

History Repeating Itself

In 1380 a poll tax was laid by Parliament on all the people of the realm; it bore unjustly on the poor, who were taxed at the same rate with the rich, and the injustice led to the famous Peasant Revolt. In this revolt the peasants marched on London, from various parts of England, to lay their grievance before King and Parliament. The protesters numbered many thousands; their leaders were killed and they were scattered; but their protest was not ineffectual. It signed the death-warrant of villeinage. The system of serfdom perished in England with the Wat Tyler Rebellion.

In 1848 the discontent of the working classes in England had grown very serious. At different points in the Kingdom organizations were formed for the purpose of presenting their grievances to the Government, and an enormous procession was organized to present a petition for reform. The procession was forbidden; the gathering shrank from half a million to fifty thousand; the petition was scrutinized, and many names appended to it were found to represent no real persons. But the six reforms demanded by the Chartists have since either been incorporated in the British Constitution, or put in the way of being incorporated therein at a not distant date.

America will do well to learn wisdom from the experience of other nations in the past. The popular disturbances, the great meetings, and the peripatetic bands of men marching on Washington from all parts of the country indicate a great unrest which could not exist without some secret cause. When detachments of what is miscalled Coxey's Army seize a railroad train, the authorities cannot be too vigorous in stopping the train, arresting the band, turning the men back, and bringing the leaders in such an audacious robbery to speedy and condign punishment. When an entire detachment reaches Washington to lay its so-called petition before Congress, the Government cannot be too vigorous in measures to prevent the overawing of the legislative department by a mob. The methods of King Richard and of the Duke of Wellington are not in detail to be imitated in our time, but the same vigor is to be shown in putting down acts of lawlessness and in protecting the country from the threats of a mob, however disguised those threats may be.

But statesmanship has not fulfilled its duty in prohibiting, preventing, and punishing the violent excesses of a distressed people. It must recognize the fact that such a phenomenon as we are witnessing to-day has some cause, and it must study that phenomenon and seek to remove that cause. The various detachments which are moving upon Washington include, undoubtedly, tramps, vagabonds, and criminals; but the heart of America is not so perverted, and its intelligence is not so poor, that an army of mere tramps, vagabonds, and criminals would receive the sympathy, encouragement, and assistance which are being afforded by peaceful and honorable communities to these foolish men, fanatically led. Not only in the manufacturing centers of the East, but throughout the agricultural regions of the West, there is a real distress, and it is not strange that the people who know not where they are to find bread, or employment by which they can earn bread, are out of patience with a Congress which is blind to the National situation, dallies with proposed remedies, violates party pledges, and spends its strength in factional fighting.

We believe that the chief causes of the present National distress are two:

Unjust taxation.

A vitiated currency.

Taxation which is levied upon expenditure, not upon

property, is always unjust taxation. It bears more heavily upon the poor than upon the rich; and the rich ought to pay heavier taxes than the poor, both because they are better able and because in the protection of their property they receive a greater advantage.

Gold monometallism gives us a standard of value which has been steadily appreciating. As a result, prices have been steadily falling. No one wishes to engage in production on a falling market; therefore business is at a standstill. It will not revive until we get a stable currency—a standard of value which will neither rise nor fall.

These we believe to be the causes of the present distress. If we are wrong, we desire to be set right; but whether we are right or wrong, the duty of the statesman is clear—and this whether he is in Congress or the editor's chair. It is to stop jesting about Coxey's Army, to ponder the significance of this continental movement, to see sympathetically the distress which alone gives it strength, and to study the causes which have led to that distress, and endeavor to ascertain the remedy.



Not Getting, but Giving

With some exceptions due to special conditions, we ordinarily get what we deserve from our friends and from society; it is idle, and worse, to charge upon others results due to our own limitations. Men will listen to the man who has something to say worth saying, and will honor and love the man who is worthy of honor and love. If society remains finally indifferent to claims made upon its attention, it is because those claims are not well founded. There is a constant tendency to shift upon others the responsibility which belongs to ourselves, and there are many people who cherish a grievance against their fellows because they are not taken at their own valuation. The public is accused of stupidity because it fails to recognize the political genius which some man finds in himself; editors are charged with prejudice and partiality because they do not open their columns to contributors whose faith in their own gifts is independent of all confirmation from the opinions of others; congregations are declared to be cold and unresponsive because they do not kindle to an eloquence which somehow evaporates between the pulpit and the pew; friends are held to be indifferent because they do not pour out confidences which can never be forced, but which flow freely only when they are drawn out by the subtle sympathy of kinship of nature. It is a false attitude which prompts us to be always demanding, and it defeats itself; we ought, rather, to be always giving. Our friends are powerless to bestow the confidence which does not instinctively flow to us, or to disclose to us those aspects of their lives which are not unconsciously turned to us. Friendship is a very delicate and sensitive relation, and it is absurd to demand from it that which it does not freely give. We draw from a friend precisely that which we have the power to understand and enter into; we are shut out from the things which are not naturally our own. If society does not give us what we crave, and our friends do not open to us doors which stand wide to others, instead of indicting others let us look well to ourselves. If we find ourselves losing in strength of position and influence, it will appear, if we search ourselves, that we are not keeping pace with the growth of those around us, and that we are losing ground in the world because we are losing force in ourselves. The whole attitude of those who are continually measuring the returns made to them by society and

friends is pernicious; we are here to give, not to get; and they who give largely receive largely.



The Real Question

We present on another page extracts from a number of letters by women respecting woman's suffrage, some approving, some disapproving, the position of *The Outlook*. Not to criticise our critics, but to correct some popular misapprehensions which are illustrated in this correspondence, we here state, without debating, the real question involved in the proposed amendment to the Constitution.

It is not whether *some* women, but whether *all* women, may vote. Striking out the word "male" from the Constitution will give women the same unlimited right to the suffrage which the Constitution now gives to men; and the ablest lawyers in the State declare that, under that Constitution, the Legislature cannot exclude the most ignorant and illiterate from voting.

It is not whether women may vote on some subjects—such as education and excise. Striking the word "male" from the Constitution confers the right, and therefore imposes the duty, of suffrage in all elections and on all women.

It is not whether some women will consent that other women may vote if they wish to. Power to vote involves the duty of voting: a duty which may be enforced by a fine imposed on the recreant (this has been practically used in some communities), and certainly will be enforced by conscience on all conscientious women.

The real question is whether women as a class shall assume the cares and responsibilities of government, hitherto borne by men alone. Government has two functions: primarily, the protection of the community; secondarily, the administration of some common industries. Incidental to both is public education. Hitherto men have assumed the duty of providing for and protecting the community. The women have borne and nurtured the children and administered the homes; the men have been the breadwinners and guardians of the homes. It is now proposed that women shall share equally with men the responsibility of all corporate breadwinning and guardianship; it is not proposed that men shall share with women their peculiar duty of nurturing the children and administering the homes.

The real question is this: Will this radical change in the social order promote the general welfare of the women, the homes, and the community?



The Revolt of the Soul

Henrik Ibsen is the apostle of unqualified individualism. From his point of view all the palliatives for the evils of society which are now being proposed are timid and colorless half-measures, doomed from the start to defeat because of their essential cowardice. "Liberty, equality, and fraternity," he says, "are no longer what they were in the days of the guillotine, of blessed memory. This is just what the politicians will not understand, and for that reason I hate them. Men still call for special revolutions—for revolutions in politics, in externals. But all that sort of thing is trumpery. It is the human soul that must revolt." In the last line the dramatist goes straight to the heart of the whole matter. *The Outlook* differs from him widely in his interpretation of life. It believes in the beneficence of many of those external conditions

which he condemns; but it agrees with him in the fundamental idea that the great and permanent reform of society is to be wrought out neither in laws nor in institutions, but in the human soul. The revolt against oppressive conditions, obsolete usages, and iniquitous laws is wise and inevitable, but it gets its significance from the fact that at heart it is one of the forms of expression which the revolt of the soul takes on. The French Revolution was not simply a revolt against an antiquated social and political status; it was a revolt of the soul, blind, destructive, in certain respects futile, but nevertheless inevitable, and marking a stage in the advance of humanity.

It is a great mistake to underrate the value of specific reforms and to fix one's eyes so exclusively upon the interior nature of man that his passionate desire to better his external condition becomes a thing of no account. It is a greater disaster, however, when men persuade themselves that man is to be saved by any political, industrial, or social changes. These will aid his salvation, but they will not complete it. The real revolt must always be the revolt of the soul, the struggle of man against the tendencies of his own nature rather than against the institutions which surround him. The significance of his struggle against institutions lies in the fact that they represent his nature, and that when he grows beyond them his reaction against them records the advance of his own soul. There is great danger, in these days of popular government, that men will come to depend too much on those changes in external conditions which can be wrought by acts of Congress or of Parliament, and that when such modifications are made, and the result does not justify anticipations, there will be a reaction toward hopelessness and pessimism. The betterment of social and political conditions has gone on very rapidly during the last century, and has brought about many beneficent results. That movement will go on perhaps with even greater rapidity during the next century, but it will never effect the salvation of humanity, and the wise man will not expect to see society redeemed by it. Carlyle was perfectly right, in one sense, when he protested against the worship of the democratic idea and insisted that the emphasis ought to be laid, not on man's rights, but on his duties; for the value of institutions is their power to represent moral ideals, and man is saved by character, not by governments. In working out the political and social emancipation of society it is not the ease of humanity which is sought, but its elevation and ennoblement; and better conditions will not bring freedom from burdens and relief from cares, but the power of living the common life with greater freedom and force. Not ease and material prosperity, but the power to liberate most completely the personal force in every man, ought to be the end of all social and political reform.

In the agitation of the times, which constantly throws men back upon themselves by the incessant discussion of fundamental questions, two great qualities ought to be sought for and developed. One of these is the power of living outside of ourselves. Perhaps the most prevalent disease of the modern mind is self-consciousness. We have talked so long about our liberties that we have come to make our own comfort and pleasure the test of the condition about us. We are constantly thinking of ourselves when we ought to be thinking of others, and determining the value of institutions and laws by their bearing upon our individual condition. With this self-consciousness comes a morbid sensitiveness and a loss of that primal health of soul which makes a man forget his own discomforts and even his own miseries in the opportunity to