# COTYLEDONS OF NATIONALISM.

By the Author of "Metzerott, Shoemaker."

THOSE who are watching with faith and hope the growth of the new organism which has recently forced itself upon the notice of society are quite as often blamed for what Nationalism is not as for what it is. Now, by the conditions, this is altogether illogical. It is said, on the one hand, that there is no plan, or only a vague one, for "introducing" Nationalism; on the other, that the plans are too definite.

But Nationalism is not a plan, it has nothing to do with plans; it is a living organism, which will and must develop according to the laws of its own being. Of course it can be dwarfed, stunted, or artificialized, like the box-trees which in former times were trimmed into the shape of peacocks; and there are movements in certain parts of the line which look very like an attempt to force it into a premature and unhealthy growth. But all that the best and most thoughtful minds among us claim to do is to predict the general scope and manner of growth of the tree of liberty, just as a botanist can safely risk his reputation, from the shape and number of cotyledons, upon the endogenous or exogenous nature of the plant; though he might very properly await a fuller development before carrying his prediction further.

I have called Nationalism a new organism, and yet, in a rudimentary form, it has been present in the world, one might say, since there was a world to contain it, certainly ever since "Israel came out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob from among a strange people." At present we speak of it as quite distinct from Christian Socialism, and so it is, but in this way: all Christian Socialists are virtually Nationalists; all Nationalists are not Christians.

The fundamental principle of Nationalism, as formulated in the constitution of the Boston Club, is "The Nationalization of Industry and the Promotion of the Brotherhood of Humanity."

Now, what do we mean by the Nationalization of Industry? The tendency of the age is toward production on a large scale, thereby reducing the cost to the producer. Nationalism proposes, by placing all the means of production in the hands of the nation, to minimize the cost to the consumer as well. For example, the post-offices all over the world, and the railroads in many places, are managed by and for the people; certainly to much better purpose than if they remained in the hands of corporations.

But if the nation become the sole producer, it will also be the sole employer; and every child born within its physical boundaries will be by birth an employee of the nation, entitled, first, to an education; second, to work and wages; third, to a pension when past work. We have the rudiments of this system in our Military Academy at West Point and our Naval Academy at Annapolis; would that I could also instance our boasted public school system, where, however, a teacher who has expended his or her best years, vital force, and nervous energy, does not even receive the benefits accorded to a stray dog in the dog days—merciful drowning.

The nation as universal employer would most probably and properly involve thorough military organization of the employees, with all the accessories, we may safely imagine, of distinctive uniforms, flags, parades, etc., so dear to the heart of a true American. The manner of choosing the officers of this industrial army we cannot yet foresee with certainty. Laurence Gronlund imagines that in a shoe factory, for instance, the workmen in each department will elect a foreman, all the foremen a superintendent, all the superintendents in a city or district a district superintendent, and so on until we come to the general manager of the leather trade, which would include tanning, harness, bag, and trunk making—in short, every possible stage in the working up of the skins of animals.

Edward Bellamy, on the contrary, represents these officers as chosen by the veterans of the Grand Army, who have passed the age of service and been honorably mustered out. This is unquestionably a higher ideal, but one which it will be impossible to realize until we shall have graduated our first set of industrial alumni; and though experience and experiment will bring us at last to this method of election, we shall scarcely attain it much before the year 2000.

Another point upon which these authorities differ is the wages question.

Mr. Gronlund advocates a graduated scale; Mr. Bellamy, equal pay to every one, except to children, who, up to the age of twenty-one, receive part of their support in the form of schooling. This difference is exactly analogous to the other; Mr. Bellamy's plan is the more ideally righteous, but we shall almost—nay, quite—certainly begin with a graduated scale, and work up to the other.

But perhaps the best summary we can give of the principles of Nationalism is this, that while at present people are too busy over the best investments for their capital to be able to enjoy their income, the nation will then be the universal trustee, and, while it manages the investment of all capital, will leave each individual to the undisturbed enjoyment of a separate income, in any way suited to his or her peculiar taste. That each shall also work to the best of his or her ability will be, of course, a *sine qua non;* but of all people on earth we Americans fear work least; in fact, as a nation we work entirely too hard, and one of the best effects of Nationalism will be that it will enforce not only "books and work," but also "healthful play."

This will be one effect; another will be the immediate and peremptory settlement of the liquor question. It is by no means unusual now for an employer to discharge a workman on account of drunkenness; but when the nation becomes the employer—an employer who will be forced to continue the wages of all worthless employees—it will prove to be to its immediate interest to discharge the liquor dealers, and turn over all intoxicants, as well as narcotics, to the department of *materia medica.*

Next, Nationalism will effectually dispose of the race problem by rendering the "negro reservation" project both possible and practicable, neither of which, in the present writer's opinion, is it to-day; but upon this point I must refer to an article in the "Nationalist" for February, 1890, where "The Negro's Part" in Nationalism is rather more fully worked out than is possible within the limits of the present brief article.

Another, and the best result of all, will be the elimination of poverty, and with it ninety-nine hundredths of the crime and suffering which now deform and disfigure human nature. One can scarcely mention a vice or crime which, if it does not owe its beginning and origin to poverty, is not at least indebted to it for aid, comfort, and fostering care. It is, of course, true that "sweet are the uses of adversity." I, at least, shall not attempt to deny it, or the country's done for. Let us by all means have a little adversity; enough to *use*, not to *abuse*, as is the case at the present day.

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Cannot we, then, leave the admixture of adversity to Him? There are sorrows enough and will be even when those arising from poverty shall have been removed: sickness, death, separation, coldness of friends, ingratitude in those we love, sin itself—these things will be only lessened, not removed, for many a century. Earth will not be heaven, the rod will remain in the Father's hand till many a generation shall have come and gone; we can trust Him, I think, when he sees the need to lay on and spare not.

The Brotherhood of Humanity—"Looking not each of you on his own things, but each of you also on the things of others." That this should be the corner-stone of a nation; that self-interest should be purified by becoming inseparable from the interests of our fellows—this surely is a great and grand step in the development of humanity.

And this is Nationalism, the secular arm of the kingdom of Christ, the human scaffolding for the edifying of the New Jerusalem. The year 2000 may be able to sing, with a fuller knowledge than can we, of the vine brought out of Egypt, how He cast out the heathen and planted it, how he made great room before it, and caused it to take deep root, so that it filled the land until the hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar trees. In those days many a leaf and flower will bring healing to the nations, of whose form and color we of the present cannot even dream; yet we can hope, trust, and take courage, even now, though we see but the cotyledons.