

21 human lives in the blowing up of a building for vengeance, is indeed an awful crime; but systematically to stunt childhood, to distort womanhood, to brutalize manhood, to spread desolation and untimely death broadcast, and to that end deliberately to poison the streams of republican government by legislative bribery, and all "for the money there is in it," is crime unconscionable and humanly almost unpardonable.

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TOUCHSTONE OF DEMOCRACY.

A friend of mine writing of seeing Humperdinck's new opera, *Koenigskinder*, happened to remark on the point that a prince could be recognized only when decked out in princely paraphernalia. Now from this remark I would know that she and Humperdinck were democrats, had the democratic mind, even if I did not know the fact otherwise. What is this touchstone, whereby at once the democratic mind discloses itself?

A man may talk ever so much about the welfare of the masses, about social betterment, about political and economic improvement, even about the too great concentration of wealth and the luxury of the wealthy classes, and yet not at all have the democratic mind. A man may wear coarse clothes, take to shirt sleeves on occasion, play the cow-boy, slap Tom, Dick and Harry on the back, and yet not have the democratic mind. A man may even belong to the Democratic party, and always vote at his party's call, and yet not have the democratic mind. There are in fact many so-called Democrats who have the aristocratic mind. There are some Republicans, not necessarily belonging to the ranks of the insurgents, who have the democratic mind. Personally I know one. What is the test?

The test is not a matter of intellect. Without doubt a majority of the intellectuals in all the times that history tells about have been on the side of the aristocratic mind. Most of the university people and the collegians have been on this side, and they are to-day. Most of the writers of good literature have always been on this side.

The test is not a matter of religion, for nearly all of the church leaders have had, and still have, the aristocratic mind. And this is strange, because Jesus was the truest embodiment, the very incarnation, the very word made flesh, of the democratic spirit.

The test is not even a matter of good-will, except in the deepest sense of this word. In the deepest sense of the word, good-will is surely a test; but a man may have good-will to a certain extent, sometimes to a very large extent, may spend his

money, his talent, his life, in behalf of his fellow-men, and yet in the essential quality lack the democratic spirit. The democratic spirit is indeed necessary to the kind of good-will which Jesus enjoined that we should have toward our neighbor, or to the good-will which St. Paul preached in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians. The very word which St. Paul used in this great chapter might perhaps better be translated gracious good-will, and in this good-will there is no savor of pride or condescension. And yet, as I have said, there is a deal of good-will in the world, of very efficient good-will, which still partakes of the aristocratic mind.

What then is the test, what the touchstone of the democratic mind? If it is not necessarily found in our works, or our manners, or our political professions, if it is not to be found in intellectual keenness, not in religious requirements, not in the practical efforts and benefactions of humanitarianism and philanthropy, where shall we find it? The test after all is a simple one. It depends upon our attitude toward men, depends upon where we lay the emphasis in dealing with and thinking of the men that are all about us, rich and poor, high and low, clever and stupid, thrifty and lazy, respectable and of no repute, pious and criminal. It depends upon whether we lay the emphasis upon man as man, upon the value of man as man, or upon the distinctions between man and man.

If we lay the emphasis upon the value of man as man, we understand the meaning of the word equality, which is wisdom of the democratic mind, but to the aristocratic mind a stumbling block and foolishness. If we lay the emphasis upon the value of man as man, we understand the sentence that all men are born equal, a sentence which is of course perfect silliness to the mind which emphasizes the distinctions between man and man. It is not that the aristocratic mind may not value man as man, it is not that the democratic mind does not see the mountains of differences among men; the point is, which idea is put first?

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Perhaps the two most beautiful exponents of the democratic spirit since the days of Jesus of Nazareth have been St. Francis of Assisi and Joseph Mazzini. "Yesterday," once wrote Mazzini in one of his prophetic moods in which the future seemed already realized, "yesterday we revered the priest, the lord, the soldier, the master; to-day we reverence man, his liberty, his dignity, his immortality, his labor, his progressive tendency;

all that constitutes him a creature made in the image of God—not his color, his birth, his fortune, all that is accidental and transitory in him. . . . We believe in the sacredness of individual conscience; in the right of every man to the utmost self-development compatible with the equal right of his fellows; and hence we hold that whatever denies or shackles liberty is impious, and ought to be overthrown, and as soon as possible destroyed.”

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The latter part of the quotation supplies for us the necessary conclusion to the idea of the first part, that is, to the idea of the value of man as man. For, in all who have the democratic mind toward others there must be the recognition of, and desire for, the right of each man to his best development, and the recognition of the further essential fact that this best development can only be attained in freedom. Here again the difference between the two minds, arising out of the primary difference as to where we lay the emphasis, continues to be a question of the object of emphasis. For, in reaching the best development, the democratic mind emphasizes freedom, the aristocratic mind emphasizes external discipline. It is not that the aristocratic mind altogether denies freedom, or that the democratic mind ignores discipline. But the democratic mind lays the emphasis on freedom, and when it helps, it helps without pharisaism or condescension, and when it disciplines, it disciplines with reluctance and without eclat. The aristocratic mind lays the emphasis on discipline, enjoys and displays the process, grants freedom with hesitation, and when it helps, no matter how wise and good the helping, can hardly avoid some register of condescension. It is not that the aristocratic mind intends to be pharisaical, or is conscious of its condescension. The trouble lies in the fact that the man of aristocratic spirit has allowed his mind, by birth and custom and environment, to put too much emphasis on the differences between his condition and the condition of the other man, and has not allowed his mind to go on to the deeper idea of man to man which lies below all differences.

J. H. DILLARD.

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Presbyterian Elder: "Nae, my mon, there'll be nane o' they new-fangled methods in Heaven."

Listener: "I don't know how you can be sure."

Elder: "Sure? Why, mon, gin they tried it, the whole Presbyterian kirk wad rise up an' gang out in a body."—Lippincott's.

INCIDENTAL SUGGESTIONS

THE BEST CHARTER FOR AMERICAN CITIES.

The best form of government for American cities is that which most conduces to intelligence in the determination of policies and to efficiency in their execution, while not sacrificing a jot or tittle of democracy.

European cities without number have long furnished us with examples of efficiency and intelligence in municipal government, but in most cases these governments have not rested on a fully democratic basis, including manhood suffrage.

Apart from the recent experiences in commission government, American cities in general have had governments neither as intelligent nor as efficient as the abilities of the people, shown outside of politics, would warrant us in expecting. And as to the democracy of our city governments, though thoroughgoing enough according to the specious test of the number of officials elected at the polls, it has been gravely defective when put to the true test of responsiveness to the will and care for the welfare of the people.

The commission form of government, combined with the Initiative and Referendum, means a long step forward towards greater intelligence and efficiency, and towards real instead of nominal democracy. But it is to be hoped that this type of charter will not be made into a fetish. If there is anything still better we want it. Once on a time civic reformers supposed that manhood suffrage would almost bring the millennium.

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Why is the Des Moines charter better than our old charters? And how could it be made better still?

One reason why it is better than the old charters is because, under it, the voters elect only officials important enough for them to know about, and few enough for them to know about, and because these few officials are given power enough to be held to account. This is the political principle that has recently been promulgated, in a brilliant campaign of publicity, under the name of "The Short Ballot."

Secondly, the Des Moines charter gives the people those guarantees of democratic government, the Initiative and the Referendum. These weapons may be awkward to handle, but they are good to wield once in a while when the people are hard pressed, and they are weapons of great potency when merely hanging on the wall, ready for use.

These two things, I take it, are the fundamental virtues of the Des Moines charter, and they are very great. Now for the imperfections.

One is that this form of charter does not provide quite the best mechanism for executive efficiency. To get the maximum efficiency you must have, for chief professional experts, men or women holding office indefinitely so long as they satisfy, not the whole electorate, but a small body of persons whose opportunities and experience especially qualify them