

How the South May Win Leadership.

A Great Opportunity for Our Churches Set Forth in Our Fourteenth Letter From Abroad—What We of the South Need to Do is (1) To Care for Our Resources as Well as Europe Does and (2) to Educate Our People as Well as Germany Does—Some Other Lessons From Our European Neighbors.

Europe is now behind me, and for ten days now we have been upon the high seas, going as fast as our mighty engines can carry us on the long, long way from Naples to New York. There are yet three more days of the voyage.

But the trip has not seemed long—all too short, in fact; and there is general regret on shipboard that we are not to be out for a full week longer. Certain it is that few travelers have ever been more favored in the matter of weather than we have been; and the joy of ocean traveling, as everybody knows, depends largely upon the weather. Barring a heavy summer shower while we were anchored at the Azores, we have had only fair days and blue skies, with breeze enough most of the time to make the temperature delightful and sunsets more gorgeous than are ever seen on land, because the most glorious tints are nearest the horizon and obstructions on land prevent your seeing these in all their beauty. But it is at night that the spell and charm and mystery of the sea are most potent, and always to artist and poet the thought of the sea suggests the moonlight upon its unresting bosom. Here again we have been peculiarly favored, for the moon was new just before we left Naples and is now at the full, and to sit out at night upon the upper deck with the open sky above you, and the moonlight upon the waves as far as the eye can reach—well, this is almost enough to wring poetry out of a wooden Indian.

Nobody has been seasick, so far as I have observed; and in fact, our party has come to the conclusion that seasickness is by no means such a terror as it is commonly believed to be. As one of my friends remarked: "Think what a fool I have been! Here I have waited ten years to come across, dreading the ocean voyage, when it is really the finest part of the whole trip!"

And now that both Europe and America are far away—so far away that we can almost doubt the existence of any land at all, and imagine ourselves the solitary inhabitants of a water-covered planet—it is the best time that I shall ever have perhaps for contrasting the Old World and the New, for the purpose of seeing what we of the newer countries can learn from our European fatherlands.

Be it said then, in the beginning, that this trip has made me gladder than ever that I am an American, much as it has taught me of the superior industrial methods of many European peoples. If we only learn (1) to care for our resources as well as Europe cares for hers, and (2) to educate our people as well as Germany educates hers, the time must soon come (as we count time in the lives of nations) when the United States will stand the acknowledged leader among the countries of the world. My ambition is that we of the South, before this achievement is consummated, shall make our section the foremost section of the United States, and therefore the foremost section of what must become the foremost nation of the earth.

It is a high ambition, and yet it does not seem to me too high for us to set up as a working ideal. We belong to a race that has won the mastery of the world, and to the best branches of that race. I have commented in former letters upon the remarkable similarity of the names seen and heard in English and Southern towns—ten times as many familiar surnames on the business signs in English towns as I should find in New York or Boston—and this is but one evidence of the oft-

repeated fact that the purest Anglo-Saxon blood in America is in the South. English, Scotch, Dutch, German—from the masterful Teutonic races our blood has come; and our citizenship has not been diluted by long decades of immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe. Immensely to the advantage of the South in the long struggle for supremacy must be this fact.

It must also be to our advantage that more largely perhaps in the Cotton States than in any

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The surest sign of promise for our future in all our recent history is the campaign for better schools which has made such wonderful progress in the South these last ten years. By the time I reached Italy, after traveling in half a dozen other European countries, I had been so much impressed by the way in which education makes itself felt in every line of commerce and industry that I exclaimed: "A careful observer, with a few years of travel, ought to be able to guess a country's percentage of illiteracy, simply by an hour's ride through the farms or the towns!"

other section of the world to-day is the old Book of Books accepted as the unquestioned moral and spiritual criterion. Much more strongly Puritan now than even New England itself, the South is learning what New England did not learn in time—how to combine the sterling uprightness of Puritanism with the warmth and beauty of modern culture. To keep the stronger virtues of Puritanism and yet hold on to tolerance and hospitality and joyfulness—this is the character which, it seems to me, the South should set itself to develop as typical of the Southerner; and the qualities are in us for the making of this product, if only they are properly handled. That we have the qualities of generosity, geniality, and hospitality is unquestioned; and that an unusual religious instinct is also ours it takes but a little observation in other sections to prove. I have traveled from the Atlantic to the Pacific in America, and now in most of the leading European countries, and nowhere have I found Sunday observed as it is in the South, the church in such favor, or religion so much a part of the people's lives. It will be well indeed if the church with us shall recognize its great opportunity, shall lend itself to the occasion, and make itself the mightiest factor in the production of that ideal character of which I have been writing—the character which will combine the unswerving uprightness of the Puritan with the warmth and geniality for which

the Southern man is already noted. In Europe religion has been reduced in most countries to fable and form: it is a mixture of mediaeval traditions and of ecclesiastical calisthenics, dead formalism that does not lay hold upon the lives of the people; and in France especially the intolerance and formalism of the church is largely responsible for the spread of atheism.

I mention this matter at some length because the church has an opportunity in the South such as it has hardly anywhere else in the world, and because upon its use of this opportunity depends in a large measure the future rank of our section. It is not sentimentalism, is not a mere pious generalization, but it is the truth of history that no people can achieve and maintain greatness except by adherence to rigid moral standards. When the old Psalmist said centuries ago, "Happy is that people whose God is the Lord," he was preaching as good politics as religion.

There is another thing, as I intimated in the beginning, to which we must give attention, and that is the thorough education of our people. The surest sign of promise for our future in all our recent history is the campaign for better schools which has made such wonderful progress in the South these last ten years. By the time I reached Italy, after traveling in half a dozen other European countries, I had been so much impressed by the way in which education makes itself felt in every line of commerce and industry that I exclaimed: "A careful observer, with a few years of travel, ought to be able to guess a country's percentage of illiteracy, simply by an hour's ride through the farms or the towns!"

And this is hardly an exaggeration. The hope of the South is in the education of its people, all its people. Every ignorant, inefficient man, white or black, in a community makes it poorer, makes everybody in the community poorer; and if he can not be educated to do good work, he ought to give way to some one who can be so trained. If the South's sons are illiterate, if your sons are illiterate, no other qualities can save them from defeat in the fierce industrial struggle of to-day. Our aim should be to spend still more money on our schools and to make them train more and more for actual life, while the work of experiment stations, farmers' institutes, demonstration workers, farm papers, etc., in educating the older farmers who have passed out of the schools, ought also to have the fullest encouragement a people can give.

There is one other thing, moreover, to which we can not give too earnest heed, and that is the conservation of our natural resources. I have mentioned this in a previous letter; but I was reminded of it again yesterday when a distinguished Pennsylvanian on our boat told me of his son's trip to Germany last year as the representative of a leading American industrial institution that was seeking information as to the methods of its competitors abroad. What the young American found and reported was this: that the American factory had the advantage in nearness and cheapness of raw material, in the thoroughness and efficiency of machinery and equipment, and also in the skill and intelligence of its workmen, and there was but one thing in which the European excelled—economy. The American factory was more wasteful.

Of almost everything the same thing is true. Lands, forests, mines,—all are handled with greater care and economy in Europe than in America; and millions of people make a living from industries that our people would laugh at as impossible. In Antwerp I saw the ragged bales of cotton from the South unloaded at the wharves—cotton bought at 8 or 10 cents a pound; but the ladies of our party tell me that when the lace makers whom I

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