

HD
4904
H27

20

UC-NRLF



⌘B 240 667

YB 65258



THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA

GIFT OF

Mrs. George P. Adams

THE FUTURE
OF DEMOCRACY
AN ADDRESS BY
LORD HALDANE

ONE SHILLING NET

Digitized for Microsoft Corporation
by the Internet Archive in 2007.

From University of California Libraries.

May be used for non-commercial: personal, research,
or educational purposes, or any fair use.

May not be indexed in a commercial service.

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

AN ADDRESS BY
LORD HALDANE
"

LONDON
HEADLEY BROS. PUBLISHERS, LTD.
72 OXFORD STREET, W.1
1918
ONE SHILLING NET

LOAN STACK^K

GIFT

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY
REPORT OF AN ADDRESS BY LORD
HALDANE DELIVERED AT A MEET-
ING UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE
WORKERS EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIA-
TION · COVENTRY BRANCH · IN ST.
MARY'S HALL, COVENTRY, ON 13
APRIL, 1918

I HAVE come here to-night to address you on "THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY." The meeting was fixed for some time before the Easter week—the week, ordinarily of peace and of thoughts of a great record which has influenced the world's history for the world's good. We did not foresee what Easter week, 1918, would bring forth. Perhaps if we had we should have postponed this meeting. But I am glad that this meeting has not been postponed. For it has brought us here to testify our living faith in our cause and our belief in the future of democracy. Democracy is threatened, and you working men have a simple question before you.

"Will you take lying down the aggression of Prussian militarism? Will you consent to and accept humbly such fragments of life and freedom as Prussian militarism chooses to leave you by grace of the Prussian military party?"

Or will you say: "We mean to fight to the last point of resistance; we will back our Army, and will support it with the last man and the last shilling we possess, rather than lie down and ignominiously submit to people who seek to triumph in this fashion over us."

Do not let us lose our heads over this matter. Our nation is resolute, I firmly believe. It has made up its mind. We

I

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

are quite aware of what the real nature of the issue is. I am one of those who have thought a good deal about Germany. I have admired, in days that are passed, and I admire not less now, the splendid triumph of thought which the great Germans of a hundred years ago brought before the world. But the efforts for peace of Kant, Goethe, and Schiller of a century ago—who taught mankind what was meant by the wonderful power of thought—those efforts have been perverted and turned to base account in the hands of the military caste who, within a very short time of the outbreak of this war, at last gained real domination over that German people whom they have led submissively into this enterprise against the liberties of mankind.

We can give but one answer to their challenge. Notwithstanding all the power of the thought so prostituted; notwithstanding all their organisation; notwithstanding all their science—we shall oppose to it our own power and our own science, our own energy, our own resolution, and we shall fight to the last man for what we hold dearer than anything else, our liberties and our lives.

Our splendid troops are bearing a hard burden to-day. These glorious men are fighting for our cause. Many of them come from your own midst. I have not forgotten those splendid Midland Territorial Divisions of the old days, when you raised part of them in Coventry, when I saw myself the efforts you were making to build up a force which some of us, even then, anticipated would play its part gloriously if the occasion called for its services. These splendid soldiers have made me proud of the nation, and have made me feel that this country is as strong as of yore, and has lost nothing of its old power, of its old spirit, or its old courage.

And so for us to-day the motto is "Courage and Resolution." Let us not look back. Let us not flinch. We stand for the

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

cause of democracy, and from the championship of that cause we do not intend to draw back. The Generals and the Armies are fighting magnificently, and my own belief is that they will succeed in stemming the tremendous attempt at this moment being made against them.

But even if their line were broken, do not let anyone imagine that we should regard ourselves as defeated. We should go on fighting, fighting with the command of the seas, fighting with our troops in France, fighting in a common effort with the French and with our other Allies, and you would have repeated what happened in 1870 after the German armies had defeated the French regulars. Gambetta raised new armies of his own and came within an ace of beating the Germans by wearing them out, and failed only because his army was not organised. We and our Allies have magnificent leaders and troops, and if our line were torn asunder there would still exist such a formidable weapon against the German aggression that we should fight on with excellent hope of ultimate victory.

Then there are, behind us and in course of full development, the resources of the hundred million people in the United States, who have entered this war, not for any chance consideration or from any jealousy that can be attributed to one nation against another, but because they believe they are called on to fight for the cause of freedom.

For my part I say "Courage and Resolution." I myself have no fear that we have not the grit in us that our forefathers had. I remember the story of a day nearly a century since when Nelson broke the enemy fleet off Trafalgar, and when he delivered this country from the fear of Napoleon's invasion. And I believe that the splendid Armies of to-day, of Regulars and Territorials, are giving their lives for a greater cause than life itself, and I believe we shall come through this trial sustained by the faith that is founded on love of freedom.

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

The cause of democracy, as I have said, is at stake against German anti-democracy. There is nothing more striking than the way in which it has become clear that the German nation, which, after all, is not so very different from our own if you take the mass, has been compelled to go into this war by a class and caste, which has trained and organised it so that it has to do as it is told. It has gone into this war, and from the deeds its citizens have done I am sure it is intoxicated. Nevertheless I am not without hope that there will come a day when the German democracy will tender its thanks to the British democracy for having made possible its deliverance from its chains and fetters.

The Lichnowsky revelations are very striking, and if I were at full liberty I could speak of them, perhaps with as much first-hand acquaintance with some of their points as any man in this country. I was concerned in some of the efforts to which Prince Lichnowsky has referred, and in other efforts—and I could add to those revelations something that would show that this country did its utmost to preserve the peace and tranquillity of the world and the feeling with which alone the nations could work together for the good of mankind. The attempt was, I need not add, destroyed and thwarted by the same military spirit that later on induced the German people to follow it into war. No doubt in good time these things will appear. They are appearing fast enough just now, and if we hold our own they will have their effect and help to bring this war to a close. In the meantime, here are you and I standing up to-night to testify that we will give our utmost and our last farthing in support of the splendid resistance that is being made to an attack on the national life and liberty.

This is a time of crisis so supreme that although the Government may do things that we do not like and in which we do not all agree, still some of us feel that the Government

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

is the only certain national instrument, and we are not at present going to stand in the way of our utmost effort being put in force by those who wield the instrument without which we cannot defend ourselves. The Government and the Generals we must support in the field. Whether the Government has always been right is a question on which hereafter some of you may hold very varying opinions. For my own part, I intend to back the Government in every way that is permissible through this crisis. I only say that because I want to make it plain that I am not speaking as a politician to-night. I am speaking to you as one who is in the middle of a great national crisis that affects the very right to exist of a democracy.

That brings me to the question of how my subject is in its own character affected by that crisis. The cloud, the heavy black cloud that is on us to-day, has got a silver lining. This war has been like a fire that has burned up chaff and stubble. It has swept away many prejudices, toned down many passions. It has got rid of much slackness and indifference, and it has opened the eyes of men and women to great duties, not only to themselves, but to their fellow men and women. It has given us a sense of new values—of higher values than we took account of before. It has raised our ideals. It has changed the spirit in which we live and work; this war is destined to have a tremendous effect on the public life of this country when it is over. I am not talking simply of the Franchise Bill. We could not have passed that Bill but for the new spirit of which I speak—a new spirit which has given women what I have believed in as their just possession all my life—the same rights as men. And the new spirit has brought about tremendous changes in our outlook. We are deeply and, I think, profoundly convinced that the faith that can move mountains can of a certainty, if it is exercised, overthrow this monstrous conspiracy of

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

Prussia against our liberties, and bring us all other things necessary. But in these other things it is vital, if we are to succeed, that we should have clear ideas of where we want to go, and how to get there. That is a lesson we may take from the Germans—that it is essential to take thought and to acquire the power of self-organisation. It is lawful, says the proverb, to learn from our enemies. Let us learn from the Germans the power of organisation, based on thorough thinking, and use our faculty of organisation for noble ideals.

What are the ideals of democracy? Before I speak to you of the future of democracy I must speak of these ideals and try to define them. I am going back a long time—over eighteen hundred years. There are those of you who hold very different opinions about Christianity. Some of you believe in the Churches, some of you do not believe in the Churches, and some of you take a detached attitude. I take a detached attitude on many things in the history of the Churches and their traditions. But this I hold most firmly, that Christianity brought into the world a new ideal, the ideal that human freedom was an end in itself. It must never be subverted by other things, but must be recognised as the legitimate and the unquestionable right of the individual. Christianity led, in the end, to the abolition of slavery. Christianity insisted on a new value being attached to human personality, and it is Christianity that by this doctrine is inspiring much in the Labour Movement to-day, and teaching men and women that there is something more important than work and comfort and the old slow conditions before the war—the infinite, the precious value of every human soul. Well, let us start with that: the new ideal that came into the world, which ought always to be associated with the name of Christ. That new ideal which culminated in sweeping away slavery is now still alive with us in a new form in which

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

it is impelling people to the recognition of the infinite worth of the humblest human being.

Let us see, if that be our ideal, what it carries with it. I want to-night to take this opportunity of putting before you my own view as to what this means for the future policy of the nation. Of course here I touch politics, but I am not speaking to you as a Liberal or a Conservative. If you ask me, I think that our old political creeds have been too narrow. I think the old political ideas are passing away, and that you will find an altogether new organisation of parties springing up. I want to speak to you as one who has a definite conviction about this matter, and who is only anxious—I am no longer young, but I feel this strongly, and have done so for some time—to devote such time as I have left of my life to the working out of the ideals of which I speak, and contributing as much humble effort as I can to their attainment. So I am not speaking as a politician attached to this Party or the other, but as an individual, and what I put before you represents my personal faith.

The ideal is what I have stated to you—the infinite value of human personality, humble and great standing on the same footing. Let us see what follows from that: it is not the notion of abstract equality. You cannot make all men equal. I will tell you why—because Nature is too powerful. One woman is born beautiful, and another ugly, and that makes a great difference. One man is born with brains, and another without them. One has bad health, and another good health. You cannot alter this fact, and you will never get complete equality in this world. Therefore dismiss that abstract idea of equality from your minds. It is an old notion that has obsessed many people. It has often obsessed the Labour Movement. It did so in 1848, when the idea was that all men should be the same, and that, translated into practice, meant that nobody should rise higher than his fellow. Then there

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

was a reaction against that narrow view, and people began to believe in human peaks and pinnacles as essential. People went to the other extreme—the idea of the dominating superman began. Thank God we have got rid of that. The truth is that people are not equal by nature, but there is a corollary to this truth, and it is: there is no reason why they should be made more unequal than is avoidable by laws and institutions. If you bear these two things in mind you will find that you get a certain amount of light.

If people cannot be in all respects equal what can they be? They can be made equal in the chance of developing what is in them. If you take the old abstract notion of equality, the old Labour notion without more, you see how badly it works. There is Russia. Where is Russia to-day? I have a certain amount of sympathy with Bolshevism. It is a reaction against an abominable system of government. The Bolsheviks fly to the other extreme; they say everyone is equal to themselves, and the standard they adopt is that everyone is on the level of the stupidest. They bring life down to a dead level. This policy is not working, and it is just making them a prey for the moment to people who have the power of putting thought into expression, as the Germans have to-day, and there is Russia at the feet of the conqueror. I believe that the Russians will recover themselves. I believe in the country of Tolstoi and Dostoyevsky. I believe Russia will recover, but Russia has taught us a lesson, and that is, not to trust in unduly abstract and narrow ideas, but to take care to organise ourselves, not according to Prussian methods, but according to our higher ideals. That will give us the best in thought and knowledge, and teach us to develop the individualities of our people.

What is it we are aiming at if Nature will not let us treat all men as equal? It is that we must give them equal opportunity. Every man, woman, and child ought to have the

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

opportunity of developing what is in them. Now, that is the second step I have come to in my line of reason.

I want to take you on by some further steps. If this is to be done then the State has two things which it must accomplish. It must positively build up and take care that the child is educated and taken care of in body as well as mind. And it must do other things than that. It must take care of the individual by building him up, and by besides maintaining him, also by restraining other people who are very clever from pushing their special advantages to such an extreme point that for their own ends they unduly drag down the level of others. That might very easily happen. You must take care there is no merely selfish exploitation in the future; and the State, therefore, has the double function of maintaining and restraining.

Bearing that double function in mind, let us see what it is necessary for the State to do in order to accomplish this ideal of equal opportunity that I have been indicating to you. First of all, the State must see not only that every child is educated and nurtured—in other words, taken care of by its parents—but the State must see that the men and women of this country live under conditions in which equality of opportunity will not be a mere farce. And for that purpose there are certain minima that the State must insist upon. The State cannot interfere and say one man has got to have £2 a day and another £10 a day. It cannot regulate all these things, but it may see that nobody is employed on terms that give less than that on which he can live decently, and that conditions of employment must not be such that they drag down below this minimum. That is not a new principle, not wholly new, at least. But it is new in the sense that the war has given it a reality it never had before.

The first principle, then, is that you must have a living wage, and the second principle is that you must have a

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

decent home. Unless a man has a decent home for his wife and children and himself you will never get a good family, and without good families you will not get a good State. All I am saying is in a two-fold interest, that of the State as well as of the individual.

I have spoken of two minima that the State must see to—the living wage and a decent home—and I can add a third, and that is sufficient knowledge. This is a delicate thing to deal with. I am speaking to-day, as you see, with the ægis thrown over me of the Workers' Educational Association, but that Association has got its enemies among certain sections of the Labour Party, who say: "What is education?" It means, they assert, the use of human faculties for the exploitation of the worker by the capitalist. "What is the use of education until you get rid of capital?" But you will not, I must tell you, get rid of the domination of capital unless you get rid of the domination of ignorance first. That is where that section of the Labour Party (and I do not believe it is a large one, although I have heard a good deal of it) is utterly benighted and belated. Oh, that I had them here in a body to argue with them! I think I could break them up! Believe me, knowledge is power more really to-day than ever before. We see how formidable knowledge has been in Prussia; we see how valuable knowledge has been among ourselves in the conduct of this war. But the lesson is much wider than that. To the swift is given the race everywhere; to the man who knows is given the chance of raising his condition. You are hopelessly handicapped in the race of life unless you have knowledge, and it must be the concern of the State, in striving after the ideal of equality, to secure that every man and woman has a chance of knowing.

Now, you see, we are getting on in the development of our programme. If you have got a good home, a living wage, good education and knowledge—and capacity and mental

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

freedom actually come only through freedom from ignorance—you get a higher standard. People who live under good conditions have larger ideals.

I sometimes think our teetotal friends are a little narrow. They talk about preventing people going into public-houses. Well, I do not wonder. Public-houses ought to be very much improved, and there is a good deal of idealism which could be usefully put into practice in connection with public-houses. The root of the matter is, however, that when you find a lot of spots on a fever patient, you don't try to paint them out, but you try to find the cause; and the cause of drunkenness, and half-a-dozen social evils, is ignorance, bad housing, and poverty. And if you address yourselves in the first place to these things, it will be better from every point of view. Temperance will follow. Our aristocracy used to drink heavily, but it is only a few of them who do so to-day; our middle-classes used to be pretty great drinkers, but to-day their standards have greatly risen in this respect.

It is the rise in general standards of value that has killed that vice, and has kept down, to a great extent, other vices; and so it will be with the working classes, too. If you could have the three minima—wages, decent homes, sufficient knowledge—you would get rid of half the things about which people bother themselves in regard to temperance and other defects which arise because the standards have not been worked up to by the State, and people have not attained to them.

Let us see what is the next step we come to.

We cannot all do intellectual work. Some will have to work with the brain, but most with the hand; and therefore it is declared that you will never get rid of the monotony of work. I think, probably, what makes the working classes more unrestful than anything else is the monotony of their work and the very little share they have in directing it. They

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY¹

are not brought into consultation, and although they do a great part in the construction, they feel they have no part in any organisation, but are just mechanically doing their job. The hour comes when they have to do this work, and it is no pleasure; the hour comes when they have to leave it, and that is a pleasure.

How can we get rid of that? Only by interesting the people in their work.

We are coming to some speculative things now, and I want to impress them upon you. I think the first problem we have to deal with is, how to get rid of that state of things in which the workman feels himself merely like a machine; he seems to himself like a machine which has to do the same thing from morning to night. I have seen highly skilled workmen doing things that were, beyond doubt, very monotonous.

But if a man is doing a thing of which he has a thorough knowledge, and is thoroughly interested in it, and he has the tools and machinery which relieve him of doing what a machine should do and a human being should never do, well, then, it is rather easier. You will never get rid of monotony.

Let us compare workmen with Judges. I am a fairly busy man. I am, among other things, a Judge of the Supreme Tribunal of the Empire, and I sit there daily from half-past ten to four listening to causes which are argued before us and on which we have to give judgments which are sometimes very difficult and laborious. Do you think there is no monotony in listening to speeches from half-past ten to four o'clock? I confess to you that I am haunted by the monotony of it. If I could only keep the arguments to the points and follow them in my own way, I should get rid of a lot of the monotony. But the suitors would not, perhaps, feel wholly satisfied, and the advocates would probably think that their arguments had been neglected. That is only

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

one instance; but everyone, even in the most interesting occupation, has a feeling of monotony. I have held the offices of Secretary of State for War, and also of Lord Chancellor, and I can tell you there is a great deal of monotony in both these tremendously interesting offices—although there is always the chance of accomplishing something great in them. If I could tell you what monotonous work had to be done before the Territorial Force (which the Mayor has referred to) was brought into existence, I should tell you of an often monotonous record.

I say this because I want to show you that there is a certain amount of monotony that you cannot hope to get rid of in life, but you can reduce it vastly if you only know your work and are interested in it.

Let me go on to speak of how things can be made better.

Some people tell us that Labour creates Capital. But Labour undirected can do little good. Nor does Capital create wealth. It is a tool which is used to create wealth, but anyone who thinks he can create wealth by Capital alone has only to try and use it by itself and without sufficient knowledge, and he will find his mistake. What creates wealth is knowledge and power of directing the requisite Labour and Capital. It is that which enables the possession of work and wealth alike to be directed for the benefit of mankind.

Labour and Capital are both necessary instruments. Nowadays, since the Joint Stock Company came into existence, all you have to do, if you are a real and trusted director—a man of wisdom and not a guinea-pig—all you have to do, if you are a capable person who can influence public confidence, is to say, "I can pay you six, eight, or ten per cent.—it is high just now—on your capital if you invest it in the company which I have formed to do such and such work. And people are thankful to get such interest, and hand over their

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

money. They are moved by faith and not by knowledge. They think well of the real director, and if he is a good one he gets them the limited return which is all that he ought to promise.

If, however, you turn to Labour it is different. Labour also cannot under present conditions direct itself. It cannot direct itself because it has not enough scientific knowledge and organisation; it is thus shut out from direction, and with the increase of business and of the scope of business Labour is getting more like a disciplined army which does not think for itself. And that gives rise to a great deal of friction and feeling, and people think of the "good old days" when working-men did wonderful things from their own designs and patterns—they made their own individual products: Chippendale chairs, and things of that sort—in a fashion which is over to-day, because men have become like machines and cannot put their imagination into their work. One reason is that in the old days the output was very small, and the conditions of those days would not satisfy modern necessities in the way of output.

What is the solution? You must have direction. Capital, I think, is becoming more and more a sort of a thing which you can go out into the market and buy at six per cent., or whatever the rate at the time is. Labour is discontented, because it does not have enough interest in its work; it is suffering from the monotony of being treated like a machine. We want to see Labour brought more into contact with direction.

For a year and a half I was chairman of an extraordinarily interesting committee. It was a Committee on the National Coal Resources, and we published one report—there exist others dealing with other questions—called "The Electricity Report," devoted to the production of electrical power from coal. Now I want you to take note of one of two things that

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

were in that Report. If they were merely my own conclusions I would not speak about them, but they were the conclusions that were come to by my colleagues as well as myself, and my colleagues included some of the greatest authorities on electrical engineering, and on the problem to which I have referred, in this country or perhaps in any country. We had all the knowledge of the century available to us, and we found that to-day we use eighty million tons of coal in the year to supply power for our industries in this country. Most of this coal is put into engines which generate steam power, and, as you know, the steam-engine is a very wasteful way of producing energy. It is a very bad way indeed, if you are using a great number of small engines as is done to-day. If you could take the coal at the pit-head and turn it on a great scale into steam at once, which you must do in order to generate the power, the waste could be reduced to a minimum, and then, with great super-power stations generating electric power on a large scale, you would get the result that instead of eighty million tons of coal per year being used to produce the existing quantity of industrial power in factories, in workshops, and on railways, we should do it with only twenty-five million tons; and as there is plenty of coal for two or three centuries, and by that time we shall very likely have discovered other sources of light and heat that will supersede coal, we can very well use the eighty million tons at one-third of the cost, and put at the disposition of the workman tools and machinery that will enable him to accomplish three times the output with the same supervision. The workman with a combination of electrical tools might therefore put out three times as much and be paid three times the wage.

You would be able to bring within the range of practical politics that which Lord Leverhulme has been advocating—a six-hour day. It would be a concentrated day, requiring

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

workmen who know a great deal and have knowledge enough to supervise the application of electrical energy. The workman would have to apply his mind very closely; like a Judge, he would have to attend to everything and never let his attention wander. Also, like a Judge, he would have to know a certain amount. But think, after six hours' work he would be able to spend time with his books, with his family, in the art gallery, in forming his mind, and generally in being more of a human being than he is now, when he is dog-tired at the end of the day.

I think that is quite possible, and what is more, I think it would be enormously to the advantage of the community, because if you had these great generating stations near the pit-heads, with great supply cables, they would probably be national, or under close State control, so that there would be little profiteering out of what would be a national resource. The cables would be kept going at a constant load, a constant quantity of electricity going along the network of lines, and in the day supplying power and after dark supplying light. And then in the small hours, when less labour would be required for it, the currents could be devoted to producing things we need much, and which electricity could give us even now were it not for the costliness of electrical power under the present wasteful system—nitrogen combinations from the atmosphere in a dozen forms which we have to import them to-day from across the seas—and this would make a great difference to our commercial and industrial world.

Now that is a suggestion which is, I believe, perfectly possible and compassable, and which would, if realised, make all the difference to the workman. He would take his part in the professional world of those who directed this new and scientific machine. He would have to be educated, and you must brush aside the idea that any illiterate person could do the work. The more intelligent the man, the

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

greater the chances he would have. Every workman will have something of the professorⁿ in him, in his mechanical occupation, as it is called to-day. He would have his chance of rising to the highest grade in the hierarchy of direction, if only he had it in him to rise. Whether this is made possible depends on what we are going to do with the coming generation. I am a strong supporter of Mr. Fisher's Education Bill. I want to see that Bill treated as a beginning. I want to see every child in the country getting such a chance that if the latent talent is there the boy or girl may cross over and go on to the highest schools and universities, and have the same chance as the child of the highest-born person. I want to see the latent talent in our democracy brought to light, brought out of that vast reservoir of talent; I want to see it made actual, not only in the interest of the individual, but in that of the State.

I have taken you a step further in this direction. I have brought you to the point that our ideal for the workman is that he should be neither a labourer nor a capitalist, but a director, receiving the wages of a director, which will vary very much according to his capacity. I am certain that in times to come the haggling over a man's capacity will still go on, but we shall have it under control; and with the principles of a minimum wage, a minimum home, and a minimum education observed, we shall get a good way in the direction of making sure that no one takes advantage of or cuts down or exploits what justly belongs to other people.

This will entail an adjustment of the land laws and other things in our existing system, and it will necessitate our taking in hand the re-casting of the machinery of government to a very considerable extent. I am Chairman, just now, of a Committee which is sitting to inquire into the working of this machinery, and the evidence that has come before us shows that an enormous amount of work has to be

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

done before we can make our machinery fit in with modern demands.

If these things of which I have now spoken can be accomplished what will follow? I read this morning a speech by Sir Wilfred Laurier. Someone here had suggested that Sir Robert Borden should submit a list of names of persons in Canada deserving hereditary titles. Sir Robert Borden wrote back that he was very busy and had not time even to think about it. Sir Wilfred Laurier took up the point, and said that the England of the past had been interested in these things, but England was likely to be less picturesque in the future, and to take less interest in such matters, and he agreed with Sir Robert Borden's policy of not taking any notice of the suggestion.

I think it is profoundly true that we are now on the way to see our old-fashioned aristocracy superseded. Quite painlessly and calmly you will put us poor Peers out of political existence, in a very delightful and easy way, I have no doubt; but we are going out of existence. And I am going to tell you what must take the place of the old-fashioned aristocracy. There is going to take its place an elite of talent. You will have your democracy, not on the footing of the Bolsheviks, but with every kind of differing authority, authority according to talent and capacity, only restrained so that the individual of great cleverness shall not be able to get more than the share which is justly his, having regard to the talent he possesses. With the elite of talent anyone, however meanly born, will have the opportunity of rising to the highest position. We have been getting on pretty fast towards that, but I want it done in a scientific way.

If you get rid of the monotony of labour, educate your workman, give him a good home, treat him properly, and see that these minima are maintained, have your electricity taking the place of the deficiency of power that there is at

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

the present time; if you get the human machine as far as possible superseded by the machine directed by the man with a certain professional skill, the educated workman, you will have gone a long way towards the point where the elite of talent may take the place of the old-fashioned aristocracy.

That is what I believe in; that is what I mean to work for; that is what I hold to be the only thing that in the days in which we live can give stability to the Constitution of this country. That is the only thing that I believe will carry us on in the future in the proud position we have occupied up to now as leaders among the nations.

But I want to say that you cannot stop there. It is the whole man we want, not the half man. Remember that there is a yet higher side than the side of people's rights. There is the side of people's duties. We are citizens of the State and we owe duties to the State and to each other. The highest values we can reach are those we reach by self-sacrifice, by putting thoughts of ourselves aside, and by thinking of something nobler and greater. That is what our soldiers are doing in the fields of France to-day, and that is why our hearts go out to them, because theirs is the faith that there is something higher than life—the good of their country. We have to bear that in mind. There is a higher side in which we recognise society as there for more than mere self-help, as an organisation in which we can realise our duties to the State, and realise more than merely our individual aspirations. In an organised community like that we do not aim at or think of reward. We live for eternal justice. Your best man does not want reward for doing the right thing. It is the thing itself, the joy of quality, that makes all the difference to him. And so the ideal of the citizen of the State must be that it is quality and not quantity that counts, and that the real reward lies in self-sacrifice itself, even, it may be, in the giving of one's life.

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

Remember that in your ideal of the State. That high thought we must keep constantly in mind if we would reach the very best that is open to us. For it is the spiritual side of a people, after all, that raises it to its highest level. Material things are essential. I do not believe you can save people's souls unless you look after their bodies. But when you have looked after their bodies you have not done everything; their souls still remain to be saved. You must see that people are encouraged to save their souls by keeping up high ideals in the State.

I sat for a quarter of a century for a remarkable constituency, the constituency of East Lothian. It is an extraordinary county. My constituents were mainly agricultural labourers, but quite different from your South of England agricultural labourers. They are men most of whom are well paid, live in good houses, and have high ideals of education. When you go into a cottage you find one son follows his father's occupation and becomes a ploughman; the second becomes a minister, the third a doctor, and the fourth a schoolmaster. That is the way they went, and they had these tremendously high standards, and they were a contented people. They were, on the whole, very moderate in their opinions. I never got in by a very large majority—but, on the other hand, they always did return me—but by a majority which was small enough to show they kept an eye on me. I learned something of the ideals of democracy in the twenty-five years I represented them. When I went into those spotless and speckless cottages there I saw books, and there was an atmosphere of education there, and I used to feel that these men were not what was ordinarily understood by labourers, but were people with mind and knowledge just like what was possessed by their most highly educated neighbours. They could give you, for example, most sound and sane opinions, not only upon religion and politics, but on the poetry of Robert Burns and other gems of literature.

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY

I learned a great deal there, and I learned this: that no political creed is worth anything that does not embrace the spiritual side as well as the material side.

Besides the scientific knowledge that is to make a man a director of machinery and deliver him from a monotonous occupation, there is something more wanted. You want to awaken his interest in literature and art. I have known a good many working men who read their Shakespeare, and some of them their Plato, too. There would be plenty of people with keen tastes in that class if we only gave them the encouragement as well as the opportunity. It is not very fashionable to give such encouragement, and I want to see it fashionable. I want to see the same love of literature and art among the working classes as I find among the best people elsewhere. I want to see the opportunities of life and education such that they shall be the same for all classes in respect of higher values.

Knowledge is power, but knowledge must not be merely abstract and material; it must be knowledge of those things that are high and spiritual, a knowledge that tells men and women that the State is largely their own lives, and that their own lives are a trust to be carried out for the benefit of those around them as well as for themselves.

I will conclude this address with a great saying of a great thinker, because I have now made plain to you what the ideal is which ought more and more to dominate life for all of us. It is this:

"THE SPIRITUAL ALONE IS THE REAL."

At the Pelican Press, 2 Carmelite Street, E.C.

BOOKS FOR DEMOCRATS

By the Rt. Hon. Arthur Henderson, M.P.

THE AIMS OF LABOUR

1/- net.

Everyone who is alive to the problems facing us in the future will make himself possessed of this book.

Oxford Magazine.

By Dr. Marion Phillips and others.

WOMEN AND THE LABOUR PARTY

Uniform with above, 1/- net.

The new Franchise Act opens a new field for the service and activities of women. This series of essays by well-known leaders of the Women's Labour Movement will indicate the part Labour is prepared to take in the politics of the future.

By Henry Noel Brailsford.

A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Paper Boards, 2/- net.

Is already the classic of the movement in England, and a very full and thorough book.—*H. G. Wells.*

By Warwick Draper.

THE TOWER

2/- net.

An anticipatory description of a Britain thirty years hence . . . with the items of a new simple democratic programme of a purified community . . . A book of no small literary merit.—*The Times Literary Supplement.*

In the Press.

By G. D. H. Cole.

LABOUR IN THE COMMONWEALTH

4/6 net.

A book for the younger generation, pointing to the principles that underlie a free democracy, with thoughts on the reconstruction of industry after the war.

HEADLEY BROS. PUBLISHERS, LTD.

72 OXFORD STREET, W.1

YB 65258

