to club members, but in the opportunity it furnishes to study the question of home making and home fitting, from the cornerstone to the fireplace.

THE DIGNITY OF LABOR

It was a matter of unusual interest to THE CRAFTSMAN to find the following sermon on the dignity of labor, as a leading editorial in the New York Herald for September 6th. For the last thirteen years we have been preaching the importance of labor as a means of physical and spiritual development, and it is with the greatest pleasure that we see the Herald lining up in this movement—a movement which probably contains the very essence of democratic progress. We are proud to have the privilege of reprinting here the editorial in full.

For these workmen maintain the fabric of the world and in the handiwork of their craft is their prayer.—Ecclesiasticus, xxxviii, 34.

HERE is a very different idea of work from that contained in the opening chapter of Genesis. According to this prophet, labor is not a curse laid upon man for his sin, but a service so holy that the very doing of it constitutes a “prayer.” Therefore does he sound the praises of the workingman as others have sounded the praises of king and soldier. The ploughman, the jeweler, the blacksmith, the potter—all these, “although they are not sought for in the council of the people nor exalted in the assembly, though they sit not in the seat of the judges nor understand the covenant of judgment,” are still to be numbered among the great and honorable of mankind!

In order to understand the justice of this tribute we only have to remind ourselves that it is work which has made the world what it actually is at the present moment. All that we mean by civilization, in the material sense, is the result of toil in the sweat of men’s brows. For ages past the men who have labored with their hands—the farmers, the woodsmen, the blacksmiths, the spinners, the builders—have been contemptuously regarded as an inferior grade of humanity, as little better, indeed, than animals! And yet while kings have fought and noblemen hunted, while gilded courtiers have twirled their scented handkerchiefs and toyed with their jewelled swords, while so-called superior classes of all ages and countries have sported, gambled and debauched, these same inferior laborers have made the world what we see it today! It is their toil which has cleared away forests, cultivated farm lands, opened mines, constructed railroads, laid out and built cities. It is their work which has created wealth, founded nations, redeemed the waste places of the earth, reared the vast monuments of civilization. Not more surely are the pyramids of Egypt the memorial not of the Pharaohs but of their driven slaves than are the huge piles of stone and steel in our modern cities the memorials of the unnamed toilers of this later age.

And not only is it work which has made the world what it is today, but it is work also which keeps the world going from hour to hour. I have food upon my table, clothing upon my back, a roof over my head, books upon my shelves only because a million hands are toiling in my service. Let this labor be suspended but for a little time and death and destruction would stand towering at my threshold. “Without these,” says the author of Ecclesiasticus, “shall not a city be inhabited, nor shall men sojourn or walk up and down therein; these maintain the fabric of the world.”

It is these facts which are slowly teaching the supreme dignity of labor. Carlyle had these in mind when he declared that work and work alone is truly noble; Ruskin, when he revealed the beauty gained through toil; Morris, when he preached and practised the gospel of skilled craftsmanship; Millet, when he painted the “Sower,” the “Reaper,” the “Gleaners;” Abbey, when he used the steel worker and coal miner for his symbolic frescoes in the Harrisburg capitol. Idleness is doomed as a badge of distinction. Work must henceforth be the sole title to nobility. Whitman is the true prophet when in his “Song of Occupations” he chants the Homeric catalogue, “housebuilding, blacksmithing, glassblowing, shipbuilding, peldriving, fishcuring,” and declares that there is nothing “which leads to greater than these lead to.”

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

—From the New York Herald of Sept. 6th, 1914.

FROM THE PHILOSOPHY OF ZARA-
THUSTRA SIMS

EVERYBODY cheers when Congressman Bellows talks about excluding the unwelcome foreigner from our shores, but I doubt if it gets him any votes. 'Cause everybody knows that when it comes to weeding onions, one bare-footed Polak woman, with a figure like a sack of feed, is worth more than a carload of congressmen, with a few college professors thrown in for good measure.