



Max M. Kampelman Papers

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I What is the promise of American life?

The average American is nothing if not patriotic. "The Americans are filled," says Mr. Emil Reich in his "Success among the Nations," "with such an implicit and absolute confidence in their Union and in their future success that any remark other than laudatory is unacceptable to the majority of them. We have had many opportunities of hearing public speakers in America case doubts upon the very existence of God and of Providence, question the historic nature or veracity of the whole fabric of Christianity; but never has it been our fortune to catch the slightest whisper of doubt, the slightest want of faith, in the chief God of America--unlimited belief in the future of America." Mr. Reich's method of emphasis may not be very happy, but the substance of what he says is true. The faith of Americans in their own country is religious, if not in its intensity, at any rate in its almost absolute and universal authority. It pervades the air we breathe. As children we hear it asserted or implied in the conversation of our elders. Every new stage of our educational training provides some additional testimony on its behalf. Newspapers and novelists, orators and playwrights, even if they are little else, are at least loyal preachers of the Truth. The skeptic is not controverted; he is overlooked. It constitutes the kind of faith which is the implication, rather than the object, of thought, and consciously or unconsciously it enters largely into our personal lives as a formative influence. We may distrust and dislike much that is done in the name of our country by our fellow-countrymen; but our country itself, its democratic system, and its prosperous future are above suspicion.

Of course, Americans have no monopoly of patriotic enthusiasm and good faith. Englishmen return thanks to Providence for not being born anything but an Englishman, in churches and alehouses as well as in comic operas. The Frenchman cherishes and proclaims the idea that France is the most civilized modern country and satisfies best the needs of a man of high social intelligence. The Russian, whose political and social estate does not seem enviable to his foreign contemporaries, secretes a vision of a mystically glorified Russia, which condemns to comparative insipidity the figures of the "Pax Britannica" and of "La Belle France" enlightening the world. Every nation, in proportion as its nationality is thoroughly alive, must be leavened by the ferment of some such faith. But there are significant differences between the faith of, say, an Englishman in the British Empire and that of an American in the Land of Democracy. The contents of an Englishman's national idea tends to be more exclusive. His patriotism is anchored to the historical achievements of Great Britain and restricted thereby. As a good patriot he is bound to be more pre-occupied with the inherited fabric of national institutions and traditions than he is with the ideal and more than national possibilities of the future. This very loyalty to the national fabric does, indeed, imply an important ideal content; but the national idealism of an Englishman, a German, or even a Frenchman, is heavily mortgaged to his own national history and cannot honestly escape the debt. The good patriot is obliged to offer faithful allegiance to a network of somewhat arbitrary institutions, social forms, and intellectual habits--on the ground that his country is exposed to more serious dangers from premature emancipation than it is from stubborn conservatism. France is the only European country which has sought to make headway towards a better future by means of a revolutionary break with its past, and the results of the French experiment have served for other European countries more as a warning than as an example.

The higher American patriotism, on the other hand, combines loyalty to historical tradition and precedent with the imaginative projection of an ideal national Promise. The Land of Democracy has always appealed to its more en-

thusiastic children chiefly as a land of wonderful and more than national possibilities. "Neither race nor tradition," says Professor Hugo Munsterberg in his volume on "The Americans," "nor the actual past, binds the American to his countrymen, but rather the future which together they are building." This vision of a better future is not, perhaps, as unclouded for the present generation of Americans as it was for certain former generations; but in spite of a more friendly acquaintance with all sorts of obstacles and pitfalls, our country is still figured in the imagination of its citizens as the Land of Promise. They still believe that somehow and sometime something better will happen to good Americans than has happened to men in any other country; and this belief, vague, innocent, and uninformed though it be, is the expression of an essential constituent in our national ideal. The past should mean less to a European than it does to an American, and the future should mean more. To be sure, American life cannot with impunity be wrenched violently from its moorings any more than the life of a European country can; but, our American past, compared to that of any European country, has a character all its own. Its peculiarity consists, not merely in its brevity, but in the fact that from the beginning it has been informed by an idea. From the beginning Americans have been anticipating and projecting a better future. From the beginning the Land of Democracy has been figured as the Land of Promise. Thus the American's loyalty to the national tradition rather affirms than denies the imaginative projection of a better future. An America which was not the Land of Promise, which was not informed by a prophetic outlook and a more or less constructive ideal, would not be the America bequeathed to us by our forefathers. In cherishing the Promise of a better national future the American is fulfilling rather than imperiling the substance of the national tradition.

When, however, Americans talk of their country as the Land of Promise, a question may well be raised as to precisely what they mean. They mean, of course, in general, that the future will have something better in store for them individually and collectively than has the past or the present; but a very superficial analysis of this meaning discloses certain ambiguities. What are the particular benefits which this better future will give to Americans either individually or as a nation? And how is this promise to be fulfilled? Will it fulfill itself, or does it imply certain responsibilities? If so, what responsibilities? When we speak of a young man's career as promising, we mean that his abilities and opportunities are such that he is likely to become rich or famous or powerful; and this judgment does not of course imply, so far as we are concerned, any responsibility. It is merely a prophecy based upon past performances and proved qualities. But the career, which from the standpoint of an outsider is merely an anticipation, becomes for the young man himself a serious task. For him, at all events, the better future will not merely happen. He will have to do something to deserve it. It may be wrecked by unforeseen obstacles, by unsuspected infirmities, or by some critical error of judgment. So it is with the Promise of American life. From the point of view of an immigrant this Promise may consist of the anticipation of a better future, which he can share merely by taking up his residence on American soil; but once he has become an American, the Promise can no longer remain merely an anticipation. It becomes in that case a responsibility, which requires for its fulfillment a certain kind of behavior on the part of himself and his fellow-Americans. And when we attempt to define the Promise of American life, we are obliged, also, to describe the kind of behavior which the fulfillment of the Promise demands.

The distinction between the two aspects of America as a Land of Promise made in the preceding paragraph is sufficiently obvious, but it is usually slurred by the average good American patriot. The better future, which is promised for himself, his children, and for other Americans, is chiefly a matter of confident anticipation. He looks upon it very much as a friendly outsider

might look on some promising individual career. The better future is understood by him as something which fulfills itself. He calls his country, not only the Land of Promise, but the Land of Destiny. It is fairly launched on a brilliant and successful career, the continued prosperity of which is prophesied by the very momentum of its advance. As Mr. H. G. Wells says in "The Future in America," "When one talks to an American in his national purpose, he seems a little at a loss; if one speaks in his national destiny, he responds with alacrity." The great majority of Americans would expect a book written about "The Promise of American Life" to contain chiefly a fanciful description of the glorious American future--a sort of Utopia up-to-date, situated in the land of Good-Enough, and flying the Stars and Stripes. They might admit in words that the achievement of this glorious future implied certain responsibilities, but they would not regard the admission either as startling or novel. Such responsibilities were met by our predecessors; they will be met by our followers. Inasmuch as it is the honorable American past which prophesies on behalf of the better American future, our national responsibility consists fundamentally in remaining true to traditional ways of behavior, standards, and ideals. What we Americans have to do in order to fulfill our national Promise is to keep up the good work--to continue resolutely and cheerfully along the appointed path.

The reader who expects this book to contain a collection of patriotic prophecies will be disappointed. I am not a prophet in any sense of the word, and I entertain an active and intense dislike of the foregoing mixture of optimism, fatalism, and conservatism. To conceive the better American future as a consummation which will take care of itself,--as the necessary result of our customary conditions, institutions, and ideas,--persistence in such a conception is admirably designed to deprive American life of any promise at all. The better future which Americans propose to build is nothing if not an idea which must in certain essential respects emancipate them from their past. American history contains much matter for pride and congratulation, and much matter for regret and humiliation. On the whole, it is a past of which the loyal American has no reason to feel ashamed, chiefly because it has throughout been made better than it was by the vision of a better future; and the American of to-day and tomorrow must remain true to that traditional vision. He must be prepared to sacrifice to that traditional vision even the traditional American ways of realizing it. Such a sacrifice is, I believe, coming to be demanded; and unless it is made, American life will gradually cease to have any specific Promise.

The only fruitful promise of which the life of any individual or any nation can be possessed, is a promise determined by an ideal. Such a promise is to be fulfilled, not by sanguine anticipations, not by a conservative imitation of past achievements, but by laborious, single-minded, clear-sighted, and fearless work. If the promising career of any individual is not determined by a specific and worthy purpose, it rapidly drifts into a mere pursuit of success; and even if such a pursuit is successful, whatever promise it may have had, is buried in the grave of its triumph. So it is with a nation. If its promise is anything more than a vision of power and success, that addition must derive its value from a purpose; because in the moral world the future exists only as a workshop in which a purpose is to be realized. Each of the several leading European nations is possessed of a specific purpose determined for the most part by the pressure of historical circumstances; but the American nation is committed to a purpose which is not merely of historical manufacture. It is committed to the realization of the democratic ideal; and if its Promise is to be fulfilled, it must be prepared to follow whithersoever that ideal may lead.

No doubt Americans have in some measure always conceived their national future as an ideal to be fulfilled. Their anticipations have been uplifting as well as confident and vainglorious. They have been prophesying not merely a safe and triumphant, but also a better, future. The ideal demand for some sort of indi-

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vidual and social amelioration has always accompanied even their vainest flights of patriotic prophecy. They may never have sufficiently realized that this better future, just in so far as it is of its own momentum; but at any rate, in seeking to disentangle and emphasize the ideal implications of the American national Promise, I am not wholly false to the accepted American tradition. Even if Americans have neglected these ideal implications, even if they have conceived the better future as containing chiefly a larger portion of familiar benefits, the ideal demand, nevertheless, has always been palpably present; and if it can be established as the dominant aspect of the American tradition, that tradition may be transformed, but it will not be violated.

Furthermore, much as we may dislike the American disposition to take the fulfillment of our national Promise for granted, the fact that such a disposition exists in its present volume and vigor demands respectful consideration. It has its roots in the salient conditions of American life, and in the actual experience of the American people. The national Promise, as it is popularly understood, has in a way been fulfilling itself. If the underlying conditions were to remain much as they have been, the prevalent mixture of optimism, fatalism, and conservatism might retain a formidable measure of justification; and the changes which are taking place in the underlying conditions and in the scope of American national experience afford the most reasonable expectation that this state of mind will undergo a radical alteration. It is new conditions which are forcing Americans to choose between the conception of their national Promise as a process and an ideal. Before, however, the nature of these novel conditions and their significance can be considered, we must examine with more care the relation between the earlier American economic and social conditions and the ideas and institutions associated with them. Only by a better understanding of the popular tradition, only by an analysis of its merits and its difficulties, can we reach a more consistent and edifying conception of the Promise of American life.

II How the Promise has been Realized

All conditions of American life have tended to encourage an easy, generous, and irresponsible optimism. As compared to Europeans, Americans have been very much favored by circumstances. Had it not been for the Atlantic Ocean and the virgin wilderness, the United States would never have been the Land of Promise. The European Powers have been obliged from the very conditions of their existence to be more circumspect and less confident of the future. They are always by way of fighting for their national security and integrity. With possible or actual enemies on their several frontiers, and with their land fully occupied by their own population, they need above all to be strong, to be cautious, to be united, and to be opportune in their policy and behavior. The case of France shows the danger of neglecting the sources of internal strength, while at the same time philandering with ideas and projects of human amelioration. Bismarck and Cavour seized the opportunity of making extremely useful for Germany and Italy the irrelevant and vacillating idealism and the timid absolutism of the third Napoleon. Great Britain has occupied in this respect a better situation than has the Continental Powers. Her insular security made her more independent of the menaces and complications of foreign politics, and left her free to be measurably liberal at home and immeasurably imperial abroad. Yet she has made only a circumspect use of her freedom. British liberalism was forged almost exclusively for the British people, and the British peace for colonial subjects. Great Britain could have afforded better than France to tie its national life to an over-national idea, but the only idea in which Britons have really believed was that of British security, prosperity, and power. In the case of our own country the advantages possessed by England have been amplified and extended. The United States was divided from the mainland of Europe not by a channel but by an ocean. Its dimensions were continental rather than insular. We were for

the most part freed from alien interference and could, so far as we dared, experiment with political and social ideals. The land was unoccupied, and its settlement offered an unprecedented area and abundance of economic opportunity. After the Revolution the whole political and social organization was renewed, and made both more serviceable and more flexible. Under such happy circumstances the New World was assuredly destined to become to its inhabitants a Land of Promise,--a land in which men were offered a fairer chance and a better future than the best which the Old World could afford.

No more explicit expression has ever been given to the way in which the Land of Promise was first conceived by its children than in the "Letters of an American Farmer." This book was written by a French immigrant, Hector St. John de Crevecoeur before the Revolution, and is informed by an intense consciousness of the difference between conditions in the Old and in the New World. "What, then, is an American, this new man?" asks the Pennsylvanian farmer. "He is either a European or the descendant of a European; hence the strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country...."

"He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great Alma Mater. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and prosperity will one day cause great changes in the world. Here the rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labor; this labor is founded on the basis of self-interest; can it want a stronger allure-ment? Wives and children, who before in vain demanded a morsel of bread, now fat and frolicsome, gladly help their father to clear those fields, whence exuberant crops are to arise to feed them all; without any part being claimed either by a despotic prince, a rich abbot, or a mighty lord.... The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labor, he has passed to toils of a very different nature rewarded by ample subsistence. This is an American."

Although the foregoing is one of the first, it is also one of the most explicit descriptions of the fundamental American; and it deserves to be analyzed with some care. According to this French convert the American is a man, or the descendant of a man, who has emigrated from Europe chiefly because he expects to be better able in the New World to enjoy the fruits of his own labor. The conception implies, consequently, an Old World, in which the ordinary man cannot become independent and prosperous, and on the other hand, a New World in which economic opportunities and much more abundant and accessible. America has been peopled by Europeans primarily because they expected in that country to make more money more easily. To the European immigrant--that is, to the aliens who have been converted into Americans by the advantages of American life--the Promise of America has consisted largely in the opportunity which it offered of economic independence and prosperity. Whatever else the better future, of which Europeans anticipate the enjoyment in America, may contain, these converts will consider themselves cheated unless they are in a measure relieved of the curse of poverty.

This conception of American life and its Promise is as much alive to-day as it was in 1780. Its expression has no doubt been modified during four generations of democratic political independence, but the modification has consisted of an expansion and a development rather than of a transposition. The native American, like the alien immigrant, conceives the better future which awaits himself and other men in America as fundamentally a future in which economic prosperity will be still more abundant and still more accessible than it has yet been either here or abroad. No alteration or attenuation of this demand has been permitted. With all their professions of Christianity their national idea remains thoroughly worldly. They do not want either for themselves or for their descendants an

indefinite future of poverty and deprivation in this world, redeemed by beatitude in the next. The Promise, which bulks so large in their patriotic outlook, is a promise of comfort and prosperity for an ever increasing majority of good Americans. At a later stage of their social development they may come to believe that they have ordered a larger supply of prosperity than the economic factory is capable of producing. Those who are already rich and comfortable, and who are keenly alive to the difficulty of distributing these benefits over a larger social area, may come to tolerate the idea that poverty and want are an essential part of the social order. But as yet this traditional European opinion has found few echoes in America, even among the comfortable and the rich. The general belief still is that Americans are not destined to renounce, but to enjoy.

Let it be immediately added, however, that this economic independence and prosperity has always been absolutely associated in the American mind with free political institutions. The "American Farmer" traced the good fortune of the European immigrant in America, not merely to the abundance of economic opportunity, but to the fact that a ruling class of abbots and lords had no prior claim to a large share of the products of the soil. He did not attach the name of democracy to the improved political and social institutions of America, and when the political differences between Great Britain and her American colonies culminated in the Revolutionary War, the converted "American Farmer" was filled with anguish at this violent assertion of the "New Americanism." Nevertheless he was fully alive to the benefits which the immigrant enjoyed from a larger dose of political and social freedom; and so, of course, have been all the more intelligent of the European converts to Americanism. A certain number of them, particularly during the early years, came over less for the purpose of making money than for that of escaping from European political and religious persecution. America has always been conventionally conceived, not merely as a land of abundant and accessible economic opportunities, but also as a refuge for the oppressed; and the immigrant ships are crowded both during times of European famine and during times of political revolution and persecution.

Inevitably, however, this aspect of the American Promise has undergone certain important changes since the establishment of our national independence. When the colonists succeeded in emancipating themselves from political allegiance to Great Britain, they were confronted by the task of organizing a stable and efficient government without encroaching on the freedom which was even at that time traditionally associated with American life. The task was by no means an easy one, and required for its performance the application of other political principles than that of freedom. The men who were responsible for this great work were not, perhaps, entirely candid in recognizing the profound modifications in their traditional ideal which their constructive political work had implied; but they were at all events fully aware of the great importance of their addition to the American idea. That idea, while not ceasing to be at bottom economic, became more than ever political and social in its meaning and contents. The Land of Freedom became in the course of time also the Land of Equality. The special American political system, the construction of which was predicted in the "Farmer's" assertion of the necessary novelty of American modes of thought and action, was made explicitly, if not uncompromisingly, democratic; and the success of this democratic political system was indissolubly associated in the American mind with the persistence of abundant and widely distributed economic prosperity. Our democratic institutions became in a sense the guarantee that prosperity would continue to be abundant and accessible. In case the majority of good Americans were not prosperous, there would be grave reasons for suspecting that our institutions were not doing their duty.

The more consciously democratic Americans became, however, the less they were satisfied with a conception of the Promised Land, which went no farther than a

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pervasive economic prosperity guaranteed by free institutions. The amelioration promised to aliens and to future Americans was to possess its moral and social aspects. The implication was, and still is, that by virtue of the more comfortable and less trammelled lives which Americans were enabled to lead, they would constitute a better society and would become in general a worthier set of men. The confidence which American institutions placed in the American citizen was considered equivalent to a greater faith in the excellence of human nature. In our favored land political liberty and economic opportunity were by a process of natural education inevitably making for individual and social amelioration. In Europe the people did not have a fair chance. Population increased more quickly than economic opportunities, and the opportunities which did exist were largely monopolized by privileged classes. Power was lodged in the hands of a few men, whose interest depended upon keeping the people in a condition of economic and political servitude; and in this way a divorce was created between individual interest and social stability and welfare. The interests of the privileged rulers demanded the perpetuation of unjust institutions. The interest of the people demanded a revolutionary upheaval. In the absence of such a revolution they had no sufficient inducement to seek their own material and moral improvement. The theory was proclaimed and accepted as a justification for this system of popular oppression that men were not to be trusted to take care of themselves--that they could be kept socially useful only by the severest measures of moral, religious, and political discipline. The theory of the American democracy and its practice was proclaimed to be the antithesis of this European theory and practice. The people were to be trusted rather than suspected and disciplined. They must be tied to their country by the strong bond of self-interest. Give them a fair chance, and the natural goodness of human nature would do the rest. Individual and public interest will, on the whole, coincide, provided no individuals are allowed to have special privileges. Thus the American system will be predestined to success by its own adequacy, and its success will constitute an enormous stride towards human amelioration. Just because our system is at bottom a thorough test of the ability of human nature to respond admirably to a fair chance, the issue of the experiment is bound to be of more than national importance. The American system stands for the highest hope of an excellent worldly life that mankind has yet ventured,--the hope that men can be improved without being fettered, that they can be saved without even vicariously being nailed to the cross.

Such are the claims advanced on behalf of the American system; and within certain limits this system has made good. Americans have been more than usually prosperous. They have been more than usually free. They have, on the whole, made their freedom and prosperity contribute to a higher level of individual and social excellence. Most assuredly the average Americanized American is neither a more intelligent, a wiser, nor a better man than the average European; but he is likely to be a more energetic and hopeful one. Out of a million well-established Americans, taken indiscriminately from all occupations and conditions, compared to a corresponding assortment of Europeans, a larger proportion of the former will be leading alert, active, and useful lives. Within a given social area there will be a smaller amount of social wreckage and a larger amount of wholesome and profitable achievement. The mass of the American people is, on the whole, more deeply stirred, more thoroughly awake, more assertive in their personal demands, and more confident of satisfying them. In a word, they are more alive, and they must be credited with the moral and social benefit attaching to a larger amount of vitality.

Furthermore, this greater individual vitality, although intimately connected with the superior agricultural and industrial opportunities of a new country, has not been due exclusively to such advantages. Undoubtedly the vast areas of cheap and fertile land which have been continuously available for settlement have contributed, not only to the abundance of American prosperity, but also to the formation of

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American character and institutions; and undoubtedly many of the economic and political evils which are now becoming offensively obtrusive are directly or indirectly derived from the gradual monopolization of certain important economic opportunities. Nevertheless, these opportunities could never have been converted so quickly into substantial benefits had it not been for our more democratic political and social forms. A privileged class does not secure itself in the enjoyment of its advantages merely by legal intrenchments. It depends quite as much upon disqualifying the "lower classes" from utilizing their opportunities by a species of social inhibition. The rail-splitter can be so easily encouraged to believe that rail-splitting is his vocation. The tragedy in the life of Mr. J. M. Barrie's "Admirable Crichton" was not due to any legal prohibition of his conversion in England, as on the tropic island, into a veritable chief, but that on English soil he did not in his own soul want any such elevation and distinction. His very loyalty to the forms and fabric of English life kept him fatuously content with the mean truckling and meaner domineering of his position of butler. On the other hand, the loyalty of an American to the American idea would tend to make him aggressive and self-confident. Our democratic prohibition of any but occasional social distinctions and our democratic dislike to any suggestion of authentic social inferiority have contributed as essentially to the fluid and elastic substance of American life as have its abundant and accessible economic opportunities.

The increased momentum of American life, both in its particles and its mass, unquestionably has a considerable moral and social value. It is the beginning, the only possible beginning, of a better life for the people as individuals and for society. So long as the great majority of the poor in any country are inert and are laboring without any hope of substantial rewards in this world, the whole associated life of that community rests on an equivocal foundation. Its moral and social order is tied to an economic system which starves and mutilates the great majority of the population, and under such conditions its religion necessarily becomes a spiritual drug, administered for the purpose of subduing the popular discontent and relieving the popular misery. The only way the associated life of such a community can be radically improved is by the leavening of the inert popular mass. Their wants must be satisfied, and must be sharpened and increased with the habit of satisfaction. During the past hundred years every European state has made a great stride in the direction of arousing its poorer citizens to be more wholesomely active, discontented, and expectant; but our own country has succeeded in traveling farther in this direction than has any other, and it may well be proud of its achievement. That the American political and economic system has accomplished so much on behalf of the ordinary man does constitute the fairest hope that men have been justified in entertaining of a better worldly order; and any higher social achievement, which America may hereafter reach, must depend upon an improved perpetuation of this process. The mass of mankind must be aroused to still greater activity by a still more abundant satisfaction of their needs, and by a consequent increase of their aggressive discontent.

The most discriminating appreciation, which I have ever read, of the social value of American national achievement has been written by Mr. John B. Crozier; and the importance of the matter is such that it will be well to quote it at length. Says Mr. Crozier in his chapter on "Reconstruction in America," in the third volume of his "History of Intellectual Development": "There (in America) a natural equality of sentiment, springing out of and resting on a broad equality of material and social conditions, has been the heritage of the people from the earliest times.... This broad natural equality of sentiment, rooted in equal material opportunities, equal education, equal laws, equal opportunities, and equal access to all positions of honor and trust, has just sufficient inequality mixed with it--in the shape of greater or less mental endowments, higher or lower degrees of culture, larger or smaller material possessions, and so on--to keep

it sweet and human; while at the same time it is all so gently graded, and marked by transitions so easy and natural, that no gap was anywhere to be discovered on which to found an order of privilege or caste. Now an equality like this, with the erectness, independence, energy, and initiative it brings with it, in men, springing from the loins of an imperial race is a possession, not for a nation only, but for civilization itself and for humanity. It is the distinct raising of the entire body of a people to a higher level, and so brings civilization a stage nearer its goal. It is the first successful attempt in recorded history to get a healthy, natural equality which should reach down to the foundations of the state and to the great masses of men; and in its results corresponds to what in other lands (excepting, perhaps, in luxury alone) has been attained only by the few,—the successful and the ruling spirits. To lose it, therefore, to barter it or give it away, would be in the language of Othello 'such deep damnation that nothing else could match,' and would be an irreparable loss to the world and to civilization."

Surely no nation can ask for a higher and more generous tribute than that which Mr. Crozier renders to America in the foregoing quotation, and its value is increased by the source from which it comes. It is written by a man who, as a Canadian, has had the opportunity of knowing American life well without being biased in its favor, and who, as the historian of the intellectual development of our race, has made an exhaustive study of the civilizations both of the ancient and the modern worlds. Nothing can be soberly added to it on behalf of American national achievement, but neither should it be diminished by any important idea and phrase. The American economic, political, and social organization has given to its citizens the benefits of material prosperity, political liberty, and a wholesome natural equality; and this achievement is a gain, not only to Americans, but to the world and to civilization.

III How the Promise is to be Realized

In the preceding section I have been seeking to render justice to the actual achievements of the American nation. A work of manifest individual and social value has been wrought; and this work, not only explains the expectant popular outlook towards the future, but it partially determines the character as distinguished from the continued fulfillment of the American national Promise. The better future, whatever else it may bring, must bring at any rate a continuation of the good things of the past. The drama of its fulfillment must find an appropriate setting in the familiar American social and economic scenery. No matter how remote the end may be, no matter what unfamiliar sacrifices may eventually be required on its behalf, the substance of the existing achievement must constitute a veritable beginning, because on no other condition can the attribution of a peculiar Promise to American life find a specific warrant. On no other condition would our national Promise constitute more than an admirable but irrelevant moral and social aspiration.

The moral and social aspiration proper to American life is, of course, the aspiration vaguely described by the word democratic; and the actual achievement of the American nation points towards an adequate and fruitful definition of the democratic ideal. Americans are usually satisfied by a most inadequate verbal description of democracy, but their national achievement implies one which is much more comprehensive and formative. In order to be true to their past, the increasing comfort and economic independence of an ever increasing proportion of the population must be secured, and it must be secured by a combination of individual effort and proper political organization. Above all, however, this economic and political system must be made to secure results of moral and social value. It is the seeking of such results which converts democracy from a political system into a constructive social ideal; and the more the ideal significance

of the American national Promise is asserted and emphasized, the greater will become the importance of securing these moral and social benefits.

The fault in the vision of our national future possessed by the ordinary American does not consist in the expectation of some continuity of achievement. It consists rather in the expectation that the familiar benefits will continue to accumulate automatically. In his mind the ideal Promise is identified with the processes and conditions which hitherto have very much simplified its fulfillment, and he fails sufficiently to realize that the conditions and processes are one thing and the ideal Promise quite another. Moreover, these underlying social and economic conditions are themselves changing, in such wise that hereafter the ideal Promise, instead of being automatically fulfilled, may well be automatically stifled. For two generations and more the American people were, from the economic point of view, most happily situated. They were able, in a sense, to slide down hill into the valley of fulfillment. Economic conditions were such that, given a fair start, they could scarcely avoid reaching a desirable goal. But such is no longer the case. Economic conditions have been profoundly modified, and American political and social problems have been modified with them. The Promise of American life must depend less than it did upon the virgin wilderness and the Atlantic Ocean, for the virgin wilderness has disappeared, and the Atlantic Ocean has become merely a big channel. The same results can no longer be achieved by the same easy methods. Ugly obstacles have jumped into view, and ugly obstacles are peculiarly dangerous to a person who is sliding down hill. The man who is clambering up hill is in a much better position to evade or overcome them. Americans will possess a safer as well as a worthier vision of their national Promise as soon as they give it a house on a hill-top rather than in a valley.

The very genuine experience upon which American optimistic fatalism rests, is equivalent, because of its limitations, to a dangerous inexperience; and of late years an increasing number of Americans have been drawing this inference. They have been coming to see themselves more as others see them; and as an introduction to a consideration of this more critical frame of mind, I am going to quote another foreigner's view of American life,--the foreigner in this case being an Englishman and writing in 1893.

"The American note," says Mr. James Muirhead in his "Land of Contrasts," "includes a sense of illimitable expansion and possibility, an almost childlike confidence in human ability and fearlessness of both the present and the future, a wider realization of human brotherhood than has yet existed, a greater theoretical willingness to judge by the individual than by the class, a breezy indifference to authority and a positive predilection for innovation, a marked alertness of mind, and a manifold variety of interest--above all, an inextinguishable hopefulness and courage. It is easy to lay one's finger in America upon almost every one of the great defects of civilization--even those defects which are specially characteristic of the civilization of the Old World. The United States cannot claim to be exempt from manifestations of economic slavery, of grinding the faces of the poor, of exploitation of the weak, of unfair distribution of wealth, of unjust monopoly, of unequal laws, of industrial and commercial chicanery, of disgraceful ignorance, of economic fallacies, of public corruption, of interested legislation, of want of public spirit, of vulgar boasting and chauvinism, of snobbery, of class prejudice, of respect of persons, and of a preference of the material over the spiritual. In a word, America has not attained, or nearly attained, perfection. But below and behind, and beyond all its weakness and evils, there is the grand fact of a noble national theory founded on reason and conscience." The reader will remark in the foregoing quotation that Mr. Muirhead is equally emphatic in his approval and in his disapproval. He generously recognizes almost as much that is good about Americans and their ways as our most vivacious patriotic orators would claim, while at the same time he has marshaled an army of abuses and sins

which sound like an echo of the pages of the London Saturday Review. In the end he applies a friendly dash of whitewash by congratulating us on the "grand fact of our noble national theory," but to a discerning mind the consolation is not very consoling. The trouble is that the sins with which America is charged by Mr. Muirhead are flagrant violations of our noble national theory. So far as his charges are true, they are a denial that the American political and economic organization is accomplishing the results which its traditional claims require. If, as Mr. Muirhead charges, Americans permit the existence of economic slavery, if they grind the face of the poor, if they exploit the weak and distribute wealth unjustly, if they allow monopolies to prevail and laws to be unequal, if they are disgracefully ignorant, politically corrupt, commercially unscrupulous, socially snobbish, vulgarly boastful, and morally coarse,--if the substance of the foregoing indictment is really true, why, the less that is said about a noble national theory, the better. A man who is a sturdy sinner all the week hardly improves his moral standing by attending church on Sunday and professing a noble Christian theory of life. There must surely be some better way of excusing our sins than by raising aloft a noble theory of which these sins are a glaring violation.

I have quoted from Mr. Muirhead, not because his antithetic characterization of American life is very illuminating, but because of the precise terms of his charges against America. His indictment is practically equivalent to the assertion that the American system is not, or at least is no longer, achieving as much as has been claimed on its behalf. A democratic system may permit underlaid the existence of many sins and abuses, but it cannot permit the exploitation of the ordinary man by means of unjust laws and institutions. Neither can this indictment be dismissed without argument. When Mr. Muirhead's book was written sixteen years ago, the majority of good Americans would assuredly have read the charge with an incredulous smile; but in the year 1909 they might behave differently. The sins of which Mr. Muirhead accused Americans sixteen years ago are substantially the sins of which to-day they are accusing themselves--or rather one another. A numerous and powerful group of reformers has been collecting whose whole political policy and action is based on the conviction that the "common people" have not been getting the Square Deal to which they are entitled under the American system; and these reformers are carrying with them a constantly increasing body of public opinion. A considerable proportion of the American people is beginning to exhibit economic and political, as well as personal, discontent. A generation ago the implication was that if a man remained poor and needy, his poverty was his own fault, because the American system was giving all its citizens a fair chance. Now, however, the discontented poor are beginning to charge their poverty to an unjust political and economic organization, and reforming agitators do not hesitate to support them in this contention. Manifestly a threatened obstacle has been raised against the anticipated realization of our national Promise. Unless the great majority of Americans not only have, but believe they have, a fair chance, the better American future will be dangerously compromised.

The conscious recognition of grave national abuses casts a deep shadow across the traditional American patriotic vision. The sincere and candid reformer can no longer consider the national Promise as destined to automatic fulfillment. The reformers themselves are, no doubt, far from believing that whatever peril there is cannot be successfully averted. They make a point of being as patriotically prophetic as the most "old-fashioned Democrat." They proclaim even more loudly their conviction of an indubitable and a beneficent national future. But they do not and cannot believe that this future will take care of itself. As reformers they are bound to assert that the national body requires for the time being a good deal of medical attendance, and many of them anticipate that even after the doctors have discontinued their daily visits the patient will still need the

supervision of a sanitary specialist. He must be persuaded to behave so that he will not easily fall ill again, and so that his health will be permanently improved. Consequently, just in so far as reformers are reformers they are obliged to abandon the traditional American patriotic fatalism. The national Promise has been transformed into a closer equivalent of a national purpose, the fulfillment of which is a matter of conscious work.

The transformation of the old sense of a glorious national destiny into the sense of a serious national purpose will inevitably tend to make the popular realization of the Promise of American life both more explicit and more serious. As long as Americans believed they were able to fulfill a noble national Promise merely by virtue of maintaining intact a set of political institutions and by the vigorous individual pursuit of private ends, their allegiance to their national fulfillment remained more a matter of words than of deeds; but now that they are being aroused from their patriotic slumber, the effect is inevitably to disentangle the national idea and to give it more dignity. The redemption of the national Promise has become a cause for which the good American must fight, and the cause for which a man fights is a cause which he more than ever values. The American idea is no longer to be propagated merely by multiplying the children of the West and by granting ignorant aliens permission to vote. Like all sacred causes, it must be propagated by the Word and by that right arm of the Word, which is the Sword.

The more enlightened reformers are conscious of the additional dignity and value which the popularity of reform has bestowed upon the American idea, but they still fail to realize the deeper implications of their own programme. In abandoning the older conception of an automatic fulfillment of our national destiny, they have abandoned more of the traditional American point of view than they are aware. The traditional American optimistic fatalism was not of accidental origin, and it cannot be abandoned without involving in its fall some other important ingredients in the accepted American tradition. Not only was it dependent on economic conditions which prevailed until comparatively recent times, but it has been associated with certain erroneous but highly cherished political theories. It has been wrought into the fabric of our popular economic and political ideas to such an extent that its overthrow necessitates a partial revision of some of the most important articles in the traditional American creed.

The extent and the character of this revision may be inferred from a brief consideration of the effect upon the substance of our national Promise of an alteration in its proposed method of fulfillment. The substance of our national Promise has consisted, as we have seen, of an improving popular economic condition, guaranteed by democratic political institutions, and resulting in moral and social amelioration. These manifold benefits were to be obtained merely by liberating the enlightened self-interest of the American people. The beneficent result followed inevitably from the action of wholly selfish motives--provided, of course, the democratic political system of equal rights was maintained in its integrity. The fulfillment of the American Promise was considered inevitable because it was based upon a combination of self-interest and the natural goodness of human nature. On the other hand, if the fulfillment of our national Promise can no longer be considered inevitable, if it must be considered as equivalent to a conscious national purpose instead of an inexorably national destiny, the implication necessarily is that the trust reposed in individual self-interest has been in some measure betrayed. No preestablished harmony can then exist between the free and abundant satisfaction of private needs and the accomplishment of a morally and socially desirable result. The Promise of American life is to be fulfilled--not merely by a maximum amount of economic freedom, but by a certain measure of discipline; not merely by the abundant satisfaction of individual desires, but by a large measure of individual subordination and self-denial. And this necessity of subordinating the satisfaction of individual desires to the fulfillment of a national purpose

is attached particularly to the absorbing occupation of the American people,—the occupation, viz.: of accumulating wealth. The automatic fulfillment of the American national Promise is to be abandoned, if at all, precisely because the traditional American confidence in individual freedom has resulted in a morally and socially undesirable distribution of wealth.

In making the concluding statement of the last paragraph I am venturing, of course, upon very debatable ground. Neither can I attempt in this immediate connection to offer any justification for the statement which might or should be sufficient to satisfy a stubborn skeptic. I must be content for the present with the bare assertion that the prevailing abuses and sins, which have made reform necessary, are all of them associated with the prodigious concentration of wealth, and of the power exercised by wealth, in the hands of a few men. I am far from believing that this concentration of economic power is wholly an undesirable thing, and I am also far from believing that the men in whose hands this power is concentrated deserve, on the whole, any exceptional moral reprobation for the manner in which it has been used. In certain respects they have served their country well, and in almost every respect their moral or immoral standards are those of the great majority of their fellow-countrymen. But it is none the less true that the political corruption, the unwise economic privileges are all under existing conditions due to the malevolent social influence of individual and incorporated American wealth; and it is with which they are associated, have originated in the peculiar freedom which the American tradition and organization have granted to the individual. Up to a certain point that freedom has been and still is beneficial. Beyond that point it is not merely harmful; it is by way of being fatal. Efficient regulation there must be; and it must be regulation which will strike, not at the symptoms of the evil, but at its roots. The existing concentration of wealth and financial power in the hands of a few irresponsible men is the inevitable outcome of the chaotic individualism of our political and economic organization, while at the same time it is inimical to democracy, because it tends to erect political abuses and social inequalities into a system. The inference which follows may be disagreeable, but it is not to be escaped. In becoming responsible for the subordination of the individual to the demand of a dominant and constructive national purpose, the American state will in effect be making itself responsible for a morally and socially desirable distribution of wealth.

The consequences, then, of converting our American national destiny into a national purpose are beginning to be revolutionary. When the Promise of American life is conceived as a national ideal, whose fulfillment is a matter of artful and laborious work, the effect thereof is substantially to identify the national purpose with the social problem. What the American people of the present and the future have really been promised by our patriotic prophecies is an attempt to solve that problem. They have been promised on American soil comfort, prosperity, and the opportunity for self-improvement; and the lesson of the existing crisis is that such a Promise can never be redeemed by an indiscriminate individual scramble for wealth. The individual competition, even when it starts under fair conditions and rules, results, not only, as it should, in the triumph of the strongest, but in the attempt to perpetuate the victory; and it is this attempt which must be recognized and forestalled in the interest of the American national purpose. The way to realize a purpose is, not to leave it to chance, but to keep it loyally in mind, and adopt means proper to the importance and the difficulty of the task. No voluntary association of individuals, resourceful and disinterested though they be, is competent to assume the responsibility. The problem belongs to the American national democracy, and its solution must be attempted chiefly by means of official national action.

Neither can its attempted solution be escaped. When they are confronted by the

individual sacrifices which the fulfillment of their national Promise demands, American political leaders will find many excuses for ignoring the responsibility thereby implied; but the difficulty of such an attempted evasion will consist in the reenforcement of the historical tradition by a logical and a practical necessity. The American problem is the social problem partly because the social problem is the democratic problem. American political and social leaders will find that in a democracy the problem cannot be evaded. The American people have no irremediable political grievances. No good American denies the desirability of popular sovereignty and of a government which should somehow represent the popular will. While our national institutions may not be a perfect embodiment of these doctrines, a decisive and a resolute popular majority has the power to alter American institutions and give them a more immediately representative character. Existing political evils and abuses are serious enough; but inasmuch as they have come into being, not against the will, but with the connivance of the American people, the latter are responsible for their persistence. In the long run, consequently, the ordinary American will have nothing irremediable to complain about except economic and social inequalities. In Europe such will not be the case. The several European peoples have, and will continue to have, political grievances, because such grievances are the inevitable consequence of their national history and their international situation; and as long as these grievances remain, the more difficult social problem will be subordinated to an agitation for political emancipation. But the American people, having achieved democratic institutions, have nothing to do but to turn them to good account. In so far as the social problem is a real problem and the economic grievance a real grievance, they are bound under the American political system to come eventually to the surface and to demand express and intelligent consideration. A democratic ideal makes the social problem inevitable and its attempted solution indispensable.

I am fully aware, as already intimated, that the forgoing interpretation of the Promise of American life will seem fantastic and obnoxious to the great majority of Americans, and I am far from claiming that any reasons as yet alleged afford a sufficient justification for such a radical transformation of the traditional national policy and democratic creed. All that can be claimed is that if a democratic ideal makes an express consideration of the social problem inevitable, it is of the first importance for Americans to realize this truth and to understand the reasons for it. Furthermore, the assumption is worth making, in case the traditional American system is breaking down, because a more highly socialized democracy is the only practical substitute on the part of convinced democrats for an excessively individualized democracy. Of course, it will be claimed that the traditional system is not breaking down, and again no absolute proof of the breakdown, and again no absolute proof of the breakdown has been or can be alleged. Nevertheless, the serious nature of contemporary American political and economic symptoms at least pointedly suggests the existence of some radical disease, and when one assumes such to be the case, one cannot be accused of borrowing trouble. I shall, consequently, start from such an assumption and make an attempt to explain contemporary American problems as in part the result of the practice of an erroneous democratic theory. The attempt will necessarily involve a brief review of our political and economic history, undertaken for the purpose of tracing the traditional ideas of their origin and testing them by their performances. There will follow a detailed examination of current political and economic problems and conditions--considered in relation to the American democratic tradition and to the proposed revision thereof. In view of the increasing ferment of American political and economic thought, no apology is necessary for submitting our traditional ideas and practices to an examination from an untraditional point of view. I need scarcely add that the untraditional point of view will contain little or no original matter. The only novelty such an inquiry can claim is the novelty of applying ideas, long familiar to foreign political thinkers, to the subject-matter of American life. When applied to American life, this group of ideas assumes a somewhat new complexion and significance; and the promise of such a small amount of novelty will, I trust, tempt even a disapproving reader to follow farther the course of the argument,

CREED BACKGROUND

18th Century is "evolution in Men's minds. Came slowly by evolution.

New ~~things~~ ideas about things and their relations, about man and the power of his mind, about the rights of man and the nature of government, about the rights of states and revolutions.

Out of the middle ages, Galileo in 16-17 century discovered laws of nature. Isaac Newton in 17-18 century continued. Leading thinkers began to leave realm of religious controversies leading to wars and to join science and study nature. Natural science or "philosophy" became the most imp't branch of learning.

The significance of Newton and Galileo is not only that they influenced the learned, but also the ordinary people, about the nature of man, his rights, his organization of govt.

In the Middle Ages the world was regarded as a mystery and man as a poor creature who could never solve this mystery. It was thought that men were naturally disposed to evil so that if they were allowed to think and act for themselves they would be sure to do evil things and think wrong things. Therefore it was supposed that God had given kings and princes authority to govern men's acts and the church authority to govern their thoughts. The duty of men was to obey this divinely established authority of state and church without question; and no one ~~was~~ supposed that men could ever, here on earth, be made much wiser or better, or the conditions of life under which they lived much improved.

Now with science, depressing view of man changed. Men saw that scientists were able, by using reason, to learn something about God's universe that the church did not know.

Men now considered that the world might be designed on a rational plan and that man had a rational mind capable of understanding that plan. By following reason and experience man could learn about the universe and laws and in the end solve all difficulties.

Thus democratic idea of the universe made man the master of his own fate. Men by reason could increase their knowledge and with that, become wiser and better... It enabled man to believe that mankind, through its own efforts, was capable of making progress toward perfection.

This was a terrible explosion. If God had intended men to be guided by reason, he could not have intended them to give blind obedience to kings and churches. Thus the democratic idea of the universe led directly to the democratic idea of govt and soc.

And so the French philosophers appeared and agreed that truth was something to be discovered by thinking. They, therefore, first believed that man must be free to think.

In their agitation they pointed to the English example. For 100 years the English went through a struggle about religion and politics out of which came a mellowness and a determination to prevent too much power in a few hands. Thus from the end of the 17th century the English people enjoyed a greater degree of self-government, free speech, free religion than any other people in Europe.

This experience was valuable because others in Europe saw that England, with its free govt, its free religion, its free thought was going more prosperous and stronger than any other country. Defeated French in 3 wars abd became leading colonial and commercial power.

Voltaire admired the English and made war on intolerance. He argued that the greatest advancement in knowledge and civilization occurred when there was greatest freedom of thought.

By the end of the 13th century, few people believed in the divine right of kings to govern as they pleased.

Works of John Locke "Two Treatises of Government" (1688):

- 1) All men have certain natural rights, a right to life, liberty and possession which they acquire by their own labor;
- 2) God gave men reason in order that they may know what their natural rights are and in order that they may devise a govt to protect them in their rights
- 3) Men, therefore, owe obedience to the govt they have established, as long as the govt protects them in their rights.
- 4) When any govt ceases to do this, the men who made it may destroy it.

This is both a democratic and revolutionary theory. It affirms that governments are made by men for the protection of their natural rights and may be overturned when they cease to protect those rights. Any people wishing to change their form of govt would be glad to borrow so convenient a theory. In the 18th cent. it was borrowed by American and French (Read).

Rousseau influenced by Locke. He said the men are naturally good and if they do evil, it is chiefly because the conditions in which they live make it impossible to do otherwise. Three bad conditions: 1) unequal distribution of wealth, which enabled the few to live in idleness and luxury and compelled the many to toil.; 2) inequality of rank and privilege which gave to a few an unfair advantage; 3) false system of education which taught people to value rank, wealth, social position more than talent, virtue or service to others.

The good society: all men have certain natural rights and liberties. This being so, no man can justly be deprived of his natural rights and liberties without his own consent. In society as it existed men had been deprived of their rights and liberties without their consent. No govt has rightful authority over men unless it had been established by the consent of all the people.... Thus governments derive their legitimate authority from the consent of the governed instead of from the will of God.

DEMOCRACY

This development led to the conviction at the end of the 18th century that a movement towards democracy was part of the great process of man's development from savagery to civilization and from higher to higher stages of civilization.

The main political movements of the 19th and early 20th centuries supplied illustrations of an apparently democratic trend.

At the close of the Napoleonic wars, except for England (limited monarch), US (democracy) and Switzerland, governments in the rest of the world were generally in the hands of hereditary kings and nobles who ruled alone or with but slight restraint from assemblies representing only the privileged.

Within the next century up until 1914 war, popular governments were widely extended: democratic constitutions were set up throughout the western hemisphere (1848 Revolts); France became a republic; representative parliaments set up in all the remaining monarchies except Russia.....Also, successive suffrage reforms steadily increased the proportion of citizens entitled to participate in govt.

Even with WWI, democracy seemed on the march. Popular peaceful and bloody revolutions swept away a tsar, a sultan, three emperors, nearly a score of minor kings dukes and princes.

Yet, we are no longer so sure.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

DEMOCRATIC DEFEAT

Large scale industry created industrial despots within societies politically organized as democracies and the former began to make the decisions that affected most seriously the welfare of the masses of workers and consumers...This they did and do directly through the power to fix the income and living conditions of the workers and the cost of the necessities of life for the other inhabitants.....Also, by controlling the means whereby the social opinion is formed, they determine indirectly the decision of democratic agencies.In spite of democratic political institutions, therefore, present problems for the masses in industrial society were not solved..... poverty, unemployment, wealth inequality

SOVIET CONSTITUTION

"Citizens of USSR have the right to work ...
"the right to rest and leisure...
"the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of
sickness or loss of capacity to work ...
"the right to education ...

"Women in the USSR are accorded equal rights with men
in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social
and political life ...

"Equality of rights of citizens of the USSR, irrespective
of their nationality or race, in all spheres of
economic, state, cultural, social and political
life, is an infeasible law".

FRENCH DECLARATION OF RIGHTS (1791)

"Men are born and remain equal in rights ... The
aim of every political association is the protection
of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These
rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance
to oppression ... Law is the expression of the general
will. All citizens have the right to share personally,
or by their representatives, in its formation".

Rogers Peet

Draft Constitution Adopted

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

PARIS, Sept. 20—The text of the law providing the establishment of the constitution of the French Republic follows:

PREAMBLE

Downs!

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Differences of opinion arise when it is asked in what respect men can be asserted to be equal. With the growth of biological and psychological knowledge, the claim that men approximate to the same physical or mental stature has been abandoned. In place of equality as a fact, it has come to be affirmed as a program and as an ideal. Admitting that men are not equally endowed or circumstanced, we still feel that to an indefinitely greater extent they ought to be. Along with the shift of claim from the natural to the normative ~~realm~~ world, it has grown more specific. The phrase "Give every man his chance", which sums up the democratic attitude today as well as any, has in its intention to guarantee not only such things as equality before the law and manhood suffrage, but universal education, public health, economic insurance - perhaps even the social control of monopolies.

Now while few will deny that the idea of equality, like many another notion dealing with human relations, has the power to arouse the will, to warm the emotions and to serve as a goal of the social process, its significance seems to lie deeper than any mere romantic make-believe. For besides consoling men's fancies, it serves as a logical condition of their experience.

Upon it, in fact, depends the possibility of all communication of ideas, of all cooperative enterprises. Only by accepting the genuineness of other persons in the same sense as our own, can we enter into social dealing with them. Only by being "on the level" can we establish a common footing of give and take. "Were I to seek to converse with a stone, I should have to treat it as

"as good as" and "as real as" I. For without recognition of others as "as much themselves as we are ourselves", intercourse loses its meaning and objective reference

Men are not equal: physically, mentally, morally; particularly if we measure them with the eye. In fact, in any sense of the word which leaves out the question of final worth... "We all know this and yet there is meaning to the idea of equality. The shortcoming of measurement is that it never settles the question of ultimate worth... it is hard to put a man in his place with a tape measure.

"Weigh him and find him wanting, but he will insist that others are no better than he. Bigger, stronger, cleverer, more determined they may be; better they are not... Our fellow, by measurement small in one way or another, simply rejects the standards used against him. He denies their validity.

If a man finds measurement used to assign privilege to another and privation to himself, he at once doubts the quality measured as a proper standard..... He cannot deny the obvious facts of measurement, but he does deny that this standard should serve as the price tag of his final worth..... "No man wishes to have his place determined by a quality which he lacks or by a kind of activity in which he does not excel.

The egalitarian wishes to be judged as a man.... The proposition of human equality can never be proved by physical measurement, nor by intelligence tests,. But since an egalitarian believes that man is more than a being contained between his hat and his boots; he sees something of a dignity and spark. He, therefore, seeks another standard universally acceptable to determine the final worth of men.... This means not judging men by his abilities or appearance, but by the human values of his deepest being.

Each man to himself is the center of the universe. Life is his life; death is his death. He has an idea of his own infinite significance and worth. His thought, his knowledge, his senses are all parts of his world.... Whatever the world thinks of him, here and now, for better or worse, the world starts and stops with his own awareness.... It is a dream, a play, a tragedy or a comedy as he may see it; it is a game or a struggle, a triumph or a disaster as he acts in it; a source of pain or pleasure or sorrow and joy according to his feelings; a riddle, challenge, or order according to his thoughts

Equality then can be stated boldly, geometrically. Each man is to himself equal to the great world of his own experience. In what matters most to men, this world has the same import to all; it teaches each the lesson of his own infinite worth. And so men who are equal to each other are equal to each other. One being of infinite worth cannot be greater or less than another of infinite worth.... Each man should judge the worth of others as he judges his own.

The doctrine of inequality is discredited as soon as we apply our intelligence. Men will never consent to have their final worth determined by a single capacity to the advantage only of a few. Justice can never be accepted by all unless it takes every man at the value which he places on himself.

ARMY COURSE SAID TO AID COMMUNISM



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Letters to

~~42-46-46~~

Our Color Bar Criticized

Suggestion Is Made That U. N. Assembly Meet in Southern States

The writer of the following letter is a member of the staff of Advisers to the Indian Representatives in the U. N. General Assembly.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:



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Anti-U. S. Trend Grows in India; Food Shipments Arouse Hostility

***Americans Are Depicted as Money-Mad,
Godless and Immoral People, Unfit to
Take Leading Role in World Affairs***

1946

By GEORGE E. JONES
By Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.



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THE NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1947.

State Department Loyalty Code Bars Risks



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The New York Times Magazine



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NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Some of the most crucial questions facing man today and everyday concern themselves with his nature. What is the nature of man? Most of man's intellectual energies have been directed toward that question.

Whatever convictions we have relating to democracy or our advocacy of an elite system of life, if they are to be intelligent, must refer back to our answer to the question of What is Man?

If man is base, vile, the victim of original sin, an original Calvinist notion, subject to perpetual punishment from a God of Wrath (a very prevalent notion in political thought), then, of course, he cannot be trusted with making decisions for himself.

If you believe, however, using religious terms once more, that he is a Son of God, made in his image, with potentialities of reaching the level of new heights, then, of course, you do trust man with the making of decisions..

On another plane: scientifically.- If looking at the evolutionary process in nature, you come to see that man actually is little more than an animal in reality, but a step or two removed, then, it is only natural that you will scoff at such terms as "dignity of man", "rights", "freedom".

If, however, looking at the evolutionary process, you see a development from one low level of life to a higher and still higher, to ape, to ancient man, to homo sapiens, to man as we know it, then it is not unreasonable to believe that man can aspire to a higher level of attainment in the evolutionary process. Then, terms like "freedom", "democracy", mean something as stimuli toward that growth.

Let's take this on still another level - the mind and here Freud is significant. If you believe that man is a rational being, capable of analysing facts and problems and using his brain

to make decisions, then it is conceivable that you can be an optimist. Certainly, there are problems facing the world. But man will get himself out of them..

If, however, you look at man's brain as an intricate mechanism, subject to fixed patterns of thought, involuntary in its recording of events, binding in its hold upon man, making him react instinctively without conscious will or premeditation, literally a slave to basic drives and psychological urges, then you are no longer an optimist with faith in man's making the correct decisions.

It's this central theme that has concerned so many of our great thinkers through the ages, part of our course too.

As we go through the course, be aware of this problem and theme. Let it through your minds.

(Questions)

Now, you may ask what this has to do with the discussion we were going to have on the crisis of our time - between 2 wars.

Important because it shapes our attitude toward the crisis.

It doesn't take a college education to find out that our problems are many and that the world is in difficulty, serious. All it takes is the use of one's eyes or ears (and they drafted some who were ~~not~~ that well equipped either). We've passed through two wars and are in the midst of talk about a third.

But knowing that, what do we do about it?

Do we run to a remote island in the Pacific, if we can find any that are free of our so called "civilization" or to some far away hideout in the Dakotas to escape from an identity with these tribulations?

Or do we go out as crusading missionaries with fire in our hearts and smoke in our eyes?

This course doesn't tell you what to do or tell you the personal ethics to apply toward the problem. That's what college can do for you, if you let it and do not lose yourself in technical specialization and vocational training....Nor are we concerned with what course of action you ought choose. What we are interested in doing is giving you a start toward formulating your own philosophy so that you know why you do what you do.!

With that background, let us try to analyze the crisis of our times.

MODERN CRISIS

Until recent years, when the Western World entered World War I, our main interest was in man's mastery over nature, the physical universe. The 19th century in American history was characterized by the triumph of science and technology. In the last 100 years, the advances in the physical sciences, in physics and chemistry, have been outstanding. Scholarship, research, money, effort, attention, all of these were focused upon the physical sciences and the result is refrigerators, television, AND atomic bombs. Technology.

This was the building era; and from the straggling villages, hundreds of cities arose, to be closely interlaced by the development of vast facilities of transportation and communication. ...100 years ago, Chicago consisted of a few hundred frame dwellings and a few thousand ardent souls...Not far from here in the Northwest and southwest, the Indians had not yet been subdued..Men were to cut down the forests literally to build their cities. The frontier was to be conquered; the country and world bound together with networks of rails, roads, and wires.

Horace Greeley in the NEW YORK TRIBUNE was able to say 90 years ago: "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country"... The generation which followed witnessed the conquest of a continent. It was done by a nation turned to individual profit and acquisition.

That was the cry of the times. Individualism, in the sense of profit and acquisition. A wide open country with plenty of land and abounding in natural resources gave ample opportunity to the man of energy and enterprise to make good.

Hence, we in US had a symbol and credo dealing with log-cabin rearing presidents, a world of hard knocks producing industrial

and financial tycoons. Every boy could become president of his company. Here was the predominant picture in peoples' heads, pictures which still linger on though their correspondence to real life long since ceased to exist.

Now, we associate all of this concept with a culture and a set of values which we call "capitalism". It stands for the kind of individualism we described, stress on industrialization, emphasis on wealth and materialism for values.

Well, something happened to this culture, this system we call capitalism. It doesn't matter for this purpose whether the system was good or bad, desirable or no. The fact of the matter is that it broke down.

In the US, the frontier disappeared for all intents and purposes with the cessation of free land in 1890. ...Growing up was a large wage earning class dependent upon and attached to machines and growingly concentrating in large industrial centers.

The fact is that no matter how often we shout the virtues of competition, "free enterprise", "the right of every man to make as much money as he can", they have largely become myths. The notion of an individual moving about freely, bargaining effectively, and receiving a just reward for his talent and ingenuity has become myth. Our society has changed.

Take the farmer. In 1870, 52.8% of all gainfully employed persons were in agriculture; those in manufacturing, mining, trade, commerce was 34.3..In 1930, agriculture had dropped to 21.3% while the total for the latter was 59.5%.

About 80% of our wageearners are employed in factories with 100 or more employees. The degree of concentration becomes even more impressive when we consider such corporations as the AT&T,

US Steel, General Motors, Standard Oil....Berle and Means estimated about 80% of American business wealth is corporate wealth.

This corporate rule, which has become more dominant, presents a new framework to which our old ideas appear unrelated. What's good enough for pappa and momma isn't good enough for us!

Corporate concentration means an increasing number of workers are brought under single management. The old independent worker has become a wage laborer receiving orders from his boss.When there is added the fact that less than 2,000 individuals are in a position to control and direct our industry, the problem becomes sharper.

These changes, therefore, have brought us steadily away from pioneer individualism to a society closely interdependent and interrelated.

But the machine has brought other changes as well, for it does not exist in a vacuum. Take the simple thing called radio. Invention gave us radio. But the radio raises a whole host of questions in economics, politics, social policy: regulation, control of advertising, censorship, use in education...Multiply this by the thousands of technological advances which have altered our culture and we see the complication and the complexity.

The breakdown comes in our spending so much time with the job of building and acquiring, that we didn't have time for dealing with the problem of a social order to meet the new world.

It is this chaos that we have inherited. Our social thinking is still that of the past. We still think, for example, in terms of an economic individualism of the frontier.

And the old patterns persist in schools, churches, press.

For the problems of crowded cities and shops, too many of us still look to solutions appropriate to the age of agriculture and small commerce.

OPA debate is an example. Talk of competition and supply and demand when bulk is in concentrated control.

BREAKDOWN OF CULTURE

These inconsistencies have led to a breakdown of our civilization: politically, economically, sociologically, culturally, morally. We will define this breakdown further, but we can first generalize it by understanding what it has done to MAN, the hero of our story of humanities.

"We've distinguished man from other animals in that he has a mind of a sort, is rational to a degree. His brain seems to have led him to a craving for this thing called "freedom". . Through the ages, man's thoughts have revolved about the central problem of release from slavery of all sorts and for a self-government and self-expression.

With the breakdown of the culture, however; and the crisis we see that man has become enslaved. It's been said that modern man has been in chains most of his life; and there is much truth in it.

What are the manifestations of that breakdown?

WARS, TOTALITARIANISM, ECONOMIC INSECURITY.

We thus see the incongruous sight of Man, the central figure in our story, striving to free himself from slavery; our criteria for civilization is the degree to which man can find freedom and happiness for himself as he controls his environment - and yet the era we live in finds man enslaved, losing freedom and losing control of his environment.

WAR - Let us see if we can suggest and fill in the details of the way in which war indicates and expresses a crisis and breakdown of our culture. First and obvious, of course, is the fact that when a society goes about decimating itself, destroying itself materially, the process reflects a breakdown.... But aside from that, there are other ways in which we find the institution leading to the enslavement of Man and the negation of what his mind strives for.

There is the fact that modern war is total. It requires large armies. Masses of populations become subject to a military caste system.

War also brings society to a peculiar and disturbing position of making undesirable choices. Once engaged in a war, everything must be subservient to its winning. Hence, we go ahead and use Atomic Bombs on helpless people who had no more say in bringing war than the man in the moon. A complete moral breakdown! (STARVATION)

TOTALITARIANISM:- Tied in with war during this period. Growing state power over the individual reaching extreme forms in Germany, Italy and still today in Spain and Russia. (IRON CURTAIN)

We may not be escaping in the US. Witness the drive for permanent conscription, universal... Witness the phenomenon of a President of the US asking to draft workers who go out on strike in the recent railraod controversy.

ECONOMIC INSECURITY:- The last of the Unholy Three. The great strides in mass production has made man a cog in wheel. He is now dispensable as a personality. We get the phenomenal circumstance of nobody being secure. There is little or no guarantee for the future. So people keep working at jobs they don't like to make money for themselves so that they wouldn't have to continue doing what they don't like and so that they can have something for illness or oldage.

But even when they earn enough for themselves, their children aren't secure economically so the parent keeps on working to earn enough to pass on to his children. And you get an everending cycle of Man working the major part of his waking life at jobs he has no love for. Psychologists tell us this builds up frustrations in modern man, make him unhappy and dissatisfied. The result, of course, is an escape into cheap dime novels, cheap Hollywood entertainment on one level...On the other level, we find an escape in violent manner of anti-semitism, Negro prejudice, jingo my country and anti-foreigner patriotism.

There we have a brief picture of the modern crisis and breakdown.

Story of the tailor who took 40 days to make a pair of pants. The angry customer complained: "It took God only 6 days to make the world. Why does it take you 40 days to make a pair of pants?" The tailor led the customer to a window and said: "Yes, but look at His world and then look at that pair of pants!"

IV

For the past few days, we've been analyzing the world between two wars prior to our entrance into a study of the specific contributions of the mind during this era. Our discussion, so far, has revolved about the phenomena of growing state power, totalitarianism, and war. These phenomena are the outstanding characteristics of our day and well point up the crisis we face.

The era, however, is significant in other less apparent ways. It can broadly be characterized as one of disillusionment after the Enlightenment.

A word about the enlightenment: The 18th and particularly the 19th centuries are particularly significant in the history of the world as the era during which man took great strides in intellect and action toward greater freedom and happiness, criteria used by many to define civilization and progress. The ideals, of course, were not discovered then. The thing giving men respect and dignity is an old one. Religion. Plato.

The 18th and 19th centuries significant for rebirth and for actually putting the plans into being. Called Age of Enlightenment. Expressed itself in art, music, literature. In the political and philosophical realm, it expressed itself in the works of the French Philosophers like Montesquieu and Rousseau and in English like Mill and Locke. (Social Contract of Rousseau).

Particularly significant in practical implementation of these great ideals. American Declaration of Independence. (not Constitution). Also French Revolt; English reform; European uprisings; Socialism.

Individualism and optimism was the stress of the era. Man was rational. He could eliminate war. All he needed was education to solve all problems. (Second International; no large wars).... Liberalism: persuasion and truth seeking, no intolerance (not always attained, but the ideal all people knew would materialize)... education: truth above all costs (public school education, Mann)

What happened? Why disillusionment?

Industrialism and Urbanism: people live in same houses, same way, same plans, go to same movies, listen same soapoperas, jukeboxes.

Reaction Against 19th Century Liberalism: Intolerance even among so called "liberals" like PM. GLK Smith--Draft---Truman

Literature: Studs Lonagan (Farrell), USA (Dos Passos), Sinclair Lewis.

Religion: Fundamentalist revivalism to original sin; faith; JW

Education: education not virtue; Iowa (not Minn); technical schools (osmosis only); salaries.

Disillusionment and Cynicism: Gallup Poll - consequence is time table life, drift, affects all life and plans. Also in class (arm for peace) english composition on officer

The extent of the disillusionment becomes evident when we see the Gallup Poll results that 60-70% expect another war very soon.....Man came to college so that in the next war he could be an officer (commentary on wanting to become officers; and on requiring torture of book learning.)....Leads to a cynicism and time table sort of life. Drift....Reflects choice of eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow is war, or build house, marry, children.

Cynicism expressed too in idea that we can arm for peace.

The war is hardly over and we talk that way, Stalin talks that way. (Patton: Sunday school class in Church of our Savior, San Gabriel, Cal: "You are the soldiers and nurses of the next war. There will be another war. There always has been. Sunday School will make you good soldiers.")

The problems we have been raising here and bringing to light have been described in another way: Agent and principal; ends and means.

Does man exist to serve the state or does the state exist to serve man?.....Is the state the agent of man or is man the agent of the state?.....Is man the end in this whole process of society or is but a means to serve the state?

The democratic ideal, of course, strives to have man as the end. The state exists to serve man; his welfare is the ultimate.Totalitarianism presents us with the reverse: Man exists as a means, an instrument for the glorification of the state, or a dictator or some holy goal.

ANALYSIS OF WAR

Some years ago, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler estimated that World War I cost 30 million lives and 400 billion dollars. With that amount, he figured we could have placed a home worth \$2500 together with furniture worth \$1000 on 5 acres of land for every family in the US, Canada, Australia, England, Wales, Ireland, Scotland, France, Belgium, Germany and Russia, with enough left over to give every city of 20,000 inhabitants or more in each of those countries a million dollar library and a 10 million dollar university.

Now, what is it in our makeup that causes us to choose as we do: war to houses; destruction to cultivation?

With the development of atomic energy, it becomes quite clear that if we continue in this process, we are doomed.

Senate Atomic Energy Committee hearings with potentialities of chain reaction breaking crust of earth, atmospheric poisoning. Latest germ spray.

It's quite clear that war becomes the great plague of our day. It is the result of a breakdown in our culture, but it has become such a great danger in its own right that it must be understood and handled in its own right.

Neither does it help you to understand the problem if you're going to blame war on nations that love war and think in terms of war being wished on our society and unasked for. It's wrong. If you think in terms of bad people and bad nations, you're missing the boat. If you think you can explain the last war or two, therefore, in those terms, you're on the wrong track.

Prof. Quincy Wright in a 2 volume study of war went to the trouble of finding out just how many wars were fought by the different nations.....Since 1480, the nation fighting most is Great Britain-78; France-71; Spain-64; Russia-61...US way up counting the

PROBLEMS OF THE PEACE

An Interpretation of the News

By DR. LENNOX A. MILLS

Associate Professor
Political Science
University of Minnesota



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Indian wars.

You want to know where Germany is? Down near the bottom with 23. The country down at the bottom: Japan with 9 wars in 500 years.

UN "peaceloving"!

We must look to basic underlying roots.

Clear that if we are to survive, we must direct our attention toward solving the problem. We must work for the creation of a culture to replace that which has broken down and for a pattern of society which is conducive to peace and which rejects war.

This is not a peace which is an uncertain period of armistice during which nations prepare for war..It must be lasting and for that must be based on a doctrine of justice makes right; not might makes right.

Cross of Lorraine scene with Nazi sergeant tossing a large round loaf of bread into midst of several dozen famished French prisoners of war. There is a silent tense pause. One man darts forward and a moment later 40 frenzied persons are pitted one against the other in a maddened heap....A priest forces his way into the mob. He tells them this is part of a trick to make them hate, fight, and kill one another...The torn loaf is placed on a table, cut and divided among all.

Suppose there had been no one to stop the struggle: 40 men would have gone on hating each other: War! Suppose again that the first one to dart was a Jew or a Negro..?

MORAL MAN AND IMMORAL SOCIETY

June 22, 1946

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Niebuhr's Vision of Our Time





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