

GOD LEFT CHALLENGE IN THE EARTH

By Dr. Allan A. Stockdale

When God made the Earth, He could have finished it. But He didn't. Instead He left it as a raw material -- to tease us, to tantalize us, to set us thinking and experimenting and risking and adventuring! And therein we find our supreme interest in living.

Have you ever noticed that small children in a nursery will ignore clever mechanical toys in order to build with spools and strings and sticks and blocks, a world of their own imagination?

And so with grown-ups, too. God gave us a world unfinished, so that we might share in the joys and satisfaction of creation.

He left the oil in Trenton rock.

He left the aluminum in the clay.

He left the electricity in the clouds.

He left the rivers un-bridged -- and the mountains un-trailed.

He left the forests un-felled and the cities un-built.

He left the laboratories un-opened.

He left the diamonds un-cut.

He gave us the challenge of raw materials, not the satisfaction of perfect, finished things.

He left the music un-sung and the dramas un-played.

He left the poetry un-dreamed, in order that men and women might not become bored, but engage in stimulating, exciting, creative activities that keep them thinking, working, experimenting and experiencing all the joys and durable satisfactions of achievement.

A man in Florida turned a miserable old green-water swamp, mosquito-infested and snake-inhabited, into a beautiful garden.

Once a sanctimonious visitor, who was inspecting it, exclaimed, "Oh, dear brother, what a beautiful garden you and the Lord have made from that swamp!"

"Yes," came the reply, "but you should have seen it when the Lord had it

all by Himself!"

So it is with all the world. There is no Shangri-La where our every want can be supplied by wishing. There is no substance to the philosophy of "getting by." There is nothing worthwhile gained by chance.

Work, thought, creation. These give life its stimulus, its real satisfaction, its intriguing value.

In Oberlin, Ohio, there is a woodshed, and by the woodshed, a grave. There lies Charles Martin Hall. For years he experimented in that woodshed on how to get aluminum out of clay at less than the then market price of \$500 a pound. He risked his time and money. He suffered discouragement after discouragement. But when at last he found the way, he created an industry which today employs a quarter million workers.

Each year thousands of high school and college graduates leave their study halls to seek jobs. A few with ability to experiment will accept the challenge of raw material as did Charles Martin Hall. In realizing their dreams they will enlist the support of others with faith in them and the courage to back that faith, at the risk of their savings, through periods of discouragement and disappointment... Then management know-how will translate those dreams into buildings, machinery, stable jobs -- to make life better for all Americans.

That is how our nation has progressed from a wilderness frontier. That is how we will reach a standard of world civilization yet undreamed.

Progress comes, not by some magic word and not by government edict, but from the thoughts, the toil, the tears, the triumphs of individuals who accept the challenge of raw material -- and by the grace of God-given talents produce results which satisfy the needs of men.