

I know that the great throbbing heart of these great American cities would respond with lavish generosity to appeals for needed help, whether that help were intended to alleviate Eastern or Western, Northern or Southern woe. But, sir, it is a characteristic of human intellects, however vast their capabilities, and though their every fibre were strength and honesty, to be more or less receptive of the influences around them. Let us recognize this truth in dealing with this great issue. Let us not indulge in criminations and recriminations. Let us not by speech erect walls of prejudice and passion between sections or classes, but let us recognize the sincerity of all, the patriotism of all, the intelligence of all, and after sifting the arguments and weighing the suggestions of all, determine the best policy for the prosperity of all.

WAYNE MACVEAGH

WAYNE MACVEAGH, American lawyer, politician, and diplomat, was born at Phoenixville, Pa., April 19, 1833, and graduated at Yale College in 1853. Three years later, he was admitted to the Bar, and from 1859 until 1864 was district attorney of Chester County, Pa. During the war, when the Confederate forces threatened to invade Pennsylvania, he served as captain of infantry. In 1863, he was chairman of the Pennsylvania Republican State Committee. In 1870, he was appointed United States minister to Turkey, and on his return served for two years as a member of the Pennsylvania Constitutional Convention. In 1877, he was head of the so-called MacVeagh commission sent to Louisiana to adjust party troubles in that State. During the Presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes, he was United States attorney-general, but in 1881 he resigned and resumed the practice of his profession at Philadelphia, supporting in the following year Grover Cleveland for the Presidency. From 1893 until 1897, he was ambassador to Italy, and on his return settled at Washington, D. C. He has taken an active interest in reform movements, having been chairman of the Civil Service Reform Association of Philadelphia, and also of the Indian Rights Association.

IDEALS IN AMERICAN POLITICS

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THE yearly observance of academic festivals in America has always seemed to me to be one of the most gracious and the most useful of the time-honored customs of our national life. They bring us together in the full beauty of our midsummer, with its wealth of fragrance and of bloom; and, while persuading us to lay aside the anxious cares, the absorbing pursuits, the engrossing ambitions which so easily beset us and fill far too large a part of our daily lives, they enable us to breathe a purer and serener air, to refresh ourselves with unaccustomed joys and a nobler reach of

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vision, and to live through these days of June less in the spirit of the age and more in the spirit of the ages.

Such an occasion is inspiring alike to the older alumni and to the younger. It is inspiring to those of us who in serenity of spirit bring hither a long retrospect of a life of labor passed in fairly good ways and in works which, if not filled with benediction, have been at least reasonably free from harm to our fellow men.

It is inspiring also to the ardent graduates of yesterday, who are just crossing the threshold which divides youth from manhood, and have before them a long prospect of days yet to be passed, let us hope, in ways and works at least equally free from blame—a prospect now seen through

"Magic casements opening on the foam
Of perilous seas in faëry lands."

And such a festival at the seat of this ancient and honored university is necessarily fraught with the buoyant and generous hopefulness born of her splendid history. In the grateful shade of these old elms, surrounded by these noble halls dedicated to the culture alike of character and of intelligence, the history of Harvard unrolls itself as on a golden page as we follow the slow procession of the fruitful years from its small beginnings to its present measure of renown and usefulness.

It is indeed impossible to measure the measureless bounty of this seat of liberal learning in that long interval to America. We cannot even recount the names of her illustrious dead, the priests and the poets, the scholars and the statesmen, the jurists and the soldiers, who received here for the first time the sign of the cross upon their foreheads, consecrating them as servants of mankind unto their life's end.

This uplifting work for the nation has gone steadily on,

with ever-widening influence, to its present yearly contribution of great numbers of young men of generous training and a high sense of duty, fitted to teach by precept and by example a nobler standard of life to their less fortunate brothers; for four years spent here at that period of life when the mind is most open to elevating impressions cannot fail to imbue them with unfaltering loyalty to their alma mater, and with a noble pride in what she has been and what she has done,—in her lasting contributions to scholarship, and to literature, her generous culture, her catholic toleration of all seekers after truth, and her ineffable charm for all her sons.

It seems to me there is no better work to be done at present by an American university than to again unseal those fountains of idealism where the human spirit has so often refreshed itself when weary of a too material age, to reawaken that enthusiasm for the moral law which we have all somehow lost, and to impress upon a people essentially noble, but now too deeply absorbed in the pursuit of wealth for wealth's sake, the advantages which the cherishing of ethical ideals may bring to all of us, even to those who pride themselves, above all things, upon being practical. It is for that reason that I venture to ask you to consider, during the time at our disposal, the value of such ideals in American politics.

While we must, of course, always insist upon the one vital distinction between true and false American patriotism, recognizing only as true that which possesses the ethical spirit, and rejecting as false that which does not possess it, we must also recognize that such a subject can be properly discussed only with that liberal and catholic feeling which makes the amplest allowances for difference of opinion; and upon an academic occasion like the present all discussion should be in a spirit

even more liberal and more catholic than might otherwise be necessary, crediting all others with the same patriotism we claim for ourselves, and displaying a charity satisfying the apostolic definition, which vaunteth not itself, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and yet rejoiceth in the truth.

It is assuredly the part of wisdom to recognize an existing situation with equal frankness whether it happens to meet our approval or our disapproval. Among the many wise sayings of Bishop Butler none was wiser than his declaring that "things are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be"; and his question, like that of Pilate, has never been answered, "Why, then, should we, as rational creatures, seek to deceive ourselves?"

There is therefore no reason why we should not cheerfully admit that the controlling consideration in the immediate present is that of money, and that the controlling aspiration of the vast majority of men who have received more or less of intellectual training is to follow Iago's advice and put money in their purses. In thus frankly confronting existing conditions it is not at all necessary to be depressed by them or to acquire "a moping melancholy."

There is, indeed, a sheer delusion cherished by unintelligent people, of which it is desirable that they should free their minds. They stupidly imagine that whoever finds fault with existing conditions in American society must necessarily think the past age better than the present; but the exact contrary is the truth. It is because we know, and are glad to know, that there has been a steady progress, alike in spiritual and material blessings, since men first lived in civilized society together, that we so earnestly desire such progress to continue.

We appreciate with cheerful thankfulness that the vast ma-

jority of mankind are now living in far happier conditions, possess far better guarantees of liberty and peace, and are more fully enjoying the indispensable conditions of any life worth living than ever before; but this conviction only makes us the more ardently desire that that progress should not now be stayed, but rather should be continued and with ever-accelerated speed, and our discontent is only with the unnecessary obstacles to such continuance and acceleration.

The men who desire the world to be better than it is contemplate with abundant pleasure the promise of the new century, opening, in spite of all its serious drawbacks, upon a brighter prospect for that religion of humanity which preceded it, and it is because they know that each succeeding century of the Christian era has been better than its predecessor that they are impatient of any apparent relaxation of that progress, and they are quite as often amused as annoyed by the very stupid apologies offered them for such relaxation.

The human spirit has in different ages and in different countries devoted itself to varying aims and objects: to religion, as in Palestine; to art and letters, as in Greece; to arms and law, as in Rome; to the aggrandizement of the Church, as in Italy in the Middle Ages; to maintaining the Protestant religion, as in Germany after the revolt of Luther; and in America to the doctrine of liberty and equality among men, ever since the landing at Jamestown; and it has been found entirely compatible with the divine order in the education of the world, and not at all disastrous to the welfare of the race, that different nations should cherish such wholly different aspirations, for the pursuit of each object has in almost every case been found to furnish a basis for further progress in good directions.

The fact, therefore, that this age is devoted to the making of

money as its chief ambition need not disturb us, for it is not at all certain that any better ambition could have been found at this time for the class of men engaged in practical business. It may, indeed, well happen that their labors are laying enduring foundations for far nobler standards of conduct, of effort, and of life than we are now enjoying; and, while it is true that so far these results have not been apparent, it is equally true that it is far too soon to expect them. In saying this I do not forget that Cicero declared that a general desire of gain would ruin any wealthy and flourishing nation, but I do not forget either that Mr. Burke, a far safer guide in the philosophy of politics than Cicero, declared that the love of gain is a grand cause of prosperity to all States.

Assuming, therefore, that we must deal with conditions as they exist, and present considerations likely to be acceptable to those to whom they are addressed, I have thought it might be useful to call the attention of our men of business to the commercial value of ethical ideas in American politics. If it is possible to satisfy them that the cherishing of such ideals may be of pecuniary advantage—may be, in truth, treated as a commercial asset—they may appreciate the wisdom of ceasing their efforts to destroy them, and may be persuaded to help in the good work of maintaining them and of extending their beneficent influence.

It would, of course, be foolish to undervalue the animosity men of practical business and men of practical politics now cherish toward such ideals. They insist—and I have no reason to doubt they honestly believe—that neither the business of the world nor its politics can now be successfully carried on if any respect is to be paid to such ideals.

A prosperous man is said to have recently declared that he had a great dislike for pessimists, and when asked what kind

of people they were, he replied: "The people who are always talking of the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, when everybody of sense knows you cannot conduct business or politics with reference to them." "Anyhow," he added, "my pastor assures me they were only addressed to Jews."

It is a part of the creed of such men that the substitution of money for morals is the only wise course for practical men to pursue in these days of ardent competition and of strenuous efforts by each man to get rich faster than his fellows and at their expense; but this belief is probably in great part founded upon a total misapprehension of the character of the idealism which it is desired to recommend to their favorable consideration. They have persuaded themselves that we wish to insist upon the immediate practical application of the standards of conduct of a far-distant and imagined perfection,—that if a person invades your household and takes your coat you shall now follow him upon the highway and beg him to accept your cloak also; and if a reckless assailant smites you upon one cheek you must now offer him the other for a like blow; while if you insist upon the wickedness of unnecessary or aggressive warfare you are supposed to imply that righteous warfare, animated by a noble purpose and struggling to attain a noble end, is unjustifiable.

What we ask is nothing impracticable or unreasonable. It is only that we shall return to the ancient ways of the fathers and again enjoy the elevation of spirit which was part of their daily lives. They were, as we ought to be, far from being blind to material advantages and far enough from being willing to live as idle enthusiasts. "Give me neither property nor riches" was their prayer, with an emphasis upon "poverty." They sought, as we do, to acquire property. They

meant, as we mean, to get what comfort and enjoyment they could out of the possession of the world in which they worked and worshipped, and they felt themselves, as we ought to feel ourselves, co-workers with God when "the orchard was planted and the wild vine tamed, when the English fruits had been domesticated under the shadow of savage forests, and the maize lifted its shining ranks upon the fields which had been barren."

Surely there can be nothing impracticable, nothing un-American in striving to persuade ourselves again to cherish the lofty, inspiring, transforming, ethical ideals which prevailed at the birth of our country and have illumined, as with celestial light, the fiery ridges of every battle in which her sons have died for liberty.

Unhappily there is no immediate danger even of the most distant approach to a realization of such ideals—no alarming prospect that the noble conditions of human life such ideals encourage will too soon brighten the earth. They will probably always remain unattainable; but they are none the less always worth striving for and hoping for, and it is as certain as anything can be that to keep such ethical ideals constantly before the minds of the plain people born in America, as well as before the minds of the hordes of untaught immigrants who are flocking to our shores from every quarter of the globe, will have a tendency to soften their asperities, to lessen their animosities, and to encourage them to bear with greater patience the bitter and ever-growing contrast between the lives of idleness and luxury which we and those dear to us are privileged to lead, and the lives of labor and poverty which they and those equally dear to them are condemned to endure; for there is now no longer any pathway open by which many men who live upon the labor of their own hands can

hope to pass into the class of those who live upon the labor of other men's hands.

The stock certificate and the corporate bond, in return for their many conveniences, have destroyed that possibility, as well as wrought other serious evils to society in divorcing the possession of wealth not only from all moral responsibility for the ways in which it is created, but even from all knowledge of the men and women whose toil creates it.

It is not difficult to understand why the free government under which we are privileged to live especially needs the influence of ethical ideals in the conduct of life, or why we may possibly incur danger if we are without the protecting and conservative influence of such ideals in that not-distant future when we may find them indispensable; for the essential difference which separates American democracy from the governments which have preceded it, as well as from those which are contemporary with it, is in the last analysis an ethical difference.

The three hundred Greeks who on that long summer day held the pass by the sea against the Persian invader were seeking to hold it for Greece alone. The splendid valor of the Roman soldiers who encompassed Cæsar as with triple lines of steel on the day he overcame the Nervii was a valor displayed for Rome alone. Even the long, heroic struggle of the Netherlands against the despotism of Philip, perhaps the most heroic struggle in history, was primarily a struggle for their own liberties.

The same absence of any ethical ideal runs through all the aggressions of the great Powers of Europe. In the seizure of India by the agency of Clive and Hastings, and the cynical acceptance of the unutterable infamies they perpetrated, as well as in exploiting that unhappy country to-