

THE TEACHING OF CIVIC DUTY.

BEFORE we inquire how Civic Duty is to be taught, let us attempt to determine what civic duty means. The French are fortunate in possessing a word, *civisme*, for which there is no precise English equivalent, since "patriotism," as we shall see presently, has received a slightly different sense. *Civisme* is taken to include all the qualities which make up the good citizen—the love of country and of liberty, respect for right and justice, attachment to the family and the community. This is perhaps not too wide an extension to give to Civic Duty, at least in a free country, where the love of liberty is no less essential than the respect for constituted order. Or we may describe it as one aspect or side—the domestic side—of the love of country, a virtue generally thought of as displaying itself in services rendered to, and sacrifices made for, one's fatherland in struggles against external enemies, but which ought to be extended to cover the devotion to all that can subserve her inner welfare. To desire that the State we belong to shall be not only strong against other Powers, but also well and wisely governed, and therefore peaceful and contented, and to fit ourselves for rendering to her such service as our capacities permit, to be always ready to render this service, even to our own hurt and loss—this is a form of patriotism less romantic and striking than the expulsion of a tyrant, or such a self-chosen death as that of Publius Decius or Arnold von Winkelried; but it springs from the same feelings, and it goes as truly in its degree to build up the fabric of national greatness.

This home side of patriotism, this sober and quiet sense of what a man owes to the community into which he is born, and which he helps to govern, has been found specially hard to maintain in modern times and in large countries. It suffers from three difficulties. One is the size of our modern States. In small city republics, like those of Greece and Rome, or of the Italian Middle Ages, every citizen felt that he counted for something, and that the fortunes of the community were his own. When a riot occurred half the citizens might swarm out into the streets. When a battle was fought the slaughter

of a thousand men might mean ruin or the loss of independence. The individual associated himself heartily with all that befell the State, and could perceive the results of his own personal effort. Now, in a vast population like ours, the individual feels swallowed up and obliterated, so that his own action seems too small a unit in the sum of national action to be worth regarding. It is like the difference between giving a vote in a representative assembly, where you are one of 670, or perhaps of only 356 persons, and giving a vote at a general election, where you are one of six millions.

Another difficulty springs from the peaceful life which Englishmen and Americans are fortunately now able to lead. There is nothing romantic about the methods in which we are now called upon to show our devotion to the State. The citizen of Sparta, or the peasant of Schwytz, who went out to repel the invader, went under circumstances which touched his imagination and raised his emotion to the highest point. In the days when the safety of England was threatened, the achievements of Drake at sea, the chivalric gallantry of Sir Philip Sidney at Zutphen struck a chord which vibrated in every English heart. To us, with exceptions too few to be worth regarding, such a stimulus is seldom applied. What can be less romantic, and to the outward eye and ordinary apprehension less inspiring, than the methods of our elections—meetings of committees and selections of candidates, platform harangues, and huntings up of careless voters, and marking crosses on bits of papers in hideous polling booths, with sawdust-sprinkled floors? Even the civic strife in Parliaments and County Councils, exciting as it often is, wants the elements which still dazzle imagination from the conflicts of fleets and armies of the past.

The third difficulty springs from the extent to which party spirit tends to overlay, if not to supersede, national spirit in those self-governing countries whose politics are worked by parties. To the ordinary citizen, participation in the government of his country appears in the form of giving a vote. His vote must be given for a party candidate; his efforts must be directed to carrying his party ticket. Each party necessarily identifies its programme and its leaders with the welfare of the State; each seeks to represent its opponents as enemies, even if it may charitably admit them to be rather ignorant than malevolent, still, nevertheless, enemies of the highest interests of the State. As a rule the men who care most about public affairs are the most active and earnest party men; and

thus the idea of devotion to the whole community, and to a national ideal, higher and more enduring than any which party can present, is apt to be obscured and forgotten. We all admit in words that party and its organization are only means by which to secure good government, but, as usually happens, the means so much absorb our energies that the end is apt to slip altogether from our view.

These obstacles to the cultivation of civic duty are all obvious, so obvious that I should hesitate to repeat them were it not the case that some truths, just because they have passed into truisms, have ceased to be felt as truths. They are obstacles which will not disappear as time goes on, and party organization becomes more perfect. All we can do is to exhort ourselves and one another to feel the growing greatness of the interests committed to our charge, and to remember that civic virtue is not the less virtue because she appears to-day in sober gray, and no longer in the gorgeous trappings of military heroism. Even at Trafalgar there was many a powder-monkey running to and fro between decks who saw nothing and knew little of the progress of the fight, but whose soul had been stirred by the signal of the morning.

You may ask in what the habits of civic duty consist which the schoolmaster may seek to form in his pupils and by what methods he is to form them. The habits are, I think, these three—To strive to know what is best for one's country as a whole. To place one's country's interest, when one knows it, above party feeling, or class feeling, or any other sectional passion or motive. To be willing to take trouble, personal and even tedious trouble, for the well-governing of every public community one belongs to, be it a township or parish, a ward or a city, or the nation as a whole. And the methods of forming these habits are two, methods which of course cannot in practice be distinguished but must go hand in hand—the giving of knowledge regarding the institutions of the country—knowledge sufficient to enable the young citizen to comprehend their working—and the inspiring a love for the nation, an appreciation of all that makes its true greatness, a desire to join in serving it.

In speaking of the methods I come upon practical ground, and feel some diffidence in making suggestions to those who may, as practical teachers, be expected to know better than I can myself what it is possible to effect under the pressure of many competing subjects and with children, most of whom leave school before fourteen. The outline of such a course of instruction as I am contem-

plating would be something like the following. It is, and must be, an outline which includes only the elements of the subject, but you will not fail to remember that there is all the difference in the world between being elementary and being superficial.

The teacher must not attempt to give many details, or to enter upon difficult and disputed questions. But it is essential that whatever is given should be thoroughly understood, and so taken into the learner's mind as to become thenceforth a part of it. That abstract ideas and technical expressions ought to be avoided goes without saying. This, however, must not prevent us from trying to make the pupil understand the meaning of such terms as the nation, the State, and the law. You need not trouble yourselves to find unimpeachable logical definitions of these terms; that is a task which still employs the learned. What is wanted is that he should grasp the idea, first, of a community—a community inhabiting a country, united by various ties, organized for mutual protection, mutual help, and the attainment of certain common ends; next, of the law as that which regulates and keeps order in this community; next of public officers, great and small, as those whom the law sets over us, and whose business it is to make us obey the law, while they also obey it themselves. With these conceptions in his mind, the pupil in England may be led to give substance and actuality to them by being referred to his own country, and applying to the nation of to-day what he has doubtless already learnt from his manual of British history. The names of Queen and Parliament are already familiar to him; it may therefore be explained to him what is the place and what the functions of the Sovereign, and what the powers of Parliament are, how it makes laws, of what parts it is composed, how it is chosen. Thus he comes to elections, and sees how the people, through the representatives whom they choose, are ultimately the law-making power. By this time he will have been led to ask what the Government does for us, and will be referred to the army, the navy, the post office, the police, the maintenance of law courts, the relief of the poor, the public schools. As the police and the schools, though established by law, are managed by local authorities, he will pass into the field of local government, and will hear about school boards, town or county councils, magistrates and justices, and persons who administer the poor law.

Not that the whole of this complex machinery need be explained, still less that the pupil should be required to carry it in his memory,

though he certainly ought to have some short and simple book so stating the facts as that he may be able readily to ascertain any particular point. What is really of consequence is that he should understand in a general way the nature and spirit of the system, the way in which the people exercise their power through their representatives and their officers, what the duty of the officer is, why we ought to obey the law, because it is our law, expressing the will of the majority, and the officers, because they are the ministers of the law, appointed to carry it out. Here again history may come in, and the learner may be reminded of times when it was necessary for the people to contend against their rulers for the right of making the law, and to resist the officer, because he was the minister of tyranny; as he may also be told of countries where to-day free government does not exist, and where in consequence the officer has neither the confidence of the citizen nor a due sense of responsibility to the community. It is fortunate for us that in all this field, and in every similar exposition of what is meant by Liberty with its rights, which also involve duties, and of Order with its duties, which also involve rights, the teacher is on ground so familiar and so uncontroversial that no suspicion of partisanship ought to attach to his explanations.

The same remark applies to the United States, where the work of the instructor, if more difficult in one way, because he has to explain the complications of a federal system, and the working of a rigid constitution, is in another way easier, because the fundamental principles of the government are set forth explicitly in public documents, whose authoritative language he may employ. The American scheme of government is intricate, no doubt, but it is also symmetrical, and offers comparatively few of those contrasts between the form and the reality of things with which our British monarchical arrangements are replete, and which it is not easy to make young people comprehend.

It may be remarked upon these suggestions that the topics I have outlined for treatment are in no small degree abstract, and therefore above the comprehension of boys and girls of thirteen. I have stated them for the sake of brevity in a somewhat abstract form. But they all admit of, and of course they ought all to receive, concrete treatment. The pupil should be made to begin from the policeman and the soldier whom he sees, from the workhouse and the school inspector, from the election of the town councillor and the member of the Legislature which, if he be an American boy, he will see pretty often, and about which, if he be an English boy, he is likely to have

heard some talk. The old maxim of Horace about eyes and ears ought never to be forgotten by the teacher either of geography or of history, or of elementary politics. An ounce of personal observation is worth a pound of facts gathered from books; but the observation profits little till the teacher has laid hold of it and made it the basis of his instruction. I must therefore qualify the warning against details by adding that wherever a detail in the system of government gives some foothold of actual personal knowledge to the pupil, that detail must be used by the teacher and made the starting-point from which general facts are to be illustrated and explained. Above all, let the teacher never be satisfied with the pupil's giving him back his own words. Every good teacher will admit this if it be put to him; but in topics which our books treat in an abstract fashion, the danger of resting in mere phrases is doubly great, even to the good teacher.

That current history—*i.e.*, the political events of the day, and newspapers their record, a record perhaps more vivacious than exact, but still the best we have, must be used to make the facts and principles of government real to the pupil, all this is too obvious to need enforcing. But I cannot leave untouched the question how far the teaching of elementary politics ought to be treated historically; that is to say, be made a part of the teaching of the history of the country itself.

Now history is of all the subjects which schools attempt to handle perhaps the worst taught. The difficulty does not lie in the suspicion of political partiality which may be supposed to attach to the teacher, for a sensible and careful man can easily avoid any such suspicion. Even if he has to explain to American children the causes which brought about the Civil War, or to English children the struggle over the Reform Bill, a little common sense and fairness will enable him to do justice to both sides. It is only where religion comes in, as in the times of Elizabeth or James II., that he has need to walk warily. No; the difficulties of teaching history lie deeper. To know a multitude of facts and names and dates is not to know history, and the schoolmaster may have all that the manual contains at his fingers' ends and yet be quite unable to give the pupils any real comprehension of the nature and significance of the events it mentions, unable to help them to realize the differences between the present and the past. A man may teach geometry tolerably well if he has a clear head, and knows thoroughly so much as is contained in the first six books of Euclid or some corresponding text-book. So

one who understands the general principles of grammar may give sufficient elementary instruction in a language though he has not gone far in it himself, and has no large mastery of words or idioms. Many a governess who could not write a piece of Latin or French prose is competent to bring children up to her own point of knowledge. The same remark applies to some branches of natural science. But to teach history a man must be a historian—that is to say, must understand the methods of history, must have the power of realizing the dead past as a living present, must, in fact, have a touch of imagination as well as a vastly larger amount of positive knowledge than he will attempt to pile upon the memory of his class.

Considering how unsatisfactory is the provision now made for the education, in history and the subjects cognate thereto, of the elementary teachers themselves in England and in many parts of the United States, one cannot expect these attainments to abound among them, and cannot therefore look for much successful teaching of history. Their want of success is not their fault, but due partly to the conditions under which they enter their profession, partly to the inherent difficulties of the subject. Hence, while heartily desiring to see history better taught, and to see it used to illustrate elementary politics, I look upon the latter subject as really an easier one than the former, and sufficiently distinct to deserve an independent place in the curriculum. This place it does now find in Switzerland, and to a less extent in France, Germany, and Italy, as well as in many States of the American Union. We may be told that in England no room has been left for it in the codes and schemes of study which now regulate our elementary schools. If so, so much the worse for those schemes, for the subject is not less essential than most of those which the schemes now include, and in the hands of an intelligent teacher, is not more difficult for boys of thirteen or fourteen. I have known instances where children even of nine or ten have so profited by the talk of their elders as to be intelligently interested in the political columns of a newspaper. As respects those who leave school before thirteen, we may point to the constantly expanding evening and continuation schools, places for which the subject is eminently suited. But it is not only in elementary schools that the need for introducing the subject exists. Boys leave our so-called "secondary" schools at sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen, leave even some of the greatest and most costly schools in the country, having received no regular instruction in the principles and working of the British Con-

stitution, much less in their own system of local government wherein many of them as local magnates are soon called upon to take part. It is otherwise in Switzerland, otherwise in the United States, where I fancy no boy passes through a high school without having been taught something about the Constitution of his country and perhaps of his State also.

I must not forget to add that occasions will often present themselves in which lessons of direct practical value in economic and social matters may be given to advanced classes. Where poor law administration is mentioned, the principles that ought to guide it may be explained; when school boards and municipal authorities are described, the reasons why the State deals with education and the functions which municipalities may discharge for the general good of the community may be touched, stating of course the views on both sides where the points are debatable. Thus much may be done to set the young citizen to think in a reasonable way about our present problems in the sphere of government.

So far I have spoken of the instruction. I come now to the other and not less important side of the matter—the means of stimulating interest in public affairs and inspiring the sense of civic duty. Here we may depend, to some extent, upon the natural play of imagination and emotion so soon as the necessary basis of knowledge has been supplied. No rightly constituted mind can help feeling some pride in the constitution of his country and in her greatness, some interest in the vast issues which its representative bodies and executive authorities have to deal with. The more that knowledge can be combined with whatever tends to touch imagination and emotion, the better will the knowledge be remembered and the more powerfully will it work in forming the character. Hence the value of two kinds of reading: historical passages relating to great or striking persons or events, and pieces of poetry. The difficulties that attach to the systematic teaching of history do not attach to the reading of historical matter, whereof the more a boy reads the better. If well-written historical narratives, fresh, simple, dramatic, were put into the hands of boys from ten years onwards, given to them not as task books but as books to read for their own pleasure, not only would a good deal of historical knowledge be acquired, but a taste would often be formed which would last on into manhood. Though the boy, however, ought to be tempted to read for his own pleasure much more than could be read in class, a skilful teacher will make great use of class

reading, and will, by his explanations and familiar talk over the book, be able to stimulate the intelligence of the pupil, setting him to think about what he is reading—the habit without which reading profits little to any of us.

Next, as to poetry, which may do as much to form a patriotic temper as even the records of great deeds in history. For a country with two such histories as England and Scotland have, and for a country with a poetry even more glorious than its history, a people whose long succession of great poets no other people in the ancient or modern world can rival, it is strange that so comparatively little of our best poetry should run in a historical and patriotic channel. No poet has yet given to Britain her sixth book of the *Æneid*. There are some plays of Shakespeare, such as "King John" and "King Henry V.," though these are rather above the interest of boys of thirteen; there are several sonnets of Milton and his contemporaries, not forgetting Andrew Marvell on the death of Charles I., a few stray bits out of Dryden, an ode of Addison's and another of Gray's; there are passages in Cowper and Scott, a very few noble lyrics of Thomas Campbell, several sonnets of Wordsworth, and some splendid ballads of Tennyson, foremost among them the tremendous poem of "The Revenge," together with some beautiful meditative pieces, such as "Of Old sat Freedom on the Heights," and "Love thou thy Land."

This list contains many gems, but it is, after all, compared with the volume of English poetry, a short list, which even the inclusion of the work of less eminent singers, such as Wolfe's "Burial of Sir John Moore," Macaulay's "Armada," and a few of Dibdin's songs, would not greatly swell. Short as it is, however, we do not make half the use of it that we ought. Good poetry is the most pervading stimulus which literature can apply to the mind and character of the young: to carry it in memory is a perennial joy, to love it is to have received the best gift education can bestow. So as to poetry and patriotism. The imaginative mind transfigures history into patriotism. When it reads of a great event it dilates with the sense of what that event has wrought. When it sees the spot where some great deed was done it is roused to emulate the spirit of those who did it, and feels like Browning in the famous lines on the evening view of Cape Trafalgar and Gibraltar: "Here and here did England help me, how can I help England? say!"

The mention of Trafalgar reminds me of the opinion expressed by

an eminent American man of letters that England has begun to forget her heroes and grow cold in her recollection of past exploits. Forty years ago, he says, men were stirred by the name of Nelson, now, a reference to him meets with no response. Is this so? Are we really ceasing to be patriotic? Has the vaster size of the population made each man feel his share less? or has long-continued peace destroyed the interest in warlike prowess? or have the leading minds begun to be merely cosmopolitan? or are we too fully occupied with social changes, too sorely distracted with the strife of labor and capital, to reverence the old ideals? So much at any rate may be said, that in England the knowledge of and interest in the national history is less than in most of the free countries. It is less than in the United States. The Republic has to be sure no large store of patriotic poetry, even less (of indisputable merit) than England has produced since 1776, only some few pieces of Whittier—the ballad of “Barbara Frietchie” perhaps the best,—Bryant and Longfellow. Walt Whitman has taken no hold of the people, and Lowell’s Muse, thoughtful and dignified and morally impressive as she is, seldom soars into the region of pure poetry. But the interest of the American people in the events of the Revolutionary War and the Civil War, and even in eminent statesmen, such as Jefferson, Clay and Webster, is far more generally diffused than any similar feeling in England, where both intelligent patriotism and historical curiosity are almost confined to the small well-educated class. Among the Nonconformists there still lingers a warm though (as it would seem) steadily cooling feeling for the Puritan heroes and divines of the Commonwealth. But with this exception, the middle class, scarcely less than the agricultural peasantry and the city artisan, care for none of these things.

This is less true of the smaller nationalities within the British Isles. In Ireland the misfortunes of the country have endeared to the people names like those of Sarsfield, Wolfe Tone, Emmet, and O’Connell. Scotland has been fortunate in having two national heroes who belong to such remote times as to be fit subjects for legend, while in the seventeenth century she produced, in the Covenanters, another set of striking figures, now, it is to be feared, beginning to be forgotten. Scotland was, moreover, favored a century ago, with two great literary artists who, the one by his songs and the other by his prose romances no less than by his poetry, made her history, the history of a small, a poor, and for a long time a rude

nation, glow with a light that will last for ages to come. Thus, even to-day, Wallace and Bruce, Bothwell Bridge and Culloden, are more vividly present even to the present of Scotland than Harold (son of Godwin) or Hampden and Blake, than Agincourt or Fontenoy, or perhaps even Salamanca and the Nile, are to the average Englishman. Scenery no doubt counts for something. In a small country with striking natural features, historical events become more closely associated with the visual impressions of the ordinary citizen. There is no place in England playing the same part in English history as Stirling Castle and its neighborhood play in Scotch history.

Here I am reminded of Switzerland, a country whose people know their own history better and love it more intensely than probably any other people in the world know or love theirs. The majestic mountain masses and narrow gorges of the older cantons of Switzerland have not only been one of the main causes in enabling a very small and once a very obscure people to conquer independence from powerful feudal lords and to maintain it ever since, except for one brief interval, in the face of the great military monarchies which surround it, but have also fostered the patriotic spirit of the natives by reminding them daily of the conflicts whereby their freedom was achieved. Like the Psalmist they can say, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my aid." Just as in little Greece and Latium, one moves about with a constant sense of tiny republics on every fortified hill top and of armies traversing every valley, just as in little Scotland one passes on the railway from Blair Athol to Berwick-on-Tweed eleven famous battlefields, so in little Switzerland the sense of history follows and environs one at almost every step, and pervades the minds of a race specially familiar with their own annals, specially zealous in commemorating by national songs, by the celebration of anniversaries, by the statues of departed heroes, by the preservation of ancient buildings, by historical and antiquarian museums in the cantonal capitals, the deeds of valiant forefathers. These things, coupled with universal military service and the practice of self-government in local and cantonal as well as in Federal affairs, have associated patriotism with the daily exercise of civic functions in a manner unapproached elsewhere. Not otherwise an imaginative or enthusiastic people, the Swiss have not only become penetrated and pervaded by patriotism, but have learnt to carry its spirit into the working of their institutions. There are some faults in the working of those institutions, but party spirit is among the least of them, and

I doubt whether a system so highly democratic could prosper save in a land where the ordinary citizen has attained so strong a sense of the responsibilities which freedom lays upon him.

Some years ago, in a lonely mountain valley in the Canton of Glarus, I was conversing with a peasant landowner about the Landsgemeinde (popular primary assembly) which regulates the affairs of the canton. After he had given me some details, I asked him whether it was not the fact that all citizens had the right of attending and voting in this assembly. "It is not so much their Right," he replied, "as their Duty."

This is the spirit by which free governments live. One would like to see more of it here in London, where Parliamentary and County Council elections often bring little more than half of the voters to the polls. One would like to see more of it in the United States, where in many places a large proportion of the voters take no trouble to inform themselves as to the merits of the candidates or the political issues submitted to them, but vote blindly at the bidding of their party organizations.

This little anecdote of my Swiss friend illustrates what I mean in speaking of patriotism as the basis of the sense of civic duty. If people learn to love their country, if their vision is raised beyond the petty circle of their personal and family interests to appreciate the true width and splendor of national life, as a thing which not only embraces all of us who are now living here and grouped in a great body seeking common ends, but reaches back into the immemorial past and forward into the mysterious future, it elevates the conception of citizenship, it fills the sheath of empty words with a keen edged sword, it helps men to rise above mere party views and to feel their exercise of voting power to be a solemn trust.

"Love thou thy land with love far brought
From out the storied Past and used
Within the Present, but transfused
Through future time by power of thought."

Into these feelings even the poorest citizen may now enter. Our British institutions have been widened to admit him: the practice of using the powers entrusted to him ought to form in him not only knowledge but the sense of duty itself. So, at any rate, we have all hoped, so the more sanguine have predicted. And as this feeling grows under the influence of free institutions, it becomes itself a fur-

ther means of developing new and possibly better institutions, such as the needs of the time may demand.

Let me take an illustration from a question which has been much discussed of late, but still remains in what may be called a fluid condition. The masses of the British people in these isles, and probably to a large extent also the masses of the people in our colonies, are still imperfectly familiar with the idea of a great English-speaking race over the world, and of all which the existence of that race imports. Till we have created more of an imperial spirit—by which I do not mean a spirit of vain glory or aggression or defiance—far from it—but a spirit of pride and joy in the extension of our language, our literature, our laws, our commerce over the vast spaces of the earth and the furthest islands of the sea, with a sense of the splendid opportunities and solemn responsibilities which that extension carries with it—till we and our colonies have more of such an imperial spirit, hardly shall we be able to create the institutions that will ere long be needed if all these scattered segments of the British people are to be held together in one enduring fabric. But if sentiment ripens quickly, and we find ourselves able to create those institutions, they will themselves develop and foster and strengthen the imperial spirit whereof I have spoken, and make it, as we trust, since it will rest even more upon moral than upon material bonds, a guarantee as well of peace as of freedom among the English-speaking races of the world.

From these dreams of the future, I return to say a concluding word on the main theme of this address—the political aspects of the teacher's function. The teacher has charge of the future citizen at the time when he is most impressionable; the only time, it may happen, in his life when he is free enough from the pressing cares of daily employment, to have leisure for thought about the functions to which the Constitution calls him, or to conceive a wish to understand the true bearing of those functions. On many, probably on most pupils, the teacher's efforts will make no great impression. But those most susceptible to the influence which stimulating teaching may exert, will be those likely in future to stir and guide their fellows, and on their guidance the beliefs and tendencies of their class will mainly depend. The dictum, Property has its duties as well as its rights, once received with surprise and even disgust, has become a commonplace. We now need to realize in the fulness of its application that other maxim, which Mazzini was never tired of enforcing, that Liberty also has its duties as well as its rights, and will

begin to be in danger if it forgets them. The tie of duty to the State, though it cannot be as close as that which binds us to family and friends, ought to be just as clearly recognized to be a tie of absolute force.

It is common to talk of ignorance as the chief peril of democracies. That it is a peril no one denies, and we are all, I hope, agreed that it has become more than ever the duty of the State to insist not only on a more penetrating and stimulative instruction, but upon the inclusion of the elements of constitutional knowledge among the subjects to be taught in the higher standards of our schools.

Democracy has, however, another foe not less pernicious. This is indolence. Indifference to public affairs shows itself not merely in a neglect to study them and fit one's self to give a judicious vote, but in the apathy which does not care to give a vote when the time arrives. It is a serious evil already in some countries, serious in London, very serious in Italy, serious enough in the United States, not indeed at Presidential, but at city and other local elections, for some reformer to have proposed to punish with a fine the citizen who neglects to vote, as in some old Greek city the law proclaimed penalties against the citizen who in a sedition stood aloof, taking neither one side nor the other. For, unhappily, it is the respectable, well-meaning, easy-going citizen, as well as the merely ignorant citizen, who is apt to be listless. Those who have their private ends to serve, their axes to grind and logs to roll, are not indolent. Private interest spurs them on; and if the so-called "good citizen," who has no desire or aim except that good government which benefits him no more than every one else, does not bestir himself, the public funds may become the plunder, and the public interests the sport of unscrupulous adventurers.

Of such evils which have befallen some great communities, there are happily no present signs among ourselves; though it is much to be wished that here in Britain we could secure both at Municipal and Parliamentary elections a much heavier vote than is usually cast. More common in all classes is that other kind of indolence which bestows so little time and thought upon current events and political questions, that it does not try to master their real significance, to extend its knowledge, and to base its opinion upon solid grounds. We need, all of us, in all classes and ranks of society, the rich and educated perhaps even more than others, because they are looked up to for guidance by their poorer or less educated neighbors, to be re-

minded that as Democracy—into which we have plunged so suddenly that some hardly yet realize what Democracy means—is, of all forms of government, that which needs the largest measure of intelligence and public spirit, so of all democracies ours is that which has been content to surround itself with the fewest checks and safeguards. The venerable Throne remains, and serves to conceal the greatness of the transformation that these twenty-five years have worked. But which among the institutions of the country could withstand any general demand proceeding from the masses of the people, or even delay the accomplishment of any purpose on which they were ardently set, seeing that they possess in the popular House a weapon whose vote, given however hastily, can effect the most revolutionary change?

I do not say this to alarm any timid mind, believing that our British masses are not set upon such changes, and are still disposed to listen to the voices of those whom they respect, to whatever class such persons may belong. The mutual good will of classes is still among the most hopeful features in our political condition. But it is well to remember that it is upon the wisdom, good sense, and self-restraint of the masses of the people that this vast and splendid edifice of British power and prosperity rests, and to feel that everything we can do to bring political knowledge and judgment within their reach is now more than ever called for. Let me express this trust in the majestic words addressed to the head of the State by the poet whose loss we mourn, than whom England had no more truly patriotic son:

Take withal

Thy poet's blessing, and his trust that Heaven
Will blow the tempest in the distance back
From thine and ours; for some are scared who mark,
Or wisely or unwisely, signs of storm,
Waverings of every vane with every wind,

* * * * *

And that which knows, but careful for itself,
And that which knows not, ruling that which knows
To its own harm: the goal of this great world
Lies beyond sight; yet—if our slowly grown
And crown'd Republic's crowning common-sense,
That saved her many times, not fail—their fears
Are morning shadows huger than the shapes
That cast them, not those gloomier which forego
The darkness of that battle in the West,
Where all of high and holy dies away.

JAMES BRYCE.

HOW THE FOURTH OF JULY SHOULD BE CELEBRATED.

I HAVE been invited to present some hints as to the proper observance of our great national holiday, the Fourth of July, and the false education implied by warlike celebrations in a nation whose cornerstone is peace and whose very freedom is a standing protest against old-world militarism.

The topic carries me back in thought to days of childhood, when, in my native city of New York, the endless crackling of torpedoes, the explosion of fire-crackers and the booming of cannon, made the day one of joyous confusion and fatigue, culminating in a distant view of the city fireworks sent up from Castle Garden. It then seemed to be a day wholly devoted to boyish pleasure and mischief, sure to be followed by reports of hairbreadth escapes and injuries more or less serious, sometimes even fatal. The day was one of terror to parents, who, while deeming it unwise to interdict to their sons the enjoyment of gunpowder, dreaded to see them maimed or disfigured for life by some unlooked-for accident. It was not uncommon then, nor is it now, to read of some sudden death, some irretrievable blindness or other injury caused by the explosion of a toy-cannon or the mis-adventure of some fireworks on "the Fourth," as the day has come to be called.

These were tragical events truly, but they appear less real to me in remembrance than do the laughing faces of my young brothers who were allowed to arrange a small table for their greater convenience on the pavement of ancient Bond Street, a very quiet by-way in those days. From this spot went forth a perpetual popping and fizzing, varied by the occasional thud of a double-headed fire-cracker. Shouts of merriment followed those explosions. The girls within-doors enjoyed the fracas from the open windows, and in the evening our good elders brought forth a store of Roman candles, blue lights, and rockets. I remember a year, early in the thirties, in which good Gideon Lee, a democratic Mayor of New York, issued an edict prohibitive of all home fireworks. Just as we had settled ourselves in the