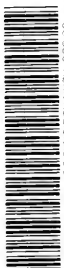


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# PROMOTING GOOD CITIZENSHIP

BY

JAMES BRYCE



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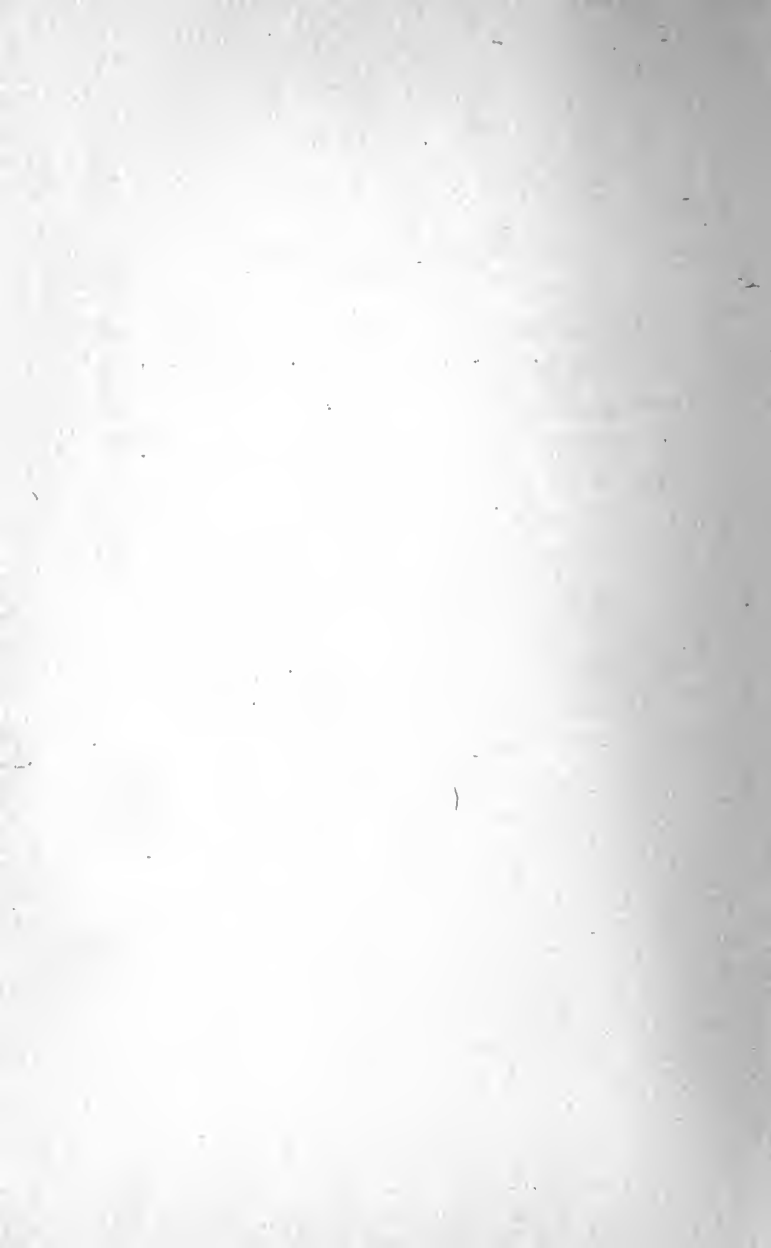
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The two essays by Mr. James Bryce included in this volume are reprinted by permission of Yale University from Mr. Bryce's lectures on the Dodge Foundation, published in book form by the Yale University Press under the title of *The Hindrances to Good Citizenship*.



## INTRODUCTION

MR. BRYCE has for a long time been a man of international prominence. His wide influence is undoubtedly due to many causes, but it may, in general, be traced to two characteristics: Mr. Bryce is a humanist who sympathetically watches the progress of nations and the guiding of governments; he is also a historian. In his biographical study of John Richard Green he has skillfully analyzed the aptitudes of the historian, and in so doing has pointedly, if unwittingly, described himself. Accuracy, he says, — a desire for the exact truth, — keen observation, sound judgment, imagination, and, following inevitably from these, command of literary exposition, are the powers which a historian needs. Each of these qualities Mr. Bryce himself possesses in large measure. It is his historical power, enabling him to observe and record the significant phases and events of human life, plus his sympathetic interest in its

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present-day manifestations which explain, in some degree, his singularly eminent position as an authority on matters pertaining to human institutions in various countries.

Mr. Bryce was born in northern Ireland in 1838, of Scotch-Irish parents; and he combines in his nature the stalwart intellectual propensities of the Scot and the artistic attributes of the Celt. He was educated at the University of Glasgow, and later went to Oxford where he won many honors. After finishing his collegiate work he was admitted to the bar and practiced law in London until 1882. At the age of thirty-two he was appointed Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford. Up to this point his life had been almost exclusively that of a student and a scholar; and already at this time he was recognized as a man of remarkable historical ability. The year 1880 marked a change in his life. He presented himself to the workmen of Tower Hamlets, London, as a candidate for a seat in the House of Commons. Mr. Stead tells us that Mr. Bryce, in this first campaign, addressed his open-air audiences somewhat after the manner of a professor lec-

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turing in a classroom; he succeeded, nevertheless, in getting himself elected, and for over twenty-five years thereafter was a member of Parliament. During these years he held various responsible offices having to do with home and foreign administrative work. The practical results of his political influence were advancement in public education, the securing of more extensive parks and open country spaces for the pleasure of the poorer classes, and the furtherance of international peace. In 1907, Mr. Bryce was appointed ambassador to the United States, which office he resigned in 1913 to carry on literary work.

Mr. Bryce's knowledge is the result not only of university training and experience in public life, but also of varied reading. He has read art, science, history, and has always been an interested student of poetry. In speaking once to Americans of Swinburne, he suddenly paused and asked, "Who are writing your songs and stirring your heart, — or is n't your heart being stirred? Nothing is more important than that each generation and each land should have its poets. Each oncoming tide of

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life, each age, requires and needs men of lofty thought who shall dream and sing for it, who shall gather up its tendencies and formulate its ideals and voice its spirit, proclaiming its duties and awakening its enthusiasm, through the high authority of the poet and the art of his verse." How extensively Mr. Bryce has read the poets, both ancient and modern, one perceives from the references and allusions in his *Studies in Contemporary Biography*.

The most important source of Mr. Bryce's knowledge, the one which has furnished the material for nearly all his books, has been his first-hand observation and study of many countries. When still a young man he wandered alone over Mount Ararat, since the native guides refused to follow him to the unknown wilds of that lonely peak. He visited the Ottoman Empire in 1876, and, as a result of his investigations there, became an advocate of the Bulgarian cause; in fact it was his speeches on the Eastern Question which first made him prominent politically. Mr. Bryce has traveled also in Iceland; he was in Africa just previous to the Boer War; he has been all

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over South America; and he knows the United States as few Americans know it. He has studied these countries with great faithfulness, observing keenly every phase of the political and social life. An interesting sample of his method of gathering information is found in the chapter on "The Position of Women" in *The American Commonwealth*. When traveling in the West he noticed that all of the women seemed so very well dressed that apparently none could be the wife or daughter of a workman; but close observation dispelled this illusion. Idling in a bookstore one day in Oregon, he noticed a woman who was asking for a certain magazine. After her departure he asked the salesman who she was, and found that she was the wife of a workman, and the magazine a Paris fashion journal. "This," says Mr. Bryce, "set me to observing female dress more closely, and it turned out to be perfectly true that the women in these little towns were following the Parisian fashions very closely, and were, in fact, ahead of the majority of English ladies belonging to the professional and mercantile classes." Thus no detail, how-

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ever trivial, escapes him; the pleasant and unpleasant phases of our American life, our manners, clothes, scenery have all been noted and reckoned with in the statement of tendencies and conclusions.

As a parliamentarian Mr. Bryce is said to have been direct, honest, and always illuminating. His ability to command attention was due not to any great oratorical gift, but rather to his scholarly view of any matter under debate. Mr. Justin McCarthy reports that the members of the House who might be dining, smoking, or reading in the rooms assigned for these purposes, would, when the news was passed around that Mr. Bryce was speaking, leave these pleasant diversions, and betake themselves with great speed to the debating chamber. "I have many a time," he says, "heard Conservative members murmur, in tones not altogether expressing absolute satisfaction at the disturbing information, 'Bryce is up — I must go in and hear what he has to say.' . . . Everybody knows that when he speaks it is because he has something to say which ought to be spoken and therefore ought



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to be heard." Mr. Bryce was able to command attention also because of his reputation as a courageous nonpartisan. He never advocated a measure or policy for mere party reasons or for personal aggrandizement. Not infrequently he has fought bravely with the minority of his own party, and has at times suffered bitter attacks, as when he remained resolutely pro-Boer during the rampant jingoism of the South African War. But however widely political enemies might differ from him, they respected his sincerity and his luminous view of governmental problems. It is further characteristic of Mr. Bryce's public life that he never, in his desire for the welfare of his own country, lost sight of what is due other nations. In practice as well as in precept he upheld the doctrine that "patriotism consists not in waving a flag, but in striving that our country shall be righteous as well as strong."

Mr. Bryce's books deal, for the most part, with historical subjects and present-day governments. *The Holy Roman Empire*, written when he was only twenty-four years old, is still regarded by able historians as an accurate and

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authoritative work; and, in the judgment of literary critics, it is written with so much charm of style that it is destined to become an English classic. All of the books which have to do with foreign nations are characterized by a tactful, faithful, and above all a truthful, handling. It was *The American Commonwealth* which made the citizens of the United States regard Mr. Bryce as a friend of the Republic; but he is not so regarded because he has always stroked the gleaming pinions of the American eagle. Although he does seem to share the hope universally cherished by Americans that we shall, in spite of grave national defects, "win out" in the end, he has nevertheless, in direct and unadorned statements, pointed out our faults. As an example of his characteristic straightforwardness of speech, take the following sentence: "America has little occasion to think of foreign affairs, but some of her domestic difficulties are such as to demand that careful observation and unbroken reflection which neither her executive magistrates, nor her legislatures, nor any leading class among her people now give." Mr. Bryce has never ceased

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to insist that America suffers from lack of honest, courageous leadership in dealing with such problems as municipal evils and the insidious influence of "vested interests." Our heedlessness and indifference to public matters is our national sin, but Mr. Bryce foresees a cure for our defects in the increasing zeal with which the younger generation is assuming the public burden; but how great must be its zeal and how steady its purpose if anything is to be accomplished, one is made poignantly aware by reading the account of the Tammany Ring in *The American Commonwealth*.

When a man of Mr. Bryce's ability and experience points out definitely the chief obstacles to good citizenship and furthermore indicates the means by which these may be overcome, one may be as sure that he will say something which should be heeded as were the members of the House when he was a parliamentarian. In 1909, Mr. Bryce gave at Yale University a series of lectures which were later published by the Yale University Press under the title *Hindrances to Good Citizenship*. The main obstacles to good citizenship are defined

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as indolence, private self-interest, and party spirit.

The first lecture, "Indolence," brings to mind the chapter in *The American Commonwealth* on "The War Against Bossdom," with its vigorous concluding words, "In America, as everywhere else in the world, the commonwealth suffers more often from apathy or shortsightedness in the upper classes, who ought to lead, than from ignorance or recklessness in the humbler classes, who generally are ready to follow when wisely led."

In the second lecture, "Private Self-Interest," Mr. Bryce states the causes which produce a body of citizens who care more about their own advancement than about the welfare of the country. The most important of these causes are tariff issues, appropriations of public money for local interests, governmental contracts, public officeholding, — all representing "the insidious power of money which knows how to play upon the self-interest of voters and legislators, polluting at its source the spring of Civic Duty."

The third lecture considers party spirit as

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a hindrance to citizenship. Mr. Bryce acknowledges the practical necessity for parties in the management of popular governments, and also the perplexing difficulties of a party leader who must decide between conscience and party. There is nevertheless but one course open to him: he must follow his conscience; only he must carefully distinguish between conscience and angular independence which is lacking in common sense and in willingness to defer to others in unimportant matters. For the average man the question is a simple one; relieved of the burdens of party leadership, he should follow his intelligence rather than his party. A large number of independent voters secures most effectively the right administration of public business.

The last lecture in the series, "How to Overcome the Obstacles to Good Citizenship," suggests various means by which a more satisfactory body of citizens may be secured. In method and style this lecture is illustrative of the author's peculiar strength in exposition.

Mr. Bryce's writings are remarkable for the

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lucid organization of a wealth of detail into significant principles and sound conclusions; for vividness in the presentation of whatever pertains to humanity, and for gracious, winning English. One finds always in his work simplicity in the unfolding of material which has been carefully gathered and calmly judged. There is perfect clarity in the handling of a mass of detail, and such skillful subordination of it and masterly emphasis of important principles that the reader easily catches the bearing on the central thought of every illustration or description. There is also in the writing a solidity and firmness, a bracing stalwartness—qualities which are the result of the writer's own sturdy nature. But this is not all. The author's almost novelistic power of seeing persons and things makes his writing as vivid as a story; even his most abstract propositions are tangible and real. And the material is, moreover, so sympathetically and earnestly treated that it is at times lifted above mere pedestrian exposition and becomes warm with the feeling of the writer. The everyday words and unadorned sentences, infused with the spirit of

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the one who writes, become potent to stir slumbering ideals. Suddenly over the level way of mere intellectual matters falls a dreamy light, a Celtic graciousness of manner; and the reader no longer journeys along a mere brown path, but sees the familiar scenes of the way idealized by the touch of poetry. The value of skillful exposition as an asset for leadership, or for the accomplishment of any other purpose, Mr. Bryce fully appreciates. A command of language is a power possessed by nearly every one of the men, eminent in the nineteenth century, whom Mr. Bryce describes in his *Studies in Contemporary Biography*. By means of it Mr. John Richard Green wrote the most brilliant history of modern times; through the stirring editorials of the *Nation*, Mr. Godkin was able to arouse an indifferent American public to a more earnest consideration of the national welfare; and it was Mr. Gladstone's gift of "noble utterance" which more than any other talent enabled him for many years to hold an authoritative political position. Mr. Bryce's own rare power as a writer of vigorous, persuasive English is one of

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the qualities which has made him in a certain sense a citizen of the world with an almost world-wide influence.

However helpful Mr. Bryce's method may be for the student who is attempting to understand and master the technique of successful English, it is the subject-matter which is primarily of importance. It is valuable for the student since it may serve to stimulate the investigation and expression of certain questions connected with the administration of public matters in his own town or city; and it may also suggest the explanation and judgment of measures proposed to secure better government, such as the Referendum. But the essential worth of the material lies in the fact that it is a tonic for relaxed vigilance in public affairs. It would be well to require every citizen of the United States to read in school days *The American Commonwealth*; one ventures to say that there would be, as a result, a steady advancement in the right understanding and fulfillment of civic duties; but even a limited acquaintance with Mr. Bryce should serve to define in clearer terms the elements of a sane



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and effective patriotism. And Mr. Bryce's own life, unfalteringly and resolutely devoted to a just administration of governments, together with its unfailing graciousness in the most trying situations, furnishes an invigorating example of the truly successful statesman.

ADA L. F. SNELL.



# Promoting Good Citizenship

## INDOLENCE

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, being once asked how he came to have made a blunder in his famous English Dictionary, is reported to have answered, "Ignorance, Sir, sheer ignorance." Whoever has grown old enough to look back over the wasted opportunities of life — and we all of us waste more opportunities than we use — will be apt to ascribe most of his blunders to sheer indolence. Sometimes one has omitted to learn what it was needful to learn in order to proceed to action; sometimes one has shrunk from the painful effort required to reflect and decide on one's course, leaving it to Fortune to settle what Will ought to have settled; sometimes one has, from mere self-indulgent sluggishness, let the happy moment slip.

The difference between men who succeed and men who fail is not so much as we com-

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monly suppose due to differences in intellectual capacity. The difference which counts for most is that between activity and slackness; between the man who, observing alertly and reflecting incessantly, anticipates contingencies before they occur, and the lazy, easy-going, slowly-moving man who is roused with difficulty, will not trouble himself to look ahead, and so being taken unprepared loses or misuses the opportunities that lead to fortune. If it be true that everywhere, though perhaps less here than in European countries, energy is the exception rather than the rule, we need not wonder that men show in the discharge of civic duty the defects which they show in their own affairs. No doubt public affairs demand only a small part of their time. But the spring of self-interest is not strong where public affairs are concerned. The need for activity is not continuously present. A duty shared with many others seems less of a personal duty. If a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand other citizens are as much bound to speak, vote, or act as each one of us is, the sense of obligation becomes to each of us weak. Still weaker does it become when

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one perceives the neglect of others to do their duty. The need for the good citizen's action, no doubt, becomes then all the greater. But it is only the best sort of citizen that feels it to be greater. The Average Man judges himself by the average standard and does not see why he should take more trouble than his neighbours. Thus we arrive at a result summed up in the terrible dictum, which reveals the basic fault of democracy, "What is Everybody's business is Nobody's business."

Of indolence, indifference, apathy, in general, no more need be said. It is a sin that easily besets us all. We might suppose that where public affairs are concerned it would decrease under the influence of education and the press. But several general causes have tended to increase it in our own generation, despite the increasing strength of the appeal which civic duty makes to men who are, or if they cared might be, better informed about public affairs than were their fathers.

The first of these causes is that manners have grown gentler and passions less angry. A chief duty of the good citizen is to be angry when

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anger is called for, and to express his anger by deeds, to attack the bad citizen in office, or otherwise in power, to expose his dishonesty, to eject him from office, to brand him with an ignominy which will prevent his returning to any post of trust. In former days indignation flamed higher, and there was little tenderness for offenders. Jehu smote the prophets of Baal. Bad ministers — and no doubt sometimes good ministers also — were in England beheaded on Tower Hill. Everywhere punishment came quicker and was more severe, though to be sure it was often too harsh. Nowadays the arm of justice is often arrested by an indulgence which forgets that the true aim of punishment is the protection of the community. The very safeguards with which our slower and more careful procedure has surrounded trials and investigations, proper as such safeguards are for the security of the innocent, have often so delayed the march of justice that when a conviction has at last been obtained, the offence has begun to be forgotten and the offender escapes with a trifling penalty, or with none. This is an illustration of the principle that as

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righteous indignation is a valuable motive power in politics, the decline in it means a decline either in the standard of virtue or in the standard of zeal, possibly in both.

Another cause may be found in the fact that the enormous growth of modern states has made the share in government of the individual citizen seem infinitesimally small. In an average Greek republic, he was one of from two to ten thousand voters. In England or France to-day he is one of many millions. The chance that his vote will make any difference to the result is so slender that it appears to him negligible. We are proud, and justly proud, of having adapted free government to areas far vaster than were formerly thought capable of receiving free institutions. It was hoped that the patriotism of the citizen would expand with the magnitude of the State. But this did not happen in Rome, the greatest of ancient republics. Can we say that it has happened in the modern world? Few of us realize that though our own share may be smaller our responsibility increases with the power our State exerts. The late Professor Henry Sidg-

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wick once travelled from Davos in the easternmost corner of Switzerland to the town of Cambridge in England and back again to deliver his vote against Home Rule at the general election of 1886, though he knew that his own side would have a majority in the constituency. Those who knew applauded, his opponents included, but I fear that few of us followed this shining example of civic virtue.

Thirdly, the highest, because the most difficult, duty of a citizen is to fight valiantly for his convictions when he is in a minority. The smaller the minority, and the more unpopular it is, and the more violent are the attacks upon it, so much the louder is the call of duty to defend one's opinions. To withstand the "*ardor civium prava iubentium*" — to face "the multitude hasting to do evil" — this is the note and the test of genuine virtue and courage. Now this is, or seems to be, a more formidable task the vaster the community becomes. It is harder to make your voice heard against the roar of ocean than against the whistling squall that sweeps down over a mountain lake.



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Lastly, there has been within the last century a great accession to our knowledge of nature, a more widely diffused and developed interest in literature and art as well as in science. This development, in itself fraught with laudable means of enjoyment, has had the unforeseen yet natural result of reducing the interest in public affairs among the educated classes, while the ardour with which competitions in physical strength and skill are followed has in like manner diverted the thoughts and attention of the less educated — and indeed, not of them alone but of many also in a class from whom better things might have been expected. Politics, in fact, have nowadays to strive against more rival subjects attracting men's eyes and minds than they had before scientific discovery and art, and above all, athletic sports, came to fill newspapers and magazines.

But so far from being less important than they were, politics are growing in every country more important the wider the sphere of governmental action becomes. Nevertheless, even in England, which is perhaps slightly less

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addicted to this new passion for looking on at and reading about athletic competitions than are North America and Australia, a cricket or football match or a horse-race seems, if one may judge by the eager throngs that snatch the evening newspapers, to excite more interest in the middle as well as in the richer and in the upper section of the poorer classes than does any political event.

How to overcome these adverse tendencies is a question which I reserve till the last of these lectures. Meantime, let us look at some of the forms in which indifference to the obligations of citizenship reveals itself.

The first duty of the citizen used to be to fight, and to fight not merely against foes from another State, but against those also who, within his own State, were trying to overturn the Constitution or resist the laws. It is a duty still incumbent on us all, though the existence of soldiers and a police force calls us to it less frequently. The omission to take up arms in a civil strife was a grave offence in the republics of antiquity, where revolutions were frequent, as they are to-day in some of the states

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of Latin America. When respectable people stayed at home instead of taking sword and spear to drive out the adherents of an adventurer trying to make himself Tyrant, they gave the adventurer his chance: and in any case their abstention tended to prolong a civil war which would end sooner when it was seen which way the bulk of the people inclined. There was accordingly a law in some of the Greek republics that every citizen must take one side or the other in an insurrection. If he did not, he was liable to punishment. I have not heard of any one being indicted in England or the United States for failing to discharge his legal duty to join in the hue and cry after a thief, or to rally to the sheriff when he calls upon the *posse comitatus* to support him in maintaining law and order. But possibly an indictment would still lie; and in England we have within recent times enrolled bodies of special constables from the civil population to aid in maintaining public tranquillity.

More peaceful times have substituted for the duty of fighting the duty of voting. But even in small communities the latter duty has been

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often neglected. In Athens the magistrates used to send round the Scythian bowmen, who acted as their police, to scour the streets with a rope coloured with vermilion, and drag towards the Pnyx (the place of assembly), citizens who preferred to lounge or to mind what they called their own business, as if ruling the State was not their business. So in modern Switzerland some cantons have enacted laws fining those who, without reasonable excuse, neglect to vote.<sup>1</sup> This is the more remarkable because the Swiss have a good record in the matter of voting, better, I think, than any other European people. Such a law witnesses not to exceptional negligence but to an exceptionally high standard of duty. In Britain we sometimes bring to the polls at a parliamentary election eighty, or even more than eighty, per cent of our registered electors, which is pretty good when it is remembered that the register may have been made up eleven months earlier, so that many electors are sure to have moved elsewhere. At elections for local authorities a much smaller proportion vote; and I fancy, though I have no

<sup>1</sup> This example has, I believe, been followed in Belgium.

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figures at hand, that in France, Belgium, and still more in Italy the percentage voting at all sorts of elections is less than in Switzerland or in Britain. The number who vote does not perfectly measure the personal sense of duty among electors, because an efficient party organization may, like the Scythian bowmen, sweep voters who do not care but who can be either driven to the polls or paid to go. Unless it is money that takes the voters there, it is well that they should go; for it helps to form the habit.

Another form of civic apathy is the reluctance to undertake civic functions. In England this is not discoverable in any want of candidates for Parliament. They abound, though sometimes the fittest men prefer ease or business success to public life. But seats upon local authorities and especially upon municipal councils and district councils, seldom attract the best ability of the local community. In English and Scottish cities the leading commercial, financial, and professional men do not often appear as candidates, leaving the work to persons who are not indeed incompetent, being

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usually intelligent business men, but whose education and talents are sometimes below the level of the functions which these bodies discharge. No great harm has followed, because our city councillors are almost always honest. Local public opinion is vigilant and exacting, so a high standard of probity is maintained. But municipalities have latterly embarked on so many kinds of new work, and the revenues of the greater cities have so grown, that not merely business capacity and experience, but a large grasp of economic principles is required. This is no less true here in America, yet I gather that here it is found even more difficult than in Europe to secure the presence of able administrators in city councils.

A man engaged in a large business who takes up municipal work may doubtless find that he is making a pecuniary sacrifice. But if he has already an income sufficient for his comfort, may it not be his best way of serving his fellow-men?

Many such men do serve as governors or trustees of educational or other public institutions which make nearly as great a demand on

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their time as the membership of a public body would. Others, in Europe, if less frequently here, give to amusement much more of their leisure than the needs of recreation and health require. This is often due rather to thoughtlessness than to a conscious indifference to the call of duty.

Some of your political reformers have dwelt on the difficulties which party organizations, specially powerful in the United States, place in the way of educated and public-spirited men seeking to enter politics. There may be truth in this as regards the lower districts of the larger cities, but one can scarcely think it generally true even of the cities. More frequently it is alleged that the work of local politics is disagreeable, bringing a man into contact with vulgar people and exposing him to misrepresentation and abuse.

This is an excuse for abstention which ought never to be heard in a democratic country. If politics are anywhere vulgar, they ought not to be suffered to remain vulgar, as they will remain if the better educated citizens keep aloof. They involve the highest interests of the

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nation or the city. The way in which they are handled is a lesson to the people either in honesty or in knavery. The best element in a community cannot afford to let its interests be the sport of self-seekers or rogues. Moreover, the loss by maladministration or robbery, large as it may sometimes be, is a less serious evil than is the damage to public morals. If those who have the manners and speak the language of educated men refuse to enter practical politics, they must cease to complain of a want of refinement in politics. In reality, good manners are the best way in which to meet rudeness; and he who is too thin-skinned to disregard abuse confesses his own want of manliness. The mass of the people, even those who are neither educated nor fastidious, know honesty when they see it, and discount such abuse. When a man is firm and upright, nothing better braces him up and fits him to serve his country than to be attacked on the platform or in the press for faults he has not committed. It puts him on his mettle. It toughens his fibre. It gives him self-control and teaches him how to do right in the way



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which is least exposed to misrepresentation. It nerves his courage for the far more difficult trials which come when friends as well as opponents censure him because honour and obedience to his conscience have required him to take an unpopular line and speak unwelcome truths. A little persecution for righteousness' sake is a wholesome thing.

The deficient sense of civic duty, though most frequently noted in the form of a neglect to vote, is really more general and serious in the neglect to think. Were it possible to have statistics to show what percentage of those who vote reflect upon the vote they have to give, there would in no country be found a large percentage. Yet what is the worth of a vote except as the expression of a considered opinion? The act of marking a ballot is nothing unless the mark carries with it a judgment, the preference of a good candidate to a bad one, the approval of one policy offered the people, the rejection of another. The citizen owes it to the community to inform himself about the questions submitted for his decision, and weigh the arguments on each side; or if the issue be

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one rather of persons than of policies, to learn all he can regarding the merits of the candidates offered to his choice.

How many voters really trouble themselves to do this? One in five? One in ten? One in twenty?

It may be asked, How can they do it? What means have they of studying public questions and reaching just conclusions? If the means are wanting, can we blame them if they do not think? If they feel they do not understand, can we blame them if they do not vote? In every free country the suffrage is now so wide that the great majority of the voters have to labour for their daily bread. In most European countries many are imperfectly educated. In the rural districts they read with difficulty, see either no newspaper or one which helps them but little, lead isolated lives in which there are scanty opportunities for learning what passes, so that the best they can do seems to be to ask advice from the priest, or the village schoolmaster, or take advice from their landlord or their employer. In the northern parts of the United States and also in Canada, the

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native population has indeed received a fair instruction, and reads newspapers; but the mass of voters is swelled by a crowd of recent immigrants, most of whom cannot read English and know nothing of your institutions.

Broadly speaking, in modern countries ruled by universal suffrage the Average Citizen has not the means of adequately discharging the function which the constitution throws upon him of following, examining, and judging those problems of statesmanship which the ever-growing range of government administration and the ever-increasing complexity of our civilization set before him as a voter to whom issues of policy are submitted.

As things stand, he votes, when he votes, not from knowledge, but as his party or his favourite newspaper bids him, or according to his predilection for some particular leader. Unless it be held that every man has a natural and indefeasible right to a share in the government of the country in which he resides, the ground for giving that share would seem to be the competence of the recipient and the belief that his sharing will promote the general welfare. So

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one may almost say that the theory of universal suffrage assumes that the Average Citizen is an active, instructed, intelligent ruler of his country.<sup>1</sup> The facts contradict this assumption.

Does this mean that widely extended suffrage is a failure, and that the Average Man is not a competent citizen in a democracy?

This question brings us to reflect on another branch of civic duty not yet mentioned. Besides the civic duties already described of Fighting, Voting, and Thinking, there is another duty. It is the duty of Mutual Help, the duty incumbent on those who possess, through their knowledge and intelligence, the capacity of Instruction and Persuasion to advise and to guide their less competent fellow-citizens. No sensible man ought ever to have supposed that under such conditions as large modern communities present, the bulk of the citizens could vote wisely from their own private knowledge and intelligence. Even in small cities, such as was Sicyon in the days of Aratus, or Boston in

<sup>1</sup> It may no doubt be argued that even if he is not competent, it is better he should be within than without the voting class. But this was not the ground generally taken by those who brought in universal suffrage.

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the days of James Otis, the Average Man needed the help of his more educated and wiser neighbours. While communities remained small, it was easy to get this help. But now the swift and vast growth of states and cities has changed everything. Private talk counts for less when the richer citizens dwell apart from the poorer; their opportunities of meeting are fewer, and there is less friendliness, if also less dependence, in the relation of the employed to the employer. Public meetings do not give nearly all that the Average Man needs, not to add that being got together to present one set of facts and arguments and deliberately to ignore the other, they do not put him in a fair position to judge. Besides, the men who most need instruction are usually those who least come to meetings to receive it.

To fill this void the newspapers have arisen, — organs purporting to supply the materials required for the formation of political opinion. Whatever the services of the newspaper in other respects, it has the inevitable defect of superseding, with most of those who read it, the exercise of independent thought. The news-

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paper — I speak generally, for there are some brilliant exceptions — is, in Europe even more than here, almost always partisan in its views, often partisan in its selection of facts or at least in its way of stating them. Presenting one side of a case, addressing chiefly those who are already adherents of that side, putting a colour on the events it reports, — it serves up to the reader ideas, perhaps only mere phrases or catchwords, which confirm him in his prepossessions, and by its daily iteration makes him take them for truths. Seldom has he the leisure, still more seldom the impulse or the patience, to scrutinize these ideas for himself and form his own judgment. He is glad to be relieved of the necessity for thinking, because thinking is hard work. Indolence again! The habit of mind that is formed by hasty reading, and especially by the reading of newspapers and magazines in which the matter, excellent as parts of it often are, is so multifarious that one topic diverts attention from the others, tends to a general dissipation and distraction of thought. It is a habit which tells upon us all and makes continuous reflection and a critical

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or logical treatment of the subjects deserving reflection more irksome to us in the full sunlight of to-day than it was to those whom we call our benighted ancestors.

This is only one form of that supersession of the practice of thinking by the vice commonly called "the reading habit" which is profoundly affecting the intellectual life of our time. Yet as steady thinking was never really common even among the educated, the difference from earlier days is not so correctly described by saying that people think less than formerly, as by noting that while people read more, and while far more people read, the ratio of thinking to reading does not increase either in the individual or in the mass, and may possibly be decreasing. Intelligence and independence of thought have not grown in proportion to the diffusion of knowledge. The number of persons who both read and vote is in England and France more than twenty times as great as it was seventy years ago. The percentage of those who reflect before they vote has not kept pace either with popular education or with the extension of the suffrage.

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The persons who constitute that percentage are, and must for the reasons already given continue for some time to be, only a fraction, in some countries a small fraction, of the voting population. But the fraction might be made much larger than it is. The citizens who stand above their fellows in knowledge and mental power ought to set an example, not only by themselves thinking more and thinking harder about public affairs than most of them do, but also by exerting themselves to stimulate and aid their less instructed or more listless neighbours. The voter, it is said, should be independent. Yes. But independence does not mean isolation. He must not commit his personal responsibility to the keeping of another. Yes. But personal responsibility does not mean the vain conceit of knowledge and judgment where knowledge is wanting and judgment is untrained.

Just as his religion throws upon every Christian the duty of loving his neighbour and giving practical expression to his love by helping his neighbour, succouring him in the hour of need, trying to rescue him from sin, seeking to



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guide his steps into the way of peace, so civic duty requires each of us to raise the level of citizenship not merely by ourselves voting and bearing a share in political agitation, but by trying to diffuse among our fellow-citizens whose opportunities have been less favourable, the knowledge and the fairness of mind and the habit of grappling with political questions which a democratic government must demand even from the Average Man. Democracy, they say, is based on Equality. But in no form of government is leadership so essential. A multitude without intelligent, responsible leaders whom it respects and follows is a crowd ready to become the prey of any self-seeking knave. Nor is it true that because men value equality they reject eminence. They are always glad to be led if some one, eschewing pretension and condescension, speaking to them with respect, but also with that authority which knowledge and capacity imply, will point out the path and give them the lead for which they are looking. To do this has now, in our great cities, become more difficult than it used to be, because men of different classes and different occupations

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do not know one another as well as they once did, and economic conflicts have made workmen suspicious. But there are those in our English and Scottish cities who do it successfully, and I have never heard that it is resented. It is largely a matter of tact, and of knowing how to express that genuine sense of human fellowship which is commoner in the richer class than the constraint and shyness that are supposed to beset Englishmen sometimes allow to appear.

If you and we, both here and in Britain, are less active than we should be in this and other forms of civic work, the fault lies in our not caring enough for our country. It is easy to wave a flag, to cheer an eminent statesman, to exult in some achievement by land or sea. But our imaginations are too dull to realize either the grandeur of the State in its splendid opportunities for promoting the welfare of the masses, or the fact that the nobility of the State lies in its being the true child, the true exponent, of the enlightened will of a right-minded and law-abiding people. Absorbed in business or pleasure, we think too little of what our mem-

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bership in a free nation means for the happiness of our poorer fellow-citizens. The eloquent voice of a patriotic reformer sometimes breaks our slumber. But the daily round of business and pleasure soon again fills the mind, and public duty fades into the background of life. This dulness of imagination and the mere indolence which makes us neglect to stop and think, are a chief cause of that indifference which chokes the growth of civic duty. It is because a great University like this is the place where the imagination of young men may best be quickened by the divine fire, because the sons of a great University are those who may best carry with them into after life the inspiration which history and philosophy and poetry have kindled within its venerable walls, that I have ventured to dwell here on the special duty which those who enjoy these privileges owe to their brethren, partners in the citizenship of a great republic.

## HOW TO OVERCOME THE OBSTACLES TO GOOD CITIZENSHIP

IN the preceding three lectures<sup>1</sup> the chief hindrances to the discharge of civic duty have been considered. Let us now go on to inquire what can be done to remove these hindrances by grappling with those faults or weaknesses in the citizen to which they are due. When symptoms have been examined, one looks about for remedies.

We have seen that of the three causes assigned, Indolence, Selfish Personal Interest, and Party Spirit, the first is the most common, the second the most noxious, the third the most excusable, yet also the most subtle, and perhaps the most likely to affect the class which takes the lead in politics and is incessantly employed upon its daily work. Whether the influence of these causes, or of any of them, is increasing with that more complete democrati-

<sup>1</sup> The two lectures reprinted in this volume are the first and last of a series of four given by Mr. Bryce at Yale University.

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zation of government which we see going on in Europe, is a question that cannot yet be answered. Fifty years may be needed before it can be answered, for new tendencies both for good and for evil are constantly emerging and affecting one another in unpredictable ways.

The remedies that may be applied to any defects in the working of governments are some of them Mechanical, some of them Ethical. By Mechanical remedies I understand those which consist in improving the structure or the customs and working devices of government, i.e., the laws and the institutions or political methods, by Ethical those which affect the character and spirit of the people. If you want to get more work and better work done in any industry, you may either improve the machinery, or the implements, by which the work is done, or else improve the strength and skill of the men who run the machinery and use the tools. In doing the former, you sometimes do the latter also, for when the workman has finer tools, he is led on to attempt more difficult work, and thus not only does his

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own skill become more perfect, but his interest in the work is likely to be increased.

Although in politics by far the most real and lasting progress may be expected from raising the intelligence and virtue of the citizens, still improvements in the machinery of government must not be undervalued. To take away from bad men the means and opportunities by which they may work evil, to furnish good men with means and opportunities which make it easier for them to prevent or overcome evil, is to render a great service. And as laws which breathe a high spirit help to educate the whole community, so does the presence of opportunities for reform stimulate and invigorate the best citizens in their efforts after better things.

I will enumerate briefly some of the remedies that may be classed as Mechanical because they consist in alterations of institutions or methods.

Two of these need only a few passing words, because they are so sweeping as to involve the whole fabric of government, and therefore too large to be discussed here.

One is propounded by those thinkers whom,

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to distinguish them from the persons who announce themselves as enemies of all society, we may call the Philosophical Anarchists, thinkers who are entitled to respectful consideration because their doctrine represents a protest that needs to be made against the conception of an all-engulfing State in which individual initiative and self-guided development might be merged and lost. They desire to get rid of the defects of government by getting rid of government itself; that is to say, by leaving men entirely alone without any coercive control, trusting to their natural good impulses to restrain them from harming one another. In such a state of things there would be no Citizenship, properly so called, but only the isolation of families, or perhaps of individuals — for it is not quite clear how far the family is expected to remain in the Anarchist paradise — an isolation more or less qualified by brotherly love. We are so far at present from a prospect of reaching the conditions needed for such an amelioration that it is enough to note this view and pass on.

A second and diametrically opposite cure for

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the evils of existing society comes from those who are commonly termed Socialists or Collectivists. It consists in so widely enlarging the functions of government as to commit to it not merely all the work it now performs of defending the country, maintaining order, enacting laws, and enforcing justice between man and man, but also the further work of producing and distributing all commodities, allotting to each man his proper labour and proper remuneration, or possibly, instead of giving any pecuniary remuneration, providing each man with what he needs for life. Under this régime two of the hindrances to good citizenship would be much reduced. There ought to be less indifference to politics when everybody's interest in the management of public concerns had been immensely increased by the fact that he found himself dependent on the public officials for everything. Nobody could plead that he was occupied by his own private business, because his private business would have vanished. So also selfish personal interest in making gains out of government must needs disappear when private property itself had ceased to exist.



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Whether, however, self-interest might not still find means of influencing public administration in ways beneficial to individual cupidity, and whether personal selfishness might not be even more dangerous, under such conditions, in proportion to the extended range and power of government, — this is another question which cannot be discussed till some definite scheme for the allotment of work and of remuneration (if any) shall have been propounded. Party Spirit would evidently, in a Collectivistic State, pass into new forms. It might, however, become more potent than ever before. But that again would depend on the kind of scheme for the reshaping of economic society that had been adopted.

We may pass from these suggestions for the extinction, or reconstruction on new lines, of the existing social and political system to certain minor devices for improving the structure and methods of government which have been put forward as likely to help the citizen to discharge his duties more efficiently.

One of these is the system of Proportional Representation. It is argued that if electoral

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areas were created with more than two members each, and if each elector was either allowed to vote for a number of candidates less than the number to be chosen, or was allowed to concentrate all his votes upon one candidate, or more, according to the number to be chosen, two good results would follow. The will of the electors would be more adequately and exactly expressed, because the minority, or possibly more than one minority, as well as the majority, would have everywhere its representative. The zeal of the electors would be stimulated, because in each district a section of opinion not large enough to have a chance of winning an election, if there were but one member, and accordingly now apathetic, because without hope, would then be roused to organize itself and to take a warmer interest in public affairs. The Proportional system is, therefore, advocated as one of those improvements in machinery which would react upon the people by quickening the pulses of public life. Some experiments have already been made in this direction. Those tried in England did not win general approval and have been dropped. That

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which is still in operation in the State of Illinois has not, if my informants are right, given much satisfaction. But the plan is said to work well both in Belgium and in some of the cantons of Switzerland; so one may hope that further experiments will be attempted. It deserves your careful study, but it is too complicated and opens too many side issues to be further discussed now and here.<sup>1</sup>

Attempts have been made in some places to overcome the indifference of citizens to their duty by fining those who, without sufficient excuse, fail to vote. This plan of Obligatory Voting, as it is called, finds favour in some Swiss cantons and in Belgium, but is too uncongenial to the habits of England or of the United States to be worth considering as a practical measure in either country. Moreover, the neglect to vote is no very serious evil in either country, at least as regards the more important elections. Swiss legislation on the subject is evidence not so much of indifference

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written a Royal Commission has been appointed in Britain to examine divers questions relating to elections, and is investigating this, among other plans.

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among the citizens of that country as of the high standard of public duty they are expected to reach.

When we come to the proposals made both here and in England for the reference of proposals to a direct popular vote, we come to a question of real practical importance. I wish that I had time to state to you and to examine the arguments both for and against this mode of legislation, which has been practised for many years in Switzerland with a virtually unanimous approval, and has been applied pretty freely in some of your States. It has taken two forms. One is the so-called Initiative, under which a section of the electors (being a number, or a proportion, prescribed by law) may propose a law upon which the people vote. This is being tried in Switzerland, but so far as I have been able to gather, has not yet proved its utility. The balance of skilled opinion seems to incline against it. The other is called the Referendum, and consists in the submission to popular vote of measures already passed by the legislative body. In this form the reference of laws to the people undoubtedly sharpens the

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interest of the ordinary citizen in the conduct of public affairs. The Swiss voters, at any rate, take pains to inform themselves on the merits of the measures submitted to them. These are widely and acutely canvassed at public meetings, and in the press. A large vote is usually cast, and all, whether or no they approve the result, agree that it is an intelligent, not a heedless, vote. The Swiss do not seem to think that the power and dignity of the legislature is weakened, as some might expect it to be, when their final voice is thus superseded by that of the people. All I need now ask you to note and remember is that the practice of bringing political issues directly before the people, whatever its drawbacks, does tend to diminish both that indolence and indifference which is pretty common among European voters. It requires every citizen to think for himself and deliver his vote upon all the more important measures, and it also reduces the power of that Party Spirit which everywhere distracts men's minds from the real merits of the questions before the country. When a law is submitted to the Swiss people for their judgment, their decision nowise

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affects either the Executive or the Legislature. The law may be rejected by the people, but the officials who drafted the law continue to hold office. The party which brought it in and carried it through the Legislature is not deemed to have been censured or weakened by the fact of its ultimate rejection. That party spirit is less strong in Switzerland than in any other free country (except perhaps Norway) may be largely attributed to this disjunction of the deciding voice in legislation from those governmental organs which every political party seeks to control. The Swiss voter is to-day an exceptionally intelligent and patriotic citizen, fitter to exercise the function of direct legislation than perhaps any other citizen in Europe, and the practice of directly legislating has doubtless helped to train him for the function.

It must, however, be admitted that the circumstances of that little republic and its cantons are too peculiar to make it safe to draw inferences from Swiss experience to large countries like Britain and France, the political life of which is highly centralized. The States of your Union may appear to offer a better field,

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and the results of the various experiments which some of them (such as Oklahoma) are trying will be watched with interest by Europeans.

In considering the harm done to civic duty by selfish personal interests we were led to observe that the fewer points of contact between government and the pecuniary interests of private citizens, the better both for the purity of government and for the conscience of the private citizen. How far government ought to include within its functions schemes for increasing national wealth, otherwise than by such means (being means which a government alone can employ because to be effective they must be done on a great scale) as the improving of education, the diffusing of knowledge, the providing means of transportation, the conservation of natural resources, and so forth, may be matter for debate. But at any rate government ought to avoid measures tending to enrich any one person or group of persons at the expense of the citizens generally. Common justice requires that. Accordingly, all contracts should be made on the terms best for the public, and if

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possible by open bidding. Franchises, if not reserved by the public authority for itself, should be granted only for limited times and so as to secure the interests of the community, whether by way of a rent payable to the city or county treasury or otherwise. Public employees should not be made into a privileged class, to which there is given larger pay than other workers of the same class and capacity receive. All bills promoted by a private person, firm, or company looking to his or their pecuniary advantage ought to be closely scrutinized by some responsible public authority. In England we draw a sharp distinction between such bills and general public legislation, and we submit the former to a quasi-judicial examination by a Parliamentary committee in order to avoid possible jobs or scandals or losses to the public. As respects general legislation, i. e., that which is not in its terms local or personal, it may be difficult or impossible to prevent a law from incidentally benefiting one group or class of men and injuring another. But everything that can be done ought to be done to prevent any set of men from abusing legislation to serve



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their own interest. If there be truth in what one hears about the groups which in France, Belgium, and Germany have, through political pressure, obtained by law bounties benefiting their industries, or tariffs specially favourable to their own commercial enterprises, the danger that the general taxpayer, or the consumer, may be sacrificed to these private interests, is a real danger. To remove the occasion and the opportunities for the exercise of such pressure, which is likely to be often exerted in a covert way and to warp or pervert the legislator's mind, is to diminish a temptation and to remove a stumbling block that lies in the path of civic duty. Whether a man be in theory a Protectionist or a Free Trader, whether or not he desires to nationalize public utilities, he must recognize the dangers incident to the passing of laws which influential groups of wealthy men may have a personal interest in promoting or resisting, because they offer a prospect of gain sufficiently large to make it worth while to "get at" legislatures and officials. Such dangers arise in all governments. That which makes them formidable in democ-

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racies is the fact that the interest of each individual citizen in protecting himself and the public against the selfish groups may be so small an interest that everybody neglects it, and the groups get their way.

As we have been considering improvements in the machinery of government, this would be a fitting place for a discussion of what you call Primary Election Laws, which are intended both to reduce the power of party organizations and to stimulate the personal zeal of the voter by making it easier for him to influence the selection of a candidate. We have, however, in Europe, nothing corresponding to the Primary Laws of American States, nothing which recognizes a political party as a concrete body, nothing which deals with the mode of selecting candidates; and many of you doubtless know better than I do what has been the effect of these American enactments and whether they have really roused the ordinary citizen to bestir himself and to assert his independence of such party organizations as may have heretofore interfered with it. Europeans do not take kindly to the notion of giving

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statutory recognition to a Party, and they doubt whether the astuteness of those whom you call "machine politicians" may not succeed in getting hold of the new statutory Primaries as they did of the old ones. Be the merits of the new legislation what they may, one must hope that its existence will not induce the friends of reform to relax their efforts to reduce in other ways the power of political "Machines."

One obvious expedient to which good citizens may resort for keeping other citizens up to the mark is to be found in the enactment and enforcement of stringent laws against breaches of public trust. I took occasion, in referring to the practices of bribery and treating at elections, to note the wholesome effect of the statute passed in England in 1883 for repressing those offences. Although St. Paul has told us that he who is under grace does not need to be under the law, Christianity has not yet gone far enough to enable any of us to dispense with the moral force law can exert, both directly through the penalties it imposes and indirectly through the type of conduct which it exhorts the com-

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munity to maintain. Laws may do much to raise and sustain the tone of all the persons engaged in public affairs as officials or as legislators, not only by appealing to their conscience, but by giving them a quick and easy reply to those who seek improper favours from them. A statute may express the best conscience of the whole people and set the standard they approve, even where the practice of most individuals falls short of the standard. If the prosecuting authorities and the courts do their duty unflinchingly, without regard to the social position of the offender, a statute may bring the practice of ordinary men up to the level of that collective conscience of the nation which it embodies.

In every walk of life a class of persons constantly subject to a particular set of temptations is apt to form habits, due to the pressure of those temptations, which are below what the conscience of the better men in the community approves. The aim of legislation, as expressing that best conscience of the whole community, ought to be to correct or extirpate those habits and make each particular class

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understand that it is not to be excused because it has special temptations and thinks its own sins venial. Even the men who yield to the temptations peculiar to their own class are willing to join in condemning those who yield to some other kind of temptation. Thus the "better conscience" may succeed in screwing up one class after another to a higher level. But the enactment of a law is not enough. It must be strictly enforced. Procedure must be prompt. Juries must be firm. Technicalities must not be suffered to obstruct the march of justice. Sentences must be carried out, else the statute will become, as statutes often have become, a record of aspiration rather than of accomplishment.

To contrive plans by which the interest of the citizen in public affairs shall be aroused and sustained, is far easier than to induce the citizen to use and to go on using, year in and year out, the contrivances and opportunities provided for his benefit. Yet it is from the heart and will of the citizen that all real and lasting improvements must proceed. In the words of the Gospel, it is the inside of the cup

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and platter that must be made clean. The central problem of civic duty is the ethical problem. Indifference, selfish interests, the excesses of party spirit, will all begin to disappear as civic life is lifted on to a higher plane, and as the number of those who, standing on that higher plane, will apply a strict test to their own conduct and to that of their leaders, realizing and striving to discharge their responsibilities, goes on steadily increasing until they come to form the majority of the people. What we have called "the better conscience" must be grafted on to the "wild stock" of the natural Average Man.

How is this to be done? The difficulty is the same as that which meets the social reformer or the preacher of religion.

One must try to reach the Will through the Soul. The most obvious way to begin is through the education of those who are to be citizens, moral education combined with and made the foundation for instruction in civic duty. This is a task which the Swiss alone among European nations seem to have seriously undertaken. Here in America it has become doubly

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important through the recent entrance into your community of a vast mass of immigrants, most of them ignorant of our language, still more of them ignorant, not only of your institutions, but of the general principles and habits of free government. Most of them doubtless belong to races of high natural intelligence, and many of them have the simple virtues of the peasant. You are providing for all of them good schools, and their children will soon become Americans in speech and habits, quite patriotic enough so far as flag-waving goes. But they will not so soon or so completely acquire your intellectual and moral standard, or imbibe your historical and religious traditions. There is no fear but what they will quickly learn to vote. To some Europeans you seem to have been overconfident in intrusting them with a power which most of them cannot yet have learned to use wisely. That however you have done, and as you hold that it cannot now be undone, your task must now be to teach them, if you can, to understand your institutions, to think about the vote they have to give, and to realize the responsibilities which

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the suffrage implies as these were realized by your New England forefathers when they planted free commonwealths in the wilderness nearly three centuries ago.

Valuable as instruction may be in fitting the citizen to comprehend and judge upon the issues which his vote determines, there must also be the will to apply his knowledge for the public good. What appeal shall be made to him?

We — I say “we” because this is our task in Europe no less than it is yours here — we may appeal to his enlightened self-interest, making self-interest so enlightened that it loses its selfish quality. We can remind him of all the useful work which governments may accomplish when they are conducted by the right men in the right spirit. Take, for instance, the work to be performed in those cities wherein so large and increasing a part of the population now dwell. How much remains to be done to make cities healthier, to secure better dwellings for the poor, to root out nests of crime, to remove the temptations to intemperance and gambling, to bring within the reach of the poorest all



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possible facilities both for intellectual progress and for enjoying the pleasures of art and music! How much may we do so to adorn the city with parks and public buildings as to make its external aspect instil the sense of beauty into its inhabitants and give them a fine pride in it! These are some of the tasks which cannot safely be intrusted to a municipality unless its government is above suspicion, unless men of probity and capacity are placed in power, unless the whole community extends its sympathy to the work and keeps a vigilant eye upon all the officials. Municipal governments cannot be encouraged to own public utilities so long as there is a risk that somebody may own municipal governments. Have we not here a strong motive for securing purity and efficiency in city administration? Is it not the personal interest of every one of us that the city we dwell in should be such as I have sought to describe? Nothing makes more for happiness than to see others around one happy. The rich residents need not grudge — nor indeed would your rich residents grudge, for there is less grumbling among the rich tax payers here than in Europe

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— taxation which they could see was being honestly spent for the benefit of the city. The interest each one of us has as a member of a city or a nation in seeing our fellow-citizens healthy, peaceful, and happy is a greater interest, if it be measured in terms of our own real enjoyment of life, than is that interest, of which we so constantly are reminded, which we have in making the State either wealthy by the development of trade, or formidable to foreign countries by its armaments.

We may also appeal to every citizen's sense of dignity and self-respect. We may bid him recollect that he is the heir of rights and privileges which you and our ancestors fought for, and which place him, whatever his birth or fortune, among the rulers of his country. He is unworthy of himself, unmindful of what he owes to the Constitution that has given him these functions, if he does not try to discharge them worthily. These considerations are no doubt familiar to us Englishmen and Americans, though we may not always feel their force as deeply as we ought. To the new immigrants of whom I have already spoken they are un-

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familiar; yet to the best among these also they have sometimes powerfully appealed. You had, in the last generation, no more high-minded and patriotic citizen than the German exile of 1849, the late Mr. Carl Schurz.

When every motive has been invoked, and every expedient applied that can stimulate the sense of civic duty, one never can feel sure that the desired result will follow. The moral reformer and the preacher of religion have the same experience. The ebbs and flows of ethical life are beyond the reach of scientific prediction. There are times of awakening, "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," as your Puritan ancestors said, but we do not know when they will come nor can we explain why they come just when they do. Every man can recall moments in his own life when the sky seemed to open above him, and when his vision was so quickened that all things stood transfigured in a purer and brighter radiance, when duty, and even toil done for the sake of duty, seemed beautiful and full of joy.

You remember Wordsworth's lines —

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“Hence, in a season of fair weather,  
Though inland far we be,  
Our souls have sight of that celestial sea  
That brought us hither.”

If we survey the wide field of European history, we shall find that something like this happens with nations also. They, too, have moments of exaltation, moments of depression. Their ideals rise and fall. They are for a time filled with a spirit which seeks truth, which loves honour, which is ready for self-sacrifice; and after a time the light begins to fade from the hills and this spirit lingers only among the best souls.

Such a spirit is sometimes evoked by a great national crisis which thrills all hearts. This happened to England or at least to a large part of the people of England, in the seventeenth century. It happened to Germany in the days of the War of Liberation, and to Italy when she was striving to expel the Austrians and the petty princes who ruled by Austria's help. You here felt it during the War of Secession. Sometimes, and usually at one of these crises, a great man stands out who helps to raise the feeling of his people and inspire them with his own lofty

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thoughts and aims. Such a man was Mazzini, seventy years ago in Italy. Such were Washington and Lincoln, the former more by his example than by his words, the latter by both, yet most by the quiet patience, dignity, and hopefulness which he showed in the darkest hours. Nations respond to the appeal which such a man makes to their best instincts. He typifies for the moment whatever is highest in them.

Unhappily, with nations as with individuals, there is apt to be a relapse from these loftier moods into the old common ways when selfish interest and trivial pleasures resume their sway. There comes a sort of reaction from the stress of virtue and strenuous high-soaring effort. Everything looks gray and dull. The divine light has died out of the sky. This, too, is an oft-repeated lesson of European history. Yet the reaction and decline are not inevitable. When an individual man has been raised above himself by some spiritual impulse, he is sometimes able to hold the ground he has won. His will may have been strengthened. He has learnt to control the meaner desires. The

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impulse that stirred him is not wholly spent, because the nobler thoughts and acts which it prompted have become a habit with him. So, too, with a nation. What habits are to the individual man, that, to a nation, are its Traditions. They are the memories of the Past turned into the standards of the Present. High traditions go to form a code of honour, which speaks with authority to the sense of honour. Whoever transgresses that code is felt to be unworthy of the nation, unfit to hold that place in its respect and confidence which the great ones of the days of old have held. Pride in the glorious foretime of the race and in its heroes sustains in the individual man who is called to public duty, the personal pride which makes him feel that all his affections and all his emotions stand rooted in the sense of honour, which is, for the man and for the nation, the foundation of all virtue.

We have seen in our own time, in the people of Japan, a striking example of what the passionate attachment to a national ideal can do in war to intensify the sense of duty and self-sacrifice. A similar example is held up to us

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by those who have recorded the earlier annals of Rome. The deepest moral they teach is the splendid power which the love of Rome and the idea of what her children owed to her exercised over her great citizens, enabling them to set shining examples of devotion to the city which the world has admired ever since. Each example evoked later examples in later generations, till at last in a changed community, its upper class demoralized by wealth and power even more than it was torn by discord, its lower classes corrupted by the upper and looking on their suffrage as a means of gain, the ancient traditions died out. Whoever, studying the conditions of modern European democracies, sees the infinite fatalities which popular government in large countries full of rich men and of opportunities for acquiring riches, offers for the perversion of government to private selfish ends, will often feel that those European States which have maintained the highest standard of civic purity have done it in respect of their Traditions. Were these to be weakened, the fabric might crumble into dust.

Every new generation as it comes up can

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make the traditions which it finds better or worse. If its imagination is touched and its emotions stirred by all that is finest in the history of its country, it learns to live up to the ideals set before it, and thus it strengthens the best standards of conduct it has inherited and prolongs the reverence felt for them.

The responsibility for forming ideals and fixing standards does not belong to statesmen alone. It belongs, and now perhaps more largely than ever before, to the intellectual leaders of the nation, and especially to those who address the people in the universities and through the press. Teachers, writers, journalists, are forming the mind of modern nations to an extent previously unknown. Here they have opportunities such as have existed never before, nor in any other country, for trying to inspire the nation with a love of truth and honour, with a sense of the high obligations of citizenship, and especially of those who hold public office.

Of the power which the daily press exerts upon the thought and the tastes of the people through the matter it scatters among them,



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and of the grave import of the choice it has always and everywhere to make between the serious treatment of public issues and that cheap cynicism which so many readers find amusing, there is no need to speak here. You know better than I do how far those who direct the press realize and try to discharge the responsibilities which attach to their power.

The observer who seeks to discern and estimate the forces working for good or evil that mark the spirit and tendencies of an age, finds it easiest to do this by noting the changes which have occurred within his own memory. To-day everyone seems to dwell upon the growth not only of luxury, but of the passion for amusement, and most of those who can look back thirty or forty years find in this growth grounds for discouragement. I deny neither the fact nor the significance of the auguries that it suggests. But let us also note a hopeful sign manifest during the last twenty years both here and in England. It is the diffusion among the educated and richer classes of a warmer feeling of sympathy and a stronger feeling of responsibility for the less fortunate sections of the

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community. There is more of a sense of brotherhood, more of a desire to help, more of a discontent with those arrangements of society which press hardly on the common man than there was forty years ago. This altruistic spirit which is now everywhere visible in the field of private philanthropic work, seems likely to spread into the field of civic action also, and may there become a new motive power. It has already become a more efficient force in legislation than it ever was before. We may well hope that it will draw more and more of those who love and seek to help their fellow-men into that legislative and administrative work whose opportunities for grappling with economic and social problems become every day greater.

Here in America I am told in nearly every city I visit that the young men are more and more caring for and bestirring themselves to discharge their civic duties. That is the best news one can hear. Surely no country makes so clear a call upon her citizens to work for her as yours does. Think of the wide-spreading results which good solid work produces on so vast a community, where everything achieved for

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good in one place is quickly known and may be quickly imitated in another. Think of the advantages for the development of the highest civilization which the boundless resources of your territory provide. Think of that principle of the Sovereignty of the People which you have carried further than it was ever carried before and which requires and inspires and, indeed, compels you to endeavour to make the whole people fit to bear a weight and discharge a task such as no other multitude of men ever yet undertook. Think of the sense of fraternity, also without precedent in any other great nation, which binds all Americans together and makes it easier here than elsewhere for each citizen to meet every other citizen as an equal upon a common ground. One who, coming from the Old World, remembers the greater difficulties the Old World has to face, rejoices to think how much, with all these advantages, the youth of America, such youth as I see here to-night in this venerable university, may accomplish for the future of your country. Nature has done her best to provide a foundation whereon the fabric of an enlightened and

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steadily advancing civilization may be reared. It is for you to build upon that foundation. Free from many of the dangers that surround the States of Europe, you have unequalled opportunities for showing what a high spirit of citizenship — zealous, intelligent, disinterested — may do for the happiness and dignity of a mighty nation, enabling it to become what its founders hoped it might be — a model for other peoples more lately emerged into the sunlight of freedom.



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