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EDITORIAL

## IN WHAT THE PROGRESS CONSISTS.

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**S**OME folks, with their eyes upon the trials and tribulations of the workers, together with the brutality of the idlers, rashly conclude there has been no real progress made in the world. They are substantially wrong. As the day approaches for the wedding of Miss Theodora Shonts, the heiress of the multimillionaire Clover Leaf Railroad, Panama Canal, and now Traction Company “Captain of Industry” Theodore Shonts, incidents crowd to the front that give a color to the views of the pessimists—and simultaneously reveal where the pessimism is misplaced.

The noble swain who is attracted by the million charms of the Shonts heiress, is the Duke of Chaulnes. The present Duke is a lineal and worthy descendant of the old Duke of Chaulnes, who, under Louis XIV. was the genius of the manoeuvres that, first, deceived the bourgeois and peasantry, then in revolt against the cruel exactions of the Crown, to lay down their arms with promises of immediate redress, and, immediately upon the disbandment of his dupes, who did not believe it possible that “so distinguished a man as the Duke of Chaulnes could so basely deceive them,” fell upon them and massacred them ruthlessly. In the language of a contemporary historian: “Whole provinces were turned into cemeteries, and, along the roads, one could see almost as many gibbets as trees.” The fusion of the worthy descendant of the aristocratic butcher of the seventeenth century with the daughter of the parvenue plunderer of modern days would seem to indicate that progress, if it exists at all, is too microscopic to deserve consideration. In so far as the fusion of the two stocks is concerned, the pessimists are right. They are wrong because they do not consider all the facts in the case.

Here is just one, out of many. When the Duke’s sister, the Duchess of Uzes, landed in this city on the 11th instant, she was compelled to undergo an experience

unimaginable in the days of her seventeenth century ancestor. Think of a sister of the arrogant and blood-thirsty old Duke of Chaulnes, loaded with heirloom jewelry with which to prink herself at the wedding of a brother of hers, held up by plebian officials, and made to show why she should not pay duty thereon—she, a member of the duties-grabbers, made to show cause why she should not herself disgorge! It needs no stretch of the imagination to see a sister of the old Duke either drop dead with a stroke of apoplexy at the “indignity” of expecting her to pay duties; or, if she did not drop dead, preserve voice enough to cause her brother’s bride’s duties-extractors and consumers to order the immediate hanging of the “insolent” plebeian. And yet, the “indignity” was put upon the Duchess of Uzes; she quietly swallowed it; and the American doubles of her caste kept quiet—there was not a single hanging.

Wherein does the progress lie? Does it lie in the present capacity of plebeians to place with impunity “indignities” upon the aristocrats or plunderers of the workers? No, indeed! That would be base triviality. The progress lies in what the occurrence implies.

In the days of the Duchess of Uzes’s ancestral old Duke of Chaulnes, there was no possibility of Plunderdom being overthrown. That possibility the plundered class of this generation now enjoys. The progress consists in that social evolution has so changed conditions that, what was not the case in the seventeenth century, has become a fact to-day: the plundered class holds Plunderdom in the hollow of their hand;—of that fact the experience of the Duchess of Uzes upon her arrival in America is a symptom, an evidence, an earnest of what CAN BE DONE—and WILL BE DONE.

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