THE UNFULFILLED PROMISE

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Every nation is like a child; it must have its toys and those toys are words. It selects one, plays with it, vaunts of it before other nations, then suddenly discards it to choose another which will in turn be toyed with and bandied about, then forgotten—unless it has become no longer a mere toy but something without which a nation cannot exist. In 1776 that word was Freedom; in 1861 it was Union and Equality; in 1916 it was Democracy. Freedom, Union, Equality, Democracy, all four have remained, honored, loved, and cherished, indispensable to the nation's welfare. Now that dominant word is Peace. Everywhere we hear it, Peace lectures, Peace Funds, Peace associations and Peace conferences. Yet this word is not a new toy. Men and nations have played with it often before, but always it has been laid aside, a toy of which they have grown tired. Never has it been retained as a vital necessity.

It has been nearly two thousand years since the promise of peace was given to the shepherds on the hill near Bethlehem. Nearly twenty centuries have elapsed since God sent his messenger to those lowly worshippers with the immortal words, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will toward men." We still repeat the promise, but does it carry with it today the same hope and the same faith in the goodness of the Almighty which it did then? After we have lived through such an experience as the world war, after we have seen villages torn down, acres and acres of land devastated, womanhood dishonored, manhood maimed and murdered, are we to turn away from God and say, "He has had nearly 2000 years in which to fulfill His promise. He has failed His people, and His book is worthless?" Many have done so. Many have lost their faith and placed the blame on God. Yet ought we not first to look back and see where we may have failed the Creator, where we may have thwarted the fulfillment of that promise? I repeat, we are not the first to demand peace. Following the pain and ravages of every war has come the inevitable plea for peace. No conqueror, no ruler, no president ever asked for the control of a state without first giving to the people a promise of Peace. Some have never tried to fulfill it; some have tried hard; many have failed.

This is an age of logic and reason. Ought we not then, before we conclude that Peace is impracticable and impossible, to use that same logic and reason which has guided practical America in all of her scientific research and business? The first steps in such a study of Peace and its possibilities would be to decide what institutions might be the basis of Peace. There are six of these—first, governmental organization; second, military power; third, economic success; fourth, religion; fifth, leadership, and sixth, education. To test the stability of these institutions as the basis of Peace, we can secure our facts from history.

Under the ancient Emperor Diocletian, Rome rose to the highest success where she remained for nearly a hundred years, then fell. No country ever had a more ideal organization of government, yet we read that it bred discontent and unrest among the people and brought the nation to bankruptcy. We might organize the world with its tribunals and courts, the organization might be perfect in its details, yet that would not bring Peace. Organiza-

tion is only the machinery of government; many more factors are needed to make it function properly.

Next, military power. Rome also tried that. Colonies and provinces were garrisoned with her soldiers. Did they bring peace? For a time, yes. But the power soon weakened. Too much attention was paid to the army; agriculture and commerce suffered so that when the barbarians swept down from the north the armies could not hold them back. The military power could not protect the organized government without the economic support of the country. Is it, then, economic success which is needed?

We need not go back far in history to find a country which excelled in all three of these institutions. That country was the German Empire. She had a wonderfully well-organized government; she had power to back that organization; she had economic prosperity. Equipped with all these, what caused her downfall? Her ideals! She lacked religion, not religion in the narrow sense, for the Germans were devout worshippers, but that religion which comes direct from God, which breeds sympathy and understanding and unselfishness—the principles of Christianity. That religion was not strong enough to dominate the policy of the nation. One thing more is needed. We cannot hope for peace while men exist who do not possess the desire for Peace, who enjoy war because it brings them personal gain. All men must be dominated by God's policy of good will toward men—the religion of Christ.

But can religion alone bring Peace? Can the desire to have Peace make it certain? We have seen the work of many an honest pope who was trying to bring Peace to the world, fail utterly as soon as his personal power was gone. Great rulers have brought Peace to their realms through this same policy, but invariably we find that Peace ending at the ruler's death. The principles of humanity need someone back of them to put them into action, to place them before the people, to explain them so that all will seek to follow. Wise leaders, then, are another essential to Peace.

Many people today are saying, "We have a wonderful plan for world organization. We can have power to put this plan into action. We have economic prosperity. We have a working religion. What we need now is a leader. I ask you, "Has the world ever produced a greater leader than the late President Wilson?" But you say, "He has not given us peace." Was it because he was not a leader or because the citizens of the world were not willing and not capable of following? There was a time when a genius, a great leader, a national hero could grasp the torch of progress and carry it practically unhampered far into the fields of advancement. After he had gone ahead and lighted up the way, the rank and file of humanity would have followed. Now, a leader, no matter how brilliant, no matter how courageous is shackled to that rank and file. He cannot move without dragging them with him. He can point out the way and explain the course, but to forge ahead is not in his power. And do they follow unwillingly? Not at all! Humanity today demands an explanation, a guarantee before every step it takes. I am not condemning this lack of blind hero worship. I would rather laud it. I do say that the great mass of humanity which casts the vote should be able to recognize progress, should be able to comprehend a leader. True we need leaders, but more than leaders we need a trained and intelligent public. And that training can come only through education. William B. Butler gives the aim of education as the control of individual life, of national life, and of international life. The control which it seeks is one of knowledge, wisdom and skill, resulting in happiness. Here, then, lies the one factor which alone has not been tried. All others have had the test and failed. Yet this one factor which will include all others and is the basis of each has remained neglected through the centuries.

Democracy and Peace go hand in hand. For a successful democracy, we need governmental organization; we need sovereign power; we need economic

stability; we need religion; we need leaders, and last of all, since government is still of the people, by the people, and for the people, we need a trained and educated people, a people who can back that organization of government with a comprehension of its principles and sound legal and political judgment; who show their recognition of the state's sovereignty by respect for its laws; a people who enjoy economic prosperity because they are skilled laborers and trained thinkers and can convert that labor and thought into financial success, a people who can select leaders of merit, who will follow those leaders intelligently or discard them when they would lead astray; a people who not only know and desire to follow the principles of Christianity, but also know how to follow and how to put them into action. A people who have in their souls the ideal of Peace and a determined purpose to make that ideal a reality. Children must be taught the feeling of universal brotherhood. We must outlaw war as we have outlawed piracy, not by physical force—but by that force which never fails—moral force—public opinion. Is this possible? The answer is: Are children born with hatred in their hearts? Can the seed grow unless it is first planted? Then let us destroy the seed before it finds a place to grow.

How shall we proceed with such a task? Last year the mayor of one of America's greatest cities prohibited the use of a certain history text because it gave a few reasons to vindicate England in the Revolutionary War. That is the way not to proceed. Let us not teach wars only in so far as they are needed to explain the periods of Peace. Let us cease to glorify war heroes while we allow great Peace heroes to go unmentioned. Psychologists say that the only successful way to break one habit is to replace it by another. Let us replace the habit of love for adventure in war with the habit of love for adventure in Peace, the adventure which attends pioneering in the fields of business, science, engineering and honest politics. Let us replace the hatred of nations by the hatred for war.

Every leading nation has at some time held sway over the known world. Every leading nation except America. Let America now come into her own! Let America conquer the world! Not with her statesmen, not with her merchants, not with her soldiers, but with her ideals, for all else will perish, but ideals live on forever. Let us help Germany's starving families; let us aid Russia's poverty-stricken students and let us keep recruiting ever an army of red-blooded Americans, citizens of the world, an army equipped with bayonets of wisdom, grenades of knowledge, and swords of Christianity, an army which will make everlasting and victorious the crusade for Peace.

The promise sung by the angels is still unfulfilled. For two thousand years we have missed the true significance of that promise. To whom did God give the promise? To the Emperor of Rome? To Herod? To the priests or scribes? No, He gave it to the shepherds, common people. It was to them he gave the promise and through them we must seek its fulfillment. Would you make the word Peace more than a mere toy? Would you make it a challenge? Then you must instill in the hearts of the nations the ideal of Peace. Would you install in the hearts of the nations the ideal of Peace? Then you must instill it in the hearts of the people. Would you make the word Peace lasting? Would you make the ideal a reality? Then you must teach the people the way to Peace. In no other way can be fulfilled the divine promise, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace and good will toward men."