

THE KEYSTONE

At last we are beginning to realize that the human family is replenished from the bottom, and that civilization travels upon the feet of the children. The quickening of the human consciousness has caused people to realize that all men everywhere should be enlightened. Therefore, we have the almost world wide movement for universal education.

While the following story is probably not true, yet it illustrates the thought I wish to get before you.

They say an archaeologist was excavating the ruins of an ancient city and he found on the site that three cities had stood there, and that they marked three epochs in the world's history. In the third city down he found a tablet that bemoaned the fact that, in that early time in the record of the world's history, conditions were not like they used to be. (Six thousand years ago the following inscription was carved on a Chaldean tablet, "Our earth is becoming degenerate in these latter days. Children no longer obey their parents!")

No doubt men lived in the second city who bemoaned the fact that the times were changed. And it would be surprising if the last city to stand upon the site did not have people in it who were singing the refrain, "The times have changed, and conditions are not like they were in the good old days." The fowls of the air and the creeping things that made their homes in the mounds which mark the ruins of these three buried cities proclaim to an observant world that here, at least, conditions are not like they used to be.

Civilizations come and civilizations go, building stratum upon stratum, ever going higher and higher, but the wail of the departing is ever the same, "Conditions are not like they used to be." Today almost the world over we hear the mournful dirge, "Conditions are not like they used to

be." It is the voice of a dying civilization. It marks the stratum that separates the recent past from the near future. We are passing out from the things of yesterday to the more glorious life of tomorrow. The city of Sorrows is slowly sinking and the new city of Hope is rising upon its ruins. "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them." The Great Architect is building a new heaven and a new earth. The structure is more nearly perfect, more glorious than any ever builded before. The stone that the builders of yesterday rejected is being placed at the head of the corner. Aesop was a slave. The aristocrat five hundred years after Aesop's day was untutored. Aesop lives, but the mediaeval aristocrat is unknown. The stone of learning, so long rejected, is today the keystone in the arch of human civilization. The civilization of tomorrow must be an intelligent one. This world from now on is to progress in proportion to what each generation does to enlighten each succeeding generation. We move on the feet of our children. The known of today must be acquired by the child of tomorrow before he can begin his structure for his today. Each generation must come into the total inheritance of all preceding generations before it can build its structure of civilization. "I am all I have inherited plus what little I can add to this inheritance" is not only true of the individual, but it is true for each epoch in human progress.

The World War. There is good in every bad thing if we take it aright. I have been trying to find what good is coming to humanity from the great World War.

It is manifest to every thinking person that we are in the midst

of a great change in the structure of human society, and what the outcome will be, no one has been able to forecast with any degree of certainty. The youth of today will no longer accept the traditions of yesterday, but the youth of today is seeking light through education as they have never sought it before.

One cold winter when I was living in Baltimore I saw the harbor completely frozen over. I saw an ice boat slowly making its way up the channel into the harbor and smashing this ice into small fragments. This kept up until the ice bound boats in the harbor were liberated. Then pilot tug after pilot tug led the big ships out of the harbor through the narrow channel and into the open water. I sometimes think civilization was frozen over by the chill of tradition until youth could not move from its moorings, and then the great World War came and smashed all of civilization's traditions, thus liberating youth. Education stands by as the pilot tug to direct youth through the narrow channels of early life and into the open waters of maturity. Shall we supply sufficient pilot boats for our children? Shall we give our children a chance? Remember it was in Baltimore that Key wrote the "Star Spangled Banner". Shall we let it continue to wave over the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave? If so, we must have pilot boats of education for our sons and our daughters, some one to guide the youth from the home moorings, through the dangerous channels of early life, and out into the open waters of maturity. Already too many misguided youths are stranded and are blocking the channel, thus handicapping others in their efforts to attain life's open waters.

The world has recently gone through the most terrific war of all history. We went into that war with the purpose of making the world safe for democracy. I wonder if the great question confronting us today is not How to make democracy safe for the world. Democracy is the

outgrowth of our institutions. The home, the school, and the church in America have been organized on the basis of an absolute monarchy, and it is no wonder that the government in this country is becoming more and more centralized. Youth is rebelling in the home, in the school, and in the church, and will soon rebel in the state. (I use the word in its broad sense.) It is the pendulum swing, but it marking an advance in human civilization. A republic is a government organized by the people in a given territory and that government is operated for the people who constitute that nation. It presupposes that the people are law abiding. A democracy is founded upon individual right-mindedness. This means that the safety of our homes, our churches, our institutions, our government, and our civilization itself is dependent upon the right kind of universal education. At present throughout America we are suffering with centralization and legal enactments. This is a natural consequence following the great world conflict, because the nation was forced to centralize and sacrifice to win the conflict. But in winning there is a danger that we have lost, because we have not gone back to a realization that a democracy is founded upon individual right-mindedness. There are many people who believe that an executive is a super man. The President of the United States is no longer just a human being, but he is more, therefore, his judgment on matters is almost infallible. This is the error that the Emperor of Germany made. We are laboring under the impression that we, by legislation, can convert falsehood into truth or make truth false. Thus we have a multitude of laws written on the statute books that should be repealed. As much as I regret to make this statement, it is no wonder that many of the good people of today are not law abiding.

Love is the great need in this world today. When there is the right kind of love in the family, there is no question about authority.

Children are afraid to do certain things, not because of any fear of punishment, but because of their love for their parents. When love gets into the school, the spirit of the Czar will disappear and student and teacher will work together in perfect harmony for the common good. When the spirit of love gets into the people, the religion of Jehovah will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. This spirit will give to the American people the real spirit of democracy, and man will learn to trust his fellowman. You and I will refrain from doing this or that because we love to be law abiding, and not for fear we will be punished by the law.

May I come back to my first statements, "The human family is replenished from the bottom, and "civilization travels upon the feet of the children." The world of tomorrow depends upon what the mature people of today do for the children. Happy is that people when "A little child shall lead them." But remember the words of the Master when He said, "Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea."

Robert H. Wright,

Greenville, N. C.

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