

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT.

TO prevent government from becoming corrupt and tyrannous, its organization and methods should be as simple as possible, its functions be restricted to those necessary to the common welfare, and in all its parts it should be kept as close to the people and as directly within their control as may be.

We have ignored these principles in many ways, and the result has been corruption and demoralization, the loss of control by the people, and the wresting of government to the advantage of the few and the spoliation of the many. The line of reform, on one side at least, lies in simplification.

(The first and main purpose of government) is admirably stated in that grand document which we Americans so honor and so ignore—the Declaration of Independence. It is to secure to men those equal and unalienable rights with which the Creator has endowed them. I shall hereafter show how the adoption of the only means by which, in civilized and progressive society, (the first of these unalienable rights—the equal right to land—can be secured, will at the same time greatly simplify government and do away with corrupting influences. And beyond this, much simplification is possible, and should be sought wherever it can be attained. As political corruption makes it easier to resist the demand for reform,

whatever may be done to purify politics and bring government within the intelligent supervision and control of the people is in itself not merely an end to be sought, but a means to larger ends.

(The American Republic has no more need for its burlesque of a navy) than a peaceable giant would have for a stuffed club or a tin sword. It is maintained only for the sake of the officers and the naval rings. In peace it is a source of expense and corruption; in war it would be useless. We are too strong for any foreign power wantonly to attack, we ought to be too great wantonly to attack others. If war should ever be forced upon us, we could safely rely upon science and invention, which are already superseding navies faster than they can be built.

(So with our army.) All we need, if we even now need that, is a small force of frontier police, such as is maintained in Australia and Canada. (Standing navies and standing armies are inimical to the genius of democracy, and it ought to be our pride, as it is our duty, to show the world that a great republic can dispense with both. And in organization, as in principle, both our navy and our army are repugnant to the democratic idea. In both we maintain that distinction between commissioned officers and common soldiers and sailors which arose in Europe when the nobility who furnished the one were considered a superior race to the serfs and peasants who supplied the other. The whole system is an insult to democracy, and ought to be swept away.

(Our diplomatic system, too, is servilely copied from the usages of kings who plotted with each other against the liberties of the people, before the ocean steamship and the telegraph were invented.) It serves no purpose save to reward unscrupulous politicians and corruptionists, and occasionally to demoralize a poet. To abolish it would save expense, corruption and national dignity.

In legal administration there is a large field for radical reform. Here, too, we have servilely copied English precedents, and have allowed lawyers to make law in the interests of their class until justice is a costly gamble for which a poor man cannot afford to sue. The best use that could be made of our great law libraries, to which the reports of thirty-eight States, of the Federal courts, and of the English, Scotch and Irish courts are each year being added, would be to send them to the paper-mills, and to adopt such principles and methods of procedure as would reduce our great army of lawyers at least to the French standard. At the same time our statute-books are full of enactments which could, with advantage, be swept away. It is not the business of government to make men virtuous or religious, or to preserve the fool from the consequences of his own folly. Government should be repressive no further than is necessary to secure liberty by protecting the equal rights of each from aggression on the part of others, and the moment governmental prohibitions extend beyond this line they are in danger of defeating the very ends they are intended to serve. For while the tendency of laws which prohibit or command what the moral sense does not, is to bring law into contempt and produce hypocrisy and evasion, so the attempt to bring law to the aid of morals as to those acts and relations which do not plainly involve violation of the liberty of others, is to weaken rather than to strengthen moral influences; to make the standard of wrong and right a legal one, and to enable him who can dexterously escape the punishment of the law to escape all punishment. Thus, for instance, there can be no doubt that the standard of commercial honesty would be much higher in the absence of laws for the collection of debts. As to all such matters, the cunning rogue keeps within the law or evades the law, while the existence of a legal standard lowers the moral standard and weakens the sanction of public opinion.

Restrictions, prohibitions, interferences with the liberty of action in itself harmless, are evil in their nature, and, though they may sometimes be necessary, may for the most part be likened to medicines which suppress or modify some symptom without lessening the disease; and, generally, where restrictive or prohibitive laws are called for, the evils they are designed to meet may be traced to previous restriction—to some curtailment of natural rights.

All the tendencies of the time are to the absorption of smaller communities, to the enlargement of the area within which uniformity of law and administration is necessary or desirable. But for this very reason we ought with the more tenacity to hold, wherever possible, to the principle of local self-government—the principle that, in things which concern only themselves, the people of each political sub-division—township, ward, city or State, as may be—shall act for themselves. We have neglected this principle within our States even more than in the relations between the State and National Governments, and in attempting to govern great cities by State commissions, and in making what properly belongs to County Supervisors and Township Trustees the business of legislatures, we have divided responsibility and promoted corruption.

(Much, too, may be done to restrict the abuse of party machinery, and make the ballot the true expression of the will of the voter, by simplifying our elective methods. And a principle should always be kept in mind which we have largely ignored, that the people cannot manage details, nor intelligently choose more than a few officials. To call upon the average citizen to vote at each election for a long string of candidates, as to the majority of whom he can know nothing unless he makes a business of politics, is to relegate choice to nominating conventions and political rings. And to divide power is often to

destroy responsibility, and to provoke, not to prevent, usurpation.

I can but briefly allude to these matters, though in themselves they deserve much attention. (It is the more necessary to simplify government as much as possible and to improve, as much as may be, what may be called the mechanics of government, because, with the progress of society, the functions which government must assume steadily increase.) It is only in the infancy of society that the functions of government can be properly confined to providing for the common defense and protecting the weak against the physical power of the strong. As society develops in obedience to that law of integration and increasing complexity of which I spoke in the first of these chapters, it becomes necessary in order to secure equality that other regulations should be made and enforced; and upon the primary and restrictive functions of government are superimposed what may be called coöperative functions, the refusal to assume which leads, in many cases, to the disregard of individual rights as surely as does the assumption of directive and restrictive functions not properly belonging to government.

In the division of labor and the specialization of vocation that begin in an early stage of social development, and increase with it, the assumption by individuals of certain parts in the business of society necessarily operates to the exclusion of other individuals. Thus when one opens a store or an inn, or establishes a regular carriage of passengers or goods, or devotes himself to a special trade or profession of which all may have need, his doing of these things operates to prevent others from doing them, and leads to the establishment of habits and customs which make resort to him a necessity to others, and which would put those who were denied this resort at a great disadvantage as compared with other individuals. Thus to secure

quality it becomes necessary so to limit liberty of action as to oblige those who thus take upon themselves quasi-public functions to serve without discrimination those who may apply to them upon customary conditions. This principle is recognized by all nations that have made any progress in civilization, in their laws relating to common carriers, innkeepers, etc.

As civilization progresses and industrial development goes on, the concentration which results from the utilization of larger powers and improved processes operates more and more to the restriction and exclusion of competition, and to the establishment of complete monopolies. This we may see very clearly in the railroad. It is but a sheer waste of capital and labor to build one railroad alongside of another; and even where this is done, an irresistible tendency leads either to consolidation or to combination; and even at what are called competing points, competition is only transitional. The consolidation of companies, which in a few years bids fair to concentrate the whole railway business of the United States in the hands of half a dozen managements, the pooling of receipts, and agreements as to business and charges, which even at competing points prevent competition, are due to a tendency inherent in the development of the railroad system, and of which it is idle to complain.

The primary purpose and end of government being to secure the natural rights and equal liberty of each, all businesses that involve monopoly are within the necessary province of governmental regulation, and businesses that are in their nature complete monopolies become properly functions of the state. As society develops, the state must assume these functions, in their nature coöperative, in order to secure the equal rights and liberty of all. That is to say, as, in the process of integration, the individual becomes more and more dependent upon and subordinate to the all, it becomes necessary for govern-

ment, which is properly that social organ by which alone the whole body of individuals can act, to take upon itself, in the interest of all, certain functions which cannot safely be left to individuals. Thus out of the principle

parts, so is it in the development of society. This is the truth in socialism, which, although it is being forced upon us by industrial progress and social development, we are so slow to recognize.

In the physical organism, weakness and disease result alike from the overstraining of functions and from the non-use of functions. In like manner governments may be corrupted and public misfortunes induced by the failure to assume, as governmental, functions that properly belong to government as the controlling organ in the management of common interests, as well as from interferences by government in the proper sphere of individual action. This we may see in our own case. In what we attempt to do by government and what we leave undone we are like a man who should leave the provision of his dinner to the promptings of his stomach while attempting to govern his digestion by the action of his will; or like one who, in walking through a crowded street or over a bad road, should concentrate all his conscious faculties upon the movement of his legs without paying any attention to where he was going.

To illustrate: It is not the business of government to interfere with the views which any one may hold of the Creator or with the worship he may choose to pay him, so

long as the exercise of these individual rights does not conflict with the equal liberty of others; and the result of governmental interference in this domain has been hypocrisy, corruption, persecution and religious war. It is not the business of government to direct the employment of labor and capital, and to foster certain industries at the expense of other industries; and the attempt to do so leads to all the waste, loss and corruption due to protective tariffs.

On the other hand, it is the business of government to issue money. This is perceived as soon as the great labor-saving invention of money supplants barter. To leave it to every one who chose to do so to issue money would be to entail general inconvenience and loss, to offer many temptations to roguery, and to put the poorer classes of society at a great disadvantage. These obvious considerations have everywhere, as society became well organized, led to the recognition of the coinage of money as an exclusive function of government. When, in the progress of society, a further labor-saving improvement becomes possible by the substitution of paper for the precious metals as the material for money, the reasons why the issuance of this money should be made a government function become still stronger. The evils entailed by wildcat banking in the United States are too well remembered to need reference. The loss and inconvenience, the swindling and corruption that flowed from the assumption by each State of the Union of the power to license banks of issue ended with the war, and no one would now go back to them. Yet instead of doing what every public consideration impels us to, and assuming wholly and fully as the exclusive function of the General Government the power to issue paper money, the private interests of bankers have, up to this, compelled us to the use of a hybrid currency, of which a large part, though guaranteed by the

General Government, is issued and made profitable to corporations. The legitimate business of banking—the safe-keeping and loaning of money, and the making and exchange of credits, is properly left to individuals and associations; but by leaving to them, even in part and under restrictions and guaranties, the issuance of money, the people of the United States suffer an annual loss of millions of dollars, and sensibly increase the influences which exert a corrupting effect upon their government.

The principle evident here may be seen in even stronger light in another department of social life.

(The great “railroad question,” with its dangers and perplexities, is a most striking instance of the evil consequences which result from the failure of the state to assume functions that properly belong to it.)

In rude stages of social development, and where government, neglectful of its proper functions, has been occupied in making needless wars and imposing harmful restrictions, the making and improvement of highways have been left to individuals, who, to recompense themselves, have been permitted to exact tolls. It has, however, from the first, been recognized that these tolls are properly subject to governmental control and regulation. But the great inconveniences of this system, and the heavy taxes which, in spite of attempted regulation, are under it levied upon production, have led, as social advance went on, to the assumption of the making and maintenance of highroads as a governmental duty. In the course of social development came the invention of the railroad, which merged the business of making and maintaining roads with the business of carrying freight and passengers upon them. It is probably due to this that it was not at first recognized that the same reasons which render it necessary for the state to make and maintain common roads apply with even greater force to the building and operating of

railroads. In Great Britain and the United States, and, with partial exceptions, in other countries, railroads have been left to private enterprise to build and private greed to manage. In the United States, where railroads are of more importance than in any other country in the world, our only recognition of their public character has been in the donation of lands and the granting of subsidies, which have been the cause of much corruption, and in some feeble attempts to regulate fares and freights.

But the fact that the railroad system as far as yet developed (and perhaps necessarily) combines transportation with the maintenance of roadways, renders competition all the more impossible, and brings it still more clearly within the province of the state. That it makes the assumption of the railroad business by the state a most serious matter is not to be denied. Even if it were possible, which may well be doubted, as has been sometimes proposed, to have the roadway maintained by the state, leaving the furnishing of trains to private enterprise, it would be still a most serious matter. But look at it which way we may, it is so serious a matter that it must be faced. As the individual grows from childhood to maturity, he must meet difficulties and accept responsibilities from which he well might shrink. So is it with society. New powers bring new duties and new responsibilities. Imprudence in going forward involves danger, but it is fatal to stand still. And however great be the difficulties involved in the assumption of the railroad business by the state, much greater difficulties are involved in the refusal to assume it.

It is not necessary to go into any elaborate argument to show that the ownership and management of railroads are functions of the state. That is proved beyond dispute by the logic of events and of existing facts. Nothing is more obvious—at least in the United States, where the

tendencies of modern development may be seen much more clearly than in Europe—than that a union of railroading with the other functions of government is inevitable. We may not like it, but we cannot avoid it. Either government must manage the railroads, or the railroads must manage the government. There is no escape. To refuse one horn of the dilemma is to be impaled on the other.

As for any satisfactory state regulation of railroads, the experience of our States shows it to be impossible. A strong-willed despot, clothed with arbitrary power, might curb such leviathans; but popular governments cannot. The power of the whole people is, of course, greater than the power of the railroads, but it cannot be exerted steadily and in details. Even a small special interest is, by reason of its intelligence, compactness and flexibility, more than a match for large and vague general interests; it has the advantage which belongs to a well-armed and disciplined force in dealing with a mob. But in the number of its employees, the amount of its revenues, and the extent of the interests which it controls, the railroad power is gigantic. And, growing faster than the growth of the country, it is tending still faster to concentration. It may be that the man is already born who will control the whole railroad system of the United States, as Vanderbilt, Gould and Huntington now control great sections of it.

Practical politicians all over the United States recognize the utter hopelessness of contending with the railroad power. In many if not in most of the States, no prudent man will run for office if he believes the railroad power is against him. Yet in the direct appeal to the people a power of this kind is weakest, and railroad kings rule States where, on any issues that came fairly before the people, they would be voted down. It is by throwing their

weight into primaries, and managing conventions, by controlling the press, manipulating legislatures, and filling the bench with their creatures, that the railroads best exert political power. The people of California, for instance, have voted against the railroad time and again, or rather imagined they did, and even adopted a very bad new constitution because they supposed the railroad was against it. The result is, that the great railroad company, of whose domain California, with an area greater than twice that of Great Britain, is but one of the provinces, absolutely dominates the State. The men who really fought it are taken into its service or crushed, and powers are exerted in the interests of the corporation managers which no government would dare attempt. This company, heavily subsidized, in the first place, as a great public convenience, levies on commerce, not tolls, but tariffs. If a man goes into business requiring transportation he must exhibit his profits and take it into partnership for the lion's share. Importers are bound by an "iron-clad agreement" to give its agents access to their books, and if they do anything the company deems against its interests they are fined or ruined by being placed at a disadvantage to their rivals in business. Three continental railroads, heavily subsidized by the nation under the impression that the competition would keep down rates, have now reached the Pacific. Instead of competing they have pooled their receipts. The line of steamers from San Francisco to New York *via* the Isthmus receives \$100,000 a month to keep up fares and freights to a level with those exacted by the railroad, and if you would send goods from New York to San Francisco by way of the Isthmus, the cheapest way is first to ship them to England. Shippers to interior points are charged as much as though their goods were carried to the end of the road and then shipped back again; and even, by means of the agreements mentioned, an embargo

is laid upon ocean commerce by sailing-vessels, wherever it might interfere with the monopoly.

I speak of California only as an instance. The power of the railroads is apparent in State after State, as it is in the National Government. (Nothing can be clearer than that, if present conditions must continue, the American people might as well content themselves to surrender political power to these great corporations and their affiliated interests.) There is no escape from this. The railroad managers cannot keep out of politics, even if they wished to. The difficulties of the railroad question do not arise from the fact that peculiarly bad men have got control of the railroads; they arise from the nature of the railroad business and its intimate relations to other interests and industries.

But it will be said: "If the railroads are even now a corrupting element in our politics, what would they be if the government were to own and to attempt to run them? Is not governmental management notoriously corrupt and inefficient? Would not the effect of adding such a vast army to the already great number of government employees, of increasing so enormously the revenues and expenditures of government, be to enable those who got control of government to defy opposition and perpetuate their power indefinitely; and would it not be, finally, to sink the whole political organization in a hopeless slough of corruption?"

My reply is, that great as these dangers may be, they must be faced, lest worse befall us. When a gale sets him on a lee shore, the seaman must make sail, even at the risk of having his canvas fly from the bolt-ropes and his masts go by the board. The dangers of wind and sea urge him to make everything snug as may be, alow and aloft; to get rid of anything that might diminish the weatherly qualities of his ship, and to send his best helmsman to the

wheel,—not supinely to accept the certain destruction of the rocks.

Instead of belittling the dangers of adding to the functions of government as it is at present, what I am endeavoring to point out is the urgent necessity of simplifying and improving government, that it may safely assume the additional functions that social development forces upon it. (It is not merely necessary to prevent government from getting more corrupt and more inefficient, though we can no more do that by a negative policy than the seaman can lay to in a gale without drifting; it is necessary to make government much more efficient and much less corrupt.) The dangers that menace us are not accidental. They spring from a universal law which we cannot escape. That law is the one I pointed out in the first chapter of this book—that every advance brings new dangers and requires higher and more alert intelligence. As the more highly organized animal cannot live unless it have a more fully developed brain than those of lower animal organizations, so the more highly organized society must perish unless it bring to the management of social affairs greater intelligence and higher moral sense. The great material advances which modern invention has enabled us to make, necessitate corresponding social and political advances. Nature knows no "Baby Act." We must live up to her conditions or not live at all.

(My purpose here is to show how important it is that we simplify government, purify politics and improve social conditions, as a preliminary to showing how much in all these directions may be accomplished by one single great reform.) But although I shall be obliged to do so briefly, it may be worth while, even if briefly, to call attention to some principles that should not be forgotten in thinking of the assumption by the state of such functions as the running of railroads.

In the first place, I think it may be accepted as a principle proved by experience, that any considerable interest having necessary relations with government is more corruptive of government when acting upon government from without than when assumed by government. Let a ship in mid-ocean drop her anchor and pay out her cable, and though she would be relieved of some weight, since part of the weight of anchor and cable would be supported by the water, not only would her progress be retarded, but she would refuse to answer her helm, and become utterly unmanageable. Yet, assumed as part of the ship, and properly stowed on board, anchor and cable no longer perceptibly interfere with her movements.

A standing army is a corrupting influence, and a danger to popular liberties; but who would maintain that on this ground it were wiser, if a standing army must be kept, that it should be enlisted and paid by private parties, and hired of them by the state? Such an army would be far more corrupting and far more dangerous than one maintained directly by the state, and would soon make its leaders masters of the state.

I do not think the postal department of the government, with its extensive ramifications and its numerous employees, begins to be as important a factor in our politics, or exerts so corrupting an influence, as would a private corporation carrying on this business, and which would be constantly tempted or forced into politics to procure favorable or prevent unfavorable legislation. Where individual States and the General Government have substituted public printing-offices for Public Printers, who themselves furnished material and hired labor, I think the result has been to lessen, not to increase, corruptive influences; and speaking generally, I think experience shows that in all departments of government the system of contracting for work and supplies has, on the whole, led to

more corruption than the system of direct employment. The reason I take to be, that there is in one case a much greater concentration of corruptive interests and power than in the other.

The inefficiency, extravagance and corruption which we commonly attribute to governmental management are mostly in those departments which do not come under the public eye, and little concern, if they concern at all, public convenience. Whether the six new steel cruisers which the persistent lobbying of contractors has induced Congress to order, are well or ill built the American people will never know, except as they learn through the newspapers, and the fact will no more affect their comfort and convenience than does the fitting of the Sultan's new breeches, or the latest changes in officers' uniforms which it has pleased the Secretary of the Navy to order. But let the mails go astray or the postman fail in his rounds, and there is at once an outcry. The post-office department is managed with greater efficiency than any other department of the National Government, because it comes close to the people. To say the very least, it is managed as efficiently as any private company could manage such a vast business, and I think, on the whole, as economically. And the scandals and abuses that have arisen in it have been, for the most part, as to out-of-the-way places, and things of which there was little or no public consciousness. So in England, the telegraph and parcel-carrying and savings-bank businesses are managed by government more efficiently and economically than before by private corporations.

Like these businesses—perhaps even more so—the railroad business comes directly under the notice of the people. It so immediately concerns the interests, the convenience and the safety of the great body, that under public management it would compel that close and quick attention that secures efficiency.

It seems to me that in regard to public affairs we too easily accept the dictum that faithful and efficient work can be secured only by the hopes of pecuniary profit, or the fear of pecuniary loss. We get faithful and efficient work in our colleges and similar institutions without this, not to speak of the army and navy, or of the postal and educational departments of government; and be this as it may, our railroads are really run by men who, from switch-tender to general superintendent, have no pecuniary interest in the business other than to get their pay—in most cases paltry and insufficient—and hold their positions. Under governmental ownership they would have, at the very least, all the incentives to faithfulness and efficiency that they have now, for that governmental management of railroads must involve the principles of civil service reform goes without the saying. The most determined supporter of the spoils system would not care to resign the safety of limb and life to engineers and brakemen appointed for political services.

Look, moreover, at the railroad system as it exists now. That it is not managed in the interests of the public is clear; but is it managed in the interests of its owners? Is it managed with that economy, efficiency and intelligence that are presumed to be the results of private ownership and control? On the contrary, while the public interests are utterly disregarded, the interests of the stockholders are in most cases little better considered. Our railroads are really managed in the interests of unscrupulous adventurers, whose purpose is to bull and bear the stock-market; by men who make the interests of the property they manage subservient to their personal interests in other railroads or in other businesses; who speculate in lands and town sites, who give themselves or their friends contracts for supplies and special rates for transportation, and who often deliberately wreck the cor-

poration they control and rob stockholders to the last cent. From one end to the other, the management of our railroad system, as it now exists, reeks with jobbery and fraud.

That ordinary roads, bridges, etc., should not be maintained for profit, either public or private, is an accepted principle, and the State of New York has recently gone so far as to abolish all tolls on the Erie Canal. Our postal service we merely aim to make self-sustaining, and no one would now think of proposing that the rates of postage should be increased in order to furnish public revenues; still less would any one think of proposing to abandon the government postal service, and turn the business over to individuals or corporations. In the beginning the postal service was carried on by individuals with a view to profits. Had that system been continued to the present day, it is certain that we should not begin to have such extensive and regular postal facilities as we have now, nor such cheap rates; and all the objections that are now urged against the government assumption of the railroad business would be urged against government carriage of letters. We never can enjoy the full benefits of the invention of the railroad until we make the railroads public property, managed by public servants in the public interests. And thus will a great cause of the corruption of government, and a great cause of monstrous fortunes, be destroyed.

All I have said of the railroad applies, of course, to the telegraph, the telephone, the supplying of cities with gas, water, heat and electricity,—in short to all businesses which are in their nature monopolies. I speak of the railroad only because the magnitude of the business makes its assumption by the state the most formidable of such undertakings.

(Businesses that are in their nature monopolies are properly functions of the state. The state must control or

assume them, in self-defense, and for the protection of the equal rights of citizens. But beyond this, the field in which the state may operate beneficially as the executive of the great coöperative association, into which it is the tendency of true civilization to blend society, will widen with the improvement of government and the growth of public spirit.

(We have already made an important step in this direction in our public-school system.) Our public schools are not maintained for the poor, as are the English board schools—where, moreover, payment is required from all who can pay; nor yet is their main motive the protection of the state against ignorance. These are subsidiary motives. (But the main motive for the maintenance of our public schools is, that by far the greater part of our people find them the best and most economical means of educating their children.) American society is, in fact, organized by the operation of government into coöperative educational associations, and with such happy results that in no State where the public-school system has obtained would any proposition to abolish it get respectful consideration. In spite of the corruption of our politics, our public schools are, on the whole, much better than private schools; while by their association of the children of rich and poor, of Jew and Gentile, of Protestant and Catholic, of Republican and Democrat, they are of inestimable value in breaking down prejudice and checking the growth of class feeling. It is likewise to be remarked as to our public-school system, that corruptive influences seem to spring rather from our not having gone far enough than from our having gone too far in the direction of state action. In some of our States the books used by the children are supplied at public expense, being considered school property, which the pupil receives on entering the school or class, and returns when leaving. In most of

them, however, the pupils, unless their parents cannot afford the outlay, are required to furnish their own books. Experience has shown the former system to be much the better, not only because, when books are furnished to all, there is no temptation of those who can afford to purchase books falsely to plead indigence, and no humiliation on the part of those who cannot; but because the number of books required is much less, and they can be purchased at cheaper rates. This not only effects a large economy in the aggregate expenditure, but lessens an important corruptive influence. For the strife of the great school-book publishers to get their books adopted in the public schools, in which most of them make no scruple of resorting to bribery wherever they can, has done much to degrade the character of school boards. This corruptive influence can only be fully done away with by manufacturing school-books at public expense, as has been in a number of the States proposed.

The public-library system, which, beginning in the public-spirited city of Boston, is steadily making its way over the country, and under which both reading and lending libraries are maintained at public expense for the free use of the public, is another instance of the successful extension of the coöperative functions of government. So are the public parks and recreation grounds which we are beginning to establish.

(Not only is it possible to go much further in the direction of thus providing, at public expense, for the public health, education and recreation, and for public encouragement of science and invention, but if we can simplify and purify government it will become possible for society in its various sub-divisions to obtain in many other ways, but in much larger degree, those advantages for its members that voluntary coöperative societies seek to obtain.) Not only could the most enormous economies

thus be obtained, but the growing tendency to adulteration and dishonesty, as fatal to morals as to health, would be checked,* and at least such an organization of industry be reached as would very greatly reduce the appropriative power of aggregated capital, and prevent those strifes that may be likened to wars. The natural progress of social development is unmistakably toward coöperation, or, if the word be preferred, toward socialism, though I dislike to use a word to which such various and vague meanings are attached. (Civilization is the art of living together in closer relations.) That mankind should dwell together in unity is the evident intent of the Divine mind,—of that Will expressed in the immutable laws of the physical and moral universe which reward obedience and punish disobedience. The dangers which menace modern society are but the reverse of blessings which modern society may grasp. The concentration that is going on in all branches of industry is a necessary tendency of our advance in the material arts. It is not in itself an evil. If in anything its results are evil, it is simply because of our bad social adjustments. The construction of this world in which we find ourselves is such that a thousand men working together can produce many times more than the same thousand men working singly. But this does

* There are many manufactured articles for which the producer now receives only a third of the price paid by the consumer, while adulteration has gone far beyond detection by the individual purchaser. Not to speak of the compounding of liquors, of oleomargarine and glucose, a single instance will show how far adulteration is carried. The adulterations in ground coffee have driven many people to purchase their coffee in the bean and grind it themselves. To meet this, at least one firm of large coffee-roasters, and I presume most of them, have adopted an invention by means of which imitation coffee-beans, exactly resembling in appearance the genuine article, are stamped out of a paste. These they mix in large quantities with real coffee.

not make it necessary that the nine hundred and ninety-nine must be the virtual slaves of the one.

Let me repeat it, though again and again, for it is, it seems to me, the great lesson which existing social facts impress upon him who studies them, and that it is all important that we should heed: The natural laws which permit of social advance, require that advance to be intellectual and moral as well as material. The natural laws which give us the steamship, the locomotive, the telegraph, the printing-press, and all the thousand inventions by which our mastery over matter and material conditions is increased, *require* greater social intelligence and a higher standard of social morals. Especially do they make more and more imperative that justice between man and man which demands the recognition of the equality of natural rights.

"Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness [right or just doing] and all these things shall be added unto you." The first step toward a natural and healthy organization of society is to secure to all men their natural, equal and unalienable rights in the material universe. To do this is not to do everything that may be necessary; but it is to make all else easier. And unless we do this nothing else will avail.

I have in this chapter touched briefly upon subjects that for thorough treatment would require much more space. My purpose has been to show that the simplification and purification of government are rendered the more necessary, on account of functions which industrial development is forcing upon government, and the further functions which it is becoming more and more evident that it would be advantageous for government to assume. In succeeding chapters I propose to show how, by recognizing in practicable method the equal and unalienable rights of men to the soil of their country, government may be

greatly simplified, and corrupting influences destroyed. For it is indeed true, as the French Assembly declared, that public misfortunes and corruptions of government spring from ignorance, neglect or contempt of human rights.

Of course in this chapter and elsewhere in speaking of government, the state, the community, etc., I use these terms in a general sense, without reference to existing political divisions. What should properly belong to the township or ward, what to the county or State, what to the nation, and what to such federations of nations as it is in the manifest line of civilization to evolve, is a matter into which I have not entered. As to the proper organization of government, and the distribution of powers, there is much need for thought.