

“NEW CALLINGS AND OLD DUTIES”

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We have been told by a distinguished English scientist, Alfred Russell Wallace, that if we count up the great inventions or scientific discoveries of the past, we shall find that thirteen of them were made during the last century and only seven were made in all the preceding story of humanity. Thirteen inventions of the first rank—like the steamboat, the telegraph, the electric light—came to us during the nineteenth century, and only seven—like the mariner's compass and the printing press—were made in all the previous climbing of the human race.

But the significance of these inventions is not chiefly scientific, it is social and industrial and ethical. Science holds on her calm and luminous path whether men be profited or not, but human life has been modified in countless ways, unforeseen and portentous. These discoveries mean new modes of living and working, new organizations

of labor and of capital, demanding new kinds of leadership, new manners and customs in city and village, new occupations and professions for millions of men and women. The world is loudly calling today not only for men to fill the old time-honored callings, whose functions and standards have been determined, but for men to fill positions which never before existed, whose social functions are not yet clear, and whose ethical standards are as yet confused and uncertain. Let no young man looking out into life believe for a moment that the world is too crowded to afford him a place. The lawyers may tell us that their profession is overstocked and the teachers may tell us that salaries are reduced by competition. Business men may affirm that they are overwhelmed with applications. But there are many novel occupations in modern life, which so far from being full, are

calling and searching for leaders, for men of trained mind, sound body and generous spirit.

Modern forestry is a science or art which has become vital to the future of our country. The whole nation is discussing—sometimes with scientific light, and sometimes with political heat,—the conservation of the forests. Millions of trees are planted every year where none were planted before. Schools of forestry are springing up in various localities. Men are needed who can advise individuals, corporations, municipalities and states as to the culture and development of trees. One man in Massachusetts has just engaged a forester to take charge of 3000 acres. Some of the finest young men of the East are now in the great woods of Montana and Oregon and by their decisions and policies are shaping the future of large sections of the republic.

Another most important occupation is that of the student of sanitation and preventive medicine. At last we are awaking to the conviction that the true function of medicine is not to heal the sick but to preserve the community in health. Men who have mastered the principles of public hygiene and municipal sanitation are now wanted by every board of health. They are needed as inspectors and counsellors in every city, in every university, and by every large industrial enterprise. The bacteriologist holds in his keeping the future of all our agriculture, the health of our children, the beauty and progress of every village. We need all through the land the new type of physician who shall prescribe long before disease arrives, and show us how to conserve the health of the individual, the community and the nation.

Another position vainly calling for men is that of superintendent in various philanthropic institutions. When a superintendent is needed for some hospital, asylum, for some social settlement, or orphanage, or organized

charity, the whole country is searched for a man and few there be that are found equipped. For such a position demands both a broad general intelligence, an expert knowledge, and also executive and administrative power. Altruistic institutions are multiplying on every side, but men who possess that union of knowledge and business ability which is needed to conduct such institutions are still few and highly prized.

A fourth calling which few young men are equipped to enter is that of private secretary. Somehow our ablest young men have thought of stenography as suited only to girls in their teens, and secretarial duties as furnishing small field for ambition. Quite the contrary is the case. The private secretary of Grover Cleveland left his imprint on our country. The private secretaries of William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt very speedily emerged into public life. The great need of every young man when he gets out of college is to go into training under a master. The private secretary to a strong resourceful leader of men has the finest training the country can afford, has opportunity for large horizon, mastery of methods, and later for an independent career.

Another profession I need only mention is that of librarian. The enormous growth of libraries in this country has not yet touched the imagination of our young men. We have left that calling largely for persons of sedentary inclination and flaccid fibre. We have failed to realize that the librarian may be, and sometimes is, the president of a great people's college, permeating large cities with light and inspiration and new ideals of life. We have dotted the land with beautiful libraries, but not yet found the men who can worthily administer the structures we have built.

A most important calling is the position of physical or athletic director in schools and colleges. It is easier to

find a dozen good teachers of Latin or mathematics than to find one teacher of physical training. No other man on a college faculty occupies so important a position as the physical director. He becomes, whether he will or not, confidant and counsellor to most of the students. He is often closer to them than any other teacher, closer than physician or minister. In the gymnasium and on the athletic field he shapes ideals of sport, of duty, of manhood. We have equipped our colleges with costly gymnasiums, with extensive playgrounds, and we have too often turned our students over to the instruction of professional pugilists and mercenaries. I would willingly today excuse any college graduate from noble service at the bar or in the pulpit if I were sure he could succeed as physical director of young men.

The modern superintendent of schools is really practicing in a new profession. He need not have been a successful teacher, any more than a railroad president need to have been a conductor on a train. He is really a social and educational engineer, called upon to enter a community, diagnose its needs and construct an educational program for the training of citizens. Men of personal force, of wide experience, of fearless temper, of popular leadership are needed for such a place. The true superintendent of schools is the guardian and director of the intellectual life of the community.

But these new callings—and a score of others I might name—present to us many novel problems in organization and ideal. The old professions had their code of honor and of duty—often curious enough it seems to us now—but it was sharp and clear. The old-time merchant had his rules of business honor. The physician might not advertise his achievements in the public prints, and he might not refuse aid to any sufferer however plumed

in poverty. The soldier's code of duty was definite and unmistakable, and it remains so still. But scores of the new occupations which now crowd the modern world have no code of honor, no established rules of duty, no principles by which to live. The introduction of the automobile has meant the creation of the chauffeur, a man with a new calling, full of peril to himself and his family, a man of uncertain home, still groping for a method by which to organize his own life. The president of the life insurance company, commanding an army of subordinates, brought into intimate relation with the philanthropic and financial and political forces of our time finds himself facing certain problems new to civilization, on which the elementary moral teaching of his childhood can throw only a dim and wavering light. Our ancient standards are thrown into confusion when we attempt to apply them to unprecedented modes of action and callings whose very names demand a new vocabulary. We are clear that no possible calling can be allowed to escape from the control of the commonwealth. The social will must be imposed on each new development of individual energy. The first attempt is usually through legislation, sometimes hasty and inadequate. The introduction of the railroad led to an immense mass of legislation and the extension of those laws is still going on. The coming of the aeroplane and the air-ship have brought novel problems which puzzle all our lawyers. The vast increase of new laws betrays our dissatisfaction with the laws we have. Modern life is so rich, so various, so complicated that it cannot be brought under the simple categories and established codes of fifty years ago. We stand like Shakespeare's Miranda, crying

"O brave new world! How goodly mankind is."

But that goodly world cannot be

—*pro bono publico*—must pass beyond the few callings which now acknowledge it, into every workshop and factory and farm and office. Modern life is too vast and varied ever to find

again a unity of occupation. It may and must rise to a unity of method in approaching truth, and a unity of ideal in regarding all tasks as modes of service to God and man.
