

were willing to take a chance on their lives. But Wall Street operates behind the door and never yet took something for nothing or gave anything for anything. It has rather too strong a grip on British Columbia now. On the whole we prefer the Old Empire of which we now are, and hope to remain, a part.

That day has now at last arrived in the history of this planet when the imperious necessity is laid upon us for fundamental thinking and for broad concerted action. We have been too busy in using up the content of our vocabulary over selfish and partisan and trivial interests to find words with which easily to express the seriousness of the new and overwhelming problems which confront us on the threshold of this new era. For this is a new era. We are a long way from having adjusted ourselves to the New World, which one century of applied science has made of the old slaughter pen, which we now call our home. We are still bewildered with the lightning rapidity with which certain phases of progress have been proceeding, and we are still apathetic toward the inertia of other very important relations of life where there has been scarcely any progress at all. If our optimism is peremptorily challenged it is that, with all the undoubted blessings which the worldwide institutions of democracy are bringing us, the world is not being, and cannot be, ruled at its highest level of intelligence. For the better or for the worse this is a proposition which must be reckoned with as a fact, and perhaps an unchanging and unchangeable fact. The late Regius Professor of modern history of Oxford University, Frederick York Powell, said, in what is practically his last word on the study of history, a year before he died, and in the closing words of that wonderful address "A General Survey of Modern History": "Most of you believe in democracy. If there is one thing the study of history shows to be certain it is that *an ignorant democracy cannot last long.*" Another thing he might have added with almost equal force: *A dishonest democracy should not last long.*

I know of no more objectionable fly in the ointment of democracy than that which has made possible the ancient reproach that it is a system under which the nursery runs the household. If my memory serves me, it was old Plato himself who complained that even the poorest intelligence would go to a shoemaker if he wanted a pair of boots made, but that most anybody could run a government. That system must contain something very unintelligent and inadequate which in the United States places a lawyer over the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, or in this country places a civilian in command of the British Navy. When amateurs, no matter how honourable and well-intentioned in the guidance of the ship of State, are placed at the helm (to say nothing about fleets), it is quite time for some one to raise a doubt as to the plenary inspiration of our political creeds, and the infallibility of our institutions. It is largely because of amateurs in politics and misfits in power, amiable and well-intentioned as they are, that the path behind us is strewn with the wrecks of so many a lost opportunity, and that the path in front, I devoutly fear, is paved with more good intentions.

There is cogent reason, therefore, that those of you who have enjoyed the highest privileges the world has to give in mental culture, spiritual refinement, and diversity and profundity of knowledge, should devote yourselves without wearying to those mighty problems which involve no less than the future welfare of mankind. The fundamental ideas of this new era are constructive, increasingly constructive. Here is our hope. Its deepest instinct is toward organisation rather than toward anarchy which is the inevitable outcome of those impulses of the individualist, which are working toward the disorganisation and disjunction and disruption of society, and