and lay in bed most of the day. She and another little one slept with the father; the mother and two babies slept in another bed in the same room. The mother earned the living, and in the evening when she came home, the little girl said, "she would just weep and weep." Upon my return I called upon the father and told him how he was endangering the lives of the children by remaining at home, and especially by his extreme carelessness in spitting about the room. I urged him to go to a hospital, but he refused, saying that, as he had to die, he was going to die with his family. The rooms were cold and dark and bare, and I knew what the result would be if he were left to continue at home. Failing in all efforts to persuade him, I urged the Board of Health to compel him; but the Health Board responded by saying that, according to the law, tuberculosis was not an infectious disease and that therefore the man could not be forcibly removed. I remember with what despair I worked for two or three weeks in trying to persuade him to be just and fair to his family. Finally I left the city and was gone for somewhat over two years and a half. Upon my return, I inquired concerning the family from a charity agent who had visited them frequently. She said they were no longer dependent upon charity: they were all dead. One seldom sees a more perfect, nor indeed a more terrible, example of the helplessness of the individual, and of the need of social action, to stop the spread of the disease.

The following measures, if carried out in every part of this country, would stamp out the Plague in twenty years. First, the disease should be declared in all states and in all cities "infectious." Second, there should be compulsory notification of all cases of tuberculosis. The necessity for this need not be argued. The reasons for it have been fully presented by Dr. Biggs and others, and a form of it is in operation in New York City, in Prussia, and in Norway. Third, the advanced cases should be given care in institutions suited to their need. Professor Koch says: "Let their days be made as pleasant as ingenuity can make them; let them in some airy ward, or in an open Liegehalle, receive visits from their friends, even in these last days; but let them go to the grave with the consolation of knowing that they are not handing on a legacy of tragedy to those they leave behind." Fourth, the establishment and maintenance of sufficient sanatoria and dispensaries for the treatment in the earlier stages of every case of consumption. Fifth, careful and complete disinfection of all houses and rooms in which consumptives have died and from which consumptives have been removed, etc., etc.

* Professor Koch says that he sees "no reason why" in England and in Germany tuberculosis should not be banished "from our midst in, say, ten years... without any exorbitant outlay on the part of either State."
Sixth, the construction of decent tenements, and
the destruction, or satisfactory renovation, of every
house known to be a source of infection, the demoli-
tion of "Lung Blocks," and the establishment of
breathing spaces in the poorer districts of the cities.
Seventh, a crusade of hygienic education among all
people and the punishment of promiscuous spitting.

"The Great White Plague" is the result of our
weakness, our ignorance, our selfishness, and our vices;
there is no more need of its existence on the earth
than of the existence of the Great Black Plague, the
plague of typhus fever, the plague of dysentery, the
plague of Asiatic cholera, the plague of leprosy, or
the plague of small-pox. These other plagues have
been driven from the western world, and so, too, will
the Great White Plague have been, when the crusade
against tuberculosis shall have enlisted a larger army
of competent physicians, and of other public-spirited
citizens who will give generously of their time and
wealth to the prevention of this disease; or when, as
in Germany, the state itself and the municipalities in
the state provide the needed sanatoria for the care of
its victims. It will be stamped out when the humane
work of the Tenement House Department and the
Health Department of this city, and of every other
city, is victorious over opponents; when there is es-
stablished in the mind of every one that vital principle
of an advanced civilization, namely, that the profits of
Individuals are second in importance to the life, wel-
fare, and prosperity of the great masses of people. It
will disappear from that community which demands
the destruction of an insanitary tenement regardless
of inconvenience to individuals and which also de-
demands that there shall be no dark and windowless
rooms within its boundaries under any condition what-
soever, as a result of any plea, or as a favor to private
interests great or small.

Tuberculosis has continued so long in the world
because the individual man, and communities made
up of men, thinking individually, cannot in their
hearts appreciate the wickedness and the sorrow
which are both cause and result of the White Plague.
Ruskin truly says: "People would instantly care for
others as well as themselves if only they could
imagine others as well as themselves. Let a child
fall into the river before the roughest man's eyes;
he will usually do what he can to get it out, even at
some risk to himself; and all the town will triumph
in the saving of one little life. Let the same man
be shown that hundreds of children are dying of
fever for want of some sanitary measure which will
cost him trouble to urge, and he will make no effort;
and probably all the town would resist if he did."
When we are told the following story by one who
has worked among the consumptives of our largest
city, and who knows that it is typical of hundreds
and thousands of wretched, poverty-stricken people, have we no incentive to do all that we can, individually and in association with others, to stamp out so devastating an affliction as that of the needless and preventable Great White Plague?

"The Prayer of the Tenement"

"‘Breath—breath—give me breath.’ A Yiddish whisper, on a night in April, 1903, from the heart of the New York Ghetto.

"At 18 Clinton Street, back in the rear tenement, a young Roumanian Jew lay dying of consumption. I had come in with a Jewish doctor. With every breath I felt the heavy, foul odor from poverty, ignorance, filth, disease. In this room ten feet square six people lay on the floor packed close, rubbing the heavy sleep from tired eyes, and staring at us dumbly. Two small windows gave them air, from a noisome court—a pit twenty feet across and five floors deep. The other room was only a closet six feet by seven, with a grated window high up opening on an air-shaft eighteen inches wide. And in that closet four more were sleeping, three on a bed, one in a cradle.

"‘Breath—breath—give me breath.’ The man’s disease was infectious; and yet for two long weeks he had lain here dying. From his soiled bed he could touch the one table where the two families ate; the cooking stove was but six feet from him; the cupboard, over his pillow; he could even reach one of the cradles, where his baby girl lay staring frightened at his strange position. For his wasted body was too feeble to rise; too choked, too tortured, to lie down. His young wife held him up while the sleepers stared silently on, and that Yiddish whisper came over and over again, but now with a new and more fearful meaning. ‘Breath—breath—breath. Or kill me; oh, kill me!’

"Two years ago this man had come to America—one of the four hundred and eighty-eight thousand in 1901. He came young and well and hopeful, with his wife and their baby son. Two more had been born since then. It was to be a new country, a new home, a fresh start, a land to breathe in. ‘Breath—breath—give me breath.’ He had breathed no air here but the close, heavy air of the sweatshop from six in the morning until ten at night. Sometimes—he whispered—he worked on until eleven. He was not alone. In New York to-day and to-night are over fifty thousand like him working. And late in the night when he left the feverish labor, at the hour when other homes are sleeping, he had come in through the foul court and had sunk into restless sleep in the dark closet six feet by seven. There are three hundred and sixty-one thousand such closets in the city. And this was his home."
"'Luft — giebt mir luft.' He spoke only Yiddish. The new country had given the Plague before the language. For the sweatshop and the closet had made him weak; his weakened body could make no fight; the Plague came in and fed swiftly. Still on through the winter he had worked over the machine in the sweatshop, infecting the garments he sewed — feverish, tired, fearful — to buy food and coal, to keep his 'home' alive.

And now, on this last day of life, ten times he had whispered to his brother, begging him to care for the wife and the three little children.

"The struggle now is ended. The home is scattered. The smothered whisper is forever hushed. 'Breath — breath — give me breath.' It speaks the appeal of thousands."

Unquestionably the responsibility, whether for the sanitary conditions of the tenements, the sanitary conditions of the workshops, or for the rendering of industrial processes less dangerous, is definitely a social one. The individual alone is powerless. Fevers and plagues will continue to afflict mankind until the community itself is aroused to demand wise and humane legislation, providing for the most thorough preventive measures. The individual cannot make laws for the community; he is very greatly dependent upon the common water supply; he is dependent upon the action of the community to insure to him and to others pure air, an abundance of light, cleanliness of streets and surroundings, the provision of good sewerage and efficient plumbing. Society must protect him from poisonous vapors and odors, arising from decomposing animal and vegetable matter and from offensive trades, such as slaughtering, etc.; he must depend upon the sanitary authorities to prevent adulteration and to guarantee to him and to others pure food. The sanitary authorities alone can prevent dangers to health from those insanitary conditions arising as a result of street excavations, privies, stables, accumulated garbage and dead animals. The community alone has the power to compel an individual to keep the tenement he owns in a wholesome and sanitary condition; it alone can legislate and it alone can enforce sanitary conditions in mines, workshops, and factories. The individual of the present day is dependent upon society for all of these preventive, sanitary measures. Whatever may be the weaknesses in socialism as applied to industry, socialism is now demanded by every one to protect the health of the community and to make wise and far-reaching provisions for the physical welfare of all the people.

There is now a pretty general realization of the necessity for social action to stamp out disease whenever it is epidemic and to employ preventive
measures whenever a disease threatens to become epidemic. Social action has already extinguished a long list of epidemic diseases which in former times caused a dreadful mortality. The great epidemic diseases of the Middle Ages, which destroyed nations almost, have been exterminated. Cholera, typhus fever, small-pox, and dysentery have been so reduced that they now affect but small numbers of people. Even yellow fever has been reduced and can be practically stamped out by proper sanitary measures. A reduction, within the last few decades, in the number of deaths due to tuberculosis is one of the striking achievements of modern sanitary science. All of these diseases are contagious or infectious, and, perhaps for that reason more than for any other, the community has been spurred to lively and associated action. There is still, however, a formidable list of preventable diseases, such as scarlet fever, diphtheria, measles, whooping-cough, and summer diarrhoea, which cause widespread sickness. In addition to the crusade against these forms of sickness, the prevention of accidents in industry and of certain diseases resulting from dangerous trades and insanitary homes and work-places are fields of promise for the sanitary and for community action. These latter forms of sickness are, however, not as a rule contagious or infectious, and therefore reform moves slowly, held back as it is by the many obstructions set in its path by selfish landlords and manufacturers. Such greed is plainly responsible for high death rates and for much sickness and poverty.

Unnecessary disease and death are mainly active in bringing misery to the working classes and especially to those in poverty. The well-to-do classes are relatively free from preventable, disease-producing conditions of work and of living. It is questionable whether, in the long run, the well-to-do classes, who own the tenements, the mines, and the factories, are really adding to their profits by resisting sanitary improvements, and by refusing, whenever possible, to remedy conditions which undermine the health and increase the death rate of the working people. To put it upon this criminally low commercial basis, even that is questionable. An increase of population is profitable to the owners of tenements; they see this very clearly when they support, as some of them do, unrestricted immigration. A large immigration means an increasing demand for tenements; but so does a decreased death rate. And yet, for the sake of profits, they often support unrestricted immigration and oppose measures for decreasing the death rate. The cost of sickness, now a loss to both landlord and tenant, might go toward an increased rental for a more sanitary tenement. The financial burden of sickness
is considerable even among well-to-do people. The workmen, with their smaller purses, must bear far heavier burdens. But the loss to the world of productive laborers, and the financial loss by sickness, are after all as nothing compared to the crime of unnecessarily and unconcernedly adding to the number of widows and to the number of the fatherless.

The entire matter sums itself up very easily. In the first place, we put property before human life; we unconsciously estimate it more highly and foster it more tenderly; we do it as individuals and we do it collectively. The railroads consider the Block System of signals and automatic couplers unwarranted luxuries because profits are valued more than the lives of the workmen. "The sanitary improvements which this law forces on us will ruin us," the landlords and manufacturers say, when a law is proposed to remedy the insanitary conditions of home and workshop. They will not, of course. Such laws never have, although many of the most important sanitary measures of the last hundred years have been opposed on these grounds. But suppose they did? Must we then withdraw our sanitary measure and continue to sacrifice certain human beings in order that other human beings may make profits? A few years ago I urged that a certain tenement be destroyed because it was vile and insanitary and caused about eight unnecessary deaths every year. An officer answered my complaint in these words: "To demolish this tenement would do a great injury to the widow woman who owns it. It is her only property." Now murder is murder — whether the killing is done by a tenement or carbolic acid, whether in hatred and revenge or in cold blood, for a certain price or for profits, for the benefit of a rich man's purse or for the last crust which a widow may ever hope to have. As I understand it, THOU SHALT NOT KILL admits of no exceptions. It applies to the man who makes profits by the killing as truly as it applies to the hold-up man.

This evil, as indeed most evils, is rooted in the old, old sins and in the old, old crimes. They are merely in new guises. Murder, Adultery, and Thiev-ery have so disguised themselves that we do not recognize them. No one can help knowing that sickness is caused by vile tenements, by dangerous employments and insanitary workshops; every one must know also that much poverty and misery inevitably result from unnecessary sickness; furthermore, no one can fail to know that an excessive number of deaths occur among the work-people employed in certain industries and living in certain tenements. The cause and effect are clear. Then why does not the owner or employer remedy the cause of the sickness, poverty, and death? "He
probably does not know it exists," is the ordinary answer. But it is no answer. Attempt to remedy the evils by legislation, or by enforcement of the laws, and then you begin to realize that you are in a fight, and that, for one reason or another, the landlords and employers are against you. Every movement you make is watched and attacked. Even bribery will be used to defeat sanitary measures; that is to say, measures to save life. Now the conclusion one is forced to draw from an experience of that sort is not a pleasant one, but the logic by which one reaches the conclusion seems clear and certain. These men are murderers.

Mr. Jacob A. Riis says, "You can kill a man with a tenement as easily as you can kill a man with an axe." But in the one case there is no concern. The newspapers do not mention the murder and no one is indicted or sent to prison. In the other case the whole town is more than likely to be in a fever of excitement. By preventing legislation, or by using influence or bribes to prevent enforcement, a man may kill thousands of human beings and still be considered perfectly respectable; he may remain a member of the best uptown clubs, and free to go on repeating his crimes; but Heaven help the man who uses the axe! We are deceived by the use of new methods in killing. One is a social method for the sake of profits; the other the use of individual physical force. It would seem as if we had arrived at the point where a social act may be understood. Almost every important act to-day is a social act and the most important crimes are social crimes. Ruskin has put the whole matter into powerful words: "A great nation, for instance, does not spend its entire national wits for a couple of months in weighing evidence of a single ruffian's having done a single murder; and for a couple of years, see its own children murder each other by their thousands or tens of thousands a day, considering only what the effect is likely to be on the price of cotton, and caring nowise to determine which side of battle is in the wrong. Neither does a great nation send its poor little boys to jail for stealing six walnuts and allow its bankrupts to steal their hundreds or thousands with a bow, and its bankers, rich with poor men's savings, to close their doors 'under circumstances over which they have no control' with a 'by your leave'; and large landed estates to be bought by men who have made their money by going with armed steamers up and down the China Seas, selling opium at the cannon's mouth, and altering, for the benefit of the foreign nation, the common highwayman's demand of 'your money or your life,' into that of 'your money and your life.' Neither does a great nation allow the lives of its innocent poor to be parched out of them by fog
fear, and rotted out of them by dunghill plague, for the sake of sixpence a life extra per week to its landlords; and then debate, with drivelling tears, and diabolical sympathies, whether it ought not piously to save, and nursingly cherish, the lives of its murderers." 1

These are terrible words, and we are just awakening to their awful truth. We ourselves, and especially our penal laws, put most things on an individualistic basis, because our thoughts, our moral principles, and our laws have been moulded in an individualistic society which has largely passed away. Only an individual man killing an individual man, or an individual stealing from an individual, or an adulterer injuring an individual, is censured and punished. The injustice lies in the killing, the stealing, or the degradation of a human being, and not in the method by which it is done. The evils of gambling are not less evil because a "public service" corporation makes it possible, nor is killing less terrible because it happens in a Southern cotton-mill owned by Northern capital, or in a tenement owned, but perhaps never seen, by one of our wealthiest citizens. Public property obtained by grab-bills, or by bribery, is not less stolen property than the revenue of a pickpocket. A man who causes adultery by paying his working-girls starvation wages, which must be increased, if in no other way, by sin, is not less

injurious to the community than the procuress. I do not believe that the mass of the men who are responsible for these things know what they are doing. But most of our present-day social ills are due to these old sins and old crimes masquerading in unfamiliar guise.

This loss of life, so much of which is unnecessary, these heavy burdens which sickness lays upon the wage-earning classes in particular, and this bitter poverty of the widows and the fatherless, which follows so often upon sickness,—these are things which point to terrible social crimes and also fortunately to remedies which are immediately at hand and obvious.