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DARKWATER

Voices from within the Veil

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
MANNING MARABLE



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The princess stepped forward.

The king grasped his sword and looked north and east; he raised his sword and looked south and west.

"I seek the sun," the princess sang, and started into the west.

"Never!" cried the king of Yonder Kingdom, "for such were blasphemy and defilement and the making of all evil."

So, raising his great sword he struck with all his might, and more. Down hissed the blow and it bit that little, white, heart-holding hand until it flew armless and disbodied up through the sunlit air. Down hissed the blow and it clove the whimpering hound until his last shriek shook the stars. Down hissed the blow and it rent the earth. It trembled, fell apart, and yawned to a chasm wide as earth from heaven, deep as hell, and empty, cold, and silent.

On yonder distant shore blazed the mighty Empire of the Sun in warm and blissful radiance, while on this side, in shadows cold and dark, gloomed the Hither Isles and the hill that once was golden, but now was green and slimy dross; all below was the sad and moaning sea, while between the Here and There flew the severed hand and dripped the bleeding heart.

Then up from the soul of the princess welled a cry of dark despair,—such a cry as only babe-raped mothers know and murdered loves. Poised on the crumbling edge of that great nothingness the princess hung, hungering with her eyes and straining her fainting ears against the awful splendor of the sky.

Out from the slime and shadows groped the king, thundering: "Back—don't be a fool!"

But down through the thin ether thrilled the still and throbbing warmth of heaven's sun, whispering "Leap!"

And the princess leapt.

IV

OF WORK AND WEALTH

FOR FIFTEEN years I was a teacher of youth. They were years out of the fullness and bloom of my younger manhood. They were years mingled of half breathless work, of anxious self-questionings, of planning and replanning, of disillusion, or mounting wonder.

The teacher's life is a double one. He stands in a certain fear. He tends to be stilted, almost dishonest, veiling himself before those awful eyes. Not the eyes of Almighty God are so straight, so penetrating, so all-seeing as the wonder-swept eyes of youth. You walk into a room: to the left is a tall window, bright with colors of crimson and gold and sunshine. Here are rows of books and there is a table. Sombre blackboards clothe the walls to the right and beside your desk is the delicate ivory of a nobly cast head. But you see nothing of this: you see only a silence and eyes,—fringed, soft eyes; hard eyes; eyes great and small; eyes here so poignant with beauty that the sob struggles in your throat; eyes there so hard with sorrow that laughter wells up to meet and beat it back; eyes through which the mockery and ridicule of hell or some pulse of high heaven may suddenly flash. Ah! That mighty pause before the class,—that orison and benediction—how much of my life it has been and made.

I fought earnestly against posing before my class. I tried to be natural and honest and frank, but it was a bitter hard. What would you say to a soft, brown face, aureoled in a thousand ripples of gray-black hair, which knells suddenly: "Do you trust white people?" You do not and you know that you do not, much as you want to; yet you rise and lie and say you do; you must say it for her salvation and the world's; you repeat that she must trust them, that most white folks are honest, and all the while you are lying and every level, silent eye there knows you are lying, and miserably you sit and lie on, to the greater glory of God.

I taught history and economics and something called "sociology" at Atlanta University, where, as our Mr. Webster used to say, we professors occupied settees and not mere chairs. I was fortunate with this teaching in having vivid in the minds of my pupils a concrete social problem of which we all were parts and which we desperately desired to solve. There was little danger, then, of my teaching or of their thinking becoming purely theoretical. Work and wage were thrilling realities to us all. What did we study? I can tell you best by taking a concrete human case, such as was continually leaping to our eyes and thought and demanding understanding and interpretation and what I could bring of prophecy.

St. Louis sprawls where mighty rivers meet,—as broad as Philadelphia, but three stories high instead of two, with wider streets and dirtier atmosphere, over the dull-brown of wide, calm rivers. The city overflows into the valleys of Illinois and lies there, writhing under its grimy cloud. The other city is dusty and hot beyond all dream,—a feverish Pittsburgh in the Mississippi Valley—a great, ruthless, terrible thing! It is the sort that crushes man and invokes some living superman,—a giant of things done, a clang of awful accomplishment.

Three men came wandering across this place. They were neither kings nor wise men, but they came with every significance—perhaps even greater—than that which the kings bore in the days of old. There was one who came from the North,—brawny and riotous with energy, a man of concentrated power, who held all the thunderbolts of modern capital in his great fists and made flour and meat, iron and steel, curing chemicals, wood, paint and paper, transforming to endless tools a disemboweled earth. He was one who saw nothing, knew nothing, sought nothing but the making and buying of that which sells; who out from the magic of his hand rolled over miles of iron road, ton upon ton of food and metal and wood, of coal and oil and lumber, until the thronging of knotted ways in East and real St. Louis was like the red, festering ganglia of some mighty heart.

Then from the East and called by the crash of thunderbolts and forked-flame came the Unwise Man,—unwise by the theft of endless ages, but as human as anything God ever made. He was the slave for the miracle maker. It was he that the thunderbolts struck and electrified into gasping energy. The rasp of his hard breathing shook the midnights of all this endless valley and the pulse of his powerful arms set the great nation to trembling.

And then, at last, out of the South, like a still, small voice, came the third man,—black, with great eyes and greater memories; hesitantly eager and yet with the infinite softness and ancient calm which come

from that eternal race whose history is not the history of a day, but of endless ages. Here, surely, was fit meeting-place for these curiously intent forces, for these epoch-making and age-twisting forces, for these human feet on their super-human errands.

Yesterday I rode in East St. Louis. It is the kind of place one quickly recognizes,—tireless and with no restful green of verdure; hard and uneven of street; crude, cold, and even hateful of aspect; conventional, of course, in its business quarter, but quickly beyond one sees the ruts and the hollows, the stench of ill-tamed sewerage, unguarded railroad crossings, saloons outnumbering churches and churches catering to saloons; homes impudently strait and new, prostitutes free and happy, gamblers in paradise, the town "wide open," shameless and frank; great factories pouring out stench, filth, and flame—these and all other things so familiar in the world market places, where industry triumphs over thought and products overwhelm men. May I tell, too, how yesterday I rode in this city past flame-swept walls and over gray ashes; in streets almost wet with blood and beside ruins, where the bones of dead men new-bleached peered out at me in sullen wonder?

Across the river, in the greater city, where bronze St. Louis,—that just and austere king—looks with angry, fear-swept eyes down from the rolling heights of Forest Park, which knows him not nor heeds him, there is something of the same thing, but this city is larger and older and the forces of evil have had some curbing from those who have seen the vision and panted for life; but eastward from St. Louis there is a land of no taxes for great industries; there is a land where you may buy grafting politicians at far less rate than you would pay for franchises or privileges in a modern town. There, too, you may escape the buying of indulgences from the great terminal fist, which squeezes industry out of St. Louis. In fact, East St. Louis is a paradise for high and frequent dividends and for the piling up of wealth to be spent in St. Louis and Chicago and New York and when the world is sane again, across the seas.

So the Unwise Men pouring out of the East,—falling, scrambling, rushing into America at the rate of a million a year,—ran, walked, and crawled to this maelstrom of the workers. They garnered higher wage than ever they had before, but not all of it came in cash. A part, and an insidious part, was given to them transmuted into whiskey, prostitutes, and games of chance. They laughed and disported themselves. God! Had not their mothers wept enough? It was a good town. There was no veil of hypocrisy here, but a wickedness, frank, ungilded, and open. To be sure, there were things sometimes to reveal the basic savagery and thin veneer. Once, for instance, a man was lynched for brawling on the public square of the county seat; once a mayor who sought to "clean up" was publicly assassinated; always there was theft and rumors of theft,

until St. Clair County was a hissing in good men's ears, but always, too, there were good wages and jolly hoodlums and unchecked wassail of Saturday nights. Gamblers, big and little, rioted in East St. Louis. The little gamblers used cards and roulette wheels and filched the weekly wage of the workers. The greater gamblers used meat and iron and undid the foundations of the world. All the gods of chance flaunted their wild raiment here, above the brown flood of the Mississippi.

Then the world changed; then civilization, built for culture, rebuilt itself for wilful murder in Europe, Asia, America, and the Southern Seas. Hands that made food made powder, and iron for railways was iron for guns. The wants of common men were forgotten before the groan of giants. Streams of gold, lost from the world's workers, filtered and trickled into the hands of gamblers and put new power into the thunderbolts of East St. Louis.

Wages had been growing before the World War. Slowly but remorselessly the skilled and intelligent, banding themselves, had threatened the coffers of the mighty, and slowly the mighty had disgorged. Even the common workers, the poor and unlettered, had again and again gripped the sills of the city walls and pulled themselves to their chins; but, alas! there were so many hands and so many mouths and the feet of the Disinherited kept coming across the wet paths of the sea to this old El Dorado.

War brought subtle changes. Wages stood still while prices fattened. It was not that the white American worker was threatened with starvation, but it was what was, after all, a more important question, — whether or not he should lose his front-room and victrola and even the dream of a Ford car. There came a whirling and scrambling among the workers, — they fought each other; they climbed on each others' backs. The skilled and intelligent, banding themselves even better than before, bargained with the men of might and held them by bitter threats; the less skilled and more ignorant seethed at the bottom and tried, as of old, to bring it about that the ignorant and unlettered should learn to stand together against both capital and skilled labor.

It was here that there came out of the East a beam of unearthly light, — a triumph of possible good in evil so strange that the workers hardly believed it. Slowly they saw the gates of Ellis Island closing, slowly the footsteps of the yearly million men became fainter and fainter, until the stream of immigrants overseas was stopped by the shadow of death at the very time when new murder opened new markets over all the world to American industry; and the giants with the thunderbolts stamped and raged and peered out across the world and called for men and evermore, — men!

The Unwise Men laughed and squeezed reluctant dollars out of the fists of the mighty and saw in their dream the vision of a day when

labor, as they knew it, should come into its own; saw this day and saw it with justice and with right, save for one thing, and that was the sound of the moan of the Disinherited, who still lay without the walls. When they heard this moan and saw that it came not across the seas, they were at first amazed and said it was not true; and then they were mad and said it should not be. Quickly they turned and looked into the red blackness of the South and in their hearts were fear and hate!

What did they see? They saw something at which they had been taught to laugh and make sport; they saw that which the heading of every newspaper column, the lie of every cub reporter, the exaggeration of every press dispatch, and the distortion of every speech and book had taught them was a mass of despicable men, inhuman; at best, laughable; at worst, the meat of mobs and fury.

What did they see? They saw nine and one-half millions of human beings. They saw the spawn of slavery, ignorant by law and by deviltry, crushed by insult and debauched by systematic and criminal injustice. They saw a people whose helpless women have been raped by thousands and whose men lynched by hundreds in the face of a sneering world. They saw a people with heads bloody, but unbowed, working faithfully at wages fifty per cent. lower than the wages of the nation and under conditions which shame civilization, saving homes, training children, hoping against hope. They saw the greatest industrial miracle of modern days, — slaves transforming themselves to freemen and climbing out of perdition by their own efforts, despite the most contemptible opposition God ever saw, — they saw all this and what they saw the distraught employers of America saw, too.

The North called to the South. A scream of rage went up from the cotton monopolists and industrial barons of the new South. Who was this who dared to "interfere" with their labor? Who sought to own their black slaves but they? Who honored and loved "niggers" as they did?

They mobilized all the machinery of modern oppression: taxes, city ordinances, licenses, state laws, municipal regulations, wholesale police arrests and, of course, the peculiarly Southern method of the mob and the lyncher. They appealed frantically to the United States Government; they groveled on their knees and shed wild tears at the "suffering" of their poor, misguided black friends, and yet, despite this, the Northern employers simply had to offer two and three dollars a day and from one-quarter to one-half a million dark workers arose and poured themselves into the North. They went to the mines of West Virginia, because war needs coal; they went to the industries of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, because war needs ships and iron; they went to the automobiles of Detroit and the load-carrying of Chicago; and they went to East St. Louis.

Now there came fear in the hearts of the Unwise Men. It was not that their wages were lowered, — they went even higher. They received, not simply, a living wage, but a wage that paid for some of the decencies, and, in East St. Louis, many of the indecencies of life. What they feared was not deprivation of the things they were used to and the shadow of poverty, but rather the definite death of their rising dreams. But if fear was new-born in the hearts of the Unwise Men, the black man was born in a house of fear; to him poverty of the ugliest and straightest type was father, mother, and blood-brother. He was slipping stealthily northward to escape hunger and insult, the hand of oppression, and the shadow of death.

Here, then, in the wide valley which Father Marquette saw peaceful and golden, lazy with fruit and river, half-asleep beneath the nod of God, — here, then, was staged every element for human tragedy, every element of the modern economic paradox.

Ah! That hot, wide plain of East St. Louis is a gripping thing. The rivers are dirty with sweat and toil and lip, like lakes, along the low and burdened shores; flatboats ramble and thread among them, and above the steamers bridges swing on great arches of steel, striding with mighty grace from shore to shore. Everywhere are brick kennels, — tall, black and red chimneys, tongues of flame. The ground is littered with cars and iron, tracks and trucks, boxes and crates, metals and coal and rubber. Nature-defying cranes, grim elevators rise above pile on pile of black and grimy lumber. And ever below is the water, — wide and silent, gray-brown and yellow.

This is the stage for the tragedy: the armored might of the modern world urged by the bloody needs of the world wants, fevered today by a fabulous vision of gain and needing only hands, hands, hands! Fear of loss and greed of gain in the hearts of the giants; the clustered cunning of the modern workman, skilled as artificer and skilled in the rhythm of the habit of work, tasting the world's good and panting for more; fear of poverty and hate of "scabs" in the hearts of the workers; the dumb yearning in the hearts of the oppressed; the echo of laughter heard at the foot of the Pyramids; the faithful, plodding slouch of the laborers; fear of the Shadow of Death in the hearts of black men.

We ask, and perhaps there is no answer, how far may the captain of the world's industry do his deeds, despite the grinding tragedy of its doing? How far may men fight for the beginning of comfort, out beyond the horrid shadow of poverty, at the cost of starving other and what the world calls lesser men? How far may those who reach up out of the slime that fills the pits of the world's damned compel men with loaves to divide with men who starve?

The answers to these questions are hard, but yet one answer looms above all, — justice lies with the lowest; the plight of the lowest man, — the plight of the black man — deserves the first answer, and the plight of the giants of industry, the last.

Little cared East St. Louis for all this bandying of human problems, so long as its grocers and saloon-keepers flourished and its industries steamed and screamed and smoked and its bankers grew rich. Stupidity, license, and graft sat enthroned in the City Hall. The new black folk were exploited as cheerfully as white Polacks and Italians; the rent of shacks mounted merrily, the street car lines counted gleeful gains, and the crimes of white men and black men flourished in the dark. The high and skilled and smart climbed on the bent backs of the ignorant; harder the mass of laborers strove to unionize their fellows and to bargain with employers.

Nor were the new blacks fools. They had no love for nothings in labor; they had no wish to make their fellows' wage envelopes smaller, but they were determined to make their own larger. They, too, were willing to join in the new union movement. But the unions did not want them. Just as employers monopolized meat and steel, so they sought to monopolize labor and beat a giant's bargain. In the higher trades they succeeded. The best electrician in the city was refused admittance to the union and driven from the town because he was black. No black builder, printer, or machinist could join a union or work in East St. Louis, no matter what his skill or character. But out of the stink of the stockyards and the dust of the aluminum works and the sweat of the lumber yards the willing blacks could not be kept.

They were invited to join unions of the laborers here and they joined. White workers and black workers struck at the aluminum works in the fall and won higher wages and better hours; then again in the spring they struck to make bargaining compulsory for the employer, but this time they fronted new things. The conflagration of war had spread to America; government and court stepped in and ordered no hesitation, no strikes; the work must go on.

Deeper was the call for workers. Black men poured in and red anger flamed in the hearts of the white workers. The anger was against the wielders of the thunderbolts, but here it was impotent because employers stood with the hand of the government before their faces; it was against entrenched union labor, which had risen on the backs of the unskilled and unintelligent and on the backs of those whom for any reason of race or prejudice or chicane they could beat beyond the bars of competition; and finally the anger of the mass of white workers was turned toward these new black interlopers, who seemed to come to spoil their last dream of a great monopoly of common labor.

These angers flamed and the union leaders, fearing their fury and knowing their own guilt, not only in the larger and subtler matter of bidding their way to power across the weakness of their less fortunate fellows, but also conscious of their part in making East St. Louis a miserable town of liquor and lust, leaped quickly to ward the gathering thunder from their own heads. The thing they wanted was even at their hands: here were black men, guilty not only of bidding for jobs which white men could have held at war prices, even if they could not fill, but also guilty of being black! It was at this blackness that the unions pointed the accusing finger. It was here that they committed the unpardonable crime. It was here that they entered the Shadow of Hell, where suddenly from a fight for wage and protection against industrial oppression East St. Louis became the center of the oldest and nastiest form of human oppression,—race hatred.

The whole situation lent itself to this terrible transformation. Everything in the history of the United States, from slavery to Sunday supplements, from disfranchisement to residence segregation, from "Jim-Crow" cars to a "Jim-Crow" army draft—all this history of discrimination and insult festered to make men think and willing to think that the venting of their unbridled anger against 12,000,000 humble, upstriving workers was a way of settling the industrial tangle of the ages. It was the logic of the broken plate, which, seared of old across its pattern, cracks never again, save along the old destruction.

So hell flamed in East St. Louis! The white men drove even black union men out of their unions and when the black men, beaten by night and assaulted, flew to arms and shot back at the marauders, five thousand rioters arose and surged like a crested stormwave, from noonday until midnight; they killed and beat and murdered; they dashed out the brains of children and stripped off the clothes of women; they drove victims into the flames and hanged the helpless to the lighting poles. Fathers were killed before the faces of mothers; children were burned; heads were cut off with axes; pregnant women crawled and spawned in dark, wet fields; thieves went through houses and firebrands followed; bodies were thrown from bridges; and rocks and bricks flew through the air.

The Negroes fought. They grappled with the mob like beasts at bay. They drove them back from the thickest cluster of their homes and piled the white dead on the street, but the cunning mob caught the black men between the factories and their homes, where they knew they were armed only with their dinner pails. Firemen, policemen, and militiamen stood with hanging hands or even joined eagerly with the mob.

It was the old world horror come to life again: all that Jews suffered in Spain and Poland; all that peasants suffered in France, and Indians in Calcutta; all that aroused human deviltry had accomplished in ages

past they did in East St. Louis, while the rags of six thousand half-naked black men and women fluttered across the bridges of the calm Mississippi.

The white South laughed,—it was infinitely funny—the "niggers" who had gone North to escape slavery and lynching had met the fury of the mob which they had fled. Delegations rushed North from Mississippi and Texas, with suspicious timeliness and with great-hearted offers to take these workers back to a lesser hell. The man from Greenville, Mississippi, who wanted a thousand got six, because, after all, the end was not so simple.

No, the end was not simple. On the contrary, the problem raised by East St. Louis was curiously complex. The ordinary American, tired of the persistence of "the Negro problem," sees only another anti-Negro mob and wonders, not when we shall settle this problem, but when we shall be well rid of it. The student of social things sees another milestone in the triumphant march of union labor; he is sorry that blood and rapine should mark its march,—but, what will you? War is life!

Despite these smug reasonings the bare facts were these: East St. Louis, a great industrial center, lost 5,000 laborers,—good, honest, hard-working laborers. It was not the criminals, either black or white, who were driven from East St. Louis. They are still there. They will stay there. But half the honest black laborers were gone. The crippled ranks of industrial organization in the mid-Mississippi Valley cannot be recruited from Ellis Island, because in Europe men are dead and maimed, and restoration, when restoration comes, will raise a European demand for labor such as this age has never seen. The vision of industrial supremacy has come to the giants who lead American industry and finance. But it can never be realized unless the laborers are here to do the work,—the skilled laborers, the common laborers, the willing laborers, the well-paid laborers. The present forces, organized however cunningly, are not large enough to do what America wants; but there is another group of laborers, 12,000,000 strong, the natural heirs, by every logic of justice, to the fruits of America's industrial advance. They will be used simply because they must be used,—but their using means East St. Louis!

Eastward from St. Louis lie great centers, like Chicago, Indianapolis, Detroit, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and New York; in every one of these and in lesser centers there is not only the industrial unrest of war and revolutionized work, but there is the call for workers, the coming of black folk, and the deliberate effort to divert the thoughts of men, and particularly of workmen, into channels of race hatred against blacks. In every one of these centers what happened in East St. Louis has been attempted, with more or less success. Yet the American

Negroes stand today as the greatest strategic group in the world. Their services are indispensable, their temper and character are fine, and their souls have seen a vision more beautiful than any other mass of workers. They may win back culture to the world if their strength can be used with the forces of the world that make for justice and not against the hidden hates that fight for barbarism. For fight they must and fight they will!

Rising on wings we cross again the rivers of St. Louis, winding and threading between the towers of industry that threaten and drown the towers of God. Far, far beyond, we sight the green of fields and hills; but ever below lies the river, blue,—brownish-gray, touched with the hint of hidden gold. Drifting through half-flooded lowlands, with shanties and crops and stunted trees, past struggling corn and straggling village, we rush toward the Battle of the Marne and the West, from this dread Battle of the East. Westward, dear God, the fire of Thy Mad World crimson the Heaven. Our answering Hell rolls eastward from St. Louis.

Here, in microcosm, is the sort of economic snarl that arose continually for me and my pupils to solve. We could bring to its unraveling little of the scholarly aloofness and academic calm of most white universities. To us this thing was Life and Hope and Death!

How should we think such a problem through, not simply as Negroes, but as men and women of a new century, helping to build a new world? And first of all, here is no simple question of race antagonism. There are no races, in the sense of great, separate, pure breeds of men, differing in attainment, development, and capacity. There are great groups,—now with common history, now with common interests, now with common ancestry; more and more common experience and present interest drive back the common blood and the world today consists, not of races, but of the imperial commercial group of master capitalists, international and predominantly white; the national middle classes of the several nations, white, yellow, and brown, with strong blood bonds, common languages, and common history; the international laboring class of all colors; the backward, oppressed groups of nature-folk, predominantly yellow, brown, and black.

Two questions arise from the work and relations of these groups: how to furnish goods and services for the wants of men and how equitably and sufficiently to satisfy these wants. There can be no doubt that we have passed in our day from a world that could hardly satisfy the physical wants of the mass of men, by the greatest effort, to a world whose technique supplies enough for all, if all can claim their right. Our great ethical question today is, therefore, how may we justly distribute the world's goods to satisfy the necessary wants of the mass of men.

What hinders the answer to this question? Dislikes, jealousies, hatreds,—undoubtedly like the race hatred in East St. Louis; the jealousy of English and German; the dislike of the Jew and the Gentile. But these are, after all, surface disturbances, sprung from ancient habit more than from present reason. They persist and are encouraged because of deeper, mightier currents. If the white workmen of East St. Louis felt sure that Negro workers would not and could not take the bread and cake from their mouths, their race hatred would never have been translated into murder. If the black workmen of the South could earn a decent living under decent circumstances at home, they would not be compelled to underbid their white fellows.

Thus the shadow of hunger, in a world which never needs to be hungry, drives us to war and murder and hate. But why does hunger shadow so vast a mass of men? Manifestly because in the great organizing of men for work a few of the participants come out with more wealth than they can possibly use, while a vast number emerge with less than can decently support life. In earlier economic stages we defended this as the reward of Thrift and Sacrifice, and as the punishment of Ignorance and Crime. To this the answer is sharp: Sacrifice calls for no such reward and Ignorance deserves no such punishment. The chief meaning of our present thinking is that the disproportion between wealth and poverty today cannot be adequately accounted for by the thrift and ignorance of the rich and the poor.

Yesterday we righted one great mistake when we realized that the ownership of the laborer did not tend to increase production. The world at large had learned this long since, but black slavery arose again in America as an inexplicable anachronism, a wilful crime. The freeing of the black slaves freed America. Today we are challenging another ownership,—the ownership of materials which go to make the goods we need. Private ownership of land, tools, and raw materials may at one stage of economic development be a method of stimulating production and one which does not greatly interfere with equitable distribution. When, however, the intricacy and length of technical production increased, the ownership of these things becomes a monopoly, which easily makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. Today, therefore, we are challenging this ownership; we are demanding general consent as to what materials shall be privately owned and as to how materials shall be used. We are rapidly approaching the day when we shall repudiate all private property in raw materials and tools and demand that distribution hinge, not on the power of those who monopolize the materials, but on the needs of the mass of men.

Can we do this and still make sufficient goods, justly gauge the needs of men, and rightly decide who are to be considered "men"? How do

we arrange to accomplish these things today? Somebody decides whose wants should be satisfied. Somebody organizes industry so as to satisfy these wants. What is to hinder the same ability and foresight from being used in the future as in the past? The amount and kind of human ability necessary need not be decreased, — it may even be vastly increased, with proper encouragement and rewards. Are we today evoking the necessary ability? On the contrary, it is not the Inventor, the Manager, and the Thinker who today are reaping the great rewards of industry, but rather the Gambler and the Highwayman. Rightly-organized industry might easily save the Gambler's Profit and the Monopolist's Interest and by paying a more discriminating reward in wealth and honor bring to the service of the state more ability and sacrifice than we can today command. If we do away with interest and profit, consider the savings that could be made; but above all, think how great the revolution would be when we ask the mysterious Somebody to decide in the light of public opinion whose wants should be satisfied. This is the great and real revolution that is coming in future industry.

But this is not the need of the revolution nor indeed, perhaps, its real beginning. What we must decide sometime is who are to be considered "men." Today, at the beginning of this industrial change, we are admitting that economic classes must give way. The laborers' hire must increase, the employers' profit must be curbed. But how far shall this change go? Must it apply to all human beings and to all work throughout the world?

Certainly not. We seek to apply it slowly and with some reluctance to white men and more slowly and with greater reserve to white women, but black folk and brown and for the most part yellow folk we have widely determined shall not be among those whose needs must justly be heard and whose wants must be ministered to in the great organization of world industry.

In the teaching of my classes I was not willing to stop with showing that this was unfair, — indeed I did not have to do this. They knew through bitter experience its rank injustice, because they were black. What I had to show was that no real reorganization of industry could be permanently made with the majority of mankind left out. These disinherited darker peoples must either share in the future industrial democracy or overturn the world.

Of course, the foundation of such a system must be a high, ethical ideal. We must really envisage the wants of humanity. We must want the wants of all men. We must get rid of the fascination for exclusiveness. Here, in a world full of folk, men are lonely. The rich are lonely. We are all frantic for fellow-souls, yet we shut souls out and bar the ways and bolster up the fiction of the Elect and the Superior when the

great mass of men is capable of producing larger and larger numbers for every human height of attainment. To be sure, there are differences between men and groups and there will ever be, but they will be differences of beauty and genius and of interest and not necessarily of ugliness, imbecility, and hatred.

The meaning of America is the beginning of the discovery of the Crowd. The crowd is not so well-trained as a Versailles garden party of Louis XIV, but it is far better trained than the Sans-culottes and it has infinite possibilities. What a world this will be when human possibilities are freed, when we discover each other, when the stranger is no longer the potential criminal and the certain inferior!

What hinders our approach to the ideals outlined above? Our profit from degradation, our colonial exploitation, our American attitude toward the Negro. Think again of East St. Louis! Think back of that to slavery and Reconstruction! Do we want the wants of American Negroes satisfied? Most certainly not, and that negative is the greatest hindrance today to the reorganization of work and redistribution of wealth, not only in America, but in the world.

All humanity must share in the future industrial democracy of the world. For this it must be trained in intelligence and in appreciation of the good and the beautiful. Present Big Business, — that Science of Human Wants — must be perfected by eliminating the price paid for waste, which is Interest, and for Chance, which is Profit, and making all income a personal wage for service rendered by the recipient; by recognizing no possible human service as great enough to enable a person to designate another as an idler or as a worker at work which he cannot do. Above all, industry must minister to the wants of the many and not to the few, and the Negro, the Indian, the Mongolian, and the South Sea Islander must be among the many as well as Germans, Frenchmen, and Englishmen.

In this coming socialization of industry we must guard against that same tyranny of the majority that has marked democracy in the making of laws. There must, for instance, persist in this future economics a certain minimum of machine-like work and prompt obedience and submission. This necessity is a simple corollary from the hard facts of the physical world. It must be accepted with the comforting thought that its routine need not demand twelve hours a day or even eight. With Work for All and All at Work probably from three to six hours would suffice, and leave abundant time for leisure, exercise, study, and avocations.

But what shall we say of work where spiritual values and social distinctions enter? Who shall be Artists and who shall be Servants in the world to come? Or shall we all be artists and all serve?

matter of spinning, but largely the determination of powerful and intelligent individuals to secure the benefits of privileged persons, as in the case of foreign slave trade.

The result was on the one hand a vast and unexampled development of industry. Life and civilization in the late 19th and early 20th century were Industry in its whole conception, language, and accomplishment: the object of life was to make goods. Now before this giant aspect of things, the new democracy stood aghast and impotent. It could not rule because it did not understand: an invincible kingdom of trade, business, and commerce ruled the world, and before its threshold stood the Freedom of 18th century philosophy warding the way. Some of the very ones who were freed from the tyranny of the Middle Age became the tyrants of the industrial age.

There came a reaction. Men sneered at "democracy" and politics, and brought forth Fate and Philanthropy to rule the world—Fate which gave divine right to rule to the Captains of Industry and their created Millionaires; Philanthropy which organized vast schemes of relief to stop at least the flow of blood in the vaster wounds which industry was making.

It was at this time that the lowest laborers, who worked hardest, got least and suffered most, began to mutter and rebel, and among these were the American Negroes. Lions have no historians, and therefore lion hunts are thrilling and satisfactory human reading. Negroes had no bards, and therefore it has been widely told how American philanthropy freed the slave. In truth the Negro revolted by armed rebellion, by sullen refusal to work, by poison and murder, by running away to the North and Canada, by giving point and powerful example to the agitation of the abolitionists and by furnishing 200,000 soldiers and many times as many civilian helpers in the Civil War. This war was not a war for Negro freedom, but a duel between two industrial systems, one of which was bound to fail because it was an anachronism, and the other bound to succeed because of the Industrial Revolution.

When now the Negro was freed the Philanthropists sought to apply to his situation the Philosophy of Democracy handed down from the 18th century.

There was a chance here to try democratic rule in a new way, that is, against the new industrial oppression with a mass of workers who were not yet in its control. With plenty of land widely distributed, staple products like cotton, rice, and sugar cane, and a thorough system of education, there was a unique chance to realize a new modern democracy in industry in the southern United States which would point the way to the world. This, too, if done by black folk, would have tended to a new unity of human beings and an obliteration of human hatreds festering along the color line.

VI

OF THE RULING OF MEN

THE RULING of men is the effort to direct the individual actions of many persons toward some end. This end theoretically should be the greatest good of all, but no human group has ever reached this ideal because of ignorance and selfishness. The simplest object would be rule for the Pleasure of One, namely the Ruler; or of the Few—his favorites; or of many—the Rich, the Privileged, the Powerful. Democratic movements inside groups and nations are always taking place and they are the efforts to increase the number of beneficiaries of the ruling. In 18th century Europe, the effort became so broad and sweeping that an attempt was made at universal expression and the philosophy of the movement said that if All ruled they would rule for All and thus Universal Good was sought through Universal Suffrage.

The unrealized difficulty of this program lay in the widespread ignorance. The mass of men, even of the more intelligent men, not only knew little about each other but less about the action of men in groups and the technique of industry in general. They could only apply universal suffrage, therefore, to the things they knew or knew partially: they knew personal and menial service, individual craftsmanship, agriculture and barter, taxes or the taking of private property for public ends and the rent of land. With these matters then they attempted to deal. Under the cry of "Freedom" they greatly relaxed the grip of selfish interests by restricting menial service, securing the right of property in handiwork and regulating public taxes; distributing land ownership and freeing trade and barter.

While they were doing this against stubborn resistance, a whole new organization of work suddenly appeared. The suddenness of this "Industrial Revolution" of the 19th century was partly fortuitous—in the case of Watt's teakettle—partly a natural development, as in the

Efforts were begun. The 14th and 15th amendments gave the right to vote to white and black laborers, and they immediately established a public school system and began to attack the land question. The United States government was seriously considering the distribution of land and capital—"40 acres and a mule"—and the price of cotton opened an easy way to economic independence. Co-operative movements began on a large scale.

But alas! Not only were the former slave-owners solidly arrayed against this experiment, but the owners of the industrial North saw disaster in any such beginnings of industrial democracy. The opposition based its objections on the color line, and Reconstruction became in history a great movement for the self-assertion of the white race against the impudent ambition of degraded blacks, instead of, in truth, the rise of a mass of black and white laborers.

The result was the disfranchisement of the blacks of the South and a world-wide attempt to restrict democratic development to white races and to distract them with race hatred against the darker races. This program, however, although it undoubtedly helped raise the scale of white labor, in much greater proportion put wealth and power in the hands of the great European Captains of Industry and made modern industrial imperialism possible.

This led to renewed efforts on the part of white European workers to understand and apply their political power to its reform through democratic control.

Whether known as Communism or Socialism or what not, these efforts are neither new nor strange nor terrible, but world-old and seeking an absolutely justifiable human ideal—the only ideal that can be sought: the direction of individual action in industry so as to secure the greatest good of all. Marxism was one method of accomplishing this, and its panacea was the doing away with private property in machines and materials. Two mighty attacks were made on this proposal. One was an attack on the fundamental democratic foundation: modern European white industry does not even theoretically seek the good of all, but simply of all Europeans. This attack was virtually unanswered—indeed some Socialists openly excluded Negroes and Asiatics from their scheme. From this it was easy to drift into that form of syndicalism which asks socialism for the skilled laborer only and leaves the common laborer in his bonds.

This throws us back on fundamentals. It compels us again to examine the roots of democracy.

Who may be excluded from a share in the ruling of men? Time and time again the world has answered:

The Ignorant
The Inexperienced
The Guarded
The Unwilling

That is, we have assumed that only the intelligent should vote, or those who know how to rule men, or those who are not under benevolent guardianship, or those who ardently desire the right.

These restrictions are not arguments for the wide distribution of the ballot—they are rather reasons for restriction addressed to the self-interest of the present real rulers. We say easily, for instance, "The ignorant ought not to vote." We would say, "No civilized state should have citizens too ignorant to participate in government," and this statement is but a step to the fact: that no state is civilized which has citizens too ignorant to help rule it. Or, in other words, education is not a prerequisite to political control—political control is the cause of popular education.

Again, to make experience a qualification for the franchise is absurd: it would stop the spread of democracy and make political power hereditary, a prerequisite of a class, caste, race, or sex. It has of course been soberly argued that only white folk or Englishmen, or men, are really capable of exercising sovereign power in a modern state. The statement proves too much: only yesterday it was Englishmen of high descent, or men of "blood," or sovereigns "by divine right" who could rule. Today the civilized world is being ruled by the descendants of persons who a century ago were pronounced incapable of ever developing a self-ruling people. In every modern state there must come to the polls every generation, and indeed every year, men who are inexperienced in the solutions of the political problems that confront them and who must experiment in methods of ruling men. Thus and thus only will civilization grow.

Again, what is this theory of benevolent guardianship for women, for the masses, for Negroes—for "lesser breeds without the law"? It is simply the old cry of privilege, the old assumption that there are those in the world who know better what is best for others than those others know themselves, and who can be trusted to do this best.

In fact no one knows himself but that self's own soul. The vast and wonderful knowledge of this marvelous universe is locked in the bosoms of its individual souls. To tap this mighty reservoir of experience, knowledge, beauty, love, and deed we must appeal not to the few, not to some souls, but to all. The narrower the appeal, the poorer the culture; the wider the appeal the more magnificent are the possibilities. Infinite is

human nature. We make it finite by choking back the mass of men, by attempting to speak for others, to interpret and act for them, and we end by acting for ourselves and using the world as our private property. If this were all, it were crime enough—but it is not all: by our ignorance we make the creation of the greater world impossible; we beat back a world built of the playing of dogs and laughter of children, the song of Black Folk and worship of Yellow, the love of women and strength of men, and try to express by a group of doddering ancients the Will of the World.

There are people who insist upon regarding the franchise, not as a necessity for the many, but as a privilege for the few. They say of persons and classes: "They do not need the ballot." This is often said of women. It is argued that everything which women with the ballot might do for themselves can be done for them; that they have influence and friends "at court," and that their enfranchisement would simply double the number of ballots. So, too, we are told that American Negroes can have done for them by other voters all that they could possibly do for themselves with the ballot and much more because the white voters are more intelligent.

Further than this, it is argued that many of the disfranchised people recognize these facts. "Women do not want the ballot" has been a very effective counter war-cry, so much so that many men have taken refuge in the declaration: "When they want to vote, why, then——" So, too, we are continually told that the "best" Negroes stay out of politics.

Such arguments show so curious a misapprehension of the foundation of the argument for democracy that the argument must be continually restated and emphasized. We must remember that if the theory of democracy is correct, the right to vote is not merely a privilege, not simply a method of meeting the needs of a particular group, and least of all a matter of recognized want or desire. Democracy is a method of realizing the broadest measure of justice to all human beings. The world has, in the past, attempted various methods of attaining this end, most of which can be summed up in three categories:

The method of the benevolent tyrant.

The method of the select few.

The method of the excluded groups.

The method of intrusting the government of a people to a strong ruler has great advantages when the ruler combines strength with ability, unselfish devotion to the public good, and knowledge of what that good calls for. Such a combination is, however, rare and the selection of the right ruler is very difficult. To leave the selection to force is to put

a premium on physical strength, chance, and intrigue; to make the selection a matter of birth simply transfers the real power from sovereign to minister. Inevitably the choice of rulers must fall on electors.

Then comes the problem, who shall elect. The earlier answer was: a select few, such as the wise, the best born, the able. Many people assume that it was corruption that made such aristocracies fail. By no means. The best and most effective aristocracy, like the best monarchy, suffered from lack of knowledge. The rulers did not know or understand the needs of the people and they could not find out, for in the last analysis only the man himself, however humble, knows his own condition. He may not know how to remedy it, he may not realize just what is the matter; but he knows when something hurts and he alone knows how that hurt feels. Or if sunk below feeling or comprehension or complaint, he does not even know that he is hurt, God help his country, for it not only lacks knowledge, but has destroyed the sources of knowledge.

So soon as a nation discovers that it holds in the heads and hearts of its individual citizens the vast mine of knowledge, out of which it may build a just government, then more and more it calls those citizens to select their rulers and to judge the justice of their acts.

Even here, however, the temptation is to ask only for the wisdom of citizens of a certain grade or those of recognized worth. Continually some classes are tacitly or expressly excluded. Thus women have been excluded from modern democracy because of the persistent theory of female subjection and because it was argued that their husbands or other male folks would look to their interests. Now, manifestly, most husbands, fathers, and brothers will, so far as they know how or as they realize women's needs, look after them. But remember the foundation of the argument,—that in the last analysis only the sufferer knows his sufferings and that no state can be strong which excludes from its expressed wisdom the knowledge possessed by mothers, wives, and daughters. We have but to view the unsatisfactory relations of the sexes the world over and the problem of children to realize how desperately we need this excluded wisdom.

The same arguments apply to other excluded groups: if a race, like the Negro race, is excluded, then so far as that race is a part of the economic and social organization of the land, the feeling and the experience of that race are absolutely necessary to the realization of the broadest justice for all citizens. Or if the "submerged tenth" be excluded, then again, there is lost from the world an experience of untold value, and they must be raised rapidly to a place where they can speak for themselves. In the same way and for the same reason children must be educated, insanity prevented, and only those put under the guardianship of others who can in no way be trained to speak for themselves.

The real argument for democracy is, then, that in the people we have the source of that endless life and unbounded wisdom which the rulers of men must have. A given people today may not be intelligent, but through a democratic government that recognizes, not only the worth of the individual to himself, but the worth of his feelings and experiences to all, they can educate, not only the individual unit, but generation after generation, until they accumulate vast stores of wisdom. Democracy alone is the method of showing the whole experience of the race for the benefit of the future and if democracy tries to exclude women or Negroes or the poor or any class because of innate characteristics which do not interfere with intelligence, then that democracy cripples itself and belies its name.

From this point of view we can easily see the weakness and strength of current criticism of extension of the ballot. It is the business of a modern government to see to it, first, that the number of ignorant within its bounds is reduced to the very smallest number. Again, it is the duty of every such government to extend as quickly as possible the number of persons of mature age who can vote. Such possible voters must be regarded, not as sharers of a limited treasure, but as sources of new national wisdom and strength.

The addition of the new wisdom, the new points of view, and the new interests must, of course, be from time to time bewildering and confusing. Today those who have a voice in the body politic have expressed their wishes and sufferings. The result has been a smaller or greater balancing of their conflicting interests. The appearance of new interests and complaints means disarrangement and confusion to the older equilibrium. It is, of course, the inevitable preliminary step to that larger equilibrium in which the interests of no human soul will be neglected. These interests will not, surely, be all fully realized, but they will be recognized and given as full weight as the conflicting interests will allow. The problem of government thereafter would be to reduce the necessary conflict of human interests to the minimum.

From such a point of view one easily sees the strength of the demand for the ballot on the part of certain disfranchised classes. When women ask for the ballot, they are asking, not for a privilege, but for a necessity. You may not see the necessity, you may easily argue that women do not need to vote. Indeed, the women themselves in considerable numbers may agree with you. Nevertheless, women do need the ballot. They need it to right the balance of a world sadly awry because of its brutal neglect of the rights of women and children. With the best will and knowledge, no man can know women's wants as well as women themselves. To disfranchise women is deliberately to turn from knowledge and grope in ignorance.

So, too, with American Negroes: the South continually insists that a benevolent guardianship of whites over blacks is the ideal thing. They assume that white people not only know better what Negroes need than Negroes themselves, but that they are anxious to supply these needs. As a result they grope in ignorance and helplessness. They cannot "understand" the Negro; they cannot protect him from cheating and lynching; and, in general, instead of loving guardianship we see anarchy and exploitation. If the Negro could speak for himself in the South instead of being spoken for, if he could defend himself instead of having to depend on the chance sympathy of white citizens, how much healthier a growth of democracy the South would have.

So, too, with the darker races of the world. No federation of the world, no true inter-nation—can exclude the black and brown and yellow races from its counsels. They must equally and according to number act and be heard at the world's council.

It is not, for a moment, to be assumed that enfranchising women will not cost something. It will for many years confuse our politics. It may even change the present status of family life. It will admit to the ballot thousands of inexperienced persons, unable to vote intelligently. Above all, it will interfere with some of the present prerogatives of men and probably for some time to come annoy them considerably.

So, too, Negro enfranchisement meant reconstruction, with its theft and bribery and incompetency as well as its public schools and enlightened, social legislation. It would mean today that black men in the South would have to be treated with consideration, have their wishes respected and their manhood rights recognized. Every white Southerner, who wants peons beneath him, who believes in hereditary menials and a privileged aristocracy, or who hates certain races because of their characteristics, would resent this.

Notwithstanding this, if America is ever to become a government built on the broadest justice to every citizen, then every citizen must be enfranchised. There may be temporary exclusions, until the ignorant and their children are taught, or to avoid too sudden an influx of inexperienced voters. But such exclusions can be but temporary if justice is to prevail.

The principle of basing all government on the consent of the governed is undenied and undeniable. Moreover, the method of modern democracy has placed within reach of the modern state larger reserves of efficiency, ability, and even genius than the ancient or mediaeval state dreamed of. That this great work of the past can be carried further among all races and nations no one can reasonably doubt.

Great as are our human differences and capabilities there is not the slightest scientific reason for assuming that a given human being of any race or sex cannot reach normal, human development if he is granted

a reasonable chance. This is, of course, denied. It is denied so volubly and so frequently and with such positive conviction that the majority of unthinking people seem to assume that most human beings are not human and have no right to human treatment or human opportunity. All this goes to prove that human beings are, and must be, woefully ignorant of each other. It always startles us to find folks thinking like ourselves. We do not really associate with each other, we associate with our ideas of each other, and few people have either the ability or courage to question their own ideas. None have more persistently and dogmatically insisted upon the inherent inferiority of women than the men with whom they come in closest contact. It is the husbands, brothers, and sons of women whom it has been most difficult to induce to consider women seriously or to acknowledge that women have rights which men are bound to respect. So, too, it is those people who live in closest contact with black folk who have most unhesitatingly asserted the utter impossibility of living beside Negroes who are not industrial or political slaves or social pariahs. All this proves that none are so blind as those nearest the thing seen, while, on the other hand, the history of the world is the history of the discovery of the common humanity of human beings among steadily-increasing circles of men.

If the foundations of democracy are thus seen to be sound, how are we going to make democracy effective where it now fails to function — particularly in industry? The Marxists assert that industrial democracy will automatically follow public ownership of machines and materials. Their opponents object that nationalization of machines and materials would not suffice because the mass of people do not understand the industrial process. They do not know:

What to do
How to do it
Who could do it best
or
How to apportion the resulting goods.

There can be no doubt but that monopoly of machines and materials is a chief source of the power of industrial tyrants over the common worker and that monopoly today is due as much to chance and cheating as to thrift and intelligence. So far as it is due to chance and cheating, the argument for public ownership of capital is incontrovertible even though it involves some interference with long vested rights and inheritance. This is being widely recognized in the whole civilized world. But how about the accumulation of goods due to thrift and intelligence — would democracy in industry interfere here to such an extent as to discourage

enterprise and make impossible the intelligent direction of the mighty and intricate industrial process of modern times?

The knowledge of what to do in industry and how to do it in order to attain the resulting goods rests in the hands and brains of the workers and managers, and the judges of the result are the public. Consequently it is not so much a question as to whether the world will admit democratic control here as how can such control be long avoided when the people once understand the fundamentals of industry. How can civilization persist in letting one person or a group of persons, by secret inherent power, determine what goods shall be made — whether bread or champagne, overcoats or silk socks? Can so vast a power be kept from the people?

But it may be opportunely asked: has our experience in electing public officials led us to think that we could run railways, cotton mills, and department stores by popular vote? The answer is clear: no, it has not, and the reason has been lack of interest in politics and the tyranny of the Majority. Politics have not touched the matters of daily life which are nearest the interests of the people — namely, work and wages; or if they have, they have touched it obscurely and indirectly. When voting touches the vital, everyday interests of all, nominations and elections will call for more intelligent activity. Consider too the vast unused and misused power of public rewards to obtain ability and genius for the service of the state. If millionaires can buy science and art, cannot the Democratic state outbid them not only with money but with the vast ideal of the common weal?

There still remains, however, the problem of the Majority.

What is the cause of the undoubted reaction and alarm that the citizens of democracy continually feel? It is, I am sure, the failure to feel the full significance of the change of rule from a privileged minority to that of an omnipotent majority, and the assumption that mere majority rule is the last word of government; that majorities have no responsibilities, that they rule by the grace of God. Granted that government should be based on the consent of the governed, does the consent of a majority at any particular time adequately express the consent of all? Has the minority, even though a small and unpopular and unfashionable minority, no right to respectful consideration?

I remember that excellent little high school text book, "Nordhoff's Politics," where I first read of government, saying this sentence at the beginning of its most important chapter: "The first duty of a minority is to become a majority." This is a statement which has its underlying truth, but it also has its dangerous falsehood; viz., any minority which cannot become a majority is not worthy of any consideration. But suppose that the out-voted minority is necessarily always a minority?

Women, for instance, can seldom expect to be a majority; artists must always be the few; ability is always rare, and black folk in this land are but a tenth. Yet to tyrannize over such minorities, to browbeat and insult them, to call that government a democracy which makes majority votes an excuse for crushing ideas and individuality and self-development, is manifestly a peculiarly dangerous perversion of the real democratic ideal. It is right here, in its method and not in its object, that democracy in America and elsewhere has so often failed. We have attempted to enthrone any chance majority and make it rule by divine right. We have kicked and cursed minorities as upstarts and usurpers when their sole offense lay in not having ideas or hair like ours. Efficiency, ability, and genius found often no abiding place in such a soil as this. Small wonder that revolt has come and high-handed methods are rife, of pretending that policies which we favor or persons that we like have the anointment of a purely imaginary majority vote.

Are the methods of such a revolt wise, howsoever great the provocation and evil may be? If the absolute monarchy of majorities is galling and inefficient, is it any more inefficient than the absolute monarchy of individuals or privileged classes have been found to be in the past? Is the appeal from a numerous-minded despot to a smaller, privileged group or to one man likely to remedy matters permanently? Shall we step backward a thousand years because our present problem is baffling?

Surely not and surely, too, the remedy for absolutism lies in calling these same minorities to council. As the king-in-council succeeded the king by the grace of God, so in future democracies the toleration and encouragement of minorities and the willingness to consider as "men" the crankiest, humblest and poorest and blackest peoples, must be the real key to the consent of the governed. Peoples and governments will not in the future assume that because they have the brute power to enforce momentarily dominant ideas, it is best to do so without thoughtful conference with the ideas of smaller groups and individuals. Proportionate representation in physical and spiritual form must come.

That this method is virtually coming in vogue we can see by the minority groups of modern legislatures. Instead of the artificial attempts to divide all possible ideas and plans between two great parties, modern legislatures in advanced nations tend to develop smaller and smaller minority groups, while government is carried on by temporary coalitions. For a time we inveighed against this and sought to consider it a perversion of the only possible method of practical democracy. Today we are gradually coming to realize that government by temporary coalition of small and diverse groups may easily become the most efficient method of expressing the will of man and of setting the human soul free. The only hindrance to the faster development of this government by allied

minorities is the fear of external war which is used again and again to melt these living, human, thinking groups into inhuman, thoughtless, and murdering machines.

The persons, then, who come forward in the dawn of the 20th century to help in the ruling of men must come with the firm conviction that no nation, race, or sex, has a monopoly of ability or ideas; that no human group is so small as to deserve to be ignored as a part, and as an integral and respected part, of the mass of men; that, above all, no group of twelve million black folk, even though they are at the physical mercy of a hundred million white majority, can be deprived of a voice in their government and of the right to self-development without a blow at the very foundations of all democracy and all human uplift; that the very criticism aimed today at universal suffrage is in reality a demand for power on the part of consciously efficient minorities, — but these minorities face a fatal blunder when they assume that less democracy will give them and their kind greater efficiency. However desperate the temptation, no modern nation can shut the gates of opportunity in the face of its women, its peasants, its laborers, or its socially damned. How astounded the future world-citizen will be to know that as late as 1918 great and civilized nations were making desperate endeavor to confine the development of ability and individuality to one sex, — that is, to one-half of the nation; and he will probably learn that similar effort to confine humanity to one race lasted a hundred years longer.

The doctrine of the divine right of majorities leads to almost humorous insistence on a dead level of mediocrity. It demands that all people be alike or that they be ostracized. At the same time its greatest accusation against rebels is this same desire to be alike: the suffragette is accused of wanting to be a man, the socialist is accused of envy of the rich, and the black man is accused of wanting to be white. That any one of these should simply want to be himself is to the average worshiper of the majority inconceivable, and yet of all worlds, may the good Lord deliver us from a world where everybody looks like his neighbor and thinks like his neighbor and is like his neighbor.

The world has long since awakened to a realization of the evil which a privileged few may exercise over the majority of a nation. So vividly has this truth been brought home to us that we have lightly assumed that a privileged and enfranchised majority cannot equally harm a nation. Insane, wicked, and wasteful as the tyranny of the few over the many may be, it is not more dangerous than the tyranny of the many over the few. Brutal physical revolution can, and usually does, end the tyranny of the few. But the spiritual losses from suppressed minorities may be vast and fatal and yet all unknown and unrealized because idea and dream and ability are paralyzed by brute force.

If, now, we have a democracy with no excluded groups, with all men and women enfranchised, what is such a democracy to do? How will it function? What will be its field of work?

The paradox which faces the civilized world today is that democratic control is everywhere limited in its control of human interests. Mankind is engaged in planting, forestry, and mining, preparing food and shelter, making clothes and machines, transporting goods and folk, disseminating news, distributing products, doing public and private personal service, teaching, advancing science, and creating art.

In this intricate whirl of activities, the theory of government has been hitherto to lay down only very general rules of conduct, marking the limits of extreme anti-social acts, like fraud, theft, and murder.

The theory was that within these bounds was Freedom—the Liberty to think and do and move as one wished. The real realm of freedom was found in experience to be much narrower than this in one direction and much broader in another. In matters of Truth and Faith and Beauty, the Ancient Law was inexcusably strait and modern law unforgivably stupid. It is here that the future and mighty fight for Freedom must and will be made. Here in the heavens and on the mountaintops, the air of Freedom is wide, almost limitless, for here, in the highest stretches, individual freedom harms no man, and, therefore, no man has the right to limit it.

On the other hand, in the valleys of the hard, unyielding laws of matter and the social necessities of time production, and human intercourse, the limits on our freedom are stern and unbending if we would exist and thrive. This does not say that everything here is governed by incontrovertible "natural" law which needs no human decision as to raw materials, machinery, prices, wages, news-dissemination, education of children, etc.; but it does mean that decisions here must be limited by brute facts and based on science and human wants.

Today the scientific and ethical boundaries of our industrial activities are not in the hands of scientists, teachers, and thinkers; nor is the intervening opportunity for decision left in the control of the public whose welfare such decisions guide. On the contrary, the control of industry is largely in the hands of a powerful few, who decide for their own good and regardless of the good of others. The making of the rules of Industry, then, is not in the hands of All, but in the hands of the Few. The Few who govern industry envisage, not the wants of mankind, but their own wants. They work quietly, often secretly, opposing Law, on the one hand, as interfering with the "freedom of industry"; opposing, on the other hand, free discussion and open determination of the rules of work and wealth and wages, on the ground that harsh natural law brooks no interference by Democracy.

These things today, then, are not matters of free discussion and determination. They are strictly controlled. Who controls them? Who makes these inner, but powerful, rules? Few people know. Others assert and believe these rules are "natural"—a part of our inescapable physical environment. Some of them doubtless are; but most of them are just as clearly the dictates of self-interest laid down by the powerful private persons who today control industry. Just here it is that modern men demand that Democracy supplant skilfully concealed, but all too evident, Monarchy.

In industry, monarchy and the aristocracy rule, and there are those who, calling themselves democratic, believe that democracy can never enter here. Industry, they maintain, is a matter of technical knowledge and ability, and, therefore, is the eternal heritage of the few. They point to the failure of attempts at democratic control in industry, just as we used to point to Spanish-American governments, and they expose, not simply the failures of Russian Soviets,—they fly to arms to prevent that greatest experiment in industrial democracy which the world has yet seen. These are the ones who say: We must control labor or civilization will fail; we must control white labor in Europe and America; above all, we must control yellow labor in Asia and black labor in Africa and the South, else we shall have no tea, or rubber, or cotton. And yet,—and yet it is so easy to give up the dream of democracy? Must industry rule men or may men rule even industry? And unless men rule industry, can they ever hope really to make laws or educate children or create beauty?

That the problem of the democratization of industry is tremendous, let no man deny. We must spread that sympathy and intelligence which tolerates the widest individual freedom despite the necessary public control; we must learn to select for public office ability rather than mere affability. We must stand ready to defer to knowledge and science and judge by result rather than by method; and finally we must face the fact that the final distribution of goods—the question of wages and income is an ethical and not a mere mechanical problem and calls for grave public human judgment and not secrecy and closed doors. All this means time and development. It comes not complete by instant revolution of a day, nor yet by the deferred evolution of a thousand years—it comes daily, bit by bit and step by step, as men and women learn and grow and as children are trained in Truth.

These steps are in many cases clear: the careful, steady increase of public democratic ownership of industry, beginning with the simplest type of public utilities and monopolies, and extending gradually as we learn the way; the use of taxation to limit inheritance and to take the unearned increment for public use beginning (but not ending) with a

"single tax" on monopolized land values; the training of the public in business technique by co-operation in buying and selling, and in industrial technique by the shop committee and manufacturing guild.

But beyond all this must come the Spirit—the Will to Human Brotherhood of all Colors, Races, and Creeds; the Wanting of the Wants of All. Perhaps the finest contribution of current Socialism to the world is neither its light nor its dogma, but the idea back of its one mighty word—Comrade!

The Call

IN THE Land of the Heavy Laden came once a dreary day. And the King, who sat upon the Great White Throne, raised his eyes and saw afar off how the hills around were hot with hostile feet and the sound of the mocking of his enemies struck anxiously on the King's ears, for the King loved his enemies. So the King lifted up his hand in the glittering silence and spake softly, saying: "Call the Servants of the King." Then the herald stepped before the armpost of the throne, and cried: "Thus saith the High and Mighty One, who inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy,—the Servants of the King!"

Now, of the servants of the king there were a hundred and forty-four thousand,—tried men and brave, brawny of arm and quick of wit; aye, too, and women of wisdom and women marvelous in beauty and grace. And yet on this drear day when the King called, their ears were thick with the dust of the enemy, their eyes were blinded with the flashing of his spears, and they hid their faces in dread silence and moved not, even at the King's behest. So the herald called again. And the servants covered in very shame, but none came forth. But the third blast of the herald struck upon a woman's heart, afar. And the woman straightway left her baking and sweeping and the rattle of pans; and the woman straightway left her chatting and gossiping and the sewing of garments, and the woman stood before the King, saying: "The servant of thy servants, O Lord."

Then the King smiled,—smiled wondrously, so that the setting sun burst through the clouds, and the hearts of the King's men dried hard within them. And the low-voiced King said, so low that even they that listened heard not well: "Go, smite me mine enemies, that they cease to do evil in my sight." And the woman quailed and trembled. Three times she lifted her eyes unto the hills and saw the heathen whirling onward in their rage. And seeing, she shrank—three times she shrank and crept to the King's feet.

"O King," she cried, "I am but a woman."

And the King answered: "Go, then, Mother of Men."

And the woman said, "Nay, King, but I am still a maid." Whereat the King cried: "O maid, made Man, thou shalt be Bride of God."

And yet the third time the woman shrank at the thunder in her ears, and whispered: "Dear God, I am black!"

The King spake not, but swept the veiling of his face aside and lifted up the light of his countenance upon her and lo! it was black.

So the woman went forth on the hills of God to do battle for the King, on that drear day in the land of the Heavy Laden, when the heathen raged and imagined a vain thing.

VII

THE DAMNATION OF WOMEN

I REMEMBER four women of my boyhood: my mother, cousin Inez, Emma, and Ide Fuller. They represented the problem of the widow, the wife, the maiden, and the outcast. They were, in color, brown and light-brown, yellow with brown freckles, and white. They existed not for themselves, but for men; they were named after the men to whom they were related and not after the fashion of their own souls.

They were not beings, they were relations and these relations were enfilmed with mystery and secrecy. We did not know the truth or believe it when we heard it. Motherhood! What was it? We did not know or greatly care. My mother and I were good chums. I liked her. After she was dead I loved her with a fierce sense of personal loss.

Inez was a pretty, brown cousin who married. What was marriage? We did not know, neither did she, poor thing! It came to mean for her a litter of children, poverty, a drunken, cruel companion, sickness, and death. Why?

There was no sweeter sight than Emma, — slim, straight, and dainty, darkly flushed with the passion of youth; but her life was a wild, awful struggle to crush her natural, fierce joy of love. She crushed it and became a cold, calculating mockery.

Last there was that awful outcast of the town, the white woman, Ide Fuller. What she was, we did not know. She stood to us as embodied filth and wrong, — but whose filth, whose wrong?

Grown up I see the problem of these women transfused; I hear all about me the unanswered call of youthful love, none the less glorious because of its clean, honest, physical passion. Why unanswered? Because the youth are too poor to marry or if they marry, too poor to have children. They turn aside, then, in three directions: to marry for support, to what men call

shame, or to that which is more evil than nothing. It is an unendurable paradox, it must be changed or the bases of culture will totter and fall.

The world wants healthy babies and intelligent workers. Today we refuse to allow the combination and force thousands of intelligent workers to go childless at a horrible expenditure of moral force, or we damn them if they break our idiotic conventions. Only at the sacrifice of intelligence and the chance to do their best work can the majority of modern women bear children. This is the damnation of women.

All womanhood is hampered today because the world on which it is emerging is a world that tries to worship both virgins and mothers and in the end despises motherhood and despoils virgins.

The future woman must have a life work and economic independence. She must have knowledge. She must have the right of motherhood at her own discretion. The present mincing horror at free womanhood must pass if we are ever to be rid of the bestiality of free manhood, not by guarding the weak in weakness do we gain strength, but by making weakness free and strong.

The world must choose the free woman or the white wraith of the prostitute. Today it wavers between the prostitute and the nun. Civilization must show two things: the glory and beauty of creating life and the need and duty of power and intelligence. This and this only will make the perfect marriage of love and work.

God is Love,
Love is God;
There is no God but Love
And Work is His Prophet!

All this of woman,—but what of black women?
The world that wills to worship womankind studiously forgets its darker sisters. They seem in a sense to typify that veiled Melancholy:

"Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And, therefore, to our weaker view
O'er-laid with black."

Yet the world must heed these daughters of sorrow, from the primal black All-Mother of men down through the ghostly throng of mighty womanhood, who walked in the mysterious dawn of Asia and Africa; from Neith, the primal mother of all, whose feet rest on hell, and whose almighty hands uphold the heavens; all religion, from beauty to

beast, lies on her eager breasts; her body bears the stars, while her shoulders are necklaced by the dragon; from black Neith down to

"That starr'd Ethiop queen who strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs,"

through dusky Cleopatras, dark Candaces, and darker, fiercer Zinghas, to our own day and our own land,—in gentle Phillis; Harriet, the crude Moses; the sybil, Sojourner Truth; and the martyr, Louise De Mortie.

The father and his worship is Asia; Europe is the precocious, self-centered, forward-striving child; but the land of the mother is and was Africa. In subtle and mysterious way, despite her curious history, her slavery, polygamy, and toil, the spell of the African mother pervades her land. Isis, the mother, is still titular goddess, in thought if not in name, of the dark continent. Nor does this all seem to be solely a survival of the historic matriarchate through which all nations pass,—it appears to be more than this,—as if the great black race in passing up the steps of human culture gave the world, not only the Iron Age, the cultivation of the soil, and the domestication of animals, but also, in peculiar emphasis, the mother-idea.

"No mother can love more tenderly and none is more tenderly loved than the Negro mother," writes Schneider. Robin tells of the slave who bought his mother's freedom instead of his own. Mungo Park writes: "Everywhere in Africa, I have noticed that no greater affront can be offered a Negro than insulting his mother. 'Strike me,' cries a Mandingo to his enemy, 'but revile not my mother!'" And the Krus and Fantis say the same. The peoples on the Zambezi and the great lakes cry in sudden fear or joy: "O, my mother!" And the Herero swears (endless oath) "By my mother's tears!" "As the mist in the swamps," cries the Angola Negro, "so lives the love of father and mother."

A student of the present Gold Coast life describes the work of the village headman, and adds: "It is a difficult task that he is set to, but in this matter he has all-powerful helpers in the female members of the family, who will be either the aunts or the sisters or the cousins or the nieces of the headman, and as their interests are identical with his in every particular, the good women spontaneously train up their children to implicit obedience to the headman, whose rule in the family thus becomes a simple and an easy matter. 'The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.' What a power for good in the native state system would the mothers of the Gold Coast and Ashanti become by judicious training upon native lines!"

Schweinfurth declares of one tribe: "A bond between mother and child which lasts for life is the measure of affection shown among the Dyoor" and Ratzel adds:

"Agreeable to the natural relation the mother stands first among the chief influences affecting the children. From the Zulus to the Waganda, we find the mother the most influential counsellor at the court of ferocious sovereigns, like Chaka or Mtesa; sometimes sisters take her place. Thus even with chiefs who possess wives by hundreds the bonds of blood are the strongest and that the woman, though often heavily burdened, is in herself held in no small esteem among the Negroes is clear from the numerous Negro queens, from the medicine women, from the participation in public meetings permitted to women by many Negro peoples."

As I remember through memories of others, backward among my own family, it is the mother I ever recall,—the little, far-off mother of my grandmothers, who sobbed her life away in song, longing for her lost palm-trees and scented waters; the tall and bronzed grandmother, with beaked nose and shrewish eyes, who loved and scolded her black and laughing husband as he smoked lazily in his high oak chair; above all, my own mother, with all her soft brownness,—the brown velvet of her skin, the sorrowful black-brown of her eyes, and the tiny brown-capped waves of her midnight hair as it lay new parted on her forehead. All the way back in these dim distances it is mothers and mothers of mothers who seem to count, while fathers are shadowy memories.

Upon this African mother-idea, the westward slave trade and American slavery struck like doom. In the cruel exigencies of the traffic in men and in the sudden, unprepared emancipation the great pendulum of social equilibrium swung from a time, in 1800,—when America had but eight or less black women to every ten black men,—all too swiftly to a day, in 1870,—when there were nearly eleven women to ten men in our Negro population. This was but the outward numerical fact of social dislocation; within lay polygamy, polyandry, concubinage, and moral degradation. They fought against all this desperately, did these black slaves in the West Indies, especially among the half-free artisans; they set up their ancient household gods, and when Toussaint and Christophe founded their kingdom in Haiti, it was based on old African tribal ties and beneath it was the mother-idea.

The crushing weight of slavery fell on black women. Under it there was no legal marriage, no legal family, no legal control over children. To be sure, custom and religion replaced here and there what the law denied, yet one has but to read advertisements like the following to see the hell beneath the system:

"One hundred dollars reward will be given for my two fellows, Abram and Frank. Abram has a wife at Colonel Stewart's, in Liberty County, and a mother at Thunderbolt, and a sister in Savannah."

"WILLIAM ROBERTS."

"Fifty dollars reward—Ran away from the subscriber a Negro girl named Maria. She is of a copper color, between thirteen and fourteen years of age—bareheaded and barefooted. She is small for her age—very sprightly and very likely. She stated she was going to see her mother at Maysville."

"SANFORD THOMSON."

"Fifty dollars reward—Ran away from the subscriber his Negro man Pauladore, commonly called Paul. I understand General R. Y. Hayne has purchased his wife and children from H. L. Pinckney, Esq., and has them now on his plantation at Goose Creek, where, no doubt, the fellow is frequently lurking."

"T. DAVIS."

The Presbyterian synod of Kentucky said to the churches under its care in 1835: "Brothers and sisters, parents and children, husbands and wives, are torn asunder and permitted to see each other no more. These acts are daily occurring in the midst of us. The shrieks and agony often witnessed on such occasions proclaim, with a trumpet tongue, the iniquity of our system. There is not a neighborhood where these heart-rending scenes are not displayed. There is not a village or road that does not behold the sad procession of manacled outcasts whose mournful countenances tell that they are exiled by force from all that their hearts hold dear."

A sister of a president of the United States declared: "We Southern ladies are complimented with the names of wives, but we are only the mistresses of seragios."

Out of this, what sort of black women could be born into the world of today? There are those who hasten to answer this query in scathing terms and who say lightly and repeatedly that out of black slavery came nothing decent in womanhood; that adultery and uncleanness were their heritage and are their continued portion.

Fortunately so exaggerated a charge is humanly impossible of truth. The half-million women of Negro descent who lived at the beginning of the 19th century had become the mothers of two and one-fourth million daughters at the time of the Civil War and five million granddaughters in 1910. Can all these women be vile and the hunted race continue to grow in wealth and character? Impossible. Yet to save from the past the shreds and vestiges of self-respect has been a terrible task. I most sincerely doubt if any other race of women could have brought its fineness up through so devilish a fire.

Alexander Crummell once said of his sister in the blood: "In her girlhood all the delicate tenderness of her sex has been rudely outraged. In the field, in the rude cabin, in the press-room, in the factory she was thrown into the companionship of coarse and ignorant men. No chance was given her for delicate reserve or tender modesty. From her childhood she was the doomed victim of the grossest passion. All the virtues of her sex were utterly ignored. If the instinct of chastity asserted itself, then she had to fight like a tiger for the ownership and possession of her own person and oftentimes had to suffer pain and lacerations for her virtuous self-assertion. When she reached maturity, all the tender instincts of her womanhood were ruthlessly violated. At the age of marriage,—always prematurely anticipated under slavery—she was mated as the stock of the plantation were mated, not to be the companion of a loved and chosen husband, but to be the breeder of human cattle for the field or the auction block."

Down in such mire has the black motherhood of this race struggled,—starving its own wailing offspring to nurse to the world their swaggering masters; welding for its children chains which affronted even the moral sense of an immoral world. Many a man and woman in the South have lived in wedlock as holy as Adam and Eve and brought forth their brown and golden children, but because the darker woman was helpless, her chivalrous and whiter mate could cast her off at his pleasure and publicly sneer at the body he had privately blasphemed.

I shall forgive the white South much in its final judgment day: I shall forgive its slavery, for slavery is a world-old habit; I shall forgive its fighting for a well-lost cause, and for remembering that struggle with tender tears; I shall forgive its so-called "pride of race," the passion of its hot blood, and even its dear, old, laughable strutting and posing; but one thing I shall never forgive, neither in this world nor the world to come: its wanton and continued and persistent insulting of the black womanhood which it sought and seeks to prostitute to its lust. I cannot forget that it is such Southern gentlemen into whose hands smug Northern hypocrites of today are seeking to place our women's eternal destiny,—men who insist upon withholding from my mother and wife and daughter those signs and appellations of courtesy and respect which elsewhere he withholds only from bawds and courtesans.

The result of this history of insult and degradation has been both fearful and glorious. It has birthed the haunting prostitute, the brawler, and the beast of burden; but it has also given the world an efficient womanhood, whose strength lies in its freedom and whose chastity was won in the teeth of temptation and not in prison and swaddling clothes.

To no modern race does its women mean so much as to the Negro nor come so near to the fulfilment of its meaning. As one of our women writes: "Only the black woman can say 'when and where I enter, in the

quiet, undisputed dignity of my womanhood, without violence and without suing or special patronage, then and there the whole Negro race enters with me."

They came first, in earlier days, like foam flashing on dark, silent waters,—bits of stern, dark womanhood here and there tossed almost carelessly aloft to the world's notice. First and naturally they assumed the panoply of the ancient African mother of men, strong and black, whose very nature beat back the wilderness of oppression and contempt. Such a one was that cousin of my grandmother, whom western Massachusetts remembers as "Mum Bett." Scarred for life by a blow received in defense of a sister, she ran away to Great Barrington and was the first slave, or one of the first, to be declared free under the Bill of Rights of 1780. The son of the judge who freed her, writes:

"Even in her humble station, she had, when occasion required it, an air of command which conferred a degree of dignity and gave her an ascendancy over those of her rank, which is very unusual in persons of any rank or color. Her determined and resolute character, which enabled her to limit the ravages of Shays' mob, was manifested in her conduct and deportment during her whole life. She claimed no distinction, but it was yielded to her from her superior experience, energy, skill, and sagacity. Having known this woman as familiarly as I knew either of my parents, I cannot believe in the moral or physical inferiority of the race to which she belonged. The degradation of the African must have been otherwise caused than by natural inferiority."

It was such strong women that laid the foundations of the great Negro church of today, with its five million members and ninety millions of dollars in property. One of the early mothers of the church, Mary Still, writes thus quaintly, in the forties:

"When we were as castouts and spurned from the large churches, driven from our knees, pointed at by the proud, neglected by the careless, without a place of worship, Allen, faithful to the heavenly calling, came forward and laid the foundation of this connection. The women, like the women at the sepulcher, were early to aid in laying the foundation of the temple and in helping to carry up the noble structure and in the name of their God set up their banner; most of our aged mothers are gone from this to a better state of things. Yet some linger still on their staves, watching with intense interest the ark as it moves over the tempestuous waves of opposition and ignorance. . . .

"But the labors of these women stopped not here, for they knew well that they were subject to affliction and death. For the purpose of mutual aid, they banded themselves together in society capacity, that they might be better able to administer to each others' sufferings and to soften their own pillows. So we find the females in the early history of the church abounding in good works and in acts of true benevolence."

From such spiritual ancestry came two striking figures of war-time, — Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth.

For eight or ten years previous to the breaking out of the Civil War, Harriet Tubman was a constant attendant at anti-slavery conventions, lectures, and other meetings; she was a black woman of medium size, smiling countenance, with her upper front teeth gone, attired in coarse but neat clothes, and carrying always an old-fashioned reticule at her side. Usually as soon as she sat down she would drop off in sound sleep.

She was born a slave in Maryland, in 1820, bore the marks of the lash on her flesh; and had been made partially deaf, and perhaps to some degree mentally unbalanced by a blow on the head in childhood. Yet she was one of the most important agents of the Underground Railroad and a leader of fugitive slaves. She ran away in 1849 and went to Boston in 1854, where she was welcomed into the homes of the leading abolitionists and where every one listened with tense interest to her strange stories. She was absolutely illiterate, with no knowledge of geography, and yet year after year she penetrated the slave states and personally led North over three hundred fugitives without losing a single one. A standing reward of \$10,000 was offered for her, but as she said: "The whites cannot catch us, for I was born with the charm, and the Lord has given me the power." She was one of John Brown's closest advisers and only severe sickness prevented her presence at Harper's Ferry.

When the war cloud broke, she hastened to the front, flitting down along her own mysterious paths, haunting the armies in the field, and serving as guide and nurse and spy. She followed Sherman in his great march to the sea and was with Grant at Petersburg, and always in the camps the Union officers silently saluted her.

The other woman belonged to a different type, — a tall, gaunt, black, unsmiling sybil, weighted with the woe of the world. She ran away from slavery and giving up her own name took the name of Sojourner Truth. She says: "I can remember when I was a little, young girl, how my old mammy would sit out of doors in the evenings and look up at the stars and groan, and I would say, 'Mammy, what makes you groan so?' And she would say, 'I am groaning to think of my poor children; they do not know where I be and I don't know where they be. I look up at the stars and they look up at the stars!'"

Her determination was founded on unwavering faith in ultimate good. Wendell Phillips says that he was once in Faneuil Hall, when Frederick Douglass was one of the chief speakers. Douglass had been describing the wrongs of the Negro race and as he proceeded he grew more and more excited and finally ended by saying that they had no hope of justice from the whites, no possible hope except in their own right arms. It must come to blood! They must fight for themselves.

Sojourner Truth was sitting, tall and dark, on the very front seat facing the platform, and in the hush of feeling when Douglass sat down she spoke out in her deep, peculiar voice, heard all over the hall: "Frederick, is God dead?"

Such strong, primitive types of Negro womanhood in America seem to some to exhaust its capabilities. They know less of a not more worthy, but a finer type of black woman wherein trembles all of that delicate sense of beauty and striving for self-realization, which is as characteristic of the Negro soul as is its quaint strength and sweet laughter. George Washington wrote in grave and gentle courtesy to a Negro woman, in 1776, that he would "be happy to see" at his headquarters at any time, a person "to whom nature has been so liberal and beneficial in her dispensations." This child, Phillis Wheatley, sang her trite and halting strain to a world that wondered and could not produce her like. Measured today her muse was slight and yet, feeling her striving spirit, we call to her still in her own words:

"Through thickest glooms look back, immortal shade."

Perhaps even higher than strength and art loom human sympathy and sacrifice as characteristic of Negro womanhood. Long years ago, before the Declaration of Independence, Kate Ferguson was born in New York. Freed, widowed, and bereaved of her children before she was twenty, she took the children of the streets of New York, white and black, to her empty arms, taught them, found them homes, and with Dr. Mason of Murray Street Church established the first modern Sunday School in Manhattan.

Sixty years later came Mary Shadd up out of Delaware. She was tall and slim, of that ravishing dream-born beauty, — that twilight of the races which we call mulatto. Well-educated, vivacious, with determination shining from her sharp eyes, she threw herself singlehanded into the great Canadian pilgrimage when thousands of hunted black men hurried northward and crept beneath the protection of the lion's paw. She became teacher, editor, and lecturer; tramping afoot through winter snows, pushing without blot or blemish through crowd and turmoil to conventions and meetings, and finally becoming recruiting agent for the United States government in gathering Negro soldiers in the West.

After the war the sacrifice of Negro women for freedom and uplift is one of the finest chapters in their history. Let one life typify all: Louise De Mortie, a free-born Virginia girl, had lived most of her life in Boston. Her high forehead, swelling lips, and dark eyes marked her for a woman of feeling and intellect. She began a successful career as a public reader. Then came the War and the Call. She went to the

orphaned colored children of New Orleans,—out of freedom into insult and oppression and into the teeth of the yellow fever. She toiled and dreamed. In 1887 she had raised money and built an orphan home and that same year, in the thirty-fourth year of her young life, she died, saying simply: "I belong to God."

As I look about me today in this veiled world of mine, despite the noisier and more spectacular advance of my brothers, I instinctively feel and know that it is the five million women of my race who really count. Black women (and women whose grandmothers were black) are today furnishing our teachers; they are the main pillars of those social settlements which we call churches; and they have with small doubt raised three-fourths of our church property. If we have today, as seems likely, over a billion dollars of accumulated goods, who shall say how much of it has been wrung from the hearts of servant girls and washerwomen and women toilers in the fields? As makers of two million homes these women are today seeking in marvelous ways to show forth our strength and beauty and our conception of the truth.

In the United States in 1910 there were 4,931,882 women of Negro descent; over twelve hundred thousand of these were children, another million were girls and young women under twenty, and two and a half million were adults. As a mass these women were unlettered,—a fourth of those from fifteen to twenty-five years of age were unable to write. These women are passing through, not only a moral, but an economic revolution. Their grandmothers married at twelve and fifteen, but twenty-seven per cent of these women today who have passed fifteen are still single.

Yet these black women toil and toil hard. There were in 1910 two and a half million Negro homes in the United States. Out of these homes walked daily to work two million women and girls over ten years of age,—over half of the colored female population as against a fifth in the case of white women. These, then, are a group of workers, fighting for their daily bread like men; independent and approaching economic freedom! They furnished a million farm laborers, 80,000 farmers, 22,000 teachers, 600,000 servants and washerwomen, and 50,000 in trades and merchandizing.

The family group, however, which is the ideal of the culture with which these folk have been born, is not based on the idea of an economically independent working mother. Rather its ideal harks back to the sheltered harem with the mother emerging at first as nurse and homemaker, while the man remains the sole breadwinner. What is the inevitable result of the clash of such ideals and such facts in the colored group? Broken families.

Among native white women one in ten is separated from her husband

by death, divorce, or desertion. Among Negroes the ratio is one in seven. Is the cause racial? No, it is economic, because there is the same high ratio among the white foreign-born. The breaking up of the present family is the result of modern working and sex conditions and it hits the laborers with terrible force. The Negroes are put in a peculiarly difficult position, because the wage of the male breadwinner is below the standard, while the openings for colored women in certain lines of domestic work, and now in industries, are many. Thus while toil holds the father and brother in country and town at low wages, the sisters and mothers are called to the city. As a result the Negro women outnumber the men nine or ten to eight in many cities, making what Charlotte Gilman bluntly calls "cheap women."

What shall we say to this new economic equality in a great laboring class? Some people within and without the race deplore it. "Back to the homes with the women," they cry, "and higher wage for the men." But how impossible this is has been shown by war conditions. Cessation of foreign migration has raised Negro men's wages, to be sure—but it has not only raised Negro women's wages, it has opened to them a score of new avenues of earning a living. Indeed, here, in microcosm and with differences emphasizing sex equality, is the industrial history of labor in the 19th and 20th centuries. We cannot abolish the new economic freedom of women. We cannot imprison women again in a home or require them all on pain of death to be nurses and housekeepers.

What is today the message of these black women to America and to the world? The uplift of women is, next to the problem of the color line and the peace movement, our greatest modern cause. When, now, two of these movements—woman and color—combine in one, the combination has deep meaning.

In other years women's way was clear: to be beautiful, to be petted, to bear children. Such has been their theoretic destiny and if perchance they have been ugly, hurt, and barren, that has been forgotten with studied silence. In partial compensation for this narrowed destiny the white world has lavished its politeness on its womankind,—its chivalry and bows, its uncoverings and courtesies—all the accumulated homage disused for courts and kings and craving exercise. The revolt of white women against this preordained destiny has in these latter days reached splendid proportions, but it is the revolt of an aristocracy of brains and ability,—the middle class and rank and file still plod on in the appointed path, paid by the homage, the almost mocking homage, of men.

From black women of America, however, (and from some others, too, but chiefly from black women and their daughters' daughters) this gauze has been withheld and without semblance of such apology they

have been frankly trodden under the feet of men. They are and have been objected to, apparently for reasons peculiarly exasperating to reasoning human beings. When in this world a man comes forward with a thought, a deed, a vision, we ask not, how does he look,—but what is his message? It is of but passing interest whether or not the messenger is beautiful or ugly,—the *message* is the thing. This, which is axiomatic among men, has been in past ages but partially true if the messenger was a woman. The world still wants to ask that a woman primarily be pretty and if she is not, the mob pouts and asks querulously, "What else are women for?" Beauty "is its own excuse for being," but there are other excuses, as most men know, and when the white world objects to black women because it does not consider them beautiful, the black world of right asks two questions: "What is beauty?" and, "Suppose you think them ugly, what then? If ugliness and unconventionality and eccentricity of face and deed do not hinder men from doing the world's work and reaping the world's reward, why should it hinder women?"

Other things being equal, all of us, black and white, would prefer to be beautiful in face and form and suitably clothed; but most of us are not so, and one of the mightiest revolts of the century is against the devilish decree that no woman is a woman who is not by present standards a beautiful woman. This decree the black women of America have in large measure escaped from the first. Not being expected to be merely ornamental, they have girded themselves for work, instead of adorning their bodies only for play. Their sturdier minds have concluded that if a woman be clean, healthy, and educated, she is as pleasing as God wills and far more useful than most of her sisters. If in addition to this she is pink and white and straight-haired, and some of her fellow-men prefer this, well and good; but if she is black or brown and crowned in curled mists (and this to us is the most beautiful thing on earth), this is surely the flimsiest excuse for spiritual incarceration or banishment.

The very attempt to do this in the case of Negro Americans has strangely over-reached itself. By so much as the defective eyesight of the white world rejects black women as beauties, by so much the more it needs them as human beings,—an enviable alternative, as many a white woman knows. Consequently, for black women alone, as a group, "handsome is that handsome does" and they are asked to be no more beautiful than God made them, but they are asked to be efficient, to be strong, fertile, muscled, and able to work. If they marry, they must as independent workers be able to help support their children, for their men are paid on a scale which makes sole support of the family often impossible.

On the whole, colored working women are paid as well as white working women for similar work, save in some higher grades, while colored

men get from one-fourth to three-fourths less than white men. The result is curious and three-fold: the economic independence of black women is increased, the breaking up of Negro families must be more frequent, and the number of illegitimate children is decreased more slowly among them than other evidences of culture are increased, just as was once true in Scotland and Bavaria.

What does this mean? It forecasts a mighty dilemma which the whole world of civilization, despite its will, must one time frankly face: the unhusbanded mother or the childless wife. God send us a world with woman's freedom and married motherhood inextricably wed, but until He sends it, I see more of future promise in the betrayed girl-mothers of the black belt than in the childless wives of the white North, and I have more respect for the colored servant who yields to her frank longing for motherhood than for her white sister who offers up children for clothes. Out of a sex freedom that today makes us shudder will come in time a day when we will no longer pay men for work they do not do, for the sake of their harem; we will pay women what they earn and insist on their working and earning it; we will allow those persons to vote who know enough to vote, whether they be black or female, white or male; and we will ward race suicide, not by further burdening the over-burdened, but by honoring motherhood, even when the sneaking father shirks his duty.

"Wait till the lady passes," said a Nashville white boy.

"She's no lady; she's a nigger," answered another.

So some few women are born free, and some amid insult and scarlet letters achieve freedom; but our women in black had freedom thrust contemptuously upon them. With that freedom they are buying an untrammelled independence and dear as is the price they pay for it, it will in the end be worth every taunt and groan. Today the dreams of the mothers are coming true. We have still our poverty and degradation, our lewdness and our cruel toil; but we have, too, a vast group of women of Negro blood who for strength of character, cleanness of soul, and unselfish devotion of purpose, is today easily the peer of any group of women in the civilized world. And more than that, in the great rank and file of our five million women we have the up-working of new revolutionary ideals, which must in time have vast influence on the thought and action of this land.

For this, their promise, and for their hard past, I honor the women of my race. Their beauty,—their dark and mysterious beauty of midnight eyes, crumpled hair, and soft, full-featured faces—is perhaps more to me than to you, because I was born to its warm and subtle spell; but their worth is yours as well as mine. No other women on earth could

have emerged from the hell of force and temptation which once engulfed and still surrounds black women in America with half the modesty and womanliness that they retain. I have always felt like bowing myself before them in all abasement, searching to bring some tribute to these long-suffering victims, these burdened sisters of mine, whom the world, the wise, white world, loves to affront and ridicule and wantonly to insult. I have known the women of many lands and nations, — I have known and seen and lived beside them, but none have I known more sweetly feminine, more unswervingly loyal, more desperately earnest, and more instinctively pure in body and in soul than the daughters of my black mothers. This, then, — a little thing — to their memory and inspiration.

Children of the Moon

I am dead;
 Yet somehow, somewhere,
 In Time's weird contradiction, I
 May tell of that dread deed, wherewith
 I brought to Children of the Moon
 Freedom and vast salvation.

I was a woman born,
 And trod the streaming street,
 That ebbs and flows from Harlem's hills,
 Through caves and cañons limned in light,
 Down to the twisting sea.

That night of nights,
 I stood alone and at the End,
 Until the sudden highway to the moon,
 Golden in splendor,
 Became too real to doubt.

Dimly I set foot upon the air,
 I fled, I flew, through the thrills of light,
 With all about, above, below, the whirling
 Of almighty wings.

I found a twilight land,
 Where, hardly hid, the sun
 Sent softly-saddened rays of
 Red and brown to burn the iron soil
 And bathe the snow-white peaks
 In mighty splendor.