

# CITIZENSHIP<sup>1</sup>

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AT the outset my topic calls for a definition of terms. Our age, like its predecessors, has its full share of sovereign words which shape and control public discussion. Their universal use, however, makes them difficult to define. One recalls the definition of the word "bay" in a famous international case. "A bay," ran the award, "is to be considered as an indentation of the coast having a configuration of a particular character, easy to determine specifically, but difficult to define generally." That was worthy of Dr. Johnson himself. Among catchwords in common use to-day are the terms "education" and "citizenship," either singly or, more often, in combination. Perhaps the definition of "education" that finds most acceptance at the moment is "a preparation for citizenship." In the minds of many the two words are inseparable. But he who tries to fix their content and to indicate their precise relationship, finds that he has taken a fairly large area for his province. I will content myself with part of the task only. I am not so rash as to define the word "education." That, like the Bible, is a field "where each his fancy seeks, where each his fancy finds." But, for the purposes of my topic, I must cast about for a working definition of "citizenship", and try to link it up, at some points, with the well-nigh universal process of education.

In the mind of everyone, doubtless, citizenship has something to do with the State, that "leviathan" so pre-eminent among social institutions. So far forth, this notion is correct. To expound it, we have civics in the schools and political science and allied subjects in the university. But reflection will show that citizenship has other, and perhaps more fundamental, bases than the political. Two years ago, I had the honour of addressing this Association on the subject of Canadian History. Incidentally, I then considered this very topic of citizenship, and ventured to commend a definition of it which I found in Sir Henry Hadow's excellent little book and which he attributes to Dr. Boyd. "Citizenship," so the definition runs, "is the right ordering of our several loyalties." This formula repays analysis. It will be found to come close to Aristotle's notion of the State as existing for the complete life, the well-

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rounded life, or, as one in another place has phrased it, the abundant life. Its keynote is loyalty. Society subsists through the faith and trust that its members place in each other. Further, there are various loyalties—to State, to Church, to home, to school. But the most fruitful idea in the definition is the *ordering* of our loyalties, the balancing, the nice adjustment, the rendering unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's.

It is seen at once that this implies a wider range than the formal study of the State. Rather does it concern itself with society, of which the State is merely one, though perhaps the most far-flung, institution. The study of citizenship, stated broadly, is the story of how men can best learn to live together well. To start with, the teacher-in-training must first get clear-cut concepts of society and the State and the multiform associations in which citizens carry on their social life. But the field is large and expanding. Just what part of it should be covered in the normal school? How shall the subject be approached? What purpose is to control its study? These questions answer themselves, if we remember that the teacher-in-training presumably will have had civics in her academic course, which implies an acquaintance with the outline facts of government and social organization. On the other hand, social theory and political philosophy properly belong to the university. There remains, as material for normal school courses, an ample domain wherein the broad historical tendencies, the actual problems of government, the chief economic and social factors and, underlying all, the ethical purposes of society, can be set forth. They can be presented only in sketch, it is true, but none the less in a way to impart to the young teacher the vision splendid of the steady march of mankind from strength to strength, and to enable her to transmit this vision to those who come under her. And we must remember that our teachers determine the quality of our citizenship. The universities produce the leaders; but the capacity and integrity of our democracy depend on the public school. Society, the State, are what the schoolmaster makes them. Scotland, Prussia, Soviet Russia, are each, in different ways, examples in point. More than ever is this true to-day. "Because of the changed conditions in modern life," says one authority, "we need to change our instruction so that it will fill the new demands. . . . On the one hand, we have more numerous and more difficult civic problems. On the other, we have fewer informal agencies to provide the needed education. The result is to put new and

heavier obligations upon social institutions—of which the school stands first—in training for intelligent citizenship.”

Such is the scope of the subject, such its importance in the schools. What shall its method be? Frankly inspirational, I should say, rather than technical. Arithmetic, reading, science, are doubtless better taught through organized class-work. But the ideas and ideals of citizenship must come home to men's bosoms through the heart and the conscience as well as the processes of the mind. The worth of human institutions, the responsibilities of citizenship, the righteousness that exalts a nation, are to be apprehended by the teacher-in-training, not so much through formal courses on civics, as by an "enthusiasm for humanity" which, if well-directed, becomes infectious. Bismarck used to be contemptuous of Gortchakoff because the latter liked to dilate upon general principles of statecraft, Bismarck himself preferring *Realpolitik*, Ems telegrams and that sort of thing. But the method of the Russian has its value at times, and I am venturing to suggest that the teaching of citizenship in training institutions should proceed, in some degree, along broad lines, leaving the practising educationist to work out details, as the time and the place may suggest.

Our object, then, in such courses as we have in mind, is to indoctrinate the teacher-in-training with a certain total impression of society and human relationships. In one sense every subject on the curriculum may contribute. "Let me teach the songs of a nation," an instructor in literature may well exclaim, "and I care not who teaches its laws." All knowledge, rightly taught and applied, promotes good citizenship. But in the specific sense of this discussion, there is a group of studies—the social sciences, so called—which more directly affect the teaching of citizenship. Chief among them are history, anthropology, government, economics and sociology. Clearly, these cannot be taken up *seriatim* in normal school classes, at least in any detail. But in the hands of the skilful instructor, a certain amalgam of these studies, proceeding along general lines and leaving much to be filled in by the individual student, will serve to create a mental picture of the great society of men—

Ever reaping something new,  
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they  
shall do.

A picture, surely, to stimulate the imagination, to arouse the social conscience, to challenge the latent power of youth! Such an instructor, of course, is born, not made. His price is above rubies.

But there are, let us hope, enough of his like to supply our normal schools.

Now that terms are defined and the province delimited, what basic principles should underlie this concept of society? In the first place, the fruitful principle of evolution must be grasped in all its significance. The historical process, as it unfolds itself not only in written records but in the wonder-book of science, must be ever kept in mind. Not that much detail can be compassed in such a course! But the great landmarks of progress may be indicated and interpreted in the light of modern conditions. The beginnings of law and custom, even in savagery, the domestication of animals, the origin of the family, the adoption of agriculture, the development of the State and the increasing complexity of the social structure, can all be given their due importance.

Even more essential are the changes in social outlook that proceed, step by step, with material progress. Perhaps the most far-reaching in its effect was the change from status to contract. This is one of the magic keys to an understanding of human relationships. The supplanting of the personal by the territorial principle of allegiance was equally momentous. Nationality has been the determining factor of modern political society. The passing of slavery, the invention of parliamentary government, the development of the federal system, the idea of world co-operation, are other elements in the evolutionary process which reveals itself to the student of social institutions at every stage.

Another principle to emphasize is discipline. The correlative of the vast power inherent in modern civilization is social control. With the advent of democracy this becomes more urgent, and at the same time more difficult. "Democracy," says a writer in the *New Era* "has first to learn to control absolutely its own forces, to discipline itself, to rely on its own judgment. To teach this lesson is the task of Education." Here, too, is the place to point out the distinction between liberty and license, between individualism and co-operation. Social evolution takes on new meaning when it is seen that civilization is a progressive trend towards social freedom. The Dyak head-hunter is free to hit a head wherever he sees it. But then heads are freer to show themselves in civilized society. This idea of discipline, of increasing social obligation, is a most fruitful clue to the study of citizenship. It sifts down to first principles, defines the spheres of the State and the individual, and clarifies our thinking on legal and moral issues. Here, more than on mere descriptive details of government, is the teaching of citizenship vital. In proportion as we get a society

imbued with a sense of the moral necessity of discipline, shall sound and enlightened views of public duties prevail.

A third fundamental on which to base this general picture of an evolving society is the doctrine of relativity. It is important to remember that the next generation will carry in their heads an entirely different concept of the universe from ours. The Copernican and Newtonian systems were rigid, uniform, boundless. Relativity points to a universe in flux, without constants. We are back to old Heracleitus: All things flow. This principle is manifold in its applications, as Lord Haldane has shown in his *Reign of Relativity*. Society, the State, international relations, all come within its scope. We hear it, for example, with respect to socialism. Socialism, it is insisted, is only relative. What is socialism in one generation becomes good liberal or conservative doctrine in the next. So with types of government. If the King did not exist as the bond of unity for the Commonwealth, he would have to be invented for the purpose. But neither King nor Commonwealth is a concept within the ambit of American political theory and practice. With a common inheritance of law and tradition, the two Anglo-Saxon peoples have different policies, each admirably equipped for its needs. Similarly in international affairs. God did not necessarily make a great mistake when he made foreigners. No one nation has always been right. Nothing is absolute in the conduct of States. "International policy," said a consummate master of diplomacy, "is a fluid element which, under certain conditions, will solidify, but on a change of atmosphere reverts to its original diffuse condition." Differing ideals, policies, and traditions must come into the forum of world opinion, and submit to the golden rule of compromise. It will readily be seen that such views, as they gradually spread among the youth of this generation, are going to work mightily for a new world order and the promotion of international peace.

So much for first principles—a few of them. Equally important for the teacher in training to possess is a definite concept of our modern world, with all the influences playing upon it. Predominant in it is myriad-minded science, with invention and a mechanized world in its train. The intellectual problem which science raises for society should also be clearly set forth. As James Harvey Robinson puts it, "we have to create an unprecedented attitude of mind to cope with unprecedented conditions, and to utilize unprecedented knowledge." Step by step with the growth of science, and largely as the result of it, the world is rapidly becoming socialized. This means co-operation and, on the econ-

omic side, large-scale production of wealth. Urbanization is a definite trend. The spirit of nationality everywhere seems to be intense, but, by a kind of paradox, the international mind also grows apace. All these powerful forces are impinging upon a society that cannot as yet divine the resultant. But the mere problem must fascinate youth, who will have so large a part in its solution.

While this discussion is more concerned with atmosphere than with set courses, possibly certain definite lines of study may be intimated. Sociology may be brought in, in an elementary way. The sense of community can be developed. "Above all nations is humanity." The institutions that go to make up society—the family, the State, the Church, associations of all kinds,—may be sketched in outline. Social values should be emphasized. The play instinct, the use of leisure, civic pride, local co-operation, all make their contribution to the story of social progress.

The factors of our economic life can also be touched upon in a general way. Its elementary principles may be stated in terms of local and national problems. The contacts and contrasts between urban and rural life, the great basic industries and their future, the problems of exchange and distribution, national projects, such as the St. Lawrence Waterways, the relation of government to prosperity, of capital to labour, are subjects quite within the scope of courses on citizenship. Especially should teacher and pupil grasp the direct bearing of education upon the personal fortunes of the individual, due value being attached to technical training and vocational guidance.

As becomes its importance, a large part of any course on citizenship will be given to the study of the State. This is the one social institution that includes us all. The structure and functions of government will already be familiar from the study of civics. But its proper sphere and legitimate aims and, especially, the ultimate sanctions upon which its authority rests, ought to receive full attention in a course for teachers. It should be shown how the powers of the State are steadily enlarging, and administration becoming more and more complex. At the same time the fundamental rights of the individual should be emphasized, and, along with them, the equally fundamental duties. To every right there is a corresponding duty. This is one of the first lessons that the citizen in a democracy, based on public service, should learn. But, most essential of all, should the significance of law be understood—how it underlies and overarches all social development and how, without it, the fabric of civilization would collapse. Socrates, as

he pleads in the *Crito* for the law which unjustly condemned him, may well point the lesson here: "He who disobeys us," the laws of Athens are made to say, "is wrong, because he has made an agreement with us that he will duly obey our commands; and he neither obeys them nor convinces us that our commands are wrong." No modern instance could better set forth the moral sanction for law, and the noble words of the immortal dialogue should be familiar to us all.

In this brief survey of material for courses in citizenship, much has necessarily been omitted. The field is vast, and the interest and skill of the instructor himself must determine the choice of details. But whatever matter and methods are employed, continual reference should be made to questions of the present day. The youth of the Canadian schools will face, as citizens, problems of the first magnitude. Canada has realized nationhood, but must study to keep itself from the pitfalls of sectionalism on the one hand and of flamboyant nationalism on the other. Our place in the Commonwealth, the destiny of the Commonwealth itself, will be for the present generation to decide. And our growing intimacy with the family of nations, our contribution to world affairs and our part in the achievement of international peace, will more and more call for political capacity which only the development of the international mind can supply.

The principles set forth in this very insufficient treatment of my subject may seem to make the teaching of citizenship too serious, if not too difficult, a task. But high seriousness is a quality not alone of great literature. It is equally essential in the supreme art of building a nation. And, in the new vistas opening before the Canadian people, the architects of our coming society—the teachers and pupils now in our schools—can build strong and sure only in proportion as the importance of the work is apprehended, and the high ideals that our destiny calls for are kept steadily before their minds.