

Democratic party promises to overthrow it. It is true that the last promise is somewhat vaguely expressed. It is true that it assumes—what we have seen is not true—that the present system furnishes a life tenure in the Civil Service, and opposes such life tenure. It is true that it vaguely promises to base its appointments on merit. But it is also true that its somewhat shadowy promise of “equal opportunities to all citizens of ascertained fitness,” interpreted by past history and present conditions, needs no interpreter. It assumes that office is a “gift” of the people; it demands for all the people an equal chance in the distribution of these gifts; it practically denies the aphorism, “A public office is a public trust,” and the doctrine that appointments to office are to be made only for the benefit of the country, never under any circumstances for the benefit of the appointee. It needs, we say, no interpreter; but if it did, Mr. Bryan’s interpretation is certainly explicit. We quote from “Good Government” for August 15, 1896:

“In a letter written, before he was a candidate, to Daniel B. Kelley, of Haverhill, Mass., Mr. Bryan declared that ‘In the distribution of patronage he (the President) is in duty bound to recognize all the elements of his party; to discriminate against a portion of the party which helped to elect him is as indefensible as it would be to appoint members of another party to offices to which the party is entitled.’”

There is no mistaking the meaning of this declaration. Offices are “patronage;” they are to be “distributed” among the party; it is the party alone which is entitled to a share in this patronage; justice requires only that all factions of that party are to have a share in the spoils. And this letter is the more significant because it was written before the present campaign began.

It cannot be said to be certain that if Mr. McKinley is elected the promises of the Republican platform will be fully carried out, for pledges made before election are not always fulfilled afterwards. But there is small reason to doubt that if Mr. Bryan is elected the whole system of Civil Service, built up by such slow processes and at so great a cost, would be swept away, the experience of Great Britain for a century and of the United States for half a century would be disregarded, the spoils system would be reintroduced, and the over one hundred and twenty-five thousand administrative offices in the Federal Government would be again put up to be struggled for by a hungry horde of office-seekers, eager for a distribution of patronage, and inspired in all their political activity, not by patriotism, but by the desire for a “soft” place and a good salary.



## A Theological Etching

What do we mean by the creed which seems to be simple and is so profound, and which slips so glibly from our lips and enters so little into our hearts—God is love? Paul has told us in a wonderfully beautiful passage what love is; and if God is love, then what Paul says of love, Theology, if it believes in Paul, ought to say of God. And then what it would say would be something like this:

God suffereth long and still is kind; God envieth not; God seeketh not his own; God is not easily provoked; God thinketh no evil; God rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; God beareth all things, trusteth all things, endureth all things.

If we believed this, we should not believe that God has to be appeased by Another’s suffering in order that He may be kind; we should believe that the Passion of Christ is itself the revelation of God’s long-suffering love, the love that suffers long and still is kind.

We should not believe that God ever punishes a mother

for loving her child too much by taking the child away, that he envies the child its mother’s love. One cannot love father or mother, husband or wife, child or friend, too much. We may love God too little, but not our dear ones too much. Idolize a child! Never! Idolatry is always of a material thing, never of a living person. Where does Old Testament prophet or New Testament Apostle warn us against loving our neighbor too much? Oh! fools and blind, to think God envies.

God seeketh not his own. The declaration of the Shorter Catechism that “The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of His will, whereby, *for His own glory*, He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass,” is not true. It cannot be reconciled with Scripture, nor with a true, loving, childlike reverence for God. Did Christ form his plans and purposes “for his own glory”? Is Christ God manifest in the flesh or not? It is true that the children are the glory of the mother; but the mother seeks her children’s welfare, not her own glory. It is true that the prosperity of his subjects is the glory of the prince; but he seeks their welfare, not his own glory. If God were the self-seeker which the Shorter Catechism says he is and the Bible says he is not, he would not deserve our reverence. He might command our service through fear, not our loyalty through love.

God is not easily provoked. What becomes of the monstrous philosophy that because God is an infinite Being sin against him deserves and will receive his infinite wrath?

God thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity. He knows the evil in man that masquerades under forms of virtue, but He also knows the good in man that hides itself under his blunders and his ignorance. His inquisition is the inquisition of love. He searches and probes only that he may cure. In no phase of iniquity can he rejoice; not in its existence; not in its discovery; not in punishing it. The sin of his children is in every aspect of it a pain to the Father’s heart. He looks on recreant humanity as Christ looked on denying Peter. He meets betraying humanity as Christ met betraying Judas, with the sorrowful greeting of wounded love, Friend, betrayest thou me with a kiss?

God trusteth all things; his faith in his children surpasses their confidence in themselves. God hopeth all things; he is infinitely hopeful, the God of all hope. God endureth all things, with a patience as infinite as his power, his wisdom, his love.

This is the New Testament outline of God: how it contrasts with such semi-pagan misreports as still find place in some modern theologies, and such cold and barren definitions as still offer themselves in some modern philosophies!



## The Citizen a Trustee

An American in England during the Parliamentary election in 1892 was impressed by observing a greater stress there than here upon the principle that a citizen, in the exercise of his franchise as a voter, is a trustee for the public welfare. Addresses to the public by committees of prominent men, representing both the Established and the Free Churches, emphasized this principle. They urged citizens to look higher than personal interests and party affiliations in favor of candidates who could be depended on to carry forward the work of social reformation. The Archbishop of Canterbury also emphasized it in a form of prayer for use while the election was pending: “That all

electors, remembering their vote to be a trust from Thee, may faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve in the Great Council of the Nation." This is a view with which the conscience of the average citizen needs to be very much more strongly impressed than it is at present.

A case came to our knowledge eight years ago in which this principle was acted on as it seldom is. The partners in an Eastern manufacturing firm were, all but one, strongly in favor of the candidate by whose success they thought their business interests would be promoted. The dissenting partner agreed with them in so thinking, but held that larger and national interests were involved, for the sake of which it was his duty as a citizen to support the other candidate. Such men are rare, but the great need of the country is that the majority of citizens should be such men.

Our courts sometimes find it necessary to enforce the law which forbids a trustee to employ his trust for his personal emolument. Each citizen is a trustee for his country, and his ballot is a part of his trust. To use that ballot as if it were a thing of private ownership to better one's business, or promote one's ambition, or conciliate favor to one's self, is simply the prostitution of a public trust to private ends, not essentially different from selling one's vote for five dollars.

When a question is submitted to a jury of twelve, the juror is held as committing a breach of trust who lets his vote be influenced by fear, or favor, or any self-interest whatever. In a National election the question is submitted to a jury of twelve million. Self-interest in any form is a consideration as illicit in this grand jury as in any petit jury.

After the Civil War the freedmen were granted the right of suffrage, as a means, it was said, of self-protection against the tyranny of their former masters. It was a low view to take, and experience demonstrated its illusiveness. All the evils of the "carpetbag" governments, and the retributive disorders which ensued, naturally flowed from this self-interest theory of the electoral franchise. To grant the franchise to the freedmen was indeed necessary, but not as an engine of self-interest; rather because the interest of a republican State requires that it shall not be divided into a class governing and a class governed.

The pulpits, if one may judge from press reports, are now showing interest in politics both in ways that are wise and ways that are otherwise. We would, therefore, emphasize the present opportunity and duty of inculcating, in place of some current non-moral ideas of citizenship, the true moral conception of it, for lack of which local, sectional, and private interests are far too influential in civic life for civic welfare. The triumph of the worst conceivable candidates at the polls, being but a temporary disaster, would be a far less evil than general acquiescence in the demoralizing theory that the ballot is the citizen's property rather than his trust, and belongs to him for what he can make of it for himself, and not for what he can do with it for his country.

A now antiquated school of political economy held that the selfishness of individuals might be trusted, if only allowed free play, to work out economic harmony and the general welfare. This fallacy, sufficiently discredited by the social stain that it created, has seriously vitiated our political life. Our social salvation depends on our working away from it to the truth embodied in the maxim of Marcus Aurelius: "What is not good for the swarm is not good for the bee." What is good for the swarm is the aim of the truly moral citizen. In the consciousness of a

common life, a common interest, transcending all that is partial or personal, he considers himself in his political action a trustee for all parts and members of the civic community. So, a century ago, Elias Boudinot wrote: "I consider myself as much the representative of Massachusetts as of New Jersey, and nothing shall prevail on me to injure the interest of one more than the other." To inculcate this Christian idea of citizenship there is always urgent need, and in the present especially is the pulpit's royal opportunity.



## The Commonwealth

### XI.—The Invalid

It is not impossible that some readers of *The Outlook* will lay down the last of this series of articles discouraged by the perusal. Laid aside by old age or by some form of invalidism from active work, such a reader will say to himself: "For me in the Commonwealth there is no place. I am a hindrance, not a help. Forbidden to minister, living only to be ministered unto, the Master's motto is not for me. I must linger, useless to others, a burden to myself, till death, more merciful than life, comes to set me free from this imprisonment." Let the last word of this series, then, carry its message to the invalid. For the invalids also have their place of honor and render their service in the Commonwealth—a service requiring greater heroism than any labor requires.

The highest service one soul can render to another is to give to it some gift of life, and suffering is the door through which the highest life is given. To be is more than to do; and suffering is a better test of character than is activity. Let the weary invalid, laid aside by infirmity or old age, ask himself what was the climax of Christ's service; when he did most divinely minister to the world; in what did he give to it the greatest gift. It was in the hour when he was bound hand and foot to the cross, when he could not go on any errands of mercy, could not reach forth his hand in healing touch, could scarcely speak any continuous words of comfort or instruction. The cross is at once the emblem of Christ's greatest weakness and his greatest power. The hour of his most apparent limitation is the hour of his illimitable service, because the supreme revelation of his illimitable love. It is Christ crucified whom Paul declares to be the manifest wisdom and the manifest power of God. And this is because patient suffering is the greatest service which one can render the world.

Nor need this be what the theologians call vicarious suffering. It need not be in lieu of another in order to be on behalf of another. It is, indeed, one of the greatest problems in theology, and one concerning which the most devout and scholarly theologians differ, whether Christ suffered in lieu of the world, though it is not at all a question whether he suffered on its behalf. It is certain that Paul never declares that the Messiah suffered in the stead of sinners, though repeatedly declaring that he suffered on their behalf. Suffering, not ostentatiously courted, but patiently endured when imposed, is the greatest service because it is at once the greatest manifestation and the greatest bestowment of life.

Blessed is the home ministered to by a saintly invalid. She softens all life's asperities, evokes in young and old their most sacred sympathies, ministers to others by the gracious reception of their ministries, thus teaches them that it is more blessed to give than to receive—a lesson we learn only in giving, and best in giving sympathetically where there is no expectation of return—reveals the life of the spirit hidden from those who know only the life of