusion in its summer course this year of a study of rehabilitation, under the joint direction of the University, the National Tuberculosis Association, the American Occupational Therapy Association, the Federal Board for Vocational Education, and the Committee for Mental Hygiene.

The Bethesda of complete physical cure is not always, in this twentieth century of ours, practicable or to be dreamed of; but the peace of mind that has its source in active and agreeable occupation seems certainly to be within the reach of those who have so greatly suffered.

THERE ARE OTHER THINGS BESIDES WRECKED BODIES IN THE WAKE OF MODERN INDUSTRY WHICH NEED REHABILITATION. SOME OF THESE THINGS THE WORLD OF INDUSTRY HAS SET ABOUT MENDING OF ITS OWN INITIATIVE. FOR INSTANCE, BUSINESS ETHICS.

"CLOSING IN ON COMMERCIAL BRIBERY"

IS A FORTHCOMING OUTLOOK ARTICLE WHICH TELLS OF THE PROGRESS WHICH IS BEING MADE TOWARDS THE ELIMINATION OF EVIL TRADE PRACTICES WHICH A FEW YEARS AGO WERE ACCEPTED AS INEVITABLE.

FOR MAISTER GEOFFREY CHAUCER

BY ROBERT HILLYER

A BARD there was, and that a worthy wight,
Who from the time that he began to write
Served God and beauty with an humble mind,
And most of all, he knew and loved mankind.
Laughing he was, and quick at many a jest;
The Lord loves mirth,—the devil take the rest!
A simple grace ere wine was poured at dinner,
A ready hand outstretched to saint and sinner,
A prayer at times, not lengthy but devout,—
This was our poet's faith without a doubt.
Travel he loved, and wonders had to tell
Of royal France and Italy as well,
And everywhere he went, his furtive pen
Took down the secrets of his fellow-men,
Their faces and their stories, high and low,
From lordly Petrarch and Boccaccio

Unto the meanest villein who could hold
Some tavern audience with the tales he told.
Yet with his scrivening, he never swerved
From duty to King Edward, whom he served,
And though he roamed both France and Italy,
England was where he ever longed to be,
And thither he returned with magic spoils
That England might have pleasure of his toils,
And hear his brave chivalric stories sung
By English pilgrims in the English tongue.
Noble his spirit was, and gay his heart;
A judge of wine, a master of his art,
He loved all men, nor was ashamed to show it:
He was a very parfit, gentil poet,
Gentil in life, and parfit in his rhyme,—
God send us such another in our time!

WHY GERMANY FAILS TO PAY

BY JOSEPH DANZIGER

A REFEREE in bankruptcy is constantly called upon to determine whether the bankrupt is willing but unable, or able but unwilling to pay his debts. In arriving at a decision the referee must decide, not only on the financial data at his disposal, but also upon the moral attitude of the bankrupt towards his debtors.

Germany comes to the court of nations pleading insolvency. In attempting to arrive at some standard for judging her ability to pay at least a part of the reparations her political tendencies as well as her economic potentiality must be considered. There are three distinct political currents in Germany, each directed in a separate channel. To the left is a considerable portion of the population which admits the national obligation to pay for deliberate damage done by German militarism. The middle course, representing probably a majority of the population, waives all discussion of moral obligation, but accepts reparations as inescapable. To the right is the channel that offers resistance to any payments under all conditions. It is composed of small but tremendously powerful interests, agrarian as well as industrial and financial. The men who represent this tendency merely wish to do nothing, to pay not a single mark they can evade paying until *der Tag* when America, England, and Japan become involved in a tripartite war. Germany, they say, will then have the opportunity to settle with France alone, and they will fall upon their old western enemy hip and thigh. In the meantime they conceal arms on the landed estates, retain private organizations of armed soldiers more or less secretly, but in public they talk, plead, and stall to gain time and evade any permanent settlement of the question.

Although this latter tendency is not representative of popular opinion, it is powerful enough to obstruct any genuine reconstruction of Germany's internal finances. It is the work of those who seek to make even a partial reparations programme an unworkable proposition. Besides the Junkers, to whom war is a popular game and their social and political privileges the only purpose of society and state, the big financial and industrial interests are equally bent on a policy of immediate inaction. At the head of this aggregation is Stinnes, the coal baron, a silent, saturnine figure, who never appears in public, never expresses a personal predilection. He owns seventy-six newspapers, of every conceivable political complexion from monarchism to single-tax, all of which are unanimous in their pro-Stinnes attitude toward reparations. His rather shabby office on Budapesterstrasse is the radiating center of more driving power than issues from the Reichstag's building. Stinnes is not only absolute dictator of the People's Party, but also a powerful influence in the Center Party. His representative in the Cabinet is Hermes, officially a member of the Centrists' party, but in reality representative of special interests in the amorphous conglomeration known as the Wirth Government. In Greek mythology Hermes was messenger of the gods, titular deity of thieves and merchants; in the German Cabinet Hermes is Minister of Finance and spokesman for Stinnes.

Rathenau, Foreign Minister, represents the financial group opposed to the Stinnes interests.¹ He is a member of the Democratic Party, a small clique of

¹ The assassination of Rathenau by fanatical disciples of Prussianism occurred after this article was written and mailed from Germany.—The Editors.

Berlin business men. One day, when the Wirth Cabinet faced one of its frequent crises, Rathenau visited the Chancellor, demanded his immediate appointment as Foreign Minister or the Democratic Party would refuse to cooperate further with the Government. The appointment was published that very day, and the Democratic Party stuck.

Wirth himself seems to be honest enough. He knows what is needed for a reconstruction of internal finance, but he can only rely on the Social Democrats and the left wing of his own party, the Centrists. All other factions in the heterogeneous coalition oppose any efficient methods for financial reform. Under these political distractions an annual budget deficit is inevitable. It increases from month to month, and the proposed remedies are mere temporizing patches which will ultimately aggravate the evil. The first essential to reparations payments is that Germany shall set her own financial house in order; but to do so would eliminate a conspicuous and specious objection to payments. For this and other reasons that will be referred to later, dominant interests reject all programmes for effective financial reform.

THE ALTERNATIVE WHICH GERMANY FACES

THE German Government can pay no greater amount than it collects from the nation, but if the Government is controlled by interests that refuse to pay even enough to support running expenses the effect on reparations payments is obvious. Every student of economics has had the ancient witticism thrust upon him at some time, that there are only three ways of acquiring wealth: earning it, receiving it as a gift, or stealing it. Conversely, there are three methods for Germany to meet