

all its faults and weaknesses it can be made safe and secure. What are its faults? To put the matter in a word, they are the faults of human nature: a government that rests on the will of the people is exposed to all the evils that may spring from undisciplined and unruly wills: we have only to reflect for a moment to realise what evils have sprung from uncontrolled multitudes into whose hands the supreme power has fallen in the past. There is always danger that clever demagogues who can play on the passions of the crowd and sway them against better judgment may arise; and if such unscrupulous persons are able to wield the power of a referendum untold injustice is sure to follow. The wisest councils of the people will avail nothing to stay the mob in such a case; and the terrors of mob-rule in France or Russia are always a possibility then. Another danger is that even in a Democracy there is sure to be jobbery and place-hunting; and wherever these exist the evils of bureaucracy are not far off. It has been foolishly asserted that the best rulers must come from the working-classes; but it is obvious to anyone that human nature is the same under the blouse of a porter and under the robes of a king. "Rulers," says F. York Powell, "are not wise by reason of their number or their poverty, or their reception of a weekly wage instead of a monthly salary or a yearly income. It is worse and more unpleasant and more dangerous to be ruled by many fools than by one fool, or a few fools. The tyranny of an ignorant and cowardly mob is worse tyranny than the tyranny of an ignorant and cowardly clique or individual. . . . A man is no better or wiser than others by reason of his position, but by reason of his stronger body, better skill, greater endurance, keener courage." Which all comes to this: Democracy to be successful must choose representatives who are noted for their wisdom, integrity, courage, and strength; and it must select them from as wide a range as possible, not limiting them to any class or classes. Men who know the lives of the people, their wants and their sufferings, their wrongs and their hopes, must be preferred to mere talkers and demagogues; worth and ability must be the sole qualifications upon which a representative is elected; otherwise we might as well have the Party system or the Plutocracy with their corrupt tyranny again. And once the best men are elected they must be more than mere mouthpieces. They have been chosen because they are wise and intelligent and honest; because they have governing qualities which the common man has not; therefore it would be the height of folly to suppose that the judgment of the ignorant should prevail over theirs and that they become machines for registering votes and nothing more.

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The dangers are obvious. But they are not so great that we need fear for the result. Democracy, when not perverted, rests on the will of the people; and the people in the main are sound and reliable. They love honesty and justice; their goodwill and their love of fair play is predominant; they, above all, stand for freedom and for the abolition of tyranny. Unless a community is corrupt and debased it can be trusted to strive for the ideals which are the beacons of true Democracy; it will make mistakes (for it is human and not a heaven-sent thing from which perfection ought to be expected), but it can learn from its mistakes and avoid them in the future. The people will have to be watchful and to keep guard over rights and liberty at all times and at all seasons—guarding against weaknesses from within and from without, from the shortcomings of all human institutions as well as from the rapacity and the avarice of those who would exploit the masses to their own ends. All other forms have been tried and have failed; government by the people and for the people, government by consent of the governed is the only form of government that men will tolerate in future. And from all we have said it follows that there is but one royal road towards making Democracy safe and beneficial to mankind: that is by making mankind better, truer, more honest and God-fearing—by teaching men and women to rule

and order their lives according to the Ten Commandments. In no other way can the selfishness and the greed and the lust which are the disintegrating forces in a community be suppressed; in no other can the foundation be laid for a Democracy such as we all dream of and hope for at the present day.

## NOTES

### Manana

*Mañana, mañana* [pronounced manyana] is a Spanish word that ought to be as international as "boycott" or "strafe" or "vamos." In the sunny South, where life is easy and trouble light, men will as a rule put off till to-morrow whatever they could do to-day. *Mañana, mañana*—to-morrow, to-morrow,—they will say; for to-day the sun shines and why should a man worry about business? The word, indeed, is Spanish, but the thing it stands for is not confined to Spain. Unpunctuality, want of discipline, lack of shame in breaking one's word, callous indifference to the inconvenience others suffer when we fail to keep appointments, are, we venture to think, just as common in New Zealand as in Lusitania; and more's the pity. The man of procrastination is always too busy to be busy about anything; he loses so much time doing nothing that he has no time to do anything. He can neither catch a train nor catch a customer; and an appointment kept for once in a while is sure to be the result of another missed. Who can tell what harm is done and what good left undone by shiftless, idle habits of procrastination? And who ever knew the man whose watchword is *mañana* to achieve anything? Procrastination is the thief of time, but the worst of it is that it steals not only the time of him who knows no other use of time but to waste it, but it also robs busy people, who live by order, of time they can ill spare. It is a disease akin to sleeping-sickness or somnambulism; and, as a rule, incurable. And it is as old as the hills and the sea. Centuries ago St. Augustine denounced it when he said,

*Cras, cras, corvina vor!*

### The End

It is a philosophical truth that there is no such thing as an indifferent human act. Everything that a man does, as a rational man, is either good or bad. If the act is not good or bad in itself its goodness or badness is determined by circumstances or by its end. And no act is performed without some end or without attendant circumstances. We do not speak of spontaneous acts, or of acts in which the rational part of man has no play. By human acts are meant all acts that proceed from man as from an agent who uses his reason and his will. Apart from reason and the will acts are not meritorious or culpable; proceeding from reason and will they are always either the one or the other. The Church teaches us a sure way to sanctify our ordinary actions by ordaining them all towards God (Who is our last end) by making a morning offering at the beginning of each new day; and those who begin the day thus go a long way towards fulfilling Our Lord's precept to pray always. While we are bound to pray at certain times, we ought to remember that to work is also to pray, if we sanctify our labor by offering it to God with due recognition of the fact that we are His creatures and He is our Master. In the same way, lawful recreation becomes sanctified and meritorious of an eternal reward. What a treasure in Heaven do they not store up for themselves who never neglect the sanctification of their whole day; and how much do they not lose who never think of God either at the beginning or the end of the day? To make eternity look through the windows of time ought to be our constant care. We have it in our power to make the most transient act of eternal value; and we are foolish if we do not do so. At the head of the fresh page of life that we open each morning we

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