

centralization is the greatest foe that popular government has to encounter, for it is supported by arguments that are plausible. "Can you not trust the people of the nation?" asks the friend of centralization. "Are they not the same individuals who make the laws in the various states?" Yes; but the government is best when it is nearest the people, and the people can act most intelligently upon the questions about which they are the best informed. The people, through the framers of our constitution, wisely delegated to the federal government the powers necessary for the conduct of national affairs and, as wisely, reserved to the states and to themselves the right to control the affairs of the state and the community.

THE WISDOM OF THE FOUNDERS OF OUR NATION

We can never be sufficiently thankful for the wisdom manifested by those who launched our nation upon its splendid career and laid the foundation for the success we have enjoyed. The governmental structure they framed will never be outgrown, for it is as well adapted to a nation of three hundred millions of people as it was to a nation of three millions—the general government welding the nation together into one harmonious whole, and the state and local governments guarding the home, the school, the property, the liberty, and the life of the citizen.

The fourth special advantage is our religion. While this is shared by nearly all the countries of Europe, it has not yet been accepted by the vast populations of the east. It is gaining a foothold in Japan, China and India, but we can not yet count among its votaries one per cent of the Orientals. Accustomed as we are to the Christian forms of worship, to the institutions of charity and mercy which Christianity had founded, and to the ideals introduced by the Man of Galilee, we are apt to under-estimate the influence which His religion has exerted upon American and European society. When its fruits are compared with the fruits of Mohammedanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, its great superiority is easily seen.

Mohammedanism degrades women, and is propagated by force; Christianity recognizes woman's rightful place as the companion and helpmate of man, and teaches the omnipotence of love.

Hinduism countenances the worship of gods made of wood, of brass and of stone; Christianity rests upon the belief in one God—the creator and preserver of all, to be worshiped in spirit and in truth.

Buddhism, a reformation of Hinduism, regards life as an affliction, the only escape from which is through absorption into the Great Spirit and the loss of individual identity; Christianity views life as a great opportunity, crowned by a higher existence which stretches through infinite ages.

Confucianism contains a code of morals which, if embodied in life, would make man a negative quantity, harmless at best; Christianity purifies the heart, and makes life a living spring, pouring forth constantly of that which refreshes and invigorates. Justice is the highest virtue taught by Confucianism, while Christianity adds to justice benevolence and compassion.

Christianity presents the highest conception of human life that the world has ever known. According to this conception, service is the measure of greatness, and this conception must of necessity be victorious over those presented by other religions. This conception of life has led multitudes to consecrate themselves to the uplifting of their fellows; and, at home and abroad, they have been content with a bare living, relying, for reward, upon the consciousness that they are contributing to the happiness and welfare of others and to the progress of the race.

The list above given by no means exhausts the reasons for thanksgiving, but more than enough has been said to show that Thanksgiving day deserves commemoration among us.

A word could be added about the nation's prosperity but for the fact that it might raise a question as to the cause; some attribute it to an era of good crops, coupled with such an increase in the volume of money as to make prices remunerative, while others attribute it to acts of legislation and to industrial policies.

But thanksgiving is of little value if our expressions of gratitude have no effect upon our own conduct. Appreciation of blessings is shown by acts rather than by words. If we regard citizenship as a priceless inheritance, we should resolve to transmit it, not only unimpaired but

improved, to the next generation; if our educational system has been a boon to us, it should be extended and amplified for the benefit of posterity; if the resources of our country have a value beyond computation, it behooves us to see to it that these resources are not squandered and that the bounties which the Creator intended for all shall not be monopolized by the cunning, the craft, and the avarice of a few; if our government gives to life, liberty, and prosperity greater protection than any other government grants, we can not excuse ourselves if we fail to preserve it, in all its purity, for our children and our children's children; if in our religion we find a consolation, a life-plan, and a moral uplift, we can not but earnestly desire—and embody the desire in deeds—that these shall be shared by those about us and by those also who, though separated from us by seas, are bound to us by that primal tie that links each human being to every other.—Written by Mr. Bryan for the November number of the Circle Magazine.

Is Mr. Roosevelt Retreating?

In its issue of Wednesday, November 6, the New York World says editorially: "The World is able to state today, on most reliable information, that Mr. Roosevelt, without changing his policies has determined upon a radical change in his political methods. Instead of continuing with sweeping charges and semi-socialistic demands for new legislation, he is to proceed on lines of calm thought and moderation and sober judgment."

Other newspapers print statements which would seem to bear the stamp of authority all along the same line as indicated by the World editorial. A sample is that printed in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat (rep.) in a dispatch under date of Washington, November 6. This is interpreted by some as in the nature of an authorized statement and is as follows:

President Roosevelt expects a number of business men, bankers and financiers from New York City and other commercial centers to visit him between this and the time for the congress to meet.

The president is greatly surprised to discover the amount of misinformation possessed by these leaders in trade and finance as to his attitude toward corporations. He welcomes visits to the White House and goes to considerable trouble to explain the things upon which they have a mass of misinformation. Today he talked in that connection with Charles E. Mellen, one of the leading railroad men in New England, and on Monday he had a conference with Messrs. Garry and Frick of the United States Steel company.

The president today expressed himself as aghast at the way in which leading men view his public utterances. He believes they secured their misinformation from the headlines and editorials of that portion of the press in the United States which has either purposely or unwittingly misrepresented him.

The president does not have it in mind to make any radical change in the position he has assumed towards wrongdoers, whether they be corporations or individuals, but he is going to considerable pains and trouble to explain just what his position is and has been. In all of these conferences he "stands pat" on what he has said in the past.

As an example of the misunderstanding on the part of recent prominent callers at the White House, it was pointed out today that they were of the opinion that he had said, in the course of public utterances, that he believes a majority of the business in the country was conducted dishonestly and unlawfully. The president points out that what he did say was just the contrary, and he challenges any one to find anything in any of his speeches or messages, or even in his correspondence, which indicates other than that he believes a majority of the business enterprises of the country are conducted on strictly legitimate and honest lines, and that whatever criticisms he has offered have been of a dishonest minority.

Again, the general accepted fallacy, even among business men and financiers, who are usually well informed on all matters of public interest, is that the president has said that he thought many of the leading corporation heads ought to be "in jail." As a matter of fact, the president has never said in any of his speeches that he thought any of them ought to be in jail. What he did say, in effect, in his Navi-

ville speech, was that he expected to continue to prosecute those who had been successful in the practice of dishonesty.

It is a matter of easy recollection that during the past summer the attorney general, Mr. Bonaparte, is reported to have said, in the course of his facetious discussion of the activities of his department, something to the effect that some of the leaders should be in jail. The interview in question was published during the absence of the president from Washington, and it is unnecessary to say, did not have his approval, either before or since its publication.

As a further indication of the president's real attitude, at this time and in the past, and of it being generally misunderstood, his utterances relative to the Sherman anti-trust law can be cited. Recently, one of his callers said in effect: "Mr. President, what this country needs at this time is some one bold enough to sacrifice himself for the public good by denouncing the Sherman anti-trust law most vigorously, so that the congress will amend it in the particulars where it needs amending. That is a most iniquitous law, in that it does not discriminate between combinations which are harmless and may be even in the interests of the consuming public, and those which are evil and operate against the public interest."

The president asked his visitor if he was familiar with recent messages to the congress of the United States. The visitor replied that he was.

The president insisted that if he was familiar with the message which he sent to congress at its last session he would not have offered this suggestion. The president then sent for a copy of his last message and read from it portions in denunciation of the Sherman anti-trust law which were fully as strong and emphatic as anything that his visitor had said. The surprise of his visitor was manifest.

Examination of that message shows that the president said: "It is unfortunate that our present laws should forbid all combinations instead of sharply discriminating between those combinations which do good and those combinations which do evil. It is a public evil to have on the statute books a law incapable of full enforcement, because both judges and juries realize that its full enforcement would destroy the business of the country."

In the message preceding the last one the president also used this language: "It has been a misfortune that the national laws have hitherto been of a negative or prohibitive rather than an affirmative kind, and still more that they have in part sought to prohibit what could not be effectively prohibited, and have in part, in their prohibitions, confounded what should be allowed and what should not be allowed. It is generally useless to try to prohibit all restraint on competition, whether this restraint be reasonable or unreasonable, and where it is not useless it is generally hurtful."

These expressions may be taken as correctly reflecting, at the present time, the views of President Roosevelt.

Mr. Roosevelt went to his home in Oyster Bay to cast his vote. In speaking of his visit and departure the New York World says:

The president left New York a changed individual. His appearance and his bearing were that of a sobered, reflective man. There was in his face a look of deep responsibility, of grave thoughtfulness, not seen before by those who know him.

From now on there will be a different plan of campaign conducted from the White House. The president is firm in his declarations that there is to be no change in his policy of antagonism toward predatory wealth and illegal corporations, but his methods are to be modified, his attacks made more discriminate, and his warfare less destructive.

The events of the past two weeks in the financial world have had remarkable effect upon Mr. Roosevelt. The crash of banks, the cry of strangled business, the frightened hoarding of money, have deeply impressed him. The hours of his journey yesterday were given more to sober reflection than to animated conversation. If final argument were needed to complete the remarkable change in the nation's chief executive, it was furnished by the sight of Manhattan's besieged sky scrapers of finance as his tugboat passed by the foot of Wall Street and skirted the Battery.

The day marked the end of indiscriminate presidential denunciation, of intemperate language, of wholesale indictments, of incessant

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