

that from the first moment of bloodshed it would be all over with argument.—The London Speaker.

AN OPEN LETTER TO GOV. YATES.
For The Public.

Excellent Sir:

Permit me to suggest that in your next message to our legislature you embody a recommendation for the passage of a law to compel poor mothers to accept some reasonable compensation for surplus children, thus permitting ladies of the higher classes to enjoy the privileges of proxy motherhood without enduring the pangs of maternity. The necessity of such a law was brought to my attention by an article in the Chicago Inter Ocean of February 12, Lincoln's birthday. It appears that a woman of the lower class, with seven children, declined to allow a lady of our class to take one of her burdens off her hands, though the upper class lady offered \$5,000 for the privilege of becoming the child's guardian. No wonder the poor become poorer while they persist in such folly, and it occurs to me that they should be protected from the results of their own improvidence by the strong arm of the law.

Think of it! Here is a poor woman with seven children to support. A herculean task, truly. A kind-hearted lady offers not only to relieve her of one-seventh of the burden, but at the same time to lighten the other six-sevenths by a payment of \$5,000. Not only does the mother refuse, but she is encouraged by a host of sentimentalists because of her obduracy.

Is there no way for the state to punish such a mother? If not, some method should be contrived at the earliest possible moment. Such heartless selfishness as this mother displayed in the instance cited should be crushed out by law. Not only has she deprived one of her children of a good home, a liberal education and fine prospects for a superior career, but the remaining six are denied the hundreds of comforts that the income of \$5,000 might have provided them in perpetuity. Not only this, but she has deprived a philanthropic woman of the higher class of an opportunity to exercise her generosity. And all this merely to gratify her own selfishness.

No right-thinking persons can condone this mother's bigotry. In citing this case to a friend he quoted the following lines:

"Which shall it be? Which shall it be?"
I looked at John—John looked at me;

Dear patient John, who loves me yet
As well as though my locks were jet.
And when I found that I must speak,
My voice seemed strangely low and weak;
"Tell me again what Robert said!"
And then I, listening, bent my head.
"This is the letter:

"I will give
A house and land while you shall live,
If, in return, from out your seven,
One child to me for aye be given."
I looked at John's old garments worn,
I thought of all that John had borne
Of poverty, and work, and care,
Which I, though willing, could not share;
I thought of seven mouths to feed,
Of seven little children's need,
And then of this.

"Come, John," said I,
"We'll choose among them as they lie
Asleep." So, walking hand in hand,
Dear John and I surveyed our band.
First to the cradle frail we stepped,
Where Lillian the baby slept,
A glory 'gainst the pillow white.
Softly the father stooped to lay
His rough hand down in a loving way,
When dream or whisper made her stir,
And huskily he said: "Not her."
We stooped beside the trundle-bed,
And one long ray of lamplight shed
Athwart the boyish faces there,
In sleep so pitiful and fair;
I saw on Jamie's rough, red cheek,
A tear undried. Ere John could speak,
"He's but a baby, too," said I,
And kissed him as we hurried by.

Pale, patient Robbie's angel face
Still in his sleep bore suffering's trace.
"No, for a thousand crowns, not him,"
He whispered, while our eyes were dim.
Poor Dick, bad Dick, our wayward son,
Turbulent, reckless, idle one—
Could he be spared? "Nay, He who gave,
Bade us befriend him to the grave;
Only a mother's heart can be
Patient enough for such as he;
And so," said John, "I would not dare
To send him from her bedside prayer."
Then stole we softly up above,
And knelt by Mary, child of love.
"Perhaps for her 't would better be,"
I said to John. Quite silently
He lifted up a curl that lay
Across her cheek in willful way,
And shook his head. "Nay, love, not thee,"
The while my heart beat audibly.
Only one more, our eldest lad,
Trusty and truthful, good and glad—
So like his father. "No, John, no—
I cannot, will not let him go."
And so we wrote in courteous way,
We could not drive one child away.
Happy, in truth, that not one face
We missed from its accustomed place.

Now think of quoting such mawkish sentimentalism when the good of society is at stake. But it seems as though we cannot undertake anything for the benefit of the poor without having to look for some silly child's-reader stuff being flung at us. The same poor crank who quoted those lines gave voice to some such absurdity as this: "As society is constituted it looks selfish to you that the poor mother refused what seems a glittering offer. But may that not

be because society is not properly constituted?"

Now a man who would ask such a question as that deserves to be quite as poor as he really is. His railing at our established civilization shows him to be, at heart, no better than an anarchist.

It were indelicate to point out to your excellency the need of sparing the women of our class the pains of child-bearing, were the occasion less important; but the growing social duties of the ladies of our class make such demands on them that some remedy should be projected. Unfortunately the lady in the case mentioned by the Inter Ocean set a deplorable precedent in offering so large a sum as \$5,000. One-tenth that figure would have been ample. And I suggest that imprisonment for a long term, at hard labor, be imposed on any mother of the poor class who refuses \$500 for any child desired by a childless matron of the upper class.

May I hope for your excellency's kindly attention to this suggestion?

Yours obediently,

HERMAN KUEHN.

THE MORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF
NATIONS.

A portion of an address delivered by the Rev. Martin D. Hardin at the Lincoln League banquet in Minneapolis, Feb. 12.

If ever there lived a statesman who believed that nations are morally accountable to a just God, it was Abraham Lincoln. He recognized as clearly as any Hebrew prophet of old that there is a moral order in the universe before which individuals and nations must bow in humble submission, or pay to the last farthing for their transgressions of its demands. He knew that the scales of an exact justice would never be unbalanced. Hear him say:

If it must be that I must go down because of this speech, then let me go down linked to truth—die in the advocacy of what is right and just. This nation cannot live on injustice; a house divided against itself cannot stand.

This is a world of compensation, and he who would be no slave, must consent to have no slaves. Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not themselves, and under a just God cannot long maintain it.

Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.

These are characteristic words of this heroic man, whose very greatness lay in his power to disentangle ingenious lies, made for expediency's sake, from about each question, and to resolve the question into a form whereby it could be easily answered in the light of eternal moral prin-

ciples. This was Lincoln's peculiar genius, that he brought all questions face to face with the moral law, and sought the solution in the light of God. He did not seek to find the expedient thing. He was not an opportunist. He did not ask what is the easy thing, or the popular thing—what is the thing that an irresponsible, irrational destiny has decreed?—but simply this—what is right? From every problem he pulled away the irrelevant wrappings until it stood in its nakedness before the law of God. He, of all men, recognized most clearly that nations have deep and awful responsibilities which they must meet with fear and trembling, or suffer for their disobedience.

The permanency of our freedom is entirely dependent upon the amount of Lincoln spirit which can be kept alive in the breasts of the American people. Only as the majesty and solemnity of the moral law inspire a wholesome fear of wrong, will the heritage of liberty be kept safe. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom alike for nation and individual.

But when a representative, high in the counsels of our dominant party, can proclaim the atheistic and anarchistic doctrine, "Our country, may she ever be right; but right or wrong, still our country"—when a United States senator, in the name of patriotism, can select such a sentence as a fit climax for his peroration in an appeal to Americans to sanction the policy of the government (as was actually done in this city, a year and a half ago, without a single note of protest from any man in his party), and when much of the appeal in a national campaign is based upon the same low plane of prejudice and passion, then we have indeed traveled as a people a long way from the ideals of Abraham Lincoln, and have gone far into that country whose inhabitants know no law, human or divine, save the un-governed impulses of their own ignorant selfishness. What is the meaning of such a speech but that my country, just because it is mine, can do no wrong; that she is a law unto herself without obligations to God or man; that for her I hold a fool's devotion that makes me believe that she is mightier than God's eternal laws of righteousness; and if she once starts in a given course, I will follow her to the end, even though she violates every command-

ment of the decalogue; those who cry out against her course in wrong and would see her confined within the narrow limits of right, as discerned by the old foggy fathers, will be branded as traitors to their country for the sole reason that they will not be swept from their ancient faith, and be willing for patriotism's sake to call a lie truth, and blind, lawless commercialism the God of providence? I want to say that when such a refusal is traitorous, let me to the end of time be branded with the honorable title.

A man who teaches the doctrine that our country must be followed, right or wrong, is more deserving of a place in the penitentiary than a seat among our law makers. He is the real traitor to every principle that has made our country worthy of respect and love. If you ought always to do right, and I ought always to do right, can all these individuals club together and do toward another nation that which would be wrong for one man to do to another? Does the deed done by many men become right, which, done by one man, would be wrong? The wisest statesmen have thought that the simple law of right binds individuals and nations alike. Franklin said:

I know of but one code of morality for men, whether acting singly or collectively.

Charles Sumner, the prophet statesman, said:

The injunction "Love one another," is as applicable to nations as to individuals. It is one of the great laws of heaven, and nations, like individuals, may measure their nearness to God by the conformity of their conduct to this duty. . . . The dark ages have not passed away, Erebus and black night, born of Chaos, still brood over the earth; nor can we hail the clear day until the hearts of nations are touched, as the hearts of individual men, and all acknowledge the same law of Right.

If it is true, as Lincoln believed, and some others whose word was once seriously taken to be fairly good authority, that "this is a world of compensation;" that we get out of life what we put into life; that with what measure we meet it shall be measured to us again; that we shall be judged as we judge—then we may well question what the future holds in store for us.

It is hard not to covet that which belongs to our neighbor—especially if he is weaker than we are. It is hard not to lie if the lie will help us get our hands on that which we covet. It is hard not to feel justified in murder when we have once fully persuaded ourselves that providence

intended our weaker brother's possessions for us, anyhow. And it is wonderfully easy, when we have gotten ourselves into trouble, to turn round to the world and say: "Destiny got us in here, and we are so piously inclined, so anxious to say, Thy will be done, that here we will stay forever—even though to stay and carry out thy plans and our plans, O destiny, we must resort to some stringent measures which before we got into full partnership with Providence were so horrible in our eyes that we actually went to war to put a stop to just such things." A nation whose sense of moral responsibility is so lightly felt that in two years' time that which was for a century universally condemned by the calm, unprejudiced conscience of the whole people, can be decked out in the garb of a hurrah patriotism, and worshiped as a god suddenly fallen from heaven, is certainly not altogether sane or sound.

"IT'S MORGAN'S."

I came to a mill by the river side,
A half mile long and nearly as wide,
With a forest of stacks and an army of men,
Tolling at furnace and shovel and pen.
"What a most magnificent plant!" I cried;
And a man with a smudge on his face replied:
"It's Morgan's."

I entered a train and rode all day
On a regal coach, and right of way
Which reached its arms all over the land,
In a system too large to understand.
"A splendid property this!" I cried;
And a man with a plate on his hat replied:
"It's Morgan's."

I sailed on a great ship trim and true,
From pennant to keel, from cabin to crew;
And the ship was one of a monster fleet—
A first-class navy could scarce compete.
"What a beautiful craft she is!" I cried;
And a man with akimbo legs replied:
"It's Morgan's."

I dwelt in a nation filled with pride;
Her people were many, her lands were wide;
Her record in war and science and art
Proved a greatness of muscle and mind
and heart.
"What a grand old country it is!" I cried;
And a man with his chest in the air replied:
"It's Morgan's."

I went to Heaven. The jasper walls
Towered high and wide, and the golden halls
Shone bright beyond. But a strange new mark
Was over the gate, viz.: "Private Park."
"Why, what is the meaning of this?" I cried;
And a saint with a livery on replied:
"It's Morgan's."

I went to the only place left. "I'll take
A chance on the boat on the brimstone
lake;