

AN ETHICAL VIEW OF AMERICAN POLITICS.

The Political Trend.

IV.

The unit or basis of any social or political system must necessarily be the individuals or the family, and in the most primitive times, every man was his own master; the only restriction upon his rights or supposed liberty being such as were imposed by the superior prowess of his neighbors, since all contentions were submitted to the arbitrament of battle. This simple condition of society, or rather state, before the organization of any society or government, has for its correlative a condition in which all power is gathered in an absolute monarch to whom the individual is subservient as a mere subject. The one is the logical result of the evolution of the forces lying dormant in the other, for were not kingdoms and empires created by the ultimate triumph of the strongest in the field of battle?

Government thus created came to stand as arbiter in contentions between subjects of the realm, and in the natural process of development soon included a code of laws, having for their real object the restraining of individuals to acts not interfering with the rights of others. This is one of the chief ends of all government, and it finds expression in the form of courts of law, which Carlyle says are but "chimneys for the contentions of men to escape by."

To devise a scheme by which unlawful acts of individuals could be properly restrained, was truly a tremendous advance from the primitive conditions; but the next great problem for solution was how to properly restrain the rapacity of the government itself in its attitude towards his subjects, due to the short sightedness and weak human nature of the rulers.

The first really great effort to solve this question is known to history as the movement resulting in the Magna Charta. This and succeeding events in England gave to the colonies an heritage rich in the principles of free government at the time of the revolution; but it remained for the American people in their federal constitution to give tangible expression to the fundamental principles of a system of civil government, at once so delicately poised as to possess ample power and resources to maintain itself, but subject to very much the same restraints, in its relations to the individual citizen, that the citizens are in their relations to each other.

This system provides admirably for local government for all local matters, and was intended to provide for national jurisdiction of all matters not purely local but which pertain to the country at large, or to its relations with foreign nations. That much venerated document, the constitution, is perhaps, as nearly perfect as the wisdom of man could make it for the conditions existing at the time of its adoption.

As before stated, our industrial and civil relations were extremely simple at that time, but the first century has seen a wonderful change; the national domain now extends from ocean to ocean, and is traversed by thousands and thousands of miles of railroads, forming a net work of highways of commerce and travel, a marked advance from stage coach and canal boat days.

We now have mammoth corporations, trusts and vast labor organizations extending in their various ramifications to every corner of these United States; we have the telegraph, telephone and that great engine of civilization, the printing press.

With our own industrial development we are hearing with even more frequency that time will see the disarmament of Europe hurried on perhaps by the immense improvement in the implements of warfare. Is it too much to expect that there will ultimately be established a tribunal for the adjudication of international disputes modeled somewhat on the lines of the supreme court of the United States? Do we not see already great international alliances on the continent of Europe, and may not the pending arbitration agreement between England and the United States be but the forerunner of what many expect to see—the federation of all English speaking peoples?

After all the relations of nations to each other are much the same as the relations of individuals, and is it too much to expect that the accumulated wisdom of the ages which has disposed of other and equally perplexing problems, will ultimately be able to provide a code of laws for nations and a tribunal for their adjudication?

True liberty is born of restraint—proper restraint, and can only

exist under the rule that no man, community or state can interfere with rights or property of any other man, community or state except in a lawful manner and upon due compensation. This is the very essence of free civil government. The man who is able to rise above local conditions and stand for the greatest good for the greatest number, with proper protection for his own community is the really great man, and is the one in line with the progress of the world.

The man who allows his own selfish, at the fancied interest of his own community, to so dim his vision, that he cannot see any rights for anybody else, may have a silver tongue; he may have personal magnetism; but if our history stands for anything, he will surely be swept aside in the maelstrom of our onward progress. A moment's thought should be sufficient to convince anyone that it must be so, for if his theories were to obtain, this union of the states would have to be broken up eventually to avoid oppression, and this process of disintegration if continued would eventually undo the history of the world.

The American people were the first in the history of the world to voluntarily and without opposition organize a constitutional civil government, and to the glory of the people, be it said, that no American citizen, however flushed with military success or renown has attempted to usurp the prerogatives of the civil office. If we can but show a wise discrimination in strengthening the national government just enough to enable it to keep pace with the ever broadening and increasing complexity of our industrial and civil relations, the United States of America will truly stand forth as a lesson to all mankind, as to the benefits of popular education and of the golden rule put into practice.

It seems to be ordained that good generally results from the contention of opposing forces, and while the great political parties may neither of them represent the loftiest idea of civil development, does it not behoove the intelligent citizen to cast his lot with the one standing nearest to such ideal, than with the one, if such there be, founded and matured in localism or sectionalism to such an extent even, that it necessarily divides against itself when in power the logical and only result of localism, and which has been compelled by the force of events to recede from nearly every important position it has ever taken upon any great question. NIXON.

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SHE GOMES, SHE GOMES.

With a hurry and a flurry, with a rip and with a whoop, emancipated woman is about to fly the coop. The cooking and the washing will bother her no more. She is going to make the polls look as they never looked before. Hubby must do the marketing, and he must sit up nights, to nurse the baby's colic while she fixes Human Rights. She has been the slave of man for years, but now she's going to vote—she's going to run for office, and she's going to ride the goat in the Masonic lodges and serve on juries, too, and run for alderwoman, and do all things that men do. She will drink the festive cocktail and stay out after dark, and ride horseback a-straddle in the streets and in the park. In fancy I can see her down in the congress hall, where men so long have had exclusive privilege to bawl: "Will the lady from Nebraska allow an inter-rup—" "No, that I won't—so there, now—you horrid thing, shut up!" "Mistress Speaker, I declare to you it really gives me pain to listen to the foolishness of that old hen from Maine." O, in dreams I hear each dear one at the same time speaking her piece 'mid the banging of the gavel in the hand of Speaker Lease. And here in little old New York I think I see her stand at the polls with Mike and Danny, shaking Barney by the hand. And Tammany Hall may then be strong up on Fifth avenue, and the damsels down on Hester street may rally around Depew; and in the county court house, when woman gets the vote, can't you hear the jurywoman putting questions to Joe Choate? O, what'll become of lawyers' technicality and judge, when the jury box is full of girls and Mrs. O'Grady's judge.—New York Sun.

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