

tributed by the people whose smallest coin is a nickel, and those who do not use their transfers. As company employes in uniform and others riding to and from work do not pay, the average of fares figured on a basis of all people who rode is considerably below 3 cents.



ART AND THE PEOPLE.

This is a time in which there is much talk about the improvement of conditions in the common life of the common people. Uplift is one of our great words. There are numerous associations for tenement house improvement, for rural improvement, for various sorts of uplift, and one could spend one's whole time in listening to addresses dealing with the many schemes. Criticize America as we will, there is no doubt that we Americans have a passion for uplifting our brethren who seem to need it. Factory hands, tenement dwellers, Negroes, mountain whites, all come in for our beneficent care.

Some of us know that while all the schemes may be well intended and may do some good there can be no basic or permanent uplift of the masses of any class so long as special privilege, and especially so long as the one great special privilege of the monopoly of land, continues. The abolition of this monopoly of the source of all wealth is the great work, and those who are enlisted in this movement are the true workers in human uplift. Some of us feel that all efforts should have this direction, but we cannot have it so, and therefore we might as well welcome any activity that looks toward betterment, and especially any effort that looks toward better education and wiser use of the conditions as they now exist.



The trend of democracy is to increase the number of people who can enjoy the good and beautiful things of life. The spirit of aristocracy is to be exclusive, except as it may choose to bestow. The spirit of democracy, which is one with the spirit of real Christianity, is to extend and spread among all the children of men fair opportunities for gaining for themselves the good and beauty of life.

We used to think that it made little difference about the good things and the beautiful things of this life, and preachers preached and some still are preaching that the ugliness of this life makes little difference, because our "citizenship is in heaven." But many of us have come to the knowledge that if God is the God of the universe and eternity, He is also the God of this life and this

earth as a part of eternity and the universe. This new thought is beginning to have a powerful influence over the minds of men. Those who may once have been reconciled to waiting for some future reward are asking why there should not be some present reward. Men are beginning to see the just claim for justice and equal opportunities in regard to the things of this world, so that there may be better living for all the people.

Now in regard to this better living, this wider spread of the enjoyments of life, let us say again that even while justice lingers it is the part of wisdom and commonsense to make the best of conditions and opportunities as they are. This is what a large majority of the world's workers fail to do. Even in the common routine of daily life we fail to deport ourselves and to use our opportunities to best advantage. It is the purpose of this paper to point out briefly one way in which we fail.



The way of failure to which I allude refers to the aesthetic, the artistic side of life. How remote this thought, when first presented, seems from any connection with the life of the masses of men! Yet it should not be so.

It is a pity that when we speak of art the thought should be of something quite remote from the life of all the people, that when we speak of art the first thought should probably be of some gallery of pictures which on certain days we may visit without charge. The word art ought to carry as common and universal a meaning as the words life and love. In its widest sense art is simply the way of doing things. There is art in eating, in drinking, in setting a table, in hanging a picture as well as in painting one, in speaking to a man in the street as well as in singing in an opera.

It would add immensely to the happiness and satisfaction of life if all people would take in this thought, and would aim to do as beautifully as we can the common things of life. The workingman and his wife with barely enough to buy the bare necessities of living might smile or sneer at this thought, but they would be wrong, dead wrong. On the contrary there is all the more reason from their pressure of living why they should want to bring into their home, however poor it be, all the comeliness possible. There is much in the way of better living which can be done in many homes without the addition of a penny to expenses. The wife's gown may be cheap, but there is no reason why she may not have it clean and well put on. Her table, however poor the fare,

can be neat, and if she lives in the country can have a bit of flower or some green thing in the center. The man can tidy himself for dinner and speak in gracious tone to wife and children without taking a nickel from his daily wage. All this is art.

Some years ago I was on an early local train going west from Lynchburg. My seat companion was a workingman with an uncommonly fine, strong face, and I soon found him to be a man of thought and information. I have rarely enjoyed a more interesting traveling companion. The train stopped ten minutes for breakfast and we went together to the station eating-room. Now the way in which my friend did his eating and drinking brought to mind the thought of the pity that he should spoil any of his fineness by his slovenly ways. He shoveled the food into his mouth, dropping crumbs and gravy on the cloth and on his clothes, and he drank his tea with as much noise as Dr. Johnson.

One trouble is that so many people have never given a thought to the art side, the aesthetic side, of life, and they have no conception how very important this side is both for our own increase of happiness and for the pleasure and satisfaction we can give to others.

Furthermore, that those who have given some thought to the matter should affect to despise and neglect external things is a silly philosophy, because external things, apart from the good in themselves, have an inevitable reaction upon character. Very good and earnest people sometimes cultivate this affectation. I knew a man who had over his desk a sentence from Cicero, *Rerum externarum despicentia*, the despicability of external things. Had he known Cicero better he would have known that the great orator was only talking, and that nobody cared more than he about the artistic way of doing things and about external things in general.

What I said about picture galleries for the people was without thought of underrating the fine influence of such institutions. Every city should have its municipal gallery of beautiful pictures, free at all times to all the people. There is no doubt that the constant view of beautiful pictures will go a long way toward cultivating the art spirit which we so greatly need in all our doings. We need tremendously in America the spread of this spirit. Art is not something to be preempted by aristocracy. We want democracy to be beautiful.

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EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE

DEMOCRACY AT THE SEAT OF HARVARD.

Cambridge, Mass.

The story of the proposed new charter for Cambridge has its features of interest for fundamental democrats the country over, for it is the story of a completely modern and completely democratic city charter in one of the oldest and supposedly most conservative communities of this country.



The fact that the charter was defeated by so small a margin on Nov. 7 last, its first submission to the voters (the vote standing 6,073 no to 5,272 yes, with 1,546 blanks and 3,500 stay-at-homes) leads its supporters to hope confidently for its adoption at no distant date. The campaign of education, known to be quite incomplete when the vote was taken, is going right on under circumstances improved by the fact that the election demolished some of the most formidable of the allegations of its opponents.

This charter is of the most up-to-date type of the so-called commission form—involving the Initiative, Referendum and Recall with workable percentages, abolition of the party label, election to specific offices, and particularly the substitution of the Preferential Ballot and single election for the older but probably short-lived system of double elections of Des Moines, Los Angeles and elsewhere.



At the time the charter came full-fledged before the people of Cambridge there was no perceptible public demand whatever for a new charter. There was the customary run of grumbling about inefficiency and high taxes, but no sign whatever of a move for a change in the charter. Individual citizens, however, had become impressed with the value of the commission form of government, and when the Grand Junction Charter appeared with its plan of preferential voting as a substitute for the double-election, it seemed to some of us who read *The Public* and thus get news of such things, that the cap-sheaf had at last been placed on government by commission. We were persuaded that Senator Bucklin and his Grand Junction friends had developed a simple, workable way of attracting and electing the right kind of men to office, with less opportunity for domination by machine or special interests than anything before proposed. The preferential ballot gained friends and admirers as fast as it was explained. The question naturally arose, Why not have it in Cambridge? and—while we are about it—Why not have as much else of the latest and best of the commission form ideas as we can under the limitations of our Massachusetts laws? A small self-appointed committee accordingly took upon itself the work of preparing a model charter for the people to consider, in the faith that the people would take to it as they came to understand it. We realized that the charter would be full of novelties, some of them unheard of in this neighborhood, and that selfish in-