

be confused with non-resistants. No plan of preparedness can enlist their support which does not first disarm their suspicions with a sincere program based on consideration of social and industrial demands. Without such a program some national crisis of the future, either of peace or war, may find America facing disunion and hostility within its own gates.

MALCOLM W. DAVIS.

Whitman's Idea of the State

THE American democracy that Whitman extolled was quite incidentally connected with any form of government. He regarded lawmakers, judges and executives as a salaried clerical staff, toward the more elevated of whom he was inclined to feel the same resentment that he showed toward the successful employer. Business to him was an activity whose reward was in the useful employment it offered. The gain was incidental except when it was unduly great, and then it became contemptible. In like manner government was a public utility rather than a ruling power, and the ideal man in office was like Dr. Johnson's lexicographer, a harmless drudge.

His allusions to the chief magistrate were quite uncalculated but quite consistent. For the "Presidential" he had a liking. It was a neat modern label for a four year term, and by implication displaced the Olympiad as a thing of the past. For the idea of the Presidency, or even for any master of the White House except the man Lincoln, he had little respect. In one of his catalogue passages he placed the President casually between a felon and a judge, and in another between a draggled prostitute and "three matrons stately and friendly." Any mechanic might rise to the high level, it was a trifle to do so; but Whitman would rather be a good friend than any kind of President, who was much less needed than a poet, was an "agent for pay," usually a trafficker in "dangled mirages," and pale-faced at the thought of public opinion.

For public opinion Whitman's respect was great, but not as a positive daily agency for good political ends. He respected it less as a dynamo than as dynamite, and even at that less as a useful explosive than as a source of terror. He explained that the great city was

Where the populace rise at once against the never-ending audacity of elected persons,
and declared that he would

make a song for the ears of the President full of weapons with menacing points.

It was a certain and final fiat to be recorded against "the frivolous judge," "the corrupt Con-

gressman, Governor, Mayor," and "the mumbling and screaming priest" on the popular day of judgment. Until that day abuses might continue without any reforming check from the poet, who would observe in silence "all the meanness and agony without end."

This estimate of public opinion as a kind of millennial voice ran counter to any assumption of immediate responsibility toward the state. If Whitman was at all interested in either the rights or the duties of the voter, he kept his sentiments to himself. Naturally if the holders of office were a negligible crew, the process of choosing them was a matter of no importance; and if social evolution was in due time certain to bring things out by a sort of cataclysmic turn, there was little use in bothering with ephemeral details. Whitman's governmental policy was simply a vehement asseveration of Emerson's: "Be good and You will be happy; and if Everybody is good, Everybody will be happy. (In fact, as I am continually reminding You, when I say You I always mean Everybody, as well as when I say I.)"

The one civic duty he emphasized was the most obvious and primitive—that of the soldier. Yet even at this point his militarism was highly sublimated. He never feared national invasion, he never talked of national honor, he had no thought of conquest for territory, much less for the protection of trade. Justice, then, in behalf of those who could not fight for themselves was the only cause for fighting left in his calendar. The army in the back of his mind was a shining host with plumes of snow, whose warfare was to be a holy crusade. His distrust of creeds and institutions would have made him protest at the assignment of "Onward Christian Soldiers" as its battle hymn, but a Christian soldiery it was, with a mission to wage unselfish war solely in the name of humanity.

This fine abstraction fitted well with the loose federation of states which composed Whitman's America. He liked to dwell on the provincial differences in race, climate, occupation, with their resultant clean-marked differences of character in different parts of the country; and he regularly indicated those provincial differences by mention of states rather than sections of this "Far breathed land! Arctic braced! Mexican breezed! the diverse! the compact." In the exalted conviction that the whole is equal to the sum of its parts in the social as well as in the mathematical world, he declared:

I will make a song for these States, that no one
State may under any circumstances be subjected to another State

And I will make a song that there shall be comity by
day and by night between all The Stars and
between any two of them.

The America that Walt Whitman loved was

clearly a community rather than a government. His new democracy was a composite of personalities, in each of whom he was interested very much on his own account, but even more because taken together they all were the stuff from which nations are made. Thus he held to the conventional view of children and immigrants as potential Americans, and also to the less commonplace one that all are necessary to the whole, and none are irredeemable. "The only government is that which makes kinute of individuals."

At this point Whitman resembled Carlyle more than Emerson in his insistence upon activity. Health of soul or body, he said, depends on exercise. Whitman did not rise to Ruskin's belief in spiritual growth through excellence of craftsmanship. He held for muscular and spiritual exertion because exertion is admirable in itself. In a primitive way he therefore distrusted the sedentary intellectual man though he believed in the poet and the "philosoph," and he applauded the open-air laborer who worked and sweated visibly, because the man of brawn was developing himself by doing the work of the "divine average" at the same time that he was accepting the challenge of nature by wresting the world's food from the soil, or by digging and delving to make Mother Earth a better place to live upon. The farther labor was removed from the soil the less he cared for it; hunter, fisher, mariner, miner, farmer, then the mechanic, then the clerk, then the priest and the university professor. Yet his fear of the nicer refinement was not a mere churlish dislike for people different from himself. It was born of the fear of decadence, the fear of "elegance, civilization, delicatessen." The vandal did not attract him because of his vandalism, but because of his restless vandalian strength. He would rather trust the future to Attila than to Nero.

This brings us to the heart of his whole social philosophy. The state was a spiritual entity containing the soul of the future. America was the promised land, the cradle of universal liberty, and that not because of any positive virtue aside from its youth and its innocence. As he looked upon it he stood as in the presence of a young Olympian.

America, curious toward foreign characters, stands by
its own at all hazards,
Stands removed, composite, sound—initiates the true
use of precedents,
Does not repel them, or the past, or what they have
produced under their forms,
Takes the lesson with calmness.

At first glance it seems a far cry from the unruly spontaneous land of love, and democracy, and religion, and freedom, and peace, and meanness and agony without end, to America "the promise and reliance of the future." It would seem a rather dim prospect toward any good end to resolve the

entire population into an amiable committee of the whole without any chairman. But even though Whitman was an agitator rather than an organizer, the organizing force was the biggest single factor in his philosophy. For he believed in the manifest destiny with a passionate faith. And he relied on it in the way of the pacific philosopher. The future of America was assured because the race was safe, and the future of the race was safe because God willed it so. On this theme Whitman sang with epic fervor of the determinant which is at the back of all faith, the

Unseen moral essence of all the vast materials of
America, (age upon age, working in Death the
same as in Life)

[The powers] that, sometimes known, oftener unknown, really shape and mould the New World.

This large-hearted desire for race and national evolution is not in any way to be confounded with the protestations of any of the warring powers today. There was nothing of what is usually regarded as national aspiration in it. There is as much difference between Whitman's belief in the future of America and the imperial dreams for which England and Germany are now fighting, as there was between the personal ambitions of himself and Jay Gould. Whitman wrought for the spiritual development of America, while Jay Gould built the railroads. Whitman extolled labor, while Jay Gould employed it. Whitman loafed and invited his soul, while Jay Gould made money. But Jay Gould's vast projects extended only to the Pacific, and Whitman's dream reached "beyond the sunset and the baths of all the western stars."

The opening retort courteous to such a commentary is perfectly obvious. It is the *argumentum ad hominem* that Jay Gould was more useful to the country than Whitman was—that a country full of Whitmans would have brought us by now into a delirium of chaotic helplessness. And the counter reply is equally obvious, that by this time a country full of Jay Goulds would have become a self-exterminated harvest of dragon's teeth. There is little profit in personalities of this sort. Any live country can make places and find uses for men of supreme eccentricity, men who are at the far poles both from each other and from the equatorial average. The one ray of light that comes out of such recriminative talk reveals the fact, however, that these two were finely antithetic American types: the complete captain of industry who in the name of progress crushes competitors to the glory of God, and the abstract philanthropist who in the name of brotherhood damns competition by the same formula. Whitman tried to disarm criticism by anticipating it. "I myself but write one or two indicative words for the future." "I charge you forever reject those who would expound me, for I cannot expound my-

self." This is a well tried and ingratiating approach to the public, but at best a gratuitous admission of weakness. If Jay Gould was a harbinger of Mr. Carnegie and Mr. Rockefeller without their expiatory benevolence, Walt Whitman was a forerunner of several million less prosperous Americans whose vociferative loyalty is minus program, and expressive of nothing but unfocused optimism.

There is another criticism to which the poet exposes himself. He was by nature and experience even more devoid of any international sense than the average man of his day. His mind seemed to entertain no concepts between his tangibly concrete surroundings and the most distantly vague abstractions. There was no one in his social vista between Peter Doyle on a street car platform and the "presence . . . whose dwelling is the light of setting suns." What he knew of America he knew down to the ground; but of the rest he was grossly ignorant; and of Europe he had no clear imagination. It was a philosophical encyclopedia, a thesaurus of abstractions, but not a place where people lived. Much less was it a congeries of nations which were for definite and human and credible reasons fighting their way through the nineteenth century

to the grim climax of to-day. His view of the world was like a landscape without any middle distance. Here was America in which the problems of the future were to be solved while Europe stood yonder in admiring expectancy. There was no Orient—nothing beyond Poland and the Balkans. In the fullness of time all the other nations would follow after this people who had shown nothing but contempt for the Old World, and a desire to be kept uncontaminated by it.

So his idea of the state is baffling at some points, and irritating at others. It is fragmentary and inarticulate, and in these respects representatively American. But, after all is said and done, it is hope-inspiring, and in its individualistic philosophy essentially sound. Program-makers are cropping up on every side now; their work is not his. If he were living to-day he would still be singing indomitably of the future,

Have the elder races halted?

Do they drop and end their lesson, wearied, over there
beyond the seas?

We take up the task eternal, and the burden and the
lesson,

Pioneers, O pioneers.

PERCY H. BOYNTON.

Germany and the Monroe Doctrine

LONG before the outbreak of the war the peaceful, natural growth of the German people was looked upon by some writers as a possible cause of a great international conflagration. Germany, they explained, is unable to maintain her growing population at home; she is unwilling to lose her people by emigration; she has been trying to direct them to her newly acquired African colonies, but she has failed, for in all her possessions there were but a few thousand white settlers. She will look around, they continued, for other parts of the world, which are fit for the settlement of a white race. There are but two groups of countries which have a temperate climate, and which are not yet thickly populated: the British dominions in Australia and Canada, and the Latin-American countries of South America. To attempt the control of the British dominions would mean a war with the British Empire; a settlement in South America would mean an infringement of the Monroe Doctrine, and probably a conflict with the United States.

In the days before the war these theories were not yet worked out in fascinating detective stories like Mr. Phillips Oppenheim's "Mr. Grex of Monte Carlo"—with the possible exception per-

haps of Mr. Roland Usher's "Pan-Germanism." But even then quotations from German authors, which seemed to indicate Germany's supposed intentions on South America, were eagerly exploited. That was easily done. Most German text-books on international law would contain a statement that the Monroe Doctrine was not an international treaty, but merely a policy laid down by the United States in its own interest. Was that not a proof, it was said, of Germany's secret plans? And was not the real meaning of such statements made quite clear when Germany insisted that her citizens must have the full enjoyment of rights guaranteed to them in any South American country with which she was at peace? Was not the blockade of Venezuela, proposed by England and joined by Germany and Italy, overwhelming evidence of Germany's desire to grab land? There is no doubt that the legal aspect of the Monroe Doctrine had a great fascination for the German students of international law. In denying its legal character, their conclusions were pretty much the same as those of most level-headed Americans. But the real question was not of law, but of policy. Neither Germany nor the sovereign states of South America, nor anybody else had given up any rights on account of the Monroe Doctrine.