A Talk With Philip D. Armour.

The Famous Chicago Millionaire Talks About Business, Fortune-Making and Religion.

A Visit to the Armour Mission and the Armour Institute. [illegible] Who Consume Their Own Space—What Armour Says About Lawyers and Inventors—He Sees His Chances of How to Pay Compulsory Health Methods in Mission Work and How He Relieved a Brother Millionaire—He Tells of Young Men and Their Chances for Fortune Making, [illegible] That Rich Men Are Born, Not Made—He Discusses the Future [illegible] Cities Some Clever Arguments as to the Big Packer in the Little Chicago—Some of the Wonders of the Packing Business and [illegible] the Packing Magnates Success.

[Continued from the Deseret Evening News of May 9, 1896.]

Special Correspondence of the News.

CHICAGO, May 14th, 1896.

MEET MR. P. D. Armour, the richest man in Chicago and the most powerful capitalist of the west, on Sunday afternoon. I had gone out to the Armour Mission to attend the services with the Rev. Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus, the pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church, and was waiting for the opening when a big, broad-shouldered, full-formed man of about sixty, came in and took a seat at my side. The man had an enormous head, which was very bald at the top. His face was long, his forehead was high and full and his jaw was as strong as that of Prince Bismarck. He had a clear blue eye, a complexion fair to ruddiness and his bushy side whiskers were of a bright red. He wore black clothes, and was well but simply dressed. There was nothing in his attire, in fact, to distinguish him from the rest of the people present, and it was only from having seen his photographs that I was able to recognize in him the noted Philip D. Armour. He put his overcoat on the back of the seat, sat down and looked with what seemed to me to be decided pleasure upon the crowd which was fast packing the hall. There were at least 1,500 people in the house. Boys and girls, young men and women, were moving rapidly about getting their seats. The ushers were making places for the strangers. The most of the people seemed to know one another, and a general air of good fellowship prevailed. Phil Armour's presence was by no means an unusual thing. He comes to the mission services every afternoon, and from his retired seat in the back of the hall he seemed to attract no attention whatever. Twice an usher rapidly passed him and each time I heard him speak out in his metallic voice the words:

"Hello, is that you? Are a surging business? Did the boy get out that letter I told you to send?" Mr. Armour seemed to know many of the young people present. Bunches of girls came up and shook hands with him and he was apparently to be afraid of him.

THE ARMOUR MISSION AND INSTITUTE.

Before I got my talk with Mr. Armour, I had time to say one word about the Armour Mission and the Armour Technical Institute. The mission was opened several years ago by his brother, but has been added to by him, and now it and the Institute he has already put more than $[illegible]. It takes about $[illegible] a year to keep the Institute running, and it is doing not what is perhaps the best system of education in the United States. About seven hundred boys and girls, young men and young women are being educated in it, and it is, in fact, a large college taught by the best of professors and equipped with some of the finest mechanical and other laboratories that you will find in the world. The plan of the institution is outlined one Sunday in a sermon by D. Gunsaulus, and at its close Mr. Armour came to the chapel and said that he believed in his scheme, and that he would supply the money for such an institution if he would take charge of it as president. I might make a letter to the institute alone, but I can only say that its system of education is so far that the girls cannot afford not to send their boys to it, while the charges are so low that the poorer classes of children are able to come. By it Armour is doing as much for bringing the people of his province and the alley together as is the school for the rich and the poor are treated alike. He does not believe in socialism, and this is his means of doing it counteracting the theories advanced by Governor Altgeld and the anarchists. The school is thoroughly practical. In addition to giving all the advantages of a technical college, it has a cooking school, a millinery and dressmaking department, black-smithing and woodworking shops and such other branches as will enable a young boy or girl to learn about any trade which is A large number of young men and women are making money out of the training which they have gotten there. I remember one black-eyed girl of about eighteen, who stopped and shook hands with Mr. Armour as she passed by. As she left he turned to me and said: "That girl is the daughter of the cook of one of our Chicago hotels. She is now pursuing a course in a university. Ordinarily I would be a menial, but she is a place where she was serving for $3 a week, but she learned a new trade, and she is now getting a good salary."

Mr. Armour then pointed out some boys to me standing with their caps hanging in their hands, and he called them over.

"I should think, Mr. Armour, that you would receive much pleasure from the work that is going on here. It must be a great satisfaction to you, to know that you can do some good. This must be a good thing to think about when you are trying at night."

"Yes," replied Mr. Armour, "I think I am getting a good profit out of the institution. I consider this a good investment, and I know that I get the worth of my money out of it every time. Yes, I am sure the investment has been satisfaction alone more than its per cent."

"Not rich men leave such investments with their wealth, do they?"

"Yes, I know that," replied Mr. Armour, "but they make a mistake. Such action is bad business. As for me, I prefer to do the work now. It is cheaper, you know. It saves the commission and it gives a man a chance to see if the plans are not carried out as they should be.

THERE IS GOOD MATERIAL IN THE OLD HEADS.

At this moment the services began and our conversation stopped. I continued it, however, the next day at Mr. Armour's office. I had noticed that the audience of the mission at the morning services were children. I referred to this fact during my talk, and with Mr. Armour replied:

"Yes, the chief object of the Armour Mission is to do good for the children. I don't care much for the old men and the hardened sinners. They don't think you can do much with the one-legged, one-eyed drunkard who lies in the gutter, and I tell the preachers they ought to keep over him and let him go, and save the young child who is playing on the street. You can't make much out of the old drunkard. There is some material in the child. The most important time in life is before the age of twenty, and the impressions gotten before that time are the most lasting."

PHIL ARMOUR AND THE PREACHERS.

"How about religion, Mr. Armour, you don't seem to believe much in the churches?"

"Yes, I do," was the reply. "I believe in them, but there are many people whom you can reach best outside of the churches. I don't think much of the cast-iron kinds of religion—I mean the hell-fire and the brimstone kind. When the mission was first started I put it in charge of a preacher of this kind. He was a Swedenborgian. When I engaged him I was about to leave here to take a tour of some months. The first thing I asked him was as to whether he could sing. He straightened himself up, inflated his chest and said, 'Just try me.' I had apparently hit upon his strongholds, and I saw that he thought he was good at singing if he was good for anything. I wanted a good singer as well as a good preacher, and I engaged him. I told the mission in his charge. When I returned I went out to attend the services. I entered the hall when the preacher was in the middle of his sermon. He was charging up and down the platform, and you could see the hard frames of his soul shrivel the hominess in his every gesticulation. It was a fine piece of word painting, but it did not create the impression I thought it ought. It was so hot about I asked him to call upon me at my office the next day, as I wanted to have a talk with him. He came, and I said:

"'Look, Mr. Hook, I heard your sermon yesterday. It was a very good sermon in some places, but it is not just what I want for the mission. I want you to drop the hell-fire and brimstone. I want you to get some fine children into that platform. I want them to sing songs and speak pieces. The exercises will be religious here, but I want the children to listen to the greater part of the service.' As I said this the preacher looked at me in a rather angry way. After a moment he said:

"'Now, Mr. Armour, there is no doubt in my mind that you know all about religion, but I believe you know very little about religion.'

"I laughed, but I answered: 'Well, Mr. Hook, I think I know what I want, and I want to know when you see what I want you.' The preacher thought a moment and then replied that he would. The next Sunday I went again to the mission. I found that he had accepted my suggestion, and that he had at his call a wonderful child, who was the principal feature of the service every Sunday, and in a short time he had the hall running in good shape. He was with me for two years. But before he left he told me I could say good-bye and at the same to said: 'I want to thank you, Mr. Armour, for what you have done for me in connection with the mission. You have given me a new knowledge of human nature. I see now that my theory was wrong, and too much of the other work of doing good then are said.'

PHIL ARMOUR'S RELIGION.

"You have no church organization at the mission," said I.

"No," was the reply. "The chief object I have had in view in the mission is to do good for the children. I don't care much for the old men and the hardened sinners. They don't think you can do much with the one-legged, one-eyed drunkard who lies in the gutter, and I tell the preachers they ought to keep over him and let him go, and save the young child who is playing on the street. You can't make much out of the old drunkard. There is some material in the child. The most important time in life is before the age of twenty, and the impressions gotten before that time are the most lasting."

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