

Citizens Union committee is unanswerable. It notes this difference:

Suppose a man now finds that his property is assessed at 90 per cent. of its value, and he objects that it ought to be assessed at 60 per cent., and brings the matter before the court; the answer of the assessors is that the law says 100 per cent., and that the land-owner cannot object to 90 per cent., and they refuse to admit that there is any general rate of 60 per cent., and the land-owner is thrown back on that provision of the statute which gives him a remedy in case his property is assessed at a proportionally higher rate than other property. But the difficulty with this proposition is a difficulty of proof. He must engage experts to make a re-assessment almost of the whole city before he can establish what percentage the assessed valuation is really based on, whereas if the assessors assessed property at what they thought was 100 per cent., and really got it at 120 per cent. in a given instance, the owner could get it reduced to 100 per cent. upon proving the actual value of his own property, without going into the question of values of all the other property within a radius of a mile or so.

A question has been asked by the Chicago Record-Herald (December 26), an independent Republican paper, which must have occurred more or less definitely to every man who hears of prosperity all about him and gets none of it—and these men are a host. The question is asked apropos of the boast of another paper that “we” are doing this, and “we” are getting that, and “we” are flourishing thus, etc., etc. “The thought is uplifting,” writes the editor of the Record-Herald, “but who are ‘we’?” Sure enough, who are “we”? That little question lets the gas out of all boasting about national prosperity. When a Rockefeller can give away millions without reducing his living expenses, it is certain that he is prosperous. And when all incomes are lumped together and averaged, “we” may appear to be prosperous, too. But when asked to define “we” in that connection, we are likely to be startled into a realization of the fact that “our” prosperity is after all only the prosperity of men like Rockefeller, and that much of it is secured at “our” expense.

A particularly gratifying thing about the Record-Herald’s question is its cavalier treatment of the “favorable balance of trade” theory. The paper it criticizes had paraded in slightly new form the old Republican “gag” that when you buy of foreigners the foreign country has the money and you have the goods; but when you buy at home, your country has both money and goods and is therefore so much the richer. The new form in which this old “gag” appeared was expressed in these words, the territories referred to being the Philippines, Hawaii and Porto Rico:

These territories produce necessities and luxuries for which we now pay out over \$400,000,000 yearly to foreigners. When the time comes, as it will, that these territories succeed in producing in sufficient quantities we shall simply take \$400,000,000 out of one national pocket and put it in the other national pocket, instead of losing the money, nationally speaking, in the capacious pocket of the foreigner.

This is justly described by the Record-Herald as “a curiosity in muddled economics, which has the virtue of being amusing if nothing more;” and in the comment it says:

The addition of the Philippines to our national wealth leaves the Philippines just where they were, leaves the Filipinos in possession and adds nothing to the wealth of any Americans except a few officeholders. We, the people of Chicago and New York, get none of the imaginary swag, neither are we saved any portion of the imaginary saving of \$400,000,000.

It is getting to be a cold day for protectionism when independent Republican papers unravel and make fun of the notion that domestic trading is best because it keeps both money and goods at home; especially if they also note the fact that such advantages as there may be in having colonies is attributable not to colonialism itself, but to the free trade which colonialism allows and which could be secured without colonialism by simply abolishing protective tariffs.

It is some comfort to reflect that Father Time is far more likely to cut himself than anybody else, if he holds his scythe as shown in the conventional New Year’s pictures.—Puck.

DEMOCRACY.

It has always been the misfortune of the great principle of democracy to be confounded in common thought with matters of personal intercourse, with questions of manners and etiquette, and to be lost to sight in these comparatively trivial things. An illustration of our meaning may be found in a recent Washington letter to the Chicago Tribune from “Raymond,” that extraordinarily observant and interesting newspaper correspondent whose letters are attracting general attention. We quote the pertinent part of this letter in full:

President Roosevelt’s democratic ways are daily manifest to the Washington public, but his democracy is carried to a still greater extent in his family. It has always been a custom, since the days of George Washington, for the attache in waiting on the President to open the door as he approached, stand to one side, and bow as he passed out. This same courtesy was shown President Roosevelt’s children, and the head usher stood respectfully by, ready to open the door for them. The President watched for several days the wondering air of the children as they went to and fro through the house, and also observed that they even unnecessarily passed in and out at doors. Finally he approached this attache and said, frankly: “I suppose it is the custom here to open and close the door for the President and his family, and you are attending to your duty in doing so, but while I live here I want to open and close the door for myself, and I want my children to enjoy the same freedom. If Mrs. Roosevelt wishes you to open the door for her I shall appreciate the courtesy, but for the rest it is not necessary.”

Both the late President McKinley and Mrs. McKinley accepted this and other attentions with smiles and a thank you. Aside from the actual duties attended to by domestics and maids, Mrs. Roosevelt waits upon herself, and not only that but she performs dozens of tasks daily for her children, always keeping a little sewing near at hand for a chance idle moment.

President Roosevelt was asked by an old friend whom he invited to the White House to dine with the family whether he should wear a dress suit at dinner or not, to which the President replied: “By George, if you think it will add any to your comfort to wear it, do so, but I shall probably dine in my riding boots, as we won’t get in until late.”

All that is, indeed, consistent with the genuine principle of democracy:

but it is also consistent with aristocracy and with plutocracy.

While we are quite content to let "Raymond's" description of President Roosevelt's conduct pass as an illustration of the genuine spirit of Mr. Roosevelt's democracy—though we should accept it with much greater confidence if there had been democratic manifestations in his attitude toward more important concerns,—our purpose is to consider the subject generally and impersonally.

Conventional manners, however punctilious, do not imply an undemocratic spirit. The man who wears a dress suit at dinner may or may not be a better democrat than he who wears his business clothes, or on occasion keeps on his riding boots. A President who allows attendants to open and close doors for him and acknowledges the service with a "thank you," may or may not be a better democrat than the one who opens and closes doors for himself. These matters of form and etiquette, whether we observe them or defy them, really reveal nothing as to our democracy.

Any man may be indifferent to forms and ceremonies, or even intolerant of them, without being a democrat. Any man may be simple in his modes of life, yet be an aristocrat or a plutocrat of the first water. It was not because Thomas Jefferson rushed the fashions from patrician breeches to plebeian trousers that he was a democrat. Any vain and eccentric patrician might have done the same. Jefferson was a democrat because he believed that all men are born with equal rights. He was a democrat because he was opposed to legal privileges for anybody.

Had he favored legal privileges, he might have worn trousers when breeches were in fashion, or have opened and closed doors for himself when etiquette demanded that they be opened and closed by attendants, and yet never have felt the slightest thrill of genuine democracy.

In slavery days it was not at all uncommon for slave owners to live with Negroes upon terms of intimacy from which many an abolitionist would have recoiled. It has been claimed, and the claim is in large measure true, that slave owners were often

more affectionate toward their slaves and more considerate of their personal comfort and feelings than abolitionists would have been. But that proves nothing except the fact itself.

Abolitionists who could not bring themselves to associate with Negroes, yet accorded them equal legal rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness were democrats; whereas slave owners who lived upon terms of personal intimacy with Negroes yet approved the laws that denied their right to liberty, were not democrats.

It is important to realize that neither condescension, nor boorishness, nor even simplicity of manners however delightful, is democracy. Democracy is a principle of social life, the essential characteristic of which is recognition of equal legal rights. It implies hostility to every legal privilege or advantage for one over another. It means love for all men in the sense of requiring justice for all.

To be true to that principle is to be a democrat, no matter how you dress, and regardless of your personal manners. And no one who rejects or ignores that principle can make himself a true democrat either by patronizing his "inferiors" or by defying rules of etiquette to which his "equals" conform.

Indifference to ceremonial is by no means the equivalent of loyalty to justice. Though the two are sometimes found together, they are oftenest found apart.

THINK OF THE CAUSE OF IT.

Canon Scott Holland, the eloquent English preacher, pleading for "Sunday," in the London Commonwealth, writes as follows concerning the strain of modern industrialism:

Industry makes ever harder demands on our efficiency; and yet this efficiency is under ever more limited conditions. There is less and less of our whole manhood utilized and evoked. We are pinned down under cramping routine. We are fettered in a beggarly monotony of habit. So little of us can be put out; so much is repressed. And that which is required of us calls only upon our poorer self. Business turns round and round, within a squirrel cage. Labor repeats, to dreariness, the same act of physical skill. Where is the heart, the mind, the imagination, in all this? Where has the soul fled?

Under what weight of oppressive burdens it lies buried! And the spirit, with its wings, and its cravings, and its wide horizons, and its heights and depths—how will it survive? And what be the growth of character? And of what founts can it drink deep?

We may, possibly, be gaining the whole world; though that is rather doubtful; but, at least, one thing is quite certain; we are losing our own souls. Under the strain of modern Industrialism, we can know but too bitterly and keenly, what it is in us which is being fatally repressed. Imagination, Home-affection, Reserve, Depth, Peace, Joy. These are what go under. These are our dreadful losses.

Whether or not this analysis of the times be too keen, all of us realize that we are living in a strenuous period; that there is a deal of spume and fret in our doings, nay even in our amusements.

We do not see this only in business. Quieter pursuits feel the same influence.

The churches are as strenuous as the counting-rooms and factories. Listen to the preacher's announcements week by week of meetings of this and that guild, his eager appeals for money, in support of this and that enterprise. The schools have programmes too long for their hours, new practical studies coming in to crowd the old ones, and none to be omitted; so that the teaching is done in a fidgety spirit. The colleges have a thousand and one activities among their students, overshadowing legitimate work—not football alone, but societies and clubs of every description.

Wherever one turns, there is the same uneasy strenuousness. It is in the air. Of course there are quiet souls still, but they are run over. We do not hear of them.

All this applies mainly to life in cities; but those who live in the country feel it in the daily papers, and are as anxious as so many moths to flit into the alluring flame, envying most those who are in the heat of the glare and blaze of city life.

Now what is the cause of this uneasiness and disquietude, in which we seem to surpass all periods that have ever been?

Doubtless there are many causes.