

LIBERTY AND EQUALITY.

The most precious of all words to Americans, of course, is liberty. It represents to us all the rights and advantages that we possess, and we invoke it as a source of inspiration in every emergency. There is nothing in all of our political literature to which we attach so much importance as the part of the Declaration of Independence which proclaims that "all men are created equal," and endowed by their Creator with the right to live, to be free and to pursue happiness. When the fathers asserted these natural rights, they laid the foundation for all of our wonderful prosperity, and provided the influence that was to shape the destinies of one of the greatest of modern nations. They did not invent liberty, to be sure, but they gave it a new significance and applied it to purposes of surpassing usefulness. Our Fourth of July orators find the theme an easy one from which to derive the opportunities of eloquence, so rich is it in the kind of interest that appeals alike to the head and to the heart. In all history there is nothing to match it, considering the original conditions, the details of the story of development, and the nature and extent of the results that have been achieved, with the possibilities of progress yet to be made by the proper use of existing and increasing facilities.

As a matter of fact, however, the fathers did not mean exactly what they said when they declared the natural equality of all men; or, to state it more accurately, they did not mean what is implied by a literal construction of their language. They did not intend to convey the idea that all men are equal in the sense of being equipped with uniform powers, either physical or mental, but only that they are equal in point of right to the liberty which guarantees a fair chance to make the best possible use of their respective capabilities. Lincoln pointed out in one of his speeches the logic of necessary distinction in the case. "The Declaration of Independence does not say," he observed, "that all men are 'born' equal; but 'created' equal. The two words are very different, and the fathers used the latter advisedly—not for a day, but for all the time. With due reverence and humility, if I may be allowed to compare man's work to God's work, that clause of the Declaration is to be classed with the passage of Holy Writ which says, 'Be ye therefore perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect'—meaning not that we are or can be perfect like the Father, but only in an approximate degree, each according to his ability and circumstances." That is to say, natural equality does not mean identity of individual force, but merely a common right to the privileges of success.

It follows that there must be inequalities in personal fortunes. The proposition that all men are created equal in the sense of being naturally entitled to an equal share of the profits of civilization is inconsistent and indefensible. Some men earn more than others, not by reason of artificial advantages in their favor, but because of their superior intelligence and energy; and certainly such men deserve more reward than those who are less competent and effective. It is impossible in the nature of things to establish a standard of distribution giving the same measure of recompense to all degrees of merit. This would be equivalent to diverting a portion of the earnings of one class to the benefit of another. The industrious and economical would be required to contribute to the prosperity of the lazy and improvident. Mediocrity would count for as much as the highest proficiency, and the incentive to exertion and improvement would be obliterated. That would not be equality in any true and just meaning of the term. It would be gross injustice, on the contrary, and its tendency would be to discourage all ambition and to reduce general prosperity to the level of a contented acceptance of the necessities of life.

Get our prices before buying elsewhere.

JECKELL BROS., tailors, 119 north 13 st.

Don't forget SISLER's new quarters when wanting anything in the Ice Cream line. 133 south 12th street. Phone 630.

If you order your ice of the LINCOLN ICE CO., you will get prompt service, courteous treatment and pure ice. 1040 O street.

Where is the best place to buy pure Jersey cream? At Central Milk Depot, 134 South Eleventh street.

Curiously enough, nevertheless, the feeling largely prevails that such ought to be the situation. There are those acting in the capacity of public teachers and claiming to be wise in social science and political philosophy who insist that the inequalities produced by disparity of personal qualifications are due to influences and arrangements which defeat the operation of natural laws and enable favored classes and individuals to thrive at the expense of those who have a right to the same rate of gain. They assert the familiar doctrine that "one man is as good as another," and deduce therefrom the pernicious sophistry that a wrong is done when the aggregated profits of commerce and industry are so apportioned as to make some rich while others remain poor, or fail to get as much as they crave. This loose and demoralizing view of a most important matter is taught in books, periodicals and public speeches by men of exceptional cunning in the art of perverting facts and distorting reasonable conclusions. The theories that they advocate represent just enough of truth to sugar-coat their inherent falsehood and make them generally mischievous. They profess to be philanthropists of sedition and enemies of the classes for which they pretend to be laboring.

It is asserted by these reformers and their followers that liberty has not made good its promises as expressed in the Declaration of Independence. They charge that it has not kept faith with the people because it has not banished poverty from the land and made all men equal in material possessions and sources of happiness. The statement is boldly put forth that the intentions of the fathers have been frustrated by unpatriotic intrigue and conspiracy, and that for a large proportion of the people liberty has lost its original meaning and value. But the fact is that more is asked of liberty than it was ever designed to accomplish. It has served every legitimate purpose in an admirable way, and can be depended upon to continue such service for all future time if we use it wisely; but it is not adapted to the ends that are sought by those who complain of its alleged shortcomings. There was never any pledge of the kind that they attach to it. They have no right to expect from it what they say it has failed to do. It has its limitations, like every other gracious and beneficent influence; its power stops short of the working of miracles and we are bound to judge its results according to the nature of its work and the necessary restriction of its functions.

There is surely no lack of liberty in this country. It is impossible to name any relation in which more of it would help to solve a problem or to supply a new chance of happiness. The average citizen is free to do everything that can in any way promote his welfare and increase his belongings. He is not forbidden to exert his ability in any direction. All the avenues of employment are open to him, with assurance of reward in proportion to the value of his service. There are no barriers of any sort to interfere with the application of his energy to the pursuit that best pleases him. He is the equal of any other man so far as rights and opportunities are concerned. There are just as many things in his favor as that of any of his neighbors, considering what he is permitted to do for the improvement of his condition. The laws do not restrain him, except as they restrain all other men in the interest of public order, of social safety of general justice. The measure of his liberty covers every contingency of personal endeavor, and gives him permission to compete for the best prizes that are offered in any line of industry or enterprise. He is not condemned to remain in an inferior position by any prohibition of the privilege of working himself into a higher one. The matter is in his own hands, the issue depends upon his own ability and determination. The trouble with those who maintain liberty has not redeemed its pledges is that they wish to push it to an unwarranted and disastrous extreme. We see this impressively illustrated in the strikes inaugurated to compel a different adjustment of the relations of capital and labor. The right to tie up the

F. C. Voelker has moved his stock of furs from the Y. M. C. A. building to the north-east corner of Twelfth and N streets where he will be glad to serve all of his old customers and many new ones.

Have you seen those Hammocks at HAWKE'S PHARMACY they are daisies and he is selling them cheap.

E. Sisler. Wholesale Ice Cream and fruit ices. New location. at 133 south 12 St. Phone 630.

We have removed our stock of harness from 1235 to 1218 O street, where we will be glad to see all our old customers and many new
WOODWORTH & MCFALL.