

Winnetka Weekly Talk

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THE REAL PAGEANT OF PROGRESS

It is a good thing to talk progress, to think progress. It stimulates one's desire to contribute something to progress and makes better citizens of those who take the optimistic view of the times. It costs nothing to consider the bright spots in the outlook and it avails far more than a contemplation of the dark and fearsome view of the pessimist.

But little or nothing comes of a false representation of a progress that does not exist. Fooling ourselves is a poor device to secure a temporary sense of security. Facts must be considered even in making an estimate of the conditions that prevail round about us.

We are progressing towards a sounder industrial condition, but not so rapidly as we might be were we all to lend a hand to effect advance towards the goal of normal standards. Everybody is more or less handicapped in giving full contribution to the betterment of things by consideration of his own immediate good and profit. The citizen who acts as we all should act to bring about a return of the pre-war prosperity is so rare that he is bound to suffer from his own idealism. The game is one in which all must join if it is to be played to effectiveness, and if the players are to benefit from it.

And there is little of the pageant element in the course of conduct required for the bringing about of real progress. It calls for the hidden virtues of steady application to one's job, confidence in the sincerity of others who are co-operating in the same endeavor, readiness to give of one's best, conscious that the time is one of emergency and that only one's best will bring about the happiest result in the shortest possible time.

Such a Pageant of Progress offers little of the picturesque. There is nothing romantic in going early to one's task and giving one's best to its performance. But it is far more effective towards realizing the ideal of the Pageant than the gaily decorated float or booth, far more demanding of patriotism and sound citizenship than participation in the most effective parade.

THE RETIRING AGE

Health writers tell us that the span of life is increasing. Statistics from the business world emphasize the claim. No longer is a man or woman retired from office or shop or school-room at the "ripe age" of fifty or even the "advanced age" of sixty. School boards in many cities place the retiring age at seventy and even this is contingent on the physical fitness of the teacher. Long ago men refused to be put on the shelf when they had reached the honored three-score-and-ten and women laid aside the matron's cap which tended to relegate them to the fireside and armchair in their early forties. No doubt the economic necessity which has placed woman in the business world by the side of man has tended to make both sexes more alert and alive, but whatever causes unite to increase the duration of human life, if they also increase its usefulness, they are to be welcomed.

CIVIC PATRIOTISM

In Cleveland the well parched lawn is a badge of civic patriotism. The city authorities have asked the people to refrain from the unnecessary use of water, lest there come the complete lack of fuel to keep going the essential utilities of the city.

In most instances the people have willingly fallen into the spirit of the occasion and are letting their hitherto well cared for lawns grow into the appearance of the neglected yard of the small town. But they arouse neither scorn nor comment. It is the green and velvety smoothness of the watered lawn that excites criticism. Public opinion does not approve the sort of person who puts the welfare of his grass and garden above the security of the city from the fire hazard and from the dangers of the darkness that would follow lack of fuel for the lighting of the streets.

Mr. Gompers has said, "The difference between a slave and a freeman is that the slave must work when his master or owner directs and wills." Although Mr. Gompers didn't mean it that way, the definition fits exactly the modern union laborer. He works when and where his union bosses tell him to work. What is more to the point, if the bosses say so he does no work at all, regardless of his own feelings in the matter.

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