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**AMERICA  
FACES THE FUTURE**



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# AMERICA FACES THE FUTURE

BY

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*Shall We Stand by the Church?* etc.

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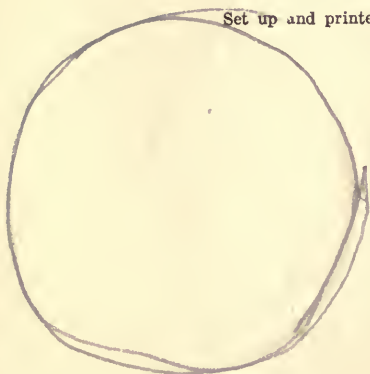
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## PREFACE

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Many books have been written to explain to foreign peoples what we are; such books naturally tend to self-congratulation and eulogy of our virtues, for it is an instinct to speak highly of ourselves to others. This volume takes a graver and more critical attitude; it has been written not as a description of what we are but as a reminder of what we ought to be. Its readers are asked to consider in these pages what our priceless heritage of American ideals actually is, and how far we are being faithful to our inheritance.

There is perpetual need of thus clarifying and fortifying our own traditional ideals, of renewing our understanding of them and evoking within our breasts a deepened loyalty. For the American spirit is continually endangered by sectionalism, class rifts, the selfishness of the fortunate and the bitterness of the unfortunate, the cynicism of the sophisticated and the complacency of the prosperous. We do not want to rubber-stamp our fellows; but we do want to produce a common devotion to the dreams that have made our nation great, and a widespread demand for their realization. Our future will be safe if we can instil into all classes and groups a true American-mindedness.

With this end in view the book has been divided into five Parts, each of which describes one of our fundamental national ideals, and discusses its application to various contemporary problems, each chapter treating of one such sphere of application. The reading-lists have been carefully selected from the

great mass of material available, and refer in general to books that are both interesting and of real merit, books that should be found in every public library of any size. The periodical-references are, similarly, in most cases to such periodicals as may be found in the ordinary library, rather than to the learned periodicals which are not so generally accessible. In order to cover the field, this volume can only sketch many matters of great importance. It is hoped, however, that it will prove a stimulus to these further readings, where the specific problems may be found treated with the attention to detail which they deserve.

This is no time in the history of our country for inert complacency; the gravest problems loom before us. We are but at the threshold of our national achievement. Our greatest danger lies in the astonishing ignorance of masses of our people, including many of the so-called educated, with respect to existing social and political conditions. Our greatest hope lies in education upon these topics, together with a renewed loyalty to the spirit that has actuated the noblest of our countrymen. It is the hope of the author that here and there one will be led to be truer to that spirit by the perusal of these pages.

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AMERICA  
FACES THE FUTURE



# AMERICA FACES THE FUTURE

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

FEW nations have been as self-conscious in their ideals as ours. Its birth was signalized by an explicit and passionate declaration of the principles that justified its separate existence and were to be its guiding-star. For approximately a century and a half that Declaration has received the wholehearted allegiance of our people and has drawn to our shores millions who saw in it the hope of salvation, the sign of the Promised Land.

This is, as the kaleidoscope of history turns, a long time for so specific a tradition to persist. The institutions and avowed ideals of Great Britain, of France, of most of the older nations, have undergone profound modification during this period within which our ideals have hardly been challenged. Germany and Italy are new nations, the other American republics are our younger sisters. We have seen within a generation revolutionary changes in national ideals in China, in Japan, and other ancient lands. The dominance of democratic ideals in Russia and the several mid-European nations is of yesterday. So that we,

who were once the pioneer republic, are now the oldest, stablest, as well as the most prosperous; and probably the most truly conservative force in the life of the world.

There can be no doubt that this stability, this prosperity, this eminence which we have attained among the nations of the earth, is due in large measure to the spiritual vision of our fathers. Our success has indeed exceeded all expectations; and it is surely not without reason that Americans are proud of their country. But it is a rare event in history for such a vision to remain unclouded under the stress of internal and external strains, and the many temptations to a lower moral code. Not always have the noble sentiments of our Founders guided our national policies or our individual efforts. And in spite of the crusading spirit in which we entered the Great War, to make the whole world safe for such a democratic life as we had here established, there are many signs that a spiritual weariness has followed this patriotic fervor, and that all sorts of acts and attitudes inconsonant with our acknowledged ideals are increasingly prevalent.

M. Guizot once asked the poet Lowell, how long this republic would last; the reply was, "As long as the ideas of the men who founded it." Certainly business prosperity and victory on the field of battle are no guaranty of any nation's future; the cardinal requisite is that its heart be sound, its moral fibre on a par with its material achievements. It may be said, of course, that other ideals than those which we have followed would lead us to an even greater destiny, and that we should substitute for Americanism the spirit, say, of international Socialism or Communism, or some other exotic theory and hope. Certainly there

is much to be said for some of these alien ideals and dreams. But the substitution of such an untried program for the tested traditions that have been our guide would be to forsake a proved good for an uncertainty, a stable policy for a vaguely charted and dangerous course. By all means let these experiments be tried in lands where change is needed; let us watch with sympathy and lend a helping hand. But for us there can be no hesitation. We know our own hearts, the path is straight before us. Our duty is still to follow the gleam that has led our people so far, and to bring to realization these long-cherished hopes.

Without arguing, then, the relative merits of Americanism as compared with other moral principles that have been adopted elsewhere, or can be conceived, it is for us to define as clearly as possible these ideals to which we, at least, are committed, and to seek to win for them, in this country, a universal and hearty allegiance. To break with them would be to plunge into chaos; we must grow in the line of our past. No party can possibly succeed here if it ignores the psychology and traditions of our people. And on the other hand, no essentially new ideals will be necessary if we are genuinely loyal to the old. If we can make men true Americans there will be no need for them to seek elsewhere for the impulse that will eventually solve our hardest problems. As Stanton Coit once wrote, "Convert men to democracy and you will have no occasion to convert them to socialism."

It is unhappily true, however, that the word "Americanism" is often used as a cloak for selfish interests and a buffer against progress. As Roosevelt said, "There are plenty of scoundrels always ready to try to belittle reform movements or to bolster up existing iniquities in the name of Americanism." More recently

Professor John Dewey has called our attention to this situation: "I find that many who talk the loudest about the need of a supreme and unified Americanism of spirit really mean some special code or tradition to which they happen to be attached. They have some pet tradition which they would impose upon all." A "League for Americanism" in one of our great States has recently been organized, apparently for the actual purpose of defeating health insurance and other "welfare" bills. An organizer of the League is quoted as saying to one of its paid lecturers, "The Americanism part of it is a joke. . . . You can go ahead and stir up sentiment on Americanism, and other men will follow after you to attend to the freak legislation."

This pseudo-patriotic propaganda is but a camouflage for the self-seeking of various selfish interests. Or it may be the expression of an instinctive hatred of aliens. We have lately seen, for example, foreign musicians of genius and refinement, men whose conduct and manners were irreproachable, humiliated and persecuted by those who call themselves "One hundred per cent Americans." Surely, as the first commandment to the ancient Jews was, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," so the first demand upon our honor should be not to use this name of ours that symbolizes the noblest and most unselfish aspirations except as our hearts are genuinely devoted to those ends.

No doubt, much of this reactionary spirit is honestly deemed American by its possessors. Washington and Hamilton were reviled as un-American by the Jeffersonians, Lincoln by the anti-abolitionists, Roosevelt by the stand-patters. Any reformer who seeks to bring about, even by the most legitimate and peaceful



means, better political or industrial arrangements is looked at askance by those who think that wisdom came to an end with the passing of their fathers. This complacency, this stubborn inertia, is, on the contrary, the most dangerous foe of the true American spirit, which has always been adventurous, forward-looking, liberative of new energies and a growing hope. We can not advance by breaking with our traditions; but we must forever be applying these great traditions to the new situations that arise, and discovering new meanings in their well-worn words. If Americanism meant the petrifying of our social order in Eighteenth or Nineteenth Century grooves, then, indeed, we should do well to turn to other creeds, or found a new tradition for ourselves.

The fact is, however, that the dreams of our fathers, embodied in their memorable phrases, have never yet been more than half realized. It is for us to carry on the work of actualizing these dreams, of working out into practice what was for them a hope and an ideal. Our history has been a zigzag, bungling experiment in self-government. Democracy is a simple concept, but extraordinarily difficult to live up to. We need continually to renew our faith in it and to attack the dangers which still beset it and threaten to make it little more than a name. We must beware the spirit, then, that would consecrate our mistakes as well as our achievements, or look upon the task that our fathers began as completed. Those fathers of ours had great courage and a clear vision of the road that leads to man's social salvation. But all they could do was to make a start. If we have caught their spirit we shall not sit still, content with their work. On the contrary, as our own poet wrote, "New occasions teach new duties"; it is yet a long task to

complete the building of the ideal democracy whose foundation-stones they laid.

It cannot, then, be too forcibly said that our heritage is not a set of perfect institutions but a set of inspiring ideals. Just as Christianity for centuries has been hindered with superstitions and errors taken over from the Jewish and pagan faiths, and has had to struggle long to rid itself of these corruptions and realize its own ideal, so Americanism has been subject to all sorts of compromises and cloudings, and has never yet fully expressed itself in the general practice. No one of us is exempted from the task of scrutinizing our social and political life, to determine how far it truly reflects our avowed ideals, and how far it yet fails to do so. There is still need not only of devotion but of criticism; Americanism should be taken to mean not what we actually have achieved, but what the best of us are trying to achieve. The temptations that prosperity and power have brought to us make it peculiarly important that we renew the visions of our nation's youth. As the Red Queen found, in *Alice in Wonderland*, it takes a lot of running to stand still—to keep from backsliding.

The chapters that follow will, therefore, continually remind the reader "to distinguish between idealism and the idealization of ourselves." They are written in the conviction that the true solution for the ills—which every candid student recognizes—in our body politic is *more liberty, more equality, more democracy, more efficiency, more patriotism*. In short, that the way to save America is to genuinely Americanize Americans.



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**PART I**  
**LIBERTY**



## CHAPTER II

### POLITICAL LIBERTY

LIBERTY is the foremost of the great ideals to whose service our nation was dedicated. We still stamp the word upon our coins, the famous statue in New York harbor still welcomes the oppressed of every land; millions have come to our shores to breathe this freer air, and millions of others have kept up courage through the thought of American freedom.

First among the various embodiments of this ideal we may speak of that political liberty that was asserted in the historical Declaration of Independence—"these colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."

Of the Revolution which won this political independence, President Wilson has said, "It was not urged on by disorderly passions, but went forward in a love of order and legality." The Declaration recites the reasons that necessitated the step, and urges that "when a long train of abuses and usurpations . . . evinces a design to reduce [a people] under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security." But, it goes on to say, "a decent regard to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation."

It is clear to any one who reads the history of the Revolution that the British rulers of that day were

stupidly blind to the needs and instincts of their subjects over seas. The slowness of communication made an adequate representation of the Colonies in the British Parliament impossible; but this physical difficulty was less serious than the mental barriers that were interposed. It is probable, indeed, that a greater patience would have presently solved the problems, and ended the tyrannies under which the colonists suffered, and that the mother country would in time have granted us autonomy of her own free will, without the cost of war. But it was impossible for our forefathers to foresee the growth of liberalism in England; and in fighting for liberty and democracy they were tearing old ties for what they cherished as most precious in life. Patrick Henry voiced this spirit in his memorable speech before the Virginia Convention of Delegates, on the twenty-third of March 1775: "Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?"

The American colonists were not a backward people, to be autocratically ruled from across the ocean. They were trained in self-government, politically as intelligent as any of their contemporaries; and they deserved what we now call self-determination. That this should have been granted them only after a long and unhappy war is a matter for profound regret. Not only because war is always a great evil, but because the memory of this war has made an "ancient grudge" between us and the British people, who are blood-brothers to many of us and spiritual brothers to us all. At this day their ideals, and those of the English-speaking peoples throughout the world, are on the whole probably nearer to our own than those of any other people.

But the political separation has had many excellent

results. It taught England a salutary lesson, as Burke acknowledged; it showed her how not to treat her colonists, and paved the way for the present-day autonomy of her self-governing Dominions. It proved a great impetus to political and social thinking and organization in this country, and advertised to the world the principle of Liberty as perhaps nothing else could have done; so that the years following it saw the assertion of similar principles in many other countries. It enabled us to acquire the Western lands—which never would have been allowed to pass peacefully into British hands—and thus to extend our sovereignty from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The loss of efficiency which naturally comes through the political division of a larger unit was scarcely felt, owing to the meagre and slow communications with the Old World. Doubtless in some ways a provincial spirit was encouraged. But certainly patriotism was vastly stimulated; and through the stress of the emergency the spirit and hopes of those pioneers were crystallized into the principles that we today call Americanism.

Happily, the schism has long been healed in spirit, although no political reunion has been attempted. For well over a century there has been no war, and scarcely a rumor of war, between us. Many Englishmen at the time of our Revolution sided with us; and even in Parliament we had staunch defenders. Now all Englishmen acknowledge that these were in the right, and unite in honoring our Washington and Lincoln, and the other great men that our nation has produced. And they, with the rest of the world, agree now in principle, if not always yet in every concrete case, with our assertion of the right of every people to determine its own destinies.

This principle was put by President Wilson, when stating our war-aims, as the rule that "no people must be forced under sovereignty under which it does not wish to live." Again he spoke, in his Address to the Senate, on January 22, 1917, of the "principle that Governments derive all their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property. . . . [This is a] political principle which has always been held very dear by those who have sought to build up America."

America was naturally foremost in sympathy with the ideals of the French Revolution, with Kossuth, with Garibaldi, with the Greek patriots, and the Russian revolutionists. Our Monroe Doctrine was the announcement to the world that we stood ready to protect the freedom of the South and Central American republics. And in the Great War, we fought to save the oppressed nationalities of Europe from alien domination. Our action in setting Cuba up as an independent nation, after we had spent money and lives in ousting her earlier oppressors, was almost unprecedented in the history of the great nations, and proves that we practise what we preach.

In the light of all this, it is obvious that we can not permanently retain our sovereignty over the Philippines, if the majority of the natives desire their independence. As they are alien to us by race, by language, and by their traditions, it is altogether probable that the mass of them will wish to be free, in spite of possible advantages for them of American rule. It is true that we paid twenty million dollars to Spain for the Islands, besides the cost of the war. And



since then our government has expended over three hundred million dollars in bringing to them the benefits of civilization. But we are rich and prosperous, they were poor and ignorant; we should not begrudge the help we have given them or allow our financial outlay to blind us to their elemental right to their freedom. In spite of our unprecedentedly altruistic rule, there have been some wrongs inflicted, there has been friction, such as inevitably arises when one race rules another. As Lincoln said, in the often-quoted words, "No man is good enough to govern another man without that other man's consent."

The problem of the right moment at which to free them is one of expediency, so long as the release is not too long delayed. It may be wisest to wait until they have had a more widespread education and longer experience in political affairs, until the various tribes have become more homogeneous and more capable of getting along peaceably together. It would surely be wrong to withdraw our flag without the acceptance by the other Powers of treaties guaranteeing their freedom. But in many ways the outlook for the future of the Islands under their own flag looks promising, even now. There is no royal dynasty whose members might attempt to recover lost power, there are no slaves, there are no vexing boundary questions. Many of the Filipinos have proved themselves able and honest in business and in politics. Governor Harrison, after intimate experience in working with them, declared, "I have found the native Filipino official to be honest, efficient, and as capable of administering executive positions as any men I have met anywhere in the world . . . By temperament, by experience, by financial ability, in every way, the ten

millions of Filipinos are entitled to be free from every government except their own choice . . . They are intelligent enough to decide for themselves."

Even if this picture is too optimistic, if disorder and confusion should follow the first attainment of their liberty, this is no more than usually happens when a new nation is launched, no more than happened in our own case. And, after all, it is not for us to judge what is best for them; it is their own right to decide.

At the very outset of our rule, President McKinley announced that we came as "a liberating rather than a conquering nation." "The Philippines are ours, not to exploit, but to develop, to civilize, to educate, to train in the science of self-government. This is the path of duty which we must follow or be recreant to a mighty trust committed to us."

President Roosevelt declared that the honor of the United States was pledged to the doctrine of "the Philippines for the Filipinos," and caused many steps to be taken during his administration increasing the measure of self-government accorded to them.

President Taft, who had been Governor General of the Philippines, and knew the situation intimately, espoused the same policy: "The Filipino people, through their officials, are making real steps in the direction of self-government. I hope and believe that these steps mark the beginning of a course which will continue until the Filipinos become fit to decide for themselves whether they desire to be an independent nation."

In recognition of this long-proclaimed principle of Americanism, Congress in 1914 pledged the United States "to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognize their independence as

soon as a stable government can be established therein." President Wilson later declared, "We must hold steadily in view their ultimate independence, and we must move toward the time of that independence as steadily as the way can be cleared and the foundations thoughtfully and permanently reared."

When this is finally accomplished, it will be another rebuke to our cynical critics in the Old World, who have distrusted the sincerity of our promises, and a relief to those South or Central American republics that fear the growth of an imperialistic policy in this country. That fear is not without justification, in view of the high-handed methods that our officials have sometimes used, in Santo Domingo and Haiti, in Nicaragua and other neighboring republics. But, however autocratic our officials may at times be, and however unjust some individual act, there can be no possible doubt that Americans will loyally maintain in every case their right to national independence.

It may, indeed, be asked why, believing as we do in self-determination, the North refused to the South the right to secede, in 1860. And at once we must admit that the ideal of Liberty often conflicts with that other great ideal of Union which we shall presently discuss. At this point we may be content to point out that North and South were essentially one people, one in language and political experience, in essential traditions and beliefs—except for the issue of slavery—as well as in race. The case was very different from that of an alien race in far-off islands, or even from that of the democratic American colonists and their monarchical rulers across the ocean. The advantages of union and disadvantages of separation were immeasurably greater. And further, the case was heavily complicated by the fact that the

South wanted secession in order to perpetuate slavery. That is, the ideal of Liberty itself fought against them. The present complete and happy reunion of North and South and the eminence that the united nation has attained, purged of sectionalism and of slavery, testifies that although both sides fought for genuine ideals, the ideal of the North was the higher.

Our nation will tolerate no disintegration of its own unity. But it will maintain, to the last drop of its blood, its right to its own national liberty. And it will maintain an equal liberty as the birthright of every other people, the weakest as well as the strongest, yellow, black and brown as well as white.

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## CHAPTER III

### CIVIL LIBERTY

THE liberty of a nation, as a nation, to choose its own rulers and policies is a precious right. But the absence of such independence does not necessarily mean any loss save a sentimental one to the people thereof. A colony governed by a wise mother-country may well have more security and attain a higher civilization than would have been possible if it had stood on its own feet. Indeed, where agitation arises for political independence it is usually because of violations of the civil liberties of the people. So it was in the case of America.

The civil rights which were more or less explicitly asserted by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution include:

- (1) Liberty of person. No one to be deprived of life or freedom of movement except by due process of law. No one to be made a slave or serf. No one to be arrested or imprisoned without a warrant.
- (2) Security of property. No one to be deprived of anything that he owns except by due process of law.
- (3) Freedom of belief and worship, of speech, and of the printed word.
- (4) Freedom from needless restrictions and tyrannies by the law, even when approved by the majority. Personal affairs to be interfered

with only in so far as is necessary for the common good.

- (5) Freedom from a tyrannical public opinion. No one to be persecuted or ostracized because he acts or lives in a different way from that approved by the majority.

No people, perhaps, have ever been so sensitive to encroachments upon personal liberty as ours. This passionate libertarianism had one of its roots in the Calvinism of the Puritans. According to that highly individualistic faith, every man was directly responsible to God; the State had no authority over him comparable to that of his creed and conscience. Another root was the sturdy self-reliance fostered by pioneer life. An unusual number of men in this country have been "self-made" men, men who carved their own fortunes and asked nothing better than to be left free to do so. Still another source lay in the past experience of the early settlers, and indeed of many later immigrants, which made them distrust all government as being naturally tyrannical. The fear lest the republican form of government which they set up would be captured by ambitious men and usurp too great power lies behind many of the clauses of the Constitution and persisted long as a bugaboo in the thought of American statesmen. Emerson expressed this ideal and this fear in his well-known lines,

"For what avail the plough or sail  
Or land or life, if freedom fail?"

The glaring inconsistency in a people that sing of their country as the "sweet land of liberty" was, of course, the toleration of negro slavery. Almost everyone took for granted the rightfulness of this long-established institution, Christian ministers as well as

worldly-minded, those who lived in the industrial sections of the North as well as the plantation-owners of the South who profited, or thought they profited, thereby. But the clash between ideal and practice was inevitable; personal liberty could not forever be worshipped as the highest good and at the same time denied to a large section of the population. One by one conscientious men awoke to the inconsistency. In 1830 Garrison wrote, "I shall strenuously contend for the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population. . . . On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard!" Later, when the South demanded its independence in order to ensure the perpetuation of slavery, Lincoln said the final word: "They who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves."

The Civil War decided the issue, and removed for all time this blot from our escutcheon. The great hymn that fired the hearts of the Union soldiers made its appeal to this elemental passion:

"As He died to make men holy, let us die to make them free."

Freedom, in this case, required a long and terrible war to secure. It often requires elaborate and sometimes apparently tyrannical laws to maintain. The old naïve notion that if the government would but keep its hands off, every one would have the greatest amount of liberty has long been known to be fallacious; bitter experience has shown that such a *laissez-faire* policy allows the strong and unscrupulous to prey upon the conscientious and the weak. We must have a considerable body of law in order to have the greatest attainable amount of liberty for all. As

President Wilson recently wrote, "If Jefferson had lived in our day he would see what we see, that the individual is caught in a great confused mix-up of all sorts of complicated circumstances, and that to let him alone is to leave him helpless as against the obstacles with which he has to contend."

Many people suppose that because a man has legal freedom he is really free. But, in the words of a great English jurist, "Necessitous men are not free men." In the pioneer days, a *laissez-faire* policy was far less inadequate than now. The transition from small-scale to large-scale industry, from personal direction of business to corporate control, the crowding of great masses of people in cities, the complexification of our social and political order, have forced all sorts of new relationships upon us that require legislative control if they are not to be allowed to curtail seriously the liberty of many.

The British Labor Party has advertised the phrase, "effective personal freedom," meaning thereby such freedom as can actually be taken advantage of. A recent American writer elaborates this conception as follows: "If you drive a man up a tree and station a bear at the foot of it, it does not gratify him to be told that he is now free to do as he chooses. If you dismiss your son from your door without food, money or education, and tell him that the whole wide world is now open to him, you have not given him 'effective personal freedom.' Circumstances may compel him to accept your terms, hard and dictatorial though they may be. Freedom in such a sense is a threat and not a promise. Similarly if you rear a man in a low social station, in the midst of poverty and ignorance, with the necessity of livelihood forced upon him from an early age, and then tell him that he may rise even



to be President of the United States, he is to be forgiven if he does not appear enthusiastic and grateful. If you throw a man into stormy waters far from land, and then tell him that there is nothing to prevent his swimming to shore and making a nice dry warm place for himself there, you do not confer a boon on him. For first he has got to keep his head above water. Even if by great and prolonged exertions he can do that, there is little chance of his living to achieve more. The man who demands 'effective personal freedom' wants to be put on shore to start with. He understands that there is a tyranny of circumstance more fatal than that of man."

Our love of liberty, our hatred of the regulation of our conduct by any authority other than God and our individual conscience, has made it difficult for any form of socialism to win favor with us. We distrust a bureaucracy, we dread paternalism; our forefathers deliberately sought to restrict the powers of the government, to allow the widest possible scope for private initiative. As Professor Mecklin says, "The measure of an efficient government at the beginning of the national life was the least possible interference with the affairs of the individual, in fact, just enough of government to facilitate individual ends. Government was at best merely the policeman to keep order and protect property." Doubtless a great many of our immigrants came to these shores to get away from the restrictions upon their personal liberty in their homelands; and we must continue our vigilance in preventing the growth of needless impediments to freedom in our own land.

But on the other hand, we have learned that one man or group of men may abuse their liberty in such a way as to interfere with the liberty of others. As

Mr. H. G. Wells says of his country, "We must get rid of these spendthrift liberties that waste liberty." Liberty and law are not contradictories; law is the servant of liberty, the means to its attainment. We may well fear a corrupt government, oppose class legislation, fight the many bills offered to further this or that special interest. But a genuinely democratic government is simply the expression of the common will—*our will*. For we, after all, are the State; and what we collectively decide upon as best for the general welfare is not tyranny but self-expression.

Those who fare well under existing conditions usually raise the cry "Hands off!" when legislation is proposed that would restrain their conduct in any way. They fail to realize that restraint upon unsocial conduct is necessary precisely in the interests of liberty—the liberty of the greatest number. A manufacturer resents a law restricting child-labor; his liberty to employ whom he will is infringed. But that liberty was a predatory liberty; it lived at the expense of the far more precious liberty of those children to have their playtime, their schooling, their health. Or a group of mill-owners may insist upon their liberty to shut down their mills in order to lessen production and raise the price of their product, ignoring the fact that they thereby would deprive thousands of men of the liberty to work and earn their living, and their families of all the liberty that a decent income alone makes possible.

In general, we have been far too blind to the true implications of the ideal of Liberty, which we so highly prize in the abstract. We have been too tolerant of the exploiters, the grafters, those whose cleverness or good fortune has enabled them to grab for

themselves rights and privileges which ought to have been our common inheritance. The old notion that if everybody "looks after number one" the general good will automatically be attained must give way to the verdict of bitter experience, that to preserve the rights and liberties of *everybody*, clever and stupid, fortunate and unfortunate, requires the unceasing watchfulness of the law.

In pursuance of this wiser view we now forbid householders to empty their refuse into the streets, as was done in some of our cities a generation ago; we no longer tolerate the existence of private toll-gates upon the highways; we interfere in a hundred ways with the conduct of private business, with the erection of private homes, with personal habits, such as gambling, drinking intoxicating beverages, and using narcotic drugs. Now and then, of course, an unwarrantable law is passed. But in general, this extension of legislative vigilance is in the interests of true liberty. And the average man of today is far freer from dangers, from fears, from the encroachments and aggressions of other men, and from the fatal effects of his own shortsightedness, selfishness or passion, than was the man of older days.

The ideal of Liberty is that every one should be unhampered in his conduct except as that conduct would interfere with the welfare of others; or rather, that every man should be helped to make his conduct a positive contribution to the common welfare. We need to think of Liberty in terms of the group. We do not want the docility and blind obedience to a State ruled by an upper-class, of pre-war Germany; we want to preserve the individual initiative and energy for which we are famous. But we want to exercise our collective intelligence in guiding that initiative and

energy into social rather than unsocial channels; we want to use the inventiveness and ingenuity of the few not so much for the winning for them personally a freer and more expansive life, as for the winning of such a larger and freer life for the people as a whole. Not every man for himself, but every man for America. Not liberty for you, or for me, at the expense of others, but such mutual adjustments and restraints as will make for the greatest liberty of all.

The same problem that faces us here, in the relation of the individual to the community, has been met and in some degree solved in the relation of the several States to the Nation. In the name of liberty the various attempts of the people as a whole, through the national Congress, to regulate matters of national concern have been strenuously opposed. The Civil War silenced for all time the doctrine that the rights of the individual States transcend the rights of the Nation; and we have a steadily increasing body of federal statutes. But we still find it impossible to regulate child-labor nationally, save in a roundabout and partial manner; some States refuse to give up their right to exploit the health of their children. We find it difficult to regulate the killing of even the migratory song-birds; some States resent interference with the right of their citizens to make pot-pies out of robins and bobolinks. A Constitutional Amendment has been necessary to bring certain backward States to relinquish their right to refuse the ballot to women.

The separate States must not be allowed in their supposed self-interest to block the way toward the freest and happiest life for the people as a whole; that principle has been definitely decided, although its full application will long give rise to debate and disagreement. Similarly, no individual or group of



individuals, no corporation, or "interest," must be allowed to block the way toward the freest and happiest life for the people as a whole. We must not let the reaction from war-restraints bring us back to the easy-going tolerance of personal and corporate selfishness into which we had drifted. The energies of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were necessarily taken up with the winning of the rights of peoples as opposed to tyrannous governments. The latter part of the nineteenth century and the twentieth century have had to add to this task that of preventing these rights from becoming the perquisite of the strong and the fortunate among the people, and ensuring them for the people as a whole.

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## CHAPTER IV

### CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTIES

IN the preceding chapter we have seen that liberty is preserved only through law. To this end we have the common law—the great mass of precedents to be found in earlier decisions, the State and National laws, and the State and National Constitutions. Of these, the written constitution is the distinctively American contribution, and deserves our special attention.

The fundamental purpose of written constitutions is to prevent majorities from tyrannizing over minorities—for the tyranny of Demos may be as crushing as that of an oligarchy. This restraining power is exercised in two ways. In the first place, a larger than majority vote is usually necessary to amend a constitution; often the process is an involved and difficult one. In the second place, the rights guaranteed by a constitution have such prestige that even a majority would be apt to be wary of annulling them.

This, then, is the chief guaranty of our civil liberties. Legislatures can not limit the rights asserted by the State and Federal Constitutions, or executives ignore them—unless the people lose their vigilance and acquiesce in their violation. Jefferson in his Inaugural Address, in 1801, expressed the heart of the matter: “All too will bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will, to be rightful must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal

rights which equal laws must protect, and to violate which would be oppressive." In short, the individual has certain rights that not even the elected representatives of the people have the right to destroy. Our government is one that is controlled not only by the views of the officials and legislators temporarily in office, but, fundamentally, by principles passed on from generation to generation and subject only to a purposely rather remote possibility of alteration.

An essential feature of this plan is that the meaning of these Constitutions is to be determined not by the legislatures—which then might declare their laws proper, against whatever outcry—but by a non-law-making arm of the government, the Courts. As a matter of fact, the action of State legislatures has thus been declared unconstitutional some hundreds of times; and more than a score of times the Supreme Court has annulled a law passed by Congress.

To many Americans, and perhaps to most foreigners, this power of our courts seems too great. M. Rodrigues, a French admirer of our people, calls it "a dreadful obligation, an exorbitant power, if ever there was one. The judge is the judge not only of cases, but of laws; he is the judge not only of parties but of legislators!" Mr. Walter Weyl, in *The New Democracy*, likewise declares that "this right of the Supreme Court finally and unreviewably to declare a law void, in opposition to the opinion of a majority, constitutes, in the absence of ample facilities for a popular amendment of the Constitution, a flat and uncompromising negation of democracy."

This situation deserves careful attention. Here is an institution conceived by our fathers for the purpose of checking legislation oppressive of the fundamental rights of any class or individual, now re-

garded by many acute observers as a grievous clog upon needed social reforms.

The problem is, first, as to the facts, and then as to the proper policy.

John Marshall, the first Chief Justice of the Federal Supreme Court, maintained the view that the Constitution is to be interpreted in such wise as to make for the truest welfare of the people, rather than in a spirit of technicality and literalism. Many of his successors were animated by this same liberal spirit, which may fairly be called the historic American tradition in the matter. It was expressed by Roosevelt in 1912, when he wrote, "My plea is that the courts act with ordinary statesmanship, ordinary regard for the Constitution as a living aid to growth, not as a strait-jacket."

It must be admitted, however, that on many occasions during the past century the exercise of this constitutional veto by the courts has actually blocked needed legislation and been a bulwark of special privilege. To cite a few out of many cases: The Federal Supreme Court declared unconstitutional a New York State law limiting the hours of work in bake-shops, on the ground that it deprived the employees of their personal liberty to work as long as they chose. This in spite of the fact that a large proportion of the bake-shops were underground, and unhygienic, that the health of many employees had been ruined by the long hours of work required of them in such surroundings, and that the law which had been passed was their only prospect of prompt relief from the intolerable conditions. What the employees *wanted* was to be able to work a reasonable number of hours and still retain their positions. That would have been for them a real increase in liberty.



Yet the right of the legislature to procure for them that liberty was denied by the courts on the ground of a purely theoretical liberty which no one, or almost no one, wanted to exercise; a liberty which simply gave the owners of the bake-shops the right to make big profits through the overwork of their employees.

Similarly, the New York State Court of Appeals declared unconstitutional a State law prohibiting the making of cigars in tenements, on the ground that this law interfered with personal liberty and private property; it forced the worker "from his home and its hallowed associations and beneficent influences!" The situation was that the employers were saving money through being able to go without a factory, while the workers were injuring their health through overlong hours of working—made necessary by the unregulated competition and very low pay per hour; little children, aged and sick people were kept at work, to add to the family income, and the health of both workers and the consumers was seriously endangered. It is universally admitted by students of social conditions that tenement-industries are a menace to the community. And these industries received a new lease of life by this widely advertised decision of the Court. Mrs. Florence Kelley, one of the ablest of our social workers, wrote in 1905, that if the new State law had been upheld instead of being annulled, "it is safe to assert that the odious system of tenement manufacture would long ago have perished in every trade in every city in the Republic."

The Illinois Supreme Court, in 1886 and subsequent years, annulled acts of the State legislature requiring mine-owners to weigh the coal mined and pay the miners on the basis of such weight. In 1892 and 1904, it held as void legislative acts regulating the keeping

of truck stores by the owners of coal mines and factories. In 1900, it annulled a law prohibiting the use of the American flag for advertising purposes; in 1901, an act prohibiting more than six persons from sleeping in one room in a lodging-house; in 1906, an act requiring owners of mines to provide a washroom at the top of the mine for the use of the miners; in 1909, an act regulating the practice of assigning future wages as security for borrowed money by requiring the assignment to be signed by the wife of a married man and recorded.

These cases, cited out of a great number, make it clear that the passing of desirable reform measures has often been blocked by the Courts. And a very great number of other reforms have been postponed, or are still impossible of achievement, because it is recognized that the courts would annul them. Our constitutions are so difficult of amendment that this veto power of the courts is usually decisive. We are the only great nation that handicaps progressive legislation in this way. And it is generally conceded that we are behind most of the more civilized nations in our social-welfare legislation.

In particular, the cause of labor has often suffered from the exercise of judicial interpretation. It is scarcely to be wondered at that delegates of labor conventions often declare that they have lost all hope in legal procedure and want to try lawless methods for ameliorating the lot of the laboring classes. The Fourteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution, which declares that property must not be taken without due process of law, has been used over and over again by judges to justify the annulment of laws passed by legislatures and desired by the people. The result is that property rights have been given in this

country a more protected status than anywhere else in the world, and often ranked above what we call human rights. So much use has been made of that Fourteenth Amendment that it has been specifically proposed that whenever an act is passed by two different sessions of a legislature, and approved by the electorate upon a referendum, it shall be held not to infringe the "life, liberty, and property" clause in that amendment.

The reasons for this obstructionist attitude of some of our courts must be sought in the training that judges receive. The law schools have trained their students rather in a legalist, backward-looking temper, than in a constructive, forward-looking spirit. One of the judges of the Federal Supreme Court has written, "The training of lawyers is a training in logic . . . The logical method and form flatter that longing for certainty and for repose which is in every human mind. But certainty generally is illusion, and repose is not the destiny of man. Behind the logical form lies a judgment as to the relative worth and importance of competing legislative grounds, often an inarticulate and unconscious judgment, it is true, and yet the very root and nerve of the whole proceeding. . . . To measure them justly needs not only the amplest powers of a judge and a training which the practice of the law does not insure, but also a freedom from prepossessions which is very hard to attain. It seems to me desirable that the work should be done with express recognition of its nature."

In short, the courts have been taking upon themselves what is not merely an interpretative but a political function. But they are made up not of representatives of all classes, but solely of lawyers, who almost inevitably come to have the property point of

view. Their work lies largely in the sphere of the enforcement of property interests. They do not consciously mean to be servants of organized property interests, but their unconscious prejudices make them often its ready tools.

To realize to what extent the supposedly interpretative function of the courts is actually determinative, we have but to read the opinions of the dissenting judges, which are usually the most drastic criticisms of the majority decisions, and show how far the social philosophy of the judges colors their arguments. A legal foundation can be brought up for almost any decision, through the selection of the precedents to be followed. A student of the law has recently declared that "there are so many principles and precedents running in different directions, that a judge can generally find some principle, precedent, or construction to justify in legal form the conclusion he has arrived at on the facts . . . With the courts of forty-six States and several English-speaking jurisdictions handing down decisions at the rate of several hundred bulky volumes every year, it is not difficult to find authority and reason for almost any practicable view; and even when certain precedents seem to stand in the way of the judgment the court would like to render, these can often be distinguished from the case at bar by some slight difference, or perhaps quite marked and vital difference in the facts and circumstances."

For example, the majority of the Massachusetts Supreme Court recently stated the opinion that the legislature could not legally give authority to the cities of the State to establish municipal coal and wood yards, for the purpose of providing their citizens with fuel at a reasonable price. The ground for this decision lay in the fact that the judges thought it



would be an unwise thing for municipalities to go into such business and that it would open the way for further "socialistic" enterprises. But Mr. Justice Holmes (now a member of the Federal Supreme Court) dissented vigorously from this view, declaring that "when money is taken to enable a public body to offer to the public without discrimination an article of general necessity, the purpose is not less public when that article is wood or coal than when it is water or gas or electricity or education, to say nothing of cases like the support of paupers, or the taking of land for railroads or public markets."

In this case the fact that a majority of the judges were unfavorably disposed, owing to their social class or education or thought, to the extension of municipal activity, led them to block legislation which a majority of Mr. Holmes' type would have passed as legitimate. It can clearly be seen that the political and social temper of our judges may well be a more serious matter than that of our legislators and executives; and, in our system, the judges have the last word. Even though there be a large popular majority in favor of a law, and a majority in the Congress or State legislature, and even though the welfare of the people, as well as their will, is embodied in the law, the courts can keep it off the statute-books.

Do we wish to allow the courts this right to obstruct the will of the people? Certainly, if we allow them to retain it, we must be free to criticize their action when we disapprove it. Time has shown that not a few court decisions have been undesirable. Our greatest American, Abraham Lincoln, felt free to condemn the action of the Supreme Court of the United States. Of the Dred Scott decision he said, "we think this decision erroneous. We know that

the court that made it has often overruled its own decisions, and we shall do what we can to have it overrule this . . . I do not resist it . . . We abide by the decision, but we will try to reverse that decision."

Similarly, Theodore Roosevelt criticized the New York State Bakeshop decision, above described: "The Supreme Court of the United States possessed, and unfortunately exercised, the negative power of not permitting the above to be remedied. By a five-to-four vote they declared the action of the State of New York unconstitutional, because, forsooth, men must not be deprived of their 'liberty' to work under unhealthy conditions . . . The Court was, of course, absolutely powerless to make the remotest attempt to provide a remedy for the wrong which undoubtedly existed, and its refusal to permit action by the State did not confer any power upon the nation to act. The decision was nominally against states' rights, but really against popular rights."

Shall we go further than to bring the pressure of public opinion to bear upon the judiciary? Many publicists have advocated the "recall" of judges whose interpretations run contrary to the majority will. Without going so far as this, we might propose, as Roosevelt did, the "recall of judicial decisions," i.e., a referendum which would let the people decide whether, in a given case, they wished to uphold or to annul the interpretation of the court. This plan seems preferable to the recall of the judge himself, since the fear of losing his office might tend to make a judge too sensitive to public opinion. The independence of the judiciary is a valuable asset in a democracy. Yet where the recall of judges has been available it has been used with moderation and wis-

dom; and it is not to be forgotten that it is a possible last resort.

Again, it would be possible to take from the judiciary its power of constitutional veto and give the Congress and State legislatures the power to determine the constitutionality of their own acts, with, perhaps, a popular referendum when desired by a sufficient number of people. This, however, would be a sharp break with our traditions. And it is highly questionable whether this taking off the brakes would not encourage hasty and extremist legislation, and do more harm than good. We are a conservative nation, and will not lightly abrogate, because of the dangers that inhere in it, a policy that has appealed to most Americans as, on the whole, reasonable and wise.

Perhaps the best solution, on the whole, will be to leave the Courts their power, and to make the process of amending Constitutions somewhat easier. Thomas Jefferson wished that constitutions might be deliberately revised every nineteen years. Attempts are periodically made thoroughly to revise antiquated State constitutions; but because of the clumsy procedure involved, they rarely achieve a marked success.

However, the passing of the eighteenth and nineteenth Amendments to the Federal Constitution shows that instrument to be still plastic to the popular will. And incidental changes are constantly being made in State constitutions. When a court, through its interpretation of constitutional provisions, blocks a generally desired law, an alteration in the Constitution can be made, if enough people want it. And although this process has hitherto been often heartbreakingly slow, and although judges are sometimes sadly lacking in social vision and prone

to give a narrowly legalistic interpretation, one that concerns itself more with property rights than with human rights, yet the idea behind this Constitutional barrier is a sound one. It comes down to a question of political policy. Do we need checks upon over-hasty legislative action? Or do we need rather to progress more freely than our constitutional barriers permit?

The ideal is undoubtedly that expressed by Dr. Lyman Abbott: "The Constitution is not like the hoops of a barrel that hold the staves together . . . It is like the bark of a tree that grows with the growth of the tree and expands with its expansion." If we can keep our Constitution as flexible as this analogy suggests, we can, if we choose, repeal or amend clauses in it that come to be interpreted by the Courts in a manner contrary to the popular will. New laws can then be passed that will not be subject to annulment, at least on the old grounds. In this manner we may unite caution with experimentation, a wise conservatism with a progressive regard for human needs and interests.

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## CHAPTER V

### INDIVIDUALISM

WE have been discussing certain restrictions upon liberty that are necessary for liberty's sake. It is by no means true, however, that our only danger lies in an unrestricted and heedless individualism. On the contrary, there are ways in which we need more rather than less individual liberty.


Much that is best in our national life has come from the self-reliance bred by pioneer conditions, the love of overcoming obstacles, the zest in what Roosevelt named the Strenuous Life. In general, the people who left their home-lands and dared the dangers of the ocean and of a new country were the bolder, hardier folk. They found here abundant opportunities for personal initiative. Owing to their diversity of race and traditions they were slow in developing a "consciousness of kind." They wrote their individualistic creed into their laws and constitutions; their writers and poets glorified that fearless and energetic individualism and crystallized it into an explicit and avowed ideal.

All this is to the good. Our aim should be, not to cramp, but so far as possible to liberate, these individual energies. It is with us an established right that each young man and woman shall choose his or her vocation, friends, religious faith, home; shall carve out an individual life, rather than be subject to family dictation or pressure, as is so often

the case in Europe. Hundreds of young men every year, with little more than their natural talents to help them, succeed in carving out a career for themselves and lifting themselves to positions of profit and power. And in increasing numbers the young women of America are following their example and becoming independent individuals, able to support themselves and make a distinctive personal contribution to the country's life.

But this individualistic spirit is as yet only partially developed. In some matters public opinion still presses too hard upon the individual, seeking to make him conform to generally accepted standards of manners and morals, at the expense of the complete development of his personality. This is partly the result of our Puritan tradition, which allowed no variation from a supposedly infallible code, and partly the instinctive expression of a very widespread human attitude, the dislike of conduct that varies from our own.

More serious even than this is the fact that there are whole classes of workers who, while being cogs in a great industrial or commercial machine, have no least share in shaping the conditions of their daily work or the policies of the industry they serve. They are simply "hands," not human beings, to be ordered about, never to be consulted or even listened to; they are what the agitators call "wage-slaves." This state of things is undesirable, not primarily out of consideration for abstract justice, but because this stifling of individuality narrows unnecessarily the lives of so many people, deprives them of zest in their work, and deprives the industries of the ideas that would be evolved from their participation in their management. Emerson boasted of our people that we are



“a nation of individuals.” But we are in danger of becoming, if we have not already become, an upper class of individuals controlling the daily life of a great mass of laborers who have little opportunity to develop their individuality or to express it if it were developed.

The fact seems to be that most of the present managers of industry are so confident in their own judgment, so afraid of the ignorance or shortsightedness of the workers whose help they use in carrying on the business—in short, so undemocratic in their outlook—that they are afraid or unwilling to share the responsibility of decision, except perhaps with their technical experts or heads of departments. Yet where some measure of industrial democracy has been tried, the results have usually been salutary, not only upon the workers admitted to participation in control, in developing their individuality and giving them a new interest in life, but in contributing ideas of value to the business. As Professor Mecklin says, “among the thousands of human beings working like bees in a vast plant there are countless precious human capacities that lie dormant or are absolutely ignored. ‘Mute inglorious Miltons,’ men with scientific, artistic, or moral gifts, are forced to fit their varied geniuses into one colossal mechanistic scheme that knows but one measure of value—earning capacity.” Some way to develop and utilize these latent energies and talents must be devised.

Curiously enough, in American politics the opposite practice rules. Our idea here is that almost anybody can fill any position; we do not demand professional training for high political office. As an acute foreign observer wrote, some years before the war, “The need of specialized experts is not felt; and the result is an

ineffective triviality which repels the best men and opens wide the door for dishonesty." When Mr. Bryan was arguing for free silver he was reported to have said that the opinion of all the professors of the United States would not affect his opinion in the least. And this same distrust of the trained student permeates our government. Mayors are elected in our great cities who have had no experience in managing municipal affairs. Senators are appointed to committees with no thought as to their previous training in the fields in which those committees must prepare legislation. Debates take place continually upon the floor of Congress which are ridiculous to any one who is a competent student of the matters discussed.

Plainly the ideal, both for politics and for industry, is to combine the fullest self-expression for all with the utilization of the greatest natural talent that can be discovered and the most thorough training that can be devised. Every one of age should participate in the choice of those who are to govern; but the people must be educated to realize the value of talent and training, so that they will try to choose those who will be most competent for the work in hand. Such a democracy, encouraging individuality everywhere, and bringing the individuals of greatest worth to the top, would be infinitely superior both to the easy-going "he's-a-good-fellow" of contemporary politics and the autocratic control of contemporary industry.

As a matter of fact, the two realms are not so unlike as would appear. Political officials are actually chosen for the most part by small groups of politicians rather than by any real popular decision; the voter is consulted not as to whom he wishes but only as to which of two or three he wishes. What we



need is a means by which a really popular will can be created and expressed, as well in politics as in industry. In the early days of the Republic, when both politics and industry were on a small scale, there was ample scope for the individuality of any one who had ideas to contribute. But the development of our highly complex political and industrial machines has throttled the individuality of all but the fortunate or clever few who can push their way into the inner councils. Many proposals will be discussed and tried out before we agree upon the best way to restore something like the splendidly democratic individualism of the old days. But a clear recognition of the partial eclipse of this ideal is half the battle for its regaining.

There is another way in which the free individualism of our American tradition is in danger of being lost. That tradition was voiced by Emerson when he wrote, "Why was man born, if not to be a reformer, a re-maker of what man has done?" It has recently been expressed by a French critic, M. Rodrigues, who writes, "The mission of the American people is a mission of renaissance and renovation." The spirit behind the Declaration of Independence was the impulse toward free experimentation, toward detachment from the past, toward giving free play to imagination and thought. The Founders were radicals, not afraid to voice their radicalism. They welcomed to these shores men of radical opinions, and make of our country the great political asylum. They were not afraid of trying out a new plan of government. The several States became so many experiment stations in democracy. Change, growth, free criticism, progress, were in the air.

But in these latter years a new timorousness has

appeared in American life. Prosperity has begotten contentment, conservatism, the let-well-enough-alone attitude. What was radical in the days of the Founders is now accepted as a matter of course; but the radical thought of today is branded in some quarters as dangerous and deserving of ruthless suppression. The result is that we are in danger of becoming actually the most convention-ridden and unprogressive of the great nations. Many modern observers have, in fact, given that as their mature opinion of American life. Even de Toqueville found this tendency to the crystallization of a new conventionalism; "one would say," he wrote, "that minds have all been formed upon the same model in America, so exactly do they follow the same routes." Matthew Arnold was impressed by the drab uniformity of our civilization and the absence of fresh currents of ideas. Lord Bryce, America's most sympathetic critic, has written of our cities that "their monotony haunts one like a nightmare"; and, again, has pointed out that we have "so few independent schools of opinion." Very recently an acute English critic, Mr. Graham Wallas, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly*, declared that American thought on social and political matters is "timid and conventional."

The fact seems to be that too many of us have come to tolerate the wrong kind of individualism and to frown upon the right kind. Individualistic *activities*—activities which further private fortunes, at no matter whose expense—are acquiesced in, out of a sincere belief in the wisdom of leaving the individual unhampered no matter how the public is plundered, or out of a more or less conscious realization that we should like to feather our own nests in the same way

if we had the opportunity. But individualistic *ideals*, ideas at variance with the accepted point of view, are increasingly the cause of social obloquy and persecution.

It is a serious question whether the tyranny of the majority opinion in a democracy may not be as baneful as the tyranny of an oligarchy. If a reformer to-day, a man who is earnestly seeking a juster and humaner order, ventures to label his vision "socialism" or "communism," he is in danger of jail; or—if he is an alien—of deportation. Even if he does not so label it, and if in fact he differs essentially from these ostracized views, he may none the less have these labels bestowed upon him by indiscriminating authorities and be equally in danger. It has been said that at the conclusion of a war the victor and vanquished exchange characteristics. It would actually seem as if a breath of Prussianism had been wafted to this land that once boasted of its individual liberty. Instead of seeking the liberation of new ideas, the free development of new ideals, there are many Americans today who are deliberately trying to stamp out ideas which they consider heterodox or radical, and, paradoxically enough, calling themselves in the doing it "One hundred per cent Americans!"

The psychologist can readily understand this reactionary attitude. "The average brain is naturally lazy and tends to take the line of least resistance. The mental world of the ordinary man consists of beliefs which he has accepted without questioning and to which he is firmly attached; he is instinctively hostile to anything which would upset the established order of his familiar world. A new idea, inconsistent with some of the beliefs which he holds, means the necessity of rearranging his mind; and this process



is laborious, requiring a painful expenditure of brain-energy. To him and his fellows, who form the vast majority, new ideas, and opinions which cast doubt on established beliefs and institutions, seem evil because they are disagreeable.

“The repugnance due to the mental laziness is increased by a positive feeling of fear. The conservative instinct hardens into the conservative doctrine that the foundations of society are endangered by any alterations in the structure. It is only recently that men have been abandoning the belief that the welfare of a state depends on rigid stability and on the preservation of its traditions and institutions unchanged. Wherever that belief prevails, novel opinions are felt to be dangerous as well as annoying, and anyone who asks inconvenient questions about the why and the wherefore of accepted principles is considered a pestilent person.”

The attitude is intelligible, but it is not one hundred per cent American; it is not one per cent American. It is the continual application of new ideas that has made possible the great development of American business, the great strides of American mechanical invention. We need that same current of fresh ideas turned upon our political and social mechanisms. No doubt there is, and always will be, much individual thinking upon public affairs that is silly, one-sided, or Utopian, inspired by resentments, unfruitful. But even so, it pays to cultivate individuality. In the realm of mechanics a hundred suggestions are made for one that proves useful. Many years of experimenting, and many costly failures, preceded the building of the airplane that could really fly. So in political matters, it is easy to criticize and to propose, and it will be a long process to

disentangle what is good in the babel of voices from what is of no constructive value. But it is only by the utmost encouragement of criticism and the welcoming of variant ideas that we can hope to move on at all.

The true American, then, will not attempt to stifle discussion by calling it "agitation," he will not label ideas with which he disagrees, however vigorously, as "dangerous"; instead of focusing his attention upon the apparent folly of Utopian schemes he will seek to understand the motives that lie behind their construction and the evils that they are meant to remedy. He will realize that from even the wildest radical there may be something to learn; he will, therefore, look for something suggestive in every man's opinions, and glory in that absence of servility to tradition, that prevalence of a critical spirit toward our institutions, and that fertility of inventive thought, which are the best fruits of American individualism.

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## CHAPTER VI

### FREE SPEECH

Most precious, perhaps, of the forms of freedom on these shores has been the freedom of belief and of public utterance. This has been conspicuously true in the field of religion. We know that the Pilgrims came hither for "freedom to worship God." So it was with the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay, the Huguenots, the Quakers, and many others.

True, religious freedom for these early immigrants meant merely the right to hold *their* views, not the right to hold *any* views. Roger Williams, a heretic among these heretics, was persecuted almost as fiercely as he would have been in the Old World. Through his efforts, however, together with the generous spirit of Lord Baltimore and William Penn and their followers, farther south, the principle was gradually accepted that the Government should not meddle with religion at all, and that every one should be free to live by the dictates of his own conscience.

This ideal of liberty of conscience, so early developed in America, is one of our most distinctive contributions to civilization. Nathaniel Shaler once declared it "the most unique accomplishment of our people." In its application to religion it was embodied in the Virginia Declaration of Rights, June 2, 1776: "All men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience." The Constitution of the United States

forbade the use of any religious test as a qualification for office, and the First Amendment declared that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

This tolerant attitude has been universally accepted in America. All churches are protected, none is to have political control. No sectarian teaching is to be allowed in the public schools. No individual is to suffer disabilities of any sort because of his religious beliefs or disbeliefs. As Roosevelt wrote, in his *American Ideals*, "We maintain that it is an outrage, in voting for a man for any position, whether state or national, to take into account his religious faith, provided only he is a good American."

This does not mean that we are an irreligious people. On the contrary, religion flourishes most vigorously where it is free. Political control is never in this country to be used to push any one Church; and conversely, the power of the Church is never to be used to sustain a particular political régime or a privileged social class. But this very divorce of religion from politics means a relaxation of sectarian animosities, an emphasis upon what the religious movements have in common, a growth in mutual respect, which may eventuate in the union of all men of good will in the common, unending war against evil.

The ideal of individual liberty is still incompletely realized while the thought of the various churches is pocketed, each group reading its own denominational literature and living an intellectual and spiritual life of its own. What we need, for the fulfilment of our ideal, is the interflowing of these varied currents of thought, the growth out of them of something larger and more inclusive. We must work to the end



that, as Dr. Stanton Coit puts it, "the thoughts and feelings on religious subjects of all individuals in a nation shall, like the thoughts and feelings in one single brain, be allowed unimpeded interaction and shall constitute one unified and common fund to which each person shall have access."

However far we may be as yet from this ideal, the fight for perfect freedom of belief and utterance in the religious sphere has been definitely won. In the political and economic sphere, on the contrary, there has been recently a reactionary movement, engendered by war-psychology and by the sight of revolutionary chaos abroad, toward the restriction of these elemental rights. Perhaps we may say that freedom of speech in religious matters is unquestioned today largely because people do not take religious differences so seriously as they did; they no longer think that a person will be damned if he has heretical ideas. But they do take differences of economic doctrine seriously; they fear the destruction of society if any radical reorganization of the industrial structure is openly advocated. Or perhaps they fear mainly the restriction of their own privileges and the limitation of their own income. In any case, their dread of economic innovation is so great that it seems to them necessary to curb the time-honored freedom of belief and speech of which America has always been so proud.

Consider, for example, the following facts. During the past few years permits for speeches in halls and out-of-doors have been repeatedly refused to people suspected of radical ideas—including Christian ministers of high reputation, professors in theological schools, editors of reputable journals, and labor leaders of unquestioned personal character. Meetings

gathered to listen to speakers obnoxious to the authorities have been roughly broken up and the speakers forcibly ejected. Not only have the mails been closed to specific issues of various newspapers and journals, but the second-class mailing privilege has been refused altogether to certain periodicals—the result being, in some cases, to put an end to their publication. Books and pamphlets containing passages disapproved by the authorities have likewise been declared unmailable.

Further, raids have been conducted by the Government against schools, clubs, workingmen's associations, political party headquarters; all persons on the premises have been indiscriminately arrested, regardless of the absence of specific evidence as to their beliefs or utterances. Property has been seized and held without warrant. Great numbers of people have been arrested and sent to jail without warrant. Spies and underground agents have been used by the wholesale to disclose to the Government the names of persons and organizations professing radical ideas. In many cases, the "radical" ideas for which men have been jailed have been in reality no more radical than the ideas of the founders of our nation—as, for example, protests against the infringement of the right of free speech or against the continued imprisonment of political prisoners beyond the immediate emergency, the pointing out of obvious evils in the present industrial or social order, the calm discussion of possible improvements upon or alternatives to contemporary institutions.

In the case of aliens in this country suspected of radical sympathies the procedure has been even more violent. Thousands of unoffending working-men have been suddenly summoned before an inspector of

the Bureau of Immigration and subjected to a searching inquisition into their beliefs. Whether or not they have ever joined any radical party or publicly uttered any radical opinions, if their private beliefs, as extracted by this inquisition, are unsatisfactory to the inspector, they can be summarily banished from the United States; and many hard-working men, innocent of all offence save that of holding a minority opinion in the sacred sphere of property or industrial organization, have been arrested, handcuffed, and dragged through the streets like common criminals, sent to jail, without a jury trial, and presently banished from the country.

The various socialist and communist parties, such as exist unmolested in all countries of Europe—flourishing openly even under the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs—have lately been treated in this country by the majority in power as criminal organizations. Membership in some of them has been held by the Department of Justice as sufficient ground in itself for the deportation of otherwise unoffending aliens who may have established a home in this country and be looking forward to citizenship. Socialist representatives have been excluded from their seats in our legislatures because of the party to which they belonged; some of these, when re-elected, have again been expelled.

Worse than all this, bills have been passed by State legislatures that lay violent hands upon freedom of teaching. According to these bills no schools are to be allowed whose teachings are not approved by the State authorities, and no teachers are to be given teaching certificates who do not promise to be “loyal to the institutions and laws” of the State—“disloyalty” meaning the advocacy of any important change



therein. City Boards of Education have passed resolutions to withhold diplomas from all public school children who do not sign a pledge that they will oppose all movements "antagonistic to the laws of the United States or tending to subvert the Constitution,"—under which heads any fundamental reform can, of course, be classified. Students professing socialistic ideas have been refused diplomas in law. Many public school teachers have been dismissed because they were suspected of radical leanings or known to be readers of radical publications. Not a few college and university professors have lost their positions for similar reasons. It no longer is wise for a teacher in many of our educational institutions to profess beliefs unpopular with the Powers that Be.

All of this persecution of opinion, which would have seemed incredible in America a few years ago, is the outgrowth of the War. It will, no doubt, gradually die out. But it has persisted, with little public disapproval, for over two years, at date of writing, since the cessation of hostilities; and the extent to which this wave of intolerance has spread over the country is ominous. It shows how little our people have been trained to cherish our American heritage of liberty of opinion.

Yet there is no ideal deeper-rooted in our history. Thomas Jefferson urged, "If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its form, let them stand undisturbed. Let them stand undisturbed as monuments to the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated when reason is free to combat it." Daniel Webster declared that what he would most proudly leave to posterity was his record that in all circumstances he had favored free-

dom of opinion, especially freedom for opinions that were in bad repute. President Wilson summed up our national ideal in these words: "If there is one thing we love more than another in the United States, it is that every man should have the privilege, unmolested and uncriticized, to utter the real convictions of his mind."

That many public-spirited Americans have kept this ideal alive in their hearts during the wave of repression following the Great War may be witnessed by the protest against the Government's policy signed by twelve of the most prominent lawyers in the country. These eminent and conservative men wrote, "We make no argument in favor of any radical doctrine, as such, whether socialist, communist, or anarchist. No one of us belongs to any of these schools of thought. Nor do we now raise any question as to the Constitutional protection of free speech and a free press. We are concerned solely with bringing to the attention of the American people the utterly illegal acts which have been committed by those charged with the highest duty of enforcing the laws—acts which have caused widespread suffering and unrest, have struck at the foundation of American free institutions, and have brought the name of our country into disrepute."

We must beware of assuming that America belongs to us alone, and not to those who disagree with us. We must remember what Lincoln said: "This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it." To those who seem to us "radicals," or "bourgeois," or "Bourbons," as well as to those who agree with us. It takes many kinds of people to make a great country. It may happen that one class of people, getting into power, is able to run things

in its own way for a while, and to make it unsafe for another class of people to advocate another way of doing things. But nothing could be more disastrous than for them to exercise that power.

The imperious reason why freedom of speech is desirable is not the hardship brought upon those who differ from the dominant views, but the need of the ideas that every one has to contribute. New and better ideas are always at first in a minority, always unpopular, usually deemed dangerous and immoral by the more conservative majority. It was so with the ideas of Socrates, and with the ideas of a greater than Socrates, the Founder of our own faith. It was so with the early Christians, whose views were so universally thought to be immoral that they were persecuted even by the wise and gentle Marcus Aurelius. In a given case we may feel certain that the opinion or ideal we are repressing is highly undesirable; but we fail to realize that the repressive attitude is even more dangerous. As Lecky has said, "The persecutor can never be certain that he is not persecuting truth rather than error, but he can always be certain that he is suppressing the *spirit* of truth."

Democracy implies not only government by majorities, but freedom of criticism and agitation by minorities, the facilitation of the development of minorities into majorities, the maintenance of opportunities for the hearing of everyone's opinion and for the making of whatever social or political changes the majority can be brought by open agitation to approve. How can we be sure that we have the best possible system unless we listen to what every critic, every agitator, every idealist, has to say? The proper way to combat one-sided and impracticable ideals is

to show their unreason, to meet argument by argument, to put no artificial barriers in the way of free discussion, but to trust to common-sense (reinforced by the inertia of conservatism) to put the brakes upon unreasonable proposals. Mr. Justice Holmes has stated the true American attitude in memorable words: "When men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe even more than they believe the very foundations of their own conduct that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideals—that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market. . . . That at any rate is the theory of our Constitution."

The seriousness of the repressive tendency lies not merely in the shutting of the mouths of the actual radicals, but in the inevitable lumping together by the repressionists of all liberals and reformers with the radicals, and thus the checking of all movements for genuine political or social progress. It may well be argued that the policy of the American Government has suffered greatly since the signing of the Armistice through the lack of enlightened public criticism, the result of the censorship and repression of discussion unfavorable to the policies of the administration.

At any rate, however exceptional may be the case in wartime, an era of peace should welcome the development of individual thought, however contrary to accepted doctrines it may be. We should say, as Voltaire said to Helvetius, "I wholly disapprove of what you say and will defend to the death your right to say it." Or as Elihu Root lately put it, "Men in a self-governing democracy must have a love of liberty



that means not merely one's own liberty but others' liberty."

Radicalism is not one single, united, sinister, red-handed thing. Radicalism is a name for a great number of very diverse theories, largely incompatible with one another, and mostly actuated by idealistic and humanitarian motives. Selfish and anti-social motives are probably no commoner among radicals than among conservatives. What we should do, then, is to encourage discussion of radical ideas to the utmost, develop our Open Forum movements, our Neighborhood Centers, our political clubs, air these new ideas, develop newer ideas, confront them in reasoned debate with older ideas. The fear that America will be destroyed by such a procedure is a childish fear. We are not so near the brink of collapse that we need to fear what anyone has to say. On the contrary, if the method of repression grows upon us and becomes a settled policy, much that is best in American life will already have disappeared.

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## CHAPTER VII

### LAW AND ORDER

THERE is one sort of person, and only one, that the machinery of repression should be turned against—the person who breaks or urges the breaking of the laws of the land. Detest as we may a man's opinions, we most give them free room unless they call for the violation of laws, or the use of violence to subvert the existing order. On the other hand, however we may sympathize with the ideals of some revolutionist, and much as we may desire with him to see some obnoxious law repealed, we cannot tolerate the proposal to disobey it while it remains upon the statute-books. The lawabiding spirit is the prime essential for the success of a democracy.

It is true that we all sympathize with the great revolutionists of the past—with Gambetta and Kossuth and Garibaldi, with the French and Russian revolutionists, and our own forefathers, who refused to obey the laws of their sovereign and by violence achieved a new political order. It is true that, as Gladstone said, "If the people of this country had obeyed the precept to preserve order and eschew violence, the liberties of this country would never have been obtained." But these resorts to violent means were justified because no peaceful channel was open for reform, and because the benefit sought by the arbitrament of war was for a whole people, not for a section or class. In a democracy like ours any alter-

ation in the political or industrial order is possible; it is merely a question of winning the approval of a majority of the people. And no change ought to be made without the verdict of that approval. The South attempted a sectional schism, and was decisively defeated, as any section or class will be that seeks to free itself from the common law of the land. The issue of that war decided that, as Lincoln put it, "among free men there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet."

The evil of violence lies not merely in the specific bloodshed and economic destruction effected, but in the precedent set. Human nature is all too prone to resort to blows instead of argument; and if this group or that were to win their point by lawbreaking, or some illegal *coup d'état*, other groups would be powerfully encouraged to yield to their impatience with the slow growth of public opinion and try the same short cut to the result they desire. There is no case in the whole field of morals where it is more important that everyone shall keep to a code, in spite of whatever immediate sacrifice. The code of law-abidingness must have the loyalty of every citizen, or we shall soon find ourselves drifting into chaos.

Moreover, even a successful revolution achieved by a class or group within the nation would not be stable; no change in the mechanism of politics or industry would be permanent that did not rest upon the sincere conviction of the majority of the people. And when that majority is secured, violence is no longer necessary to secure the change. Violence, on the contrary, stimulates opposition, increases estrangements, encourages the use of counter-violence, makes it harder for classes to work together and understand one another. Yet work together we must,

in the end, and learn to use peaceful means for making changes. The slow road of education, propaganda, campaigning, and the ballot, will be in the long run the quickest road to the attainment of any reform that is genuinely desirable.

Unhappily, respect for the slow processes of law is not a mark of a pioneer country; and our nation, strong with the strength of youth and rich with the exploitation of the virgin resources of a continent, has not yet fully learned the necessity of restraint. Lord Bryce has declared that our greatest fault is "the disposition to be lax in enforcing laws disliked by any large part of the population, to tolerate breaches of public order, to be too indulgent to offenders generally."

The most flagrant example of our lawlessness is, of course, the lynchings we tolerate. In the past thirty years over three thousand people have been put to death by mobs in this country—a record worse than that of any other contemporary civilized State, up to the time of the Great War. The number of annual lynchings has begun to decrease appreciably; but some of the most brutal and inexcusable of these mob murders have been perpetrated within the past few years. The fact that more than three-quarters of the victims were negroes points to the factor of race prejudice but does not in the least palliate the crimes. The offence charged has by no means always been rape—the suspicion of which most arouses human passions; in many cases the alleged crime was of a trivial character. And in very many cases the evidence of the guilt of the victim has been meager. Certainly in a number of cases an innocent man has been tortured and hanged or burned to death. It is true that the most progressive sections of the country

are free from this horror. But the stain rests upon the Nation as a whole; and it is nothing short of grotesque to make a great hue and cry about imagined Bolshevists in our midst when men and women of American descent thus practise the most brutal forms of violence and go unpunished therefor.

As a matter of fact, violence by "Bolshevists," by anarchists, by radicals of any sort bent on terrorizing and bloodshed, has existed to very slight extent in this country. There has been more or less open advocacy of revolutionary methods, of the destruction of property, by the propertyless, of sabotage, by underpaid and underfed workers, of armed revolution, when the "proletariat" could be brought to the point of revolution. But the sporadic cases of violence actually attempted have been vigorously condemned by the rank and file of labor; and there is absolutely no danger of armed revolution in the present temper of the masses. The fact is, we are too prosperous; revolution thrives upon hardship and hunger. In spite of much that is unjust and exasperating in our social order, conditions are not such as drive men to bloodshed and anarchy.

It is, indeed, a fair question whether more actual lawbreaking and violence has not been committed by the noisy advocates of "law and order," the "hundred per cent Americans" who label every critic of contemporary institutions a "Bolshevist," who raid illegally the offices of radical newspapers, break up Socialist meetings and parades, threaten labor organizers, and urge the jailing or deportation of every "red." There has been no more flagrant violation of law than the Bisbee deportations, in 1917, carried out by the bitter enemies of organized labor—an outrage for which no punishment was ever inflicted. There



has been probably more violence committed in time of strikes by the strikebreakers and hired servants of the employers than by the strikers.

In any case, whatever the facts may be as to the past, we must be stern to repress illegal action in the future, whether committed by a lower class or an upper class, by an I. W. W. agitator or the hired thug of a great corporation.

But it is not enough to repress violence, we must seek to counteract the influences that lead to it. Among those influences there are three of chief importance. In the first place, there is the conviction, current here and there among the lower classes, that the social order is weighted against them, that they have no hope of securing their share of the good things of life except through some violent convulsion. This conviction we must combat by promoting a discussion of their grievances, real or supposed, and focusing the attention of publicists and legislators upon their cure. If these disaffected people can be shown that their government is sincerely interested in their welfare—shown by acts as well as by platform promises—they will cease to look to extra-governmental means for improving their condition.

In the second place, the upper classes, those who are well off under our present system of laws, must cease to regard that system as sacrosanct. Reverence for law and order means properly the insistence upon using the ballot alone for altering the legal structure, not the insistence upon retaining unmodified a given social system. Criticism of our laws, even of our Constitution, is not equivalent to advocacy of disobedience to these laws while they remain on the statute-books. To brand as "disloyal" every honest thinker who holds that our present system can be



improved upon is to cheapen respect for that system. It has often been true that the most devoted patriots have been the keenest critics of their country's policies and laws. It is possible to criticize our existing political or industrial system, not because we do not love our country, but precisely because we love her too well to be content that she should have any but the most ideal system that can be devised. To assume that wisdom died with our fathers, and that the laws they conceived are to be petrified and made unchangeable is to belie the spirit of those valiant reformers and to supplant Americanism with Bourbonism—the maintenance of what is, simply because it is to some people's advantage to keep it as it is.

In the third place, and most important of all, if lawlessness on the part of the disaffected is to be avoided, they must be given every opportunity to air their opinions openly and without fear. Deny men the right of free speech, and you foster in them the revolutionary spirit. Nothing cheapens the authority of the laws more than the browbeating of those who protest against them. Free speech, and plenty of it, is the great safety valve; conversely, as President Wilson has put it, "repression is the seed of revolution."

This, then, is an argument for free speech perhaps even more important than those we discussed in the preceding chapter. No argument for any existing law or custom will weigh with those who chafe under it unless they feel perfectly free, with safety, to express their arguments against it. The utter futility of the repression policy is obvious to any careful observer, or, indeed, to any student of psychology. The suppressed ideas do not vanish, they work underground, and, like steam without an outlet,

become more and more explosive. On the other hand, as Mr. Justice Holmes recently wrote, "with effervescing opinions, as with the not yet forgotten champagnes, the quickest way to let them get flat is to let them get exposed to the air."

In a society as complex as ours, there is bound to be disaffection. No sensible person can suppose that our present civilization achieves the maximum of human welfare obtainable. If there were no unrest, there would be no hope of progress. Our danger is not in unrest, it is in unrest that is suppressed, ignored, inarticulate. Our hope is in unrest that crystallizes into concrete proposals which can be debated until they convert the majority or disappear through the impact of sound and fair-minded argument. Institutions inherently justifiable will never be overthrown by iconoclastic agitators, they may be overthrown only if they are artificially protected from criticism and hence come to be regarded as without reasonable justification.

One of the sanest proposals of recent years is that of the eminent sociologist, Dr. Edward T. Devine: "Let all of those who have grievances be openly . . . invited to voice them. Let President Wilson and every governor and every mayor designate great public meeting places—in halls and in public parks—where the freely chosen representatives of every group . . . may express their views. Let the secret service men attend, not to find victims for prosecution, but to catch the faintest whisper of a just complaint. Let legislative assemblies give patient hearing to delegates who come to them from such assemblies. Let grand juries weigh their complaints, whether against individuals or against any existing abuse which might be remedied. Let the industries

be represented by their detectives, not to spot agitators to discharge them, but to make careful notes of any bad practises which might be reformed. . . . Let it be considered bad form to characterize any man as a Bolshevik merely because you do not agree with him. . . . Let us have parades of Socialists or Communists, or Christians, or any other sect that can muster enough enthusiasm and confidence in their cause to make a showing. Let us make it the greatest offense against morals and manners to silence the voice of a prophet; to refuse a respectful hearing to those who speak in the name of a more perfect justice, in the name of a better social order."

So we are brought to the conclusion that as law is not the enemy of liberty, so lawlessness is the product not of liberty but of its denial. It is not less liberty that we need, but more. If we would avoid the lawless state through which Mexico, for example, has been passing, we must guard against that assumption of despotic power and that denial of popular rights which has engendered there a contempt for the ballot as the means of reform and an impatience of the restraints of law. Obedience to law can be expected only if the law represents the free will and sincere convictions of the people. The Pilgrims, drawing up the Famous Mayflower Compact, November 11, 1620, pledged to yield to their laws "all due submission and obedience"; but they offered their allegiance because the laws were their own, not imposed upon them from above.

Washington, in his Farewell Address, declared that "the very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish Government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established Government." Jefferson, in his First Inaugural, asserted

that liberty is to be secured only "by absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority; the vital principle of republics, from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism."

This principle was reaffirmed by Lincoln in these well-known words: "Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well-wisher to his posterity swear by the blood of the Revolution never to violate in the least particular the laws of the country, and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of '76 did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and the laws, let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor; let every man remember that to violate the law is to trample upon the blood of his fathers and to tear the charter of his own and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws be breathed by every American mother to the lisping babe that prattles on her lap. Let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges. Let it be written in primers, spelling books, and almanacs. Let it be preached from the pulpits, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. In short, let it become the political religion of the Nation."

And finally, Roosevelt, speaking at Columbus, September 10, 1910, declared, "The first essential to the achievement of justice is that law and order shall obtain, that violence shall be repressed, that the orderly course of law shall be unobstructed, and that those who commit violence shall be sternly punished."

This is the American tradition. It is broken by anyone who urges bomb-throwing, assassination, disobedience to the laws, arrest without warrant, punish-



ment without due trial by jury, the incitement of class against class, suppression of free speech and a free press, the branding by opprobrious names of those with whom we disagree, the use of any means but open argument and the ballot-box either for the attaining of a better order or the maintenance of the order that now is. We are passing through perilous times, and may have to pass through times still more perilous. But no harm will come to the American Republic if we remain true to our heritage of *liberty for all within the law*.

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**PART TWO**  
**EQUALITY**



## CHAPTER VIII

### JUSTICE FOR ALL

THE Declaration of Independence asserts that "all men are created equal." This is not, of course, the announcement of a biological law, but an emphatic way of saying that all men ought to have equality of treatment—equal security for life and limb, equal access to the means for developing their capacities, equal opportunities for the pursuit of happiness. There must be here no hereditary office or rank, or social class; every career must be open to anyone who can make good in it. "Every American is as good as his brains and character and manners, and no better." This is the second great principle of Americanism. De Tocqueville hardly exaggerated when he said that we were so devoted to it that we had rather be equal in slavery than unequal in freedom.

Equality cannot be secured by a mere absence of discriminatory laws and customs. Life is like a handicap race; much must be done for the weaker among us to secure for them an opportunity for happiness equal to that of their stronger or more fortunate neighbors. But the foundation must be laid in an absolute equality of all citizens before the law. Not only must every citizen have the protection of the law from injustice and injury, anywhere in the world, on land or on sea, and a right to fair trial by due process, whenever accused of wrongdoing, but,

most essential of all, he must have assurance of an administration of justice that is impartial toward rich and poor, high and low, educated and ignorant, white and black.

If we have had no personal experience to refute our optimism, we shall naturally assume that this is the case in America. But a little study of the facts shows that our ideal is not completely realized. Many of our conservative statesmen and lawyers, as well as more radical writers, have expressed opinions similar to that of ex-President Taft: "Of all the questions which are before the American people, I regard no one as more important than the improvement of the administration of justice. We must make it so that the poor man will have as nearly as possible an equal opportunity in litigation with the rich man; and under present conditions, ashamed as we may be of it, this is not the fact."

In what respects is it not the fact? Well, in the first place, it costs more than a poor man can afford to hire a good lawyer to defend his case. The rich offender has at his command the services of the cleverest attorneys, who are skilled in the many technical devices by which justice can be delayed or sidetracked altogether. At least, every extenuating circumstance will be emphasized, every precedent favorable to his case will be hunted up, every resource of dialectic and persuasion brought to bear upon the witnesses and the jury. A highly paid alienist may testify to a temporary fit of insanity on the part of his client. Altogether, cases are well known in which rich men guilty of the worst crimes have escaped with light penalties or with none.

The law does, indeed, provide for the defense of every man accused of crime, by assigning counsel to

those who cannot afford their own lawyers. But these are usually unsuccessful lawyers, no match for the rich man's attorneys, and often little interested in the cases assigned to them. It is a common belief among the criminal classes that conviction or acquittal depends upon the sum they can pay to their counsel. There are a great number of "shyster" lawyers who get what fees they can collect from the poor, and render little or no service in return; in some cases they do not even take the trouble to go to court when the case comes up.

An ex-convict, writing in the *Outlook* for December 27, 1916, declares that among the men who went to trial "a majority seemed to believe that freedom or imprisonment was largely a matter of money. If they could raise enough of this to secure certain lawyers, the result was almost foreordained. And certainly there appeared solid ground for this belief in that these men did secure verdicts of 'not guilty' for several scores of prisoners who had made little secret of their guilt while among us. . . . Study of the situation reveals that not more than ten per cent of criminals have the means to engage really capable attorneys. And usually these are of the types most dangerous to society. . . . The criminal lawyers . . . have taught the professional criminal that he can 'get away with anything short of murder' if he has the money."

Now, however common or unusual this situation may be, it is intolerable that even the suspicion of it should rest upon our judicial system. At least this much should be done: defense, like prosecution, should be recognized as a public matter; there should be Public Defenders, as well paid as prosecuting attorneys, well enough paid to attract to the position



men of ability and experience. The securing of justice requires as great skill in defense as in prosecution, and an equal skill available to rich and poor. If this plan, already in practice in some American communities, is universally applied, we may hope to substitute in the minds of the poor a genuine respect for the law for the contempt and fear that they now too often feel. Society must be protected equally against jugglery of law and evidence in favor of the rich offender, and an inadequate hearing of the case of the poor.

Still more serious than this weighting of the scales of justice in favor of rich offenders is the trend of judicial decisions and interpretations in favor of the possessing classes as against the working-man. It has been often said, and not without show of reason, that the majority of our lawyers and judges, coming from the upper stratum of society, are unconsciously prejudiced in favor of property rights as against human rights. This, at least, is a widespread conviction among the poorer classes; and it must receive the gravest attention; for nothing could bode more ill for our Republic than the growth of this conviction that justice is a class affair.

To realize the extent of this conviction we have but to read the resolutions unanimously adopted by the American Federation of Labor at its convention in 1919. An extract follows: "Our organization of law presents a mass of inconsistencies and contradictions. While organizations of capital are encouraged and protected, combinations of workers are constantly attacked. While employers may unite and combine against workers and against the buying public, the right of the workers to resist encroachments and to right admitted wrongs is constantly

being interfered with. . . . Whenever an officer of an incorporated financial, industrial, or commercial enterprise exceeds the power specifically delegated to him, the courts declare his act *ultra vires* and the company is absolved from all responsibility. But when a labor man at a trade union meeting makes utterances which are condemned by those in authority, the union and its members may be robbed of their funds and savings.

“It was the spirit of the jurisprudence of slavery which forbade the slaves the opportunity to read to defend themselves; and so it is the jurisprudence of employers of today to continue doctrines which deny the workers a full opportunity of defence. The time has passed, however, when our courts should be longer permitted to devise legal doctrines and design local fictions by which to deny the wage earners equal rights and privileges before the law . . .

“The power of our courts to declare legislation unconstitutional and void is a most flagrant usurpation of power and authority by our courts and is a repudiation and denial of the principle of self-government recognized now as a world doctrine. The continued exercise of this unwarranted power is a blasphemy on the rights and claims of free men of America.”

We have already had occasion to notice that there have been a great number of cases in which humanitarian legislation, legislation favoring working-men and women, has been set aside as unconstitutional by the courts because it interfered with property rights. Eight-hour, and even ten-hour, laws; laws forbidding tenement-house labor of certain sorts; laws forbidding child-labor; laws requiring payment of wages in cash instead of truck; a law forbidding employers to

discharge employees for being members of a labor union, have thus been annulled by the courts. In 1917 the Supreme Court went even further, and declared that a Labor Union has no right, against an employer's wish, to urge his workmen to join the union. The New York State Supreme Court declared the workman's compensation law unconstitutional, and it required a constitutional amendment to make it operative.

At the same time that the Courts have thus been annulling laws passed in the interest of the weaker members of society, they have been sustaining the powers of the great Corporations, and making possible the prodigious profit-takings of the past few decades. It is no wonder, then, that not only the representatives of the laboring classes, but many members of the professional classes, have felt that the Courts were essentially a class-institution. A distinguished student of public affairs wrote with some bitterness, in 1919, "Within the last year the case of the United States against the Standard Oil Company for violation of the statutes directed against rebates was dismissed by the courts, while the officers of the American Federation of Labor were committed to jail for alleged violation of a court order."

It is useless to expect, of course, that prejudice will not enter into judicial decisions. All men are full of prejudices; lawyers and judges are no exception. The fact that there are precedents available for almost any possible decision, and that judges differ upon almost every disputed case, means that the element of unconscious bias must be a considerable factor. What is essential, then, is that judges should be drawn from all classes of society, subject to all the conflicting prejudices, and that decisions of impor-

tance should be made only by a two-thirds vote, or even perhaps a unanimous vote, of a panel of judges representing all schools of thought.

It is also important that the law should be conceived not merely as a mass of precedents, a binding grip of the past upon the present, but that fresh interpretations shall keep our laws in touch with changing conditions. It is necessary that judges be men "who have a large comprehension of our country's needs, wide conceptions of social justice, and who have creative minds—who can make legal interpretations contribute to the structure of our government." To this end the law schools should teach their students and the legal profession should inculcate among its members the realization that their ultimate aim must be to serve the welfare of the country.

But justice must go farther than to treat the rich and poor alike, and to rate human needs above property interests. It must take account of the influences that lead certain people almost irresistibly into crime; it must seek to give them a fair chance by counteracting as far as possible these evil forces. It must see to it that the punishment inflicted for crime is not of such a nature as to brutalize and make a hardened criminal out of a first offender. It must see to it that a man who has fallen once has every possible opportunity to recover his self-respect and the respect of society. In these aspects of what we might call the Broader Justice, we must confess that we are only at the beginning of imperative reforms. Our penology may compare favorably with that of some other countries. But nothing should content America but the best. And our present penal system is far short of what it ought to be.

It is an axiom of modern criminology that most



crime is preventable. In the phrase that has become familiar, "All men are possible criminals, and all criminals possible men." The number of convicts released for war-service who won commissions and medals, and the greater number who made good in less spectacular ways, should convince the most reluctant of the needless injustice in branding a man as a criminal for life because of one offence. It should also show that what a man becomes depends largely upon the nature of his environment and opportunities. We have been too slow to discriminate between the pathological, hopeless criminal, and the man whom we might call a chance offender, a victim of circumstances. Toward the latter we need the humbler and more generous attitude expressed in the words attributed to various godly lips, "There but for the Grace of God go I!"

Perhaps a third of the inmates of our prisons showed signs in childhood or youth of abnormality. They should have been carefully watched by the school medical examiners and either given a special corrective treatment or education, or, if necessary, removed from the pressure of an environment in which they were practically sure to go wrong. Most of these defectives and abnormal individuals could be kept from crime and made into self-supporting citizens by proper precautions. The more hopeless ones should have been put where they could never have been dangerous to society, without waiting for the harm to be done and the stigma of "criminal" to attach to them.

As to the other two-thirds of our criminals, probably more than half would have kept clear of crime but for the pressure of poverty, of over-hard and unpleasant work, of crowded, noisy, unsanitary,



uncomfortable homes. The provision of adequate housing accommodations and decently pleasant working conditions, with reasonable hours and wages; and the securing of education for everyone, so that all can earn an honest living and have resources for their leisure hours,—these are the minimum requirements of our American ideal of justice for all.

There will still be those who will yield to passion or seductive temptation and commit anti-social acts. With these our aim should be not revenge but reformation. Most of these offenders, if treated kindly and trained in social co-operation, would come to regret their mistake and would emerge from their imprisonment with a resolve never to return. But this is a matter for expert treatment, as far removed as A from Z from the incredibly stupid treatment that prisoners now sometimes receive. Many of our prisons are scandalously unhygienic; the wardens are often men without special training for their office, if, indeed, they are not coarse and of a lower moral grade than some of their charges. Little is done usually to train the unskilled prisoners in any vocation; in many cases they are even required to pass their days in idleness. Often young offenders are allowed to associate freely with men who are hardened and who take pleasure in teaching them criminal ways. Little is done, if anything, to remedy the defect of character which caused their fall. They are kept under restraint for a period of unhappiness and brooding, and then turned loose upon society again.

There is no need to labor the point that we are not fair to our criminals. Many of them have never had a fair chance to become reputable citizens; many others who have abused their opportunities could also, by proper training and environment, be made

over into men of use to society. Some will, no doubt, prove hopeless. But a more discriminating treatment would salvage most of the human wreckage that now disgraces our civilization.

As a scientific penology proved the possibility of restoring most offenders to normal citizenship, the people at large would become less wary of accepting the services of those who had served prison terms, and there would be a mitigation, at least, of that cruel suspiciousness which makes it all but impossible now for a man who has once fallen to regain the respect of his fellows and build for himself again a respectable life. Another chance for everybody, should be our demand. If our prisons were all scientifically managed our faith in their efficiency as reform-schools would be justified, and the professionally criminal class would lose the many recruits that join it out of desperation at the attitude toward them of society.

~~Human life can never be made to offer equal opportunities to all.~~ We shall be to the end different in brains, in good looks, in health, in a thousand things that contribute to the determination of our conduct. But if we sincerely cherish our ideal of Justice to all, we must realize that far more is necessary for its attainment than the judicial and penal systems that we as yet possess.

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## CHAPTER IX

### RACIAL EQUALITY

THE toleration of negro slavery was, of course, the great crime, the great inconsistency, in a nation founded upon the principle that "all men are created equal." That crime was atoned for by the blood and tears of the Civil War, and ended by the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution. Now Lincoln, the Emancipator, is known and revered by the poorest child who earns or is given a copper cent.

Scarcely less serious a stain upon our record has been our treatment of the natives of our land, the American Indians. They were subjugated with comparative ease by the superior numbers and weapons of the European settlers, and thereupon denied citizenship, banished to the far West, cooped up upon Reserves, and treated in a way that justifies the title of a recent volume, *A Century of Dishonor*. A commission appointed by President Grant to report upon Indian affairs published this conclusion: "The history of the Government connection with the Indians is a shameful record of broken treaties and unfulfilled promises. The history of the border white man's connection with the Indians is a sickening record of murder, outrage, robbery and wrongs committed by the former, as the rule, and occasional outbreaks and unspeakably barbarous deeds of retaliation by the latter, as the exception."

The nation has now generally recognized the wrong that was done the negro and the Indian. What remains of the latter race seems in a fair way to be absorbed into the common American stock. But the negro race remains a sharply distinct race, whose intermarriage is not usually regarded as desirable. Human nature being what it is, a certain racial antipathy seems unconquerable; and the presence of eleven millions of negroes in this country gives rise to a very serious problem.

It is not that the negroes are an "inferior" race. Modern biology has been undermining that complacent assumption of innate superiority which the white man has until recently taken for granted. Recent investigations seem to indicate that there is no very great difference in average mental ability between the members of the white, red, yellow, brown and black races. It may be—though it has not yet been decisively proved—that the average of negro capacity is somewhat below the average capacity of the white race. But in any case, the range of capacity within each race is so great as compared with any average difference that there may be between the races, that no difference in attitude toward any race as a whole is justified because of different mental capacity.

It would seem, if these biological investigations are trustworthy, that the apparent lower capacity of the negroes, as of every backward race, is to be explained mainly, if not altogether, by the absence of an environment favorable for development. Give the negroes equal educational and cultural advantages, and in a generation there will be no more problem of a backward race there than there is with the Japanese, who, in a generation, have leaped from a semi-civilized status to be one of the world's great



Powers. The poetry of Paul Lawrence Dunbar, the great educational achievement of Booker Washington—possibly the greatest educational achievement of the past generation, the undisputed genius of many negroes in this and other countries, reveals the potentialities in a hitherto cramped and suppressed race. The problem of the negro is not so much the problem of the negro as the problem of the white man who does not want to extend to him equal advantages.

It is easy, of course, for a Northerner, who sees few negroes, to preach equality of treatment. It is quite another matter for a Southerner who lives in a region where, perhaps, the blacks outnumber the whites, to practice such equality. But it should be unnecessary to insist that the denial of equal rights and privileges to any race is fundamentally un-American. The negro in many parts of the country does not get equal justice. He is brutally treated by the police. If there is a quarrel between whites and blacks, it is usually the blacks that are arrested. In the recent Chicago race-riots—which started with the shameless murder of an innocent colored boy—twenty-three colored and fifteen white people were killed; but the arrests and indictments of negroes were five times as numerous as those of whites. The lynchings that disgrace our land have usually negroes for the victims, although the statistics show that the negroes are a comparatively law-abiding race. More cases of rape are recorded annually as committed by white men in a single Northern city than by all the negroes in the South.

Apart from this flagrant injustice, the petty indignities to which the negro population is subject in many parts of the South show how undeveloped the sense of human equality still remains. The nasty

waiting-rooms and railway cars which negroes must use, the discourtesies of conductors and ticket-agents and hotel men, make travelling for the refined negro extremely disagreeable. Employers cheat their negro helpers, storekeepers insult them, politicians indulge in coarse jests and vituperation at their expense, a venal press fans the flame of race prejudice by misrepresenting facts and exploiting whatever cases of negro criminality come to hand. There is a widespread effort to keep the negro in a position of inferiority; and to justify this injustice, there is a continual stream of abuse poured upon him, to prove that the discrimination is deserved.

Most serious of all is the denial of educational privileges. The recent constitutional amendments in most of the Southern States withhold the ballot from the illiterate blacks; and there is therefore a widespread desire to keep them illiterate in order to prevent their obtaining political power. No Southern state permits white and negro children to attend the same public schools; four states prohibit even mixed private schools and colleges. One state goes so far as to forbid whites from *teaching* negroes! In many parts of the South the sums available for negro education are shamelessly small—far less than the sums available for white children, though the negro children may outnumber the whites. Figures available some years ago showed that although the negroes constitute eleven per cent of our population, they get the benefit of but two per cent of the school funds of the country. As a result, ignorance still prevails among the negroes; and it is no wonder if poverty, crime and vice, the concomitants of ignorance, too largely prevail.

Thus, instead of solving the problem by helping the negro to rise to a higher level, many of their white

neighbors are doing their best to keep the negroes down, retarding the only possible solution. What with the educational disqualification, from which most of the illiterate whites are exempt, and the poll-tax laws, and the pressure of white disapproval of negro participation in politics, the negroes are not in a position to relieve their own situation at the ballot-box. It is necessary to awaken the conscience of their white compatriots to the true implications of Americanism.

The act of freeing and giving the franchise to the negroes was, as Professor Hartley Alexander has said, "the most heroic act of political faith in history." They have not had a fair chance to justify that faith. But some of their leaders are making heroic efforts to uplift their people. The return of negro soldiers from participation in the War, with its broadening outlook, the growing appreciation of the economic value of the negro in a time when farm-labor is increasingly scarce, the work of the few endowed negro schools, and of such bodies as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, offer hope for the alleviation of an intolerable situation. At any rate, the negroes are not dying out, not emigrating, not being blended with the rest of the population. Their degradation involves the degradation, in some degree, of their white neighbors; as Booker Washington used to say, "You can't keep a man in the ditch without staying in the ditch with him." The only possible solution of the negro problem lies in a frank recognition of the American principle of equality. This does not imply intermarriage or unnecessary social contact. It does imply equal rights—to education, to the ballot, to all the privi-

leges available to the white population. America is theirs as well as ours.

The crux of the negro problem lies in the fact that, on the one hand, we do not want to assimilate them biologically, and, on the other hand, the presence of an unassimilated race so different from our own creates an unhappy social situation. The situation seems permanently unsatisfactory, with no way out. We can, and must, insist on fair treatment for the negroes; we must respect them and cease to look upon them as inferiors. But we should learn the lesson of our fathers' blunder in bringing them to our shores, and make sure that another such situation does not arise.

Yet just such another situation might arise if the Chinese or Japanese or Hindus were to be allowed to enter our country in any considerable numbers. It is not, again, that these are inferior races. The Chinese and Hindus were civilized while our Caucasian ancestors were still savages; and the Japanese have already shown a capacity for modern methods that everyone admires. It is likely that within a comparatively short time, as history goes, these nations will all be as civilized as our own.

But do we want to intermarry with these races? Are we sure that it would be wise? Certainly most of our people would vigorously repudiate the idea; and these Orientals would form a separate race in our midst, not so ignorant, and—let us hope—not so ill-treated as the negroes have been, but still aliens, separate, and made to feel their separateness. Candidly, we cannot count on our courtesy to such an alien race living in our midst. Race-prejudice rests on deep-seated human instincts, and it is



utopian to expect it to disappear. It is far wiser to avoid situations that inflame it. We can respect and admire the Orientals in their own homes; we can gladly learn from them and have a happy interchange of students and scholars, travellers and technicians. But occasions for friction and race-wars will be best averted by restrictions which will, in general, keep each race to its own continent.

The policy of Oriental exclusion, then, does not, or should not, rest on any denial of the doctrine of human equality. It rests on the obvious fact that the hybridizing of races, once done, can never be undone. And the complementary fact that another unassimilated race in America would be a constant source of friction and a danger to democracy. These sources of friction we must be wise enough to avoid, whenever possible.

“With the two races physically on different sides of the ocean, we can develop our common national and international interests. But with any considerable immigration to this side, causes of friction would inevitably develop. They might be our fault, but we could not prevent them. Our people have learned their racial lessons in a dangerous school. . . . We have dealt unjustly with the Negro and he submits. We have dealt unjustly with the Indian and he is dead. If we have many Japanese, we shall not know how to deal otherwise than unjustly with them, and very properly they will not submit. The only real safety is in separation.”

With the various Caucasian races (“white men”) the situation we have discussed will not arise, or, at least, be permanent; for they are all assimilable, and rapidly being assimilated into the American stock. But the question may still be raised whether for other



reasons some further restriction of immigration is not desirable.

There seems to be no abstract right of the inhabitants of one country to emigrate to another. If for any reason it seems best for the general welfare, our people may properly reserve to themselves the right to say who shall come and who shall not come to live here. But there is much to be said for the policy of a comparatively unrestricted immigration. It is difficult to devise laws that will shut out the less desirable and admit the more desirable immigrants—except for the exclusion of people of obviously sub-normal mentality and those suffering from contagious or inheritable diseases, or likely to become a public charge, or likely to indulge in crime or flagrant vice. The illiteracy test now in force keeps out a good many who have had no educational opportunities, but is no fair test of mental capacity or race-value.

It is doubtful if, as is so often assumed, the people from southern and eastern Europe are really inferior on the average in their potentialities to the immigrants from northern and western Europe. It is certainly true that they have ideals and ideas to bring us, as well as muscle. The cessation of immigration during the war brought about a shortage of unskilled labor particularly irksome to the owners of factories and mines, but of moment to us all. Why not welcome their brains and brawn, rejoice in the bettering of their condition over here, in the relief to overcrowded districts of Europe, and in the return flux of ideals and ideas to the lands from which they came and with which they usually remain in touch?

In answer, we may say that while there is any doubt as to the average mental capacity of a given race, we may well hesitate to admit great numbers of

that race into the melting pot out of which is to come the American stock of the future. More clearly, the admission of great numbers of ignorant and untrained foreigners makes it very hard to raise the standard of living not only of their own families but of the American laborers with whom they compete. Many of these immigrants are willing to work for low wages, because they were used, in the Old World, to poor living conditions. It is difficult to organize men of many different races into unions which can demand a living wage and proper working conditions. The presence of multitudes of these servile laborers is welcome to the owners of some of our factories and mines, but is undesirable from the public point of view.

Apart from this economic situation and a possible eugenic disadvantage in certain racial mixtures, the immigrant-problem is, as we said of the negro-problem, not so much their problem as ours. It is the problem of treating the immigrants fairly, protecting them from exploitation, giving them decent housing conditions, facilities for education, and influences that make for moral upbuilding rather than for demoralization. It is, unhappily, by no means always true that the influence of America upon immigrants is wholesome. Many of them degenerate morally here. The children of immigrants form, more than any other class, the supply for our criminals and prostitutes. The traditions of the immigrants themselves persist sufficiently to keep them "straight," for the most part. But we do not take enough pains to see to it that their children have American ideals to take their place.

The two traditional American attitudes toward the

immigrant may be illustrated by the following stanzas, by Bryant and Aldrich respectively :

“There’s freedom at thy gates and rest  
For earth’s down-trodden and opprest,  
A shelter for the hunted head,  
For the starved laborer toil and bread.”

“O Liberty, white Goddess! is it well  
To leave the gates unguarded? On thy breast  
Fold Sorrow’s children, soothe the hurts of fate,  
Lift the down-trodden, but with hands of steel  
Stay those who to thy sacred portals come  
To waste the gifts of freedom.”

Neither of these attitudes, however, is very largely pertinent to our present problem. The European countries are now, for the most part, as democratic as ours; there is little oppression from which we need to succor them. There is poverty, partly the result of ignorance, largely now the result of the War. But there is much work to be done over there, hands are needed; to bring millions of the ablest-bodied over here is to rob Europe of the strength that she needs just now more than we.

On the other hand, there are few who come to these shores with any destructive or anti-social intent. Almost all of our immigrants come eagerly, ready to love and serve America, happy at the prospect of being Americans. All they need is the right treatment to make them patriotic and useful citizens. If other results accrue it is more apt to be our fault than theirs.

The plan of restricting the number of immigrants to be admitted from any race or people annually to a small percentage of the people of that race already here, is an excellent plan. It rests on the sound ob-

servation that immigrants are for the most part received into an environment of their own former compatriots. Too many newcomers cannot be assimilated; they remain foreigners in our midst and produce, temporarily, the sort of undesirable social situation that the presence of unassimilable races permanently produces. Moreover, this plan, without discriminating against any particular race, and so offending national susceptibilities, automatically checks the immigration from those peoples that are most alien to our existing American stock.

But in addition to our immigration laws, we must cultivate the temper of fair-mindedness and hospitality toward newcomers. Aliens in our land should be regarded as guests of the nation, and should be treated as courteously as we wish our own compatriots to be treated when they reside abroad. Nothing is more offensively un-American than the epithets such as "dago," "sheeny," and the like that are so commonly applied to these foreigners. To any who still have a contemptuous attitude such as is expressed by these words we should recommend the reading of Robert Haven Schauffler's noble poem, entitled *Scum o' the Earth*. Or the words which a school-principal used in rebuking some pupils for discourtesy to foreigners: "I want you boys and girls, especially those that go to the Catholic Church, always to remember that the Pope is a dago; and you who don't go to the Catholic Church might bear in mind that America was discovered by a dago. And I don't want any one of you to forget that Jesus himself was a sheeny."

An Irish believer in Equality used to say, "One man is as good as another—if not better!" The true American spirit is to say that these immigrants who come to us to live with us, work for us, share our



common life, are as good as we—if not better. America has been made by such as they—men who were poor, ignorant, hard-working, but full of energy and hope. Our fathers were probably such as they—of another race and speech, perhaps, with other ideas and traditions behind them, but essentially the same in their belief in progress and democracy, in liberty and equality for all. The glory and hope of America lies in the fusion of races here going on; from that blending of types, if accelerated by mutual kindness and forbearance and understanding, there may spring a race, the American race of the future, with a destiny beyond that of any race the world has yet known.

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## CHAPTER X

### EDUCATION FOR ALL

OF all the aspects of equality in America there is none in which we have taken more pride than in our universal free education. Our educational system is crude as yet, and only in the making. But America has always believed passionately in education. Our rich men have vied with one another in founding colleges and universities, poor men have sacrificed much that their children might have schooling. Nearly a century ago Cobden wrote, "The universality of education in the United States is probably more calculated than all other things to accelerate their progress towards a superior rank of civilization and power."

It has been said that the typical American phrase is, "I want to know!" Certainly the typical American does want to know, believes, indeed, in what a recent essayist has called "the moral obligation to be intelligent." He believes in the educability of common men, and in the importance for the common welfare that the common man be educated. Washington, in his Farewell Address, bade his countrymen promote, "as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened."

It is, indeed, true that the mistakes of democracy have always been due, essentially, to the ignorance of the people, the lack of a widespread enlightenment on political and social matters. The one source of fear for the Republic is the apprehension lest our people are not intelligent and well-informed enough to meet successfully the exigencies that may arise. The answer of America to these fears must be, "we will *make* the people intelligent and well-informed." The motto graven on the exterior of the Boston Public Library should be stamped upon our hearts: "The Commonwealth requires the education of the people as the safeguard of order and liberty."

In purely financial terms, education pays. The boy who stays in school until he is eighteen has received, on the average, by the time he is twenty-five, two thousand dollars more than the boy who left school at fourteen, and is earning at twenty-five, nearly a thousand dollars a year more. From this age onward his salary is likely to rise still more rapidly, while that of the boy who left school at fourteen is likely to rise but little.

A similar ratio holds between community-earnings and the general education. Where education is longest and most widespread, there is industrial efficiency and national wealth. The backwardness of Russia, of Turkey, of Mexico is fundamentally due to lack of education. In our own country the productivity and wealth of our several States is in a pretty constant ratio to the amount of schooling of their inhabitants. For example, the average schooling given, some years ago, in Massachusetts was about seven years, and the average daily productiveness of the citizens of that State was eighty-five cents. For Tennessee in the same year the average schooling was

about three years and the average daily productiveness thirty-eight cents.

There is a certain tendency among our "self-made" men and their admirers to belittle the value of schooling. And we must admit that a boy of exceptional force has often, when favored by opportunity, made his way to wealth and eminence without the advantages of formal education. This was oftener possible, however, in the frontier and formative conditions of American life than it is now. More and more the successful man must be an expert, must depend upon exact knowledge rather than solely upon personal force and cleverness. A study of *Who's Who in America* reveals the fact that "out of the nearly 5,000,000 uneducated men and women in America, only 31 have been sufficiently successful in any kind of work to obtain a place among the 8,000 leaders catalogued in this book. Out of 33,000,000 people with as much as a common-school education, 808 were able to win a place in the list, while out of only 2,000,000 with high-school training, 1,245 have manifested this marked efficiency, and out of 1,000,000 with college or university training, 5,768 have merited this distinction." That is to say, a man with college education is eight hundred times as likely to become a notable factor in his country's life as an unschooled man.

We have spoken only of the more conspicuous fruits of education. They are such as to justify the words of Chancellor Kent: "A parent who sends his son into the world uneducated and without skill in any art or science does a great injury to mankind as well as to his own family; for he defrauds the community of a useful citizen and bequeaths to it a nuisance." Far the greater number of our paupers and prosti-

tutes and criminals come from the ranks of the uneducated. Victor Hugo once said that every school that is opened causes a prison to be closed. A Sing Sing prisoner recently declared, "Most of the inmates of the prisons are there because they could not compete successfully with others. They did not know how to meet the conditions of free life."

But in addition to these social aspects of education, its value in enhancing the personal life should not be forgotten. Education gives *interests*, adds to our resources, helps us to an innocent and profitable use of our leisure. Nothing is more pathetic than the waste of leisure hours on the part of men and women who have never cultivated a taste for reading, for art or music, or any of the higher activities of the mind. "The educated man is one whose life is characterized by increasing richness, safety, and control." He is "at home in the world, has at least a part of it under his intelligent control, and has opened up to him new avenues of intellectual and emotional enjoyment."

The educated man is an intelligent consumer. He is not the dupe of unscrupulous advertisers and dealers; he knows what is good from what is shoddy or inferior. He is safe from the wiles of quacks and charlatans—notoriously numerous in America. He is relatively free from superstition and prejudice. His life has range and variety and dignity.

It is important to emphasize this enrichment and safeguarding of the personal life that results from a liberal education, because there is a strain in American thought and character that looks upon "culture" as impractical and useless. We are, in general, of the "motor type"; our men are happiest "in the harness", and are apt to be lost and resourceless when on a va-



cation. A contemporary French critic finds that "the American concerns himself but little with culture, considering it a luxury good for a few dilettanti, but which does not 'pay', and which, as such, appears somewhat suspicious to the practical Yankee mind." A recent American writer expresses it thus: "We have few or no social habits that encourage the life of reflection. The average American, especially in the great industrial centers, is catapulted from the cradle to the grave in the mad hurly-burly of a head-long civilization that never pauses to get its bearings or to ask the meaning of life."

But even vocational education has been neglected here, as compared with the extent to which it has been developed in several European countries. Munich, a city of 500,000 inhabitants, had, in 1912, fifty-two vocational schools, with nearly 17,000 pupils. Berlin had 40,000 students in trade and commercial schools. The small state of Saxony had 115 technical institutes. France, Denmark, Norway, Great Britain, and other countries, have established systems of industrial and commercial education that surpass, in per capita extent and efficiency, our still rudimentary and fragmentary national system. A commission of eminent German scientists, visiting this country shortly before the outbreak of the Great War, reported to their government that they need have no fear of American competition in trade and manufacture, that we were complacently relying upon our unexhausted natural resources and neglecting to train our youth in industrial and commercial efficiency. The fact that the German technique was misused, at the beck of a selfish military clique, should not blind us to the excellence of the technical education that Germany had established for her citizens.



Every vocation is becoming more scientific. The world needs its work well done, and could have it far better done than it ever has. Apprenticeship and home-instruction are inadequate for the new era. Happily, the Federal Government is awakening to the need, and is now encouraging the States by appropriating federal funds for inaugurating and improving vocational education in the public schools. There is hope that we may yet realize our traditional aspiration toward an educational system that shall give to every boy and girl in the land access to the world's store of experience, and a training that will make them all self-respecting and skilled artisans—whether with hand or brain—at some work that has a useful place in the national life.

We must frankly admit that we have yet a long way to go. A recent government bulletin reveals the fact that we are eighth on the list of countries ranked with respect to the proportion of literacy among their inhabitants. Our illiteracy rate is close to 7 per cent for people over ten years old. The rate in Switzerland is one half of one per cent, in Germany the pre-war rate was three one-hundredths of one per cent. Of the young men of draft age during the War, some 700,000 were found to be unable to read and write; our total adult illiterate population is about ten times that number, besides many more millions who can barely read and seldom do. Secretary Lane recently computed that this illiteracy means an annual economic loss to the country of \$825,000,000.

When it comes to higher education our relative standing is equally disappointing. Some years ago, when comparative statistics were available, there were, for each ten thousand of our population, twenty students in our colleges and universities. At the same

time there were fifty-six students per ten thousand inhabitants in British colleges and universities, sixty-five in Germany, seventy-seven in Italy, eighty-one in France, and a hundred and seventy-eight in Switzerland.

The fact is, in spite of much recent improvement in our educational system, we are not spending nearly enough for education. The rise in prices during the War has made our educational expenditures practically far less than a few years ago. Even before the War we were spending much less in proportion to the national wealth than in earlier days. Everywhere people grumble about high taxes, and fail to realize that education is the best possible investment. Nearly twice as much money is spent in this country upon tobacco as upon education; while the money saved by the prohibition of alcoholic beverages, if applied to education, would treble its efficiency.

It is a well known fact that teachers are among the poorest paid wage-earners in the country; in spite of recent salary-increases, the figures for the average salaries of teachers in even the most advanced States are too low, while in the more backward States they are disgraceful. There is no work more important than that of moulding the minds of the young, no career that calls for more talent or more careful preparation. But the vocation has become a by-word, for its niggardly rewards; able young men and women are turning from it in disgust. Unless radical improvement is made, our children will more and more be taught by the incompetent and the ambitionless; positions will have to be increasingly filled by those who lack the proper temperament and training. And this when our country is far richer than ever before—incomparably the richest country in the world!

Nothing should satisfy us, nothing will fulfill the visions of the founders of the Republic, short of the best educational system, the highest educational attendance, and the lowest illiteracy rate, in the world. Indeed, there is no excuse for illiteracy at all; it should be stamped out like a plague. There is no excuse even for the stopping of the schooling of any boy or girl, save in exceptional cases, short of high-school graduation. Nothing less than that is consonant with our ideal of Equality of opportunity. Yet as things are, the average schooling of Americans lasts but a little over six years—and the school “years” are often very short. The *average* schooling! That means, since so many go on through the eight years of the elementary school, the four years of high school, and the four years of college, that very many of our children have considerably *less* than six years’ schooling. As a matter of fact, a little over half of the children who enter the elementary schools reach the fourth grade; something over a quarter reach the eighth grade; about an eighth get to high school, and less than a twentieth graduate from high school. About two per cent go to some college or higher institution of learning, and only a fraction of those graduate therefrom.

To relieve the gloom of these statistics we should add that there are many hopeful signs on the educational horizon. The number of pupils in high schools is increasing far faster than the increase in the population. And most of our colleges and universities are badly overcrowded. The national Bureau of Education is doing a great deal to raise standards and to encourage the extension of opportunities. It is earnestly to be hoped that Congress will authorize bigger and bigger appropriations from the national

treasury, to be used by the several States on condition of their appropriating equal or larger amounts. Our educational system is very decentralized, as compared with some European systems; and our plan, that throws the burden of organization and finance upon the local communities, has its advantages. But in the manner above indicated, and by its constant supervision and advice, the Federal Government can do much to equalize the now very unequal educational facilities of the different sections of the country, and to raise the general level of efficiency.

Among the most important tendencies is the movement which is opening the school-houses to the adult population. More and more the schools are becoming community-centers, from which radiate educational, cultural, socializing influences of the highest importance. We are realizing that education is something not merely for the child but for every citizen. Farmers are being taught, through the public schools and State universities, to raise bigger crops; craftsmen are taught to improve the technique of their profession; housewives are taught better methods of cooking and canning, groups of men and women are taught a readier use of the English language, are instructed in current events, and in the various branches, history, economics, sociology, and the like, that will help to make them more intelligent voters. This "extension" work of the schools and Universities is only in its infancy,—but it is gathering momentum; we may hope eventually to see practically the whole nation at school.

The old idea was that only the select few were capable of intelligence or deserving of education. The American idea was that practically all the people would respond to education and become intelligent



citizens. This idea is corroborated by modern sociology. Professor Lester Ward, for example, in his well-known work on *Applied Sociology*, affirms that "capacity is latent everywhere. It is opportunity that is rare, not ability." As it is, "only ten per cent of [our human] resources have been developed. Another ten per cent are somewhat developed. There remain eighty per cent as yet almost undeveloped."

Education is really the fundamental human need, and the one great hope for the future. The task of progress is not so much in devising progressive laws, or a just and efficient industrial and political order, it is in getting people to want the laws, to realize the defects in our present social order and the means by which they can be remedied. The danger to America consists far less in any lack of patriotism or loyalty among its citizens, in any destructive intent of "Bolsheviks" or "reds"; the danger to America can be summed up in one word—*ignorance*. Let the people know the facts, understand the situations with which they have to deal, let their minds be trained to think clearly and dispassionately, to weigh the evidence pro and con, let them be taught to appreciate the meaning and value of old institutions, and at the same time to realize the necessity for continual criticism and the application of new ideas—in short, let them be truly educated, and we may breathe freely when we think of the future of the Republic.

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## CHAPTER XI

### HEALTH FOR ALL

It is only in recent years that health has come to be thought of as in any considerable degree the concern of the State. In fact, our fathers thought very little about health. When half of their children died in infancy, when their wives showed the marks of age at forty, when epidemics decimated the population, they resigned themselves to the workings of a mysterious Providence. Physical exercise most of them got in abundance, sanitation was less necessary in the sparsely settled communities of the pioneer days, and so the evils of a careless individualism were less serious than now. Today we are made to realize that no man liveth to himself alone; that individual ill-health is a community loss and a community danger; that a large part of the illness and premature death of our people is preventable, and that it is the duty of the community to prevent it. In the words of Dr. Thomas Wood of Columbia University, "Better health is to a striking extent a purchasable commodity; and national economy demands that we purchase it."

Certainly there is no more important natural right than the right to health and long life. And an organization of society which practically denies that right to a large part of the population is seriously inconsistent with our ideal of Equality. Not only does health constitute itself a large part of the intrinsic worth of life, it means opportunity for range of ex-

perience, and for the formation of those qualities of character that come through a rich and normal life-experience. Health is one of the most important factors that make for morality; bodily depression warps the judgment, causes irritability and discouragement, lowers resistance to temptation, weakens the will. It affects immediately the interest in one's work and the quality, as well as quantity of work done. As Horace Mann, our great educator, wrote, "All through the life of a feeble-bodied man, his path is lined with memory's gravestones which mark the spots where noble enterprises perished for lack of physical vigor to embody them in deeds." From a purely utilitarian and financial point of view, the conservation of health is of extreme importance.

As compared with most other peoples, the American average of health and longevity is good. Yet thirty million American wage earners lose from sickness every year an average of nine days each, a wage loss, at \$3.50 a day, of nearly a billion dollars, besides a cost for treatment of perhaps \$200,000,000. Three hundred thousand babies die annually in this country; it is estimated that at least half of these deaths in infancy could be easily prevented. Tuberculosis alone costs the country \$350,000,000 a year, and malaria \$100,000,000. Both of these diseases are preventable by known means. The annual death rate for the United States as a whole has been, in recent years, about 14 per thousand population. Some States have rates as high as 16 or 17, in normal years, and some cities have rates over 20 per thousand. On the other hand, some States have rates around 10; the State of Washington has kept close to 8. Australia has kept close to 10, New Zealand between 9 and 10. With proper care, the rate might be lowered through-

out the country to the level attained in these more advanced communities. To lower it from 14 to 10 per thousand would mean an annual saving of 400,000 lives. So Secretary of Commerce Redfield was hardly too sanguine when he declared that "we can save the lives of 500,000 people a year if we choose."

The two prime causes of this needlessly high death-rate are poverty and ignorance. The importance of the latter factor is revealed by the fact that while in our cities there has been in general a marked decline in the death-rate in recent years, the rate in the country, where hygienic knowledge has been less disseminated, remains close to the older levels. Country folks as a whole pay less attention to ventilation, and to the provision of a normal and wholesome diet. There is much malnutrition found in rural districts, and a startling ignorance of the proper care of children. Country people are more apt to ignore defects of the eyes, ears, teeth, or throat. A recent investigation sums up its conclusions in the following words: "The standards of living on the American farm, when tested by the accepted principles of physiology, sanitation, and hygiene, are alarmingly defective."

In some parts of the South, conditions are intolerable. Dr. Frederic T. Gates of the General Education Board, writing in 1916, estimated that there were two million children in the South between six and sixteen years of age stunted physically and mentally by the hookworm disease, while many thousands died annually from its effects. School-inspectors have in some districts found over half of the school children defective or more or less disabled from other preventable or curable ailments.

The effect of poverty upon the death-rate can be clearly seen in available statistics. A bulletin issued

by the Children's Bureau in Washington shows the following relation between income and infant death-rate:

Income \$ 450 and under,	infant death rate	242
" 649 "	" "	174
" 849 "	" "	162
" 1,049 "	" "	125
" 1,250 and over	" "	58

Poverty means under-nutrition, lack of proper living-conditions, lack of care during illness, and, often, over-work and worry, which greatly lessen resistance to disease. Dr. Wood states that one child in every five in the United States is suffering from insufficient nutrition. Dr. William Emerson, a Boston authority, recently reckoned the number even higher. In 1917, medical examination discovered 160,000 children in the high schools alone of New York City who "show the stigmata of prolonged undernourishment."

The parents of these undernourished children usually age quickly, being often past their prime at forty or forty-five, whereas professional men and the employing class very commonly keep efficient and hearty until seventy. Professor Lester Ward, in his *Applied Sociology*, shows that the average longevity of the rich is practically double that of the poor. John Spargo finds the death-rate among the "well-to-do" about 10 per 1000, among the best-paid laborers 15, among the lower paid laborers 35. These divisions and figures are, of course, more or less arbitrary; but the general situation is unquestioned. The poor have far from an equal chance for life and health.

A recent federal investigation in Montclair, N. J. disclosed an average infant mortality of 84 per thousand. Among the babies of business or professional



men the rate was 41; among the higher-paid laborers the rate was 74; among the low-paid laborers, it was 130. In the tenement district of Johnstown, Pa., the rate, recently, was 271. Statistics compiled a decade ago revealed the fact that the children of the lower-paid workers weighed, at sixteen, nineteen and a half pounds less, on the average, and were three and three-quarters inches lower in stature, than the children of the well-to-do. Miss Esther Lovejoy, in *Democracy in Reconstruction*, draws this obvious conclusion: "The great predisposing cause of premature death is poverty. . . . Any social scheme that insures a fair standard of living will reduce the death-rate. . . . We should have not only minimum wages, upon which men and women can live without working themselves to death, but we should have minimum standards of living, below which human beings should not be permitted to fall. . . . It is self-evident that conditions that condemn millions of people to premature death are public nuisances that should be legally abated without loss of time."

Surely every child that is born an American should have the best possible chance for health and long life. If the children of the poor die in great numbers, or grow up stunted, coarsened, dull of mind and sickly of body, society has failed in its duty. As Mr. Walter Weyl forcibly puts it, "Every preventable death is a reflection upon the good will or the intelligence of the community which suffers it." "On a mere calculation of dollars and cents, it is a foolish extravagance to allow a baby to die for lack of a few dollars' worth of pure milk, or to allow an expensively bred workman to die for lack of a few hundred dollars spent in protection and prevention. But we do not yet realize that it is we as a community who pay for these deaths,

although we only too clearly realize that it is we who pay for their prevention."

England and America have attained their industrial pre-eminence at the cost of the lives and health of their workers. The appallingly large percentage of volunteers and drafted men rejected because of poor physical condition in both countries shows, more than anything else, the result of the working-conditions in our factories and mills and mines, and the living conditions of the poorer half of our population. Tuberculosis will always be with us while we have congested slums. Men below weight, under-developed muscularly, and weak in resistance to disease, will always exist in great numbers while they are thought of as mere "hands," to be hired at the lowest rate for which they will work, and crowded into uncomfortable and unsanitary homes.

Many movements for the amelioration of this shocking situation are under way. Wages of some of the poorest paid workers have been raised. Factories are becoming cleaner, lighter, less dusty, better ventilated. Housing laws are making impossible the worst types of earlier tenements. Bad as conditions are in New York City today, the tenement-house legislation of recent years has had a large part in the reduction of that city's death-rate from nearly 19 to 13.5 per thousand. Pure food and pure milk laws have likewise been of great value. Motherhood classes are teaching ignorant women not to expose milk to air, heat, and flies, and averting many other perils from their babies.

Most important of all, perhaps, is the extension of physical education in the public schools. School nurses are discovering defects and contagious diseases in the children, and are explaining to their parents

the necessity of treatment. The annual physical examination of school children will soon, it is to be hoped, become universal. It is said that from twenty to thirty per cent of our school children have defects of vision—which often result in headaches, stomach troubles, or nervousness. A smaller number have defects of hearing, a great many have nose and throat troubles, and perhaps nine out of ten have defective teeth—often the obscure cause of serious ailments which appear in later life.

In addition to these periodic examinations, with the correction of defects revealed, and to the constant watchfulness of the school nurses, the public school children are being trained in personal health-habits and taught the principles of modern hygiene and sanitation. Clean, airy, sunny, well-ventilated school-houses are an object-lesson of the first importance. Some States go further and provide for physical training, in the form of supervised exercises, for every pupil. In such ways a new generation is growing up with a keener realization of the importance and the attainability of health. The notable result attained through the teaching of the evils of alcoholism in the schools shows what advances in the general health may be expected to eventuate from this education of the children. They will not be content to endow hospitals to care for the sick; they will see to it that the causes leading to illness are radically diminished.

In addition to the work in the schools, various agencies are engaged in improving the national health. The United States Public Health Service controls the quarantine stations up and down our coasts, and has a splendid record of efficiency in stamping out plagues that might easily have assumed

very serious proportions. It also maintains a number of laboratories for the investigation of diseases, and maintains a careful inspection of the private establishments that sell serums, anti-toxins, and vaccines. It has conducted sanitary surveys in several States and secured the passage of many ordinances that regulate the disposal of waste, the safeguarding of the water-supply, the prevention of fly-breeding and other hygienic measures.

Another very efficient organization for the improvement of health, both in this country and in various foreign countries, is the Rockefeller Foundation, whose annual reports show remarkable results. In particular, it is waging a campaign for the eradication of yellow fever and malaria, with the hookworm disease and tuberculosis and infantile paralysis also the object of vigorous onslaughts. It is fostering medical education and research, and in various other ways fighting to lower the death-rate.

The National Tuberculosis Association has demonstrated, especially in its work at Framingham, Massachusetts, that that widespread disease can be almost entirely eradicated. The town of Framingham, by its help, raised its annual per capita expenditure for public health from 39 cents to \$1. Before the experiment was made the death-rate in Framingham was about 16 or 17 per thousand, and the infant death-rate about 85 or 90. The first year's attack upon the causes of ill-health reduced these rates to about 12 and 69 respectively. The following year (1918) was the year of the influenza epidemic. But the figures for 1919 show a retention of the gain. Deaths directly due to tuberculosis have entirely ceased.

In these various ways the opportunity for health



is being extended to more and more of our citizens, and we may hope to see eventually something approaching a real equality in this respect. In the meantime, health insurance is of great importance in enabling the poor to deal with illness. Even if the present number of something like three million people seriously ill at every given moment in this country is considerably lowered in the near future, there will still be need of provision for those who cannot afford proper doctoring, proper food and care for their sick, and cannot afford the loss of income caused by the illness. Hundreds of thousands are cast into serious financial straits every year through the illness and the death of wage-earners. Most of these people cannot afford the premiums which private companies charge for life and disability insurance. Indeed, these premiums are usually far too high—more than half the money spent on them going, in some cases, to operating expenses and profits, leaving less than half to be paid in insurance.

Whether health and disability insurance should be left in private hands, or managed by the State, or by the several industries, can not be here discussed. But in some way the vicious circle must be broken whereby poverty leads to ill-health and ill-health increases poverty. A wise insurance system will do more than keep the sick and their families from destitution, it will include early diagnosis and advice, the insistence upon proper hygienic precautions, and the education of the community in the prevention of illness.

In such ways, and in ways yet to be devised by the coming generation, we may hope not only to see America made the healthiest nation on earth, but to see health and long life the perquisites of every



American, the humblest as well as the most gifted and most highly rewarded. This would be but the logical carrying out of our founders' dreams of Equality, rudely upset by the conditions of a close-compacted industrial society, but secured and made permanent by the vigorous efforts of our people.

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## CHAPTER XII

### WORK FOR ALL

ANOTHER corollary of the American ideal of Equality is the demand that every citizen shall be a worker, whether with hand or brain; that neither the possession of wealth or position, or the possession of a roving and vagabond disposition, exempts any one from the duty of contributing his share to the productive work of the nation. In the Old World from which our founders came, there had always been a leisure class, that looked upon labor as menial, debasing, ignoble; a gentleman might be a warrior, showing prowess in killing, he might be an employer, exploiting others' labors, but he must not handle tools himself, or earn his living by the sweat of his brow. Because the life of gentlemen and ladies was a life of leisure and lazy trifling, the Heaven pictured by wistful souls of all classes came to be dreamed of as a place where all work should have an end; and labor was looked upon as the primal curse.

This, however, is not in accordance with the instincts of normal human nature, which finds one of its deepest satisfactions in work. And it is this more normal attitude which has received the stamp of American approval. The late President Harper of Chicago University said on his deathbed that he was looking forward to the world beyond not as a place of rest but a place where he would have more work to

do. Our best-loved poet crystallized this American spirit in the now so familiar lines,

"Act, act in the living present. . . .  
Let us then be up and doing . . ."

President Roosevelt, using an adjective that has come to be peculiarly associated with him, declared that "our country calls us not for the life of ease, but for the life of strenuous endeavor."

The title of a recent volume on America by a distinguished Frenchman is significant: *The People of Action*. The Author, speaking of the apparent passion for money-making, declares that "it is a question not of *being* rich, but of *becoming* so. . . . To be rich, for an American, is not to be a social parasite, but a social force." We do not seek to become rich in order then to stop working; our rich men on the average work about as hard as the poor. Emerson, in his essay on *Wealth*, said that the American "is born to be rich; not to amass money, which is despicable; not to enjoy it, which is trivial; but to master himself in mastering it." The power that expresses itself in conquering obstacles, and the new power that comes from success in the game, appeals to our manhood. We despise the idler, whether a tramp or the son of a millionaire.

It is not that work is "noble" in some mysterious way, it is that working is interesting, working calls into play our powers, develops our character, gives us the solid satisfaction of feeling ourselves of use, and a vital part of the nation's life. And from the social viewpoint, a life of productive work is the only fair life to live. For there is so much work that must be done; and if one man shirks his part, others must do more than theirs.

Indeed, there is a vast deal of work that cries to be done but must go neglected for lack of hands and brains to do it. We need thousands of miles of roads built in this country—only twelve or fifteen per cent of our roads are surfaced. We need more railway tracks laid, more terminal facilities, more engines and cars built, more tunnels and bridges. We need canals, and deepened waterways, levees and reservoirs and irrigating channels. We need plants to utilize our waterpower, over ninety per cent of which is now wasted. We need the planting of millions of trees to replace the lumber that has been cut. We need hundreds of thousands of houses built for those who are now packed too closely in tenements. We need more schools, we need more teachers, we need—but the list is too long to complete.

There is a perennial tendency in this country toward the aping of the old-world aristocracies and the growth of an idle class. During the War this tendency was overborne by the pressure of an aroused public opinion; and even upper class women who had hardly done a stroke of useful work before donned their khaki, rolled up their sleeves, and got into the game. With the coming of peace again, there has reappeared the type of rich man whom the French call the *flâneur*, and our irrepressible American slang terms the "lounge-lizard." Still more in evidence is the well-to-do woman, who has servants to do her house-work, and spends her time in a round of social calls, bridge parties, or other trivialities, with perhaps a little ineffective "social work" to salve her conscience, and piano-practice to keep her essential uselessness from being too apparent.

This social approval, or tolerance, of a class of drones in our busy American life, must be vigorously

fought. It is to be hoped that we shall not have to resort to a conscription of labor—although William James, and other distinguished Americans, have thought that, if properly managed, an excellent proposal. But we must keep in the foreground our fathers' ideal of a life of useful activity for all—which is the Biblical ideal also—: *Six days shalt thou labor. We command you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*

The sin of uselessness becomes more obvious when it is contrasted with the overwork of so many others in our society. With all our labor-saving machinery, we have not lessened the labors of many of our citizens. Some industries still employ thousands of men for twelve hours a day and seven days a week. Many other industries require nine or ten hours. And this is not at agreeable and easy work, but at the hardest and most monotonous, and sometimes the most dangerous, of human occupations. In the steel industry, for example, according to the Report of the Inter-church Commission of Inquiry, in 1919, approximately half the employees were subject to a twelve-hour day, the percentage of employees subject to this schedule having increased during the ten years previous. In the blast-furnace departments of twenty-four establishments, 4,049 men out of 6,315 worked eighty-four hours a week. In many departments a seven-day working week was standard.

The two wrongs, idleness and overwork, are separable. But in general it may be said that idleness at one end of the social scale involves overwork at the other end; if you shirk your share of the nation's work, some one else must do more than his share.

Leisure is desirable, and necessary, for every one; not chronic leisure, but leisure coming after work.



This leisure is necessary if our citizens are to be anything but unthinking "hands"; if they are to read, and think, and be developed human beings, if they are to become intelligent enough to participate wisely in the sustaining of our democracy. For the mere matter of greatest efficiency in one's work, overlong hours are a mistake. Experiments have pretty conclusively shown that in most occupations the average man can accomplish more in an eight-hour day and a six-day week, than when working more continuously; employers who have given most careful study to the problem of industrial fatigue are practically unanimous in favor of the shorter working-periods. From the broader human point of view, it is evident that a forty-eight hour week is the maximum that can decently be demanded of a man or woman in any routine occupation. There must be some energy left to put into reading books, enjoying pictures, listening to music, digging in a garden, or in some other way developing one's capacities as a human being.

Professional people, employers, sometimes fail to realize this, because their own work often spreads out into ten or more hours a day. But their work is varied, and interesting; it develops their minds, it brings them in touch with other minds, whether through personal contacts or through reading. It is one thing to work ten hours a day, at one task or another, as a college student, a manager of a large concern, a lawyer, a doctor, or a minister. It is far more fatiguing to work ten hours as a mill-hand. Moreover, the work of the student or professional man or employer is largely under his own control; he can stop if he is tired, he is not some one else's servant. The mill-hand, if the mill runs for ten hours a day, is forced to work for those ten hours every day, at the

risk of losing his job. This is not exactly slavery, but it comes altogether too near it.

Particularly disastrous is the overwork of women. For a man may be seriously overtired and beget healthy children; but an overtired mother means a sickly or abnormal child. Many children today are suffering from overworking of their mothers; and with the increasing movement of women into industry the danger becomes more and more alarming. This is no argument against the participation of women in industry. Work in moderation is healthy; and women, if they are not needed at home, for housework or the care of children, ought to work outside the home. The time is past when a woman can be regarded as essentially an ornament, a mere useless luxury for some man to possess; though that, of course, was never more than a badge of upper-class status, for the great majority of women since life began have worked as hard as men, if not harder. But while it is no argument against utilizing the labor of women, it is a decisive argument against overworking women. Unjust as it is to force any human being to overwork, it is utterly disastrous when that overwork is bound to weaken the vitality of the coming generation.

It seems utopian to expect all employers to be humane enough to consider the welfare of unborn children, or of the State as a whole. It is therefore necessary to have stringent legislation on the statute-books forbidding the labor of women beyond the limit which physiologists and psychologists may agree upon as safe for any given occupation. Probably certain occupations should be forbidden to women altogether, though these will not be many. In particular, the law must forbid work, of many sorts, before and

after child-birth. And if this enforced abstention of women from wage-earning necessitates State support for mothers and infants, or something of the sort, then to that we must come. Such proposals must not be damned as "socialistic"; they must be considered on their own merits. The American principle of Equality demands a fair chance for every mother and child; whatever devices may be necessary to procure that must be accepted.

Particularly inexcusable, in our prosperous land, is the stealing from children of their playtime and school-time, to save the hiring of more expensive adult workers. In spite of the efforts of reformers for a generation, child-labor on a great scale remains, a disgrace to our civilization. Something like two million children under sixteen are wage-earners in the United States. The Keating-Owen Federal Child-Labor Law, passed in 1916, was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, by a five to four vote, and the safeguarding of the vitality of the American people by preventing the labor of young children in mills and factories, thereby relegated to the States as a matter of purely local concern. Unhappily, the laws of many of the States are extremely lax. A clause in a revenue bill passed by Congress after the Supreme Court's decision was announced, seeks to restrain child-labor by levying a tax upon the profits of establishments where too young children are employed, or older children are employed too long. This bill has been taken to the Supreme Court for consideration; its decision has not, at time of writing, been announced.

A number of States permit children under fourteen to work in factories and mills. Some States permit boys of twelve to work in mines. Many States permit

young children to work on night-shifts. Few States set an eight-hour maximum for the child's working-day. Where humane restrictions are written into the Statutes, they are commonly waived for the benefit of certain industries—as for the canning industry, because of the perishable nature of fruits and vegetables. Moreover, such laws as exist are seldom strictly enforced. A Government Commission investigating the matter in 1918 found that in New York City in one of the largest industries over ninety-six per cent of the factories employing women and children were violating some provision of the child-labor laws. In three months of a recent year, one hundred and fifteen prosecutions were instituted in Ohio for violations of the child-labor and woman's-labor laws. In three-fourths of these cases the fines imposed were remitted or suspended. In other States there is scarcely even an attempt at prosecution, public opinion being unfavorable to enforcement. This state of things is likely to continue until the people in general awake to the serious public menace of this exploitation of the children.

The National Child-Labor Committee is responsible for the statement that during the first half of 1920 there was an increase of child-labor in fourteen States. Most of this can not be restricted by the existing laws. On the farms, and in the cotton fields, children are set to work by their parents; in some cases children five years old have been found doing a pretty long day's work. Instances are cited by investigators where parents have insisted upon their children's working, that they might add a little to the family income and purchase an automobile or some other luxury!

It seems to be not enough to plead for the child's



right to play and to schooling, to point out that to spend his days in productive labor, while normal for an adult, is a misuse of the formative years, when a child should put all its energies into learning about the world and building up a sound foundation of health. Even to point to the demoralization of child-workers, the increase of juvenile delinquency, which is very striking among these working-children, arouses little attention. We must address our appeals to the pocket-book!

Well, the argument on this basis is conclusive. Statistics show that "for every dollar earned by a child under fourteen, tenfold will be taken from its earning capacity in later years." There is an immediate gain to the employer; but in the long run the State loses far more than it gains by the premature entrance of children into industry. The total earning capacity of a man during his working-life is far greater if he waits until his health is secured upon a firm basis by a carefully safeguarded childhood, and a reasonable degree of education is secured, before he enters the ranks of the wage-earners.

Recent studies show clearly the increase of diseases among children who go to work; the normal exercise and growth of their bodies is interfered with; they become prematurely old or unfit. In addition to this almost universal effect, children are far more apt to be careless in their handling of machinery; in a recent year twenty thousand children under sixteen were killed or injured in industry in Massachusetts alone. If carefully prepared figures were available for the country as a whole, they would be appalling. The eugenic loss is of serious import; we are impairing the vitality of future generations by this sacrifice of our children to the greedy jaws of industry. This



utilitarian consideration should move those who can coldly contemplate the sight of thousands of boys and girls, pale and listless, ignorant, uneducated,

“weeping in the playtime of the others,  
In the country of the free.”

The pathos of the overwork of women and children is heightened by the realization that the involuntary unemployment of able-bodied men is a chronically recurrent aspect of our industrial order. Some industries, such as coal-mining, never offer continuous employment; the average coal-miner is unable to find work for more than two-thirds of the working days of the year. Nearly all our industries, under their present management, are subject to great fluctuations in the number of workers to whom they offer employment. And it has become a common phenomenon for a mill or factory to shut down for a few weeks or months, at a moment's notice, in order to produce a scarcity of goods and raise the price of the product.

The amount of involuntary unemployment in the United States varies in normal times from four or five per cent of the workers upward. In January, 1915, forty per cent of the workers in New York City were reported out of work. In January, 1921, statistics showed that over two million workers were out of work, the country over. That such a situation works severe hardship needs no argument; few of these workers have been able to lay aside a reserve of savings sufficient for a period of enforced idleness. The problem is a difficult one, and cannot be discussed within the limits of this volume. But we must insist here upon the essential *right* of every citizen to work, as a corollary of his duty to work. There must be no considerable idleness at either end of the scale—

among the rich, who can afford to idle, or among the poor, to whom idleness is the great horror. The problem is not impossible of solution; many proposals, tried here and there, offer ways to ameliorate or cure this evil of our industrial system. We may hesitate to commit ourselves to this or that "radical" proposal. But somehow America must ensure to every able-bodied person the opportunity to work—if possible, at a vocation congenial to his powers and tastes—but at least at a job that will maintain his self-respect and ensure him and his family against destitution. Work is a universal need, and must always be open to all.

We may go further, and say that reasonably pleasant work is the due of every American citizen. Whether all necessary work can be made, by the progress of human invention, reasonably pleasant, and, if not, who is to do the hopelessly disagreeable work, are questions not easy to answer. Possibly we may some day accept William James's suggestion, and through a six month's or a year's conscription of our youth, require every citizen to do his share of the dirty and disagreeable work that must be done. But certainly most work can be made reasonably pleasant for the healthy adult. And there is no excuse for the dusty, sunless, poorly ventilated, unsanitary factories and mills that still so largely disgrace our civilization. It is useless to speak of the "dignity of labor" to men and women whose labor is spent in ugly and unhealthy surroundings. Nothing is more important than to maintain a good morale among workers; their degree of zest in their work will affect not only the quantity and quality of goods produced, but their health, their attitude toward their fellowmen, and their happiness. "In some way we must get the

spiritual appeal of the job." It cannot be got when work is too monotonous, too hard, too disagreeable, or carried on amid too disagreeable surroundings.

In spite of the unpleasant and unhygienic working conditions that still so largely persist, this is a point in which America is taking the lead. There are already a great many factories and business houses that are healthful and delightful places to work in; and their number is increasing yearly. Needless to say, in such concerns the employees are very loyal and the labor troubles small. A Swedish industrial expert who recently visited this country has published a book whose title, translated, reads *Joy of Work: Lessons from America*. "At sight of all this beauty," she writes, "which enhances existence and makes labor lighter to the many workers, one feels that mankind has actually advanced."

It should be needless to add that work in America must be made as free as possible from preventable injuries. We have been incredibly careless in this respect. In our mines and on our railways we kill and injure two or three times as many employees annually as in the advanced countries of Europe. In our factories and mills, likewise, preventable accidents are far more frequent. During the nineteen months of our participation in the War, some forty-eight thousand American soldiers were killed or died from wounds. During that same period thirty-five thousand men, women, and children were killed in American industries. This casualty-list goes on, year after year, but little mitigated as yet by the reforms and legislation of the past few years. Yet most of these casualties are needless, and occur only because the expense of safety devices postpones their installation. But human life is costly, too. And the pro-

duction of cheap goods, or coal, or transportation, at the expense of thousands of deaths and injuries annually is a shameful aspect of our American life.

To sum up, Equality of opportunity implies a society in which every able-bodied person does his or her share of the work that is to be done; in which every person is guarded from having to work too hard or too long, but given an opportunity to work continuously, a reasonable number of hours a week, during his working-life, at an occupation made as pleasant and as safe as American ingenuity can make it. Play-time and school-time for our children, care for our mothers and prospective mothers, employment for all, and such social pressure as will require that every one does his bit—that is surely the American ideal, the ideal that must be attained.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### PROSPERITY FOR ALL

AMERICA is the most prosperous nation in the world. The rich are richer than anywhere else, and there are more of them. The poorer classes are, perhaps on the whole, better off here than in any other land; perhaps better off than at any other period in the world's history. There are here at least no fixed social classes, no rigid barriers that make it impossible for the poorest youth to make his way to fortune. Nor is there, perhaps, any land where wealth carries with it less prestige. We have no first, second, and third class railway carriages and waiting-rooms. Except for certain snobbish smart sets, which are not representative of the true American spirit, a genuine sense of social equality has persisted since pioneer days. The rich man is the lucky fellow; but, in general, we feel that he is one of us and wish him well. It has never been an implication of our ideal of Equality that wealth or income should be equally distributed. He may take who can get; and so long as the race is open on equal terms to all, we shall take the other man's success in a sporting spirit.

It is a grave question, however, whether this attitude can be maintained much longer if inequality of wealth and manner of life continues to be more and more marked. We have developed during the past few decades what is commonly called a plutocracy;



that is, a comparatively small group of people who have vastly greater wealth than the great body of the people, and proportionate power over industry, and even over politics, journalism, and education. The wealth of our prosperous land is being divided far more unevenly than it used to be; a much sharper line separates the rich from the poor. Discontent is raising its head among what are sometimes called the "disinherited classes"; not so much because of socialistic or Bolshevist propaganda—these doctrines are exotic on our shores, and make no very widespread appeal—but out of a natural desire for a fair share of the good things of life. We must, therefore, seriously consider whether some modification of the present inequality in the distribution of wealth is not demanded by our ideal of Equality.

There are various estimates as to the present distribution of the wealth of the country. One statistician declares that one per cent of our people own eighty-five per cent of the national wealth. A far more conservative estimate is that of the United States Industrial Commission of 1915, which reported that two per cent of the population own sixty per cent of the national wealth; another thirty-three per cent own thirty-five per cent, and the remaining sixty-five per cent of the people own but five per cent of the total wealth of the country. One man gets an annual income said to be in the neighborhood of fifty million dollars—an income equal to that of fifty thousand poorly-paid laborers. Or, to put it another way, it would take one of the laborers fifty thousand years to earn what this man gets in a single year. The twenty-five or thirty biggest fortunes in the country probably amount to five billion dollars; and, according to an estimate in the *New York Times* in

1920, one hundred and sixty-two men have annual incomes of a million dollars or more apiece.

On the other hand, the incomes of our poorer families are sadly inadequate for the maintenance of a minimum American standard of living. As prices go in 1921, \$1,500 a year, or thereabouts, is necessary to maintain the average family of five in even a moderate degree of comfort. Yet probably fifty per cent of the families in the country receive less than that. Reliable recent figures are hard to get. But in 1919, an investigation by Dr. Harris, of the New York City Health Department showed that twenty per cent of the thousands of poor families investigated in that city had an income of *less than \$600 a year! Thirty per cent had less than \$900.* In Massachusetts, in 1917, more than half the men in the industries of the State received less than \$20 a week—\$1,000 a year. Of the women workers, about a third received less than \$10 a week. In Baltimore in 1918, seventy-six per cent of the working women and girls were receiving less than \$10 a week. The Interchurch Report on the Steel Strike, in 1920, reported that the annual earnings of seventy-two per cent of the steel workers (who, with their families, aggregate three quarters of a million people) “were, and had been for years, below the level set by Government experts for families of five.”

The most serious aspect of the matter is that in recent years the situation has been growing distinctly worse. Father Ryan, in 1906, estimated that between sixty and seventy per cent of American laborers were getting less than a living wage—which he then set at the very low figure, \$600. The cost of living in 1921 is probably, for the whole country, nearly a hundred per cent higher than then. And in spite of a good

many exceptions, the average earnings of the laboring classes have not kept pace with this increase. If between sixty and seventy per cent of "working-class" families were living in 1906 on less than a fair "living wage," it is probable that more than seventy per cent were so situated in 1920.

Many figures could be cited in support of this conclusion, drawn from such reliable sources as the documents compiled by the Treasury Department from income tax returns, and *Poor and Moody's Manual*. In his testimony before the United States Railroad Labor Board, since summarized in a pamphlet entitled *Relation between Wages and the Increased Cost of Living* (1920), Mr. W. Jett Lauck gave clear proof of his conclusion that, in general, "wage increases have lagged behind price increases; and usually they are far behind." Behind not only in amount, but in time; that is, increases in prices were followed, not preceded, by increases in wages. The situation is well known to workers among the poor. For example, the Charity Organization Society of New York, in 1919, had a Committee on Home Economics, which reported that, "in spite of the common belief that wages generally had advanced, only two-fifths of the families interviewed reported an increase in the family income. In most cases the wage increases were slight in amount and far less than the proportionate increase in living costs."

It is probable, however, that we are now to see a long period of falling prices. If wages are not too generally and drastically cut, the workers may presently be better off than they were before prices and wages went up. Certain classes of workers, now relatively overpaid, should receive less than they now receive. The whole matter of remuneration for labor

is in chaos. He takes who can get; while those who are not in a position to demand much, are fain to be content with little. Evening-up to some extent there should be. But we must not be content with a return to the *status quo ante*. We must be satisfied with nothing short of the abolition of undeserved poverty—the securing to every willing worker an adequate livelihood.

We are very far from securing that now. To realize that this is so, one has only to go and see how “the other half lives.” The housing conditions of a large section of the city and town population in the United States are a national disgrace that can hardly be exaggerated. Lack of air and sunshine, lack of sanitary arrangements, above all, lack of room, are the conditions under which millions of children are growing up in this country today. Out of thirty-eight compositions written by New York school-children from the East Side, describing their homes, seen by the writer some years ago, twenty-one spoke of the bad smell. If the others did not mention it, it was merely because of their habituation thereto. There are many thousands of occupied rooms in tenements throughout the cities of this country with no windows at all, and, of course, hundreds of thousands of rooms with windows opening only on to narrow air shafts where no adequate ventilation is possible. In one of the compositions above referred to, a little girl said of her room, “It is so dark it seems as if there was no sky.”

It may be doubted if there is any more significant aspect of a nation’s life than the conditions under which its children are growing up. The overcrowded, noisy, dark, unsanitary homes which at present are the lot of a large percentage of them today are a men-



ace to the nation's future, both from the point of view of health and of morals. Much can be done by enlightened housing legislation. But unless the incomes of the poorer people are considerably increased, conditions are bound to remain very bad. What with the wretched home-conditions and the under-nourishment referred to in an earlier chapter, the physique and the morale of a large section of our people are in a fair way to be seriously impaired.

It is not that the country is poor. On the contrary, the national wealth is increasing by leaps and bounds. But it is becoming more and more concentrated in the hands of the wealthy classes. During the past decade there has been a far greater percentage of increase in the larger incomes than in the smaller. One obvious reason for this lies in the fact that whereas practically the whole income of the poor is spent upon the necessities of life, which doubled in cost within a few years, the greater part of the income of the rich has been invested in securities, which have been purchasable at far lower prices than usual, and has been accumulating at a very high rate of interest. If the tendencies of the past decade continue unchecked, most of the surplus wealth of the country will be in the hands of a small class of rich people, within a generation.

If this surplus wealth were to accrue to the "capitalist" class only after the poorer classes had all received a living wage, and were to be used by them for reinvestment in industry, we might be content. Even then, the great power concentrated in so few hands would have dangerous potentialities; and it is a question whether the control of industry by a comparatively small set of people, implied by such a situation, is consonant with our American ideal of



Democracy. But the actual situation is much more obviously wrong. For on the one hand we have hundreds of thousands of families with less than enough to live on in comfort, and on the other hand a class of rich people who spend extravagantly for the satisfaction of luxurious personal wants.

The indulgence in luxury, and extravagant spending, are comparatively new traits in American life. But they have been growing rapidly, so that recent estimates assert that a quarter of the national income goes today for luxuries. The rich set the pace, and a great many who are not rich catch the infection and spend more than they can afford. The result is that instead of being, as we once were, a thrifty folk, we have become the most spendthrift nation on earth.

Most of this expenditure is innocent in itself, much of it is intrinsically desirable. Man does not live by bread alone; and the billions of dollars spent every year by Americans on automobiles, pretty clothes, jewelry, candy, soft drinks, tobacco, theatres and movies, and the other enjoyments classified as "luxuries," are by no means wholly wasted. But the production of these luxuries limits correspondingly the production of necessities; and it is a question how far any one has moral right to indulgence while others are suffering. Every dollar spent on personal enjoyment of any sort means so much labor withdrawn from the production of other goods. Ought we, as patriotic Americans, to look tolerantly upon extravagant expenditures of any sort, while our poor are wretchedly housed and underfed? Should we not consider seriously the motto adopted by the British Labor Party at a recent election, "No cake for any till all have bread?"

It is not enough to say, as we said at the beginning

of this chapter, that the poor in our country today are, on the whole, better off than the poor have ever been before. It has always been a bad world for the poor, and it is still a pretty bad world for them. Their status, though it has improved in some respects, has not improved in proportion to the increasing prosperity of the country. In the Old World the "common people" were not considered of importance, anyway; they swarmed and were swept away by famine and pestilence, with little pity from the ruling class. But the American ideal was that every human being has intrinsic worth, and a right to his share of the good things of life. So deeply rooted has this ideal become in our soil that we can never hope henceforth to have a stable social order until it again approaches some approximate realization. If class conflicts are ever to cease, if the "unrest" that we hear so much of today is ever to be cured, it can only be by the setting in of a vigorous tide in the direction of a greater equalization of the benefits of our national prosperity. Many observers would put the case even more decidedly; Professor Edward Ross, for example, in *Changing America*, warns us that "unless democracy mends the distribution of wealth, the mal-distribution of wealth will end democracy."

It is not, perhaps, in terms of regard for an abstract ideal, or in terms of a concrete pity for the sufferings of their less fortunate fellow-countryman, that we can most surely arouse the attention of Americans today. It is in terms of national efficiency and preparedness. We are wasting our man-power, lessening our productive efficiency, by permitting poverty, inadequate housing, underfeeding, anxiety over subsistence, the destruction of health, premature death. A division of the national wealth which allows a small

percentage of our people, at one end of the scale, to pamper and soften themselves by luxurious living, and refuses comfort, health, leisure to a considerable percentage at the other end of the scale, is not a sensible division. What we should seek is efficiency in consumption, as well as in production; that is, the greatest attainable welfare for the amount of wealth consumed. Luxury consumption is inefficient consumption; the same amount of money would produce more valuable results if consumed in the form of more necessary things by more people.

The problem of the ways in which money can most efficiently be spent to forward human happiness is a matter for very careful study. But it is clear that our present methods of consumption are far from the norm. Certainly more money should be spent upon food for the undernourished, comfortable homes to replace the squalid and unhealthful tenements into which the poor are crowded, care for the sick, education for the ignorant, and public works that benefit the whole community; less money, therefore, should be allowed for fine clothes, elaborate meals, and the costlier forms of amusement. Our present system of distribution, which permits a great expenditure for needless luxuries on the one hand, while on the other hand it denies the amenities of life to others, is an inefficient and inherently unstable system. And any nation that permits such a system to perpetuate itself will, in the long run, fall behind a nation that evolves a more efficient distribution of wealth.

Here and there one may discern signs among the upper classes of a realization of this truth. An American financier of note recently declared that in his judgment the interest in acquiring wealth was beginning to give way, in this country, to the interest

in performing public service. Perhaps we shall witness a revival of the spirit of the Greeks of the best period, by whom, Professor Butcher says, "money lavished on personal enjoyment was counted vulgar, oriental, inhuman." Perhaps we shall take Walt Whitman's utterance as our motto:

"I speak the pass-word primeval—I give the sign of democracy; By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms."

Several distinguished Americans have recently urged "self-limitation in regard to wealth." The well-to-do, one holds, should "take for their own use only what they require for the essentials of a civilized life, and regard the rest as a deposit for the general good." Another, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* a "Word to the Rich," urges them to spend their fortunes during their life-time in good works. "The strong man has reached his goal, but it is not time for resting. The day has come for him to show other men that his life and his work are henceforth for them, and not for his own gratification. He must prove that he has labored for the common good, and that he knows the rightful, wise use of his profits. . . . This plan gives occupation and happiness to the giver, explains, and, if you please, atones to his fellows for his success. It blesses the receiver and the giver; it cultivates kindly relations and feelings between the lucky and the less lucky men; it takes a long step toward the making of a great, healthy nation; and what higher, more pressing duty can the citizen have than this task?"

Such instances as the following are becoming more and more frequent. The daily papers for November 29, 1920, announced that a young Bostonian had re-



nounced his right to a legacy of about a million dollars left him by his father. "I refuse to accept the money," the young man declared, "because it is not mine. A system which starves thousands, while hundreds are stuffed, condemns itself. A system which leaves a sick woman helpless and offers its services to a healthy man condemns itself. It is such a system that offers me a million dollars."

Other, equally conscientious, young men and young women, instead of refusing to handle wealth bequeathed to them, or accruing to them in the form of rent, interest, or profits from industry, are maintaining a simple manner of life and spending their surplus money for social or philanthropic purposes. Others are returning the greater part of their profits to the workers on some profit-sharing plan. Others are investing their surplus in the expansion of industry, while keeping the ownership of the wealth in their name. It is a gravely puzzling question, which is the best way, the most socially desirable way, of disposing of the surplus wealth of the nation. It is clear, however, that its use for luxurious and extravagant living is not its best possible use. Surplus wealth should be used, for the most part, in ways that are socially efficient and just. The ideal of America must be, not unlimited enjoyments for those who are fortunate or clever enough to command them, but a widely diffused welfare.

Our existing industrial system could easily produce enough to provide plenty of food and clothing and the other necessities of life for everybody. If it does not, it is partly because too much of its energy is consumed in producing superfluities for the well-to-do, partly because production is often purposely kept below its maximum by the owners of industry, in



order to keep prices high, and partly because the workers often fail to give their wholehearted energy to the work. The War showed that with most of the able-bodied young men drafted from industry more goods than ever could be produced. And although that feverish energy could not be permanently maintained, there is no doubt that we can all live in comfort if we utilize to the full the resources and inventions and human abilities now at our disposal.

It is possible that some people are incorrigibly lazy; but a proper system of vocational guidance and training would certainly discover for almost all men and women some work to which they would be willing to give a reasonable amount of energy. Some people, of course, are stupid; but appropriate education can make all of these useful producers except the extremely sub-normal; and these the State must look after—if for no other reason, to prevent their having children. Some people will be improvident, and fail to provide for illness and old age; a proper system of health and old-age insurance will remove this gambler's risk and protect people against misfortune. Differences in productive ability will remain, but not such as to deny to anyone a decent livelihood. There is no need of anything more than sporadic poverty and want, overwork, undernourishment, or indecent housing. It is our fault, our national crime, that these evils exist on a large scale.

The fact is, we have not yet realized our national unity. We are, in reality, one big family; the misfortune of one class is the misfortune of the nation. As Professor Leacock well says, "Every child of the nation has the right to be clothed and fed and trained irrespective of its parents' lot. . . . The ancient grudging selfishness that would not feed other peo-

ples' children must be cast out. In the war time the wealthy bachelor and the spinster of advancing years took it for granted that other peoples' children should fight for them. The obligation must apply both ways. No society is properly organized until every child that is born into it shall have an opportunity in life."

The lot of the children is most important, for a man's whole life is commonly made or marred by his opportunities during a few years of childhood. But the lot of the adult wage-earner should also be a matter of national concern. And we should be content with nothing short of a reasonable amount of comfort—at least food enough, enough warm clothing, and a decent home, for every citizen of America.

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## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SQUARE DEAL

IT IS perhaps hopeless to expect any great proportion of the well-to-do to give the bulk of their surplus wealth to raise the level of life for the less prosperous. Neither patriotic nor religious appeals can counteract, for most people, the lure of the personal enjoyments, of one sort or other, made possible by money. "The money has been fairly won," they will say; "it is ours; let these others earn their own money; the race is open to all on equal terms."

Nor is it to be expected that any socialistic or communistic plan of equalizing wealth will commend itself to our people. We are confirmed individualists in our attitude toward the problem of distribution.

Is there then no hope for a more diffused prosperity, for a completer access for all to the good things of life? Yes, the hope lies in our American ideal of the Square Deal. Individualism in the acquisition of wealth can be retained *if the race is really kept open to all on equal terms*, if every citizen is given a really fair chance to acquire a competence.

The threat to our American system lies in the growing sense in the hearts of many people that they have not really had a fair chance. They had to go to work young, and could not afford an adequate education; they have not been able to live under such conditions as would safeguard their health; they have no capital with which to draw themselves up out of

the status of the day-laborer, and their wages as laborers are low. On the other hand, healthful living conditions, inherited means, acquaintance with the right people, pull, leisure for proper training of the faculties, together with a measure of acquisitive ability, give their possessors a tremendous start. The race is not to all on equal terms, it is to the rich, the clever, the fortunate, those "on the inside," or those to whom some combination of lucky circumstances and mental qualities gives the necessary start.

We may waive discussion of the relative importance of these various factors. Men who have made fortunes usually attribute their success to their superior ability; while if they lose out, they attribute their failure to bad luck or to the unscrupulousness or more advantageous situation of their rivals. All these factors, and many others, enter in, so that it is difficult in any given case to know in what degree success results from superior ability; and still more obviously impossible to generalize with respect to the class of earners as a whole.

But even where it is clearly ability that wins the prize, it is apt to be an acquisitive ability rather than a productive ability. It is business strategy quite as much as productive efficiency that brings returns. The inventor who perfects some new process, the manager who evolves an efficient organization, the artisan who develops uncommon skill at his craft, are far less likely to grow rich than the owner of a plant who knows how to use the brains and industry of others for the creation of profits for himself. In fact, skill at making money seems to be in considerable degree a specialized skill, with little relation to public service or intrinsic desert.

But far more embittering than the realization of

these personal differences in environment and endowment is the growing consciousness of what is coming to be called, in a more specific sense, *Privilege*. This term connotes the fact that a comparatively small section of the population have succeeded in getting for themselves the greater part of the natural resources of the country and the manufacture and distribution of certain monopolizable necessities of life; this ownership and control enables them to divert to themselves an increasingly large share of the national income. Indeed, any combination of producers in a given line, whether formal or virtual, so as to create a practical monopoly, gives them just such a privileged position in our industrial system, making possible what we call today *Profiteering*. It is this situation, above all, which must be corrected or neutralized if we are to attain a stable and generally prosperous society.

For example, some sixty thousand people own a quarter of the land of the United States; a comparatively small number own a large proportion of the most valuable city land. As the population grows, this land becomes more and more valuable. The farm-lands of the country have increased in value over two hundred per cent in twenty years. New York City real estate is increasing in assessed valuation at a rate of about a hundred and fifty million dollars a year. The annual rent received from land in New York City is said to be about four hundred million dollars. The Astor fortune, of several hundred millions, had its foundation in this rise in value of the land upon which that city is built. One farm for which one of the earlier Astors paid \$4,500 is said to be worth today \$50,000,000. This is an extreme case. But the general truth is that there is a con-



tinual increase in land-values, and that the fortunate owners of valuable land are in a position to demand an enormous amount of money each year from the rest of the population in the form of rent.

Now we are not going to question the intrinsic justice of the private appropriation of rent. When a man has worked hard, saved his money, and put it into real estate, he is as much entitled to interest upon it in the form of rent as if he were getting interest on bonds, or on a savings-bank account. But apart from the fact that a man may inherit the land he owns, without having earned it himself—which is equally true, of course, of the other forms of Privilege—there is the other fact that the *increase* in the value of land is socially created. Land increases in value because the population increases. Specific lands increase more rapidly in value because good roads are built, and schools, and water-supplies and sewerage-systems, all at public expense; and because other people move into the neighborhood and build homes, and shops, and make the land in question thereby more desirable. Because of this socially created situation, many fortunate land-owners are able to get a rental considerably in excess of the average interest obtainable on the sum for which they purchased the land. They are in a strategic position. They are able to say: "You cannot use this desirable land except by paying me this high rent." This is one aspect of what is today commonly called Privilege.

What is true of land is true of all the natural resources of the country—the ore deposits, the coal, the oil, the natural gas, the forests. A comparatively small class of people have been fortunate or clever enough to get the ownership of practically all of the

sources of supply of these indispensable things. The great mass of poor people couldn't buy them up; a few rich people could. And now these people are in a situation to ask, and get, high prices for iron and copper and coal and oil and gas and lumber. In certain cases, owners of some of these natural resources have received profits of a thousand per cent in a year on their investments. Coal we must have, or freeze to death; lumber we must have for buildings and for furniture, as well as wood-pulp for paper. Copper and iron are essentials in an industrial age. And in almost equal degree a long list of important commodities. But because we must all of us have these things, is it right that we should have to pay for them whatever the owners of the sources of supply demand?

Any one of a number of other factors may likewise give a privileged position, an 'inside track', in the race for fortune. It may be a franchise that gives its possessor exclusive right to supply a community with electricity, or gas, or street-car service, or to develop and sell water-power from a given site. It may be the possession of trade-secrets or patents. It may be the ownership of a railroad, or of refrigerator cars, or of storage-warehouses. It may be a tariff law which chokes off foreign competition and enables a manufacturer to demand a higher price than he could get in an open market. It may be a sudden increase of demand for certain commodities, or a sudden decrease in the available supply—as happened so strikingly during the Great War. But whatever the cause, or combination of causes, that makes possible the high profits, there are few human beings who will refuse the opportunity. In their own minds these fortunate

ones are reaping the just reward of their foresight and cleverness. To the less fortunate they are just—profiteers.

Some recent instances of profiteering will illustrate what is meant. The profits of the United States Steel Corporation were, approximately, \$23,000,000 in 1914; owing to the demand created by the War they rose to \$450,000,000 in 1917. The Baldwin Locomotive Company's profits rose from \$350,000 in 1914 to \$6,000,000 in 1916; the Niles-Bement Bond Company from \$35,000 in 1914 to \$5,000,000 in 1916; the Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Company from \$25,000 in 1914 to \$3,000,000 in 1916. A considerable number of fortunately situated corporations were able to pay dividends on their stock of over a hundred per cent yearly. Besides this, they greatly increased their reserve funds; the Steel Corporation, for example, in four years increased its undivided surplus from \$135,000,000 to \$493,000,000. In November, 1919, Mr. McAdoo testified before the investigating committee of the Senate to the existence of profits in the coal-mining industry running up to two thousand per cent on the capital stock. Indeed, the coal-mines were said to be yielding their owners in 1916 a billion dollars in excess profits every eight weeks.

The point is that these profits resulted only in minor degree from increased production; in some cases production was actually less than before. They resulted primarily from increased demand. Where there is a virtual monopoly, as in the case of the Standard Oil Company, the Harvester Trust, the Tobacco Trust, or the Pullman Company, the price that can be asked is limited only by the possibility that consumers can do without the article. But experience shows that monopoly is not a prerequisite

of "charging all the traffic will bear." When a wave of high prices sets in, manufacturers and dealers who have what the public needs will raise prices generally, as if by concerted action. To be sure, a reaction is apt to follow, a wave of low prices, during which many manufacturers and dealers barely subsist, and many fail—to the more or less avowed satisfaction of the consumers who have resented the high prices! But one evil does not atone for another. Neither profiteering nor bankruptcy is desirable. And the net result of these fluctuations is, in general, the increasing concentration of production and selling in the hands of a class of capitalists, who, because of their monopoly, will be in an ever more favorable position for profiteering.

According to a recent report, the amount of profits exacted from the consumers by the sugar manufacturers and dealers in 1920 was in the neighborhood of \$600,000,000—an average tax of \$30 on every American family. In 1913 the margin between production cost and the retail price of a pound of sugar was less than one cent; in 1920 it was ten cents or more. Even in 1917, when the retail price of sugar was seven or eight cents a pound, the beet-sugar producers earned an average of about sixty per cent profit on their invested capital, while cane sugar producers earned an average of two hundred thirty-eight per cent on their invested capital. In addition to the profits of the producers, many middlemen and retailers have been shown to have made profits on sugar running up to a hundred per cent and more.

Much the same story can be told with respect to shoes, and clothing, and scores of other articles. The American Woolen Company, for example, was shown, in an investigation by the Department of Justice, in



1920, to be making profits running up to one hundred per cent and more. A case argued before the Courts in 1919 brought out the fact that a certain Brooklyn Cloak and Suit Manufacturer who could neither read nor write had within a few years amassed a fortune of half a million dollars. The five leading meat packers of the country, who pull together and have a practical monopoly of the business, are said to have accumulated \$178,000,000 in net profits during the years 1915-1917. Their rate of profit was said to be about four hundred per cent upon invested capital.

One expert estimates that the corporations of the country received \$4,800,000,000 *more* in net profits during the years 1916-1918 than during the three preceding years—which were by no means lean years. These excess profits would amount to a tax of \$240 upon every family in the country. Another expert calculates that during four years the corporations of the country gathered in total net profits (that is, profits remaining after the payment of all their taxes) of \$34,000,000,000. Not all of the corporations in the country made large profits, of course; on the contrary, many corporations, not in a strategic position, earned very meagre profits, or no profits at all. This immense sum went to those corporations that were in a favorable position to exact it. Besides the corporations, many individuals and unincorporated firms made fat profits. So that it is clear that a very large part of the total income of the country within the past few years has gone, in the form of “excess profits”—that is, profits beyond what is considered the normal rate of interest upon investment—into the pockets of a comparatively few corporations and business men.

Even the summation of frankly acknowledged prof-



its by no means completes the tale. For there are other channels by which the rewards of successful industry are distributed. A large sum is retained every year for the expansion of business, or for a reserve fund, or to pay off bonded indebtedness. This results ultimately in increased profits to the stockholders. Again, the declaring of stock dividends permits a really very high percentage of profit to be disguised as a normal dividend upon the amount of stock outstanding. A great deal of the capital stock of the more prosperous concerns is nothing but "water"; that is, it represents no money invested, it is simply a claim to an income from the industry.

To some extent these great profits accruing to the fortunate industries and to the owners of natural resources are distributed among a class of stockholders. But this is not a large class of people. And the bulk of the stock is owned by a comparatively small fraction of this class. The "insiders," also, have usually been the ones to buy the stock at a low price and so to make a large profit on their investment, whereas the other stockholders are apt to get their shares only at an advanced price and therefore to receive a smaller return for their money. Another way in which the "insiders" can increase their share of the booty is by paying high salaries to themselves as officers of the companies. For example, the American Metal Company was reported recently to be paying \$1,000,000 a year in salaries to six officers. A firm of Wall Street brokers, according to the testimony of its president, was paying recently nearly a million dollars a year for the salaries of its twelve highest officers and directors; the president and first vice-president receiving \$161,000 apiece, and four other officers close to or above \$100,000 apiece.

There are, of course, all sorts of methods of getting big profits in business—if one has a strategic position. Perhaps the most anti-social method is that of curtailing production in order to make the article scarcer, and hence saleable at a higher price. For example, in the winter of 1917, when the world was facing famine, a combination of middlemen who had bought up a large part of the potato crop allowed a considerable percentage of these potatoes to rot in the ground, because they could make more money if there were fewer potatoes on the market. So, when cargo space was desperately wanted and available tonnage was not nearly adequate, bananas were being dropped overboard outside of New York harbor, in order not to reduce the price of that fruit by glutting the market. For a long time during which many thousands of children and babies were suffering, and actually dying, for want of milk, in the city of New York, milk dealers refused to bring into the city some two million quarts of milk produced within marketable distance—and even posted notices suggesting to farmers that they cease producing this surplus milk which they did not wish to distribute. Naturally the price of milk remained very high, and babies of the poor died.

These are not very unusual occurrences. In the South there is a recurrent crusade yearly against the "overproduction" of cotton. The Rubber Growers' Association, in 1920, suggested to plantation-owners that they reduce their tappings of rubber trees so as to effect a twenty-five per cent reduction in the output of rubber. This would have the effect of keeping the price of rubber high. The consumers would suffer, but the rubber producers would make a lot of money.

Profiteering is, of course, not a new phenomenon.

But the War gave it an enormous boost. Business men have learned how to make the most of their opportunities. And while there are not a few Americans who refuse to make all the money they can, and find their happiness in producing or retailing needed goods at the lowest possible cost, the general trend has been heavily in the direction of reaping the greatest possible financial harvest. And this is the chief cause of that very great inequality in the distribution of wealth which we noted in the preceding chapter.

It seems obvious that Privilege and Profiteering must be curbed if our American system is to be retained. For a while we can muddle along with a comparatively small class of people raking in large profits, at one end of the scale, and a larger class of people at the other end of the scale lacking the essentials of life. But not forever. It will mean eventually reform or revolution. And by revolution much that is precious in our American tradition might be lost. So the conservative people, who make up the bulk of our population, must find some method of preventing the fortunate holders of the strategic positions in our economic life from profiting inordinately from their situation, and, at the same time, a method of ensuring to the poorest laborers a decent livelihood.

This is the aim of much of the "progressive" legislation of the past generation. A beginning has been made. But—as the experience of the last few years shows—only a beginning. We have minimum wage laws now in many States; the minimum is usually set below the standard of comfortable or even efficient living, is quite too low to be satisfactory; but it is a beginning. We have the machinery of taxation used

to divert a part of the excess profits of fortunate industries to the State. The Excess Profits Tax—which leaves an eight per cent profit untaxed, and takes only a small percentage of the profits above eight per cent—went but a little way toward rectifying the situation; but the idea behind it was sound. The graduated Income Tax and Inheritance Tax go much further toward paring down the fortunes of the rich, and enable the State to raise its revenue without exacting too much from the poorer classes.

Of particular interest is the movement toward differentiating between “earned” income (wages, salaries up to a figure that can be honestly thought earned, professional receipts—i.e. what a man gets for his labor) and “unearned” income (interest on bonds, bank-deposits, and loans, dividends on stock, rent from land and property owned, excess profits from industry). It is no part of the American tradition to denounce unearned income. But it is an implication of our ideal of Equality that one class of society should not be allowed to divert to itself by this means such a large proportion of the national income that there is too little left for the greater numbers who are not property owners. To allow that is not a legitimate Individualism—which would seek to give every individual a fair chance—but individual or class selfishness.

It is doubtful whether taxation alone can remedy the excessive distortion of our distribution of wealth. It is quite possible that we may have to resort to State regulation of prices and wages. Perhaps we must come to State ownership of natural resources—the coal-mines, the oil-wells, the forests, the water-power sites. It is no part of the plan of this volume to discuss the pros and cons of the highly intricate



economic problems involved. The point of this chapter is simply that ways must be found and utilized to cure the generally recognized evils of Privilege and Profiteering. The continuance of our American traditions depends, among other things, upon our success in this undertaking.

Success in this undertaking would be the realization of what Roosevelt meant by the Square Deal. In his address to the Ohio Constitutional Convention, in 1912, he declared, "This country, as Lincoln said, belongs to the people. So do the natural resources which make it rich. . . . It will help the people little to conserve our national wealth unless the benefits which it can yield are secured to the people."

The fact is, in a nutshell, that prosperity—and all the human goods that material prosperity makes possible—has been far too dependent upon the accident of birth. To give every child, so far as possible, an equal start in the race, we should see to it that, however poor his parents may be, he has a chance for health and education and an adequate livelihood. We must recognize that every child belongs not only to his parents but to the nation; he is a potential asset—or a potential weakling, incompetent, or even criminal. We must send him into life fairly equipped for the struggle. And on the other hand, we must see to it that the possession of the strategic positions by a group of owners of land and resources and important industries does not make it too difficult for him to succeed, and win for his family a fair share of the good things of life. It is not that we begrudge luxury and power to the fortunate and clever, but that we must have a Square Deal for those who are less fortunate or less clever in the acquisitive line. As Wilson has written, "America was set up that she



might be different from all the nations of the world in this: that the strong could not push the weak to the wall."

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**PART THREE**  
**DEMOCRACY**



## CHAPTER XV

### POLITICAL DEMOCRACY

THE Declaration of Independence declared that governments "derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." Lincoln defined Democracy as "government of the people, by the people, for the people"; and defended it by the assertion, already quoted, that "no man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent."

More concretely, Democracy implies the choosing of legislators and executives by the people. In an autocracy the rulers are not chosen by the people; or even if, on rare occasion, they are so chosen, they are not responsible to the people when once in office. Democracy does away with the doctrine of the divine right of monarchs to do as they please; it makes the voice of the people the ultimate authority. Practically, that means the voice of the majority of the people; for if action is to go forward, there can be no waiting for unanimous agreement. But no individual or class in a democracy has a privileged position. Every adult counts for one; and the preponderance of opinion or desire determines policy.

Not only do all the people, in a democracy, have a share in the election of officials to govern, but every individual has the right to seek and hold office. There is no hereditary ruling class; anyone can attain the highest political position who can persuade his fellow-

countrymen of his fitness therefor. In this way, too, Democracy dares to trust the common man.

American Democracy did not spring into being fullgrown. On the contrary, it has been in process of realization from the days of the early settlers, and is still but partially achieved. Maryland was the first State to proclaim universal manhood suffrage. The Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1920, finally included womanhood suffrage in the national policy. But so long as Privilege sits in high places, so long as "the Interests" have an undue control of legislation, so long as masses of people remain politically uneducated, the prey of clever bosses, demagogues, and a propagandist press, so long as millions of workers have no say whatever as to the conditions of their workaday life, democracy is still but partially achieved.

Still, America has already achieved a large measure of its democratic ideal. And most of us will agree with Ambassador Choate's dictum that "the cardinal principle upon which American institutions rest, the absolute political equality of all citizens with universal suffrage, is the secret of American success." It is important, then, to ask, What is the advantage of Democracy? Why should we be so eager to maintain and extend this ideal?

The apologists for autocracy can make out a persuasive case for that system. Democracy, they say, is hopelessly inefficient; it "lowers the aims of the best to the standard of the masses, while aristocracy must push the masses with their lower interests into a striving toward higher ends."

We must admit that genuine aristocracy—that is, a government by the *best* people—would push the masses toward higher ends. But actually, an autoc-



racy is seldom an aristocracy. The chances are almost overwhelming that hereditary and irresponsible rulers will be self-seeking, oblivious to the real needs of the people, blinded by class-prejudice, and very likely by imperialistic dreams. Even with respect to efficiency, apart from ideals, autocracies have seldom achieved striking success. Neither have democracies. But it is an open question whether there is not, on the whole, more likelihood of efficiency, in the long run, in a democracy than in an autocracy.

The one undoubted advantage of an autocracy is that it permits of quicker decisions and quicker action. There is no need to wait for deliberation by popular assemblies or a popular vote. The few who control the national destinies can act instantly in any crisis. This is of particular value in declaring war, and carrying out a truculent foreign policy in general. But this alleged advantage is, after all, a dangerous and undesirable one. Autocracies lead their subjects into wars and embroilments. The slower processes of democracy make for a wiser caution in action and a greater friendliness in international relations.

The rule of kings and a Junker-class has been endured so long in the world's history largely because they offered vigilant protection against foreign invasion. With the evolution of an international mechanism to prevent invasions and imperialisms, democracy can develop unafraid. And our own country, because of its great size and strength, and the protection of the oceans, has no need to subject itself to a military caste for protection.

Democracy makes war less likely, because it demands publicity. As Wilson has said, "Wars are not made because of the passions of the many, but because

of the intrigues of the few; and those intrigues are possible because they are pursued in the dark." Imperialism is not likely to go far when diplomatic methods are open and aboveboard. Democracies sometimes approve of wars, sometimes even of unrighteous wars; but history shows clearly that they tend to be more pacific than autocracies.

It is not true that autocracy implies a greater centralization of power or a greater subordination of the individual to the State. Democracy can have these things precisely in the degree that it desires. It may put experts in office if it wishes, and give them as much authority as it deems wise. An autocracy can never develop so long as these officials hold office for but a limited period, or are subject to recall if they do not satisfy the electorate. Our democracy is the result of a revolt against autocratic and irresponsible power. Hence we are still afraid of the centralization of authority, and distrustful of professional statesmen. But there is nothing to prevent us from training a body of men in the art of government and utilizing their services for the attainment of the collective will. Democracy can, and must, learn that efficiency need not mean tyranny.

Even with our as yet clumsy mechanism of democracy we have been able in most matters to make wiser decisions than are likely in an autocracy. It is a mistake to assume that ruling classes will have a better judgment, or higher ideals, than common people. Lord Bryce, in his great book, *The American Commonwealth*, asserted that "where the humbler classes have differed in opinion from the higher, they have often been proved by the event to have been right and their so-called betters wrong." A distinguished American, himself a highly cultured gentleman, has

gone so far as to say that "there never has been a period in our history, since the American nation was independent, when it would not have been a calamity to have it controlled by its highly educated men alone."

It is not, then, merely a matter of "rights," it is a matter of actual expediency to cleave to democracy. For democracy is the method that brings the most widespread and diverse intelligence to bear upon public problems. The prejudices of one class are neutralized by the opposite prejudices of another class. The self-seeking of one group is cancelled by the interest of other groups. Only by thus giving expression to the needs and ideas of every vocational group, every cultural interest, and every geographical section, can we get a resultant effective force best representative of the general welfare.

And we must not forget the educative influence of democracy. In an autocracy decisions are made *for* the people; in a democracy decisions are made *by* the people. To be governed never so well misses something of the value that comes from helping to govern. Mr. Elihu Root has declared that "the greatest, most useful educative process ever known in the world occurs every four years in the United States when, during a Presidential election, some fifteen million voters are engaged for months in reading and hearing about great and difficult questions of government." With all allowance for the buncombe that they hear on the platform, the unfair, partisan arguments that they read, the meaningless eulogies and the mudslinging, there is a solid nucleus of serious attention to public problems, and a good deal of fruitful thinking engendered. One of the great advantages of the extension of the democratic

principle to include women lies in the impetus thus given them to interest themselves in the problems of city, State and Nation.

The belief in democracy implies the belief in the ballot as the means of effecting needed changes in legislation or administration; belief in the ballot not only as contrasted with the bullet but as contrasted with what is today called "direct action." This is not to say that all strikes are unjustifiable. On the contrary, a strike to bring pressure to bear upon selfish and profiteering employers to grant a living wage, reasonable hours, or what not, may be the best means available to a highly desirable end. But the use of a General Strike, or sabotage, or ca'canny, or the expropriation of owners by workers (as recently in Italy), to effect fundamental changes in our institutions, is sharply opposed to our democratic ideal, which demands the attainment of political ends through political channels.

It is necessary to emphasize this point because there seems to be a growing group of those who despair of reform by the ballot and advocate the employment in far greater degree than hitherto of economic pressure. The editor of a brilliant American weekly recently expressed his attitude as follows: "When the economic organization wants anything enough to insist on having it, nothing else really matters. In an editorial some weeks ago we have already adverted to the passage of the Adamson bill. The railwaymen wanted the eight-hour day, and wanted it enough to insist on having it. They got it promptly from the existing Administration, and would have gotten it just as promptly from any other. They now seem to want the Plumb plan, and have the support of the miners in this desire. We do



not think much of the Plumb plan except by way of its educative value; but if the railwaymen really want it, want it as they wanted the Adamson bill, they will get it and get it on demand. It is clear to this paper, in short, that actual power lies in the economic organization, and that whatever power the political organization has, is purely factitious and exists on sufferance. Hence the political organization comes finally to nothing but a set of dummies and may be regarded accordingly. No President, Congress or Supreme Court will ever be found in the way of any demand of the economic organization, provided such demand has the backing of serious purpose such as was behind the Adamson bill.

“The thing is, then, in our judgment—without stirring up revolutions, which usually mean the mere exchange of one form of tyranny for another and hence do little good and great harm; without arraying oneself against the existing political or institutional order—the thing is to get the economic organization to want the right things, the fundamental things, and to be in earnest about getting them.

“Let the existing political organization take its own course. It is keenly aware of the power of the economic organization; and whenever it becomes convinced that the intelligence and will of the economic organization is really functioning behind that power, it will yield without any serious trial of strength.”

What of this argument? As a matter of fact, the experience of “direct action” in recent years does not corroborate this editor’s assurance of its success. Both in England and in France a general strike of the railway workers was beaten. Volunteers were found to do the work of engineers and trainmen, automobiles were used to transport people and goods,



and the people showed so great resourcefulness in getting along without the regular railway workers that nothing came of the demonstration. From the study of these and other cases a great many of the most ardent labor leaders and most radical advocates of social change admit that unless the public in general sympathizes heartily with the strikers and is willing to endure privation for the sake of furthering their cause, the attempt at direct action is bound to be futile.

It is also obvious that there is, and will be, no unified "economic organization." There are a number of different groups of workers, some wanting one thing, some another. If the railway-workers seek by direct action to force the nationalization of the railways, will the textile-workers, the metal-workers, the carpenters, plumbers, farmers, and teachers support them? Not unless they have become convinced that such a change of policy is advantageous for the country as a whole. And if they are convinced of the desirability of the change, it can be attained by the ballot. They will never consent, and they ought not to consent, to the dictation of public policy by a single group or combination of groups which is not strong enough or persuasive enough in its arguments to win in a fair contest at the polls.

Direct action is the attempt of a wilful minority to have its way. It means inconvenience to the public, very likely actual suffering. It engenders bitterness, and almost inevitably leads to bloodshed. If it represents the wish of a majority in the community it is unnecessary, because its end could be attained by the ballot. If it represents the attempt of a minority who feel themselves in a strategic position to hold

up the community's life until they are granted what they wish, it is the very negation of our ideal of Democracy. Instead of seeking to decide matters of public policy by discussion, persuasion, and a majority vote, it proposes to attain its end by a threat, by browbeating the rest of the people into accepting the policy of a minority. Under an autocracy, such a method matches power against power; it may be the best way of breaking the back of tyranny. In a democracy the one thing most needful is to preserve a general respect for the attainment of political ends by the ballot. And any economic organization that makes use of the public's need of its services to force its program upon the State is guilty of grave disservice.

On the other hand, we must recognize that groups of workers are right in pointing out that the owners of industry are making use of *their* strategic position to divert a large share of the profits of labor into their pockets. Owners of valuable land and natural resources are making the most of *their* strategic position to make fortunes by demanding high rentals and prices. Inheritors of fortunes are using their strategic position to add to their fortunes at compound interest. Why should not groups of workers, who have no other advantage in the race, use *their* strategic position to extort such terms as they can get?

The answer is, Two evils do not make a good. By all means let us seek to curtail Privilege and Profiteering and devise a fairer distribution of the fruits of industry and the natural resources of our continent. But let us do it by political means; that is, by educating people to see the need of reform until a majority vote can be obtained for measures and men

that will rectify existing evils. To seek a shorter cut to this end is to compromise the good sought, and to undermine the foundations of democracy.

The fundamental need in a democracy, then, is political education. The responsibility for State policy in America rests, ultimately, upon all the people; it will be wise or foolish, fair or unfair, skilful or blundering, in the long run in proportion to the insight of the electorate on public problems. The big problems of public policy are not beyond the comprehension of the people. But they are obscured by prejudice and self-seeking, by the rhetoric and sophistry of a propagandist press, by the passions and greed of groups accustomed to think in terms of personal or class advantage. What we need is state-mindedness, patriotism, Americanism—call it what you will—the habit of thinking in terms of the general good; and a widespread determination to study all problems from that angle. We need so diffused an education on civic matters that the mass of voters will no longer be helpless in the hands of political bosses, spellbinder orators, and a partisan press. We must think for ourselves, every one of us; in the formation and utilization of an enlightened public opinion lies our salvation.

On the other hand, we must not expect the impossible of human nature. The great mass of Americans are busy, hard-working; people, with little spare time and energy to study political situations and inform themselves with regard to candidates. We must beware of putting too heavy a burden upon them, for in so doing we shall defeat our end. We must devise such improvements in our political mechanism as will make the obfuscation of issues less easy, and smooth the way for the formation and direct application to

public policy of a genuine public opinion. Ways and means to this end will be considered in succeeding chapters.

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## CHAPTER XVI

### POLITICAL HONESTY

A BRILLIANT American student of politics, in a book published a few years ago, writes: "We talk about the evils of democracy. We have not yet tried democracy. Party or 'interests' govern us with some fiction of the 'consent of the governed.'"

A conservative professor of law in one of our leading universities declares, "In other forms of unpopular government the central figure has been the monarch, the autocrat, the oligarch, or the aristocrat. In ours it is the politocrat (i.e., the boss). We have avoided monarchy, autocracy, oligarchy, and aristocracy, only to find ourselves tightly in the grasp of a politocracy."

Another contemporary writer has recently declared, ("The name of self-government is noisy everywhere, the Thing is throttled.")

A valuable work on Social Ethics, published in 1920, states this as a truism: "The average American prides himself upon his energy, his business astuteness, his industrial efficiency; but in many ways his civic stupidity makes the world stand aghast."

These are undoubtedly exaggerated statements. But they are examples of a very widespread disgust with politics in this country. This is not a new state of things; on the contrary, inefficiency and graft have existed in our politics from the beginning. Charles Lee described the Continental Congress as "a stable



of stupid cattle that stumbled at every step." It is doubtful if standards are lower today than formerly. But certainly they are not as high as our ideal of Democracy demands. We must seek to discover the causes of this unsatisfactory situation.

It is obvious to any observer that there is a great deal of ignorance and incompetence in high places, even in such conspicuous positions as those of Congressmen. In 1917 a well-known political critic, writing in one of our conservative weeklies about a tax bill that had been under discussion in Congress, said, "The House did its part in framing the bill with a looseness and carelessness which were almost terrifying to anyone who understood the gravity of the country's circumstances." The chairman of the committee that framed it "was, in the field of finance, an awkward child—almost a wilful child, and . . . to say it in the only word that is adequate—ignorant."

A man who was for years a leader in the Senate recently made the statement that by the application of proper business methods the cost of conducting the United States Government could be reduced \$300,000,000 a year. Other observers have made other estimates; but there is general agreement as to the existence of enormous waste.

A professor of politics in one of our great universities, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly*, declares that "consideration of Congressional procedure from the standpoint of comparative politics causes a feeling of blank amazement at the national tolerance."

In another important American weekly the editor wrote, "This last session of Congress has been an ominous exhibition. From first to last it was calculated to destroy all confidence in the machinery of

representative government. . . . It was garrulous, wasteful, amorphous, frivolous and foolish. It wasted money like a drunken sailor and time like a babbling idiot. It could not think, it would not imagine, it could not organize, it could not act."

Still another observer wrote, "Among Americans who have watched Congress closely, who have dealings with it on any public matter, the legislature of this nation is cordially despised. There isn't a decent public servant in Washington who doesn't breathe a sigh of relief when Congress adjourns. There isn't an official interested in his work who can't work better when Congress is gone."

Mr. Bryce described the situation clearly in his *American Commonwealth*, though he was too courteous, in his rôle of foreign critic, to put the matter so boldly as this. "Congressmen," he wrote, "are not chosen from among the best citizens. . . . They do not pretend to lead the people, being, indeed, seldom specifically qualified to do so."

Now, making all allowance for the exaggeration of these statements, the fact remains that, with exceptions, our system does not get the ablest, the best trained men, the men with deepest insight into public problems, into Congress. The situation is even worse in the State legislatures and municipal councils. However we may hesitate to criticize our legislators and officials in the presence of foreigners, we all admit to ourselves that these are usually not very efficient bodies, to say the least. There is a vast deal of legislative blundering; important bills are held up year by year, or amended so as to ruin their value, and vicious bills are constantly passed. To point this out is the sheerest commonplace. It is when we come to ask why this is so that we are forced to realize

how little most of us understand the actual workings of our democratic system.

Does the trouble lie in the fact that the ablest and most scrupulous men will not run for office? Or is it that the people are too ignorant to vote for the better candidates whose names appear on the ballots? Or is it that the nominating machinery does not get the best men upon the ballots? The answer seems to be a partial yes to all these questions. The best men do not usually run for office, because, among other reasons, they know that they have small chance of being nominated, or, if nominated, of being elected. The nomination of candidates for public office, whether it takes place at conventions or at direct primaries, is usually controlled by party organizations, and these organizations will usually put up only candidates whom they trust to further the party interests. Even if independent candidates are nominated, the chances are that—unless the candidate is unusually conspicuous—a preponderant number of voters will follow the party standards and defeat the independents. In short, our government is a government, ultimately, by party organizations. And these organizations—or the controlling element in them—are concerned in general, whether consciously or not, rather with their own maintenance and advantage than with the public welfare.

Even if there were no parties, incompetent men would of course, be put up for office, and individual dishonesty would not be absent. But actually, what happens is that the party leaders look first, usually, for a candidate who will be “regular,” who will be pliant to the wishes of the Interests that support the party, and appoint as office-holders deserving party men. For this the ablest and most scrupulous men

are far less likely to be available. For some conspicuous office, indeed, a man of fearless and independent character and of special training may be nominated by the party leaders. Owing to the scattering of responsibility in our political system, such a man cannot do much to dislodge the party grip upon power; and the prestige of having such a man in office may be a needed asset. But in general it is a good party man who is put up and pushed; if he is able, so much the better; but his party allegiance is a *sine qua non*.

Now parties are inevitable and useful organizations in a democracy, to formulate principles and carry on political propaganda. It is inevitable, also, that they should try to elect men who approve their principles and can be counted on to further them. It is, perhaps, also inevitable that they should degenerate largely into organizations for the securing of office, with principles a secondary consideration. But what must be clearly realized is that, as things are, it is the party-organizations that get most of our public officials into office. The incompetence of legislators and administrators is incompetence winked at by the party-leaders. The graft is party graft. When public moneys are wasted, it is not that the money is lost; it goes into the pockets of the party bosses, or into the pockets of people whom they are depending upon for help.

It is this situation that makes "reform" so difficult. An independent free-lance politician who tried to get his share of graft would find it a difficult matter. His best chance would lie in threatening to expose his colleagues if he were not let in on it. But he could be sure that the party organizations would do their utmost to oust him from politics and chastise his



sins. The vast preponderance of graft is collective graft. It wears the *camouflage* of party policy, and is connived at out of party loyalty by many men to whom it has perhaps never occurred that it is essentially selfish and dishonest. It is the accepted game in politics.

As a matter of fact, politics are probably no more "corrupt" than business. People are in business mostly for their pocketbooks. A love of wielding power plays a large part in both business and politics, but making money is the main thing. The disinterested public servants in either are few. The average man accepts the situation, and takes his place in the game; the man who does not want to play that sort of game keeps out.

Thus when the voter scrutinizes the names of candidates on his ballot, the chances are that: first, there are few if any candidates who have a more idealistic conception of politics, or who, if they yearn for it, do not realize that they must conform to the general practice in order to get on at all; secondly, that if there are any such candidates, the voter, confused by the eulogies uttered on them all, or entirely ignorant of their qualifications, does not know which of them are these abler and more honorable ones; thirdly, that if he takes the pains to form an intelligent opinion on the matter and vote for the fearless independent, his candidate will be swamped by the great number of votes cast blindly, loyally, in favor of the candidates that the party organizations trust and back.

If any reader doubts this party control of our politics, let him seek appointment to office. The recognized route is through service to one of the leading party organizations and recognition by its local boss



as a deserving party man. If you are a successful worker in furthering the party cause and are reasonably presentable, you may, if you seek it, presently receive the party nomination for some minor office. You will be opposed by a rival who has been serving the other leading party organization. Unless some unusual situation arises, one of you will win. If then you back the party measures, and so far as your position allows, help get party men upon the public payrolls, you may be boosted to higher office. But if you oppose the will of the party leaders, you will receive no further nomination.

There are, of course, exceptional cases. A man of remarkable personality, like Roosevelt, may win the ear of the public and succeed in spite of the party bosses. Even in his case, however, it took a war and an assassination to lift him to the presidency. He came back from the Spanish War a popular hero. He was nominated to the Vice-Presidency by the Republican party leaders in order to shelve him—the office being, in our system, one of singular impotence. If McKinley had not been shot, the political career of even so extraordinary a man and consummate a politician would probably have gone no farther. He was renominated because, once in the Presidential chair, he created a popular demand for his re-election that was irresistible. But when, in 1912, the popular will again demanded his nomination, the party leaders were able to thwart it. And the great revolt against the control by the “insiders” of the Republican party, although led with Roosevelt’s customary enthusiasm and skill, came in the end to nothing.

In every age and country there have been those who have sought to control the government for

selfish ends. In the old days the method was crude; a ruling class perpetuated itself and denied the people any share in decisions. Nowadays a government has to be controlled in subtler ways. The main reliance of the groups of people who make it their business to profit by controlling government is upon party loyalty. In the name of a great party they nominate some one who can be trusted to work with them; they then eulogize his virtues and abilities in campaign speeches and personal conversation; the newspapers which are working with them join in praising him and disparaging his rival; his election is made to seem a matter of vital principle; and in the general ignorance of his actual qualifications, the party loyalty so assiduously cultivated can be usually trusted to float him into office.

The rewards of this control of government are manifold. Offices are distributed to party-workers, including purely sinecure offices, for which no work to speak of is done. Appropriations are made for public improvements, for schools, postoffices, harbor dredging, or what not, and contracts awarded to friends of the party leaders. Water-power franchises, public utility franchises—all sorts of measures benefiting this set of people or that are passed. Bills which would curtail the powers and privileges of this or that business are throttled—not, however, until the Interests threatened realize the danger they were in. There are, of course, all sorts of ways in which those who benefit by the passing or knifing of these bills reward their friends who pull the wires. There may be a cash payment for services, there may be an election to a valuable directorate, there may be a purchase of property owned by the deserving politician at a handsome price. In some way or other

we may be sure that the unseen helmsmen are profited by their labors.

Volumes could be filled with concrete instances of these methods. In a certain city is a house and lot advertised for sale for months at \$10,000. The City decides to erect a school on that lot, and pays \$17,500 for it. We may be sure that the greater part of that added sum goes to the party leaders, perhaps to a single boss, who was able to dictate the necessary votes. Again, a new boulevard, or the widening of a street, is decided upon. Some agents have bought up the lands along the new avenue, which are going to be worth double their former value. We may be sure that the party leaders are making their profit there. Important "welfare" laws are blocked year after year: a law limiting the working-day of some workers to ten or eight hours, a law requiring seats for sales-girls, a law requiring costly fire protective devices. We may be sure that there are those who are sharing the profits thus saved to the employers.

Some of these methods are quite obviously and cynically dishonest—as when the agent of a gas company approaches the chairman of a legislative committee that has framed, for this express purpose, a gas bill which would curtail the company's profits, and asks, "Well, how much do you want?" The gas bill is never reported out of committee; it was decided to be inexpedient, on grounds, of course, of public policy. Very likely it *was* inexpedient. But it could have been passed, and it was worth a good deal to the gas company to keep it from passing.

Millions of dollars are collected in our cities annually from gambling houses, "disorderly" houses, and other institutions of commercialized vice, for "protection." Even many innocent people have to pay, as a

price of not being persecuted, subjected to annoyances, or refused privileges really their due.

But these cruder forms of bribery and blackmail are a small part of the story. More often the direction given to legislation seems intrinsically desirable to the party men. It is really too bad to compel a department store owner to put in seats for his sales-girls; they would sit down and be lazy when they ought to be on the alert for customers. To be sure, the store owner advertises largely in certain newspapers, and these newspapers boost the party leaders in question. If the bill to require seats were to be passed, the store owner would withdraw his full-page advertisements from these newspapers, and the newspapers would discover that the party leaders in question were unworthy of support. Perhaps, indeed, one of the party bosses owns the newspaper. More likely the newspaper owner has some direct or indirect way of rewarding him. The *quid pro quo* game has infinite ramifications. Reformers speak of "log-rolling," and the "pork-barrel," or use goodness knows what other disparaging terms. But to the people in the game it is not dishonesty, it is just—the way the game is played. If you can get people with money or influence to do favors for you in return for your favors for them, you are no more dishonest than the average business man. Politics is business; and business exists for personal profits.

The result of it is, however, that "big business" pretty generally has its way, because it can afford to pay for it. As Governor Hughes of New York said in 1912, "There is a constant effort by special Interests to shape or defeat legislation, to seek privileges and to obtain favors in the administrative departments." And that effort is pretty generally success-



ful. There are always reasons discoverable for opposing or pushing bills, apart from the really controlling motives. Many a politician, being "in with" the Interests in question, sincerely believes it to be his duty to protect them from inadvisable legislation. The fact that he receives a splendid "legal fee" for his advice—or a stock-exchange tip—or a nomination for a higher office—or a complimentary write-up—or social recognition for his wife—or what not—is simply the due reward of his political soundness. He has the business prosperity of this great nation at heart.

So, vitally important bills are defeated year after year. Special Interests fatten, Privilege is undisturbed, Profiteering goes on uncurbed, local constituencies are favored at the general expense, vast sums of public money flow into the pockets opened to receive it, incompetent "party men" sit in our legislative halls, untrained men grapple with complex administrative problems, able men are defeated for office because they are not subservient to the party organization.

It is not really quite so bad as all this! Even party bosses may have some sort of conscience; and the average politician is not a bad fellow. Other motives than the selfish ones enter in to mitigate the sordid scramble. Moreover, bosses fall out with one another sometimes, to the profit of the public. But the fact remains that the welfare of the people is constantly thwarted, and a great deal is done that has no popular will behind it. Or if the popular approval exists, it is because it has been created by the Interests, the politicians, and the newspapers who are working hand in hand for their common profit. This is the "Invisible Government," the "machines," the



“rings,” whose dominance in our public affairs is matter of common knowledge. They work by underhand methods, methods which, though usually not recognized as such by those who use them, are fundamentally dishonest.

Mr. Elihu Root, in his farewell address to the New York Constitutional Convention in 1915, said, “We found that . . . the majority of the legislators were occupying themselves chiefly in the promotion of private and local bills, of special interests . . . upon which apparently their re-elections to their positions depended.” The situation there was thoroughly typical. Our rulers are elected by the people; but to a large extent they do not represent the people. They do not, primarily, owe their election to the people, but to the “machine” that brought about their nomination. And to the dictates of those party leaders, rather than to the popular will, they are, for the most part, loyal. They forward the Interests which their party is backing. They dare not—often they are convinced they *ought* not—to deviate from the party policy, on matters where the party demands their allegiance.

Can we then hope to purge the party machines of self-seeking and graft? Or can we hope to launch a new party whose leaders will maintain a more idealistic and disinterested attitude? Or can we devise a plan whereby the sovereign people will be more independent of party control and able oftener to elect men of expert qualification for office and a genuine public-mindedness? One of these things must be done if we are to justify the faith of our fathers in democracy. There is no problem more pressing for this generation. Democracy is still on trial. As the writer quoted at the opening of this chapter con-

cludes, "With the inclusion of all men and women in the suffrage, with the rapidly increasing acceptance of direct government, the *extensive* work of the democratic impulse has ended. Now the *intensive* work of democracy must begin."

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

OUR problem is, to make government truly representative of the interests of the people as a whole, instead of, as it too largely is today, representative of the interests of the party bosses and the business organizations that can afford to give money and energy to influencing legislation. It is possible that by a more efficiently socialized education we might bring up a generation far more public-spirited than the present, and so raise the average level of conscience in politicians. Religious revivals, patriotic appeals—something may touch the hearts of bosses here and there and bring them to quit the game. But when a politician becomes too disinterested he will find the highly organized forces of the machine against him. And when one boss gets converted another will be ready to step into his shoes. The system has become self-perpetuating; and nothing is likely to uproot it short of such changes in our political system as will make it cease to be a profitable means of livelihood.

Certainly the history of reform movements in this country is very discouraging. Nearly all of our big cities are ruled, practically, by a Democratic or a Republican machine, or a working-agreement of the two. A wave of popular disgust, the exposure of some particularly flagrant case of graft, the nomination by a temporary independent organization of some con-

spicuously able and honest man, may lead to his election and a few years of relatively efficient and honest government. But the reform administration will inevitably be hampered from within and without by the "regulars" who do not want it to succeed. And at the next election, when the popular attention has lapsed, the machine will quietly come back into power.

Reformers are never tired of telling us that it is our fault, that we have the kind of government we vote for, that we must take more interest in politics, learn the qualifications and past record of candidates, and vote more intelligently.

"Why don't they keep the streets a little cleaner?"

You ask with keen annoyance, not undue.

"Why don't they keep the parks a little greener?"

(Did you ever stop to think that 'they' means *you?*")

But as a matter of fact, these appeals are nearly futile. The way by which you and I can hope to reform politics is too arduous and discouraging. We have other things to do. The bosses can give their whole time to politics, it is their business; the chances are they will circumvent us. No political system will work well which necessitates for its success too much work or presupposes too much intelligence on the part of the electorate. We must adjust political duties to human nature, and not expect too much of people.

One great and permanent gain has been made in recent years, the erection and extension of the Civil Service. This means that for thousands of subordinate offices a man may no longer be appointed simply because he is a friend or supporter of the leaders of the dominant party. He must show by passing a standard examination that he has the training and

abilities requisite to the duties of the position. Fitness, not party allegiance, is the criterion of selection. This deprives the party bosses in so far of their hold upon their supporters. It also raises the level of efficiency in the service, saves the country millions of dollars, and attracts able young men to government positions. They no longer need to fear dismissal when another party comes into power. Their pride in their work is thereby increased, and their loyalty is given to the service itself rather than to their party. There is less personal dishonesty and slacking; as President Alderman of the University of Virginia says, "You can trust men if you will train them."

The principle of the Civil Service should be extended to many positions not yet included. Instead of the easy-going assumption that anybody can fill any office, we must aim to have all public duties performed by experts, trained for their particular work, and proving their fitness by examination. Congressmen, instead of wasting a large part of their time, as they now do, in making petty appointments and apportioning the party spoils, can then give their full attention to matters of public policy. Except for the highest positions, the party convictions of an official have no bearing upon the efficiency of his work, and should be disregarded.

It would be impossible, however, to extend this principle to legislators and the highest executive offices, because in their case it is not merely efficiency and expert knowledge that is required, but convictions and principles which are to determine their policy. These principles must be such as to commend them to the people whom they are to represent. Moreover, in these responsible positions the factor



of personality enters in, which cannot be adequately tested by an examination. It might, indeed, be an excellent thing if candidates for Congress, as well as for State and municipal office, were required to take standard psychological and information tests, and the results published, as part of the data bearing upon the voters' decision. But examinations alone can never show to the people who can best serve them in those positions that require important decisions. Those representatives must be chosen not only for their ability but because they can be depended upon to represent faithfully the needs and wishes of their constituents.

If it were only a matter of expressing the ideas of the people, we might replace representative government to considerable extent by direct legislation, such as has become increasingly popular in several States of the Union. The movement toward direct legislation—the Initiative and Referendum—is a natural consequence of the thwarting of the popular will by the party machine. But it cannot succeed to any great extent in breaking the power of the machine; and it implies the renunciation of the ideal of expertness in government. Legislation should embody not only what the people think will be for their interests, but what trained students of public policy decide, after mutual discussion and investigation, to be for their interests.

Direct legislation does have the advantage of giving the voters a chance to express their will on a specific issue, disentangling it from the jumble of issues which complicate any election of representatives. And it may have an educative value not to be despised. But it is too much to expect the mass of voters to become competent to decide most questions

of public policy; they are too intricate, they require expert knowledge and study. Legislators are elected for the express purpose of deliberating and studying out the best solution of such problems. A popular verdict will usually be a snap judgment, based chiefly upon superficial newspaper arguments, the speeches of clever orators, or sectional interests and prejudices. The party organizations have the advantage in creating these prejudices and misunderstandings; the newspapers are controlled by definite interests. Thus direct legislation can be used by party machines to thwart a too public-spirited legislature as well as by an aroused public to thwart a party-dominated legislature.

The people should be able to elect to the highest offices the men they trust and honor—as they very often can not today. They should decide, by the choice of their representatives, the big questions of public policy. If their representatives are thus men whom they trust and honor, men who represent their general attitudes toward public policy, they should, in general, leave to their more deliberately formed opinion the decisions as to ways and means. This certainly is the ideal of traditional Americanism. Direct interposition by the people should, perhaps, be available for exceptional cases. But it should be employed with caution. If we can but make our representatives truly representative it will seldom be necessary to resort to these heroic measures.

The Recall, likewise, is a double-edged and dangerous weapon. When there appears a wave of popular indignation at some office-holder, because of the disclosure of his dishonesty or treason to the interests of the people, the Recall may be used to salutary effect. But we are so used to bad government that

such waves of effective indignation are rare. And the Recall, if it is available at all, can be instituted by the party machine as well as by reformers. The machine organization can reach the ears of many voters; selfish advantage and blind party loyalty can always command for it many votes. And a campaign of slander and vilification can, at least temporarily, arouse masses of suggestible voters against the hapless victim of party ostracism. The Recall need not be often used, but it can be held as a threat over the heads of party members to keep them in line. Hence it is desirable that—at least as long as office-seeking party organizations dominate our politics—the Recall should, if available at all, be so restricted and hedged about with conditions that it cannot be used to intimidate independent and honest officials. If we devise a surer plan of getting the best men into office, it will seldom be needed.

The crux of the problem of democracy is, how to get the right men into office. The voters cannot judge fairly of the qualifications of candidates for office, in any case, unless they are conspicuous leaders with easily ascertainable records, or unless they are elected from so small a constituency that most of the voters know them personally. Moreover, the number of offices to which election must be made is usually so great that the voter has neither time nor energy to ferret out their past record, study their character, and make a reasonable decision as to which of the candidates offered is the best for each office. The result is, as we all know, that we go to the voting-booth with a clear idea of why we should vote for this man for a few leading offices, and for the rest we vote for the nominees of the party-organization with whom we have, for one reason or other, affiliated our-

selves. We may knife the party nominee for Governor or Mayor, but we tamely follow the party lead in nine cases out of ten. What else is there for us to do? Hence the party-bosses go on putting up second- and third-rate men for these offices, men whom they can count on as tools for their ends. And we are helpless.

As a matter of fact, for State and municipal offices it usually matters very little, if at all, that a candidate belongs to the Republican or Democratic or some other party, because the issues that divide these parties refer to matters of national policy, and have nothing to do with efficiency in State and local government. It is quite feasible, then, to remove the party emblems and designations from the ballot or voting-machine, and to vote for these candidates simply as individuals of such and such a record and character, making such and such promises. Independent candidates would thereby be encouraged to put their names up for election (there are ways of discouraging candidates who would have no chance of election), and it would become common, perhaps, to have a really excellent candidate for every office rather than a mere choice between third-rate men, as now so often happens.

But the insuperable obstacle of our ignorance would still intervene. How should we know which of the candidates for all these offices were really worthy? In our distraction we should, in most cases, either not vote at all, or vote more or less hit or miss, or fall back upon a slate recommended by our party.

One method of correcting our ignorance and blind party loyalty is the publication of a pamphlet by a non-partisan organization run by men of standing in the community, summarizing the qualifications



candidates. But if the number of candidates is large, it is doubtful if a sufficient number of voters can be got to study up and remember their qualifications, even when thus compactly presented. Moreover, such a statement, to be truly non-partisan, must confine itself to facts, and cannot fill in the picture with the appraisal which is necessary to truly guide the voter. The statement of the past record of a candidate will mean little to a voter who has not been conscientiously following the course of government in his State and city. And a man's legislative expertness can often not be expressed in terms of the fact that he introduced this bill, voted for that, against this other, and so on. Administrative efficiency is even harder to describe in impartial terms; and so closely are the duties of various offices interwoven that it is impossible to present except in terms of personal judgment the expertness and energy of the various officials.

There is only one way out of this situation. We must not be asked to vote for so many people. Our forefathers were so afraid of autocracy that they planned to have almost all offices filled by popular election. This was feasible under the conditions of a small and simple society. But with our great increase in population this plan of having many elective offices defeats its own end. What we should aim for now is to have only the most important officials chosen by popular vote, leaving to them the appointment of their subordinates. In this way the ballot to be presented to the voter will contain the names of the candidates for but one or two, at most not more than four or five offices. The voter will concentrate his attention on the candidates for these conspicuous offices, the newspapers will discuss them,



and their qualifications for office will be readily ascertainable. With this spotlight turned on the small group of candidates, the party organizations will discover the necessity of nominating men whose qualifications will bear inspection. And if independent candidates are put up, there is considerable likelihood, if they are clearly superior to the machine candidates, that they will be elected.

That this shortening of the ballot is the imperious necessity in our political system today is the judgment of most impartial students. Ex-President Eliot of Harvard has spoken of it as "absolutely the gist of all constructive reform." Mr. Albert Kales, professor of law in Northwestern University, concludes a valuable book on politics with the emphatic declaration that the three words "The Short Ballot" are "the emancipation proclamation for our government," expressing the need which is, of all our present political needs, the most pressing.

This plan has several great advantages besides that of evoking a much wiser vote than is now obtained. For one thing, it concentrates responsibility. Our present plan of electing many officials divides governmental powers in such a way that the responsibility for bad government can be easily evaded. All sorts of State and municipal officers divide up administrative functions; because they are elected by the people, the Governor or Mayor cannot be blamed for their inefficiency. Often jurisdictions and duties overlap; often there is friction between different arms of the Government. Deadlocks often arise, the difficulty of passing and executing legislation becomes great, and the public finds it impossible to ascertain who really is to blame. This situation creates, of course, a happy hunting-ground for the machine politician.

It is a mistake to think that as little power as possible should be given to any one official. On the contrary, where, for example, a small body of commissioners is elected to manage all the affairs of a city, these few men can be held directly responsible for everything that is done. If one commissioner is chosen from each of several sections of the city, the voter will have but one official to elect. He will concentrate his attention upon this one choice; and if the candidate he elects does not fulfil his wishes, it will be because of the conflicting policy of the few other men on the Council. Their votes can be followed in detail, and a close watch kept upon their administration. All the other municipal officials not appointed through the Civil Service will be their appointees, and the responsibility for their conduct will be theirs. As there will be frequent re-elections to this municipal Council, there will be comparatively little danger of autocratic or fundamentally dishonest government. Detection and location of responsibility are too certain, and the mechanism of changing the Government too easy.

In the national election the voter will have to decide, at most, upon his choice for President, Vice-President, Senator, and Representative. No other officials should be elected at the same time, so that his attention may be concentrated upon the candidates for these high offices. The President appoints his Cabinet officers, and is responsible for their conduct and for that of their appointees. Similarly, when the State election takes place, the voter should be called upon to vote only for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Representative—with the addition of State Senator if the State legislature is bi-cameral. The other State officers should be appointed by the

Governor. It may be that we shall ultimately merge the executive and legislative branches in our State governments, as we have done so successfully in many of our municipal governments, electing a Commission to have complete control of all State business. But whatever the exact form of government, the most important point to bear in mind is—the election of few officials and the concentration of responsibility upon their shoulders.

Government by a small Council or Commission is the ideal form of government. One-man government is bound to be too highly colored by a single point of view; the mutual deliberation of several minds, the reaction upon one another's ideas, the correction of one another's idiosyncrasies, leads to a greater wisdom. But our government has more often suffered from too wide a diffusion of power. As Lord Bryce wrote, in *The American Commonwealth*, "There is in the American government, considered as a whole, a want of unity. The branches are unconnected and their efforts are not directed to one aim, do not produce one harmonious result." The plan of concentrated responsibility here urged will correct this generally recognized fault in our political mechanism. Our Government will still be as democratic; the appointees of our few elected officials are actually more likely to represent the interests of the people than those who, under our present complicated and confusing plan, are nominated by party leaders and blindly elected by the voters.

The City Manager plan has proved to be the best political mechanism yet devised in this country. A small City Council is elected by popular vote. This Council appoints an expert administrator—the City Manager, he is usually called—to take complete

charge of the municipal business. The members of the Council are men whom the voters trust, but not necessarily experts in the profession of running a city government. Nor could the voters be trusted to judge of the qualifications of candidates for this skilled vocation. But by this indirect method, city administration can be made an expert profession. A young man may enter it as he would enter the law, or medicine; he may offer his services first to some small town, and work his way up to the administration of a great city. This will not be possible until we take city government "out of politics," that is, out of party control. But a non-partisan, small city Council, entrusted with the entire responsibility for the City's welfare, and closely watched by the electorate, will have every possible incentive for seeing to it that the City's business is efficiently done.

Such a City Manager finds it to his advantage to satisfy the citizens as a whole—not a particular party or section. His continuance in office, and his whole future career, depend upon the reputation he makes. If he makes good, a change in the personnel of the Council will not necessarily remove him from office; there is more likelihood of stability of government under this than under any other form of democratic government.

Similar plans of delegated government are applicable to State and National affairs. Appointed officials and commissions should do a great deal of the expert work that is now handled by elected officials. The elected officials are responsible to the people, and will therefore keep a sharp eye upon their appointees. But they need not make politics their vocation, and may retain their regular professions. In this way



the ablest and best known citizens can accept these high offices, decide upon the best available trained experts to call in to carry on the various functions of government, without themselves having to devote their time to becoming expert in those manifold duties. We can thus have specialization of function, and expert service, combined with quick responsiveness, through the elective Council or Executive, to the popular will.

Coupled with this mechanism of indirect government and concentrated responsibility, we should elaborate a plan for a greater participation of the people in public discussion. These open forums should not be party affairs, or confined to occupational groups, because we should then have a *parti pris*, a one-sided point of view. We do not want more meetings to defend a party dogma, to whip people into line with a platform. We want meetings of people with varying views, for the purpose of mutual understanding, the clarification of ideas, and their integration, through reciprocal suggestion, into something more nearly representing a Common Will. Neighborhood units, not so large as to be unwieldy, but large enough to bring together men and women of diverse convictions and experiences, and to evoke leadership, make the best political groups. Such groups, meeting periodically for discussion of public questions, would produce a public opinion in far greater degree than now independent of the manipulated party-opinion and the manipulated newspaper-opinion now so overwhelmingly dominant.

Perhaps eventually we shall use such Neighborhood Groups as electoral units, and send a representative from each one—some one who is personally



known and approved by the group, and has shown the qualities of leadership therein—to our elective Council. At any rate, we must not be afraid of trying new methods. Our politics have got into a rut. The system perhaps once adequate needs revision in the light of contemporary experience. The revision must always be for the purpose of realizing our traditional ideals. But it is those ideals, not the particular ways and means that our fathers devised, that are sacred. Washington himself criticized the Constitution sharply, finding in it “a host of vices and inexpediciencies.” We must be as critical in our attitude—not destructively but constructively critical.

Once and for all, we must give up our complacent reliance upon exhortation to the electorate and abuse of the politicians. Human nature will continue to be human nature; we must utilize it as it is. Instead of abortive or purely transient attempts to “purify” politics, we must put into operation methods that are practicable and that do not so readily lend themselves to anti-social practices. The devotion of the youth of the land is needed to evolve a system of representative government of which we may properly be proud.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

- James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth*.  
 W. H. Taft, *Four Aspects of Civic Duty*.  
 Elihu Root, *The Citizen's Part in Government*.  
 D. F. Wilcox, *Government by all the People*.  
 C. R. Henderson, *The Social Spirit in America*, Chap. XI.  
 H. G. Wells, *Social Forces in England and America*, p. 293, ff.  
 M. P. Follett, *The New State*.  
 R. S. Childs, *Short Ballot Principles*.  
 E. S. Bradford, *Commission Government in American Cities*.  
 W. B. Munroe, *The Government of American Cities*.  
 C. E. Rightor, *City Manager in Dayton*.

- Charles Zueblin, *American Municipal Progress*, revised ed.,  
Chap. XX.
- Evans Woolen, in *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 110, p. 41.
- J. Bourne, Jr., in *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 109, pp. 122, 429.
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- H. A. Overstreet, *Forum*, vol. 54, p. 6.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### DEMOCRACY IN JOURNALISM

WE HAVE been considering how, in our democracy, public opinion can get itself faithfully represented and its dictates expertly carried out. But behind that problem lies the problem of how a well-informed and wise public opinion can be created. Open-forum meetings for free discussion of contemporary affairs might be of great value. But these meetings would be held only at intervals, whereas the newspapers are read daily. Whether or not their readers realize that their views are being formed by the papers they read, it is to a very great degree the fact. Americans read their newspapers more than the people of any other nation. Hence it is of the utmost importance that the news furnished in the daily press be accurate and impartial, reporting every event of importance and reporting it uncolored by the bias of the newspaper-owners. If one set of facts is ignored and another set of facts emphasized or exaggerated, public opinion is in so far misled, and its resulting judgments warped.

The importance of a free and impartial press was recognized by our fathers. The Virginia Declaration of Rights, of June 2, 1776, declared that "freedom of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty." No more fearlessly honest journal than Benjamin Franklin's *Gazette* was ever published. In general,

a newspaper was published to furnish the news; and editors were given a free hand.

In recent years, however, the situation has been seriously altered. Practically all of the great papers of the country are now owned by men of wealth. A few rich and ambitious men control a good many of them. It is not impossible that any year might see one or two men in absolute control of hundreds of our leading organs of public opinion. Lord Northcliffe in England is the controlling shareholder of a great trust which owns some sixty publications. Herr Stinnes in Germany was reported recently to have bought up sixty-four papers to push his propaganda. With the strong forces making for centralization and combination in American business, it is surprising that no greater mergers have been made as yet in this field. Possibly there is already more centralization of control than is made public. At any rate, we have Mr. Hearst, with his many newspapers and magazines, and certain other fairly large-scale manipulators of opinion.

Then we have the Associated Press, which has almost a monopoly of the news-gathering service. The Manager of this agency is said to have remarked recently that he was more powerful than the President of the United States. If his censorship of the news is as autocratic and as drastic as is commonly reported, that remark may well be true. He who can select the news upon which millions of readers are to be fed every day has an enormous, if unseen, influence upon the creation of the popular will. A few rich newspapers can afford to maintain their own special correspondents. But the great majority of them are almost wholly dependent, and all are very largely dependent, upon the despatches which the

Associated Press correspondents send and the Associated Press office allows to get by.

Any one who knows the newspaper business from the inside knows that most newspapers are very autocratically run. The editors and reporters know what topics must be avoided, what news hushed up, what men and movements must be given no publicity. They know, on the other hand, the individuals and the corporations, the events and movements, which are to be written up. Not only are the editorials thoroughly partisan—that we expect, and discount—but the news itself is editorialized. The headlines emphasize what the policy of the paper intends to thrust upon the attention of the readers. The position, prominent or out-of-the-way, given to an article, the manner of the write-up, the excisions and emphases, all work to the same end. The result is that, to an extent not realized as yet by most readers, our newspapers have become organs of propaganda rather than impartial records of fact.

The motives behind this warping of the news are not difficult to understand. In the first place, a newspaper is a money-making enterprise, like any other business; the owner knows his public, and, other things equal, wishes to print the sort of thing that will sell the greatest number of copies. What this will be, depends upon the particular clientele of the paper; Mr. Hearst's papers pander to the poorer classes, while the Boston Transcript must please its Back Bay buyers. It is not surprising, therefore, that we find the former papers portraying financial magnates as brutal profiteers, and headlining every scandal affecting big business, whereas the latter harps upon the unreasonableness of labor and its grafting leaders.



But our newspapers do not live on the money paid for copies, they live on the money paid in by advertisers. Over two-thirds of the total receipts of the average newspaper today come from advertising; in some cases the proportion is said to run as high as ninety per cent. It is obvious, therefore, that to incur the displeasure of the big advertisers would mean financial ruin. The loss of the department-store advertising alone might well make just the difference between success and bankruptcy. Naturally, then, scandals that involve their owners must not be published, conditions in the stores reflecting upon the management must be ignored, legislation whose effect would be to involve the owners in expense must not be advocated, or must perhaps be vigorously opposed.

There are many other ways in which a newspaper can serve the financial interests of its owner. For example, if, as is the case with at least one of our great newspaper-owners, he is the possessor of rich oil-lands in Mexico, he will be likely to advocate in his paper a "strong" policy toward that unhappy country. Headlines and sensational reports will emphasize the unsettled condition of policies there, every case of injury to Americans or their property will be exploited; and in all sorts of indirect ways the impression will be spread that intervention is necessary and righteous.

If the owner of the paper has invested heavily in steel, he will naturally hush up any news that reflects upon the conduct of that great industry. He will oppose agitation tending toward the raising of wages or shortening of hours for the laborers, lest dividends decrease. If there is a strike, the paper will be full of indignation at the labor-unions, and give space to

every item of news and every rumor that will discredit the strikers in the eyes of the public.

These are not mere hypotheses. This is just the sort of thing that is going on continually. Usually the reader knows nothing about the owner of the paper he reads—what his particular interests are, and the interests of his friends. If he is naïve, he lets his mind absorb the attitude of the paper; if he is worldly-wise, he becomes cynical with regard to everything he reads. But even the most cynical reader, unless he is continually on his guard, will be influenced unconsciously by the subtle “suggestion” of the “stories” in the paper.

Of course, most papers are partisan when it comes to politics. Even the “independent” papers are not impartial; they simply reserve the right to change sides when platforms or candidates present a new issue. A Democratic paper fills its readers’ minds with “news” and editorials that show the worthiness of its cause; a republican paper has no difficulty in finding news that points to the necessity of a Republican administration, and its editorials would move the hardest-hearted to the conviction that the true patriot will vote that ticket. Since the Democrats read their papers and the Republicans theirs (few people read more than one daily paper), every one is strengthened daily in his own convictions. Of dispassionate search for truth and presentation of all sides of a question there is hardly a sign.

Political issues change from decade to decade, candidates come and go. And it often makes little enough difference in the end which party won at the polls. But there is something of far deeper import than the alignment between the two traditional parties. It is the fact that almost all of the daily

papers of the country, except a few labor and socialist papers, which have few readers outside their own particular clientele, represent the "upper class" point of view. Their presentation of that point of view may be interrupted now and then by the "human interests" of a story; as when the misery of strikers' families is played up, or some scandal affecting the employers. The desire to get a "beat," together with some measure of natural human sympathy, and all sorts of other motives, enter in. And of course there is no one homogeneous "upper class point of view"; there are all sorts of conflicting ideas, jealousies, disputes, all of them more or less represented in the press. But the underlying fact remains that year in and year out the daily press of the country reflects the point of view, the judgments and desires, of the wealthy class. Because of the power of the press, that general point of view has an influence upon affairs far out of proportion to the numbers or intellectual ability of this class.

Perhaps we think that this point of view of the wealthy class is the right point of view, and so rejoice in its grip upon the organs that form public opinion. But this is not the democratic ideal. That ideal was not the ideal of a class-government, but of a government by the people. The idea of a free press was the idea of a press that should freely represent the ideas of all classes of the people. It has become increasingly clear that this ideal cannot be attained merely by a *laissez-faire* policy on the part of the Government. Every one is free to publish a paper, if he chooses, and to say what he wills; the Government will not interfere—except during a war, or while the war-psychology lasts. But it has become the case that to publish a paper requires a great deal of

capital; and it is impossible to make a paper financially successful if the great financial interests disapprove its policy. In the older sense, we have a "free press." But that sort of freedom is not enough. Practically, a great deal of opinion gets very inadequately represented in the press; a great many facts of importance are exaggerated, played up, colored, twisted, so that a false impression results. Most people who would like to get their facts before the public are not really free to do so, because they cannot afford to.

We must not suppose that there is any conspiracy here, or even a universal scramble for money, regardless of ideals. The "upper-class" people who run our newspapers are, for the most part, average human beings morally, as well as above the average intellectually. Many of them have personal ambitions, of one sort or other, to serve, and all of them are bound to make their papers pay a good return on the investment. But a very large part of the bias of their papers is the natural expression of sincere convictions on their part. A man who has a thousand shares of steel is likely to believe with all his heart that trade-unions are vicious, and that excess-profits-taxes are inexpedient. A strike even in a textile-mill in which he has no financial interest is apt to arouse his honest condemnation. We are all prejudiced, though we would all resent the accusation.

The radical press, the socialist and labor papers, are just as prejudiced as the more widely read dailies. Their prejudices are, indeed, more conscious and more obvious, and for that reason less subtly dangerous; they are avowedly partisan organs. In any case, their circle of readers is comparatively small. And if the big dailies were trustworthy venders of news,



their readers would be still fewer. The real problem, then, is with these big metropolitan newspapers which purport to be colorless media for the transmission of news but are actually controlled and colored by the policy of their upper-class owners.

What is wrong, let us repeat, about this class-control of the press is not that this particular class is worse than other classes. If the rich are, on the whole, over-complacent with things as they are, and over-callous to the wrongs of the poor, the poor, on their part, are apt to be bitter and unintelligent. No other class of people would run the papers better, perhaps. What is wrong is that *any* class should have such monopoly-control.

The harm done by our profit-seeking journalism is of many sorts. There is, for one thing, the sensationalism of the "yellow" press—the sickening succession of murders, suicides, divorces, scandals, crimes, and gossip with which the papers that cater to the less educated are filled. These stories appeal to deep-rooted human instincts; and the strength of the instincts grows by feeding. It is not socially expedient that men and women, boys and girls, should live on this diet. But the papers that exploit all this human vice and passion sell well. It is very doubtful if a democratic control of journalism would tolerate this; a people that has voted to deny itself alcoholic drinks could rather easily be aroused to the moral harmfulness of this daily flaunting of the cruelty and sensuality in men. But while a few private owners have autocratic control of these yellow papers, we are helpless.

A far less obvious, but in the end perhaps more serious, evil is the constant reflection on the part of nearly all of our "respectable" papers, of the common



and accepted ideas of the time. A newspaper cannot hope to succeed, against well-established rivals, if it champions unpopular opinions. We are in desperate need of new ideas and ideals, or at least of new applications of old ideals. But to break away from established respectabilities would mean severe criticism; and newspapers can not afford to run that risk. They can choose between a Republican or Democratic policy; occasionally, when some great popular revolt takes place, such as the Populist or Progressive movements, they may swing with the tide. But in general they must cling to familiar and safe ideas. This means the stereotyping of opinion. It means an unfair advantage to the conservatives and stand-patters—and, consequently, the increase of unrest and underground revolutionary propaganda. If the American press were more hospitable to minority views, gave space to accounts of meetings and addresses representing the newer movements of thought, instead of, as is now commonly the case, either ignoring or misrepresenting and ridiculing them, we should be less in danger of mental stagnation among the upper classes, with class-consciousness and bitterness on the part of those who find it so difficult to get the ear of the public.

The respectable point of view, which the newspapers instinctively represent, usually rests upon some deep-rooted human instinct. For instance, the instinct of patriotism, together with the combative instinct, ensures the popularity of a paper which adopts a jingoistic tone. The responsibility for arousing a war-fever rests largely upon the shoulders of the newspaper-owners. If the war is, indeed, a necessary one, they can be thus of enormous service. But if the war would be an unnecessary and un-

righteous one, there will still be many papers to rattle the sword and insist upon the satisfaction of our national honor. As this is written, a few of our dailies are apparently trying to stir up war with Mexico, with Japan, with Great Britain. Facts are twisted, or even invented outright; mere rumors are headlined, the country in question is pictured as seeking to outwit us, as infringing our rights, as preparing secretly for war with us. The worst sort of nationalistic spirit is thus kept inflamed; and statesmen who are trying to preserve amicable relations between our country and these others are seriously handicapped. What the owner's motive is, must be inferred. It may be a desire to further the value of his investments; it may be a knowledge that he could become a war-profiteer; it may be a desire to influence the stock-market; it may be a mere desire to sell more papers by appealing to the wide-spread jingoistic instinct; it may be a native and honest truculence of temperament; it may be any one of a number of other things. Whatever the motive, or combination of motives, this power which a few men have of inciting popular passions is extremely dangerous.

Of course American newspapers have been strongly opposed, as the American people have been, to the Soviet Government in Russia. The constant stream of editorial comment on Russia has naturally, and legitimately, been unfavorable—though, even here, justice and the ideal of free speech demand that those who have something good to report, or some plea for approval to make, with regard to this or any other movement, should have ample opportunity to do so. But the fact is that the press in general has done more than oppose that movement editorially, it has persistently misrepresented the facts. Ever since the first

months of the Communist régime the public has been led to believe that it was on the verge of falling. One after another of the anti-Bolshevist leaders was reported as about to win his campaign. Day after day, the news as reported in the American press was colored by the hopes or policy of the correspondents, or of the managers of the Associated Press, or of the newspaper-owners, or of all together. How much conscious suppression and distortion of the news there was, an outsider can not judge. To a large extent, no doubt, all of these people were gulled by their hopes. But the point is, that there were other newsgatherers in the field who had other reports to make, which time proved to be more accurate. These reporters had no way of getting *their* news and *their* prognostications before the public.

Now this it not in the least an argument for Bolshevism. Bolshevism is obviously quite alien to Americanism. The point is, that however we dislike Bolshevism, we ought to be able to get the truth about it from our newspapers. At least, we ought not to be so steadily and persistently misled as we have been. Time after time, the reports and prophecies of our greatest newspapers turned out to be mistaken. This means that with respect to one of the most critical events going on in the contemporary world, the American people could not get correct information.

This instance has been specifically cited, because a very searching non-partisan investigation was made of the distortion of news of the Russian situation, and the facts are easily accessible. But a similar untrustworthiness could be shown to exist in the reporting of many matters where strong feelings and vital interests are involved.

It may be that much of the trouble resides in the

lack of adequate training of reporters and correspondents. But if the newspaper owners demanded accuracy and impartiality, "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," they could certainly come much nearer to getting it. We must not be surprised that many people today are speaking of the "kept press." Not only the socialists and agitators, but many people of very respectable views. It would be easy to quote page after page of the most vigorous indictments from the pens of ex-newspaper men. It is easy to get greatly excited over the unfairness and unreliability of our most efficient and honored newspapers. It is more to the point to ask, what can be done about it?

The main trouble obviously lies in the fact that the control of our press is highly autocratic. A more democratic control would serve at least to correct the bias and neutralize the selfish interest of the present owners. If the newspaper men themselves, the editors and reporters, were allowed to determine the policy of the paper, with regard to news and editorials, we should doubtless fare better than we do. But after all, a comparatively small group of men would still have a dangerous power. The public as a whole must reserve the right to ultimate control of that great public institution, the Press. It is as important, in its way, as the public schools. The only ultimate solution can be a Press which is, by law, made omnipartisan. Its columns must be open to reports of facts and expressions of opinion from every stratum of public opinion.

One way to attain this democratic ideal would be to require that a certain number of columns should be at the disposal of each of the national parties, and perhaps of other important groups, such as employ-



ers' associations, the trade-unions, an association of college-graduates, etc. These columns must be uncensored by the newspaper owner or editor. In this way facts and opinions that seem important to any respectable group could be got fairly before the public, and every newspaper would become, instead of a more or less unrecognized organ of private opinion and selected news, a real open forum for discussion of contemporary affairs, a way by which the members of a democracy may talk to one another and learn of everything important that is being done and said.

There are various ways in which the impartiality of the Press could be secured; there is no space here to discuss their relative advantages. Every reform, however, must recognize that the Press is an institution of public service. Its potentialities for the education of the people are almost limitless. It could be used to create an intelligent democracy, by voicing the various existing opinions upon every problem and noting accurately all relevant facts. If this ideal can be attained under the individualistic system of private ownership, well and good. But if the owners of the Press and of the great newsgathering agencies persist in using their power irresponsibly, for the furthering of their own particular views and interests, the public will find a way to limit or end that power. A "free press" must be taken to mean not a press that any one who can afford to can buy and run as he chooses, but a press free from dictation at the hands of any interest, free to serve the people as a whole. Nothing short of that will realize our ideal of Democracy in journalism.



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## CHAPTER XIX

### DEMOCRACY IN INDUSTRY

THE ideal of Democracy demands that every adult human being should have a voice in every decision that directly affects his welfare. Toward this ideal the impulses that we may group together under the term "The American spirit" have been pushing us. But powerful forces have been blocking the way. The discovery that politics can be made to yield a substantial livelihood to the "insiders" has gone far toward thwarting the popular will and nullifying the achievement of political democracy. The discovery that the Press can be bought up by a few people and used to push their personal and class interests, and the causes in which they believe, has gone far toward robbing the people of a Press really free to tell the whole truth and to express all shades of opinion.

But the Ballot and the Press are, after all, primarily means to an end—the control by the people, for the people's good, of the conditions of their life. And there is a discovery that has done more to thwart democracy than either of the two we have mentioned—the discovery that industry and commerce can be largely bought up and controlled, in their own interest, by a comparatively few rich men. So Big Business has arisen, feudal in its conception; a great mechanism whereby a small class of men have, within certain legal limits, complete dictation over the main activities of the country and the conditions amid

which the masses of men and women must work and live. These conditions are, as we saw in earlier chapters, often such as to take the heart out of the workers, and to wear out their lives. They may be remedied, one by one, by piecemeal legislation forced upon the owners of industry. But the fundamental reason for their existence is that the big industries are autocratically controlled. If those who suffer from these evils were to have direct voice with regard to them, they would quickly be mended.

When the great economists of an earlier day advocated the *laissez-faire* policy in business, they saw in that policy an opportunity of escape from a tyrannous state. They did not realize that it would result in "the exploitation of the economically weak by the economically strong, and the increase among the masses of that hopeless form of poverty which we call industrial poverty." But this has been the actual result of a system based upon the principle

"Let him take who hath the power,  
And let him keep who can."

There are many employers who treat their employees kindly; there are some classes of employees better off in the conditions and rewards of their work than some employers. But because the despotism is at times a benevolent one, it is none the less a despotic system, far from the ideal of a true democracy.

Our working life is, for most of us, far the most important part of our life. And yet the tardiness of our application of the democratic principle to industry is easily explicable when we remember the very recent growth of the power of capitalism. The founders of our republic were independent farmers and artisans, or professional men, or in business on such a small

scale that they could know their hired helpers personally. The rise of the great soulless corporations is a matter almost of yesterday; the power of organized wealth is a new power in America. We have hardly had time to realize the momentous change that has quietly been taking place in our institutions, and making Democracy for masses of people little more than a name.

A large proportion of our people are still independent workers, controlling their own hours and conditions of work. But an increasing proportion have become simply "hands"—a labor commodity, to be bought as cheaply as possible, and used for the making of profits for the owners of the mine or factory or mill or business house. The impersonal nature of the corporation tends to make it heartless. It exists to "get results"; in many cases the owners know little of the conditions under which the laborers work or the scale upon which they are paid. The result is that it takes years of effort and the bitterest struggles to win for many of the workers even the minimum decencies of life.

The rest of us suffer too, not only indirectly, as from the danger of the disease- and vice-breeding slums in which underpaid laborers are forced to live, but directly, through the indifference of powerful money-making corporations to the public interest. It took many years of struggle to get our pure food laws, our meat inspection laws, our safety device laws, and the like. We still find ourselves helpless when some corporation or group of corporations decide to stop production in order to create a relative scarcity and raise the price of their product. If the move is skillfully executed, a few owners may make a considerable profit. In the meantime thousands

of families suffer privation for want of work, and the public has to pay a quite unnecessary price for what it buys. A speculator corners the ice supply in summer; we all pay high prices for ice; in the poorer homes the babies die; a few men make handsome profits.

Perhaps the bulk of our business is carried on with a reasonable degree of public spirit and fairness. The opportunities for exploitation are checked not only by the inertia of those who do not realize their opportunities, and by human kindness or public spirit that refuses to seize them, but also by the pressure of public opinion, by the competition of rivals, by the power of organized labor, and by various other forces. Still, benevolent as for the most part our Big Business may be, it can not be called democratic. And the arguments for democracy that we discussed in Chapter XV apply nowhere more forcibly than to this situation. It is not right for any single individual or small group of men to have such power over the lives of masses of men as the rulers of our large-scale industries and business-houses have. Our forefathers did not foresee this situation when they expounded the ideal of Democracy; it is for us to apply their ideal to present-day conditions.

Does this mean Socialism? Not at all. Socialism is a particular theory, with much truth in it and much error, not very widely held in this country, and at any rate outside the province of this volume. What *is* indicated is simply the recognition of the democratic principle as applying to the conditions of a man's working life. Every industry of sufficient size to need it should have a board of representatives of the workers, and a written code of procedure. There must be no more arbitrary decisions by owners or



managers; the people who do the work must be consulted; or, rather, decisions must be made in accordance with jointly accepted objective standards, and impartial investigation. Industry must be ruled by a code of laws and precedents that commend themselves to the workers in the industry and to the public at large, instead of being subject to the caprices and selfish interests of the men who supply the capital.

For example, no worker should be discharged without fair trial—"due process of law"; he should not be subject to dismissal, as is now often the case, because he has joined a Union, or because he is suspected of holding "radical" ideas, or because the foreman has conceived a grudge against him. In these days of specialized skill, especially in the industries that are highly organized, for a man to lose his job may be sheer ruin. His life should not thus be at the mercy of caprice or grudge or prejudice. He must have a fair hearing before his peers, and be dismissed only for just cause.

So with regard to safety appliances, sanitary conditions, fire protection, hours of work, and the like. These are matters that affect the workers more than anybody else; it is their right to have a share in the decisions with regard to them. When it comes to the more important questions, concerning wages, business policy, and price of product, the public too has its rights, and must have its voice in the decision. The working out of the particular plan by which workers and public shall share responsibility with the owners of the capital is a matter too detailed for this little volume. But many such schemes are in operation already, and the general idea is accepted by a number of the most conspicuous owners of industry. The process of democratization of industry will run

parallel, perhaps, to the process by which absolute monarchy gave way to the constitutional monarchy of such a country as England. It is earnestly to be hoped that capitalists generally will have the vision and the patriotism to co-operate in this movement. An obstinate refusal, if persisted in, would be a fruitful soil for revolution.

Of course it is a nuisance to have to keep to a code, or to consult a board of representatives, or to yield to a majority vote. Autocracy is always simpler than democracy, and more agreeable for the autocrats. And of course the present "owners" of industry will often be inclined to look upon the democratic movement as trespassing upon their "rights." But the private ownership of the capital used in an industry, the taking for private profit of the excess wealth produced by the industry, and the lodgment of exclusive control in the hands of these owners, are not the only conceivable conditions of the carrying on of the industry. Our system of private ownership of this wealth, which is socially produced, will be tolerated only if it consents to such abridgement of its concentration of power as will make it tolerable. On our economic system the owners take what they choose of the profits of an industry for their own enjoyment and keep what they choose as capital to produce more wealth. We believe that this is the best system; at any rate, we mean to give it a thorough trial before discarding it. But such grave abuses have crept into the system that unless they are corrected there will certainly develop a growing movement toward the abolition of the system, root and branch, as happened in that unhappy country, Russia.

The development of democracy in industry will not only ensure reasonable hours and conditions of

work, and security of employment, for the workers, it will ultimately make for a fairer division of the profits of industry, now so absurdly apportioned. Our present concentration of wealth results in large measure from our present concentration of power. The distribution of the profits of the great industries that employ thousands of workers ought to be decided not by a handful of men but by the community as a whole. The few "owners" now usually take an exorbitant share for themselves. This exorbitant share is partly squandered in luxurious living, partly used to increase, by investment, the wealth of the already wealthy, and partly used to maintain the political bosses in existence and through them to push or strangle legislation. It is safe to predict that we shall never have a diffusion of wealth consonant with our ideal of Equality, or a political system free from organized large-scale graft, until we have a considerable measure of democracy applied to industry.

This is what is meant, or should be meant, by the dictum that the cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy. The money that makes political "corruption" a profitable game comes chiefly from the rich owners of industry, and the owners of our natural resources—to a large extent the same set of people. These men, we must repeat, are not usually dishonest in intent. They think of themselves as protecting their legitimate interests. But the thwarting of the popular will that results, and the fortifying of the privileges of the rich, put off by so much the realization of the American ideal. A valuable remedy for political corruption may be found in a Short Ballot, with concentration of responsibility and delegated government. That reform would enable the people to wage a more successful war against the bosses who

are in politics for their personal profit. But there will always be a war between the vigilant among the people and the bosses so long as a class of owners are free to take as much as they can grab of the profits of industry and to use a large slice of that wealth for the direct and indirect subsidizing of legislation.

The main motive for the opposition to democracy in industry is, of course, the natural desire of those who enjoy the power and the profits to keep them. Democracy will mean a limitation of power, and, in the case of the profiteers, a limitation of profit; because neither the irresponsible power nor the congestion of wealth is socially justifiable. Concentration of power there must be, for efficiency, and for the location of responsibility. But it must be responsible power, power exercised in the interests of the industry as a whole, the interests of the workers and of the public, as well as the interests of the owners. Workers will still be discharged for incompetence or laziness, managers will still have pride in their departments and strive for efficiency. But the value of the results attained will be measured by the well-being secured for the workers and the low price secured for the public rather than by the profits secured for the owners. As it is now, we worship the god of Business Prosperity. But Business Prosperity means big profits for the owners; it may coincide with starvation wages or cruel tyranny for the workers and high prices for the consumer. Democratic control would not tolerate the worship of such a god.

But would not democratic control, by limiting the profits of the owners, lessen their interest in the business and slacken their energy? Would managers bound by a democratically determined code of procedure have the same incentive for striving for effi-



ciency? Would the workers, if freed from the arbitrary despotism of owners and managers, work as hard as they do now? It is a matter of psychology; the results would certainly be complex. We lack experience of a thoroughly democratized society. As it is, the brainiest men keep clear, in general, of the various attempts at democratic enterprise—producers' co-operative societies, and the like—because they can make far higher profits for themselves in the scramble of private business. If all the Big Business of the country were democratized, the men of brains would be forced to find their field of activity within it. And there is no real reason to suppose that their energy and ingenuity would be lessened because they were on salary instead of facing an uncertain but unlimited profit.

If it is true that salaried men, or men whose possibility of profits is limited to the approximate level of a high salary, and whose power is constitutional rather than autocratic, will not work, as a class, so hard as those who have unfettered opportunity of power and profits, then we must put up with that loss of energy. To this subject we shall return in discussing our American ideal of Efficiency. It may be enough at this point to suggest that this possible loss of interest on the part of the present *entrepreneur* class would probably be insignificant as compared with the increase of interest on the part of millions of workers who would gain a stake in their life-work. It would become *their* business as well as their employers'. The gravest problem in industry today is how to get the workers to put their heart into their work, how to develop their morale. It is safe to say that the only ultimately successful way of reviving our waning industrial morale is through the admis-



sion of the workers to participation in the control of the industry.

The big industries are at present the seat of a continuous class-conflict. Simmering beneath the surface there is always agitation and unrest. The small owner-class are the legal "insiders" in industry, the great mass of workers are simply hirelings, with no security of tenure, no personal stake in the business. No wonder the sight of big profits going to the owners awakens resentment; no wonder that decisions and policies that affect the lives of the workers adversely engender bitterness. There is no need of "Bolshevist" propaganda to explain this ever-latent hostility. The interests of owners and workers are obviously opposed. So long as this is the case, we shall have strikes and sabotage and soldiering on the job. The only escape is to diminish the separateness of function between the two classes, to merge their interests. Peace may exist in an ignorant and convention-ridden society between autocrats and their hirelings; not in a democracy. The old idea was that laborers should be docile, tame, submissive; the American spirit makes them independent in thought, eager to find scope for initiative and personality, determined to have their share of profits and power. It is too late to hope to stabilize the autocratic ideal; we must put our backs into making the democratic ideal work.

It is not the extension of bureaucratic government control that we need; government undertakings have not often been truly democratic. What we need is more self-determination, more individualism, more participation by everybody in the decisions in the field of his particular work. Industry must be conceived as a communal affair instead of as a private enterprise hiring multitudes of servile workers. Only in

this way can we give dignity to the average man's life, a far horizon, and zest in his work. This is what we all really want, or would want if we thought about it enough—to be members of a self-governing community of workers. It is what Mr. Gerald Stanley Lee means when he says, "The people have decided to be parts of We-Machines. We have been cogs in other people's I-Machines long enough."

It is certain that a more democratic management of industry will lead to many blunders, and to much "graft." Whether to more blunders and more graft than our existing system, no one can say. Our present system is probably not on the whole more than ten per cent efficient; its striking successes are few and its failures many. But however that may be, progress has to proceed by trial and error. Political democracy has blundered so much, and been so honey-combed with corruption, that its enemies have deemed it far worse than autocracy. Yet it has spread and spread, until it is obviously to be the universal policy. The adventures of democratized industry will be many. But it is surely coming; because the masses are learning to want it, and learning that they can have it. The ballot is the camel's nose in the tent; nothing can prevent the camel from coming all the way in now. To dam the current will be but to make its eventual coming more tempestuous and destructive. That energy is wasted that opposes it; only that energy and thought are fruitfully spent which go to the working out of concrete plans and to the education of the people to use wisely their coming power.

Business men will, of course, resist the transition; not only those who profit by their power, but millions of others who have grown up to think in their terms. With their warnings of the danger of costly blunders,

decreased production, and a possible industrial chaos, we may sympathize. But if they raise the cry of loyalty to American principles, we shall know what to say. Efficient, feasible, democracy may or may not be; but it is at least the ideal to which we are committed, the ideal for which our forefathers bled, the ideal for which but just now our sons and brothers bled. To be obliged to argue this point at all shows how many people have as yet failed to grasp what the idea of Democracy really implies.

During the War a brilliant speaker before the American Academy of Social and Political Science uttered these memorable words: "We stand committed as never before to the realization of democracy in America. We who have gone to war to insure democracy in the world will have raised an aspiration here that will not end in the overthrow of the Prussian autocracy . . . We shall call that man unAmerican and no patriot who prates of liberty in Europe and resists it at home. A force is loose in America as well." That this force may be used not for destruction but for construction should be our prayer and our earnest concern. Not only must the world be made safe for democracy, but democracy itself must be unfolded into its completest meaning. What further developments may lie before democracy we cannot now say; but just now it needs much effort to free it from the forces which are strangling it in politics, in journalism, and in industry.

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**PART FOUR**  
**EFFICIENCY**





## CHAPTER XX

### BIG BUSINESS

WE are all, in our patriotic moments, proud of our ideal of Democracy, and of the extent to which it has already been successfully embodied in our institutions. But as an actual working motive in the lives of successful Americans it does not begin to have the potency of another ideal—efficiency. Efficiency it not one of the great historic slogans that we repeat on the Fourth of July, and attribute to Washington or Lincoln. But when the American traveller boasts of his country abroad, what he is most apt to speak of is the success of our big business, of our great transportation systems, and the other achievements in organization of our industrial order. And most foreign observers have given a verdict similar to that of Arnold Bennett's: "It seems to me that the brains and the imagination of America shine superlatively in the conception and ordering of its vast organizations of human beings, and of machinery, and of the two combined . . . For me they were the proudest material achievements, and essentially the most poetical achievements, of the United States."

Because of this widespread pride in organization and efficiency, America has often been sneered at as a land of "materialists." But efficiency means the saving of human labor, its consequent release from concern with the mechanics of life, and greater freedom to pursue ideal ends. The simple peasant life

idealized by Tolstoy, the cottage handicraft life idealized by Ruskin, have their allurements for an age of machinery. But actually, such a life means longer hours of work, a harder, less human life, than efficiently organized industry necessitates. It is true that the end has often been lost sight of in preoccupation with the means; masses of workers have not yet won the greater leisure, the pleasanter conditions of work, the larger purchasing power, for which the efficient organization of human labor opens the way. The benefits of our industrial efficiency have not yet been properly distributed. To be a worthy ideal, Efficiency must lose its savor of tyranny and ruthlessness and self-seeking, and go hand in hand with a true Equality and Democracy. But in this way, as an integral part of our national ideal, Efficiency can not be overemphasized.

Just what efficiency in the ordering of human relations requires is a problem at which generations to come must work. But there is one tendency in America so far-reaching in its influence on the lives of our people that it must have our immediate attention. This is the movement toward combination and centralization in business. There is no doubt that Big Business is an American ideal, and that, whatever impulses toward the exercising of power and the raking in of profits may enter in as motives, its justification is its efficiency. Already we have many splendid examples of the saving of human labor and the diminution of the price of commodities, through the formation of our great corporations or "trusts." And there can be little doubt that the next generation will witness a great increase in this co-ordination in the business world.

That, in general, the replacement of competitive

business by closely co-operative or highly centralized business does make for efficiency is indubitable. Lack of organization means, for one thing, unnecessary duplication of plant and equipment. For example, it has been estimated by reliable statisticians that the flour-mills of the country could grind all the wheat produced in a year in 157 days, and that the saw mills could saw all the lumber consumed in a year in 120 days. Hundreds of millions of dollars are thus wasted by competitive business. Moreover, a great deal of time and money is lost in cross-routing, in separate purchasing and keeping of accounts.

A great many economies possible to a large-scale organization are not practicable for the petty manufacturer or tradesman. The big concern finds it profitable to utilize by-products. It can buy raw materials in larger quantities, and needs to keep less material on hand than was necessary in the case of the smaller concerns it replaces. It can afford expenditures beyond the means of the smaller concerns, it can avail itself of the most expert advice, and strike out more boldly into new lines. Having many strings to its bow, it needs less to fear a single mistake, and can be more enterprising than the small-scale manufacturer or trader can usually dare to be.

The wastefulness of competition is most striking in the field of distribution, including middlemen and retailers. In almost every line we see thousands of unnecessary shops, delivery wagons, and employees. For example, several years ago a survey was made of the distribution of milk in the city of Washington, D. C. "Sixty-five dealers supplied the city, by a wasteful process of duplicating storage, pasteurizing, cooling and delivery plants; in some apartment houses substantially every tenant was served by a

different dealer. On one city block seventeen milk wagons were counted one morning, each serving one to three customers . . . Competitive conditions made it impossible to enforce proper care of bottles. Washington was paying about \$120,000 annually for milk bottles! A public service monopoly, enforcing penalties, as gas, water, and electric companies do, would save most of this. Under competition, the dealer attempting it would lose his trade to more lenient dealers . . . There was testimony of considerable quantities of milk going to waste at seasons when supply exceeded demands. Small dealers could not afford manufacturing plants to convert their surplus into butter, cheese, condensed and powdered milk. Under centralized control, the single distributor would utilize the surplus at all times." It is no wonder that it cost as much to distribute milk in Washington as to produce it and get it into the hands of the distributors.

This situation is fairly typical. A committee of the New York legislature stated, after investigation, that "under present competitive conditions it takes almost as many men to bring the dairyman's milk to the consumer as there are dairymen engaged in the production of milk, with all their employees. This is the result of the purely competitive basis upon which the business is handled."

Or take testimony presented before a recent Congressional committee: "The conditions of the retail merchandizing business are very uneconomical. There are two or three times as many people, in my judgment, engaged in the retail business as should be." In a later statement, this witness said he "believed it would be nearer the truth to state that five times as many people are making a living out of the retail



shoe business as would be necessary to serve the public. This, of course, connotes that other retailing expenses are likewise excessive—rent, capital investment, insurance, fixtures . . . and many more.”

One of our best-known retail merchants, Mr. Edward Filene, in a magazine article published in 1920, declares that retail distribution, as at present conducted, practically doubles the price of the manufactured article to the consumer. “There is doubtless profiteering here and there in isolated cases, but the real criminal profiteer is unscientific method—general inefficiency of organization.”

In addition to this needless multiplication of equipment and effort in the process of distribution itself, there is an enormous waste in competitive advertising. Hundreds of thousands of drummers spend their energies in persuading retailers, contractors, or consumers, to buy their goods rather than the other man's. Millions of dollars are spent in advertisements in newspapers, magazines, and circulars, and on billboards. The buyers, of course, have to pay this expense. Mr. Henry Holt has recently written, “Those who use the finer kinds of soap probably pay more for having it dinned into them to use a certain brand, than they pay for the soap itself.” And “the country probably pays more for having its elementary schoolbooks argued and cajoled and bribed into use, than for the books themselves.” These are two cases of a general truth. Wary buyers avoid much-advertised articles, realizing that in buying them they will have to pay for the advertising. It is said that the cost of advertising means an overhead charge of twenty-five per cent on American industry.

The money spent in advertising is not wholly lost. It is desirable that new articles, as well as the merits

of familiar articles, should be called to the attention of potential purchasers. Unhappily, competitive advertising is so widely untrustworthy in its statements that it is, on the whole, perhaps as misleading as enlightening. It works on the mind rather as a quasi-hypnotic suggestion than as a channel of information.

A more important aspect of the matter is the fact that advertising supports our newspapers and magazines. If, because of the unification of the various industries and distributing agencies, advertising were no longer necessary to draw trade from rivals, most of these dailies and weeklies and monthlies would either have to increase very greatly the subscription price or receive a subsidy. The increase in price of newspapers and magazines would be a calamity, since it would decrease the number of readers. On the other hand, their release from the need of pleasing the big advertisers would permit a great gain in honesty and nonpartisanship in presenting the news and expressing opinions. A number of our most useful weeklies, and a few dailies and monthlies, are now endowed, and so independent of advertising. But in general, the problem of efficiency in business is wrapt up with the problem of journalism, as it is with the problem of politics, and many another problem. And this tangled inter-relation of problems is one reason why social progress in this direction, as in many others, is so slow.

There are many other advantages of business amalgamation, as over against the anarchic struggle of nineteenth century business. Everyone's good ideas and methods become available for the whole business; whereas in a régime of competition, secrets are carefully guarded, patents give exclusive use of labor-

saving inventions to a few, and outdated methods and materials are perforce used by most. Further, Big Business can afford to maintain laboratories and experts for the investigation of new inventions and methods. It passes fewer positions on, "in the family," to inefficient workers and managers, and offers more opportunity for the young man or woman of brains but without business connections. In these and other ways, a completely organized business can serve the public better than cut-throat business, in most cases, can.

It is, of course, not always true that Big Business is more efficient than small-scale business. It depends upon the particular nature of the article manufactured or sold. Some businesses are in their nature local—as, a street-car system, a lighting-system. In other cases, as in the matter of coal, steel, oil, fertilizers, etc., the whole world should be organized as one economic community. But whether its sphere is local or national or world-wide, the ideal of Efficiency demands that every business should, within its sphere, be free from waste and duplication of effort. This implies the elimination of the sort of competition wherein rivals seek to perform the same service. There may still be much rivalry between the different departments of a given business, between different plants, between different producers or salesmen. But it will be a rivalry in the performance of co-operating tasks, not the sort of rivalry in which one man's success means another man's failure.

The gain through this steering of effort into co-operative instead of antagonistic work is not merely material, it is mental and spiritual. Competitive business encourages hardness of heart and penalizes kindness. Man is pitted against man, not in a gener-

ous spirit of emulation, as in competitive sports, but in a veritable struggle for existence. Legislation and government regulation can eliminate some of the more unscrupulous and anti-social acts devised in this struggle but it can never put an end to the manifold ways in which, under a competitive régime, one man or firm will selfishly seek to get the better of its competitors. The result of this struggle is, as we all know, a constant series of business failures, each meaning an economic loss to the community, often of considerable magnitude; and each meaning God only knows how much heartache and despair.

It is often thought that this high tension under which competitive business lives—this perpetual fear of failure and this constant impulse to get the better of rivals—makes for a greater expenditure of energy and initiative; that monopolistic business tends to become slack and unenterprising, through the relaxing of this pressure. The results achieved by the “trusts” in this country do not seem to bear out this contention; if there is a diminution of energy from this cause, its baneful effect is more than counterbalanced by the gains. It may be said, however, that it is neither normal nor desirable for human beings to live under such a strain as competitive business often entails, and that enough motives remain—pride in achievement, promotion and retention of position, increase in product and hence in financial return, and so on—to keep human energies whipped to the degree desirable. A more democratic control of business will undoubtedly tap new sources of energy and interest. And if, in the end, we should find that a completely organized industrial system was somewhat more easy-going than the feverish pace of some contemporary businesses, we must remember that human



welfare is a bigger thing than material productivity. Freedom from strain, and a sense of security, are worth paying for.

But there still remains the question, If the business of the country is thus fully organized, will not the benefits accrue to a small class, and further accentuate the inequalities of wealth and power already so marked? The remarkable achievements of our great corporations have had as their corollary the accumulation of great private fortunes, with a consequent power over journalism, politics, and legislation that has awakened considerable popular distrust. It is not that we have had, usually, to pay higher prices for what we buy from the trusts. The old notion that competition suffices to keep prices down has gone by the board. The experience of recent years shows that there is as much profiteering by small concerns as by Big Business. When credit can be got, and the general impression of scarcity becomes widespread, manufacturers and dealers will seize their opportunity for raising prices without any formal conspiracy or co-operation. In general, with certain exceptions, the formation of trusts has lowered rather than raised the price of commodities to the consumer.

But even if the public is actually no worse off, it is far more inclined to resent the concentrated profiteering of a few big firms than the more diffused prosperity of many smaller firms. The profit-taking is far more conspicuous, and benefits fewer people. Moreover, there is a sense engendered of being at the mercy of these industrial autocrats which is repugnant to our democratic sensibilities. And of course, there is a continual protest against absorption or elimination, on the part of the small manufacturers



or dealers who find themselves elbowed out or threatened with ruin by their bigger rivals. The process by which the great corporations have won their power has often been unscrupulous, and still oftener is the result of a struggle which, however fair according to our current standards of business practice, has actually resulted in the ruin of their former rivals.

The effect upon the employees of this organization of business into large units has many aspects. The wealthy corporation can usually afford to pay better wages, to build more sanitary and comfortable factories, to make working conditions in many ways pleasanter. Its conspicuousness makes it more liable to public criticism, and it is apt to feel more keenly the need of heeding such criticism. In many cases "welfare work" is being carried on by our big firms which would never have been possible to the smaller houses.

On the other hand, the big corporation has so much more power, that when it chooses to lower wages, to oppose the unionization of employees, or in any other way to resist the desires of labor, it is a far more formidable antagonist than the smaller competing firms. There is less personal contact of employer with employees; it is usually harder for the employee with a grievance to get his case before his employer. And the ownership of stock by absentee shareholders makes a continuous urge for dividends which sometimes results in a policy that is inhuman in the extreme.

The opposition to Big Business comes, then, from several quarters. It comes from the owners of small factories and shops, who do not want to give up their independence and become parts of a larger concern. It comes from labor-unions, that fear the increase of

power of the employers, which may make it harder for them to succeed in their efforts to get fairer remuneration and better working conditions. It comes from ~~the~~ public, that sees with apprehension this concentration of wealth and power. The result has been a series of "anti-trust" laws, and repeated pronouncements like that of the Democratic party platform of 1912, which declared that "the control by any one corporation of so large a proportion of industry as to make it a menace to competitive conditions" is "indefensible and intolerable," and demanded "the enactment of such additional legislation as may be necessary to make it impossible for a private monopoly to exist in the United States."

The lessons of the Great War, however, were in no respect more striking than in their emphasis upon the need of the pooling of interests, and the incapacity of a divided industrial régime. Temporarily, men worked together under a unified governmental plan, and achieved results in production and distribution which amazed us all. Almost as much energy was spent in organizing industry and commerce as in moving armies and fighting the enemy. A machinery of co-operation was built up, an economic integration, which, in spite of the drawing away of several million young men from industry, speeded up production to a point far above pre-war possibilities. We have since drifted back into much of the old disorder of effort and undisciplined confusion. But the lessons of the War have graven themselves deeply upon many minds.

It is true, of course, that the government control exercised over firms, small and great, and tolerated in the emergency, became irksome when the emergency had passed. It is also true that much blunder-

ing and graft appeared in this hasty and unprecedented organization, of the nation's effort. But it would seem as if our efforts ought to be directed rather toward improving the machinery of organization, and eliminating the blunders and the opportunities for graft, rather than in discarding the ideal of co-ordination and unity. As our population grows, and our natural resources yield less exuberantly, the problem of efficiency in production and distribution will become more and more acute; and it would seem wise for us to be working in the direction of that unification of effort to which we must eventually come.

As a matter of fact, the Sherman Anti-Trust Act never accomplished its purpose. The process of amalgamation has gone pretty steadily on, and recent judicial interpretations have followed the principle that only those combinations which actually work to the injury of the public are to be condemned, not the process of combination itself.

We should be proud of this genius for organization; it is one of our most distinctive American traits, and ought to be one of our proudest ideals. It requires great intellectual power, executive ability, imagination, and faith, for its completest realization. But there must be more than that. There must go hand in hand with this organization of production and distribution such a measure of democratic participation in control by the workers as shall ensure them a self-respecting life and their just share of the results of the new efficiency. And there must be an increased oversight of these great private organizations by the State, to ensure the public against exploitation. Delicate problems these. But as industry is the backbone of a nation's life, so these problems are the fun-

damental problems, whose solution is imperative if its future is to be secure.

How to preserve and increase that individual initiative and energy in which we so firmly believe, how to increase the dignity and power of individual men, and yet harmonize their efforts into one great synthetic purpose,—that is the task set for our young business men to think out. We shall be proud indeed if America leads the way in solving this great problem.

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## CHAPTER XXI

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

THE combination and co-operation of business men have made possible the great achievements of American business—greater production, improved product, larger profits, lower prices. But these economic gains have not, for the most part, resulted in any great improvement in the status of the employees, except as the latter have been able, in their turn, to bring pressure to bear through organizations of their own. The labor-unions thus necessitated have also many other achievements to their credit. They have helped to assimilate and Americanize heterogeneous groups of immigrants, have promoted friendliness and mutual help among the laboring classes, and in many ways served their welfare.

Thus the unions are now an accepted part of our American life. Theodore Roosevelt, speaking at Columbus, September 10, 1910, said, "If I were a wage worker, I should certainly join a union. . . . In our modern industrial system the union is just as necessary as the corporation, and in the modern field of industrialism, it is often an absolute necessity that there should be collective bargaining by the employees with the employers; and such collective bargaining is but one of the many benefits conferred by wisely and honestly organized unions that act properly."

To offset this good record, it must be admitted that the unions have often retarded industrial progress and even the efficient working of existing machinery. They have at times sought to restrict the number of



apprentices in a trade, opposed trade schools, opposed scientific management, in order to make more work, insisted on the retention of incompetent employees, and upon a uniform wage to all, without regard to efficiency. They have sometimes been in the grip of grafting leaders, who have sought to use their power for their personal enrichment. They have sometimes broken their agreements with employers, and declared strikes in violation of contract. In short, like all other forms of human organization, they come under the control, from time to time, of all sorts of leaders, wise and unwise, scrupulous and selfish, and have a mixed record of good and evil—whether better or worse than that of business firms, trusts, and financial rings, or than that of political parties, it would be difficult to say.

It is fair to say, however, that some or all of the above-mentioned tactics have been adopted by unions because, in their judgment, they were necessary means for the attainment of their end—the bettering of the status of labor. And however shortsighted their methods at times have been, it is beyond dispute that they have been the greatest force that has made for higher wages, shorter hours, and better working conditions. Even the attainment of decently humane conditions for working women and children has been mostly the work of the unions, in the face of strenuous opposition from the employers. It is no wonder that organized labor thinks of itself “not as a selfish group which is extorting all it can from the community, but as a group which, under the conditions of a modern industrial society, is now occupying the firing line in the battle for human liberation.”

The labor-unions are able to ameliorate the lot of the workers in two ways, by influencing legislation,

and by direct bargaining with the employers. The latter has been by far the more efficacious method hitherto. There has been little agreement among labor-leaders upon political measures, and no concerted action at the polls. But economic pressure brought to bear upon the owners of industry through the power of the workers to cease working has had marked effects.

Whether we shall approve of the exercise of this power depends upon our judgment as to the desirability of the ends sought. Undoubtedly in many cases organized labor has demanded more than could reasonably be granted under existing conditions. But in general, the status of the workers has been unnecessarily low, and the gains won through collective action desirable, for the community as a whole, as well as for the workers. Hence nearly all disinterested students of the industrial situation have approved the principle of collective bargaining. Public Commissions on Industrial Relations, Church Conferences, Presidents of the United States—practically everyone except certain representatives of the employing class declare the method necessary; so that it is now firmly established as a principle of Americanism. Recently the Federal Council of the Churches declared that "the safety and development of the workers, the best interest of the employers, the security and progress of the community all demand it."

The success of collective bargaining depends, obviously, upon the completeness with which the workers are organized. If only a part of those in a given industrial concern belong to the unions, and the rest refuse to obey their leadership, the employer can defy their demands. Hence the earnest efforts to unionize

laborers, and the bitterness of the resentment felt by the members of the unions toward the "scabs"—workers who continue to work when the union decides to strike, or who take the places of strikers. If it is true that the betterment of the lot of the workers is made, for the most part, only by the collective effort and sacrifice of the workers united in their unions, then the worker who refuses to join in this effort and sacrifice, who continues to accept his pay when his comrades are wageless, and helps to make their effort and sacrifice fruitless, is naturally regarded as a traitor to the common cause and deserving of the utmost contempt.

The organization of laborers along the lines of their separate crafts has stood in the way of their collective action. Hence the movement toward industrial unions whose membership shall be coextensive with the workers in an entire industry. And hence the demand for the Closed Shop, that is, a shop in which only union members are allowed to work. If such a requirement were to become universal, all the workers would join the unions, and no one would be excluded from positions. But of course, this is precisely what the autocratically-minded employers do not wish. They follow the ancient maxim, *Divide et impera*. In particular, the owners of some of the greatest corporations have fought the unionization of their employees, under the slogan, The Open Shop.

The Open Shop idea appeals to our American spirit of individualism; it insists upon the right of each laborer to decide for himself whether or not he will join the union. But if the unions are right in saying, *United we stand, divided we fall*, they must blame this individualistic attitude as vigorously as a nation at war condemns the citizens who disrupt its unity.

The employer, or the owner of industrial securities, is not disinterested; the success of a labor-movement may lessen his profits or his dividends. And so his conscientious fervor for the open shop ideal is not quite convincing. And when we find directors of corporations quietly discharging men who have joined the unions, and even employing, as many do, spies among the workers to spot those who show signs of favoring union ideas, we realize that their avowed advocacy of the Open Shop often masks an actual determination to keep the employees unorganized and so helpless.

That acute critic of American institutions, Mr. Dooley, saw clearly the laborers' side of the Open Shop controversy.

"What's all this that's in the papers about the open shop?" asked Mr. Hennessey.

"Why, don't you know?" said Mr. Dooley. "Really I'm surprised at yer ignorance, Hinnissey. What is th' open shop? Sure, 'tis where they kape the doors open to accommodate th' constant stream av' min comin' in t' take jobs cheaper than th' min what has th' jobs. 'Tis like this, Hinnissey: Suppose wan av these freeborn citizens is workin' in an open shop f'r th' princely wages av wan large iron dollar a day av tin hour. Along comes anither son-av-gun and he sez to th' boss 'Oi think Oi could handle th' job nicely f'r ninety cints.' 'Sure,' sez th' boss, and th' wan dollar man gets out into th' crool woruld t' exercise his inalienable roights as a freeborn American citizen an' scab on some other poor devil. An' so it goes on, Hinnissey. An' who gits th' benefit? Thru, it saves th' boss money, but he don't care no more f'r money thin he does f'r his right eye.



"It's all principle wid him. He hates t' see men robbed av their indipendence. They must have their indipendence, regardless av anything else."

"But," said Mr. Hennessey, "these open shop min ye menshun say they are f'r unions iv properly conducted."

"Shure," said Mr. Dooley, "iv properly conducted. An' there we are: An' how would they have thim conducted? No strikes, no rules, no contracts, no scales, hardly iny wages an' dam few mimbers."

If this is often the actual psychology of the employer, it must be admitted that the motives and ideals of the unions are often equally open to criticism. But since there is an inevitable conflict of interest between profit-seeking employers and employees seeking better working and living conditions, it seems necessary to forward by whatever means are consonant with our American ideal of Liberty, the organization of employees, in order that the two parties may be fairly equal in the contest. At any rate, the fight against unionization usually results in the spread of restlessness and radicalism; workers who find themselves unable to help themselves by fair means will fall back upon foul means. If labor is opposed too generally in its efforts toward organization, it is likely to become destructively pugnacious and tend more and more to sabotage, slacking on the job, and other forms of "direct action." There can be little doubt that the Report of the United States Commission on Industrial Relations, in 1915, was right in declaring that "the most effectual course that can be pursued to bring about general contentment among our people . . . is the promotion of labor organization."



What then? the reader may say. The chief weapon by which the unions can win for labor its due share of the national prosperity is through the strike. And can we approve the strike? Every one suffers during a strike—the employers and stockholders, the wage-earners and their families, and the general public. The total economic loss to the community from strikes is very great; and the cost of living is appreciably raised thereby for all of us. A large proportion of the strikes are unsuccessful, sheer waste for everyone. Even when the workers are successful, their gains in wages are often not enough to compensate them for the losses they have suffered. And always a strike engenders bitterness, class-division, and angry passions. In general, strikers in America have exercised great self-control, and have been guilty of relatively little violence—such violence as has occurred being usually the result of unfair and provocative conduct on the part of the employers. But certainly the strike is at best a hateful thing, to be tolerated only if it is the only means available for the attainment of justice for the workers.

The laboring classes believe, almost universally, that it is a necessary and therefore a legitimate weapon—in the last resort, if employers are obdurate to considerations of justice and humanity, the only available method of obtaining their rights. It is, therefore, useless to dwell upon the evils of the strike—which every one admits. If the workers believe that they have a serious grievance, and can get it remedied in no other way, they will strike, and nothing but the use of the power of military mobilization can make them work. This is a very dangerous power to use, and would probably not be tolerated in this country unless public sympathies were overwhelm-

ingly against the strikers. We must face the fact, then, that strikes will occur from time to time, until the workers feel that they have their fair share of the profits—and perhaps of the control—of industry, and are satisfied with the conditions and hours of their work. Or until some other method proves equally efficacious for the attainment of these ends.

To say “equally efficacious” is not to say very much! Strikes, for all their cost, have not actually, as yet, accomplished a great deal. It is a question whether the energy spent in strikes would not have accomplished far more if it had been put into getting legislation enacted. The wage-earning classes form the largest block of the population; if they could agree upon the laws they want, they could undoubtedly get them upon the statute-books. Why should not political action, in a democracy, be substituted for economic action?

Undoubtedly it should. The era of strikes must be conceived by every hopeful American as a transient era. The strike is a form of coercion, whereas the principle of democracy is persuasion, and the dominance of enlightened public opinion. The strike is a method by which one group seeks to win its end without having to convince the majority that it is in the right. Might does not make right; and the victory in a strike goes to the stronger side; not necessarily, and not, perhaps, in a majority of cases, to the side that is in the right. The strike is a form of private warfare, in which the public has to suffer from the inability of the two groups at war to agree.

When we contemplate the terrible possibilities of a “general strike,” we see clearly that another method of settling industrial disputes must be devised. A strike of the railroad workers throughout the country

would quickly become a calamity of vast proportions—babies would die for lack of milk and ice, the big cities would be in serious straits for food and coal, the whole activity of the country would be paralyzed. A general strike of coal miners in winter would quickly result in the stoppage of trains, and actual freezing to death in the cities. If the workers in the key industries of our country ever unite in a cause which they feel to be just, and steel themselves to suffering as ruthlessly as the fighting nations did in the Great War, the disaster to the nation might be even greater than that of war.

It is no wonder that a great deal of agitation has been carried on for compulsory arbitration of labor disputes. If justice can be secured by the verdict of an impartial tribunal or court, all the suffering and bitterness and economic loss caused by strikes can be saved. Labor can be sure of getting its due even when it is not strong enough to make a successful strike. Other disputes are settled by legal means, why not these? Surely right, not might, should have the deciding voice.

As a matter of fact, however, it is impracticable at present to compel arbitration in these matters. The labor-unions are almost all violently opposed to it; and even in New Zealand and Australia, where the wage-earners once welcomed it, they have lost their faith in it. It has not actually resulted in improving their status; and while once it was thought that in these lands the age of strikes was over, they have again become common. So that in 1919 the Federated Business Men's Organization of Australia declared, "It is obvious after an experience of twenty years that our industrial laws have lamentably failed to secure industrial peace."

If compulsory arbitration is not successful in securing justice, it actually works out in favor of the employers. Success in a strike demands sudden action. During an enforced delay, employers can be gathering together strike-breakers and preparing to get on without their former workers.

At any rate, to compel a body of wage-earners to accept arbitration by a body which they distrust is not feasible. Fines cannot be collected from thousands of poor people, men cannot be imprisoned by the thousand, nor can they be made to work, save under military rule. The attempt to force a verdict, in an important case, upon laborers who believed it to be radically unjust would be to invite revolution.

The point is that the basic matters in dispute between labor and capital—the proper wages, hours, working conditions, and division of control—are non-justiciable. There are no generally approved principles from which to decide a particular case. Labor wants not a static condition, perpetuation of the *status quo*, but progress toward better conditions. The so-called impartial judge, however, usually thinks in terms of the existing distribution of profits and power; his verdicts usually tend to standardize conditions at their present unsatisfactory level. Judges and arbitrators seldom have the laborer's point of view; they are apt to be thinking of business prosperity, reasonable dividends, the public convenience, rather than of the welfare of the workers. The public is instinctively inclined to resent the extra cost of commodities necessitated by, or at any rate usually resulting from, an improvement in the status of the wage-earners, and usually thinks of them as disturbers of the peace. Thus the workers feel that the scales are weighted against them, and that arbi-



tration, instead of getting for them their just demands, actually serves as a means of keeping them slaves in an unjust social order.

Certainly peace at any price is not the ideal. The industrial pacifists must realize that a peace resting upon an unjust distribution of profits and power, of inhumane working conditions, cannot be a lasting peace. The various plans for conferences and common decisions within an industry—Shop Committees, Industrial Councils, and the like, seem promising. An opportunity to present their case to one another, to come to a mutual understanding, to participate in policies that make for the common advantage, can obviate much of the friction between employers and wage-earners. Investigation and mediation by outside tribunals may often be useful. But in the present condition of industry, obviously a transition situation, we must hesitate to take from the wage-earners the one weapon that they feel they can depend upon to remedy intolerable conditions. Wretched as the strike-weapon is, we have not yet worked out an industrial order in which it is safe to make it illegal.

The hope for the future lies in education—the education of the workers to understand their own needs and duties and to use the ballot as the means of remedying their wrongs; the education of the employing class, that they may understand the laborers' point of view and put into operation industrial methods that will bring about a diffused prosperity and a self-respecting life for their employees; the education of the general public, that it may understand the rights and wrongs of the intricate industrial problem and put its weight on the side of humanity and justice. Strikes, "direct action," economic pressure—these are war-methods; they must in time give way to the



methods of open discussion and decision by the majority vote. What stands in the way of this is—ignorance, and prejudice, the child of ignorance. A better and longer school-education, a more wide-awake and socially useful Church, a non-partisan, or omni-partisan, press, these are to be the means of our salvation. In the meantime we must be content to let labor meet the power of organized business with its own organized power, and hope that through their bargaining and bickering some genuine progress may be made.

It is also to be hoped that the labor-unions will more and more use their organized power not merely to wrest higher wages and humaner working conditions from their employers, but to improve the efficiency of their members and to co-operate with capital in bettering the technique of production. They are at present mainly, and necessarily, fighting-organizations. The gradual satisfaction of their aspirations for labor should transform them ultimately into constructive agencies of great value for the future of American industry.

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## CHAPTER XXII

### MORALE

DISPUTES and divergences of viewpoint there will always be in industry, as in every other field of co-operative action. But when these disputes merge into a continuous and deep-seated conflict between labor and capital, we have a state of things obviously destructive of efficiency. The maintenance of American industry and commerce upon a high level of efficiency is in no small degree dependent upon *corps d'esprit*, team-play, a genuine spirit of co-operation. And that is dependent upon the mental attitude of the workers—what we have in recent years learned to call *morale*.

Many observers declare that the morale of American wage-earners has been lowered in recent years. The antagonism between their ideals and the policies of their employers has become more conscious. Workers refuse to exert themselves greatly, they repeat the phrases, "take your time," "go easy," "no hurry"; they take vacations from their jobs when they feel like it, they are less and less docile and dependable. One writer declares that "this growing reluctance of wage-earners to give more than they get is the Achilles-heel of our modern industrial system." Another writer puts the situation thus: "Let us remember that such habits of industry as we can still count on were established under an earlier order, when the relation between reward and effort appeared

closer, in the skilled trades, and when the unskilled workman, illiterate and oppressed, was more amenable to discipline. We are trading on an inherited capital of industrious habits. This is the road to bankruptcy, unless we can learn to create similar habits that may serve for the future."

Certainly we can never again expect, and should never want, to see laborers meek and spiritless, with overseers cracking the whip over them, like so many "dumb, driven cattle." That is not a thinkable American solution for the problem. The development of morale among the workers must come through the awaking of their interest in their work, through the tapping of new sources of creative energy, and the development of a voluntary code of honor, and tradition of loyal service, like that which exists in an army that believes in its cause and in its leaders. The workman who is industrious and faithful must command the admiration of his fellows instead of their suspicion. The slacker and floater must come to be regarded with contempt. In short, morale must be created by the active attitude of the mass of wage-earners themselves, and cannot be imposed upon them from without.

To some extent, this tendency to work slowly and do as little as possible for his wages, this lack of interest in the success of the business for which he is working, is due to the natural laziness and selfishness to which man is prone; in so far it can only be overcome by the diffusion of higher moral or religious standards. But human motives and attitudes are largely formed by environment; and the widespread lack of morale among workers is to a large extent the result of external causes that can be removed. The situation cannot be cured by preaching

the necessity of production, or by scolding at labor. We must put ourselves in the place of the workers and consider what can be done to increase their loyalty and enthusiasm for their work.

One important means to this end, alluded to in an earlier chapter, is the extension of vocational education. Interest arises through an intelligent comprehension of the task one is performing, and a realization of its relation to the related tasks which one's fellows are performing. The skilled worker is far more apt to put his heart into his work than the untrained laborer. And the analyses of industrial processes made in recent years by physiologists and technicians reveal an enormous waste of human labor that could be saved by teaching the humblest manual workers the best way to perform their tasks. For the positions requiring more thought and decision, the necessity of trained intelligence is even more obvious. But as yet a very small per cent of American wage-earners receive any sort of scientific training for their work.

This is strikingly the situation in agriculture. The farmers, except for the "hired men," are not "wage-earners." But they are to an increasing extent dependent upon the big industrial and commercial concerns—the packing houses, the milk distributors, the middlemen, and brokers; and those who do not own their farms have to pay increasingly high rents. Many of them have felt in recent years that the dice were weighted against them, that the prices which they are forced to pay for seed and feed and fertilizers and equipment, coupled with the price at which they were obliged to sell their produce, left them too little opportunity for an honest living. The result has been, in some quarters, a lowering of morale among



farmers, and a disinclination of our young people to take up the farm-life. And yet the trained farmers have been making, in general, good profits. Government bulletins, experimental stations, agricultural colleges, and agricultural courses in the public schools, are doing a good deal toward bringing in the age of scientific farming. But we have, as a nation, a discouragingly long way yet to go.

Another extremely important means toward the development of morale is vocational guidance. Our present methods of finding the right person for every job and the right job for every person are, in general, quite rudimentary. A son drifts into the business of his father. An employer picks a man from a number of applicants, on the basis of his momentary impression, or because he is vaguely recommended by someone. The result is a trial and error method, with square pegs constantly trying to fit themselves into round holes. A large proportion of our population never find the work for which, by temperament and ability, they are actually best fitted. No one can estimate how much enthusiasm, how much ability, how much real genius, is wasted because never applied to its proper field. The universal use in the public schools of careful psychological tests, and the steering of boys and girls into the lines of study, and later into the vocations, for which nature has adapted them, will mean not only a far more general interest and happiness in work, but an incalculable increase in its productivity, both in quantity and quality.

In all sorts of ways up-to-date employers are seeking to cultivate good-will among their workers, and to utilize their instinct of workmanship. They are encouraging their employees to get acquainted with one another, and to have social good times. They are



providing them with reading-rooms, rest-rooms, ball-fields, gymnasiums. They are giving them a chance to learn about the various departments of the business and so to feel a pride in it. They are encouraging them to hand in "suggestions." They are employing "labor managers," to adjust their minor grievances and to manifest their employers' interest in their comfort.

But all this fails to go to the root of the matter. The fundamental reason why the wage-earner is so often listless and indifferent to the interests of his employer is precisely because they are his employer's interests, and not his. If our society expects to get loyalty from the wage-earner, it must treat him not as a mere "hand," a seller of labor, but as an integral part of the industrial structure. The fact is that at present most American business is run solely in the interests of owners' profits, with only that degree of regard which is expedient, for the interest of either the public or the workers. "Business prosperity"—which means large profits to the owners—is the scale by which even kindness to employees is measured. The workers, gradually becoming more intelligent and observant, are realizing this more and more keenly, and becoming more resentful and class-conscious.

Take the matter of scarcity of employment. What enthusiasm for his work can a wage-earner have when he knows that he may be discharged at any time at the will of his employer, no matter how faithful or even how efficient his work? A wave of business depression occurs; or the employers in a given industry simply decide to curtail production in order to raise the price of their product. Men are turned off by the score or by the hundred. It is not easy for

them to get other employment. Their families suffer from want. Is it any wonder that they have a low morale? In the words of a recent student of the situation, "If we can devise nothing better than the regulation of industrial relations by commercial principles alone, if we cannot rid ourselves of the preconception that labor is a commodity, to be taken from the market when needed and thrown back when not needed, we may as well prepare ourselves for a period of progressive disintegration of labor efficiency."

As matters stand, the zealous and faithful worker is naturally regarded by his fellows as on the employer's side. He gets through with work quickly which might be made to last longer, and thus increases the risk of future unemployment. Furthermore, he sets a pace which will be demanded of his fellows, compelling them also to use up too soon the available work. This fear of losing their jobs haunts many wage-earners day and night; it is the cause of much of their unrest, and of much of their deliberate slacking. The development of morale requires security of employment for the faithful worker. The problem is a difficult one to solve. But some solution of it better than the present is demanded, not only from humane considerations, but for the building up of an efficient industrial system.

Moreover, underpaid workers can hardly be expected to feel a zest for strenuous production when they see the profits of their energy going into the pockets of their already rich employers. The "scientific management" of efficiency-engineers is silently or openly opposed by laborers because they find the speeding up process inuring chiefly, if not wholly, to the benefit of the stockholders. Conversely, firms

that have increased the wages of their employees have sometimes found their profits greater than ever, through the reduction in labor turnover and the increased good-will and energy of their workers. What constitutes a "fair wage" is, of course, always a moot question. But it can be laid down as an axiom that such a distribution of the national income as we saw in an earlier chapter to prevail at present will not call out anywhere near the maximum of energy from the nation's workers.

Even, however, if wages are generous, it is doubtful if labor will give of its best in the years ahead of us without a greater stake in the enterprises upon which it is engaged. We urge the "free play of initiative" as essential to efficient business. But we give opportunity for such exercise of initiative to a comparative few, in our industrial system. Much more thought and enthusiasm is devoted to work when the workers have a share in the management. To quote a recent acute observer, "The wage incentive and other stimuli, such as profit-sharing, do not make the workers feel fundamentally interested in their tasks. If the full productive capacity which is at this time both consciously and unconsciously withheld from society is ever to be released, labor must participate in the conduct of industry."

This development of democracy in industry should only take place as the workers are educated to understand both their own individual tasks and the wider economic principles that underlie the efficient conduct of business. It must be introduced with caution, step by step, lest a mass of ignorant laborers bring disaster upon a business through their advocacy of mistaken policies. But it is a goal to work toward. The older conception, that an industry belongs ex-

clusively to those who furnish the capital, and may be run precisely as they please, with the workers merely a part of the necessary machinery, must give way to the conception that the workers have an inherent right to responsibilities and power. Undoubtedly, this participation by the wage-earners in the management of our industries, if coupled with proper education and vocational guidance, and sponsored by the labor-unions, could greatly accelerate the development of a scientific technique and result in a great increase in output.

The fact is that the autocratic conduct of industry, like the autocratic control of nations, may be benevolent and efficient, but cannot be trusted to be so. We have many instances of paternalistic benevolence—welfare work, improvement of working conditions, voluntary profit-sharing or distributing of bonuses—that hearten the observer of American business. But on the other hand, we have conspicuous instances such as the steel industry, where, as a distinguished economist has recently put it, “the mass of workers are driven as large numbers of laborers, whether slave or free, have scarcely before in human history been driven.”

It is with such instances in mind that President Wilson, in his First Inaugural, said, “We have been proud of our industrial achievements, but we have not stopped thoughtfully enough to count the human cost, the cost of lives snuffed out, of energies overtaxed and broken, the fearful physical and spiritual cost to the men and women and children upon whom the dead weight and burden of it all has fallen pitilessly the years through.”

Real efficiency is something bigger than financial efficiency; the ability to pay big dividends, or even



to produce at low cost, is only part of the story. Real efficiency is the ratio between the human effort and sacrifice given, and the results in production. To make cheaper goods at the cost of human happiness is not real efficiency. Nor, in the long run, can this kind of financial efficiency last; inhumane methods are bound to generate dissatisfaction and slackness, if not actual sabotage. But unhappily, human nature is shortsighted; and there is likely to be a perpetual tendency on the part of employers to slight the claims of such abstract ideals as Liberty, Equality, and Democracy, in their interest in immediate financial returns. For this evil there seems to be no permanent remedy save some form of democratic control over the power of capital.

After all, "the good will of labor is the most valuable asset in business." It is foolish to expect the utmost from workers when their attitude is one of docile, unthinking obedience, still more foolish when their attitude has become that of resentment and bitterness. In the chaos of plans and suggestions and experiments, we must expect a long period of clashing ideas, with much friction and much loss to production. But in all our musings on the tangled situation, we must never forget that the workers of the country must be fairly treated, treated as self-respecting citizens; more than that, they must, if possible, be led to *feel* that they are fairly treated. For only so can we have a high morale in business; and without a high morale we can have neither happiness nor efficiency.

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## CHAPTER XXIII

### CONSERVATION

PROUD as we Americans are apt to be of our efficiency in business, it is probably safe to say that, by contrast with an ideal mechanism of production and distribution, our existing processes are not more than ten per cent efficient. Few of our industries are much more than at the beginning of the development of their technique. The discoveries and inventions of modern science, the education of human skill, the organization of human effort, open endless vistas of progress before us. Eventually, when every able-bodied citizen works, a far shorter working day should suffice for a satisfaction of human needs far above the present average standard of life. Even now, if we had exercised a wise prudence in the developing of our national estate, we should be far richer than we are.

The inertia of the human mind—even of the American mind—is great. Trade journals and associations are doing a good deal to advertise the more efficient methods; and there is a visible improvement from year to year. But the opposition to a scientific organization of the national industry and commerce, and to the wise conservation of our resources, is more than a stupid conservatism; it comes largely from the deliberate opposition of individuals and groups that profit by the general loss. The fact is that business is run too exclusively to benefit the pocket-books of

the owners, and too little as a public service. Unhappily, the two ends often conflict.

It is doubtful if America has any more important duty than to conserve with a reasonable prudence the natural resources of the continent. Yet we have actually been wasting these resources with criminal prodigality. There has been no intelligent, comprehensive plan for this utilization. The nation's heritage has been allowed, for the most part, to fall into the hands of private owners; and these owners have been chiefly concerned with making immediate profits for themselves rather than with conserving this inheritance for future generations.

Take, for example, the destruction of our forests. There were over 800,000,000 acres of forests in this country when the white men came. Five-sixths of this area has now been cut over, culled, or burned. We are now taking twenty-six billion cubic feet of wood out of our forests annually, and growing only six billion cubic feet to replace what we take. The depletion of the lumber supply has already seriously affected the whole population. Hundreds of thousands of needed homes remain unbuilt because of the high price of lumber. Many industries have been seriously crippled. A report of the United States Forest Service, in August, 1920, contains the following statements: "The timber of the country as a whole is being used and destroyed four times as fast as new timber is growing; and the saw timber, the most valuable and most needed part of the stand, is being cut five and one-half times as fast as it is produced. More than 80,000,000 acres of land that should be growing timber is unproductive waste, much more is only partially productive, and fires are steadily causing further deterioration."

The Forest Service deserves the highest praise for what it has done. But the policy of forest-reservation came too late to save the wanton despoiling of the greater part of our timber-supply. Methods of cutting have been exceedingly wasteful, reforestation has been neglected, and forest fires have been allowed to complete the destruction. Altogether, about ten million acres of forest are devastated annually by fires—a yearly loss of between one and two hundred million dollars' worth of the national wealth. About forty billion feet, board measure, of merchantable lumber are cut annually, and another seventy billion are wasted in the forest and at the mill in getting it! In a comparatively few years more, at this rate, our reserves will be nearly exhausted.

Moreover, an expert has recently estimated that "in the yellow pine belt the values in rosin, turpentine, ethyl alcohol, pine oil, tar, charcoal, and paper-stock lost in the waste are three or four times the value of the lumber produced. Enough yellow-pine pulp-wood is consumed in burners, or left to rot, to make double the total tonnage of paper produced in the United States."

This is what our reckless individualism has brought us to! In Europe, forest-cutting is carefully regulated by the various nations, so that there may be as little waste as possible, and no depletion of the supply. Fortunately, it is never too late to plant forests. There are hundreds of millions of acres of land in our country, not suitable for other purposes, upon which enough timber can be grown to meet our needs. What is wanted is a comprehensive national policy, strict regulation of timber-cutting, and a greatly increased organization for fire-patrol.

Forests can be replaced, in time. But the wasteful

destruction of oil and coal is irremediable. The owners of oil-wells, and the distributors of oil, have made their thousands of millions of dollars; but at a cost to posterity of which we should be deeply ashamed. In the words of an American business man who has studied the situation: "The wastes in our petroleum industry have been shocking and stupendous. Fields are abandoned with from thirty to ninety per cent of the oil still underground; vast areas have been ruined by admitting water into the oil sands; fires take heavy toll. In all, not more than twenty-five per cent of the oil underground reaches the pipe-line, and less than half of that is utilized to the best advantage."

The United States Geological Survey has recently estimated that our natural oil is already more than forty per cent exhausted, and that the native supply is not likely to last more than sixteen years longer. Our natural gas is likewise approaching exhaustion. A billion feet a day have been allowed to escape. An expert has lately told us that we have wasted more natural gas than we have used.

However accurate these estimates may or may not be, it is certain that our oil-supplies, and our supplies of natural gas, will be practically exhausted before many years have passed. The large wastes represent a loss of wealth that can never be replaced. So it is, likewise, with our coal-supplies, which will last longer, but which will be exhausted, at best, within a brief period, as human history goes. Mining-methods are so wasteful that one expert declares that in West Virginia alone "for twenty years the waste has been equivalent to dumping each minute a forty-five ton car of coal into an abyss from which it can never be recovered."



Another student of the situation points out that "as business is now organized it is actually more profitable to waste nearly 50 per cent of the coal that is mined than to preserve it by standardized methods of operation. If this situation persists it is probable that the fuel supply of the country will be entirely exhausted in 100 years. Under the present 'business-like bungling,' approximately 500,000,000 tons of coal are lost per year. The only remedy is a thorough reformation of mining methods by experts in the field, not by operators who see no further than their own immediate interests in profits."

Indeed, a large proportion of the coal that is now transported on the railways ought to be transformed at the collieries into its various derivatives. The processes now available yield for every ton of raw coal up to 1,500 pounds of smokeless, dustless artificial anthracite, together with from 7,000 to 10,000 cubic feet of fuel gas. In addition, valuable by-products are recovered: some twenty or twenty-five pounds of ammonium sulphate, excellent for fertilizer; from one and a half to three gallons of benzol, a substitute for gasoline; about eight gallons of coal tar, from which, as we all know, an endless number of extremely important products are made, including the aniline dyes, perfumes, flavors, drugs, and explosives. The value of these various products is fifteen or twenty times the value of the raw coal from which they were made. The processes by which they are made are well known. But still these potentialities are, for the most part, wasted. Even in the plants where coke and gas are made, the valuable by-products are often lost.

Besides the recovery of these by-products, the plan of splitting up the coal at the mines has other great

advantages. For one thing, the mines could then be operated continuously instead of, as now, with a great seasonal fluctuation. The average coal-mine is idle about one-third of the year now, because of the falling off of demand in the summer and the difficulty of storing great quantities of coal. Some 600,000 men work, on an average, about two hundred days in the year, and are out of work the rest of the time, unless they can find some other job. If the mines were worked continuously, 400,000 men would suffice; they would be steadily employed, and the other 200,000 men released for productive work elsewhere.

Incidentally, the smoke caused by the burning of raw coal would be eliminated, and the damage done by smoke to property and health—estimated at over a billion dollars a year—would be ended. And think how much pleasanter our cities would be to live in, and how much more beautiful, if the smoke were done away with.

Moreover, if the gas produced at the collieries were piped to the nearest cities, and only the smokeless fuel shipped, the number of coal-cars needed could be greatly reduced, and the railways freed from congestion. Of course it is profitable to the railway-owners—who are largely also the mine-owners, or hand in glove with them—to haul these thousands of carloads of raw coal, together with the dirt, slate, and water that the shipments contain, half way across the continent. But it is not economical from the public point of view.

Indeed, a large part even of this hauling of fuel would be done away with if it were to be burned near the collieries for the generation of electric power. Transmission-wires could take this power to the factories at a great ultimate saving of energy. This

same system of transmission would be available for the hydro-electric power which must ultimately, it would seem, take the place of power produced from coal.

We must not blame the coal-operators too severely for their lack of social vision. So long as they can make large profits by existing methods they can hardly be expected to think in terms of the welfare of the public and of future generations. The guiding-star of almost all business is—profits. If a public service is done, well and good. But how many of our business men sacrifice their opportunities for making money out of a disinterested regard for the public good? Some do; and they are greatly to be honored. But in general, the public must look out for itself. The public, of course, is mostly ignorant, and kept in ignorance, of the facts. And all attempts at public regulation of business are vigorously opposed. Disaster is predicted; the evils of democratic interference with private business are eloquently described. Nevertheless, the public must learn how to conserve its interests. Until it does, we shall have not only much profiteering—which is not so serious a matter, after all, since some one gets the wealth—but much actual waste of human effort and of valuable and irreplaceable natural resources.

The growth of democracy in industry will undoubtedly improve matters. Constant pronouncements are being made by organized labor, like that of the twenty-seventh Convention of the United Mine Workers: "The incomparable natural resources of America, particularly those of timber and coal, are being despoiled under a system of production which wastes from thirty-three to fifty per cent of these resources in order that the maximum amount of divi-

dends may accrue to those who have secured ownership of these indispensable commodities. Our coal resources are the birthright of the American people for all time to come; and we hold that it is the immediate duty of the American people to prevent the profligate waste that is taking place under private ownership of these resources."

The older countries cannot, of course, afford to waste natural products as lavishly as we. We have had so much to use that we have not realized that we were squandering our inheritance. But the day of reckoning is drawing near. Our grandchildren will bitterly reprove our selfish shortsightedness. We must, then, find men of vision, experts in their several fields. We must draw up a national plan for the prudent utilization of the resources that remain to us, and insist that private interests subordinate themselves to this plan.

Such a comprehensive plan formed a part of the program of neither of the great political parties at the last election; we have a way, common to all democracies, of getting excited over trivial issues and ignoring the really vital matters. No doubt there are those who exercise their skill in thus diverting public attention, for their own reasons. But if the politicians will not take up this matter, the ear of the public must be reached by other channels, that we may salvage what remains to us of our fast vanishing heritage.

We should, for one thing, greatly accelerate the rate at which our water-power is being developed, in order to save our dwindling supplies of coal. At present less than five per cent of our available water-power is utilized. The total supply is estimated at two hundred million horse-power—enough energy to



do all the present mechanical work of the country, but not enough for all its future needs. There is peat available, there is lignite; but the supply of these is likewise limited. Where future generations will get all the energy they need, and the heat, and the light, no one now can say. All the more reason, then, for making our coal last as long as possible.

A few great corporations have been buying up water-power sites; and there are signs that we may have before very long a gigantic water-power trust, which, when oil and coal are approaching exhaustion, might easily become the dominating power in American industry. For without power nothing can be done. It is of the utmost importance that the nation should keep its water-power under public control, that it may be utilized in the public interest instead of for the benefit of a small group of people.

Parallel with water-power development should go the effort to make our streams navigable, and create a system of connecting canals. Water-borne traffic consumes less than half as much energy as freight carried by rail. If at the same time we improve our highways—only about twelve per cent of our roads are as yet improved by any sort of surfacing—we can save many hundreds of millions of dollars a year. In the face of all this need for work, the continual involuntary unemployment of thousands of men caused by the clumsiness of our industrial system is seen to have not only a personal but a public aspect. We need the labors of these men, at once, and badly.

The term *conservation* may well be stretched to include the conservation of public health and life, and all conservation of human effort. The movements to eliminate preventable accidents, to eradicate the diseases that can be stamped out by concentrated



control, the child-labor movement, the spread of the use of labor-saving devices, the development of scientific management, the diminishing of friction between the members of the industrial mechanism—all this, and much more, might be covered by the term. But these movements we have discussed in other chapters. What we are here specifically concerned with is the prudent use of the raw materials with which nature has so generously endowed us.

The leaders of our national life have not failed to warn us of our extravagance. Roosevelt gave strenuous efforts to make Conservation one of our American ideals. "It is time we should wake up the country," he said in 1910, "to the need of using foresight and common sense as regards our natural resources. We of this generation hold the land in part for the use of the next generation and not exclusively for our own selfish enjoyment."

Gifford Pinchot, former chief forester of the United States, has put the case even more trenchantly: "We are prosperous because our forefathers bequeathed to us a land of marvellous resources. Shall we conserve those resources, and in our turn transmit them, still unexhausted, to our descendants? Unless we do, those who come after us will have to pay the price of misery, degradation and failure for the progress and prosperity of our day. . . . Business prudence and business common-sense indicate as strongly as anything can the absolute necessity of a change in point of view on the part of the people of the United States regarding their natural resources. The way we have been handling them is not good business. Purely on the side of dollars and cents, it is not good business to kill the goose that lays the golden egg—to burn up half our forests, to waste our coal, and to remove

from under the feet of those who are coming after us the opportunity for equal happiness with ourselves."

As this chapter is being revised for the press, the February, 1921, number of the *Atlantic Monthly* appears, with a vigorous article by a chemical engineer of wide experience, who sums up his conclusions as follows: "We need sadly to develop a national common-sense, and to apply it to the spending of our natural resources, which are the basis of our national wealth. More than ever before is the whole world under a heavy responsibility to use its resources wisely; and the major portion of that burden falls upon us who are the most richly endowed of all. . . . We must substitute co-ordinated development by planning for opportunist development designed primarily for the enrichment of the individual."

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## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE COMMON GOOD

THE selfishness and shortsightedness that have shown themselves so flagrantly in the exploitation of our natural resources are to be found in a hundred ways impeding the socially efficient conduct of American business. Money is thrown into ventures that promise quick returns, and withheld from undertakings far more imperative from the public point of view. The bankers, who lend the funds for new enterprises, enlargements of plant, or production for future sale, have it within their power to considerable extent to favor or withhold favor at their discretion. The people as a whole, and their representatives, have little opportunity to decide whether, for example, agriculture or manufacturing or transportation should be aided with credit, whether housing should be encouraged, whether the savings of the American people should be invested in this country or abroad. Yet these are matters that vitally concern the nation as a whole.

Take the matter of housing. For several years we have been in dire need of hundreds of thousands of homes. The building of private houses, apartments, and tenements has fallen far behind the growth in population. The result is a widespread discomfort, much serious inconvenience, and, for the poor, an overcrowding that is undermining the health and the morals of a considerable section of the population.

Yet theatres and garages have been going up in unprecedented numbers; money has poured into foreign investment in a great volume, lured by the low exchange rates; all sorts of socially unnecessary undertakings have been launched. The country is prosperous, but it apparently can not get, under the present management of its savings, the homes it imperatively needs.

Moreover, in the conduct of a given business, the criterion of success has been the amount of profits it has paid to its stockholders, rather than the service it has rendered to the public. Recently an advertising circular of a well-known moving-picture concern stated, with pride, that it had taken in five million dollars in less than three years from an original investment of \$114,000. In other words, movie patrons had been made to pay for their seats enough more than the cost of producing and showing these pictures to pile up this yield to the producers. But this is not social efficiency, it is merely efficiency in making money for a few people by charging unnecessarily high rates to the rest of the people.

So, to take another example, has it been in life-insurance. The companies pay high salaries to their officers and high commissions to their agents, with the result that fifteen per cent cost of doing business has been considered reasonable. The United States government during the war insured four million Americans at an overhead cost of less than two per cent. It is needless to multiply instances. Mr. Roger Babson, the conservative financier, has expressed the point of the matter in the following words: "The dominant thought in our whole industrial machinery is not how we can produce the most, but how we can profit the most."



Individual energy and initiative in business must indeed be encouraged. But the public must find ways to control that energy and initiative in the interests of the common good. The *laissez-faire* policy has shown its insufficiency. It is not merely the selfishness of men that needs checking, it is their honest stupidity, their shortsighted folly. Every year there are many thousands of business failures in this country. These usually involve economic waste and confusion, unemployment, a partial paralysis of the industrial-commercial system, as well as an incalculable amount of anxiety and despair. The great majority of suicides are due to business reverses; and suicides are increasing in this country far faster than the population. It is clear, from every angle, that private business must be far more carefully watched and controlled than heretofore.

It is not that we are fundamentally a selfish people. On the contrary, no people are more generous than we in giving to the needy. The record of our philanthropies astonishes the world. But this is still, for the most part, private altruism; "business is business," still. And it can hardly be otherwise, if it is left free from legal control. For the contagion of profit-making is inevitably irresistible to most participants in the struggle. It is not merely for the money, it is for the pride in success; and success, according to present standards, means large profits. The business man who puts the public service first is in danger of being elbowed out by some less scrupulous rival. How can one employer refuse to use child-labor when his rivals, by using it, are underselling him? Or when the stockholders, whose servant he is, are demanding dividends as large as those his rivals produce? The game of business as it is played



at present is a hard game; and unless one is exceptionally able or favorably situated, one must play it according to the accepted rules. If the results are often socially undesirable, the rules of the game must be altered.

Our fathers were so afraid of governmental tyranny that they wanted the power of the State as slight as possible. But the tyranny of today is not the tyranny of the State, it is the tyranny of money-making business. "Don't deceive yourselves for a moment," President Wilson has written, "as to the power of the great interests which now dominate our development. They are so great that it is almost an open question whether the government of the United States can dominate them or not." In the pioneer days, all were fairly equal in possessions and opportunities; free land was available for every one; the State could leave them to work out their individual salvation. Today our lives have become endlessly interlinked; and the men who hold strategic positions have enormous power over our pocketbooks and our lives. The personal morality of the older preaching must be supplemented by a "social gospel," a doctrine of common responsibility for the common welfare.

President Wilson, even when championing the "new freedom," pointed out that freedom alone is an insufficient ideal. "The individual is caught in a great confused nexus of all sorts of complicated circumstances; and to let him alone is to leave him helpless as against the obstacles with which he has to contend; and therefore, law in our day must come to the assistance of the individual." The weak must be protected against the strong, the scrupulous against the unscrupulous. And nothing but law can accomplish this.

For we must not expect a new social-mindedness to replace the selfishness in men's hearts through the mere preaching of a gospel of repentance. Exhortation will accomplish little, in the face of daily temptation and the sight of others "making their pile." Moreover, it is not right to expect any business man to run the risk of failure—itsself a social loss—through trying to live by a higher code than his fellows observe. No, the more socially-minded conduct of business will come only through the patient construction of a system of guiding and restraining laws. This legislation will not be irksome to the socially-minded, who will see its value, but it will restrain the unscrupulous and the greedy from conduct which tends to lower the standard of practice all along the line.

We must recognize the fact that the capital which is invested in business has come out of the pockets of the people as a whole. For example, the Federal Trade Commission recently pointed out the origin of the capitalization of the meat-packing concerns. One of these concerns has put into its business about fourteen million dollars got from the sale of stocks and bonds, and about a hundred and forty million dollars gathered from the profits on sales. This is the public's share of the investment—about ninety per cent. Add to this the fact that the site-value of their plant has increased enormously owing to the growth in population, and we must realize that most of this property, though legally and legitimately theirs, has been contributed by the public, and must, therefore, be administered in the public interest.

Most business men themselves, if they are educated to realize the social harmfulness of certain practices, will vote for laws to prohibit them, although if there

is no law they will not refrain therefrom. This is partly because the law will restrict the other fellow too; and the harmfulness of his practices is more apparent to us than that of our own. But it is also because each of us has two selves; and the more public-minded self, which votes, is often willing to erect barriers to restrain the more individualistic self which the stress of business fosters. Such barriers to selfishness, when imposed not by an autocratic government upon its subjects but by free men upon themselves, are absolutely necessary steps in social progress. By this blocking of the pathways to anti-social activity, many a man whose impulses would have seized upon opportunities for exploitation will find perforce other channels for his activity that will lead him into a more useful and actually happier life.

The cry of "hands off" is raised, to be sure, by many business men; and not wholly for selfish reasons. They remind us of our national ideal of Liberty, and point to the proud record of our individualistic tradition. But they forget that the ideal of Liberty exists to protect the weak, and must not be used to justify the strong in so acting as to impair the common good. Liberty means the right not to be exploited, not the right to exploit others. And individualism must mean the right of every citizen to have his share in determining what is for the public good, not the right of a single class of people to run the country's business in their private interest.

From another angle, individualism is seen to be always a half-truth; our great achievements have been accomplished quite as truly through our power of organization and mutual adjustment as through our high degree of individual energy. What is needed now

is to increase the span of organization and mutual adjustment until it includes the whole nation, instead of leaving it a mere organization of business men for purely private ends.

True, legislation has often been ill-considered and blundering. Resentment at the selfishness of many of the trusts has crystallized in laws which have sometimes needlessly hampered the organization and efficiency of industry. Loosely-devised statutes, construed this way and that by different judges, have given opportunity for subterfuge and chicanery. Nevertheless, the work must go on. If laws are harmful, they must be improved. Ways must be found to encourage industrial progress while restricting unscrupulous and anti-social practices—whatever is obviously unfair to business rivals, to employees, or to the public. It is inevitable that the devising of the new controls over industry should be experimental and sometimes unfortunate in their results. Political democracy will require perhaps centuries yet to grope its way toward the best attainable forms of public control. But the only way out is through. And opposition to the great movement only creates friction and retards its achievement.

The principle of public control in the interest of the common good extends, of course, far beyond the field of industry, though that is its most important sphere of application. We have recently seen the successful consummation of the Prohibition Movement, which has interfered with the personal habits of millions. There can be no doubt in the mind of anyone who has studied the physiological and psychological effects of alcohol that our people are vastly better off, and on the whole and in the end far happier, to do without that narcotic. This voluntary self-abnegation on the part of



a great nation is almost unexampled in history, and an event of which we may well be proud. There is no more reason to declaim against the prohibition of alcohol than against the prohibition of the opium and cocaine derivatives. Any drug that seriously undermines the health and efficiency of our people must be banished as rigidly as possible, however pleasant its use may be to many.

But the precedent established by the Eighteenth Amendment has its dangerous side. The majority—even the sweeping majorities needed to pass an amendment to the Constitution—should beware of interfering more than is absolutely necessary with the personal morals of individuals. For not only does such interference awaken resentment and excite against itself the passion for liberty, but there is also the danger of ignoring individual needs, repressing desirable variations in conduct, and producing a stereotyped and conventional conformity instead of the variety of experiments and variations which is the fertile seed-bed of progress. In general, it may be said that in the spheres wherein success and happiness depend largely upon organization and mutual adaptation, as notably in industry, a great deal of restriction upon individual rights is necessary; whereas in the field of personal habits and morals, religious beliefs and worship, artistic activity, and intellectual research and discussion, only the practices universally recognized as vicious, or shown by scientific investigation to be seriously harmful, should be forbidden.

The problem of individualism vs. social control is an intricate one, to which no glib solution is possible. Every case must be decided upon its merits. In some cases the joys and potentialities of unrestricted



liberty are more precious, in other cases the public need must weigh the heavier in the balance. Hitherto, in America, we have worshipped individualism, and—according to the judgment of nearly all foreign observers—lacked “statemindedness,” the willingness to subordinate ourselves to the general welfare. But the Great War, with its conscription of men and money, and its steam-rolling of minority opinions, revealed a hitherto unrealized willingness to exercise compulsion in what the overwhelming majority deems the public interest. That this new sense of the moral and legal precedence of public over private interests may be used for good rather than unfortunate ends needs our utmost vigilance.

Washington, in a letter to the Constitutional Convention, pointed out that “individuals entering into society must give up a share of liberty to preserve the rest.” To learn to subordinate sectional to national interests has taken us many years; the lesson was driven home by the crushing defeat of the Secession movement, but it has not yet been thoroughly learned. Bills are constantly introduced into Congress that favor one section of the country at the expense of the country as a whole. Projects of obvious benefit to the nation are blocked because of the opposition of certain States or cities that fear the diversion of their trade or the diminution of their prestige. We still lack such a sense of solidarity as would ensure us against this geographical selfishness.

A century or so ago the several States were practically self-sufficing; comparatively few undertakings crossed their boundaries. Now State lines mean almost nothing. Our railways, telegraphs, telephones, have bound us together in one industrial and political unit. It remains for us to work out a

greater harmony between State laws. As it is, to quote a recent writer, "In one State you may do business for which in another State you would go to jail; in one you may be married and crazy, in another single and sane." This variety in codes is of great educative value; but in the cases mentioned, and in other respects, it is high time for us to seek a greater national uniformity. The American of today seldom thinks of himself as first a citizen of New York, or Illinois; he is first and foremost a citizen of the United States, and only secondarily a citizen of the particular State in which he happens to reside. It is an anomaly, then, that the disparities in State laws should ever produce such confusion and injustice as that to which the sentence above quoted alludes.

Geographical sectionalism is probably waning. But we must beware lest a class or occupational sectionalism take its place. There are powerful divisive forces at work. The development of Big Business has pushed the employer class and the wage-earners farther apart; they live differently, have different interests, read different newspapers, think differently, and perhaps in an increasing degree fail to understand one another and to work together as complementary elements in one harmonious industrial scheme.

Thus America, at first so homogeneous in her social order, now faces the old-world problem of class-stratification. Fifth Avenue is far from Second Avenue, Beacon Street from the North End. If this nation ever loses its unity it will be through a horizontal split between the property-owning classes and propertyless labor. To avert such a calamity must be our constant aim and prayer. We should remember Roosevelt's solemn words: "Other republics have

failed because the citizens gradually grew to consider the interests of the class against the whole; for, when such was the case, it mattered not whether the poor plundered the rich or the rich exploited the poor; in either case the end of the republic was at hand. We are resolute not to fall into such a pit. This great Republic of ours shall never become the government of a plutocracy and it shall never become the government of a mob."

The way of our duty lies clearly in cultivating the sense of common American ideals as transcending the interests of group or class. Party loyalty must cease to be blind or selfish; it must be a matter of temporary union to achieve some definite political ends seriously believed to be for the general good. Special interests must cease to use their wealth and power to defeat measures that will make for the public welfare. The conscious aim of both parties to the industrial struggle must be to work out an industrial system both just and efficient. Or—since it is Utopian to expect such a voluntarily maintained wide-spread subordination of private and group interests—the public must watch its component groups, and by a series of carefully devised checks and restraints, reduce to a minimum their power to thwart the common good.

Finally, in all sorts of positive ways, the people, through their legislators, must forward the general happiness. We already provide parks and playgrounds, hospitals and asylums, public schools and universities, libraries and museums, and many other privileges, freely to every American citizen. All sorts of other public benefits are being discussed—health and old age insurance, maternity benefits, public employment for the unemployed, and the like. Each of

these projects must be accepted or rejected on its particular merits. But we have definitely abandoned the conception that the function of government is purely negative, to prevent wrongdoing. Our government is the American people using its sovereign power to forward in every possible way the common good. The record of what our government already does for us is an inspiring one; and doubtless the future will see its beneficent activity extended in many directions. May its aim ever be, not sectional advantage, not class control, not the advancement of special interests, but the good of the American people as a whole!

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**PART FIVE**  
**PATRIOTISM**





## CHAPTER XXV

### AMERICA FIRST

WASHINGTON, in his Farewell Address, said to his countrymen: "Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections."

The American of today yields to no one in patriotism; certainly we make more noise about it than any other nation! The fact that we are a composite people, gathered here from many lands with mutually hostile traditions, has not worked to make us less united, or less loyal to this country of our birth or adoption. On the contrary, there is actually, beyond doubt, a greater spiritual homogeneity here than in most of those older lands. It is not common ancestry that makes national unity, it is common ideals, and common hopes. The Great War showed that men of all racial stocks were equally eager to give their money, their labor, and their lives to the national service. There are varying degrees of sympathy for, or hostility toward, the several nations of the old world; but for us all it is "America first."

There is, indeed, in some quarters, a distrust of this patriotic sentiment. Here and there a band of "internationalists" disavow it. A small group of pacifists, among them men of the highest motives, and a few leaders of distinction, speak of the nationalistic emotion as a primitive and dangerous passion, to be superseded by the boundaryless brotherhood of man.

And we must all recognize the force of their arguments. Patriotism often functions as a collective selfishness, more disastrous by far than individual selfishness. It easily degenerates into chauvinism, or, as we call it, jingoism, inspiring men with the lust of conquest, provoking jealousy and hatred of other nations, impeding the unification of mankind. If it were not for patriotism, it would be impossible to get the peoples to go to war with one another. And when we see the suffering and the ruin that war has brought to man, we may well ask if the value of patriotism can counterbalance this harm.

Even when patriotism is not truculent it is—speaking in nationalistic terms—self-centered. It tends to ignore the achievements, to dislike the manners and morals of other peoples. It thinks of them as “foreigners,” that is, as being essentially different from us, and prefers to believe that everything we do is better than what they do, that every opinion we hold is truer than theirs. Thus it tends to be provincial, to erect barriers that impede the free exchange of ideas and ideals, and to deprive each nation, to some extent, of what the other nations could contribute to its development.

When patriotism goes even farther in this direction and becomes “spread-eagleism,” it is insufferable. The boastful American, bragging endlessly of his country’s prosperity and power, curling his lips patronizingly at the lower buildings or slower trains or less comfortable hotels of some foreign land, and making it plain that he will be thankful to get back to “God’s own country,” brings us into serious disrepute. As a matter of fact, while our civilization is in some respects superior to that of most other countries, it is in other respects inferior; we have much

to learn as well as much to teach. And the complacent self-satisfaction of the unmannerly tourist is one of the developments of our national life of which we have least reason to be proud.

Even worse is the bigotry that, parading under the cloak of patriotism, seeks to stamp out all criticism of our contemporary institutions or of the policies of the party in power, on the ground that such criticism is "unpatriotic." During a time of war this intolerance of minority opinions is less inexcusable; the successful prosecution of the war may require a temporary willingness to submerge differences and unite on the policy that approves itself to the majority. But even then, the suppression of criticism is highly dangerous. Administrations commit serious blunders for the lack of the light that such criticism might have shed. And since even a democracy may be led into an unrighteous or inexpedient war, the right to discuss the whole matter with perfect freedom is of the utmost importance. It takes courage to maintain unpopular opinions, it takes individuality to think up new ideas; such courage and individuality are among our best assets, and should be encouraged rather than repressed. We are far too apt to swing with the tide, to be carried off our feet by a wave of popular feeling, or to stick in the rut of unthinking habit. Men who differ from the majority by no means always do so from selfish or traitorous motives; on the contrary, they may be actuated by ideals far higher than those of their persecutors.

Mr. Gilbert Chesterton recently wrote, "I have passed the great part of my life in criticizing and condemning the existing rulers and institutions of my country: I think it is infinitely the most patriotic thing that a man can do." The real anti-patriots

are not the critics and would-be reformers of our institutions, not those who hold unpopular views or oppose contemporary policies, but rather the ill-mannered and truculent, who give us a bad name among neighboring peoples or inflame our feelings against them; the advocates of "national expansion," who would have us trample on the rights of other nations to increase our own power and prosperity; the idle and frivolous, who fail to contribute their share to the nation's work; the profiteers, who think in terms of their own pocket-books instead of in terms of public service; the groups that put sectional or class interests above the national interest and think in terms of group-loyalty rather than in terms of the common good.

Professor J. M. Mecklin, in a recent volume, points out that the American "is patriotic. But the state that elicits his patriotism is a hazy idealistic entity that bears about the same relation to actual politics that the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount does to the 'rules of the game' in business. These shadowy ideals find expression at Fourth of July celebrations, or are evoked by the name of Lincoln or the sight of the flag. Seldom do they provide moral dynamic in dealing with the problems of the immediate political situation."

There is no doubt that as a people we are lacking, as Mr. Wells and many other observers have pointed out, in "state-mindedness." The complacency with which we have allowed politics to become the happy hunting-ground of self-seeking politicians, or with which we have allowed our precious natural resources to be recklessly wasted, are examples of this ineffectiveness of our patriotic emotions. Our patriotism has been too largely oratorical, a pride in what our



fathers did, rather than a concrete impulse to make sacrifices ourselves for our country. Our young men are, indeed, ready to die for their country, ready to serve her unselfishly in time of war. But in the ordinary times of peace there seems to be too often a hiatus between their sentiment of patriotism and the duties and sacrifices to which it should lead them.

The fact is, that patriotism, like religion and love and every other great passion, is capable of great good and of great harm. Edith Cavell, as she went to her death, uttered four words which many people have declared the greatest saying of the war—"Patriotism is not enough." The critics of patriotism are right, with reference to the wrong kind of patriotism, the kind that is nothing but a larger egotism, a bias of the emotions and the judgment, an intolerant bigotry, a latent hostility to other peoples, or a ruthlessness in attaining national ends. But on the other hand, at its best it is one of the noblest sentiments, and far too valuable a motive force to be allowed to wane.

Just in itself, as a joy and addition to life, it is worth much to us. Edward Everett Hale's familiar story, "The Man Without a Country," drives home this truth. We have many beautiful mountains and seas, rivers, lakes, cities, and park-like countrysides; we may well be passionately attached to the land and sing with genuine emotion "I love thy rocks and rills, thy woods and templed hills." We have splendid public buildings, noble works of art and literature. We have a roll-call of heroes of which we may be deeply proud. We have traditions of high idealism which should be a stimulus to the apathetic and a rebuke to the selfish. To glory in all this is our right and our high privilege.

What a pity then, that we Americans should often seem to glory above all else in our prosperity and wealth, our mere size and power! It is not particularly to our credit that our ancestors found an empty and unexploited continent awaiting them, or that this abundance of free land and rich natural resources has made us richer than the older, crowded nations. Nor is it particularly to our merit that we have been able to keep relatively free from wars, with the oceans protecting us on either side. The question is rather, What have we done with this lavish wealth, this unexampled opportunity? Are we building therewith a beautiful, brotherly, happy civilization? We have much of which to be ashamed. Pride is legitimate, and desirable; but it should be discriminating, evoked by what is really deserving of pride, and coupled with a genuine humility as we consider our faults and face the unformed future.

Above all, we must make our patriotism "not the will to power but the will to serve." We should be proud to be honorable, generous, and conciliatory. We should desire for our country not its enrichment or power at the expense of other peoples, but such achievements as will redound to our common advantage. Our rivalry should be a rivalry in service. In the words of Mr. Stuart Sherman, "the new type of patriot no longer cries 'My country against the world!' but 'My country for the world!'"

Roosevelt did much to awaken this higher form of patriotism. "So far," he once wrote, "from patriotism being inconsistent with a proper regard for the rights of other nations, I hold that the true patriot, who is as jealous of the national honor as a gentleman of his own honor, will be careful to see that the nation neither inflicts nor suffers wrong, just as a gentleman

scorns equally to wrong others or to suffer others to wrong him." And again, "True patriotism carries with it not hostility to other nations, but a quickened sense of responsible good-will towards other nations."

Admiral Decatur is reported to have said, in words that have become famous, "Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she be always in the right; but our country, right or wrong!" In a very real sense we can all say Amen! to these words. Whatever wrongs our country may commit, she is still our country, and we shall love and serve her with undiminished ardor. But if these words mean that we should back an iniquitous policy, if our officials should be led into it, or even if a temporary popular majority should approve it, they are sinister words, deserving the sternest rebuke. Precisely the most patriotic service, on such an occasion, would consist in opposing to the last ditch the act that in our opinion would stain the national honor. Our country, right or wrong, yes; but if our country seems to you or to me to be, in any instance, in the wrong, it is our sacred duty not to connive at her wrongdoing, but to use whatever infinitesimal influence we may have in the effort to turn her back to the right, that her record may be untarnished and her name held in high honor among nations.

It is an old fallacy that a nation's honor requires it to be touchy and quick to resentment, that the way for it to be great is through making itself feared. It should be the pride of America that in spite of her great strength she is not feared but loved. It should be our boast that in our dealings with other countries we are always generous, always considerate of their interests as well as of our own; that we practice no secret intrigues, seek to get the advantage of no one,

but do unto other nations as we would have them do unto us. If this reputation were everywhere to be ours, how proud we should be to be Americans!

On the whole, as compared with the world's long history of international intrigue and chicanery, our record is excellent. Secretary Hay stated our policy as follows: "The principles which have guided us have been of limpid simplicity . . . We have set no traps; we have wasted no time in evading the imaginary traps of others . . . There might be worse reputations for a country to acquire than that of always speaking the truth, and always expecting it from others. In bargaining we have tried not to get the worst of the deal, always remembering however, that the best bargains are those that satisfy both sides . . . Let us hope we may never be big enough to outgrow our conscience."

This statement, by one of our greatest Secretaries of State, of his working ideal, carries out the admonition of Washington: "Our politics must have for its basis the purest principles of private morality; and the same virtues which commend the good man to the esteem of his fellows must commend our republic to the esteem of the world." President Wilson voiced this same ideal in an address to Congress, when he said, "We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among individual citizens of civilized states."

Magnanimity and absence of rancor, courtesy toward our neighbors, a readiness to listen to what other peoples have to say, and a serious effort to understand them and adjust our needs to theirs, have distinguished the greatest Americans, and made



them not only national heroes but men whom all the world delights to honor. But the path is not easy to tread; and we must be constantly on our guard lest we lapse from this high ideal. It is easy to see the moths in our neighbors' eyes; their traditions and problems are not ours, and we can readily persuade ourselves that we should have been juster, more disinterested, more generous, in such and such a case, than they. It would better behoove us to listen with open minds to the criticisms of our own conduct on the part of these others. For abstract ideals easily go by the board in the face of concrete exigencies; and to see ourselves as others see us is a salutary discipline.

In a word, it is not more patriotism quantitatively that we need, but a higher quality of patriotism; not the sort of patriotism that has a chip on its shoulder, but the sort that seeks to make our nation first in justice, honor, and international service. And even more imperatively, the sort of patriotism that will make us conscious of our national solidarity, and glad to sacrifice our personal interests to the greatest welfare of our people as a whole. "America first" should mean precisely that;—the welfare of our country before our personal advantage. In the words of Mr. Elihu Root, "True love of country means a little different feeling toward every American because he is an American. It means a desire that every American shall be prosperous; it means kindly consideration for his opinions, for his views, for his interests, for his prejudices, and charity for his follies and his errors."

This sort of patriotism will not develop unaided, from Fourth of July celebrations and salutations of the flag. It must be carefully fostered, by systematic



and skillful training. It requires the vigilance of every high-minded citizen to keep it from lapsing into its more primitive forms. But if it can be developed in masses of our countrymen into the noble passion that it has been in our greatest leaders, it will be a dynamic of incalculable power and beneficence.

“Out of a land of comfort and of ease,  
 Holding for conscience' sake the world well lost,  
 Our dauntless fathers dared the winter seas,  
 The savage arrow, and the hungry frost,  
 Knowing the danger, counting well the cost.  
 The legend of their courage we recall—  
 We thrill with pride to know that in our veins  
 The glow of that heroic blood remains.  
 We thrill—and that is all.

“We pile our heroes' cairns, each year a stone;  
 It is our joy the starry flag to wave  
 For those who died for freedom of our own  
 And those who died for freedom of the slave.  
 Laying our laurel on each patriot's grave,  
 Proudly we tell of liberty's great price  
 And echo with a glibness undismayed  
 Words bled from the deep hearts of those who paid.  
 Shall not their blood suffice?

“We who have grown so perfect in the word,  
 Where is the holy lightning of the deed?  
 We of the facile heart so quickly stirred  
 And soothed with dreams ere it has time to bleed,  
 Vainly we call ourselves the Pilgrim seed—  
 Where is the Pilgrim soul that braved the sea  
 For a pure conscience? God awake the men  
 Of power to make America again  
 A country of the free!”

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## CHAPTER XXVI

### PEACEABLENESS

A PATRIOTIC people need not be militant; and in spite of the half dozen wars that we have waged during the brief span of our national life, we are a peace-loving folk. We have tried to observe Washington's injunction to "observe good faith and justice toward all nations," and to live in relations of mutual esteem and good will with the rest of the world.

We cannot control the spirit of other nations. But to no small extent, their attitude toward us will be determined by our attitude toward them. Emerson thus expressed the fearlessness with which a peace-loving people faces the future: "Whenever we see the doctrine of peace embraced by a nation, we may be assured that it will not be one that invites injury; but one, on the contrary, which has a friend in the bottom of the heart of every man, even of the violent and the base; one against which no weapon can prosper; one which is looked upon as the asylum of the human race and has the tears and the blessings of mankind."

Our hatred of war results from no lack of daring or ambition. On the contrary, our people have sprung from the more adventurous and hardy of the Old World, who had the courage and persistence to cross the ocean and make a new life for themselves in a far-away land. When we have had to face war we have fought as fiercely and as fearlessly as any. But our

composite origin, our distance from the ancient feuds of Europe, and the relative security afforded by our isolation, have given us a calmer outlook and enabled us to see war for the horror that it is. It was our General Sherman whose dictum "War is hell" has become so famous. And the boys who made such a gallant record for America on the fields of France have for the most part come home resolved that if they can help it, no such horror shall recur.

But the American spirit is not that of non-resistance to evil. We were very reluctant, as a people, to enter the Great War; but the day came when it seemed a worse evil to stay out than to go in. There are wrongs so intolerable that even the horrors of war are to be preferred. And we must face the fact that such a situation *may*, possibly, arise again. If an aggressive military imperialism again seeks to enslave a weaker country, to seize its territory, crush its peoples' spirit, and plunder its resources for its own aggrandizement, and if no other way than war seems open to prevent that black and cruel tyranny, then war there must be again. Better that millions should die on the field, better that civilization should perish, if need be, than that such injustice should be done. So speaks the traditional American spirit.

America's passion for justice has been voiced by no one more eloquently than by Roosevelt. "Peace is not the end," he declared, "Righteousness is the end . . . It is a wicked thing to be neutral between right and wrong." "The chief trouble comes from the entire inability of these worthy people to understand that they are demanding things that are mutually incompatible when they demand peace at any price and also justice and righteousness." "The golden hopes of mankind can be realized only by men who have iron

in their blood; by men who scorn to do wrong and equally scorn to submit to wrong; by men of gentle souls whose hearts are harder than steel in their readiness to war against brutality and evil." "The only peace of permanent value is the peace of righteousness."

The trouble with the peace-at-any-price attitude is, that if there is any people bent on ruthless aggression, it plays into their hands. This was what Roosevelt saw so clearly. "The existence of soft timidity in one nation puts a premium upon brutality in another." "The ultra-pacifists have exerted practically no influence in restraining wrong, although they have sometimes had a real and lamentable influence in crippling the forces of right and preventing them from dealing with wrong."

It is unhappily true that the highest ends can sometimes be attained only by the most tragic means. Many of the goods that we value most have been won only through the willingness of our fathers to fight for them. In the words of another American of incisive thought and speech, Professor A. O. Lovejoy of Johns Hopkins, "That youths should be sent out armed to kill or maim other youths is an unspeakably abominable thing; but it is yet more abominable that through horror at this evil, the lovers of peace should become the silent partners of those that make and would perpetuate war, and that our youth should be bred to sit by with folded hands while others are made the victims of lawless violence."

Our participation in the Great War was directed by such motives. The question before us was, should we allow these unoffending peoples to be enslaved and dominated, against their passionate protest, by an ambitious and ruthless nation? Their youths were



dying by the million to preserve their liberties; could we sit by and see their sacrifice vain? President Wilson voiced the mind of our people in his reply to the Pope, August 29, 1917: "The object of this war is to deliver the free peoples of the world from the menace and the actual power of a vast military establishment controlled by an irresponsible government, which, having secretly planned to dominate the world, proceeded to carry the plan out without regard either to the sacred obligations of treaty or the long established practices and long cherished principles of international action and honor; which chose its own time for the war; delivered its blow fiercely and suddenly; stopped at no barrier, either of law or of mercy, swept a whole continent within the tide of blood—not the blood of soldiers only, but the blood of innocent women and children also, and of the helpless poor—and now stands balked but not defeated, the enemy of four-fifths of the world."

President Wilson delayed long our entrance into the war. "Never shall I forget," he wrote, "that the sword is not to be drawn until the last moment, to defend public liberties, and that it is to be returned to the scabbard at the first moment when those liberties are safe." "The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our motives as a nation. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge, or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right . . . we have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the cham-

pions of the rights of mankind; we shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as faith and the freedom of nations can make them . . . The day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other."

Four years earlier, when a clamor rose among the hot-tempered for intervention in Mexico, Mr. Wilson had shown the same spirit of generosity and moderation. "Impatience on our part would be childish, and would be fraught with every risk of wrong and folly . . . We can afford to exercise the self-restraint of a really great nation which realizes its own strength and scorns to misuse it."

This declaration of national policy should be put side by side with Washington's "I have always thought that no nation should meddle with the international affairs of another nation." And with President Harrison's "In no case do we desire territorial possessions which do not directly form one body with our national domain; and we nowhere desire a domain acquired by criminal aggression."

These sentiments have been repeated over and over again by our statesmen, and express the true spirit of Americanism. But it is wise to repeat them often, since there are not wanting jingoes in our midst, and those who would gladly find profit or prestige in another people's humiliation. Certain newspaper owners have been persistently trying to inflame our fears and our resentment toward other nations. And not a few citizens of the nations to the south of us suspect us of imperialistic designs. Our interventions in Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Nicaragua, our acquisition of Porto Rico and the Canal Zone, may easily seem to

be the first steps in an attempt to extend our sway over the relatively feeble nations below our borders. And we must confess that our diplomacy has not always been such as to remove these fears. A South American of eminence is reported to have said recently, "To live on the shady side of the big stick is not pleasant."

It is unfortunate that the Monroe Doctrine, intended for the protection of our weaker neighbors, should have come to be construed in some quarters as an attempt to dominate them. President Monroe's words were "The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers." They were intended as a warning to the world that we should not allow any further permanent occupation of territory or acquisition of political control in the American hemisphere by a non-American power.

Now that some of the South American peoples have become stable in their government, and powerful nations, it would be courteous to cease talking of ourselves as the guardian of their liberties, and to consider the Monroe doctrine as upheld by the united will and might of the peoples of North and South America. In Mr. Wilson's address to the Pan-American Conference, he declared that there is in it "no claim of guardianship or thought of wards, but instead, a full and honorable association as of partners between ourselves and our neighbors, in the interest of all America north and south . . . All the governments of America stand, as far as we are concerned, upon a feeling of genuine equality and unquestioned independence."

The Monroe doctrine is, after all, nothing but a special application of the principle of the self-determination of nations, for the sake of which we fought in the Great War. Indeed, Mr. Wilson has proposed "that the nations should with one accord adopt the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world; that no nation should seek to extend its policy over any other nation or people, but that every people should be left free to determine its own policy, its own way of development, unhindered, unthreatened, unafraid, the little along with the great and powerful."

Nothing is of more vital moment than that we should convince the world of our pacific intentions, our absolute determination to infringe on the rights and liberties of no other people, together with an equal determination to stand with the other moral forces in the world in opposing such aggression on the part of any other nation. While maintaining a reasonable preparedness for possible emergencies, we must avoid belying our pacific declarations by seeking to outbuild the navies of other nations or by maintaining a large standing army. As we are the strongest and securest among the nations, it is our plain duty to lead the way toward disarmament. Happily we are so situated that we can avoid the creation of a great military establishment—which, as Washington warned his countrymen, is always "inauspicious to liberty, and particularly hostile to republican liberty."

The common sense of the American people refuses to believe that the war of man against man is a necessary evil, ineradicable from human life. We confidently look forward to the time of man's coming of age, when he shall lay aside his foolish passions, his



insensate will to destroy, and learn to put all his energy and his devotion into the great common war against nature. That this time may come quickly, we must keep before our people the remembrance of the horror and the wickedness of war—not to belittle the heroism of our forefathers, or of the youth of today, but to remind ourselves that such terrible sacrifices must not again be necessary, that a better way must be found to maintain justice among men.

The Great War took the lives of some eight million men in battle, and was directly or indirectly responsible, according to the Danish Bureau of Statistics, for at least forty million deaths. We, to be sure, because of our tardy entrance, lost but one in two hundred of our young men. But England lost one in four, and France one in three. The great increase in the prevalence of many diseases will take many years to offset. The influenza epidemic, due to the war, killed its millions—very largely the young and strong; tuberculosis has a new hold all over Europe; syphilis has been widely spread; famine and pestilence are not yet under control. In the third year after the Armistice, millions of people are close to starvation; many of these must still succumb.

The suffering of this war touched our people but lightly. But it has come close enough to us to teach us its lesson. The horrors of the trenches; the heart-break of wives, sweethearts, and mothers; the miseries of the inhabitants of occupied territory—property plundered, homes destroyed, women violated, whole sections of the population deported; the terror on land from the air, the terror at sea from the submarine; the constant strain, the lack of food—it is a wonder that any human beings remained sane after the ordeal.



The lesson should be seared into us. For if another great war comes it is likely to be far worse than this. The potentialities of destructiveness in high explosives have been but half revealed. Whole cities could be wiped out in a night by bombs from a fleet of giant airplanes. Submarine warfare is capable of indefinite expansion. Already many new poison gases have been discovered; and, in spite of international agreements, any big war will almost certainly make greater use of this type of weapon. Tank warfare, warfare by means of poisons and disease-germs—with the experience of this war to build on, we should find another great war far more terrible and involving more and more completely the entire population.

Materially, Europe has thrown away the progress of a generation. Scores of thousands of towns and villages have been wiped out of existence, fruit-trees and shade-trees have been cut down over great areas, the soil has been so torn up and buried under the sub-soil as to be in some places irrecoverable. The enormous waste of the world's none too large supplies of oil, coal, copper, platinum, and many other natural resources, is a permanent loss to mankind. Much of the machinery of the world is badly worn, railways are in poor shape, tools and raw materials are everywhere lacking. In addition to this loss of capital, the warring nations have incurred two hundred billion dollars' worth of debts which it will take generations of toil to pay off, if indeed they can ever be paid.

Even we, who got, relatively speaking, but a taste of the war, have found the cost of living practically doubled for the time being. And our expenditures for war, past and prospective, will continue to eat up far the greater part of our revenue. According to a report of the United States Bureau of Standards

for the year ending June 30, 1920, the national expenditure for that year was divided as follows: 1 per cent for public welfare, including agriculture, development of natural resources, education, public health, and labor; 3 per cent for public works; 3.2 per cent for the administration of the government; 92.8 per cent for war and the maintenance of the military establishment.

Moreover, the loss is not merely material, it is moral. There comes, to be sure, a wave of patriotism and courage, of fortitude and national solidarity, that for the time being makes war seem a moral blessing. But with the relaxing of the strain there follows the inevitable moral exhaustion, a tired acquiescence in selfishness and graft, a wave of restlessness and crime, a great increase in license of all sorts, prodigal expenditure, wild frivolity, and sensuality. Cruelty, callousness to suffering, and contempt of life are, of course, from the first engendered, as well as the spirit of animosity toward the nation's enemies; and these linger long after peace is signed. We have been sad witnesses in this country to the prevalence of prejudice and hatred, directed not only toward our enemies, but toward those who have differed from the majority in their views. Minority opinion has been persecuted, and intellectual dishonesty has been fostered. It will take us as a people some time yet to quite recover from the distorting effect of the war-passions, and see many matters in their true perspective.

Finally, every war turns men's energies away from the other problems that cry to be solved, diverts their enthusiasms from the undertakings of peace and the reforms that are needed. We have to pay for the hatred stirred up against the enemy nation by a

relative cessation of hatred against the evils in our own body politic. The enemies of reform know this; many wars have been made, and many more urged, in order to distract attention from social or political reforms that seemed imminent. War is always the occasion for the accentuation of abuses for which the disengaged vigilance of peace would not have allowed so free a field.

So we shall refuse to believe that wars must yet be. We shall put all our weight on the side of a generous friendliness and mutual helpfulness between the peoples of the earth. We shall sternly repress the voices and the acts of those who seek to embroil us with any of these peoples, and vigilantly endeavor to refrain from any policy that would tend to arouse suspicion or fear among our neighbors. We shall follow William James's suggestion and find substitutes for war to engage the energies of our youth, in outdoor sports and achievements, in the adventures of a fully democratized politics and industry, and in the long campaign against privilege, inefficiency, graft, and all forms of private and collective selfishness.

This greatest of all wars needs to enlist us all. And the same spirit that led Nathan Hale to regret that he had only one life to give to his country, the spirit that would make twenty million men leap to arms if our fair land were invaded, must be kindled during the long, drab years of peace, for the routing out from our national life of all that is not worthy of the long line of heroes whom we honor, who paid the ultimate price, that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, should not perish from the earth.

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## CHAPTER XXVII

### HANDS ACROSS THE SEAS

PEACEABLENESS is not enough. If the world is to be saved from a recurrence of the tragedy of 1914, it will be by more than a passive pacificism on our part. We must learn how to co-operate with the other great nations in the building up of a common world-wide civilization and the removing of the causes that have hitherto made human history one long record of wars. Just now we are conscious that we want no more war and intend to have no more war. But we remember that in less than a century and a half we have fought six wars. We are not likely to escape future situations as acute. If we seriously mean to root out this intolerable, fratricidal way of settling disputes, *we must do something about it*. And we must set about doing it now, before the critical situation arises. We have been a leader in peace-propaganda; that proved in the event, to be of no value in averting war. It is now our opportunity and privilege to take a leading part in the construction of a world-order that shall put an end forever to the settlement of disputes by the ordeal of battle.

In the early days of our national life it was wise for us to remain aloof from the conflicts that perpetually ravaged Europe. We were young and weak, groping our way toward a new form of society, and separated by a long and dangerous voyage from the old world. We had little intercourse with Europe,



her problems were not ours; and we could best serve the world by concentrating our thought and energy upon our own difficult experiment in self-government. Washington and Jefferson were right, then, in counselling their fellow-countrymen to keep clear of European feuds, and to make no "entangling alliances" that might drag us into war. Thus Lord Bryce was able to write of us, in *The American Commonwealth*, "America has lived in a world of her own. Safe from attack, safe even from menace, she hears from afar the warring cries of European races and faiths, as the gods of Epicurus listened to the murmurs of the unhappy earth spread out beneath their golden dwellings."

But the times have changed. The lesson of 1917 has taught us that we can not remain isolated any longer from the rest of the world, if we would. We have an enormous interchange of commodities, of letters and travellers, of investments, with Europe. We are now full-grown. Our experiment has succeeded. One by one the European nations have adopted our democratic ideals, until now we stand as one member, the richest and probably the strongest, in the family of democratic nations that encircles the globe. Our future is wrapped up with theirs. They look to us for aid. By the side of Jefferson's Declaration of Independence we must now put Wilson's Declaration of Interdependence. The only way now to make our democracy safe is to make the world safe for democracy.

This does not mean "entangling alliances"—or promises to help any one nation against another. It does mean a willingness to co-operate with the rest of the world in constructing a mechanism of world-justice and peace. The experience through which we

have passed in welding a number of separate States into a single nation should make us particularly useful in the difficult task of establishing for the diverse peoples of the earth a working world-policy. This is the finest possible extension of the ideals which animated our Founders. They sowed the seeds of freedom-in-co-operation on these shores; the plant has flourished, and may now be more widely spread. "What was in the writings of the men who founded America," asks Mr. Wilson,—“to serve the selfish interests of America? Do you find that in their writings? No; to serve the cause of humanity, to bring liberty to mankind.”

Many of us had hoped that the Great War would definitely mark the end of the period of our self-centered and self-sufficient isolation. As a recent writer in the *Century Magazine* points out, “History does not tell a very reassuring tale of peoples that have striven to live apart, any more than memoirs give a comforting recount of recluses . . . No nation can cut itself off from the world without stunting its material and spiritual growth.” It is not merely out of sympathy and altruism that we should stretch out our hands across the seas, but for our own souls’ good, and to prevent the recurrence of a situation that may otherwise again arise, in which, as in 1917, we shall be drawn against our will into a maelstrom which we have not created, but which we have done nothing to avert. Whether we like it or not, whether we recognize it or not, we *are* now interdependent. Our future is linked with that of Europe and Asia.

The endowment of peace-societies, the teaching of the horrors of war, should be continued. But war can not be stopped by education and propaganda alone, any more than crime can be. “Hating war is quite

unproductive unless you are thinking about its nature and causes so thoroughly that you will presently be able to take hold of it and control it and end it." We must do all we can, through pulpit, platform, and press, to cultivate a genuine international-mindedness—not as a substitute for American-mindedness, but as its highest expression. But a mere subjective attitude, however generous and honorable, will not suffice, unless it expresses itself in an objective order, a world policy.

As a means to that end, and for their own sake, we shall do well to cultivate friendly intercourse with neighboring peoples—exchange professorships and student scholarships, international sports, international professional organizations, and such world-wide societies as *Clarté* and *Corda Fratres*. But increase of intercourse means increased occasions for friction. It is by no means true that the more we see of people the more we like them. The contact of dissimilar social systems often results in mutual antipathy, ridicule, or contempt; manners and morals different from our own affect us unpleasantly, and defects in alien customs tend to become exaggerated in our memory and discourse. It is hopeless to expect that we shall be brought by commercial, professional, or personal intercourse to any widespread understanding of and sympathy for the diverse standards of foreign peoples. Moreover, at times they will do or say what is really unfair and unjust. So, very likely, shall we. Human nature being what it is, we can not expect to avoid misunderstandings and resentments. But they need not lead to war, and will not, if we have an accepted alternative means of dealing with them.

Hitherto our efforts to devise a mechanism to settle misunderstandings have been confined to arbitration

treaties and the reference of disputes to the Hague Tribunal. The first arbitration-treaty of modern times was the Jay Treaty of 1794, between the United States and Great Britain; and we had the honor of being the first nation to submit a dispute to the Hague Tribunal, something over a century later. At date of writing, America is party to some thirty treaties, in which we agree that all disputes between us and these other nations, "of every nature whatsoever, to the settlement of which previous arbitration treaties or agreements do not apply in their terms or are not applied in fact, shall, when diplomatic methods of adjustment have failed, be referred for investigation and report to an international commission"; we further agree "not to declare war or to begin hostilities during such investigation and before the report is submitted."

These terms do not bind us to refrain from declaring war with these nations, as a last resort. But the required delay may be of immeasurable value in giving hot heads time in which to cool; and the report of the international commission should lift the dispute out of the realm of passion and prejudice into that of reason. This will not suffice to restrain a nation that is bent on war. But if our own people and the other peoples to whom we are thus bound are genuinely eager to maintain amicable relations, this method provides a way for us to preserve peace with self-respect.

We may well be proud of this pioneer work in constructive statesmanship. But time has proved that we must go farther. Roosevelt pointed out with emphatic reiteration that "peace treaties and arbitration treaties unbacked by force are not merely useless but mischievous in any serious crisis. . . . The police-



man must be put back of the judge in international law, just as he is back of the judge in municipal law." Such a mechanism must be made operative that no nation will dare to make of a treaty a "scrap of paper" when it feels strong enough to repudiate it. The whole force of the world must stand back of international order and security. The single nation should no more have to worry about protecting itself than the private individual in a state; the family of nations should see to it that each of its members is free to live its own life undisturbed and unintimidated by any other. No nation must be allowed to act as its own advocate, judge, and inflicter of punishment. Each nation must have the fullest opportunity to present its case; but the common opinion of mankind must be the judge; and punishment—or rather, reparation—must be required only when the common opinion of mankind demands it.

Moreover, it is not merely to prevent war that we need international organization. We need it to remedy the injustices that lead to war, to guide and harmonize the increasing number of activities that are world-wide in scope. Questions of the distribution of shipping, and of raw material, the control of disease, the distribution of labor, and its status, and a hundred other matters, can no longer be settled by the nations severally. To fail to co-operate in these matters is not only to lose in efficiency, but to invite mutual hostilities.

This is not necessarily to say that the existing League of Nations is the best means to these ends. No one can foresee at the date of this writing what decision the American people will come to on this point. But it is to say that *some* sort of international organization must replace the older anarchy, and



replace it soon. Any scheme is sure to have defects. But "if we were to postpone the setting up of any machinery for the conduct of human affairs until we were certain that it could not possibly go wrong, or even until all objections were finally and completely answered, we should never get anywhere and never do anything."

We must welcome, then, all honest criticism of the existing League, and of any other scheme that may be proposed or attempted. But beneath all the pros and cons of this discussion, we must recognize that *in some way or other we must co-operate*. The era of national isolations is over, we are now an integral part of the world. Far from being inconsistent with our national spirit that we should take our place in this world-order, it would be fatally inconsistent that we should refuse to do so. When we think of our own personal desires and interests, it must always be "America first." But when we think of the other peoples who need our help and co-operation, it must be "America for the world."

We must frankly admit that co-operation may involve sacrifice; sometimes material sacrifice, sometimes sacrifice of prestige or supposed "national honor." It is, however, a false conception of honor that would lead us to refuse the compromises inherent in co-operation. We must take the lead in the willingness to see the general interest of mankind prevail, if there is a conflict, over our national desires and expectations. We must be willing to abide loyally by the decision of the international tribunal, even if we feel it to be unjust or mistaken. If it falls to our lot to make a concession for the general good, we must be ready to make it. There are few precedents upon which to base decisions in international matters, there

are few judges not unconsciously biased. Impartial, absolutely just and wise decisions we hope there will be; but there are bound to be some that seem, and perhaps are, one-sided, unfair to some nation, based upon an insufficient grasp of the facts, or colored by passion and prejudice. The essential thing is that we take these decisions, when they are made, as good sports; just as in baseball the game cannot go on unless both sides accept in good humor the umpire's decisions.

The federation of the world is coming. But how fast? How great a leap forward will statesmen dare now to take? And, whatever plan they try to put into operation, will it work? The answer to these questions depends upon the state of mind of the people of the nations that are to be thus federated. It is not exclusively a problem for statesmen and students of international law, though their expert services will be needed. It is in even greater degree a problem for the moralists, the educators, the editors and preachers, and all who can help mould the minds of men. For difficult as it is going to be to complete a just and workable system of international law and administration, that difficulty is as nothing to that of persuading the people of the component nations to give that loyal allegiance to this new authority which alone can transform it from a paper plan into a working system. It should be a matter of pride with us to be foremost in this next step in the world's progress.

There is, then, no duty more pressing than to awaken our people to the realization of the imperative need of world-organization; not merely that such an organization may be elaborated, but that it may be loyally upheld through the long period of readjustments and necessary concessions. We must not let

the world lapse into a complacent self-congratulation on the collapse of Teutonic militarism and the exit of Kaisers and kings. Other nations may yet become powerful, arrogant, imperialistic; the lessons of history are quickly forgotten by the ambitious and the proud—and, indeed, there are examples of successful aggression as striking as those of defeated ambition. Sources of friction and bitterness will long persist, injustices will still rankle, thwarted ambitions still smoulder. The growing complexity of international relations will produce more occasions than ever for friction. Nothing is more likely than that this will *not* be the last war, unless we set to work with utmost determination and create a mechanism which shall make the penalties for aggression so instant and certain that it will be universally recognized as suicidal. Nothing is more certain than that injustices will be committed and inequities persist, unless we find a way to settle the world's problems in peaceful co-operation.

We must combat by might and main that vague optimism that expects things to come out all right if they are left alone, that inertia that would let the peoples sink back into another era of unchecked nationalistic rivalry. It is to be hoped that the pacifists, i. e., the passivists, who counted on the efficacy of non-resistance in touching the hearts of the predatory and the proud, who thought that words, and paper treaties, could shame them or win them to a brotherly spirit, have learned their lesson. Isolated instances to the contrary, human nature is, unhappily, such that its fiercer impulses cannot be tamed by charity and patience. The ingenuity for evil and the blind passions of men must be counteracted by a greater ingenuity in devising the good and a greater

and wiser passion in embodying it. *Effort*, effort of organization, of thinking, of training, of education, is the inexorable price of progress.

And then, our plain duty is to forget our fears and suspicions of other nations' intentions, our bitterness and hatred and scorn of their wrongdoing, and to cultivate sympathy and understanding. For the former mental attitudes create trouble just as surely as the latter heal it. Our great danger now is not from Germany, or Japan, or any other nation, it is from ourselves. We are unchastened by years of suffering, we are rich, proud, unbeaten; we want *our* way in everything. Lately we have been hearing all about us the cries for revenge of those who would have us punish more severely an already prostrate enemy, keep our clutch on her throat, treat her as her autocratic rulers would have treated us. In no such way can a lasting peace be established. Might does not make right simply because it is our might. The time has come to apply the Golden Rule in politics. What we should be thinking of is not an enemy's past sins, but the future of the family of nations. It is not a weak surrender to return good for evil, it is safeguarding the future welfare of man.

Patriotism, like charity, begins at home. But it does not end there. It is rather a matter of concentric circles. Loyalty to one's family, or to one's club or college, does not imply disloyalty to the city or village in which one lives; nor does civic pride involve disloyalty to State or nation. Similarly, love and loyalty to our country does not rightly require disloyalty to the great brotherhood of man which not only Christianity but the most elementary common sense holds up to us as the supreme object of our sacrifice and service. Surely we must cultivate "the



international mind"—it is our most pressing duty just now, because international sentiment has as yet been so little cultivated. But to suppose that the era of international co-operation and loyalty is going to lessen our national pride and patriotism is a serious blunder. It is going to clarify and purge them, it is not going to make them less coercive or less beautiful.

Certainly if we fail to achieve a successful international organization in the near future, the effort and sacrifice of the War will have been largely wasted. The organization of an enduring peace is the only result which could compensate the world for these years of destruction and death, and the serious setback to civilization. Mr. Wilson, who, whatever his mistakes, has been the prophet of the new era, stated clearly what was implied in the slogan, "The war to end war." He declared, in an address to the Senate, on January 22, 1917, that "if the peace presently to be made is to endure, it must be a peace made secure, by the organized major force of mankind . . . It is inconceivable that the people of the United States should play no part in that great enterprise . . . It is clear to every man who can think, that there is in this no breach in either our traditions or our policy as a nation, but a fulfilment of all that we have professed or striven for."

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## CHAPTER XXVIII

### AMERICANIZATION

WE have now completed our survey of American ideals, from the stout assertion of political independence, of 1776, to the keen realization of interdependence, of 1917. It remains to ask whether our people as a whole, or certain classes of our people, are clearly enough conscious of these ideals; and whether forces should be set at work to accelerate their spread, and to deepen devotion to them. It is that process of awakening comprehension of, and loyalty to, these ideals, that we call today Americanization.

Between a seventh and an eighth of our population today are foreign-born. Concerning these no sweeping statement can be made. They are of all types, of every nationality, of all degrees of education. Among them are some undesirables, as among the native-born. But the great mass of them are hard-working, honest, and loyal. The majority of them become citizens; and if they do not, their children are citizens by birth. In general, these aliens, when they arrive, are eager to learn our language, our customs, our ideals. If some of them become indifferent and cynical and lawless, it is usually because we have failed in our duty to them.

It may be questioned, however, whether, on the whole, the immigrant needs Americanization more than the native. From many schools comes the report that the children of immigrants are more eager and

industrious and patriotic than the children of the older stock. From many public libraries comes the report that the immigrants and their children read the serious books while the children of the upper class read novels and detective stories. In some towns, indeed, the public library does not welcome the immigrants; or at least they do not feel at home there, and have not the boldness to intrude. But where an effort is made to show them that they are welcome, they often turn out to be ardent readers of history, science, poetry, biography, and the drama.

The boys and girls of American parentage are very apt to have a sense of superiority which is not warranted. As a matter of fact, most of them know little enough about the duties of citizenship, and think little about either the history of our country or its present problems. They become citizens automatically, by growing up, and are less apt to be conscious of the meaning of citizenship than the alien to whom it is granted as a privilege. We hear of the danger of the "foreign element." But on the whole, the ignorance of the foreigners is no more dangerous than the apathy of the natives. The bigger part of the task of Americanization is that of Americanizing our native youth, keeping alive in them the vision that fired their fathers, and adding to it the wisdom that our national experience has brought.

There are, of course, special needs of the immigrant. If he does not speak or read English, we must offer him every facility to learn the language of his adopted country. There is no difficulty here except that of the cost of providing instruction and of finding spare energy for learning on the part of tired, hard-working men and women. There is no lack of desire to learn; the immigrant has every reason for learning, it is to

his advantage more obviously than to ours. There is no need of coaxing him to learn; and it is a tactical error to require him to learn, by compulsory legislation. There is so much forcing of the national language upon minority races in Europe that many immigrants instinctively resent it; it is a sign of the sort of thing they have come to America to escape. We must remember that a knowledge of English by no means ensures loyalty; and we must beware of sacrificing the end to the means.

Many an immigrant who can not speak English is intensely loyal. And if the conditions of his life and work are such that it is practically impossible for him to find the time or energy to learn, we must blame ourselves rather than him, and worry more over a harsh industrial order than over his ignorance of English. His children will learn it in the public schools, and will use it in preference to their parents' speech. (Of course it goes without saying that all the public schools in the land must be conducted in English.) Meantime, the foreign-language press can do, and is doing, a valuable service in teaching the non-English-reading aliens about America and reporting for them the events of the day. With few exceptions, this foreign-language press has been loyal, and of great service in the Americanization process. To attempt to censor it is unnecessary, and would be extremely unwise, undoing our best attempts to describe America as the land of liberty, and showing it to be actually a land of mistrust and repression.

Every effort, also, should be made to teach the various groups of immigrants the meaning and history of our institutions. Much can be done through the trade unions, the churches, the public libraries, the social settlements, community centers, and open

forums, and, of course, the evening schools. Often valuable seed can be sown by some holiday celebration, pageant, or special meeting. Neighborhood singing and neighborhood theatres could be utilized far more than they yet have been. The Boy Scout and Girl Scout movements reach not only the children, with their admirable discipline, but through the children bring often new ideas and attitudes to their parents. In addition to these diverse means, much might be done by the sending of lecturers to speak to various immigrant groups in their own halls, on topics in which they are interested, combating whatever un-American propaganda there may be with open argument and the exposition of American principles.

The work with the children is, of course, of paramount importance. And we should forget the distinction between the children of immigrants and the children of natives. We need a great deal more for all of them than the lifeless "civics" of the typical school course. Mr. Arnold Bennett, in his recent volume, *Your United States*, writes, "I do positively think that American education does not altogether succeed in the very important business of inculcating public spirit into young citizens." The statement is moderate; in most cases we ignominiously fail. We must teach every child, not only the outward forms of our government and social institutions, but their meaning and spirit. We should teach the ideals that have been wrought into the laws of the land, and show their reasonableness. The great body of our laws are plainly just and righteous; a code of morals is exemplified in them, and can be taught without partisanship or bigotry. Thus the laws and institutions of America will come to seem beneficent instead of repressive. And if there are bad laws, this study of



reasons and principles will serve to breed critics of them—the best possible outcome.

Indeed, one of the dangers of which we must beware is that of inculcating a complacent attitude toward our institutions as they are. Americanism should not be thought of as something static, but as something in process of realization. The evils in our present political and industrial order should be frankly faced, and the youth of our land encouraged to consider seriously and with open mind the various reforms proposed. For the danger ahead of us is less that of unrest than that of fatuous optimism and inertia. If we look backward with pride to our past history, it should be to draw fresh inspiration to help us in grappling with the problems of the present. The alien agitator's ignorance of the worth of our institutions is a less menacing evil than the native American's ignorance of their defects. Civics must be taught not as the description of a finished political system, but as the description of a changing set of laws and institutions, which are attempting ever more and more adequately to embody certain fundamental ideals—liberty, equality, and the like—but which need the energies of generations yet to perfect.

✓ There is no present danger that alien ideals will undermine our American traditions. The foreigners among us are a comparatively small group; and their prestige is even less than their numbers. Everywhere the older Americans have things in their own hands. Our danger is not that of overthrow by hostile ideals, it is rather that of decay from within. Indeed, the analysis of the "radical" vote in recent elections shows that it has less strength in the States where the immigrant population is largest than in certain Western States where fewer aliens live. And radical-

ism by no means always goes with either ignorance or disloyalty. The real strength of radicalism today lies in groups of university graduates, men and women who are perhaps more or less impractical theorists, but who for the most part are idealists and intensely devoted to the welfare of their country. The complete stoppage of immigration would make little difference in the amount of radical thought. The only way to meet this thought is to *meet* it; to let it express itself openly, and to answer it in earnest but good-tempered discussion. Met in that manner it will be a salutary ingredient in our national life, balancing the inert standpat-ism of other groups and contributing its insights to our counsels.

The Freudian psychologists have taught us of the danger to our mental life from the isolation and suppression of certain ideas and "complexes." So in our social life, the danger lies in the isolation of groups, whose ideas become more and more set and fanatical from lack of contact with other currents of thought. If there is suppression by an unsympathetic majority, we have all the conditions of social hysteria. What we need is the application of the "melting-pot" concept not only to racial stocks, but to their ideas. Above all things we must beware of allowing a dominant majority to attempt to rubberstamp our people with their particular beliefs. We must welcome the contributions of diverse races and schools of thought, seeking to learn something from each and to weave them all into the texture of our growing civilization.

We have in this country a unique opportunity to profit by the rich cultural heritage of the various immigrant groups. The American of the future is to be a composite photograph, a blend of these diverse traits. Each strain has its values, has something to

contribute to the symphony of American life. Professor Dewey has recently put it thus: "The way to deal with hyphenism is to welcome it, but to welcome it in the sense of extracting from each people its special good, so that it shall surrender into a common fund of wisdom and experience what it especially has to contribute. All these surrenders and contributions taken together create the national spirit of America."

Mr. Rabindranath Tagore has sharply criticized the mania for stereotyping manners and ideas that he, like many other observers, finds in this country. "America lacks respect for unlikeness, for otherness. Its democracy seeks to make all men alike, to run them into one mold, to rob them or shame them out of their picturesqueness or diversity. Americanization seems to mean that when all accept a certain formula it is enough; but old racial traits and cultural characteristics can not be ironed out of humanity. Nor should they be. It is not a melting-pot that is needed, but a flower-garden, where each race may bloom and add its beauty to the commonwealth."

Above all things, we must banish that patronizing, contemptuous air that so many Americans of the older stock assume toward the more recent immigrants. We must sternly rebuke the use of those derisive nicknames that prolong antipathy and beget resentment. If their ignorance and low standard of living irks us, the remedy is obviously to give them education and better living conditions. If they become a menace to our institutions, or to our standards of living, it is far less due to their recalcitrancy than to our neglect.

We must remember, also, that the teaching the alien receives is a small part of the influences that are at work upon him. In the words of a recent bulletin of

the federal Department of Education, "The immigrant is becoming either Americanized or anarchized by every experience which he undergoes, every condition to which he is subjected. Americanization is in a measure the problem of the school. But it is also a matter of prevention of exploitation, of good housing, of clean milk for babies, of adequate wages, of satisfactory industrial conditions, of the spirit of neighborliness between Americans, old and new. Everything that touches the immigrant's life is an instrument for his Americanization or the reverse." In general it may be said that if the immigrant finds himself well treated in this country he will be loyal. Kindness, courtesy, justice, opportunity for a normal human life for himself and his children—this is the obvious way to make the newcomers to these shores patriotic American citizens.

We must confess that our record is far from clean in this fundamental respect. Listen to the words of one who is thoroughly conversant with the situation—not an agitator or alien but a conservative and earnestly loyal American: "The immigrant arrives at the port of entry. After passing his examination (during which time not a friendly word of greeting is given him, or a personal interest taken in him) he is turned loose upon the city, to be met at the gate by cabmen, porters, runners, crooks, thieves, and every conceivable kind of exploiter interested in getting his cash money. This is America's first reception line. He then meets our second reception line—the employment agent, the private banker, and 'steering agent,' who derive profit from his labor before it has even become productive. When the immigrant actually goes to work, he has generally lost his money and is in debt. He then meets our third American reception



line, the employer interested only in his labor output, and he is treated accordingly . . . By the time the immigrant has shaken hands along these various reception lines he feels he knows everybody, and he has a very definite idea of liberty, justice, freedom, law, order, and measures of happiness, which in no sense accords with our forefathers' ideal of America."

This same writer describes an industrial plant where immigrants are employed. "His men sleep five to fifteen in a room, often on the floor and in their clothing; they have no care and eat badly prepared food. They crowd family houses, destroying privacy and morality . . . One native-born American controls the health, decency, morality, and efficiency of some 8,000 immigrant workmen, whose only protest is to move on, and whose only future is high enough wages to return to their home country. And the worst of it is that men get used to these conditions, believing them to be American; and with this belief go the dreams, the visions, and the ambitions which are the essence of good citizenship. The prospective good citizen is sacrificed to the demand for cheap labor, which is a native-American demand."

Conditions are, of course, by no means always so bad as this. But they are sometimes as bad, and they are seldom anywhere near what they ought to be. This is the crux of the problem of Americanization. These people are being fashioned not by what we preach to them, but by what we do to them. How can they believe in the sincerity of our professions of idealism when they find themselves exploited on every hand and unable to live a decent human life? Actions speak louder than words; and what they see is a scramble for profits, a race in which the clever and the aggressive and the fortunate push their way



to a competence, while the timid and conscientious get pushed to the wall. They see honest and brave men deported or sent to prison for daring to voice opinions contrary to the accepted creed. They find themselves with little "effective liberty," little actual equality of opportunity; their democratic rights are apt to seem a mockery. Only efficiency seems a genuine American ideal—an efficiency in whose name they are treated as mere unthinking "hands." Often they are bitterly disillusioned in their dreams of America. No doubt they are often partly to blame. But the greater blame rests upon the rest of us, who allow them to be so bewildered and exploited and driven to a disillusionment so rapid and so harsh.

The writer of a magazine article that has appeared since the above words were set down has so well expressed the root of the matter that some sentences of his are best appended: "You may give the alien evening schools and continuation schools; you may teach his wife in the home and his daughter in the factory; you may flood him with reprints of the Declaration of Independence and the speeches of Lincoln; and when you have finished, you will be no farther along the road of winning his heart and his co-operation than when you began.

"What we have to do is, therefore, clear enough. It is not, as the now popular phrase has it, that we must Americanize the Americans. It is much more than that. Before the immigrant can be won over, we must Americanize America herself. We must lift American institutions and American practices to the high plane of America's own traditions. We must come to look upon the immigrant as he is, a boon to us and an equal, instead of a nuisance and an uninvited invader. And we must somehow meet his ideal

of us and our country by fashioning them in the mould of the ideals and the aspirations of the twentieth century. When we have done this much, life itself will take care of the future. For America is still very much in the making, and it will require the energy and the goodwill and the traditions of all the peoples of the earth, working together, to make her what she started out to be, a greater and a freer and a nobler Europe."

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## CHAPTER XXIX

### FAITH IN AMERICA

THIS volume has been concerned rather with criticism and warning than with eulogy and congratulation. We are far too prone to brag of our achievements and too little disposed to acknowledge our shortcomings. If the American spirit is to find its splendid fulfilment, it will be not through a complacent acquiescence in things as they are, but through our earnest efforts to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way and to embody that spirit more completely in legislation and practice.

But the picture must not be drawn too dark. We have not yet fully realized our fathers' dreams, but, on the whole, we have done well. And the signs of the times are full of promise. There is more criticism of our institutions, more fault-finding, more clash of interpretation and program, than ever. But that is because more people are taking our historic ideals seriously, more people are interesting themselves in their realization. We perceive the difficulties more keenly, we realize the mistakes that have been made, we are not so blindly optimistic. But we have not lost faith. And precisely this spirit of criticism, this chorus of proposals, this growing soberness of reflection, warrants our faith and pledges its fulfilment.

Already the relative success of our experiment in self-government has had an enormous effect upon the

rest of the world. And more than ever we have the opportunity to play the rôle of spiritual as well as material leader. In the inspiring words of Roosevelt, "We are not only custodians of the hopes of our children, but in a peculiar sense we are custodians of the hope of the world." "Our nation is that one among all the nations of the earth which holds in its hands the fate of the coming years. We enjoy exceptional advantages, and are menaced by exceptional dangers; and all signs indicate that we shall either fail greatly or succeed greatly. I firmly believe that we shall succeed; but we must not be foolishly blind to the dangers by which we are threatened, for that is the way to fail."

Not only will our future have an influence far beyond our geographical frontiers, but millions more, scores of millions, are coming to these shores, to join their fortunes with ours. What they are to become rests very largely with us of the older American stock. By the middle of this century we shall doubtless have a population of more than a hundred and fifty million, by its close probably two hundred million. And this within the lifetime of people now living! What a challenge to our idealism! We are a very young nation, not yet a hundred and fifty years old—a mere moment in the history of man. Infinite vistas stretch before us. Why should not our nation endure for thousands of centuries? Surely there could be no object more worthy of our effort and sacrifice than to help shape the polity and guide the development of this youthful giant among the nations.

Kings and Kaisers have fallen; the battle against political autocracy, of the sort that has so long plagued the earth, seems won. But the democracies are still far from safe. They will not be safe from



one another until they have perfected an international organization that will secure justice and peace for all the world. They will not be safe from internal disruption until they succeed in establishing a complete internal justice and liberty. One long epoch of man's history is over; it is time to gird ourselves for the next struggle. The War is over; the War begins.

We must definitely realize that moral and social progress are not automatic, they come through human effort. And there are powerful forces making for injustice, materialism, license, for decadence and disruption. It is a perpetually shifting battle. Our codes have to become continually more intricate to meet the new methods of exploitation, the new forms of inequity, the new follies, that are forever being devised. We have by no means reached a point of safety. The belief in social progress has become almost a dogma with us, a dogma supported by the material progress that nothing now apparently, save a prolonged world-war, can check. But moral and social degeneracy may go hand in hand with material progress, with national power and pride. Thus it may be that our greatest dangers lie ahead. Our future is still problematic. Faith in it we must have; but faith without works is dead.

It is a salutary exercise, then, to consider the newer forms of sin, for which the growing complexity of our social life has opened the way. Certain industrial evils, certain forms of profiteering and graft, certain forms of commercialized vice, that have become already widespread, were unknown to our founders. We live, in our cities, less in one another's eyes than our fathers lived. Our social restraints have in some ways become greatly relaxed. We have drifted far from what Mrs. Wharton rather ironically calls the



Age of Innocence—as recent a period as the eighteen seventies. Privilege has become bolder, sinister “interests” more powerful, the congestion of wealth and the wanton luxury of the rich more marked, poverty more acute, class consciousness more widespread and bitter.

But when we look back and remember that we have succeeded in abolishing political tyranny, and human slavery, have risen above the bitter sectionalism of our early years, have devised and put into operation a thousand ingenious plans for the checking of private selfishness and the forwarding of the common good, we turn to the future with confidence. These newer evils can also be overcome. Our people are becoming better and better educated; the churches are awaking more and more to their duty as teachers and fortifiers of our national ideals. The number of voluntary associations devoted to the forwarding of specific causes is increasing yearly. Great potentialities for good lie in professional associations, in trade unions, and other organizations along vocational lines. The conception is gaining headway that the government exists not merely to protect the individual in his rights but positively to forward the general welfare. Our pioneering is nearly done; a larger and larger part of our surplus energy can be freed for attention to the moral and social problems that confront us. The new generation includes many thousands of young men and women who are studying these problems and are determined to find solutions.

In 1910 Mr. William Allen White published a book with the title, “The Old Order Changeth.” At a date so recent as that it was common to hold, with this author, that the days of bossism, of the “invisible government,” of graft and corruption, were numbered.

The experiences of the past few years have shown us that the millennium is not yet at hand. But they have also shown the tremendous latent energy and idealism in our people. The problem is, how to arouse it, to focus it upon the evils to be cured, and make it effective for progress.

Two things we must cease to be afraid of. We must not be afraid of "unrest," of "agitation," of open discussion and experiment. Stagnation, acquiescence in evil, apathy, and blindness to the defects in our social order, are worse than unrest. We cannot afford yet to settle down and take our ease. Our forefathers were not afraid of unrest when they threw the tea overboard in Boston Harbor, when they resisted the redcoats at Lexington and Concord. The real cause of revolutions is never the spirit of unrest; that is secondary. The real cause is the existence of injustice, the autocratic and selfish rule of man over man, the poignant contrast between power and impotence, or between wealth and poverty. The ostrich-policy will not save us. The danger is not in wrong thinking, it is in not thinking at all, in letting things drift.

Every serious alteration in our political or social system has been dubbed un-American, and its sponsors persecuted as traitors. Roger Williams was banished from Massachusetts for his advocacy of religious liberty, Garrison was dragged through the streets of Boston for daring to oppose slavery. The secret ballot, the gold standard, the conservation policy, the civil service—these and many other reforms were red rags to the self-styled "true Americans." Yet these reforms have been accepted, as many more will yet be, as embodying better than the older forms the true American spirit.

The other thing we must cease to be afraid of is

spending money raised by taxes. We cannot evolve the America of our dreams without spending very much greater sums than we have yet been willing to spend for public education and health, for reforestation and irrigation, for social insurance of many sorts. These expenditures, if wisely made, will far more than pay for themselves in dollars and cents, in the increased efficiency of our people. They will pay a thousandfold in heightened happiness, and in the deepened loyalty of a contented and prosperous people. There is no sign more hopeful for our future than our growing willingness to spend money in ways that will redound to the benefit of all the people, making their opportunities for self-development more equal and securing for them a more effective liberty.

Another hopeful sign lies in our growing national solidarity. In spite of our being at first a union of originally separate States, and in spite of our being a composite people, drawn from all the diverse races of Europe, we have now far more homogeneity, far less sectionalism, than most European countries. It is often impossible from manner or habits or point of view to tell whether a man comes from Boston or from San Francisco. Nowhere else in the world does this homogeneity hold true of so large an area. The people of Maine and Florida, of Oregon and Texas, have confidence in one another, think of one another as neighbors and as like themselves. Washington warned his countrymen in his Farewell Address that "every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole." Such a warning is no longer necessary; the permanence and integrity of our union is now beyond question. The best thought

of our citizens from Maine to California is at the service of a united country.

There is no excuse, then, for pessimism. We must retain the faith of our founders. They had formidable difficulties to meet, but they believed firmly in the future of their new people. Our recent hysteria over the "reds" is a sign of lack of faith. Our ideals are strong enough to stand shocks. Our future is safe if, in Wilson's words, "We be but true to ourselves—to ourselves as we have wished to be known in the counsels of the world, in the thought of all those who love liberty, justice, and right exalted." We want, not a blind faith in our country, but a fighting faith, an open-eyed faith, a faith that nerves us to action. We must look to the future not with distrust and apprehension, but with eager expectation fortified by a determined resolve. This is the spirit of the often-quoted words of our best-beloved poet:

"Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,  
Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,  
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,  
Are all with thee—are all with thee."

We can still have unclouded faith, in spite of the lapse in our practice, so long as the American spirit is taught to our youth. Our national literature is a literature shot through with ideals, our history is a record of heroic deeds. So long as our schools and our churches, our poets and our orators hold up these high ideals to fire the hearts of our boys and girls, we need not fear for our future. Mr. Edward Steiner has touched the heart of the matter when he says, "I do not believe that the future of a nation is written in the land it occupies or in the language it speaks,



or in the tradition it inherits; its future lies written in its *will*. . . . What shall we be? That which we *want* America to be, and determine it to be. . . . And may God grant that to be an American may, in the future, mean something better and more significant than what we now understand it to mean."

The lover of his country will dream of a land far more beautiful than that which now is. The smoke and grime of our cities must go, the crowded, ill-smelling tenements, the dreary unloveliness of our slums. City-planning must replace the careless anarchy of the past. Civic centers, with noble buildings and ample open spaces, must be created. Beauty, which in the old days was but for the few, shall here be for all. Our national parks and forests are already the wonder of the world. The next generation must see the reservation of public playgrounds in still more generous measure. This country is not for the rich alone, but for every citizen's pride and joy. We must take more interest in beautifying our countryside, our schools and public buildings, our river fronts and highways. So shall our country be dear and grateful to the outward eye as well as to the hearts of those who love her.

"O beautiful for patriot's dream,  
That sees beyond the years  
Thine alabaster cities gleam,  
Undimmed by human tears;  
America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood,  
From sea to shining sea."



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