

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

By Dr. D. D. Wallace, Wofford College

"South Carolina Education" is the name of a journal just launched by the extension department of the University of South Carolina. It will be issued eight times a year from October to May, and will be devoted to the cause of education generally. It will be sent to all the teachers of the state.

The first number, which has just been issued, has a quantity of interesting articles. Among others is one entitled, "What Is Democracy?" from the pen of Dr. D. D. Wallace, of Wofford College. Concerning the article, the following explanation is made:

"Miss Gray, the supervisor of adult schools, realizing the great need that adult illiterates should learn, along with their reading and writing, some of the lessons in good citizenship, requested Dr. Wallace to prepare a series of lessons for this purpose." "South Carolina Education" obtained the consent of Dr. Wallace and Miss Gray to publish this series. For their soundness of doctrine and simplicity of statement and for the tremendous importance of the subject treated, they are commended to the teachers of South Carolina."

Dr. Wallace's article follows: "There never was a time when people needed more to understand truly what democracy really is. It is hard to put clearly into one short sentence the full meaning of such a large idea. Let us try rather to get the leading thought stated briefly and then add others that will make the meaning more full and plain.

"Democracy means the equal right of every one to a fair chance in life and a part in controlling the conditions under which he lives. This states our rights, but democracy has also duties. It is like a silver dollar, which has two sides. The duty side is just as important as the rights side.

"If we examine some of the things that democracy is not, it will help us to understand better what democracy really is. First, democracy is not the right to do what you please. That would be lawlessness or anarchy, and there is nothing more dangerous to democracy than disregard for law. The strict enforcement of law is necessary for democracy; because if we do not have this to protect equally the strong and the weak, the majority of the people will be at the mercy of the small number who regard nothing but their own will. Such men destroy the property, the rights and the happiness of others for their own selfish advantage unless they are controlled by law.

"Second, democracy is not class rule. Russia is today suffering from a terrible system of class rule that is destroying the rights of everybody except those who agree with the ideas of one class. It is ruining the whole country. The rich man and the poor man have equal rights under democracy. A man is not to be allowed to trespass upon the rights of another because he owns a large plantation or a big bank account; nor is he to be denied his right to any office or position of honor or trust either because he is rich or because he is poor. Stirring up class against class, either in politics or in industry, is the very opposite of democracy; for it is the attempt to set up the despotic rule of one part of the people over the rest of the people and to put a part of the people under a disadvantage."

"Democracy does not apply to government alone, but to social life, religion, and industry. Of course some persons are more refined and upright in character and conduct than others. There will always be an aristocracy of character and ability; for God has made men and women to vary immensely in talents. But the ideal of democracy is that those who are so gifted shall use their talents for the service of mankind, not for oppressing the masses and getting power and special privileges for themselves. Thus, a great singer can delight millions of people by her wonderful voice. A great inventor, like Edison, serves us in a hundred ways that we could not serve ourselves. A man of political genius and noble character, like President Wilson, serves the people by doing with his great mind what all of us together could not do for ourselves without his leadership. The ideal of democracy is that those who are specially gifted by God should use

these gifts to serve their fellow men. It has been truly said that Jesus was the first true democrat, as he was the first true gentleman.

"It is often said that Democracy is hostile to talent. Democracy could not make a greater mistake. The true interest of democracy is not to hate or destroy talent, but to give talent its fullest opportunity and to insist that talent serve the people instead of merely serving itself.

"What is the true democracy in the home? Is it for the father to order his wife and children about like they were his property? Is it for him to keep all the money that he makes for himself? Did not the wife by her labor in keeping the house in order earn it as truly as he did? If he does not think so, let him try doing the home work himself. Does democracy in the home mean that the children are to be put to work for the interest of the parents so early that they can never have a chance to make the best possible out of their own lives? The reason that there are so many illiterate grown men and women today is because so many parents in the past have run their homes as though they were kings and their children were merely their subjects. Democracy in the home means that the parents are to use their position to serve their children, just as a great man, like a Washington or a Wilson uses his power to serve the people, and so comes to be called truly "The Father of His Country."

"Of course democracy does not mean that children are to have the same authority in running the home as the older people have. Neither does it mean that an ignorant is to be elected to the legislature. Anybody's common sense ought to teach them that there are necessary limits to the part each person can play in running society. It must be according to each person's intelligence and natural fitness.

"Why do we so earnestly wish for the spread of democracy? For two reasons. First, we consider that it is right that men should be treated with justice and given an equal chance for making the most of their lives. And second, because we believe that the masses of men will be better off with the increase of their power in government and industry. As the influence of the average man becomes more strongly felt, and as he realizes more fully how he may exercise his power, he will get better living conditions all along the line. He will have better schools, better homes, and better treatment. There will be less undeserved advantage for those who have been born in favored circumstances, and less disadvantage for those who have only their own talent and character to make their way.

"Let us never forget that the privileges of democracy carry with them also duties. We can never hope to enjoy the benefits of a free democratic society unless the general mass of the people are earnest and constant in the performance of their duties to society. It is the duty of every true democrat to uphold the law, to make himself as intelligent and self-controlled as possible, and to contribute the best that is in him for the general good. Democracy is a precious thing, but it is also a very dangerous thing. We have shown how valuable we consider it by the terrible price we have paid to preserve it in the war for freedom against autocracy to make the world safe for democracy. But it is just as necessary to make democracy safe for the world. This can be done only by making democracy moral and intelligent."

NOTICE TO PUBLIC

On account of shortness of labor and extreme heavy Express, Merchants will be required to pay for their Express as they get it. I will be glad to inform you over the phone what your charges are, sending out a collector will be discontinued after the 1st. of December.

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FLOUR SCARCITY BASELESS RUMOR

New York, Nov. 19.—To prove that rumors concerning scarcity of flour and advancing prices are baseless, the United States Grain Corporation announced today that it would enable consumers to buy the best flour at lower prices.

Pure, straight flour, made of the finest wheat, will be sold by the corporation to the retail trade in 12-1-4 and 24-1-2 pound packages. It will be available in about three weeks and the price to the consum-

er will be about 75 cents for the smaller package.

Mr. Barnes said that the grain corporation's action "puts the solution of one phase of the cost of living problem up to the consumer by making it possible for the purchaser of flour to decide for himself whether he will continue to pay fancy prices for special brands or buy at a lower price pure straight flour made from the finest wheat."

Rumors, possibly inspired by over-zealous flour salesmen, he said,

had been current in the market from time to time of an impending flour shortage, and the possibility that the use of substitutes would be resumed. He declared there was no authority in the present food regulations for restoring war flour.

While certain grades of flour are scarce, owing to the short crop of spring wheat, the total wheat crop is 918,000,000 bushels this year against 917,000,000 last year, according to Mr. Barnes.

Production of flour for the season

ending November 7 amounted to 52,433,000 barrels against 43,174,000 last year, he said. Exports have been about the same as last year.

"The facts are," he said, "that stocks of flour are very large and production very large. Therefore the wheat director has determined trade, in the large cities particularly a supply of flour from the mill to place in the hands of the retail mense stocks of the grain corporation at nominal prices."

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