THE AMERICANS

"American Problems from the Point of View of a Psychologist"



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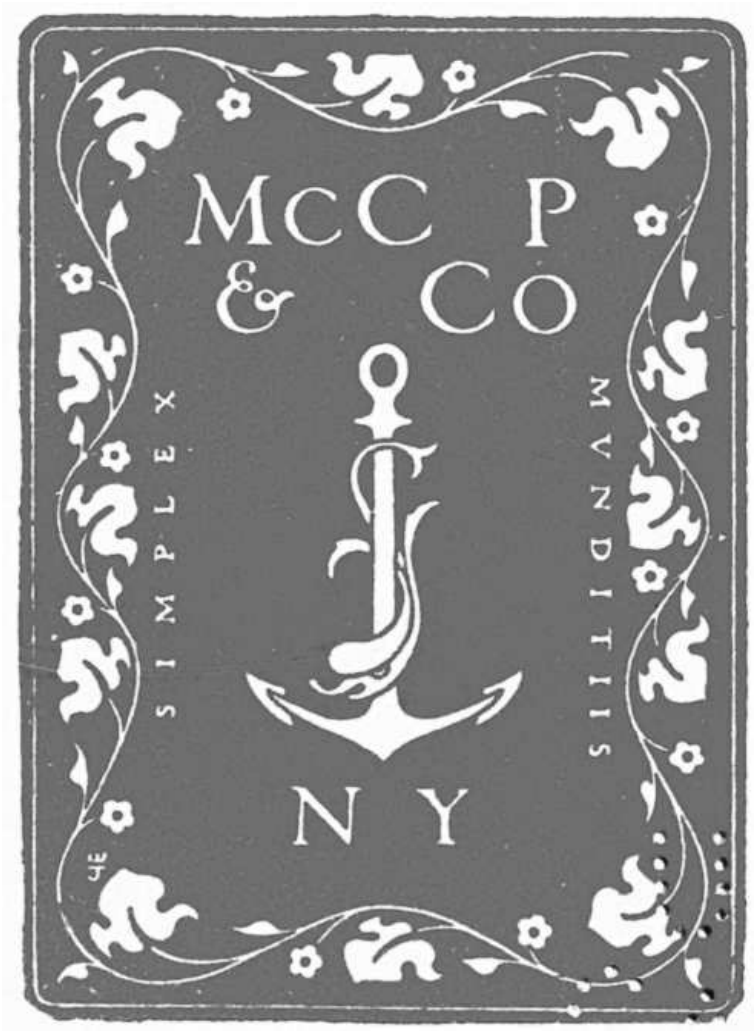
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About the Book & Author:



"***The Americans***" by Hugo Munsterberg stands alongside Alexis de Tocqueville's American Democracy as one of the great works on the New World written by a scholar deeply familiar with the Old World. When originally published, it gave the German public a sense of American life, and was described as "a book which deals in a detailed way with the political, economic, intellectual, and social aspects of American culture." Munsterberg, a world-renowned psychologist at the turn of the twentieth century, noted that "its purpose is to interpret systematically the democratic ideals of America."The primary aim of The Americans is to study the people and America's inner tendencies. It offers a "philosophy of Americanism," the ideology of a people writ whole. Munsterberg's sense of the "spirit" of a people, rather than facts about the people, is revealed in his four cardinal chapters: Self-Direction, Self-Realization, Self-Perfection, and Self-Assertion. While he covers the economic premises of the free market and the politics of party affairs, he considers these the least important. Instead it is the lasting forces and tendencies of American life, rather than problems of the day, that occupy the author. This focus was shared by German readers, for whom the book was conceived, and for those in the United States who read the book in English.The dynamic of strong basic tendencies of democratic forces and lesser, but significant, aristocratic tendencies underwrites the strains and tensions in American society. It also defines the special nature of a book, written more than one hundred years ago, that retains its lively sense of purpose and deep

insight into American life. One could well say that this book is required reading in this day and age for Americans and Europeans alike. This is a neglected masterpiece.

"Hugo Münsterberg", (1863, Danzig, Prussia [now Gdańsk, Poland]—died 1916, Cambridge, Mass., U.S.), German-American psychologist and philosopher who was interested in the applications of psychology to law, business, industry, medicine, teaching, and sociology.

Münsterberg took his Ph. D. in 1885 and his M.D. at the University of Heidelberg in 1887. After his appointment as an instructor at the University of Freiburg, where he established a psychological laboratory, he began publishing *Beiträge zur experimentellen Psychologie* (1889–92; "Contributions to Experimental Psychology"). His work was criticized by German colleagues but won the approval of the American psychologist William James, who invited him to be a visiting professor at Harvard University (1892–95). Münsterberg returned to the United States permanently in 1897 to direct the Harvard psychological laboratory, and he became increasingly absorbed with the application of psychology to a number of different areas, including psychic research. He is sometimes credited with being the founder of applied psychology. His works include *Psychology and the Teacher* (1909), *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency* (1913), and *Psychology: General and Applied* (1914).

PREFACE

In the Preface to my "American Traits," in which I defended German ideals and criticised some American tendencies, I said, some years ago: "It has been often questioned whether I am right in fighting merely against American shortcomings from a German point of view, and in trying to destroy prejudices on this side of the water; whether it is not, in a still higher degree, my duty to attempt the same for the other side;—for German prejudices concerning the United States are certainly not less severe, and the points in which Germany might learn from American culture not less numerous. The question is fair, and I shall soon put before the German public a book on American life—a book which deals in a detailed way with the political, economic, intellectual, and social aspects of American culture. Its purpose is to interpret systematically the democratic ideals of America."

Here is the book; it fulfils the promise, and it might appear that no further explanation is needed. And yet, in sending a book into the world, I have never felt more strongly the need of prefatory excuses—excuses not for writing the book, but for agreeing to its translation into English.

To outline American life for readers beyond the sea is one thing; to appear before an American audience and to tell them solemnly that there is a Republican and a Democratic party, and that there are troubles between capital and labour, is quite another thing. To inform my German countrymen about America may be to fill a long-felt want; but, as a German, to inform the Americans on matters which they knew before they were born seems, indeed, worse than superfluous.

When I was urged, on so many sides, to bring my "Americans" before the Americans, it was, therefore, clear to me from the outset that I ought not to do it myself under any circumstances. If I had translated the book myself, it would have become simply an English book, written in English by the author; and yet its only possible right to existence must lie in its reflected character, in its having been written for others, in its coming back to the New World from the Old. My friend, Dr. Holt, who has been for years my assistant in the Harvard Psychological Laboratory, has assisted, therefore, in this social psychological experiment, and translated the book from the German edition.

I have been still more influenced by another consideration. If the book were chiefly a record of facts, it would be folly for a foreigner to present it to the citizens; but the aim of the book is a quite different one. To make a real scientific study of the facts, I should have felt utterly incompetent; indeed, it may be doubted whether any one could hope to master the material of the various fields: a division of labour would then become necessary. The

historian, the politician, the economist, the jurist, the engineer, and many others would have to co-operate in a scholarly investigation of American events; and I have no right to any of these titles. I am merely a psychologist, and have not set out to discover new material. The only aim of the book is to study the American man and his inner tendencies; and, perhaps, a truer name for my book would have been "The Philosophy of Americanism." For such a task the outsider may be, after all, not quite unsuited, since the characteristic forces make themselves more easily felt by him than by those who have breathed the atmosphere from their childhood. I am, therefore, anxious to insist that the accent of the book lies on the four chapters, "Spirit of Self-Direction", "Spirit of Self-Realization," "Spirit of Self-Perfection," and "Spirit of Self-Assertion"; while those chapters on the economic and political problems are the least important of the book, as they are meant merely by way of illustration. The lasting forces and tendencies of American life are my topics, and not the problems of the day. For this reason the book is translated as it appeared six months ago in Germany, and the events and statistical figures of the last few months have not been added; the Philosophy of Americanism is independent of the happenings of yesterday. The only changes in the translation are abbreviations; for instance, the industrial tables, which every American can get easily from the government reports, are abridged; and, above all, the chapters which deal with the German-Americans are left out, as better remaining an esoteric discussion for the Germans.

The purpose of finding the deeper impulses in American life necessarily demands a certain ignoring of the shortcomings of the hour. If we aim to work out and to make clear the essentials of the American mission in the world, we cannot take the attitude of the reformer, whose attention belongs, first of all, to the blunders and frailties of the hour; they are to us less important by-products. The grumbler in public life sees in such a view of the American, of course, merely a fancy picture of an imaginary creature; he is not aware that every portrayal involves abstraction, and that a study in Americanism means, indeed, a study of the Americans as the best of them are, and as the others should wish to be.

But the optimism of my book has still another source. Its outspoken purpose has been to awaken a better understanding of Americans in the German nation. Whoever fights against prejudices can serve the truth merely in emphasizing the neglected good sides, and in somewhat retouching in the picture the exaggerated shadows. But just here arises my strong reluctance. The optimism and the style of a defender were sincere, and necessary to the book when it addressed itself to the Germans; is it necessary, is it, indeed, sincere, to place such a eulogy of Americanism before the Americans? I know too well that, besides the self-direction, self-realization, self-perfection, and self-assertion there is, more vivid still, the spirit of self-satisfaction, whose story I have forgotten to include in this volume. Have I the right to cater to this spirit?

But is it not best that the moods of criticism and optimism alternate? The critical eagerness of the reformer which attacks the faults and follies of the day is most necessary; but it turns into discouraging pessimism if it is not supplemented by a profession of faith in the lasting principles and deeper tendencies. The rôle of the critic I have played, perhaps, more often and more vehemently than is the foreigner's right. My book on "American Traits" has been its sharpest expression. Does that not give me, after all, a moral right to supplement the warning cry by a joyful word on the high aims of true Americanism? My duty is only to emphasize that I am myself fully aware of the strong one-sidedness, and that this new book is not in the least meant to retract the criticisms of my "American Traits." The two books are meant to be like the two pictures of a stereoscope, which must be seen both together to get the full plastic effect of reality. It is certainly important to remind the nation frequently that there are political corruption and pedagogical blundering in the world; but sometimes it is also worth while to say that Americanism is something noble and inspiring, even for the outsiders, with whom naturally other impulses are stronger—in fact, to make clear that this Americanism is a consistent system of tendencies is ultimately, perhaps, only another way of attaining the reformer's end.

Only one word more—a word of thanks. I said the aim of the book was to bring the facts of American life under the point of view of general principles, but not to embody an original research in American history and institutions. I have had thus to accept the facts ready-made, as the best American authors present them; and I am thus their debtor everywhere. Since the book is popular in its style, I have no foot-notes and scholarly quotations, and so cannot enumerate the thousand American sources from which I have taken my material. And I am not speaking here merely of the great standard books and specialistic writings, but even the daily and weekly papers, and especially the leading monthly magazines, have helped to fill my note-books. My thanks are due to all these silent helpers, and I am glad to share with them the welcome which, in competent quarters, the German edition of the book has found.

HUGO MÜNSTERBERG

Cambridge, Mass., October 25, 1904

Part I.

POLITICAL LIFE

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Chapter I.

The Spirit of Self-Direction

§

Whosoever wishes to describe the political life of the American people can accomplish this end from a number of starting points. Perhaps he would begin most naturally with the Articles of the Constitution and expound the document which has given to the American body-politic its remarkable and permanent form; or he might ramble through history and trace out from petty colonies the rise of a great world-power; or he might make his way through that multitude of events which to-day arouse the keenest public interest, the party strifes and presidential elections, the burdens and amenities of city and state, the transactions of the courts and of Congress. Yet all this would be but a superficial delineation. Whoever wishes to understand the secret of that baffling turmoil, the inner mechanism and motive behind all the politically effective forces, must set out from only one point. He must appreciate the yearning of the American heart after self-direction. Everything else is to be understood from this.

In his social life the American is very ready to conform to the will of another. With an inborn good-nature, and often too willingly, perhaps, he lends himself to social situations which are otherwise inconvenient. Thus his guest, for instance, is apt to feel like a master in his house, so completely is his own will subordinated to that of the guest. But, on the other hand, in the sphere of public life, the individual, or a more or less restricted group of individuals, feels that it must guide its own activities to the last detail if these are to have for it any value or significance whatsoever. He will allow no alien motive to be substituted—neither the self-renunciation of fidelity or gratitude, nor the æsthetic self-forgetfulness of hero-worship, nor even the recognition that a material advantage would accrue or some desirable end be more readily achieved if the control and responsibility were to be vested in some one else. This self-direction is neither arbitrary nor perverse; least of all does it indicate a love of ease or aversion to toil. In Russia, as a well-known American once said, serfdom could be wiped out by a stroke of the Czar's pen, and millions of Russians would be freed from slavery with no loss of life or property. "We Americans had to offer up a half-million lives and many millions' worth of property in order to free our slaves. And yet nothing else was to be thought of. We had to overcome that evil by our own initiative, and by our own exertions reach our goal. And just because

we are Americans and not Russians no power on earth could have relieved us of our responsibility."

When in any people the desire of self-direction dominates all other motives, the form of government of that people is necessarily republican. But it does not conversely follow that every republic is grounded in this spirit of self-direction. Hence it is that the republic of the United States is so entirely different from all other republics, since in no other people is the craving for self-determination so completely the informing force. The republics of Middle and South America, or of France, have sprung from an entirely different political spirit; while those newer republics, which in fundamental intention are perhaps more similar, as for instance Switzerland, are still not comparable because of their diminutive size. The French republic is founded on rationalism. The philosophy of the eighteenth century, with its destructive criticism of the existing order, furnished the doctrines, and from that seed of knowledge there grew and still are growing the practical ideals of France. But the political life of the United States sprang not from reasoned motives but from ideals; it is not the result of insight but of will; it has not a logical but a moral foundation. And while in France the principles embodied in the constitution are derived from theory, the somewhat doubtful doctrines enunciated in the Declaration of Independence are merely a corollary to that system of moral ideals which is indissolubly combined with the American character.

It is not here to be questioned whether this character is purely the cause and not also the effect of the American system; but so much is sure, that the system of political relations which has sprung from these ethical ideals constitutes the actual body-politic of America. Such is the America which receives the immigrant and so thoroughly transforms him that the demand for self-determination becomes the profoundest passion of his soul. Such is the America toward which he feels a proud and earnest patriotism. For the soil on which his kingdom has been reared he knows but scanty sentiment or love; indeed, the early progress of America was always an extension of the frontier, an unremitting pushing forth over new domain. The American may be linked by personal ties to a particular plot of land, but his national patriotism is independent of the soil. It is also independent of the people. A nation which in every decade has assimilated millions of aliens, and whose historic past everywhere leads back to strange peoples, cannot with its racial variegation inspire a profound feeling of indissoluble unity. And yet that feeling is present here as it is perhaps in no European country. American patriotism is directed neither to soil nor citizen, but to a system of ideas respecting society which is compacted by the desire for self-direction. And to be an American means to be a partizan of this system. Neither race nor tradition, nor yet the actual past binds him to his countryman, but rather the future which together they are building. It is a community of purpose, and it is more effective than any tradition, because it pervades the whole man. Participation in a common task holds the people together, a task with no definite and tangible end nor yet any special victory or triumph to look forward to, but rather a task which is fulfilled at

each moment, which has its meaning not in any result but in the doing, its accomplishment not in any event which may befall, but only in the rightness of the motive. To be an American means to co-operate in perpetuating the spirit of self-direction throughout the body-politic; and whosoever does not feel this duty and actively respond to it, although perhaps a naturalized citizen of the land, remains an alien forever.

If the newcomer is readily assimilated in such a society, commonly, yet it must not be overlooked that those who come from across the seas are not selected at random. Those who are strong of will are the ones who seek out new spheres of activity. Just those whose satisfaction in life has been stunted by a petty and oppressive environment have always cherished a longing for the New World. That conflict which every one must wage in his own bosom before he can finally tear himself away from home, has schooled the emigrant for the spirit of his new home; and only those who have been impelled by the desire for self-direction have had the strength to break the ties with their own past. Thus it is that those of Germanic extraction adapt themselves so much more quickly and thoroughly to the political spirit of America than those of Romanic blood. The Latin peoples are much more the victims of suggestion. Being more excitable, they are more imitative, and therefore as individuals less stable. The Frenchman, Italian, or Spaniard is often a sympathetic member of the social life of the country, but in its political life he introduces a certain false note; his republicanism is not the American republicanism. As a moral ideal he has little or no concern with the doctrine of self-direction.

The American political system, therefore, by no means represents an ideal of universal significance; it is the expression of a certain character, the necessary way of living for that distinct type of man which an historically traceable process of selection has brought together. And this way of living reacts in its turn to strengthen the fundamental type. Other nations, in whom other temperamental factors no less significant or potent or admirable are the fundamental traits, must find the solution of their political problems in other directions. No gain would accrue to them from any mere imitation, since it would tend to nothing but the crippling and estranging of the native genius of their people.

The cultivated American of to-day feels this instinctively. Among the masses, to be sure, the old theme is still sometimes broached of the world-wide supremacy of American ideals: and a part of the necessary paraphernalia of popular assemblages will naturally consist in a reaffirmation that the duty of America is to extend its political system into every quarter of the globe; other nations will thus be rated according to their ripeness for this system, and the history of the world appear one long and happy education of the human race up to the plane of American conceptions. But this tendency is inevitable and not to be despised. It must more nearly concern the American than the citizen of other states to propagate his ideals, since here everything depends on each individual co-operating with all his might, and this co-operation must succeed best when it is impelled by an uncritical and blindly devoted faith. And such a faith arouses, too, a zealous

missionary spirit, which wants to carry this inspired state-craft unto all political heathen. But the foreigner is apt to overestimate these sentiments. The cultivated American is well aware that the various political institutions of other nations are not to be gauged simply as good or bad, and that the American system would be as impossible for Germany as the German system for America.

Those days are indeed remote when philosophy tried to discover one intrinsically best form of government. It is true that in the conflicts of diverse nations the old opposition of realistic and idealistic, of democratic and aristocratic social forces is repeated over and over. But new problems are always coming up. The ancient opposition is neutralized, and the problem finds its practical solution in that the opposing forces deploy their skirmish lines in other territory. The political ideas which led to the French Revolution had been outlived by the middle of the nineteenth century. A compromise had been effected. The whole stress of the conflict had transferred itself to social problems, and no one earnestly discussed any more whether republic or monarchy was the better form of government. The intellectual make-up of a people and its history must decide what shall be the outward form of its political institutions. And it is to-day tacitly admitted that there are light and shade on either side.

The darker side of democracy, indeed, as of every system which is founded on complete individualism, can be hidden from no one; nor would any one be so foolish, even though he loved and admired America, as to deny that weaknesses and dangers, and evils both secret and public, do there abound. Those who base their judgments less on knowledge of democratic forces than on obvious and somewhat sentimental social prejudices are apt to look for the dangers in the wrong direction. A German naturally thinks of mob-rule, harangues of the demagogue, and every form of lawlessness and violence. But true democracy does not allow of such things. A people that allows itself to turn into a mob and to be guided by irresponsible leaders, is not capable of directing itself. Self-direction demands the education of the nation. And nowhere else in the world is the mere demagogue so powerless, and nowhere does the populace observe more exemplary order and self-discipline.

The essential weakness of such a democracy is rather the importance it assigns to the average man with his petty opinions, which are sometimes right and sometimes wrong, his total lack of comprehension for all that is great and exceptional, his self-satisfied dilettanteism and his complacency before the accredited and trite in thought. This is far less true of a republic like the French, with its genius for scepticism, a republic nourished in æsthetic traditions and founded on the ruins of an empire. The intellectual conditions are there quite different. But in an ethical democracy, where self-direction is a serious issue, domination by the average intelligence is inevitable; and those who are truly great are the ones who find no scope for their powers. Those who appear great are merely men who are exploiting to the utmost the tendencies of the day. There are no great distinctions

or premiums for truly high achievements which do not immediately concern the average man, and therefore the best energies of the nation are not spurred on to their keenest activity. All ambition is directed necessarily toward such achievements as the common man can understand and compete for—athletic virtuosity and wealth. Therefore the spirit of sport and of money-getting concerns the people more nearly than art or science, and even in politics the domination of the majority easily crowds from the arena those whose qualifications do not appeal to its mediocre taste. And by as much as mature and capable minds withdraw from political life, by so much are the well-intentioned masses more easily led astray by sharp and self-interested politicians and politics made to cater to mean instincts. In short, the danger is not from any wild lawlessness, but from a crass philistinism. The seditious demagogue who appeals to passion is less dangerous than the sly political wire-puller who exploits the indolence and indifference of the people; and evil intent is less to be feared than dilettanteism and the intellectual limitations of the general public.

But, on the other hand, it is also certain that when it comes to a critical comparison between the weaknesses and theoretical dangers of democracy and aristocracy, the American is at no loss to serve up a handsome list of shortcomings to the other side. He has observed and, perhaps overestimating, he detests the spirit of caste, the existence of those restrictions which wrongfully hamper one individual and as undeservedly advantage another. Again, the American hates bureaucracy and he hates militarism. The idea of highest authority being vested in a man for any other reason than that of his individual qualifications goes against all his convictions; and his moral feeling knows no more detestable breed of man than the incompetent aspirant who is servile with his superiors and brutal to his inferiors. It is typically un-American. And if, in contrast to this, one tries to do justice to the proved advantages of monarchy, of aristocracy and the spirit of caste, to justify the ruler who stands above the strife of parties, and to defend that system of symbols by which the sentiment of the past is perpetuated in a people, and the protection which is instituted for all the more ideal undertakings which surpass the comprehension of the masses, or if one urges the value of that high efficiency which can arise only from compact political organization—then the American citizen swells with contempt. What does he care for all that if he loses the inestimable and infinite advantage which lies in the fact that in his state every individual takes an active hand, assumes responsibility, and fights for his own ideals? What outward brilliancy of achievement would compensate him for that moral value of co-operation, initiative, self-discipline, and responsibility, which the poorest and meanest citizen enjoys? It may be that an enlightened and well-meaning monarch sees to it that the least peasant can sit down to his chicken of a Sunday; but God raised up the United States as an example to all nations, that it shall be the privilege of every man to feel himself responsible for his town, county, state, and country, and even for all mankind, and by his own free initiative to work to better them. The strife of parties would better be, than that a single man should

be dead to the welfare of his country; and it is good riddance to aristocracy and plenty, if a single man is to be prevented from emulating freely the highest that he knows or anywise detained from his utmost accomplishment.

All such speculative estimates of different constitutional forms lead to no result unless they take into account the facts of history. Every side has its good and evil. And all such discussions are the less productive in that superiorities of constitution, although soundly argued, may or may not in any given country be fully made use of, while on the other hand defects of constitution are very often obviated. Indeed, to take an example from present tendencies in America, nothing is more characteristic than the aristocratic by-currents through which so many dangers of democracy are avoided. Officially, of course, a republic must remain a democracy, otherwise it mines its own foundations, and yet we shall see that American social and political life have developed by no means along parallel lines but rather stand out often in sharp contrast. The same is true of Germany. Official Germany is aristocratic and monarchic through and through, and no one would wish it other; but the intimate life of Germany becomes every day more democratic, and thus the natural weaknesses of an aristocracy are checked by irresistible social counter-tendencies. It may have been the growing wealth of Germany which raised the plane of life of the middle classes; or the industrial advance which loaned greater importance to manufacturer and merchant, and took some social gloss from the office-holding class; it may have been the colonial expansion which broadened the horizon and upset a stagnant equilibrium of stale opinion; or, again, the renewed efforts of those who felt cramped and oppressed, the labourers, and, above all, the women; it does not matter how it arose—a wave of progress is sweeping over that country, and a political aristocracy is being infused with new, democratic blood.

Now in America, as will often appear later, the days are over in which all aristocratic tendencies were strictly held back. The influence of intellectual leaders is increasing, art, science, and the ideals of the upper classes are continually pushing to the front, and even social lines and stratifications are beginning more and more to be felt. The soul of the people is agitated by imperialistic and military sentiments, and whereas in former times it was bent on freeing the slaves it now discovers "the white man's burden" to lie in the subjugation of inferior races. The restrictions to immigration are constantly being increased. Now of course all this does not a whit prejudice the formal political democracy of the land; it is simply a quiet, aristocratic complement to the inner workings of the constitution.

The presence, and even the bare possibility, here, of such by-currents, brings out more clearly how hopeless the theoretical estimation of any isolated form of statehood is, if it neglects the factors introduced by the actual life of the people. The American democracy is not an abstractly superior system of which a European can approve only by becoming himself a republican and condemning, incidentally, his own form of government: it is

rather, merely, the necessary form of government for the types of men and the conditions which are found here. And any educated American of to-day fully realizes this. No theoretical hair-splitting will solve the problem as to what is best for one or another country; for that true historical insight is needed. And even when the histories of two peoples are so utterly dissimilar as are those of America and Germany, it by no means follows, as the social by-currents just mentioned show, that the real spirit of the peoples must be unlike. Democratic America, with its unofficial aristocratic leanings, has, in fact, a surprising kinship to monarchical Germany, with its inner workings of a true democracy. The two peoples are growing into strong resemblance, although their respective constitutions flourish and take deeper root.

The beginnings of American history showed unmistakably and imperatively that the government of the American people must be, in the words of Lincoln, "a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." No one dreamed when the Constitution of the United States was framed, some hundred and seventeen years ago, that this democratic instrument would ever be called on to bind together a mighty nation extending from Maine to California. And, indeed, such a territorial expansion would undoubtedly have stretched and burst the unifying bonds of this Constitution, if the distance between Boston and San Francisco had not meanwhile become practically shorter than the road from Boston to Washington was in those early days. But that this Constitution could so adapt itself to the undreamt broadening of conditions, that it could continue to be the mainstay of a people that was indefinitely extending itself by exchange and purchase, conquest and treaty, and that in no crisis has an individual or party succeeded in any tampering with the rights of the people; all this shows convincingly that the American form of state was not arbitrarily hit on, but that it was the outcome of an historical development.

* * *

The spirit of this commonwealth was not first conceived in the year 1787. It was strong and ripe long before the delegates from the Thirteen States assembled under Washington's leadership in Independence Hall at Philadelphia. The history of the English colonists to the Atlantic coast shows from the very first what weight they attached to the duties and rights of the individual, and foretells as well the inevitable result, their unloosing from the mother country and final declaration of their independence.

We may consider the different lines of development which began early in the seventeenth century, after the feeble attempts at colonization from England, France and Spain in the latter half of the sixteenth century had miscarried and left socially no traces. French settlements flourished as early as 1605, chiefly however in Nova Scotia and other parts of Canada, and in 1609 settlements of Dutch, whose colony on the Hudson River, the present New York, soon passed over into English hands. The development of the

Spanish colonies on the Gulf of Mexico went on outside the territory of these young United States; and so the story of the meagre years of America is comprised in the history of the English colonies alone.

These colonies began diversely but came to resemble one another more and more as time went on. There can be no greater contrast than between the pioneer life of stout-willed men, who have left their native soil in order to live in undisturbed enjoyment of their Puritan faith, seeking to found their little communities on simple forms of self-government, and on the other hand the occupation of a rich trading company under royal charter, or the inauguration of a colony of the crown. But these differences could not be preserved. The tiny independent communities, as they grew in consideration, felt the need of some protecting power and therefore they looked once more to England; while, on the other hand, the more powerful, chartered colonies tended to loose themselves from the mother country, feeling, as they soon did, that their interests could not be well administered from across a broad ocean. In spite of the protecting arm of England, they felt it to be a condition of their sound growth that they should manage their domestic affairs for themselves. Thus it happened that all the colonies alike were externally dependent on England, while internally they were independent and were being schooled in citizenship.

The desire for self-government as a factor in the transformations which went on can very easily be traced; but it would be harder to say how far utilitarian and how far moral factors entered in. Virginia took the first step. Its first settlement of 1606 was completely subject to the king, who granted homesteads but no political rights to the colonists. It was a lifeless undertaking until 1609, when its political status was changed. The administration of the colony was entrusted to those who were interested in its material success. It became a great business undertaking which had everything in its favour. At the head was a London company, which for a nominal sum had been allowed to purchase a strip of land having four hundred miles of seacoast and extending inland indefinitely. This land contained inestimable natural resources, but needed labour to exploit them. The company then offered to grant homes on very favourable terms to settlers, receiving in return either cash or labour; and these inducements, together with the economic pressure felt by the lower classes at home, brought about a rapid growth of the colony. Now since this colony was organized like a military despotism, whose ruler, however, was no less than three thousand miles away, the interests of the company had to be represented by officials delegated to live in the colony. The interests of these officials were of course never those of the colonists, and presently, moreover, unscrupulous officials commenced to misuse their power; so that as a result, while the colony flourished, the company was on the brink of failure. The only way out of this difficulty was to concede something to the colonists themselves, and harmonize their interests with those of the company by granting them the free direction of their own affairs. It was arranged that every village or small city should be a political unit and as such should send two delegates

to a convention which sat to deliberate all matters of common concern. This body met for the first time in 1619; and in a short time it happened, as was to be expected, that the local government felt itself to be stronger than the mercantile company back in London. Disputes arose, and before five years the company had ceased to exist, and Virginia became a royal province. But the fact remained that in the year 1619 for the first time a deliberative body representing the people had met on American soil. The first step toward freedom had been taken. And with subtle irony fate decreed that in this same year of grace a Dutch ship should land the first cargo of African negroes in the same colony, as slaves.

That other form of political development, which started in the voluntary compact of men who owned no other allegiance, was first exemplified in the covenant of those hundred and two Puritans who landed from the Mayflower at Plymouth, in the year 1620, having forsaken England in order to enjoy religious freedom in the New World. A storm forced them to land on Cape Cod, where they remained and amid the severest hardships built up their little colony, which, as no other, has been a perpetual spring of moral force. Even to-day the best men of the land derive their strength from the moral courage and earnestness of life of the Pilgrims. Before they landed they signed a compact, in which they declared that they had made this voyage "for ye glory of God and advancement of ye Christian faith, and honour of our King and countrie," and that now in the sight of God they would "combine ... togeather into a civil body politik for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of ye end aforesaid, and by vertue hearof to enacte, constitute and frame such just and equal lawes, ordinances, actes, constitutions and offices from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for ye generall good of ye colonie."

The executive was a governor and his assistants, elected annually from the people: while the power to make laws remained with the body of male communicants of the church. And so it remained for eighteen years, until the growth of the colony made it hard for all church-members to meet together, so that a simple system of popular representation by election had to be introduced. This colony united later with a flourishing trading settlement, which centred about Salem; and these together formed the Massachusetts Bay Colony, which in 1640 numbered already twenty thousand souls.

The covenant which was drawn up on board the Mayflower is to be accounted the first voluntary federation of independent Americans for the purposes of orderly government. The first written constitution was drawn up in the colony of Connecticut, a colony which repeated essentially the successful experiments of New Plymouth, and which consisted of agricultural settlements and small posts for trading with the Indians situated at Windsor and Hartford and other places along the Connecticut Valley. Led by common interests, they adopted in 1638 a formal constitution.

There was still a third important type of colonial government, which was at first thoroughly aristocratic and English, and nevertheless became quickly Americanized. It was the custom of the King to grant to distinguished men, under provision of a small tribute, almost monarchical rights over large tracts of land. The first such man was Lord Baltimore, who received in 1632 a title to the domain of Maryland, on the Chesapeake Bay. He enjoyed the most complete princely prerogatives, and pledged to the crown in return about a fifth part of the gold and silver mined in his province. In 1664 Charles the Second gave to his brother, the Duke of York, a large territory, which was soon broken up, and which included what are now known as the States of Vermont, New Jersey, and Delaware. The great provinces of Georgia and Carolina—now North and South Carolina—were awarded by the same King to one of his admirals, Sir William Penn, for certain services. Penn died, and his son, who found himself in need of the sixteen thousand pounds which his father had loaned to the King, gratified that monarch by accepting in their stead a stretch of coast lands extending between the fortieth and forty-third degrees of latitude.

In this way extensive districts were turned over to the caprice of a few noblemen; but immediately the spirit of self-direction took everywhere root, and a social-political enthusiasm proceeded to shape the land according to new ideals. Carolina took counsel of the philosopher, Locke, in carrying out her experiment. Maryland, which was immediately prospered with two hundred men of property and rank, chiefly of Roman Catholic faith, started out with a general popular assembly, and soon went over to the representative system. And Penn's constructive handiwork, the Quaker State of Pennsylvania, was intended from the first to be "a consecrated experiment." Penn himself explained that he should take care so to arrange the politics of his colony that neither he himself nor his successors should have an opportunity to do wrong. Penn's enthusiasm awoke response from the continent: he himself founded the "city of brotherly love," Philadelphia; and Franz Daniel Pastorius brought over his colony of Mennonites, the first German settlers, who took up their abode at Germantown.

Thus it was that the spirit of self-reliant and self-assertive independence took root in the most various soils. But that which led the colonies to unite was not their common sentiments and ambitions, but it was their common enemies. In spite of the similarity of their positions there was no lack of sharp contrasts. And perhaps the most striking of these was the opposition between the southern colonies, with their languid climate, where the planters left all the work to slaves, and the middle and northern provinces, where the citizens found in work the inspiration of their lives. The foes which bound together these diverse elements were the Indians, the French, the Spanish, and lastly their parent race, the English.

The Indian had been lord of the land until he was driven back by the colonists to remoter hunting territory. The more warlike tribes tried repeatedly to wipe out the white

intruder, and constantly menaced the isolated settlements, which were by no means a match for them. Soon after the first serious conflict in 1636, the Pequot war, Rhode Island, which was a small colony of scattered settlements, made overtures toward a protective alliance with her stronger neighbours. In this she was successful, and together with Massachusetts, Plymouth, New Haven, and Connecticut, formed the United Colonies of New England. This union was of little practical importance except as a first lesson to the colonies to avoid petty jealousies and to consider a closer mutual alliance as a possibility which would by no means impair the freedom and independence of the uniting parties.

The wars with the French colonies had more serious consequences. The French, who were the natural enemies of all English settlements, had originally planted colonies only in the far north, in Quebec in 1608. But during those decades in which the English wayfarers were making homes for themselves along the Atlantic coast, the French were migrating down from the north through the valley of the Saint Lawrence and along the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River. Then they pressed on down this stream to its mouth and laid title to the tremendous tracts which it drains, in the name of the French crown. This country they called after King Louis XIV, Louisiana. They had not come as colonists, but solely with an eye to gain, hoping to exploit these untouched resources in behalf of the Canadian fur traffic; and close on the heels of the trader came the Catholic priest. Thus the territory that flanked the English colonies to inland fell into French hands, whereas the land-grants of the English crown so read that only the Pacific Ocean should be the western boundary. A collision was therefore inevitable, although indeed mountains and virgin forests separated the coastland settlements from the inland regions of the Mississippi where the French had planted and fortified their trading posts.

When, in 1689, war broke out in Europe between England and France, a fierce struggle began between their representatives in the New World. But it was not now as it had been in the Indian war, where only a couple of colonies were involved. All the colonies along the coast were threatened by a common enemy. A congress of delegates convened at New York in April of 1690, in which for the first time all the colonies were invited to take part. Three long wars followed. The greatest advantage on the French side was that from the first they had been on good terms with the Indians, whose aid they were now able to enlist. But the French were numerically weak, and received but little assistance from their mother country. When in 1766 the last great war broke out the English colonies had a population of a million and a quarter, while the French had only a tenth as many. Chiefly and finally, the English colonists were actual settlers, hardened and matured through carrying the responsibilities of their young state, and fighting for hearth and home; the French were either traders or soldiers. The principle of free government was destined on this continent to triumph. Washington, then a young man, led the fight; the English Secretary of State, William Pitt, did everything in his power to aid; and the victory was complete. By the treaty of 1763 all French possessions east of the

Mississippi were given to England, with the exception of New Orleans, which, together with the French possessions west of the Mississippi, went to Spain. Spain meanwhile ceded Florida to England. Thus the entire continent was divided between England and Spain.

But the Seven Years War had not merely altered the map of America; it had been an instructive lesson to the colonists. They had learned that their fortunes were one; that their own generals and soldiers were not inferior to any which England could send over; and lastly, they had come to see that England looked at the affairs of the colonies strictly from the point of view of her own gain. Herewith was opened up a new prospect for the future: the French no longer threatened and everything this side of the Mississippi stood open to them and promised huge resources. What need had they to depend further on the English throne? The spirit of self-direction could now consistently come forward and dictate the last move.

It is true that the colonists were still faithful English subjects, and in spite of their independent ambitions they took it for granted that England would always direct their foreign policy, would have the right to veto such laws as they passed, and that the English governors would always be recognized as official authorities. But now the English Parliament planned certain taxations that were the occasion of serious dispute. The Thirteen Colonies, which in the meantime had grown to be a population of two million, had by their considerable war expenditures shown to the debt-encumbered Britons the thriving condition of colonial trade. And the latter were soon ready with a plan to lay a part of the public taxation on the Americans. It was not in itself unfair to demand of the colonies some contribution to the public treasury, since many of the expenditures were distinctly for their benefit; and yet it must have seemed extraordinary to these men who had been forced from childhood to shift for themselves, and who believed the doctrine of self-government to be incontrovertible. They objected to paying taxes to a Parliament in which they had no representation; and the phrase, “no taxation without representation,” became the motto of the hour.

The Stamp Tax, which prescribed the use of revenue stamps on all American documents and newspapers, was received with consternation, and societies called the Sons of Freedom were formed throughout the land to agitate against this innovation. The Stamp Tax Congress, which met in New York in 1765, repudiated the law in outspoken terms. Nor did it halt with a mere expression of opinion; the spirit of self-direction was not to be molested with impunity. Close on the resolve not to observe the law, came the further agreement to buy no English merchandise. England had to waive the Stamp Tax, but endless mutterings and recriminations followed which increased the bitterness. Both sides were ripe for war when, in 1770, England issued a proclamation laying a tax on all tea imported to the colonies. The citizens of Boston became enraged and pitched an English ship-load of tea into the harbour. Thereupon England, equally aroused,

proceeded to punish Boston by passing measures designed to ruin the commerce of Boston and indeed all Massachusetts. The Thirteen Colonies took sides with Massachusetts and a storm became imminent. The first battle was fought on the 19th of April, 1775; and on July 4th, 1776, the Thirteen Colonies declared their independence of England. Henceforth there were to be no colonies but in their place thirteen free states.

The Declaration of Independence was composed by Jefferson, a Virginian, and is a remarkable document. The spirit that informs it is found in the following lines: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...." The sins of the English king and people against America are enumerated at length, and in solemn language the United States of America are declared independent of the English people, who are henceforth to be as "the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends." This Declaration was signed by delegates from the states in Independence Hall, in Philadelphia, where hung the famous bell, with its inscription, "Proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof."

The spirit of self-direction had triumphed; but the dangers were by no means wholly passed. England sent over no more governors, and had indeed been repulsed; but she had as yet no intention of giving in. The war dragged on for five long years, and the outcome was uncertain until in 1781 Cornwallis was brought to surrender. Then England knew that she had lost the contest. The king desired still to prolong the war, but the people were tired of it and, the ministry having finally to yield, peace was declared in April of the year 1783. This was no assurance of an harmonious future, however. That solidarity which the colonies had felt in the face of a common enemy now gave way to petty jealousies and oppositions, and the inner weakness of the new Union was revealed. In itself the Union had no legal authority over the several states, and while during the war the affairs of the country had fallen into disorder, yet the Union had no power to conduct foreign diplomacy or even to collect customs.

It was rather in their zeal for self-direction that at first considerable portions of the population seemed disinclined to enlarge the authority of the central organization. Self-direction begins with the individual or some group of individuals. The true self-direction of society as a whole was not to be allowed to encroach on the rights of the individual, and this was the danger feared. Each state, with its separate interests and powers, would not give up its autonomy in favour of an impersonal central power which might easily come to tyrannize over the single state in much the same way as the hated English throne had done. And yet the best men of the country were brought at length more and more to the opposite view; a strong central authority, in which the states as a whole should become a larger self-directing unit, carrying out and ensuring the self-direction of the

component members, was seen to be a necessity. Another congress of representatives from all the states was convened in Independence Hall, at Philadelphia, and this body of uncommonly able men sat for months deliberating ways by which the opposing factions of federalism and anti-federalism could be brought together in a satisfactory alliance. It was obvious that compromises would have to be made. So, for instance, it was conceded that the smallest state, like the largest, should be represented in the senate by two delegates: and the single state enjoyed many other rights not usual in a federation. But, on the other hand, it was equally certain that the chief executive must be a single man with a firm will, and that this office must be refilled at frequent intervals by a popular election. A few had tentatively suggested making Washington king, but he stood firm against any such plan. The republican form of government was in this instance no shrewdly devised system which was adopted for the sake of nicely spun theoretical advantages—it was the necessity of the time and place, the natural culmination of a whole movement. It was as absolutely necessary as the consolidation of the German states, eighty years later, under an imperial crown. The congress eventually submitted a constitutional project to the several state legislatures, for their summary approval or rejection. Whereon the anti-federalistic factions made a final effort, but were outvoted, and the Constitution was adopted. In 1789 George Washington was elected the first president of the United States.

It would take a lively partisan to assert, as one sometimes does, that this Constitution is the greatest achievement of human intellect, and yet the severest critics have acknowledged that a genius for statesmanship is displayed in its text. Penned in an age which was given over to bombastic declamation, this document lays down the fundamental lines of the new government with great clearness and simplicity. "We, the people of the United States," it begins, "in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." This is the entire introduction. The contents come under seven articles. The first article provides for the making of laws, this power to be vested in a Congress consisting of a Senate and House of Representatives; for the business and daily routine of this Congress, as well as its powers and obligations. The second article provides for the executive power, to be vested in the person of the President, who is elected every fourth year; the third article provides for a judiciary; the fourth defines the mutual relations of separate states; and the last three articles concern the adoption of the Constitution and the conditions under which it may be amended.

The need of amendments and extensions to this Constitution was foreseen and provided for. How profoundly the original document comprehended and expressed the genius of the American people may be seen from the fact that during a century which saw an unexampled growth of the country and an undreamed-of transformation of its foreign

policy, not a single great principle of the Constitution was modified. After seventy-seven years one important paragraph was added, prohibiting slavery; and this change was made at a tremendous cost of blood. Otherwise the few amendments have been insignificant and concerned matters of expediency or else, and more specially, further formulations of what, according to American conceptions, are the rights of the individual. Although the original Constitution did not contain a formal proclamation of religious freedom, freedom of speech, of the press, and of public assemblage, this was not because those who signed the document did not believe in these things, but because they had not aimed to make of the Constitution of the Union either a treatise on ethics or yet a book of law. But as early as 1789 the states insisted that all the rights of the individual, as endorsed by the national ideals, should be incorporated in the articles of this document. In the year 1870 one more tardy straggler was added to the list of human rights, the last amendment; the right of the citizens to vote was not to be abridged on account of race, colour, or previous condition of servitude.

Of the other amendments, the tenth had been tacitly assumed from the first year of the Republic; this was that "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." This principle also was surely in no way at variance with the spirit of the original document. It was, indeed, the lever that ensured the great efficacy of the Constitution, so that by its provisions the centrifugal forces were never disturbed by centripetal ones; an equilibrium was effected between the tendencies that made for unity and those that made against it, in such a way that the highest efficiency was ensured to the whole while the fullest encouragement was given to the enterprise and initiative of the parts. In no direction, probably, would an improvement have been possible. More authority concentrated at the head would have impeded general activity, and less would have lost the advantages of concerted action; in neither case would material growth or the reconciliation of conflicting opinions have been possible. Constant compensation of old forces and the quickening of new ones were the secret of this documented power, and yet it was only the complete expression of the spirit of self-direction, which demands unremittingly that the nation as a whole shall conduct itself without encroaching on the freedom of the individual, and that the individual shall be free to go his own ways without interfering with the unfettered policy of the nation.

Under the auspices of this Constitution the country waxed and throve. As early as 1803 its land area was doubled by the accession of Louisiana, which had been ceded by Spain to France, and was now purchased from Napoleon for fifteen million dollars—an event of such far-reaching importance that the people of St. Louis have not inappropriately invited the nations of the earth to participate in a Louisiana Purchase Exposition. In 1845 Texas was taken into the Union, it having broken away from Mexico just previously and constituted itself an independent state. The large region on the Pacific slope known as Oregon came in 1846 to the United States by treaty with England, and

when finally, in 1847, after the war with Mexico, New Mexico and California became the spoils of the victor and in 1867 Russia relinquished Alaska, the domain of the country was found to have grown from its original size of 324,000 square miles to one of 3,600,000. The thirteen states had become forty-five, since the newly acquired lands had to be divided. But all this growth brought no alteration in the Constitution, whose spirit of self-direction, rather, had led to this magnificent development, had fortified and secured the country, and inspired it with energy and contentment. The population also has grown under this benevolent Constitution. Millions have flocked hither to seek and to find prosperity on this new and inexhaustible soil. The area has increased tenfold, but the population twenty-fold; and the newcomers have been disciplined in the school of self-direction and educated to the spirit of American citizenship.

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There is a certain kind of character which must be developed in this school. It is true, of course, that there is no one model which just fits every one, the native-born Yankee as well as the European immigrant, the farmer as well as the resident in cities. The Irish-American is not the German-American, nor is the New Englander like the Virginian, nor the son of the East like his brother in the West. The infinite shadings of personal character, temperament, and capacity which nature has produced, have, of course, not been lost. And, nevertheless, just as the human race in America has begun to differentiate into a species which is anthropologically distinct, and this partly under the influence of the climate since the species has several characters in common with the aboriginal Indian, so also in the moral atmosphere of this body-politic a distinct type of human character is undoubtedly being evolved; and one may note with perpetual surprise how little the other great divisions of social life, as of rich and poor, cultivated and ignorant, native-born and immigrant, manual labourer and brain-worker—how little these differentiate the American citizen in his political capacity. Of course only the political life is in question here; that new groupings and divisions are being continually formed in the economic, intellectual, and social life need not concern us for the present. In the individual it may not be easy to follow the threads through the tissue of his psychic motions, but in the abstract and schematic picture of the type it is by no means impossible to trace them out.

What is it, then, which the American has gotten from his training? Many and apparently unrelated lessons are taught in the school of self-direction, and perhaps none of them are without their dangers. For it is here not a matter of theoretical knowledge, which may be remembered or forgotten and may be well or ill selected, but which in itself involves no scale of excellence and, therefore, has no need to be tempered or restrained. Theoretical knowledge cannot be overdone or exaggerated into untruth. But the practical conduct which is here in question is different; it involves an ideal, and in such a way that a man may not only misapprehend or forget what is the best course of action, but also he may err in following it, he may give it undue place and so neglect opposing motives

which in their place are no less requisite. In short, conduct, unlike knowledge, demands a fine tact and unflagging discernment for the fitness of things. In this sense it cannot be denied that the teaching of American democracy is itself the source of serious errors, and that the typical American citizen is by no means free from the failings of his virtues. His fundamental traits may be briefly sketched, and from the excellencies which he strives for many of his defects can be understood.

There is, firstly, a group of closely related impulses, which springs from the American's unbounded belief in his own strength, a trait which in the last analysis must be, of course, the foundation-stone of any doctrine of self-direction. He will not wait for others to look out for him, counsel him, or take cognizance of his interests, but relies wholly on his own judgment and his own strength, and believes no goal too high for his exertions to attain. Every true American will have found in himself some trace of this spirit. Each day of his life has suggested it to him, and all the institutions of his country have reinforced the teaching. Its most immediate result is such a strength of initiative as no other people on earth possesses, an optimism, a self-reliance and feeling of security which contribute more than half to his success. Faint heart is not in the American's dictionary. Individual, corporation, or country may be undecided, and dispute whether a certain end is desirable or whether a certain means is best to a given end, but no one ever doubts or goes into his work with misgivings lest his strength be not enough to traverse the road and reach the goal. And such an attitude encourages every man to exert himself to the utmost. The spirit of self-direction is here closely allied with that self-initiative which is the mainspring of the economic life of America. But the initiative and optimistic resolution shown in the political arena astonish the stranger more than the same traits displayed in the economic field. It is shown in the readiness for argument, in which every one can express himself accurately and effectively; in the indefatigable demand that every public office shall be open to the humblest incumbent, and in the cool assurance with which thousands and thousands of persons, without any technical knowledge or professional training, assume the most exacting political offices, and become postmasters, mayors, ministers and ambassadors, without even pausing before their grave responsibilities. But most of all, American initiative is shown in the structure of all her institutions, great or small, which minimizes transitions and degrees between higher and lower, and so facilitates the steady advance of the individual. Each and all must have the chance to unfold and there must be no obstacles to hinder the right ambition from its utmost realization. Every impulse must be utilized; and however far toward the periphery a man may be born he must have the right of pressing forward to the centre. The strength of this nation lies at the periphery, and the American government would never have advanced so unerringly from success to success if every village stable-lad and city messenger-boy had not known with pride that it depends only on himself if he is not to become President of the United States.

But the transition is easy and not well marked from such strength to a deplorable weakness. The spirit of initiative and optimism is in danger of becoming inexcusable

arrogance as to one's abilities and sad underestimation of the value of professional training. Dilettanteism is generally well-meaning, often successful, and sometimes wholly admirable; but it is always dangerous. When brawny young factory-hands sit on a school committee, sturdy tradesmen assume direction of a municipal postal service, bankers become speakers in legislature, and journalists shift over to be cabinet ministers, the general citizen may sometimes find cold comfort in knowing that the public service is not roped off from private life, nor like to become effete through stale traditions. It is very evident that America is to-day making a great effort to ward off the evils of amateurish incompetence and give more prominence to the man of special training. And yet it cannot be denied that very noticeably in the intellectual make-up of the American his free initiative and easy optimism are combined with a readiness to overestimate his own powers and with a bias for dilettanteism.

Another psychological outcome of this individualism seems inevitable. When every member of a nation feels called on to pass judgment on all subjects for himself, it will come about that public opinion reaches an uncommonly high mean level, but it will also happen that the greatest intellects are not recognized as being above this mean. The genius, who in his day is always incomprehensible to the masses, goes to waste; and the man who sees beyond the vulgar horizon fights an uphill battle. The glittering successes are for the man whose doings impress the multitude, and this fact is necessarily reflected in the mind of the aspirant, who unconsciously shapes his ambitions to the taste of the many rather than of the best. Wherever the spirit of initiative possesses all alike, a truly great individual is of course insufferable; any great advance must be a collective movement, and the best energies of the country must be futilely expended in budging the masses. It is no accident that America has still produced no great world genius. And this is the other side of the vaunted and truthful assertion, that whenever in a New England town a question is brought to an open debate, the number of those who will take a lively, earnest, orderly, and intelligent part in the discussion is perhaps greater in proportion to the total number of inhabitants than in any place in Europe.

This leads us to a second consequence of the desire for self-direction. It stimulates not only initiative and self-reliance, but also the consciousness of duty. If a man earnestly believes that the subject must also be potentate, he will not try to put off his responsibilities on any one else but will forthwith set himself to work, and prescribe as well his own due restrictions. If a neighbourhood or club, town, city, or state, or yet the whole federation sees before it some duty, the American will not be found waiting for a higher authority to stir him up, for he is himself that authority; his vote it is which determines all who are to figure in the affair. Wherefore he is constrained by the whole system to an earnest and untiring co-operation in everything. This is not the superficial politics of the ale-house, with its irresponsible bandying of yeas and nays. When Secretary of the Navy under McKinley, Mr. Long said that when the cabinet at Washington was in conference, every member was of course better posted on the matter

than the average citizen; but that nevertheless a dozen villagers, say in northern Maine, would read their New York and Boston papers and talk over the affairs with as much intelligence and as good a comprehension of the points at issue as would appear at any cabinet debates. This was by no means meant as a reflection on his colleagues of the cabinet, but as a frank recognition of an aspect of American life which invariably surprises the foreigner. One needs only to recall the discussion which preceded the last presidential election, and more especially the one preceding that; the silver question was the great issue, and evening after evening hundreds of thousands listened to technical arguments in finance such as no European orator could hope to lay before a popular assembly. Huge audiences followed with rapt attention for hours lectures on the most difficult points of international monetary standards. And this intellectual seriousness springs from the feeling of personal responsibility which is everywhere present. The European is always astonished at the exemplary demeanour of an American crowd; how on public occasions great multitudes of men and women regulate their movements without any noticeable interference by the police, how the great transportation companies operate with almost no surveillance of the public, trusting each person to do his part, and how in general the whole social structure is based on mutual confidence to a degree which is nowhere the case in Europe. The feeling that the ruler and the ruled are one pervades all activities, and its consequences are felt far beyond the political realm. Especially in the social sphere it makes for self-respect among the lower classes; they adapt themselves readily to discipline, for at the same time they feel themselves to be the masters; and the dignity of their position is the best security for their good behaviour.

But here, too, excellence has its defects. Where every one is so intensely aware of an identity between political authority and political subject, it is hard for the feeling of respect for any person whatsoever to find root. The feeling of equality will crop out where nature designed none, as for instance between youth and mature years. A certain lack of respect appears in the family and goes unpunished because superficially it corresponds to the political system of the land. Parents even make it a principle to implore and persuade their children, holding it to be a mistake to compel or punish them; and they believe that the schools should be conducted in the same spirit. And thus young men and women grow up without experiencing the advantages of outer constraint or discipline.

Hitherto we have considered only those intellectual factors derived from the spirit of self-direction which bear on the will of the individual, his rights and duties; but these factors are closely bound up with the others which concern the rights and privileges of one's neighbour. We may sketch these briefly. Deeply as he feels his own rights, the American is not less conscious of those of his neighbour. He does not forget that his neighbour may not be molested and must have every opportunity for development and the pursuit of his ambitions, and this without scrutiny or supervision. He recognizes the other's equal voice and influence in public affairs, his equally sincere sense of duty and fidelity to it. This altruism expresses itself variously in practical life. Firstly, in a complete

subordination to the majority. In America the dissenting minority displays remarkable discipline, and if the majority has formally taken action, one hears no grumbling or quibbling from the discontented, whether among boys at play or men who have everything at stake. The outvoiced minority is self-controlled and good-natured and ready at once to take part in the work which the majority has laid out; and herein lies one of the clearest results of the American system and one of the superior traits of American character.

Closely related to this is another trait which lends to American life much of its intrinsic worth—the unconditional insistence in any competition on equal rights for both sides. The demand for "fair play" dominates the whole American people, and shapes public opinion in all matters whether large or small. And with this, finally, goes the belief in the self-respect and integrity of one's neighbour. The American cannot understand how Europeans so often reinforce their statements with explicit mention of their honour which is at stake, as if the hearer is likely to feel a doubt about it; and even American children are often apt to wonder at young people abroad who quarrel at play and at once suspect one another of some unfairness. The American system does not wait for years of discretion to come before exerting its influence; it makes itself felt in the nursery, where already the word of one child is never doubted by his playmates.

Here too, however, the brightest light will cast a shadow. Every intelligent American is somewhat sadly aware that the vote of a majority is no solution of a problem, and he realizes oftener than he will admit that faith in the majority is pure nonsense if theoretical principles are at issue. This is a system which compels him always where a genius is required to substitute a committee, and to abide by the majority vote. The very theory of unlimited opportunity has its obvious dangers arising, here as everywhere, from extremes of feeling and so exaggeration of the principle. The recognition of another's rights leads naturally to a sympathy for the weaker, which is as often as not unjustified, and easily runs over into sentimentalism, not to say an actual hysteria of solicitude. And this is in fact a phase of public opinion which stands in striking contrast to the exuberant health of the nation. What is even worse, the ever-sensitive desire not to interfere in another's rights leads to the shutting of one's eyes and letting the other do what he likes, even if it is unjust. And in this way a situation is created which encourages the unscrupulous and rewards rascality.

For a long time the blackest spot on American life, specially in the opinion of German critics, has been the corruption in municipal and other politics. We need not now review the facts. It is enough to point out that a comparison with conditions in Germany, say, is entirely misleading if it is supposed to yield conclusions as to the moral character of the American people. Unscrupulous persons who are keen for plunder, are to be found everywhere; merely the conditions under which the German public service has developed and now maintains itself make it almost impossible for a reprobate of that sort to force his

entrance. And if a German official were discovered in dishonest practices it would be, in fact, discrediting to the people. In America the situation is almost reversed. The conditions on which, according to the American system, the lesser officials secure their positions, specially in municipal governments, and the many chances of enriching oneself unlawfully and yet without liability to arrest, while the regular remuneration and above all the social dignity of the positions are relatively small, drive away the better elements of the population and draw on the inferior. The charge against the Americans, then, should not be that they make dishonest officials, but that they permit a system which allows dishonest persons to become officials. This is truly a serious reproach, yet it is not a charge of contemptible dishonesty but of inexcusable complacency; and this springs from the national weakness of leniency toward one's neighbour, a trait which comes near to being a fundamental democratic virtue. It cannot be denied, moreover, that the whole nation is earnestly and successfully working to overcome this difficulty.

The denunciations of the daily papers, however, must not be taken as an indication of this, for the uncurbed American press makes the merest unfounded suspicion an occasion for sensational accusations. Any one who has compared in recent years the records of unquestionably impartial judicial processes with the charges which had previously been made in the papers, must be very sceptical as to the hue and cry of corruption. Even municipal politics are much better than they are painted. The easiest way of overcoming every evil would be to remove the public service from popular and party influences, but this is, of course, not feasible since it would endanger the most cherished prerogatives of individualism. Besides, the American is comforted about his situation because he knows that just this direct efficiency of the people's will is the surest means of thoroughly uprooting the evil as soon as it becomes really threatening. He may be patient or indifferent too long, but if he is once aroused he finds in his system a strong and ready instrument for suddenly overturning an administration and putting another in its stead. Moreover, if corruption becomes too unblushing an "educational campaign" is always in order. James Bryce, who is of all Europeans the one most thoroughly acquainted with American party politics, gives his opinion, that the great mass of civil officials in the United States is no more corrupt than that of England or Germany. An American would add, however, that they excel their European rivals in a better disposition and greater readiness to be of service.

But the situation is complicated by still another tendency which makes the fight for clean and disinterested politics difficult. The spirit of self-direction involves a political philosophy which is based on the individual; and the whole commonwealth has no other meaning than an adding up of the rights of separate individuals, so that every proposal must benefit some individual or other if it is to commend itself for adoption. Now since the state is a collection of numberless individuals and the law merely a pledge between them all, the honour of the state and the majesty of the law do not attach to a well organized and peculiarly exalted collective will, which stands above the individual. Such

a thing would seem to an individualist a hollow abstraction, for state and law consist only in the rights and responsibilities of such as he. From this more or less explicitly formulated conception of political life there accrue to society both advantages and dangers. The advantages are obvious: the Mephistophelian saying, "Vernunft wird Unsinn, Wohltat Plage," becomes unthinkable, since the body-politic is continually tested and held in check by the lively interests of individuals. Any obvious injustice can be righted, for above the common weal stands the great army of individuals by whom and for whom both state and law were made.

But the disadvantages follow as well. If state and law are only a mutual restraint agreed on between individuals, the feeling of restraint becomes lively in proportion as the particular individuals in question can be pointed to, but vanishingly weak when, in a more intangible way, the abstract totality requires allegiance. So one finds the finest feeling for justice in cases of obligation to an individual, as in contracts, for instance, and the minimum sense of right where the duty is toward the state. There is no country of Europe where the sense of individual right so pervades all classes of the inhabitants, a fact which stands in no wise contradictory to the other prevalent tendency of esteeming too lightly one's righteous obligations to city or state. Men who, in the interests of their corporations, try to influence in irregular ways the professional politicians in the legislatures, observe nevertheless in private life the most rigid principles of right; and many a one who could safely be trusted by the widows and orphans of his city with every cent which they own, would still be very apt to make a false declaration of his taxable property.

There is a parallel case in the sphere of criminal law. Possibly even more than the abuses of American municipal politics, the crimes of lynch courts have brought down the condemnation of the civilized world. Corruption and "lynch justice" are usually thought of as the two blemishes on the nation, and it is from them that the casual observer in Europe gets a very unfavourable impression of the American conception of justice. We have already tried to rectify this estimate in so far as it includes corruption, and as regards lynching it is perhaps even more in error. Lynch violence is of course not to be excused. Crime is crime; and the social psychologist is interested only in deciding what rubric to put it under. Now the entire development of lynch action shows that it is not the wanton violence of men who have no sense of right, but rather the frenzied fulfillment of that which we have termed the individualistic conception of justice. The typical case of lynching is found, of course, in Southern States with a considerable negro population. A negro will have attempted violence on a white woman, whereon all the white men of the neighbourhood, assuming that through the influence of his fellow negroes the criminal would not be duly convicted, or else feeling that the regular legal penalty would not suffice to deter others from the same crime, violently seize the culprit from out the jurisdiction of the law, and after a summary popular trial hang him. But these are not men who are merely seeking a victim to their brutal instinct for murder. It is reported that

after the deed, when the horrid crime has been horribly expiated, the participants will quietly and almost solemnly shake one another by the hand and disperse peacefully to their homes, as if they had fulfilled a sacred obligation of citizenship. These are men imbued with the individualistic notion of society, confident that law is not a thing whose validity extends beyond themselves, but something which they have freely framed and adopted, and which they both may and must annul or disregard as soon as the conditions which made it necessary are altered. It is a matter of course that such presumption is abhorred and condemned in the more highly civilized states of the Union, also by the better classes in the Southern States; and a lyncher is legally a murderer. His deed, however, is not to be referred psychologically to a deficient sense of justice. That which is the foundation of this sense, resentment at an infringement of the individual's rights and belief in the connection between sin and expiation, are all too vividly realized in his soul.

We have dwelt on these two offshoots of the individualistic idea of law because they have been used constantly to distort the true picture of American character. Rightly understood, psychologically, these phenomena are seen to be black and ugly incidents, which have little to do with the national consciousness of right and honour; they are the regrettable accompaniments of an extreme individualism, which in its turn, to be sure, grows naturally out of the doctrine of self-direction. Every American knows that it is one of the most sacred duties of the land to fight against these abuses, and yet the foreigner should not be deceived into thinking, because so and so many negroes are informally disposed of each year, and the politicians of Philadelphia or Chicago continue to stuff their pockets with spoils in ways which are legally unpunishable, that the American is not thoroughly informed with a respect for law. He has not taken his instruction in the system of self-direction in vain. And the German who estimates the tone of political life in America by the corruption and lynch violence narrated in the daily papers, is like the American who makes up his opinion of the German army, as he sometimes does, from the harangues of social democrats on the abuses of military officers, or from sensational disclosures of small garrisons on the frontier.

One more trait must be mentioned, finally, which is characteristic of every individualistic community, and which, having been impressed on the individual by the American system, has now reacted and contributed much to the working out of this system. The American possesses an astonishing gift for rapid organization. His highest talents are primarily along this line, and in the same way every individual has an instinct for stationing himself at the right place in any organization. This is true both high and low, and can be observed on every occasion, whether in the concerted action of labouring men, in a street accident, or in any sort of popular demonstration. For instance, one has only to notice how quickly and naturally the public forms in orderly procession before a ticket-office. This sure instinct for organization, which is such an admirable complement to the spirit of initiative, gives to the American workman his superiority over the European, for it is lamentably lacking in the latter, and can be replaced only by the

strictest discipline. But this instinct finds its fullest expression in the political sphere. It is this which creates parties, guarantees the efficiency of legislatures, preserves the discipline of the state, and is in general the most striking manifestation of the spirit of self-direction. But we have seen that none of the merits of this system are quite without their drawbacks, and this gift for organization has also its dangers. The political parties which it fosters may become political "machines," and the party leader a "boss"—but here we are already in the midst of those political institutions with which we must deal more in detail.

Chapter 2.

Political Parties

§

The Presidency is the highest peak in the diversified range of political institutions, and may well be the first to occupy our attention. But this chief executive office may be looked at in several relations: firstly, it is one of the three divisions of the Government, which are the executive, the legislative, and the judicial. And these might well be considered in this order. But, on the other hand, the President stands at the head of the federation of states; and the structural beauty of the American political edifice consists in the repetition of the whole in each part and of the part in every smaller part, and so on down. The top governmental stratum of the federation is repeated on a smaller scale at the head of each of the forty-five states, and again, still smaller, over every city. The governor of a state has in narrower limits the functions of the President, and so, within still narrower, has the mayor of a city. We might, then, consider the highest office, and after that its smaller counterparts in the order of their importance.

But neither of these methods of treatment would bring out the most important connection. It is possible to understand the President apart from the miniature presidents of the separate states, or apart from the Supreme Court, or even Congress, but it is not possible to understand the President without taking account of the political parties. It is the party which selects its candidate, elects him to office, and expects from him in return party support and party politics. The same is true, moreover, of elections to Congress and to the state legislatures. For here again the party is the background to which everything is naturally referred, and any description of the President, or Congress, or the courts, which, like the original Constitution, makes no mention of the parties, appears to us to-day as lacking in plastic reality, in historical perspective. We shall, therefore, attempt no such artificial analysis, but rather describe together the constitutional government and the inofficial party formations. They imply and explain each other. Then on this background of party activities we can view more comprehensively the President, Congress, the Supreme Court, and the entire politics of the federation and the states.

We must not forget, however, that in separating any of these factors from the rest, we deal at once with highly artificial abstractions, so that this description will have continually to neglect many facts and cut the threads that cross its path. The history of the American Presidency shows at all times its close connection with other institutions. A

treaty or even a nomination by the President requires the ratification of the Senate before it is valid; and on the other side, the President can veto any bill of Congress. Even the Supreme Court and the President can hardly be considered apart, as was seen, for instance, in the time of Cleveland, when his fiscal policy took final shape in an income tax which the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional, and therefore unlawful; or again when the colonial policy of McKinley was upheld and validated by a decision of the same court. Again, the party politics of state and town are no less intimately related to the federal government and the Presidency. Here, too, the leadings are in both directions; local politics condition the national, and these in turn dominate the local. Cleveland was a man who had never played a part in national politics until he became the executive head of the nation. As Mayor of Buffalo he had been so conspicuous throughout the State of New York as to be elected Governor of that state, and then in the state politics so won the confidence of his party as to be nominated and elected to the highest national office. McKinley, on the other hand, although he, too, had been the Governor of a state, nevertheless gained the confidence of his party during his long term of service in Congress.

Similarly it may be said that local politics are the natural path which leads to any national position, whether that of senator or representative. And inversely the great federal problems play an often decisive rôle in the politics of the states with which they strictly have no connection. Federal party lines divide legislatures from the largest to the smallest, and even figure in the municipal elections. Unreasonable as it may seem, it is a fact that the great national questions, such as expansion, free trade, and the gold standard, divide the voters of a small village into opposing groups when they have to elect merely some one to the police or street-cleaning department. It is, therefore, never a question of a mechanical co-ordination and independence of parts, but of an organic interdependence, and every least district of the Union is thoroughly *en rapport* with the central government and doings of the national parties.

There are political parties in every country, but none like the American parties. The English system presents the nearest analogy, with its two great parties, but the similarity is merely superficial and extends to no essential points. Even in the comparison between America and Germany it is not the greater number of the German parties that makes the real difference. For the German his party is in the narrower sense a group of legislators, or, more broadly, these legislators together with the general body of their constituents. The party has in a way concrete reality only in the act of voting and the representation in parliament of certain principles. Of course, even in Germany there exists some organization between the multitude of voters and the small group which they return to the Reichstag. Party directors, who are for the most part the representatives themselves, central committees and local directors, local clubs and assemblies are all necessary to stir up the voters and to attend to various formalities of the election; but no one has dreamt of a horde of professional politicians who are not legislators, of party leaders who are more

powerful than the representative to be elected, or of parties which are stronger than either the parliament or the people. The American party is first of all a closely knit organization with extensive machinery and rigid discipline; to be represented in Congress or legislature is only one of its many objects.

This situation is, however, no accident. One may easily understand the incomparable machinery and irresistible might of the parties, if one but realizes a few of the essential factors in American party life. First, of course, comes the tremendous extent of the field in which the citizens' ballots have the decision. If it were as it is in the German elections to the imperial diet, the American party organization would never have become what it is. But besides the elections to Congress, the state legislatures and local assemblies, there is the direct choice to be made for President, vice-president, governor, the principal state officials and deputies, judges of the appellate court, mayor and city officials, and many others. The entire responsibility falls on the voters, since the doctrine of self-direction ordains that only citizens of the state shall vote for state officials, and of the city for city officers. The governor, unlike an "Oberpräsident," is not appointed by the Government, nor a mayor by any authority outside his city. The voter is nowhere to be politically disburdened of responsibility. But, with the direct suffrage, his sphere of action is only begun. Almost every one of the men he elects has in turn to make further appointments and choices. The members of a state legislature elect senators to Congress, and both governor and mayor name many officials, but most of all, the President has to give out offices from ambassadors and ministers down to village postmasters and light-house keepers, in all of which there is ample chance to put the adherents of one's party in influential positions. Thus the functions of the American voter are incomparably more important and far-reaching than those of the German voter.

But even with this, the political duties of the American citizen in connection with his party are not exhausted. The spirit of self-direction demands the carrying out of a principle which is unknown to the German politician. The choice and nomination of a candidate for election must be made by the same voting public; it must be carried on by the same parliamentary methods, and decided strictly by a majority vote. There are in theory no committees or head officials to relieve the voting public of responsibility, by themselves benignly apportioning the various offices among the candidates. A party may propose but one candidate for each office, whereas there will often be several men within the party who wish to be candidates for the same office, as for instance, that of mayor, city counsellor, or treasurer. In every case the members of a party have to select the official nominee of their party by casting ballots, and thus it may happen that the contest between groups within the party may be livelier than the ultimate battle between the parties.

Now on a large scale such transactions can be no longer carried on directly. All the citizens of the state cannot come together to nominate the party candidate for governor.

For this purpose, therefore, electors have to be chosen, every one by a strict majority vote, and these meet to fix finally on the candidates of the party. And when it comes to the President of the whole country, the voting public elects a congress of electors, and these in turn choose other electors, and this twice-sifted body of delegates meets in national convention to name the candidate whom the party will support in the final, popular elections. Through such a strict programme for nominations the duties of the voters towards their party are just doubled, and it becomes an art considerably beyond the ability of the average citizen to move through this regressive chain of elections without losing his way. It requires, in short, an established and well articulated organization to arrange and conduct the popular convocations, to deliberate carefully on the candidates to be proposed for nomination, and to carry the infinitely complicated and yet unavoidable operations through to their conclusion.

Finally, another factor enters in, which is once more quite foreign to the political life of Germany. Every American election is strictly local, in the sense that the candidate is invariably chosen from among the voters. In Germany, when a provincial city is about to send a representative to the Reichstag, the party in power accounts it a specially favourable circumstance if the candidates are not men of that very city, to suffer the proverbial dishonour of prophets in their own country, and prefers to see on the ballot the names of great party leaders from some other part of the empire. And when Berlin, for example, selects a mayor, the city is glad to call him from Breslau or Königsberg. This is inconceivable to the American. It is a corollary to the doctrine of self-determination that whenever a political district, whether village or city, selects a representative, the citizens shall not only nominate and elect their candidate, but that they shall also choose him from their own midst. But this makes it at once necessary for the party to have its organized branches in every nook and corner of the country. A single central organization graciously to provide candidates for the whole land is not to be thought of. The party organization must be everywhere efficient, and quick to select and weigh for the purposes of the party such material as is at hand. It is obvious that this is a very intricate and exacting task, and that if the organization were sentimental, loose, or undisciplined, it would go to pieces by reason of the personal and other opposing interests which exist within it. And if it were less widely branched or less machine-like in its intricate workings, it would not be able to do its daily work, pick candidates for posts of responsibility, nominate electors, and elect its nominees; and eventually it would sink out of sight. The American political party is thus an essentially complete and independent organization.

Two evils are necessarily occasioned by this invulnerable organization of party activities, both of which are peculiar and of such undoubtedly bad consequences as to strike the most superficial observer, and specially the foreigner; and yet both of which on closer view are seen to be much less serious than one might have supposed at first. After a party has grown up and become well organized in its purpose of representing these or

those political principles and of defending and propagating them, it may at length cease to be only the means to an end, and become an end unto itself. There is the danger that it will come to look on its duties as being nothing else than to keep itself in power, even by denying or opposing the principles with which it has grown up. Moreover, such an organization exacts a colossal amount of labour which must be rewarded in some form or other; and so it will find it expedient, quite apart from the political ideals of the party, to exert its influence in the patronage of state and other offices. The result is that the rewards and honours conferred necessarily draw men into the service of the party who care less for its ideals than for the emoluments they are to derive. And thus two evils spring up together; firstly, the parties lose their principles, and, secondly, take into their service professional politicians who have no principles to lose. We must consider both matters more in detail, the party ideals and the politicians.

America has two great parties, the Republican, which is just now in power, and the Democratic. Other parties, as, for instance, the Populist, are small, and while they may for a while secure a meagre representation in Congress, they are too insignificant to have any chance of success in the presidential elections: although, to be sure, this does not prevent various groups of over-enthusiastic persons from seizing the politically unfitting and impracticable occasion to set up their own presidential candidate as a sort of figure-head. Any political amateur, who finds no place in the official parties, may gather a few friends under his banner and start a new, independent party; but the bubble bursts in a few days. And even if it is a person like Admiral Dewey, whose party banner is the flag under which he has sent an enemy's fleet to the bottom, he will succeed only in being amusing. The regular, organized parties are the only ones which seriously count in politics. It sometimes happens, however, that a few months before the elections a small band of politically or industrially influential men will meet to consider the project of a third party, while their real aim is to create a little organization whose voting power will be coveted by both of the great parties. In this way the founders plan to force one or both of these to make concessions to the principles of their little group, since the most important feature is that Republicans and Democrats are so nearly equally balanced that only a slight force is needed to turn the scales to either side. In recent elections McKinley and Cleveland have each been elected twice to the Presidency, and no one can say whether the next presidential majority will be Republican or Democrat. On Cleveland's second election the Democrats had 5,556,918, and the Republicans 5,176,108 votes, while the Populists made a showing of one million votes. But four years later the tables were turned, and McKinley won on 7,106,199 votes, while Bryan lost on 6,502,685. It is clear, therefore, that neither of the parties has to fear that a third party will elect its candidate; nor can either rest on old laurels, for any remission of effort is a certain victory for the other side. A third party is dangerous only in so far as it is likely to split up one of the two parties and so weaken it in an otherwise almost equal competition.

What, now, are the principles and aims of the Republican and Democratic parties? Their names are not significant, since neither do the Republicans wish to do away with American democracy, nor do the Democrats have any designs on the republican form of government. At the opening of the nineteenth century the present Democrats were called "Democratic-Republicans," and this long abandoned name could just as well be given to all surviving parties. Neither aristocracy nor monarchy nor anarchy nor plutocracy has ever so far appeared on a party programme, and however hotly the battle may be waged between Republicans and Democrats, it is forever certain that both opponents are at once Democrats and Republicans. Wherein, then, do they differ?

The true party politician of America does not philosophize overmuch about the parties; it is enough for him that one party has taken or is likely to take this, and the other party that position on the living questions, and beyond this his interest is absorbed by special problems. He is reluctant enough when it comes to taking up the nicer question of deducing logically from the general principles of a party what attitude it ought to take on this or that special issue. The nearest he would come to this would be conversely to point out that the attitude of his opponents directly refutes their party's most sacred doctrines. Those who philosophize are mostly outsiders, either sojourners in the country, or indigenous critics who are considerably more alive to the unavoidable evils of party politics than to the merits. From such opponents of parties as well as from foreigners, one hears again and again that the parties do not really stand for any general principles at the present time, that their separate existence has lost whatever political significance it may have had, and that to-day they are merely two organizations preserving a semblance of individuality and taking such attitude toward the issues of the day as is likely to secure the largest number of votes, in order to distribute among their members the fruits of victory. The present parties, say these critics, were formed in that struggle of intellectual forces which took place during the third quarter of the last century; it was the dispute over slavery which led to the Civil War. The Republican party was the party of the Northern States in their anti-slavery zeal; the Democratic was the party of the slave-holding Southern States; and the opposition had political significance as long as the effects of the war lasted, and it was necessary to work for the conciliation and renewed participation of the defeated Confederacy. But all this is long past. Harrison, Cleveland, Blaine, Bryan, McKinley, and Roosevelt became the standard-bearers of their respective parties long after the wounds of the war had healed. And it is no outcome from the original, distinguishing principles of the parties, if the slave-holding party takes the side of free-trade, silver currency and anti-imperialism, while the anti-slavery elements stay together in behalf of the gold standard, protection, and expansion.

It looks, rather, as if the doctrines had migrated each to the other's habitat. The party which was against slavery was supporting the rights of the individual; how comes it, then, to be bitterly opposing the freedom of trade? And how do the friends of slavery happen to champion the cause of free-trade, or, more remarkably, to oppose so passionately to-day

the oppression of the people of the Philippines? And what have these questions to do with the monetary standard? It looks as if the organization had become a body without a soul. Each party tries to keep the dignity of its historic traditions and at every new juncture bobs and ducks before the interests and prejudices of its habitual clientèle, while it seeks to outwit the opposite party by popular agitation against persistent wrongs and abuses or by new campaign catch-words and other devices. But there is no further thought of consistently standing by any fundamental principles. This hap-hazard propping up of the party programme is evinced by the fact that either party is divided on almost every question, and the preference of the majority becomes the policy of the party only through the strict discipline and suppression of the minority. The Republicans won in their campaign for imperialism, and yet no anti-imperialist raised his voice more loudly than the Republican Senator Hoar. The Democrats acclaimed the silver schemes of Bryan, but the Gold Democrats numbered on their side really all the best men of the party. Again, on other important issues both parties will adopt the same platform as soon as they see that the masses are bound to vote that way. Thus neither party will openly come out for trusts, but both parties boast of deprecating them; and both profess likewise to uphold civil-service reform. This is so much the case that it has often been observed that within a wide range the programmes of the two parties in no way conflict. One party extols that which the other has never opposed, and the semblance of a difference is kept up only by such insistent vociferation of the policy as implies some sly and powerful gainsayer. And then with the same histrionic rage comes the other party and pounces on some scandal which the first had never thought of sanctioning. In short, there are no parties to-day but the powerful election organizations which have no other end in view than to come into power at whatever cost. It should seem better wholly to give up the outlived issues, and to have only independent candidates who, without regard to party pressure, would be grouped according to their attitude on the chief problems of the day.

And yet, after the worst has thus been said, we find ourselves still far removed from the facts. Each separate charge may be true, but the whole be false and misleading: even although many a party adherent admits the justness of the characterization, and declares that the party must decide every case "on its merits," and that to hold to principles is inexpedient in politics. For the principles exist, nevertheless, and have existed, and they dominate mightily the great to and fro of party movements. Just as there have always been persons who pretend to deduce the entire history of Europe from petty court intrigues and jealousies of the ante-room or the boudoir, so there will always be wise-heads in America to see through party doings, and deduce everything from the speculative manipulations of a couple of banking houses or the private schemes of a sugar magnate or a silver king. Such explanations never go begging for a credulous public, since mankind has a deep-rooted craving to see lowness put on exhibition. No man is a hero, it is said, in the eyes of his valet. Nations, too, have their valets; and with them, too, the fact is not that there are no heroes, but that a valet can see only with the eyes of a valet.

It is true that the party lines of to-day have developed from the conflicting motives of the Civil War. But the fundamental error which prevents all insight into the deeper connections, lies in supposing that the anti-slavery party was first inspired by the individual fate of the negro, or in general the freedom of the individual. We must recall some of the facts of history. The question of slavery did not make its first appearance in the year 1860, when the Republican party became important. The contrast between the plantation owners of the South, to whom slave labour was apparently indispensable, and the industry and trade of the North, which had no need of slaves, had existed from the beginning of the century and was in itself no reason for the formation of political parties. It was mainly an economic question which, together with many other factors, led to a far-reaching opposition between the New England States and the South, an opposition which was strengthened, to be sure, by the moral scruples of the Puritanical North. But the earlier parties were not marked off by degrees of latitude, and furthermore the Southerner was by no means lacking in personal sympathy for the negro. The question first came into politics indirectly. It was in those years when the Union was pushing out into the West, taking in new territories and then making them into states by act of Congress, according to the provisions of the Constitution. In 1819 the question came up of admitting Missouri to the Union, and now for the first time Congress faced the problem as to whether slavery should be allowed in a new state. The South wished it and the North opposed it. Congress finally decided that Missouri should be a slave state, but that in the future slavery should be forbidden north of a certain geographical line. Thus slavery came to be recognized as a question within the jurisdiction of the federal Congress. Wherewith, if Congress should vote against slavery by a sufficient majority, it could forbid the practice in all the Southern states. And this would mean their ruin.

It came thus to be for the interest of the Southern states, which at that time had a majority, to see to it that for every free state admitted to the Union there should be at least one new slave state; this in order to hold their majority in Congress. Now it happened at that time that the territories which, by reason of their population, would have next to be admitted, lay all north of the appointed boundary and would, therefore, be free states. Therefore the slave-holders promulgated the theory that Congress had exceeded its jurisdiction and interfered with the rights of the individual states. The matter was brought before the Supreme Court, and in 1857 a verdict was given which upheld the new theory. Thus Congress, that is, the Union as a whole, could not forbid slavery in any place, but must leave the matter for each state to decide. Herewith an important political issue was created, and a part of the country stood out for the rights of the Union, a part for those of the individual states. The group of men who at that time foresaw that the whole Union was threatened, if so far-reaching rights were to be conceded to the states, was the Republican party. It rose up defiantly for the might and right of the federation, and would not permit one of the most important social and economic questions to be taken out of the hands of the central government and left to local choice. It was, of

course, not a matter of chance that slavery became the occasion of dispute, but the real question at issue was the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. The federal party won, under the leadership of Abraham Lincoln. His election was the signal for the slave states to secede, South Carolina being the first. In February, 1861, these states formed a Confederation, and the Union was formally cleft. In his inaugural speech of the following March, Lincoln firmly declared that the Union must be preserved at all cost. The Civil War began in April, and after fearful fighting the secessionists were returned to the Union, all slaves were freed, and the Southern states were reconstructed after the ideas of the Republican party. The opposing party, the Democratic, was the party of decentralization. Its programme was the freedom of the individual state but not the servitude of the individual man.

When one understands in this way the difference between the two parties, one sees that the Republicans were not for freedom nor the Democrats for slavery, but the Republicans were for a more complete subordination of the states to the federation and the Democrats were for the converse. This is a very different point of view, and from it very much which seems incompatible with the attitude of the two parties toward the question of slavery may now be seen as a necessary historical consequence.

If we cast a glance at foregoing decades, we see that ever since the early days of the republic there has been hardly a time when these two forces, the centralizing and the decentralizing, have not been in play. It has lain deep in the nature of Teutonic peoples to pull apart from one another, while at the same time the struggle for existence has forced them to strong and well unified organization, so that scarcely a single Teutonic people has been spared that same opposition of social forces which is found in America. The origin of the Constitution itself can be understood only with reference to these antagonistic tendencies. The country wanted to be free of the miserable uncertainty, the internal discord and outward weakness which followed the Declaration of Independence; it wanted the strength of unity. And yet every single state guarded jealously its own rights, suspected every other state, and wished to be ensured against any encroachment of the federal power. And so the Constitution was drawn up with special precautions ensuring the equilibrium of power. At once, in Washington's cabinet, both tendencies were distinctly and notably represented. There sat the distinguished Hamilton, the minister of finance and framer of the Constitution, who was a tireless champion of the federal spirit, and beside him sat Jefferson, the minister of state, who would have preferred to have the federation transact nothing but foreign affairs and who believed in general the less the legislation the better for the people. The adherents of Hamilton's policy formed the federalist party, while Jefferson's supporters were called the Democratic Republicans. The names have changed and the special issues have altered with the progress of events; indeed, apparently the centralist party has gone twice out of existence, yet it was actually this party of which Lincoln became the leader. Jefferson's party, on the other hand, in spite of its change of name, has never as an organization

ceased to exist. The Democrats who, in 1860, wished to submit the question of slavery to the individual states, were the immediate heirs of the anti-federalists who had elected their first president in 1800.

Now if the centralizing and decentralizing character of the two parties is borne in mind, their further development down to the present day can be understood. This development seems disconnected and contradictory only when the slavery question is thought to be the main feature and the Republicans are accounted the champions of freedom and the Democrats of slavery. Even Bryce, who has furnished by far the best account of the American party system, underestimates somewhat the inner continuity of the parties. Even he believes that the chief mission of the Republican party has been to do away with slavery and to reconstruct the Southern states, and that since this end was accomplished as far back as in the seventies, new parties ought naturally to have been formed by this time. Although the old organizations have in fact persisted, a certain vagueness and lack of vitality can be detected, he says, in both parties. According to that conception, however, it would be incomprehensible why those who formerly went forth to put an end to slavery now advance to bring the Filipinos into subjection, and to detain the poor man from purchasing his necessities where they are the cheapest.

As we have seen, the Democrats were the party which was true to the Jeffersonian principles, and in opposition to the supporters of congressional authority defended the rights and free play of the individual states. And the Republicans were those who wished to exalt beyond any other the authority of the Federal Government. This is the key to everything which has since come to pass. At the last presidential elections there were three great party issues—the tariff, the currency, and the question of expansion. In deciding on all three of these points, the parties have conformed to their old principles. Free-trade versus protective tariff was not a new bone of contention. Jefferson's party had urged free-trade with all the nations of the earth at the very beginning of the century, and, of course, a decentralizing party which likes as little supervision and paternalism as possible, will always concede to the individual his right to buy what he requires where it will cost the least. The Democrats did not oppose a tariff for revenue, to help defray the public expenses, but they objected on principle to that further tariff which was laid on goods in order to keep the prices of them high and so to protect home industries. The centralists, that is, the whigs or the Republicans, on the contrary, by their supreme confidence in the one national government, had early been led to expect from it a certain protection of the national market and some regulation of the economic struggle for existence. And protective tariff was one of the main planks in their platform early in the century.

It is clear, once more, that the anti-centralists had a direct and natural interest in the small man, his economic weaknesses and burdens; every member of society must have equal right and opportunity to work out his career. It does not contradict this that the

Democrats believed in slavery. In the Southern states the negro had come in the course of generations to be looked on as property, as a possession to be held and utilized in a special way, and any feeling of personal responsibility was of a patriarchal and not a political nature. The peculiarly democratic element in the position taken was the demand that the slavery question be left with the separate states to decide. As soon as fellow citizens were concerned, the anti-centralist party held true to its principles of looking out for the members on the periphery of society. In this way the party favoured the progressive income tax, and has always espoused any cause which would assist the working-man against the superior force of protected capital, or the farmer against the machinations of the stock market. The exaggerated notions as to the silver standard of currency originated outside of the Democratic party, and have intrinsically nothing to do with democracy. But as soon as a considerable part of the people from one cause or another began really to believe that nothing but a silver currency could relieve the condition of the artisans and farmers, it became logically necessary for the party which opposed centralization to adopt and foster this panacea, however senseless it might seem to the more thoughtful elements within the party. And it was no less necessary for the party which upholds federal authority to oppose unconditionally anything which would endanger the coinage and credit of the country. The gold standard is specifically a Republican doctrine only when it is understood to repudiate and oppose all risky experimenting with bimetallism.

In the new imperialistic movement, on the other hand, it was the Democrats who were put on the defensive. Any one who leans toward individualism must instinctively lean away from militarism, which makes for strength at the centre; from aggressive movements to annex new lands, whereby the owners are deprived of their natural rights to manage their own affairs, and from any meddling with international politics, for this involves necessarily increased discretionary powers for the central government. It is not that the Democrats care less for the greatness of their fatherland, but they despise that jingo patriotism which abandons the traditions of the country by bringing foreign peoples into subjection. It is left for the centralists to meet the new situation squarely, undertake new responsibilities, and convince the nation that it is strong and mature enough now to play a decisive rôle in the politics of the world. And thus the two great parties are by no manner of means two rudderless derelicts carried hither and thither by the currents ever since the Civil War, but, rather, great three-deckers following without swerve their appointed courses.

The parties have sometimes been distinguished as conservative and liberal, but this is rather a reminiscence of conditions in Europe. Both of the parties are really conservative, as results from both the American character and the nature of the party organization. Even in the most radical Democratic gathering the great appeal is never made in behalf of some advantageous or brilliant innovation but on the grounds of adherence to the old, reliable, and well-nigh sacred party principles. If either party is at present departing from

the traditions of the past, it is the Republican party, which has always figured as the more conservative of the two. Yet such a distinction is partly true, since the centralists in conformity to their principles must specially maintain the Federal authority and precedent, while the Democratic party is more naturally inclined to give ear to discontented spirits, clever innovators, and fantastic reformers, lest some decentralizing energy should be suppressed. So the Republican party gains a fundamental and cheerful complacence with the prevailing order of things, while the Democratic party, even when it is in power, can never come quite to rest. The contrast is not that between rich and poor; the Democratic party has its quota of millionaires, and the Republican has, for instance, in its negro clientage many of the poorest in the land. But the Republican party is filled with self-satisfaction and the consciousness of power and success, while the Democrats are forever measuring the actual according to an ideal which can never be realized. Like all centralists, the Republicans are essentially opportunists and matter-of-fact politicians; and the Democrats, like all anti-centralists, are idealists and enthusiasts. It has been well said that a Democratic committee is conducted like a debating club, but a Republican like a meeting of the stockholders in a corporation.

These facts clearly hint at a certain personal factor which influences the citizen's allegiance to one or other of the parties. In meeting a man on a journey one has very soon the impression, though one may often be mistaken, as to what party he belongs to, although he may not have spoken a word about politics. But more distinctive than the personal bias are the groupings by classes and regions which have come about during the course of time. In the North and West the Republicans have the majority among the educated classes, but in the South the educated people are Democrats, particularly since the negro population there holds to the old abolition party, so that the whites are the more ready to be on the other side. The lower classes are moved by the most diverse motives; the farmer is inclined to be Republican and the artisan of the cities Democratic; Protestants are more often Republicans and Catholics Democrats, a partition which began with the early identification of the Puritan clergy of New England with the Republican party. This resulted in an affiliation of Catholicism and Democracy which has had very important consequences, particularly in municipal politics; the Irish, who are invariably Catholics, vote with the Democratic party. The Germans and Swedes, specially in the West, are mostly Republicans. In these ways the most complicated combinations have come about, particularly in the Middle West, where many of the larger states are always uncertain at election time. In the elections of the State of New York, the Democrats and Republicans have been alternately successful. Very often the capital city votes differently from the rural districts, as in Massachusetts, which is a stalwart Republican state, although Boston, owing to the Irish population, is Democratic.