

A New Nation

We of today look back with pride to the time our forefathers established a republic that should be the boast of the nineteenth century. We point with a spirit of reverence to those heroes who in the time of a nations peril voluntarily laid down their lives to solve the vexed question of human slavery. We all agree that by these means we have reached a degree of development never before attained.

And yet while thus congratulating ourselves, we hear from all sides of the wonderful opportunity for improvement. Such questions as the tariff, the labor problem, and the free coinage of silver are presenting themselves each with their special claims.

But in our eagerness to discuss these issues, we are very apt to neglect one very important question. A question that if properly solved would put an end to the existence of these others. This question arises from our system of

competition.

Go into any of our large cities and there you will see that the struggle for existence is a perpetual warfare. A merchant spends his time and energy not in advancing the interests of the community but in getting his neighbor out of the way. His success seems to be dependant upon somebody else's failure. Every new man that enters the contest instead of being a help to his neighbor brings additional anxiety.

This conflict of interests becomes so great that in order to succeed at all, men must give their whole time and attention to their business, thus becoming machines for making money instead of men making manhood.

And if the men are unable to maintain the family, the women and children are expected to step forward and assist. Compelled by necessity women are now making shirts at $3\frac{1}{2}$ cts a doz. Factory girls laboring from ten to twelve hours for 60 cts a day. Children ten years of age working ten hours a day

receiving one dollar per week. And what is still worse, when the state attempts to relieve this condition of affairs by reducing the hours of labor it is confronted with the statement that if such a law be passed it will on account of the fierce competition with factories of other states compel them to cease operations.

Ah! you may talk about the dignity of labor. You may paint in glowing terms the advantages of manual toil. But to such persons as these it amounts to nothing more than commonplace oratory.

When on the one hand we see women and children worked to their utmost and on the other thousands of able bodied men unable to find employment it looks as though there is a waste of energy caused by misapplied labor. It looks as though there is, as the politicians say, something radically wrong.

We boast that this is a land of freedom and equality and true freedom and equality are attained to a higher degree than at any previous age of civilization. But can we yet say that all men are

created equal.

An Astor baby in N. Y. was recently born heir to \$50 000 000. This with interest at 6% will have accumulated by the time the child is 21 yrs of age \$600 000 000. Now do you mean to say that this child is on the same plane of equality with the one born without a cent to its name? Is it possible under our system of competition that it should be so? Are the opportunities such that all have the same chance to bring out their inherent qualities? It seems not.

But if you object to this system of competition what will you substitute in its place? It is a rather poor policy to object to an existing system unless you are sure of something better.

Let us glance for a moment at the "signs of the times" and discover if possible some of the tendencies of our civilization. We see on every hand a wonderful combination of capital. Men in the different industries are fast realizing that in order to succeed they must combine and it seems only a question of time when

all our business will be done on some co-operative plan. Production is becoming more and more capitalistic and less individualistic; manufacturers not individuals supply the demand and our commerce is fast passing into the hands of corporations, combines, and trusts.

Under the circumstances it is no wonder that small competitors are crowded out. No wonder that the young man of today shrinks from entering the fierce competitive struggle. No wonder that there is a great rush to the government offices where good steady income and less hours of labor are insured. No wonder that editor Flower talks of the smallness of civilization.

What is then the objective point of our nation? Evidently there is a tendency toward the nationalization of industry. Civilization is demanding the best possible organization of labor, and this demand is likely to be left unsatisfied without the formation of an industrial army to combat the forces of nature. Leaders of industry are wanted.

who are impelled by the same spirit of duty and honor as were our leaders in the late war.

By the formation of this industrial army all working for each and each for all, everybody doing his share of the drudgery of life, think of the material gain to society. Men no longer actuated by the lust of wealth would use their influence to advance public welfare instead of opposing their competitors. This would no longer be a land of plenty with beggars at our back doors. The motive to untruthfulness and dishonesty removed friendship in our business affairs would be restored. Newspapers would have no occasion to publish the accounts of business failures and financial panics.

Then think of the wonderful incentive to invention. Under our present system every invention reducing manual toil throws so many laborers out of employment, but under nationalism such inventions would be heralded with delight and the laborers would simply transfer themselves to some other occupation.

But by far the greatest gain is found in that of an intellectual and social nature. This cooperative plan would so increase the productive power of the community that the hours of labor would necessarily be shortened and all laborers allowed the time to improve their opportunities. How many characters there are today that from the lack of development sink into oblivion while had they been properly trained might have stood among the brightest!

But some object to nationalism on the ground that it will destroy individuality, that it will place every body upon the same "dead level" and destroy incentives to work.

For a man whose whole object in life is the hoarding of money, or a woman whose sole ambition is to outshine others to make this objection is natural, but for a man with a philanthropic spirit the argument is decidedly obscure. Of what does individuality consist? Is it to pile up mountains of gold? Is it to parade the streets with silk dresses and pug dogs? No, it is to develop a higher nobler being, to bring out one's inherent qualities and

place him upon a plane where he shall do his own thinking. One's occupation is not the end of life but is simply the means by which he is enabled to progress.

Now this is precisely the idea of nationalism. There is no contradiction between it and individualism. In fact nationalism supplies the best means for developing individual qualities.

It is possible to see then in the light of the nineteenth century, the dawn of a new nation where co operation in our business affairs is substituted for competition. Men on all hands are discussing its feasibility. Many of our statesmen are giving it careful study, and what is still more many of the ministers of the gospel are presenting its claims. They realize that the family is the divinely ordained unit of society and there co operation is the primal law. What is wanted is an extension of this idea into the community thus making it possible for a man to love his neighbor as himself. Nationalism is simply applied Christianity.

That the advantages of nationalism are great cannot be denied; What becomes of such questions as the tariff, the labor problem, or the free silver agitation?

That there are disadvantages to its attainment is also apparent, but let us look on both sides of the question and then draw our conclusions as to whether it is visionary or impracticable and not object to it on the ground that it is of recent origin or that it is an untried experiment but side with Lowell when he said "Wrong though its title deeds go back to the days of Sodom is by nature a thing of yesterday, while right of which we became conscience but an hour ago is more ancient than the stars and of the essence of heaven."

L. H. Otis.