

party managers. The Republican party must judge Mr. McKinley at St. Louis, as the country will judge him in November, by the record he has made.



## The Duty of Congressmen

*To the Editors of The Outlook:*

In an article in a late Outlook, entitled "Cowardice and Bunkum," I find the following sentence:

"When a man holds his seat in Congress by a small majority in the district which he represents, he is tempted to follow what he supposes to be the general sentiment of that majority rather than his own convictions." This sentence raises a question I would like to have clearly settled in my mind. What is the duty of a member of Congress? We are said to have a "representative government," a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." Do we have this if our public officials represent their own views and ignore those of the people who sent them there? If our Government is "of, for, and by the people," does it not follow that our public men should represent the Government, in other words "the people," and *not* themselves? Should his vote indicate his individual wishes or should it represent the legislation demanded "by and for the people"—his constituency—for whom he is spokesman, and of whose views and interests he is supposed to be the advocate and representative? To me the question seems one of tremendous importance, and especially at this time, when the great metropolitan dailies are filled with bitter denunciations and wholesale invective directed against Western Senators who vote in favor of free silver coinage, when at the same time it cannot but be well known to these newspaper critics that any other course pursued by these public officials would be antagonistic to the desires and a sacrifice of the dearest wishes of their constituents. I can scarcely believe that The Outlook holds that a representative of the people is elected simply to voice his own sentiments and not the views of his constituents, and that a legislator does wrong who follows "the sentiment of his district" in the casting of his vote, as the sentence I have quoted would seem to indicate. It seems to me that the chief wrongs under which our people suffer are the legislative wrongs brought about by our public officials acting upon their own responsibility, and paying no heed to the wishes of their constituents. If I am wrong, will you kindly set me right in this matter?

Oblong, Ill.

H. E. K.

This letter raises an interesting question, to which, in our judgment, a categorical reply cannot be given. It is, however, certain that the trend of public thought in this country, and even in England, has been from representative government to democratic government; from government by Parliament or Congress to government by the people themselves. The contrast between the two is sharply, clearly, and, on the whole, fairly stated by Mr. Lecky in his interesting volumes on "Liberty and Democracy." He takes ground in favor of parliamentary government, and deprecates the change to democratic government. We believe that the change is beneficent, as it certainly is inevitable. Whatever may be the final issue of the experiment, we are certainly entering upon this experiment, and it will not be abandoned until it has been fully tried.

The difference between these two forms of government is important, though it is not easy to define it, since one shades insensibly into the other. In a parliamentary or representative government the people elect presumptively the wisest and best of the community to make laws for them. In a democratic government the people determine for themselves what the laws shall be, and elect their representatives only to do the necessary work of framing the popular resolves into statutory form and giving them effect. When the United States Constitution was formed, the framers of that Constitution intended that the people of the United States should elect a body of wise men who should in turn select a President. The Electoral College no longer selects a President. The people select him, and the Electoral College simply records the judgment of the people. What is evidently true in respect to a Presiden-

tial election is somewhat less evidently true in respect to ordinary legislation. The framers of the Constitution had no idea that the people would determine such intricate and difficult questions as what kind of a tariff there should be, or whether our currency should be gold, or silver, or paper, or two or three of these combined. They expected that the people would send wise men to Congress, who would bring to bear on these questions expert judgment and decide them accordingly. But this is no longer done. Not only are great issues like the tariff question and the currency question publicly debated through the press, on the rostrum, in clubs and stores, and on the street corners until a decision is reached, but subordinate questions are decided by a similar process, and by similar assemblages of the people. The House of Representatives is less and less a deliberative body. It is a congeries of committees. These committees do not determine what the law shall be, but how the law shall be formulated which the people have demanded. Legislators are less and less counselors on whose judgment the Nation relies for legislative wisdom, and more and more practical men of business on whose expert knowledge the Nation relies to put into effect the National decision. A Lake Mohonk Conference, wholly voluntary, meets year after year and decides how the Indians should be treated. It then secures through associations, public meetings, and newspaper discussions throughout the country a public opinion in favor of the reforms which it has recommended. Enforced by this public opinion, it urges these reforms upon Congress, and Congress puts into legal form the decisions thus initiated. A war-cloud no bigger than a man's hand appears on the horizon. Publicists, lawyers, college presidents, divines, meet together to consider how war can be avoided and still justice maintained. They formulate a demand for the establishment of a permanent tribunal to decide questions between nations, as the Supreme Court of the United States decides questions between the States. They go to Washington, lay this demand before the President, bring through their various constituencies influence to bear upon their Senators and Representatives in favor of this international reform, and then leave the President by diplomatic action, and the Senate and the House by legislative action, to reduce to legal form the plan which the people have proposed, considered, resolved upon. It would be difficult to mention any important public reform within the last quarter of a century which has originated in Congress. Congress has ceased to be the place in which to originate reforms; they originate without, among the people.

In this transition period the position of a legislator is one of no little moral difficulty. On the one hand, if he yields to the demand of his constituency and helps to carry into effect resolves which he believes to be injurious to the National welfare, he is liable to be accused of lacking independence and catering to public prejudices. If, on the other hand, he disregards the resolves of his constituents, and puts his own will against their will, he is liable to be accused of violating the trust which has been reposed in him, and setting at naught the very function which he has been appointed to fulfill. Under a purely representative government the duty of the legislator was very simple; it was to use his own best judgment on every question which came before him, and to act for his constituents, but not necessarily in accordance with their judgment. In a purely democratic government the function of a legislator would be comparatively simple. The people would then, by direct vote, as to-day in Switzerland, pass on all measures of grave importance, and the legislator would simply have a power of attorney to put the decision

reached by the people into effect. If he could not conscientiously do this, he would have no alternative but to resign his office. He would be a lawyer appointed to draft the instrument which his client desired. If he could not draft such an instrument, he would leave the client to find another lawyer. But our present government is neither representative nor democratic. It is passing from a representative to a democratic government, and is somewhere midway between the two. He who believes in representative government will do all that he can to delay or even defeat the change. He who believes in democratic government will do all that he can to promote and accelerate it. Members of Congress cannot be expected to act altogether consistently in such an inconsistent time. All that their constituents have a right to demand is that they shall be true to their own convictions; that they shall not mistake a transient popular passion for a permanent and well-settled conviction; that they shall take counsel of their courage rather than of their fears; that they shall represent the best thought of their district, not always its mere numbers; and that they shall count as their client, not its prejudices, but its conscience and its higher reason.

### The Outlook Vacation Fund

The work of the Working-Girls' Vacation Society, in which the readers of The Outlook have so generously and sympathetically co-operated, is not to furnish houses prettily, but to give working-girls vacations; to provide the ways and means for girls who cannot have vacations without such provision; to assist those who can meet only part of their expenses; to give to girls threatened with consumption a chance to fight for their lives. To meet the needs of the working-girls who depend wholly or partly upon the Working-Girls' Vacation Society for the opportunity to maintain and increase the physical possibilities of their wage-earning capacity, The Outlook Vacation Fund should be this year at least six thousand dollars. Four thousand was the amount last year; the year closed without a balance. The Outlook Vacation Fund met all the expenses of Elmcote (Orange County, New York) and Cherry Vale (Greenwich, Conn.) not met by the board of those girls who paid all or a part of their expenses. Santa Clara (the Adirondacks) is to be maintained this year. At least two thousand dollars should be in hand to meet the expenses of Santa Clara. The girls who go into this Adirondack region have more than a fighting chance for their lives—lives that are jeopardized by foul air, want of space, starvation wages, and sanitary ignorance. To keep Santa Clara at an ideal standard of beauty, hygiene, and nutrition is only paying a debt to lives robbed by the indifference and selfishness of good men and women. "The wrong of one is the wrong of all." A life cannot be robbed of its chance for physical development and the whole community not suffer.

Beauty is as much the right of every man and woman as health; it ministers as directly to the development of character. These three houses, Cherry Vale, Elmcote, and Santa Clara, recognize this divine right, and are conducted on the principles that secure it for two weeks or more to every working-girl under their roofs. These houses can be maintained on these principles only if the readers of The Outlook make it possible. Certainly, vacation work can be done cheaply; it can be maintained on a basis that indicates the hand of charity—that word which has come to mean the paltry saving from pangs of starvation—under conditions that keep all those supported by it conscious of their place in the world, the recipients

of some one's conscience money. Or it can be so maintained as to be the expression of that generous love, that indefinable joy of giving, which deprives the gift of every sting. "I have a small gift for the working-girls," was said in a gentle voice, eloquent with sympathy, by a man who came into the office of The Outlook one morning last week. He left five hundred dollars in the hands of one of the editors, and declined to give his name. With this generous gift we open the account of 1896, believing that its example will bring quickly the money that will mean more than vacations for brave girls who have but small opportunity to realize that Love is the greatest thing in life.

#### VACATION FUND

From an unknown Friend.....	\$500 00
A Friend.....	1 00
Free-Will Offering.....	1 00
A. L. Ely.....	6 30
Mrs. E. W. A., Brooklyn.....	10 00
Miss Ellen W. Clarke.....	2 85
C. G. Comstock.....	25 00
Outlook Company Trustee.....	1 24
Through E. W. C.....	2 00
A Subscriber, Bath, Me.....	1 00
I. R., Montclair, N. J.....	1 00
A. R., Vergennes, Vt.....	5 00
Miss J. S. C., Providence, R. I.....	10 00
Anacapa.....	5 00
Miss K. T. B., New York, N. Y.....	5 00
E. P., Maine.....	10 00
The Short Hills School for Girls, Short Hills, N. J.....	34 75
Young Ladies' Branch of the Women's Missionary Society, First Congregational Church, Malone, N. Y.....	28 00
A Friend.....	1 00
Total.....	\$650 14

### A Pertinent Illustration

In his address in answer to the question, "Is Life Worth Living?" already quoted from in these columns, Professor William James uses an illustration which is in itself an argument—an illustration so pertinent and so luminous that The Outlook is very glad to reprint it. Professor James says, in substance, that under the most adverse condition life would be well worth living to all of us if we could only be certain that bravery and patience would bear fruit in some spiritual world, and he goes on to add that a converging multitude of arguments prove that the world of physics is not absolute. That our whole physical life may lie soaking in a spiritual atmosphere, a dimension of Being that we at present have no organ for apprehending, is vividly suggested to us by the analogy of the life of our domestic animals. Our dogs, for example, are "in our human life but not of it." And it is at this point that Professor James introduces a very striking illustration of the fact that we may be surrounded by a world which is absolutely real, which is within touch and of which we are at the same moment entirely unconscious so far as our physical senses are concerned. "Consider a poor dog," says Professor James, "whom they are vivisectioning in a laboratory. He lies strapped on a board and shrieking at his executioners, and to his own dark consciousness is literally in a sort of hell. He cannot see a single redeeming ray in the whole business; and yet all these diabolical-seeming events are usually controlled by human intentions with which, if his poor benighted mind could only be made to catch a glimpse of them, all that is heroic in him would religiously acquiesce. Healing truth, relief to future sufferings of beast and man, are to be bought by them. It is genuinely a process of redemption. Lying on his back on the board there he is performing a function incalculably higher than any prosperous canine life admits of; and yet, of the whole performance, this function is the one portion that must remain absolutely beyond his ken."