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Utopia

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in all our states the advantage which other countries, and especially our nearest neighbor, whose conditions are most like our own, have of us, in the system of admission and discipline of the members of the bar.

UTOPIA

'Tis a beautiful thought
Born of dreamland's ken.

Dominating personalities represent great eras. Domination is progression or retrogression. Either causes rebellions, passive and active, in spirit, in strife. From the aftermath emerges strength by knowledge of frailty, unity by suffering and scarifice, sagacity by sophistry, government by failure, nationalism by war, universalism by relation, thus dissipating the theories and hopes of our peace propagandists that in the immediate future, when the horrible din of the present war will be ringing in our ears, awaits an indeterminate era of peace or the millennium.

Poets have dreamed, philosophers have thought of Utopia. Statesmen have debated, prophets have predicted Utopia. Artists have painted, politicians have promised Utopia. Yet, obscured by the halo from the crown, it remains floating about in the ethereal blue, buffeted by the tropical winds of first one and then the other, long sought for, almost illusory, a balloon without ballast.

Properly speaking relation is of two kinds: between human beings consanguinity and affinity, between nations blood and treaty. Primitive man almost invariably responded to the call of blood. As with the man so with the tribe. But as civilization spreads educating the *sensus animalis* of the masses, increasing the common intelligence,

elevating the common morals, uniting the better and independent elements of all parties and religions in common endeavor, concerted action, conditions are changing, altering our relations, bringing out their true meanings. The impulse remains but reason dictates, the conscience either approves or condemns.

Since the days of idolatry when Confucius, whose system was nevertheless essentially mundane in its methods and aims; of Socrates, who, looking dimly through a veil, saw a vision; of all those lesser celebrities, revolutionizers of thought, who wrote their names indelibly upon the pages of profane history with their life's blood for a broader, better, more comprehensive scheme of life; since the days of miracles, divine revelations, the necessity for which is a remarkable proof of man's skepticism; since the days of Martin Luther, the reformer, of Bonaparte, the ambitious, of Karl Marx, the great Socialist, has there dawned a more propitious time to convince human beings that Utopia means a real, a practical state, not one of dreams like Sir Thomas More's, Sir Walter Raleigh's or John Locke's, a place of ideal perfection, but realities, where they may enjoy, molested though they be, their heritage.

All Europe is embroiled in war. Traditions, customs, laws are being shattered, precedents made. The old feudal principle, "All for one, one for all," is, while an admirable policy, monarchical, not governmental, universal. Faced with truth, forced by necessity the exponents of same are loudly protesting that they are working for the common weal. Their machinations are apparent. Since time immemorial plots of similar import have been conceived by an Alexander, a Caesar, a Charlemagne and a Hapsburg, a Bourbon, a Hohenzollern, resorted to by despotism: With a Lenzuoli, a Mazarin, a Bismarck to sing their praise and a Gonsalvo, a Conde, a von Moltke to decorate their banners with victory, they have striven in vain to conceal their diabolical designs by blinding the eyes of the

people with the glory of accomplishment, achievement. Even now the magic of the word Sedan kindles the passions. Concentration of power, however, disturbs the national equilibrium and produces in the mind of a militarist a sort of cerebral congestion culminating in disaster.

The Israelites under the judges present a rather odd but most democratic form of government. Their officials, however, were prelates. The mistakes made by them affected virtue, helped destroy the morals, uproot the religion. They were never able to differentiate the functions or distinguish between the two capacities combined in one. As a result the opportunity afforded ambition made a king possible and at the time probably necessary. The early Grecian republics surrounded as they were by warlike barbarians developed military chieftains, most of whom ultimately became dictators possessing almost absolute power for all practical purposes. The Roman republics had their citizens, plebeians, serfs. They lacked homogeneity, democratic equality. The English republic under Cromwell was a paradox. The first French republic had its citizens and emigres, its Jacobins and Royalists, its Robespierre, Danton and Marat. The second French republic was almost equally unfortunate. It had its partisans of the Bonapartes and Bourbons. The present French republic has been afflicted with a wavering, vacillating band of socialists and possesses a compulsory military system incompatible with a democratic form of government, made necessary, however, by the exigencies of its situation. The Swiss republic is a negligible quantity, being too small to affect welt-politick. Our own republic stands above all, a government for the people and by the people.

The question, therefore, naturally arising is, are we living in a Utopian age? Obviously it must be answered in the negative. The present condition of the world, its past progress and apparent stagnation at times justifies a conclusion and signifies that we are not living

in a Utopian age, but presages it. Upon the termination of the great war now raging, when the glamour of victory shall have faded crimson, dissatisfaction with the form of government under which they are living will become manifest in the usual, time-worn way among the inhabitants of the countries involved.

“From discontent grows treason
And on the stalk of treason death.”—Shakespeare.

The offenders against the principle that all are free and equal will be punished. The fallacy that any person rules by divine right will be exploded even in this enlightened age on the scaffold. Many problems of national and international import of vital interest, the solution of which has been postponed by the favorite artifice of despots,

“Tyrants swim safest in a crimson flood”
—Shakespeare.

will be again presented. Their solving, contrary to the intentions of those responsible for this almost world-wide war, will be all the more sure, definite, certain. The experiences, sacrifices made by the people will quicken their interest. Where moral ignorance prevails the resistance of autocrats to the advance of democrats will be most obstinate. But success will inevitably crown the efforts of the latter. Despotie governments will be replaced by liberal ones. The old order of life will be changed. Ability, not heredity, will determine the man and his position in life. A wonderful opportunity will be presented for the establishment of good, sound, stable governments during this reconstruction period.

This nation possessing as it does the most practical and successful government will undoubtedly serve as an example. Our position as the leading neutral defender of humanitarian principles will naturally attract attention. We will be in a position to render to the world great and lasting help, and are, therefore, almost duty bound

to preserve a strict neutrality and follow in the footsteps of our forefathers. We are not and will not be expected to bow and cringe before the war god. Our rights must be defended. They are fundamental, inalienable, sacred and are necessary requisites of sovereign power. We cannot surrender them or acquiesce in their violation, for by so doing we, as did the nations of old, invite destruction, a certain inevitable result of a bigoted opulence. In order to maintain neutrality we must present an undivided front, be peaceful but firm and resolute. Our mission is plain, course patent, duty certain. We must be Americans first, last and always, commanding respect by our scrupulous observance of international laws, humanitarian principles and the dictates of justice.

While the schemes of Utopian dreamers are but glimmering generalities we will have accomplished much towards giving to the world liberal government, not of the Utopian kind but, since death alone removes all inclination to sin, disability, the most perfect existing

E. H. DECKER,

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