



EVERY time humanity moves to a new plane, the feeble and the cowardly and the commonplace all join in a chorus of glee whose refrain is that the day of the MAN is over. When the aristocracy succeeded at last in pulling down the King, and substituting their own rule for his, they shouted out to the world that the day of the MAN was over, and that hereafter the world would be ruled by a number of equals. At this, every sprig of aristocracy smiled, for he was to be one of the rulers. The great mass of the people paid no attention; for they were not yet included and it mattered little to them who robbed them of all their surplus over a bare living. But the gleeful aristocrats did not reckon on the strong Minister; and before long they learned that they had not got rid of the MAN. They had only changed the name of his office. Then the Middle Classes—the burgesses of the cities, the free land owners, the great ship-masters—took a hand in government; and again we were assured that the MAN had disappeared. But again the mediocre mob were disappointed. The MAN was still master, were he Cromwell or Pitt or Napoleon.

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TODAY in certain sections of the world, a wide—though not a wholly free—democracy has come. From the Mexican line north, this continent is ruled by the democracy. But have we got rid of the MAN? The recent elections in Canada and the United States tell the tale. A MAN carried the Canadian elections. There was no other issue worth considering. When Sir John Macdonald was alive, allegiance to him and opposition to him made up the most of our politics. In the United States, a MAN appeared at the White House and captured the people. In spite of the “no third term” rule, which was framed to meet just such cases, he could have been re-elected President if he had not forbidden it. As it was, he chose to try his strength only in naming his successor. For this purpose, he picked out a man whom no one wanted. It was not that they disliked him but that they did not know him. He was not “in politics.” He was not a Senator nor a Congressman nor a State Governor nor a great General. He was one of the last men in the Union whom a prophet would have selected.

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BUT the MAN said, “I will make him President”; and he did. More than half of the workers of the Republican party were against him, and the whole Democratic party fought him; but he was elected. The MAN won out. Moreover, another MAN appeared in the Democratic ranks and the nomination became his. Again, the political forces fought him; but the MAN was victorious. The people still love a hero. Another MAN had got, in spite of the politicians, into the Governor’s chair in New York. The politicians said that he must make way for one of themselves. But the MAN appealed to the people; and the MAN was re-nominated. More than that, he was re-elected in spite of the most shameless plotting, treachery and “trading” to secure his political death. But the world is full of such cases. The MAN Clemenceau dominates France. There is no big man to-day in Britain; and the people are in a state of flux. During the past half century, they have been ruled by Gladstone, Disraeli and Chamberlain.

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DOES this mean that democracy is a failure? Not a bit of it. The inference is rather that it is a greater success than its critics expected; for it does not deprive the nations where it exists of the great benefits of powerful personal leadership. Critics of the democracy are always asking us if we can possibly imagine that the average wisdom of the whole people—ignorant and uninformed as well as intelligent and experienced—will rise to the same heights as the skilled and big-brained wisdom of the selected few. This dominance of the MAN in every democracy is giving these cynics their answer. The whole people do not pit their average wisdom against that of the “King” or the oligarchy; they merely exercise it in choosing the right

“King” and oligarchy. The trouble was, when the MAN was put on horse-back by the few, that he was chosen for his services, past and probable, to these few; and the great mass of the people and their interests were ignored. Now the MAN, on his way to the seat of power, must consider the entire nation, weak as well as strong, and he must rule so as to win their approval. This the MAN can always do. He can fit himself to the conditions necessary to permit him to lead.

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THE democracy then, instead of suspecting the persistence of the MAN at its head, should welcome it as a sign of its permanence and value. It can produce a Napoleon when he is needed quite as certainly as a monarchy can produce a Von Moltke. The nation loses nothing by being a democracy; and it gains infinite happiness, opportunity and freedom for the many. We need not fear that the ballot in the hands of the masses will keep the MAN down; and we know that it will compel the MAN to rule for the ballot-holders and not for a coterie of knights who alone could unhorse him and nullify his genius. The people should insist upon being at least as well served as a tyrant, a court or an aristocracy. They have a wider field from which to choose their man. They supply a more comprehensive and well distributed education, and so “enter” more of the sons of the nation in the great competition for MAN-ship. But they must not permit their prejudices to incline them against the scion of an old house or the recipient of the best training when it is clear that he is the best MAN. The democracy has come to stay; and it need not fear giving those who once opposed its coming, or who have had better opportunities than most, the fullest chance to serve the new order. The glory of popular rule should be that it can more surely secure for the nation its best leader than any of the other systems it has replaced.

N’IMPORTE

IN MEMORY OF BURKE.

AMBASSADOR WHITELOW REID unveiled a tablet in Bath, on October 22, in memory of Edmund Burke, the English statesman and orator. The tablet had been set upon the house where Burke lived in Bath. Subsequent to the unveiling ceremonies Mr. Reid made a long address in which he declared that the highest, the most courageous, and the most far-seeing service in Burke’s whole illustrious career was his outspoken sympathy with the American colonists and his unflinching resistance to the measures which eventually brought about the American revolution.



“HE PUT IN HIS THUMB.”

Shade of Prince Bismarck (to little Franz-Josef Horner). “Hullo, my boy! Breaking the pie-crust I helped to bake? Well, well; after all they’re made to be broken, and I’ve done a bit in that way myself.”—Punch.

(For further explanation see article next following).