

Notes from the address of President Philip Curtis Nash  
at the University of Toledo Convocation October 4.

During the last few days of the celebration of the Toledo Centennial our thoughts have naturally gone back to the century just passed and it appears that during this century our world civilization has changed probably more than during any other similar period in all history. Naturally, mankind is not able to change the cosmic forces of the universe such as the heat and light of the sun, the rainfall, etc., but with this limitation mankind has made great strides in improving our environment and in harnessing all the forces of nature. A century ago the Malthusian<sup>a</sup> doctrine was the law of the economists. The population of the earth could increase but little, so they said, because the population would increase in geometric proportion and the food on the earth could only increase in arithmetic proportion as new acres might be brought into cultivation. But we see that man has been able to overcome that law and with the help of improved methods of agriculture has produced food in such quantities that the population of the world has tripled in the last century- from six hundred millions people to eighteen hundred millions. If you question the modern ability to produce food in almost unlimited quantities go just across the street and visit the commercial greenhouses of the Wright Bros. There you will see twelve acres of tomatoes being raised under glass, thousands of bushels of them, the land cultivated in a special way so that it can be used over and over again, simply being an expedient for holding the plant food which is put in from the outside by fertilizer. In California they are growing vegetables without any earth at all. The seeds are planted in sawdust and the roots go through wire mesh to trays of liquid plant food just below.

Down at Antioch College they are studying this matter of how it is that the sunlight makes plants grow. That secret has not yet been solved but the key is fumbling in the lock and apparently we shall soon be able to grow all food we want perhaps without any ground or any sunlight at all. In other words, it appears that the limit of mankind's progress and prosperity is not to be governed by the food supply. There will be plenty of food for all.

There will be plenty of power for all. We are just beginning to harness the water power of the country in the T.V.A. at Boulder Dam and Bonneville and the pessimist says that we <sup>shall</sup> will have too much power, not too little. That means that much of the hard work of the world will be done by mechanic slaves through coal, gasoline and electricity, freeing the energies of mankind for self-expression in ways of his own choosing and not for his own self-preservation. Similar strides are being made for man's bodily well being. Disease cannot perhaps be eradicated but wonderful things are being done to protect mankind from disease and to help him when he is injured. One of the most stubborn diseases has been cancer and enormous energy and skill backed by millions of dollars are now being spent to protect mankind from that disease.

In other words you <sup>who</sup> will be leaders of world affairs in another twenty-five years are going to live a life entirely different from your great grandfathers. If you do manual work, you will work six hours a day instead of twelve. You will not have to worry very much as to what you shall eat or wear. You will have a life of physical ease and comfort that your great grandfathers would not have dreamed possible, and on the basis of this rosy picture it would appear that we should have before us an era when our energies would be freed for self-expression in games, hobbies, <sup>government</sup> architecture, art and music, that should rival the golden age of Greece and of Florence.

But you know very well that I have not yet painted the full picture. You know that the world is a very troubled one. That even here in this country where we are far removed from the miseries in China and Spain, nevertheless millions of people here are fearful, nervous and worried. Why is it?

It is true, I think, for two fundamental reasons. First, because of the great increase of population in the world. The problem of man's happiness has changed from the individual problem to the group problem. In this country it is especially true, <sup>a century ago</sup> that a man was trained to frontier conditions. If he lost a job in the east, he could go west to a frontier town, country or village and grow up with the community; but now that is changed. If a man loses a job in Detroit, there is no better likelihood of his getting another one in San Francisco, Birmingham or Boston. He must be protected as a group. I shall enlarge upon that in a moment. The second fundamental reason for our troubled world is that man as a physical individual is not used to this environment. Alexis Carrel has brought that out in his most challenging book "Man, the Unknown", and if you have time you will be interested to read it. During most of the thousands of years of man's development he has been living pretty much as an animal, gorging when there is food, starving between times; keyed to tremendous physical exertion in combat or in chase, used to extremes of cold and heat. Carrel says that lack of this nervous and physical stimulation gives rise to the nervous disorders which are a menace to our civilization and Carrel actually wonders if the physical ease and security which we envisage is for the real benefit of the race.

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He feels certain that it is not a benefit unless mankind can adapt himself in other ways to overcome the nervous results of his environment. Glenn Frank at Danver raised the same question last spring when he said - "The great advances of the race biologically have come out of periods of dangerous insecurity, when wit and will had to win their way against an unfriendly environment, either by defeating it or changing it, when strength and skill and adaptability had to be summoned to meet an endless array of stubborn menages, when man had to struggle to survive. And, when the historic books have been balanced, it will be found that this has been quite as true socially as it has been biologically. I should be sorry for you if life promised to be so easy for you that you could loaf your way to retirement as a generation of social beach-combers letting the tides bring you a moderate and unchallenging security of existence."

Pericles, Phidias, and Socrates flourished in Greece amid insecurity and violence although the system of human slavery gave them time for personal self-expression. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Cellini, Michelangelo, and da Vinci flourished at Florence when there was wealth enough to encourage their work but when mankind was in the flux of the Renaissance. We shall have the leisure. Can we develop such a self-expression as has gone before?

Mankind has proved himself an extremely adaptable animal and I believe that he can adapt himself again to this changed environment as far as his physical make-up goes, but the main problem of your generation is to adapt our civilization to these new social environments especially in this country and it is to that problem that I shall primarily wish to call your attention today. As I said man cannot now go to the frontier and start over again. He cannot live without his job. He must either starve or go on relief and the natural implication of that situation is to bring about a brand new theory of property rights; - the right of the workman to his job, which is coming to be talked

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of in just the same manner as the property right of the owner to the buildings and machinery which make the job possible. That is a brand new idea in our civilization, and it has sprung up only in the last three or four years and the control of that property right of the job is being snatched at by various groups. Just as the Spaniards seized the gold of the Incas and our early explorers exploited our wealth of furs, forest, oil and minerals, so the quarrel between the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. is simply an expression of the struggle to control that property right of the job. While that struggle is so painful and so costly at the moment, I believe it to be a great step forward that mankind is recognizing the right of the individual to the security of the job. It is most encouraging to see this change which has come over the mind of the average employer in the last hundred years. When ~~we were~~ recovering from the panic of 1837 the idea of the employer was to squeeze labor like an orange and when everything had been gotten out of man to cast him aside as you would the orange rind. That attitude is not taken today by one employer in a thousand. Rather, the employer is recognizing that his business is like a man's body. If there is something the matter with a man's little toe he is incapacitated or handicapped throughout all his body and a festered finger makes his whole body sick. Similarly, the employer is recognizing that his business depends on his customers, his raw material, his machinery and his labor and they must all fit together. Unless his employees have a square deal and are getting such rewards in security and decent standard of living as the business will warrant then his business cannot be a ~~worthy~~ *healthy* one. Similarly, we are finding this to be true in our nation as a whole. If there is any one part of our country that is in distress, all the rest feel it. If there is one class that is depressed it means worry and anxiety and trouble for us all. This has not been fully recognized as yet but it is coming. We are concerned with the

condition of the share cropper in the south, with the flood victims in the Ohio valley, with the farmer in the dust bowl. If there are riots in the steel mills the farmer in the country loses his market. If the farmer is not prosperous the employes of the harvester machinery, of the clothing factory, and the Sears Roebuck clerk loses ~~their~~ jobs. Happiness for one depends upon the happiness for all. It is amazing to see this fundamental Christian philosophy gradually winning its way as the only philosophy that will work under our new group problem. (2) The main trouble with the world and the cloud on the horizon that gives me the most concern, nowever, is that mankind does not seem to recognize that this philosophy applies just as surely and inevitable to the world as a whole. One country cannot be happy and secure if another is depressed. I am certain that in the years to come ways will be found to raise the standard of living of all countries up to at least something like the level that we now have in the United States and until this is done there will always be nervousness and fear and warfare in the world. It is hardly necessary for me to prove the point that the whole world is tied together. If I were broadcasting this address and if there were the proper relays it would be possible for you to hear my direct voice and practically at the same instant to hear my voice from a transmitter having gone all the way around the earth. You can fly from Moscow to Los Angeles in a few hours, and in a few days you can fly all the way around the earth on commercial routes. It is utterly impossible to raise tariffs or any kind of barrier that will keep men from trading with each other and visiting each other. Wherever there is an opportunity for advancement man will go, and just like the human body that I mentioned before, a dislocation of any joint is felt over the whole system of the world. Riots in Calcutta mean that the mills in ~~Louisiana~~ <sup>Lancashire</sup> sell less cotton goods in Calcutta, buy less raw cotton from Louisiana, and the Montgomery Ward salesman in Chicago loses his job.

Now ~~xxx~~ we are engaged in a fumbling world-wide attempt to solve these ~~particular~~ <sup>tremendous</sup> problems and we may well wonder if the leaders of men and the millions of folks who must back them up, have the intelligence and the patience and the wisdom to solve these problems on a world-wide basis. The little old New England town meeting was simple because the men could get together and talk over problems, but when a few leaders must settle the destiny for eighteen <sup>hundreds</sup> millions people the pressure is terrific. I am, however, an optimist. I believe that mankind can find the leaders and that gradually the millions of people will see the necessity of settling these problems on a world-wide basis and will agree to that method. Certain it is that mankind cannot dodge the problem of world-wide solution of all these problems. The alternative is warfare and if you have followed to the slightest degree the problems in Ethiopia, Spain or China you will realize that that means eventually the death of our civilization. Man must solve the problem or die, and we can be encouraged at the progress that is being made if we can look at it on the long range basis and not expect everything to be settled by next Wednesday afternoon as we Americans are so prone to do. The very fact that we have a League of Nations in beautiful buildings and surroundings on Lake Geneva in Switzerland where almost all the nations come together with their problems is a great step forward. We have not yet learned how to control the outlaw nation partly because we of the United States have been slow to recognize that for our own safety and our one well-being we must cooperate. But progress is being made there too. As the Chinese representative said in the League of Nations last ~~spring~~ <sup>week</sup>, "If the League cannot control the marauder and the ~~aggressor~~ <sup>of</sup> international treaties, it can at least condemn him". That <sup>much is already</sup> is being done and I am thankful that the United States is represented on the ~~International~~ <sup>advisory</sup> Committee of the League of

Nations which is making the condemnation. The ~~pressure~~ <sup>pressure</sup> from the ~~Society~~ <sup>League</sup> could not prevent Japan from going into Manchuria and China, and could ~~not~~ <sup>not</sup> prevent Italy from going into Ethiopia, but ~~this~~ <sup>this</sup> is only the beginning and methods are being learned which may be more useful in the future. The world has ~~never~~ <sup>never</sup> tried to organize itself before and the machinery is bound to creak, rattle and occasionally break, just as did the early automobiles. Nicholas Murray Butler, the illustrious president of Columbia, has summed up the situation pretty well in an address at Geneva last June. He says- "Surely the time has come when the whole world must realize the fundamental character of the problem which confronts it. Since the very beginning of history, men in the Western world have been bent upon unifying that world under some single form of leadership or control. That movement may be said to have begun when Alexander the Great took his armies into Asia and started towards India to make the near-by world Greek by the use of force. That movement failed. It was renewed when Julius Caesar and his successors attempted the same plan of control and organisation, carried it much farther, and enforced for a long time the civil law over a wide area. Then that failed. Attempts were made by the Christian Church and by the Moslems to unify the world in terms of belief. Those failed. Then, following the death of Charlemagne, there began the movement in which we have been living. It is the movement of nation-building. Mankind set out to build himself into nations. A nation typically is an ethnic unity inhabiting a geographic unity. Mankind, sometimes consciously and often unconsciously, tried to achieve ethnic unity, by the suppression, the expulsion or the punishment of minorities and by the unification under one ethnic or racial unit of the whole population. That accounts



for war after war for centuries. Then they tried to put this ethnic unity in occupation of a geographic unit. An ideal geographic unit is Italy, protected from the rest of Europe by the Alps, by the Adriatic and by the Mediterranean. Another ideal geographic unit is the Iberian Peninsula, <sup>Spain + Portugal</sup> protected by the Pyrenees, the Mediterranean, the Straits of Gibraltar and the Atlantic. Another geographic unit is the British Isles. Another is Scandinavia. And the reason why there has been war after war in Central and Western Europe for hundreds of years is fundamentally that there has been no ocean or mountain chain sufficiently high to provide the boundary of a geographic unit. We have gone on doing the best we could, this ambitious nation growing here, that ambitious nation growing there, coming into conflict with a neighbor over some question of ethnos or home, until finally the Great War was precipitated.

What is before us? History has shown clearly, and if it had not, our own reflection and experience would show, that the unification of the world is impossible and would be unwise were it possible. History has shown, and our experience confirms it, that nation-building, carried on in what may be called a selfish and self-aggrandising spirit, in order to complete an ethnic unity to occupy a geographic unit, means war after war after war. We are therefore faced- as we stand at the beginning of a new era, when world unification has failed, when nation-building has failed as a solution- with the necessity for a new and vast experiment in the operation of the federal principle. We have now come to the point where the only path left is the application, in terms of the twentieth century world, of the federal principle. It is very

interesting for an American to be able to point out that from the history of the United States may be found both guidance and encouragement in the pursuit of this ideal."

The thirteen colonies after the revolutions were really little independent nations with their tariff rules and even almost actual warfare between them. They realized that a federal government was an absolute necessity and just by the very narrowest margin the Constitution whose one hundred and fiftieth anniversary we are celebrating this year was adopted. We all ~~could not~~ <sup>can now</sup> see the benefits of this strong federal government in which <sup>states rights &</sup> the freedom of the individual ~~are~~ protected but the states are bound together for their own benefit. ~~This association must be expanded~~ <sup>a similar federation must be formed</sup> to include the whole world. <sup>(Juntas)</sup> I see no other alternative except death of our civilization, and I beg of you that you study these matters which I have so briefly stated and ~~that~~ <sup>if</sup> your thinking will bring you to the same conclusion then it is your duty and privilege to help along in every possible way this slow progress towards world organization.