

Perfect Liberty.

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Class - 94.

The Creator, the Author of Perfect Liberty

Man early showed the love of greater gain, which generated oppression and bondage.

The question of liberty, has been the thought and highest interest of the nations. Much study has been put upon the beginnings and growth of liberty; and to understand its nature, has been the desire of man.

Often, for the best growth of liberty, there must be resolution and bloodshed, before it can be fully established.

The settlement of the colonies, the separation from England, and the civil war, examples of resolution that were necessary, for the higher advancement of liberty.

Individual and civil liberty are closely connected.

Religion, society, and custom, may be transformed into a yoke that binds.

The final triumph, when perfect liberty will exist.

With the declaration, "Let there be light," was implied the idea, that this light should send its rays throughout the whole earth. In every part of the creation, is found the same universal benevolence. There were to be no restrictions, no limitations, but for man's good. Each of His creatures was to be free. Our first parents stepped beyond the bounds of this God-given liberty, stamping upon man, the love of greater gain, generating oppression, tyranny and bondage.

Recent investigations in Egypt, reveal walls, the lower layers of which show well made brick. The upper layers reveal a deficiency of the necessary material straw, and at last the upper tiers show an entire absence.

History records - "Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. To ye therefore, and work for there shall be no straw given you, yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks". We are familiar with the first great oppression, the helplessness and hopelessness of a disheartened people. Their rights were not forgotten - "I have also heard the groanings of the children

of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage. Speak unto Pharaoh, King of Egypt, that he let the children go out of his land."

That highest authoritative command, "Let my people go", has been down the ages. The nations are hearing it today. As there has been deliverance in the past, so will deliverance come to all oppressed people. It was not intended that nations, or individuals should be kept in bondage.

The question of liberty has been the thought and highest interest of the nations. How is the seed to germinate and grow? What are its enemies, and how are they to be overcome? The movements of nations must be studied. It is to the history of liberty we must look for aid. Greece and Rome demonstrated many noble principles, and furnished examples of virtue, but through the lack of enduring principles, they fell short of the perfection of liberty. In the beginning of the 16th century, notwithstanding the revival of learning, and progress of reformation, the people were in a more deplorable condition, than in the time

of the Caesars. It seemed that the future political servitude of man was fixed. Again the Divine hand raised help. All will not be lost. Sometime in the year 1486, a stranger presented himself at a convent to ask for bread. He approaches the sovereigns of Portugal and Spain, with the wild idea of a round world, asking aid to lift the veil, to reveal a country that shall be a benefit to the nations, and through the instrumentality of Columbus the establishment of this nation was made. England had made advance in freedom, yet she was far behind the real spirit of liberty.

Again a people are oppressed and for what? Because in their worship they seek for greater freedom. The landing of the puritans meant overthrow of oppression.

The lines had been drawn closer and closer, until that inherent love of liberty would bear it no longer. Closely followed resolution, and at the cost of blood greater freedom was gained, and the foundations laid for a home of liberty. The political separation between Eng-

- land and America effected. Then came the formation of the government. - The failure of the articles of Confederation to meet the needs of the nation. They had served the colonies, but now were inadequate to meet wants of the government. Was there hope that a new departure would result in success? Misgivings were many of the great men of that time. They were as men groping in darkness. They saw no light with which to guide them. Providence again directed them, in framing that wonderful instrument, the Constitution of the United States, which does not define liberty, but in which is embodied its very spirit, the rights we love, and the despot hates.

In it is shown the high free action of man individually and socially respected by the government, and which in turn respects the government. Other nations have looked to our own, as an example by which to follow, and imitate. The ancients ignored the individual rights of a person. Their whole attention was directed to the government by states. In our government the individual interests are regarded,

In this lies the essential features of political science. The Tudors in their endeavor to reach a higher state of individual independence, adopted the feudal system. A certain degree of prosperity followed. It was only a system, however, that led to party interests; as the interests of individuals was centered upon self, regardless of others. The prevailing idea, was the exemptions of burdens. Soon the feudal system became oppressive, and successive revolutions tended to break the power of Barons. From that time, their efforts were directed toward the regaining of their liberty. To fully understand the meaning of civil liberty, we must examine the history of the early times, of the charters granted to the people, the principles and measures that were insisted upon. There must be an understanding of the common law, and of the Constitution. As from the diseased body, the physician gains new light, so from unhealthy nations, do we gain enlightenment as to the cause of the revolutions and downfalls, and from

the dark clouds of despotism do we gain further enlightenment. So closely are liberty and humanity interwoven, that its perfection lies in the acknowledgment of those inherent rights, which belong to manly independent existence, and these are closely connected with state and national existence. Among the many essentials to perfect liberty must be forbearance. Easily are the seeds of despotism germinated, when there is an absence of toleration. Convictions of truth and right lead to the respect of others. Tyranny begins its growth when convictions are feeble.

Another element most essential to society and state is obedience to law.

When the people forget the part of their being governed, and become absorbed in their power to govern, absolutism sets in to undermine the health and strength of a nation. When authority is in excess of obedience, the foundations begin to tumble. Times of quiet and prosperity more severely try the metal of a nation, than when there is agitation, for the undermining elements are unobserved.

Stormy times try men's souls, but in times of oppression, the solidity of a nation is tried, and sometimes their liberty lost forever. Often the masses overlap their rights, and abuse liberty. They look to communism, or power, vested in one person or sovereign. It is through these masses we must examine the dangers to society and nations, and seek a remedy. It is to the history of liberty we must look for aid; - the history of those who and are struggling to be free. There is but one theme. A freedom that shall extend from pole to pole, from ocean to ocean.

Multitudes of constructions are laid upon the meaning of liberty, and its perfection. There are as many meanings as those attached to religion, art and property.

To man belongs freedom in his relations to man, and in his relations to society and governments. The greatest rogue wants liberty as much as the deserving patriot.

The trouble is - he wants too much, and is selfish in it - no matter if others are oppressed or burdened through his ardent love for liberty. The real beauty of

liberty, lies in the mutual grant and check which exists in the intercourse between man and man. A despot may govern wisely, but the people are not fitted for a higher civilized state.

Our wise men tell us - "The noblest human work, nobler even than literature science or art, is broad civil liberty, well secured and wisely handled". Not a higher work has been shown than in the plan of self government - of a free people, the fair and just intercourse with other peoples or nations. Some have believed that in the rule of the majority liberty exists. Should the majority bid you destroy yourself, or establish Despotism in the place of liberty, would there be an atom of liberty in this? We come nearer the truth when we affirm, that it is in the protection of the minority that liberty exists, but it cannot exist in the power of the majority. The majority directed and controlled in the French massacre of the Protestants. Was there any liberty on that account?

You do not need to be reminded of

that dark blot upon our national record, when the four million souls were subjected to chains, the lash and tyranny. In 1862 sounded forth that command - "Set my people go," and through the instrumentality of His co-workers, they were made a free people, and the nation saved from disgrace and ruin. It is through the slow, painful processes, that perfect liberty grows. To a strong government belongs the harmony of power, check and protection. If the overbearing growth of power is not checked before full grown, class will rise up against class, interests against interests, only for one to survive and absorb the other. Let the spirit of our states be national, our liberty broad. Let the increase of wealth be widespread. It is well to profit by the better elements in Grecian and Roman life, leaving in the background, their evils and faults.

The cry of oppression is again being heard in the land. The demands of a needy people must be heeded, and justice done. It is true that on both sides may wrong be found, but when that

- sands are starving in this land of plenty,
and multitudes are without hope of em-
- ployment, something is radically wrong.

The same power that has emancipated
the enslaved in the past, will again
release His people, even though revolution
and bloodshed must be the price paid
for the freedom. To protect individuals
is one of the essentials elements of free-
- dom. and closely are the individual in-
- terests connected with that of the nation.

"Every house is a man's castle" be it of
granite or straw. The free personality
which Nature gave to man is opposed to
slavery. He cannot be regarded as a thing,
and by right can there be no dominion
of man over man. What is the basis
of this priceless jewel, for which men
will abandon all else to obtain?

"Freedom has in herself her own charm.
He who seeks in anything else, than
freedom is bowed in bondage". Though the
advance of this God-given gift advance-
- ment is made through all lines of life.

Oppression or bondage may come and
be forced upon individuals in other

than political forms. Religion or society may bind. Custom may transform itself into a yoke, that controls the thought and actions of men. The Creator intended that degree of liberty in which every faculty should be cultivated, and nourished, unfolding itself to the utmost capability, making human life and liberty fuller and richer, until it permeates the whole race. With this advanced state, despotism, be it in the name of liberty or religion, can make no headway. It is this conflict between liberty and despotism, that has been of most interest in the past centuries. Among the aids to perfect liberty are education, variety of situations, commerce, and freedom of speech. The question has been asked, - "Where shall the line be drawn between social and individual liberty". The answer may be, that each shall have at heart the interests of society that protects, helping bear its burdens. The one obligation shall be to develop good, and crush evil. Let there be an absence of that selfishness and avarice, that leads to

the subjection of others in any way. Each shall have its own field of action, each in harmony with the other.

Is this continual contest between individuals, between individuals and society to cease? Is there no solution to the problem? The time is promised, when His Kingdom will come. The bondage of inheritance, unwise education and evil will cease. The cloud of darkness will be lifted. Again the Light will shine forth in all its glory. Truth will be revealed, and we shall be a free people.

"On the light of liberty, you
saw the light of Peace like

"another morn
Risen on mid-noon"
and the sky on which you
closed your eye, was cloudless.