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# Ford Hall Folks =

A MAGAZINE OF NEIGHBORLINESS

VOLUME II NUMBER 10

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## WALT WHITMAN PROPHET AND DEMOCRAT\*

By CHARLES ZUEBLIN

**I**T was my misfortune not to become acquainted with the poetry of Walt Whitman until the year of his death, and then to be introduced to it and him by an Englishman at Oxford, who told me he was our greatest American poet. I went to England to study, as I went to Germany,



with the idea that Walt Whitman and Richard Wagner were makers of noise. I discovered in Germany that cultivated people preferred Richard Wagner to the Italian composers, and I discovered, when I made the acquaintance of Walt Whitman, that it did not mat-

ter so much whether people were cultivated or not from the point of view of Walt Whitman and the larger life. He is our greatest exponent of democracy.

There are three periods in Walt Whitman's life. He served thirty years' apprenticeship for life; and then he underwent a transformation that made him a new man, and he had twenty years of productivity; and after that twenty years of quiescence. He was educated in the Brooklyn public schools, and began his career as an office boy, in a lawyer's and then in a doctor's office. Then he became a printer's apprentice, and wrote sentimental bits, as we all have done—and not more meritorious than ours. At eighteen he was teaching school in Long Island. In 1846 he was

help reminding you of a great—a greater—prototype, who spent thirty years in preparing for three brief years of life. When you consider the probable effect on the world of living the kind of life that Whitman taught us to live, you can see so many points of contact that you cannot help comparing the preparation of Jesus and the preparation of Whitman—the chaste ascetic and the sensuous Bohemian. Whitman came forth a man preaching a religion. He states it in terms that absolutely fit him:

"I, too, following many and follow'd by many, inaugurate a religion, I descend into the arena.

(It may be I am destin'd to utter the loudest cries there, the winner's pealing shouts,

Who knows? they may rise from me yet, and soar above everything.)

Each is not for its own sake,

I say the whole earth and all the stars in the sky are for religion's sake."

It is a little shocking to have the "barbaric yawp" preaching the tenderest religion. But you must take him as he is if you would understand him.

"Swiftly arose and spread around me the peace and knowledge that pass all the argument of the earth,

And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,

And I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own,

And that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and the women my sisters, and lovers,

And that a kelson of the creation is love, And limitless are leaves stiff or drooping in the fields,

And brown ants in the little wells beneath them,

For several years after his return to Brooklyn we find him working as a carpenter—a significant point—and also writing, speech-making, preaching. In 1855 the first edition of "Leaves of Grass" appeared, the same year his father died. When you go to "Leaves of Grass," you do not find a book, you find a man revealed. "A feeling or ambition to articulate and faithfully express in literary or poetic form, and uncompromisingly, my own physical, emotional, moral, intellectual, and aesthetic Personality, in the midst of, and tallying, the momentous spirit and facts of its immediate days, and of current America—and to exploit that Personality, in a far more candid and comprehensive sense than any hitherto poem or book."

If you are perfectly in tune with the universe, if you are a conscious participant in all elements of the cosmos, why should you apologize, why should you be called egotistic?

The explanation of all this is that Whitman was a pantheist. All things were one to Whitman. Nature was the first of the elements which gave Whitman that consciousness. Thoreau was a nature-lover, but Whitman was more than that; he was nature. He saw and felt no distinctions. Here is the profoundest expression of the truth of evolution of which I know:

"I am an acme of things accomplished, and I am an encloser of things to be.

My feet strike an apex of the apices of the stairs,

On every step bunches of ages, and larger bunches between the steps,

All below duly travell'd, and still I mount and mount.

Rise after rise bow the phantoms behind me.

Afar down I see the huge first Nothing, I know I was even there.



Whitman, that it did not matter so much whether people were cultivated or not from the point of view of Walt Whitman and the larger life. He is our greatest exponent of democracy.

There are three periods in Walt Whitman's life. He served thirty years' apprenticeship for life; and then he underwent a transformation that made him a new man, and he had twenty years of productivity; and after that twenty years of quiescence. He was educated in the Brooklyn public schools, and began his career as an office boy, in a lawyer's and then in a doctor's office. Then he became a printer's apprentice, and wrote sentimental bits, as we all have done—and not more meritorious than ours. At eighteen he was teaching school in Long Island. In 1846 he was editor of the Brooklyn Eagle, having climbed the ladder of the newspaper profession. Then he began his *Wanderjahre* as a journeyman printer. He went to the South and the Far West. In 1848 he was on the editorial staff of the New Orleans Crescent. Here there is a shadow on his life. In New Orleans he had a wife or wives. We do not know anything of the domestic affairs of Whitman except that in later years, in Camden, he was visited by grandchildren. It is only fair to make your own estimate of the meaning of this obscure passage of his life.

But there came within a year a complete transformation of this man, such as takes place in the life of every person who finds himself. Walt Whitman was born again; and no man or woman finds his place in the world until he is born again. (Applause.) You may state this in any terms you like, but if you don't undergo a transformation and come into a consciousness of your relation to the infinite you do not really live. (Applause.) In 1850 he was back in Brooklyn. It was still several years before he produced the volume that was to startle the literary and thinking world. I cannot

\*The speeches and the questions and answers reported by Miriam Allen de Ford.

It is a little shocking to have the "barbaric yawp" preaching the tenderest religion. But you must take him as he is if you would understand him.

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And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,  
And I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own,  
And that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and the women my sisters, and lovers,  
And that a kelson of the creation is love,  
And limitless are leaves stiff or drooping in the fields,  
And brown ants in the little wells beneath them,  
And mossy scabs of the worn fence, heap'd stones, elder, mullein and poke weed."

That is a rather large philosophy—from God to poke-weed—and there is nothing left out of it; he dodges no issue and no element of life, here, hitherto, or hereafter.

#### MY CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO YOU

THE keenest joys, the greatest satisfactions, the richest treasures we find in each other. Our mutual intimacies are the coin of the kingdom of life. He is richest who knows best the most people. We only know each other when we share the best there is in us. Material possessions are worth while only as they help us to know people. They become a deadly poison when they get between us and folks.

In addition to exchanging friendliness one day in the year, let us give ourselves to each other every day in the year. That is the meaning back of this whole Christmas business.

—George W. Coleman.

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All below duly travell'd, and still I mount and mount.  
Rise after rise bow the phantoms behind me,  
Afar down I see the huge first Nothing, I know I was even there,  
I waited unseen and always, and slept through the letkargic mist, and took my time, and took no hurt from the fetid carbon.

Long I was hugged close—long and long. Immense have been the preparations for me,

Faithful and friendly the arms that have helped me.

Cycles ferried my cradle, rowing and rowing like cheerful boatmen,

For room to me stars kept aside in their own rings,

They sent influences to look after what was to hold me,

Before I was born out of my mother generations guided me,

My embryo has never been torpid, nothing could overlay it.

For it the nebula cohered to an orb,  
The long slow strata piled to rest it on,

Vast vegetables gave it sustenance,  
Monstrous sauroids transported it in their mouths and deposited it with care.

All forces have been steadily employed to complete and delight me.

Now on this spot I stand with my robust soul."

You remember Martin Luther's "Here I stand; I can do no otherwise." What was  
(Continued on Page 2.)



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## THE QUESTIONS

Q: What is the use of philosophizing about health and a strong body when we don't get a chance to develop ourselves?

A: The main use is to make us insist on getting a chance.

Q (Mr. Sagerman): What is the use of praying to an impersonal God?

A: The expression of prayer to the modern mind is designed to get the person who puts forth the petition to go and answer it himself, and he feels a little more sure of doing this if he prays to an impersonal God.

Q: Was Walt Whitman a member of the Baptist denomination?

A: He was never a member of any church.

Q: What was Walt Whitman's definition of God, and what is yours?

A: Walt Whitman taught that God was everything, that there was no distinction between the material and the spiritual, the finite and the infinite—it was all one great Life-Force. I see no reason to disagree with that definition.

Q (Mr. Victorson): Wasn't Edgar Allan Poe a greater American poet than Walt Whitman; and did Whitman invent his own philosophy, or was he a follower of Spinoza?

A: Poe is our greatest poet in form, but he had no such things to express as Whitman had. Spinoza and Whitman are very similar, but I see no indication that Whitman had read Spinoza.

Q: Isn't Whitman's poem, "Captain, My Captain," one of the best in the English language?

A: That is a question of taste; I think it is. (Applause.)

Q: What is the difference between Whitman's idea of pantheism, as expressed tonight, and Haeckel's monism?

A: Whitman felt that we had a responsibility for the carrying on of the universe, and I do not find that in Haeckel.

Q: Did Whitman attempt to live the life he preached or not?

A: He preached what he lived. (Applause.)

Q: Why should we strive for the beau-

Q: Would you say that Whitman believed in reincarnation?

A: No, because there was no cessation.

Q: Whom do you consider the greatest American poet, and why?

A: Walt Whitman, for reasons I spent about an hour in explaining!

Q: How would Miller and Bret Harte stand, from Whitman's point of view?

A: I don't believe they ought to be mentioned in the same breath. They were splendid men who gave us a beautiful spirit of the West, but they were essentially local.

Q: Would it be possible to find enough Whitman admirers here to start a subscription for the purchase of Whitman's Long Island home?

A (Mr. Coleman): If any here wish to do that, let them give their names to Miss Crawford.

Q: Why was Whitman appreciated in England and Germany before America?

A: In the first place, because the people who read are more democratic in England and Germany, and, second, because they are more appreciative of good literature.

Q: Walt Whitman looked upon death as beautiful. Would he think that capital punishment was a beautiful death?

A: Whitman did not believe we should hasten to death in order to enjoy the benefits that fellow, which is the orthodox view. He believed we should live here as long as possible, to qualify.

Q: What was Whitman's conception of the origin of God and the universe?

A: I do not know that he anywhere gives that; I do not think he ever tried to, though he does speak of "universal nothingness" as a beginning.

Q: Would Whitman distinguish between God and the world?

A: No. We are living in a world of matter. When we make the transition from matter to water, air or ether, when you see there is no dividing line between organic and ignoranic life, it seems easier to conceive of the material and the spiritual as all one. (Applause.)

Q (Same): Is reality spacial?

A: I do not think the human mind can project itself beyond time and space.

Q (Mr. Mills): Is not Edward Carpenter

## WALT WHITMAN, PROPHET AND DEMOCRAT.

(Continued from Page 1.)

defiance of the Church to identity with the universe? If you stop to think how you got here, and look at all your antecedents, everything must have been mapped out in order that you should be here today. Such is the conception of this poetic evolutionist.

Next to nature, of course, the exposition of pantheism that reveals itself to us is that of man. And what has most embarrassed us in this connection is his thought of sex. Whitman always thought of sex, not as woman, but as man and woman coincidentally.

"Fast-anchored eternal O love! O woman I love!

O bride! O wife! more resistless than I can tell, the thought of you!

Then separate, as disembodied or another born.

Ethereal, the last athletic reality, my consolation,

I ascend, I float in the regions of your love, O man,

O sharer of my roving life."

His understanding of sex was like the understanding of the Greek sculptor. We do not have the sculpture of ancient days because we do not know the human body so well. Whitman knew the human body, and he knew his own body.

"Shall I tell you, reader, to what I attribute my already much restored health? That I have been almost two years, off and on, without drugs and medicines, and daily in the open air. Last summer I found a particularly secluded little dell off one side by my creek, originally a large dug-out marl-pit, now abandoned, filled with bushes, trees, grass a group of willows, a straggling bank, and a spring of delicious water running right through the middle of it, with two or three little cascades. Here I retreated every hot day, and follow it up this summer. . . Never before did I get so close to Nature; never before did she come so close to me. . . Sweet, sane, still Nakedness in Nature!—ah, if poor sick, prurient humanity in cities might really know you once more! Is not nakedness then indecent? No, not inherently. It is your thought, your sophistication, your fear, your respectability, that is indecent. There come moods when these clothes of ours are not only too irksome to wear, but are themselves indecent. Perhaps indeed he or she

By GEORGE

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A: Whitman felt that we had a responsibility for the carrying on of the universe, and I do not find that in Haeckel.

Q: Did Whitman attempt to live the life he preached or not?

A: He preached what he lived. (Applause.)

Q: Why should we strive for the beautiful and good if God is everything and everything is godly?

A: Why not? The pantheistic idea involves a process. We are moving toward the fullness of life, and it puts a responsibility upon each individual to leave the world richer than he found it.

Q (Mr. Brown): Since we do not know the exact circumstances of Whitman's life in New Orleans, should we not call it a blank, instead of a blot, in his life?

A: I did not say it was a blot, but a shadow. It was not a blank. From our present conventional standpoint we must neither gloss over nor glorify it.

Q: You said Whitman was a Socialist but did not belong to the party. I have known other gentlemen who did the same thing—for a reason.

A: I did not say he was a Socialist.

Q: What generation guided Whitman before he was born?

A: If you press this poetic language too literally you will lose the meaning.

Q (Mrs. Sargent): Would you give Whitman to youth to read without guidance?

A: No; until young people have nearly finished their adolescent stage, give them a book like Oscar Triggs' Selections from Whitman.

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Q (Mr. Mills): Is not Edward Carpenter as far beyond Whitman as the 20th century is beyond the 19th, and would not Whitman in this century be a syndicalist, as Carpenter is?

A: I do not think Edward Carpenter is in any sense beyond Whitman. As for Whitman's being something today, it is none of our business, and very unprofitable besides, to ask that. He has a universal and timeless philosophy, which we should apply with the same kind of universality that he did.

Q (Mr. Frazier): Isn't it surprising that John Boyle O'Reilly was in favor of raising money to build a cottage in New England for Whitman?

A: I think that when you get to the cosmic philosophy of Whitman it is so far beyond such little differences as those of Catholic and Protestant that you lose sight of them altogether.

Q: Did Whitman believe that God was in a state of evolutionary process, and did he think of himself as having come to a completion?

A: Whitman had the advantage of stating his philosophy in poetry, which does not attempt to be precise. But he and other pantheists think that God is coming to what corresponds to a larger conception.

"Shall I tell you, reader, I am  
ute my already much restored health? That I have been almost two years, off and on, without drugs and medicines, and daily in the open air. Last summer I found a particularly secluded little dell off one side by my creek, originally a large 'dug-out' mar-pit, now abandoned, filled with bushes, trees, grass a group of willows, a straggling bank, and a spring of delicious water running right through the middle of it, with two or three little cascades. Here I retreated every hot day, and follow it up this summer. . . Never before did I get so close to Nature; never before did she come so close to me. . . Sweet, sane, still Nakedness in Nature!—ah, if poor sick, prurient humanity in cities might really know you once more! Is not nakedness then indecent? No, not inherently. It is your thought, your sophistication, your fear, your respectability, that is indecent. There come moods when these clothes of ours are not only too irksome to wear, but are themselves indecent. Perhaps indeed he or she to whom the free exhilarating ecstasy of nakedness in Nature has never been eligible (and how many thousands there are!) has not really known what purity is—nor what faith or art of health really is."

"The expression of a well made man appears not only in his face; it is in his limbs and joints also; it is curiously in the joints of his hips and wrists; it is in his walk, the carriage of his neck, the flex of his waist, and knees: dress does not hide him; the strong sweet supple quality he has strikes through the cotton and flannel, to see him pass conveys as much as the best poem, perhaps more. You linger to see his back, and the back of his neck and shoulder-side."

Now, of course, you don't linger to look at a man going by, as you would if he were a woman. But next summer go down to Revere or Nantasket and look at the guards, after they have got to a fine mahogany finish. You can go there day after day and not see a woman so beautiful.

The human body was sacred to Whitman.

"A man's body at auction (for before the war I often go and watch the sale), I help the auctioneer, the sloven does not half know his business.

(Continued on Page 4.)

in every community one central gathering place for all the people that would every requirement and be free from objectionable bias or associations. In cities this great need of the people has been left to the haphazard chance of private enterprise. In a few of the more enterprising cities all over the country the municipal authorities have taken the matter in hand and the result is a number of municipal auditoriums that are a delight to the eye and a pride to the citizens, and a great benefit to the whole municipality.

And I am just finding out that this need for an adequate common meeting-place is keenly felt in the rural districts also. Last week a letter came to me from my friend, Mr. C. P. Jameson, who is living in Ashland, N. H., and was formerly a well known Boston business man. Let me quote him:

"One of the great needs of our small country towns and villages is a social hall or general building, suitable for holding meetings, socials, free entertainment, lectures, banquets, etc., to be controlled by a carefully selected local board of trustees. Such a building would be a great boon to the young and the old who have little or no opportunity for social intercourse as pertains to our cities.

"The small country church edifice is of an old stereotyped structure with the fire-box-like pew, no vestry or basement, and therefore unfitted for above purposes, and naturally operated and governed along narrow lines.

"Such a building as suggested would tend to bring the non-church people in touch with church along social lines, and at the same time give the church an opportunity of broadening and brightening herself. Sometime (who can tell?) some new cult worthy and ambitious purpose might be seeking a 'manger' (when there is no room at the inn) and such a building would help to serve a unique purpose."

\* \* \*

One of our regular attendants, Mr. Maurice Gertlin, is down in Panama at work on the Canal. He has written a very interesting letter to the readers of this magazine which I am turning over to Editor Drepper for publication as soon as space permits. You will not want to miss it. He sees



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(Continued from Page 1.)

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AS IT LOOKS TO ME  
By GEORGE W. COLEMAN, Director of the Ford Hall Meetings

Mr. Hogan in his chat with Miss Crawford, as set forth on another page, strikes a most interesting note. If men had to qualify for public office by examination as to technical knowledge it would greatly reduce the numbers who clamor for preferment, and also materially assist the voters (on the appointing powers) in making their choice of rival candidates. It is a novel suggestion that provokes good thinking. Strangely enough the day before at the Twentieth Century Club, Mrs. Margaret Orland, the popular author, in favoring a limited woman suffrage argued in favor of a form of examination of all would-be citizens, whereby intelligence rather than a bare literacy should be the requisite demanded. Her discussion of the whole subject of qualifications for citizenship was the ablest I ever heard. In thinking along a similar line, Mr. Hogan can well congratulate himself on finding himself in such good company.

I am deeply interested in the subject of municipal auditoriums. There ought to be in every community one central gathering place for all the people that would meet every requirement and be free from any objectional bias or associations. In most cities this great need of the people has been left to the haphazard chance of private enterprise. In a few of the more enterprising cities all over the country the municipal authorities have taken the matter in hand, and the result is a number of municipal auditoriums that are a delight to the eye, a pride to the citizens, and a great blessing to the whole municipality.

And I am just finding out that this need for an adequate common meeting-place is keenly felt in the rural districts also. This week a letter came to me from my old friend, Mr. C. P. Jameson, who is living in Ashland, N. H., and was formerly a well-known Boston business man. Let me quote him:

"One of the great needs of our small country towns and villages is a social hall or general building, suitable for holding meetings, socials, free entertainments.

new environment from our point of view and draws a good picture of it.

More than fifty of our own number have already registered to become "first citizens" of the Ford Hall Town Meeting. Thursday, Jan. 8, is the date selected for the opening night, and the meetings will be held thereafter every Thursday night. The place is Kingsley Hall in the Ford Building, at 7.45. I have strong hopes that this may be the beginning of a big thing. As chairman of the Educational Committee, Mr. Foster will continue to give his assistance in every possible way to make the thing a success. Mr. Allen of the City History Club is the expert upon whom we shall lean heavily, and Miss Grout of the School of Social Science will bring to it those qualities of good judgment and steady persistence which have made her own work such a great success.

The pressure on the editor to find space in these pages for the things he wants to print grows apace. Mr. Victorson has written an article in answer to one of mine, which has been waiting for a chance to appear. The full statement about the Ford Hall Town Meeting, made by Mr. Foster, had to be printed separately as a circular last Sunday night, for lack of room in the paper. And I don't know how long we shall have to wait to find room for the letter from Panama. And Editor Dreier has very little room in which to say his say. What are we to do about it? More pages mean more money. Where is it coming from?

Other Meetings

Wells Memorial Institute, 987 Washington street, Tuesday, Dec. 30, at 8 P. M., The Attitude of Working People Towards Socialism, by Fred J. Kneeland and John Weaver Sherman.

Sunday Commons, Huntington Chambers Hall, Sunday, Jan. 4, at 3.30 P. M., Dr. Charles Fleischer, leader.

Public Library, Thursday, Jan. 1, at 8 P. M., Savonarola, by Rev. Thomas I. Gas-

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE TO BE DISCUSSED HERE.

No man could present more strikingly on our platform "The Ethics of Marriage and Divorce" than Dr. Stanton Coit, of London. Dr. Coit is a man of the finest personal standards, and is at the head of the well-known Ethical Church in his home city. He is a brilliant orator, and has besides a remarkable power of infusing with spiritual truth every topic which he touches. He will be worth coming early to hear.

A BLIND MAN TO ADDRESS THE FOLKS

John D. W. Bodfish, an honor student in the Boston University Law School and a constant attendant at our meetings—though totally blind—is to address us at the Folks gathering downstairs in Kingsley Hall next Sunday afternoon. The 15-minute talks we are getting in the lower hall have so far seemed to be in the line of appreciation of good work now being done by established social agencies. Mr. Bodfish will tell us what the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind is doing to better conditions. Everybody is welcome to this meeting, but if you expect to stay and have supper with us (25 cents) drop a line to Miss Crawford, Room 707, Ford Building before Thursday. The meetings begin at 3.30.

WHAT FORD HALL MEANS TO ONE OF US.

One of the Ford Hall friends who has thought deeply on the great questions of life, rose from a sick bed to hear Professor Zueblin on Walt Whitman. Asked what she thought of the meeting she said:

"I find it a bit difficult to comply with your request for the expression of the effect upon me during my first attendance at a Ford Hall meeting. There were so many impressions.

"First, the poignant expectancy of the crowd as it massed down the aisle appalled me. It seemed for a few moments that the four quarters of the earth had converged there and that the cries of all the ages were expressing in the eager faces of an audience more catholic than any I had ever seen.

"Next, it seemed incredible that under the auspices of an acknowledged church organization there should meet a body of men and women so evidently diverse in belief, practice, life, as to embrace all gods—and no God—and still produce an atmosphere



andoned, filled with bushes, a group of willows, a straggling spring of delicious water run through the middle of it, with ee little cascades. Here I re-ry hot day, and follow it up this Never before did I get so close never before did she come so e... Sweet, sane, still Naked-ure!—ah, if poor sick, prurient n cities might really know you Is not nakedness then inde- not inherently. It is your ur sophistication, your fear, tability, that is indecent. There s when these clothes of ours are ) irksome to wear, but are them- cent. Perhaps indeed he or she he free exhilarating ecstasy of in Nature has never been elig- ow many thousands there are!) ally known what purity is—nor or art of health really is.”

ression of a well made man ap-ly in his face: it is in his limbs also; it is curiously in the joints and wrists; it is in his walk, the his neck, the flex of his waist, dress does not hide him; the et supple quality he has strikes e cotton and flannel; to see him ys as much as the best poem, re. You linger to see his back, k of his neck and shoulder-side.”

course, you don't linger to look oing by, as you would if he were But next summer go down to Nantasket and look at the er they have got to a fine ma-sh. You can go there day after t see a woman so beautiful. an body was sacred to Whitman.

body at auction (for before the [ often go and watch the sale), auctioneer, the sloven does not know his business.”

Continued on Page 4.)

enterprise. In a few of the more enterpris- ing cities all over the country the municipal authorities have taken the matter in hand, and the result is a number of municipal auditoriums that are a delight to the eye, a pride to the citizens, and a great bless- ing to the whole municipality.

And I am just finding out that this need for an adequate common meeting-place is keenly felt in the rural districts also. This week a letter came to me from my old friend, Mr. C. P. Jameson, who is living in Ashland, N. H., and was formerly a well-known Boston business man. Let me quote him:

“One of the great needs of our small country towns and villages is a social hall or general building, suitable for hold- ing meetings, socials, free entertainments, lectures, banquets, etc., to be controlled by a carefully selected local board of trustees. Such a building would be a great boon for the young and the old who have little or no opportunity for social intercourse such as pertains to our cities.

“The small country church edifice is of the old stereotyped structure with the fixed box-like pew, no vestry or basement, and therefore unfitted for above purposes, and naturally operated and governed along nar- row lines.

“Such a building as suggested would tend to bring the non-church people in touch with church along social lines, and at the same time give the church an opportunity of broadening and brightening herself. Sometime (who can tell?) some new cult of worthy and ambitious purpose might be seeking a ‘manger’ (when there is no room at the inn) and such a building would here serve a unique purpose.”

\* \* \*

One of our regular attendants, Mr. Mau- rice Gertlin, is down in Panama at work on the Canal. He has written a very interest- ing letter to the readers of this magazine, which I am turning over to Editor Dreier for publication as soon as space permits. You will not want to miss it. He sees his

paper. And I don't know how long we shall have to wait to find room for the letter from Panama. And Editor Dreier has very little room in which to say his say. What are we to do about it? More pages mean more money. Where is it coming from?

### Other Meetings

Wells Memorial Institute, 987 Washing- ton street, Tuesday, Dec. 30, at 8 P. M., The Attitude of Working People Towards Socialism, by Fred J. Kneeland and John Weaver Sherman.

Sunday Commons, Huntington Chambers Hall, Sunday, Jan. 4, at 3.30 P. M., Dr. Charles Fleischer, leader.

Public Library, Thursday, Jan. 1, at 8 P. M., Savonarola, by Rev. Thomas I. Gas- son, S.J. Sunday, Jan. 4, at 3.30 P. M., How to Listen to Music, by Arthur M. Curry.

### Ford Hall Folks

Edited by Thomas Dreier.

**P**UBLISHED weekly by the Ford Hall Associates, whose work is to create, assemble, and distribute ideas that will help men and institutions grow more helpful in serving society, and which will promote “peace on earth, good will toward men.” It is the official publication of the Ford Hall Meet- ings, which are held, under the direc- tion of George W. Coleman, every Sunday evening during the months of October to May, in Ford Hall, Ash- burton Place, Boston, Massachusetts.

All business communications should be sent to Miss Mary C. Crawford, Treasurer Ford Building, Boston, and all communications intended for the editor to The Thomas Dreier Ser- vice, University Press, Cambridge, Mass. Subscription Price: \$1.50 for 26 numbers.

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“Next, it seemed incredible that under the auspices of an acknowledged church or- ganization there should meet a body of men and women so evidently diverse in belief, practice, life, as to embrace all *gods*—and no *God*—and still produce an atmosphere not lacking harmony.

“It was, to me a purposeful audience; men and women with well-defined aims. Many of the faces reflected the vision of the goal set far ahead, mayhap too far for its acquisition. What matter? I thought, so long as the inspiration fires the intelli- gence of their minds, so long will the quest of their Grail fulfil itself.

“It was good to feel when the speaker of the evening arose that he was to address those who, in the main, would lend to him a concentration of intelligent attention and that many would be *en rapport* with the message from Walt.

“Many who, as the individual expression in the wonderful apotheosis of friendship, ‘Out of the rolling ocean came a drop gently’ became, even as the drop returned to the ocean, universal—*en masse*.”

Wilda L. Brown

### ADVERTISING

A space of this size—one inch high and two and one-half inches wide—can be had for advertising purposes for one dollar per issue. For information regarding advertis- ing apply to Jacob London, Room 707, Ford Building, Boston, Mass.



A CHAT WITH CHRISTOPHER HOGAN.

By Mary C. Crawford.

Economics should be taught in the public schools, contends Christopher Hogan. I agree with him. It is simply astounding that I, for instance,—who was educated at the Boston Latin School for girls, at Radcliffe College and at the professional school for Social Workers fathered by Harvard College and mothered by Simmons College,—should *never have been taught* any economics. For a long time I have felt this lack, but I never felt it quite so keenly as during my recent chat with this earnest Ford Hall Socialist, who is a sheet-metal worker by trade.

Possibly, Mr. Hogan has had too much economics—even as I have had too little. Certainly it seemed exceedingly difficult for this Marxian, whose interpretation of current, as well as past, history is the economic one, to establish any kind of satisfactory basis of understanding with a totally un-economic mind. Mr. Hogan and I cannot be said to have “got on” at all in our chat! But at least I caught some distant glimmer as we talked of his point of view. And I learned several things I did not previously know about Socialists and I. W. W.’s.

For instance, I did not previously know that “the only people who are Socialists are those who accept the platform of the Socialist Labor Party, the oldest Socialist group in this country.” For these Socialists are Marxians, it appears, and hence the real Simon Pure article. Then there is a Detroit brand of I. W. W. and a Chicago brand. Chicago advocates sabotage in the objectionable and violent manner most of us know to disapprove; Detroit doesn’t. From a conscientious, but no doubt unintelligent, perusal of the organ of the Socialist Labor Party, *The Weekly People*, a copy of which Mr. Hogan kindly lent me, I gathered that Detroit stands better than Chicago with Marxian Socialists. I also gathered that Masonry and the Church of Rome are alike regarded as the sworn enemies of true Socialism. It appears that these two bodies, usually antagonistic to each other, have at least this, in common: that they are both “capitalistic.”

I had not gone far in my chat with Mr. Hogan before I got hopelessly lost,—by reason of my already confessed lack of economics. But I rallied when he asserted vigorously that candidates, before being elected to

Flakes of breast-muscle, pliant backbone and neck, flesh not flabby, good-sized arms and legs,

And wonders within there yet.

Within there runs blood,

The same old blood! the same red-running blood!

There swells and jets a heart, there all passions, desires, reachings, aspirations, (Do you think they are not there because they are not express’d in parlors and lecture-rooms?)

This is not only one man, this the father of those who shall be fathers in their turns.

In him the start of populous states, and rich republics,

Of him countless immortal lives with countless embodiments and enjoyments.

How do you know who shall come from the offspring of his offspring through the centuries?

(Who might you find you have come from yourself, if you could trace back through the centuries?)”

Whitman never fails to think of man or woman as potential parent.

“A woman’s body at auction,

She too is not only herself, she is the teeming mother of mothers,

She is the bearer of them that shall grow and be mates to the mothers. . . . .

If anything is sacred the human body is sacred,

And the glory and sweet of a man is the token of manhood untainted.

And in man or woman a clean, strong, firm-fibred body is more beautiful than the most beautiful face.”

When we get to the world of the future, when people shall get rid of most of their vulgar clothing, we shall change our ideas about modesty. A woman with a beautiful figure does not object to being admired impersonally, if there is nothing implied or involved in it. Whitman viewed this thing impersonally, and there is nothing suggestive about him. Thoreau says, “Of course Whitman can communicate to us no experience, and if we are shocked, whose experience is it we are reminded of?” This in him is not indifference, but actual searching after the truth of everything.

“A man is a great thing upon the earth and through eternity, but every jot of the greatness of man is unfolded out of

There isn’t anything *but* God, according to pantheism.

How do you explain evil in the universe in terms of a righteous God? Whitman has two ideas—at one time he thinks evil is going to be transformed into good, at another he just accepts it all as part of life.

“Through me many long dumb voices; Voices of interminable generations of slaves;

Voices of prostitutes and of deformed persons;

Voices of the diseased and the despairing, and of thieves and dwarfs;

Voices of the cycles of preparation and accretion,

And of the threads that connect the stars—”

The other baffling problem of theology is the question of death. Whitman says:

“Prais’d be the fathomless universe,

For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious;

And for love, sweet love,—but praise! O praise and praise,

For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding Death!

Dark mother, always gliding near, with soft feet,

Have none chanted for thee a chant of fullest welcome?

Then I chant it for thee—I glorify thee above all;

I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unfalteringly.”

Whitman is such a democrat that he will even be the friend of death!

Walt Whitman can best be described as a social democrat—not necessarily a Social-Demokrat. That term in its original meaning accurately describes him. And he would not have his followers Whitmaniacs. He would have them be—lovers.

All good work is done with abandon, with joyousness, with a certain divine carelessness.

Friends Who Are Coming

Jan. 4—Dr. Stanton Coit of London, “The Ethics of Marriage and Divorce.”

Jan. 11—Symposium, “What Is the Matter

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I had not gone far in my chat with Mr. Hogan before I got hopelessly lost,—by reason of my already confessed lack of economics. But I rallied when he asserted vigorously that candidates, before being elected to any public office, should pass an examination on matters connected with the exercise of their new duties. I'm not sure that he didn't, also, advocate putting a man through an examination as to the meaning of citizenship before permitting him to cast a ballot. I'd be particularly in favor of this last measure, for the reason that it would oblige men now—and women soon—to study economics.

#### WALT WHITMAN: PROPHET AND DEMOCRAT.

(Continued from Page 3.)

Gentlemen, look on this wonder,  
Whatever the bid of the bidders they cannot be high enough for it.  
For it the globe lay preparing quintillions of years without one animal or plant,  
For it the revolving cycles truly and steadily roll'd.  
In this head the all-baffling brain,  
In it and below it the makings of heroes.  
Examine these limbs, red, black, or white,  
they are cunning in tendon and nerve,  
They shall be stript that you may see them.  
Exquisite senses, life-lit eyes, pluck, volition,

If anything is sacred the human body is sacred,  
And the glory and sweet of a man is the token of manhood untainted.  
And in man or woman a clean, strong, firm-fibred body is more beautiful than the most beautiful face."

When we get to the world of the future, when people shall get rid of most of their vulgar clothing, we shall change our ideas about modesty. A woman with a beautiful figure does not object to being admired impersonally, if there is nothing implied or involved in it. Whitman viewed this thing impersonally, and there is nothing suggestive about him. Thoreau says, "Of course Whitman can communicate to us no experience, and if we are shocked, whose experience is it we are reminded of?" This in him is not indifference, but actual searching after the truth of everything.

"A man is a great thing upon the earth and through eternity, but every jot of the greatness of man is unfolded out of woman.

First the man is shaped in the woman, he can then be shaped in himself."

Motherhood was to him the summit of all the significance of sex. When he was serving as a nurse in Washington he brought women to minister to the soldiers, and was particularly anxious that they should all be mothers.

Perhaps the very name of pantheism suggests the pantheistic idea of God, but Whitman's terms in which he speaks of God are rather anthropomorphic.

"I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God not in the least,  
Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than myself.

Why should I wish to see God better than this day?

I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and each moment then,  
In the faces of men and women I see God,  
and in my own face in the glass,

I find letters from God dropt in the street,  
and every one is signed by God's name,

And I leave them where they are, for I know that wheresoever I go  
Others will punctually come for ever and ever."

above all;  
I bring thee a song that when thou must indeed come, come unflatteringly."

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Jan. 11—*Symposium*, "What Is the Matter With Our Public Schools?" Miss Margaret Slattery of Fitchburg and others to be announced.

Jan. 18—Bishop Charles Williams of Michigan, "Why I Work for the Single Tax,"

Jan. 25—Dr. Albion Woodbury Small of Chicago University.

Feb. 1—Alexander Irvine of New York.

Feb. 8—Prof. Edward A. Steiner, "The Inter-National Mind and the Inter-Racial Heart."

Feb. 15—*Symposium*, "Breeding Men." Speakers to be announced.

Feb. 22—Charles Brandon Booth, "The Case for the Prisoner."

March 1—Leslie Willis Sprague of Chicago.

March 8—*Symposium*, on "Journalism." A. J. Philpott of the *Boston Globe* and others to be announced.

March 15—Rev. Harry Ward, "The Challenge of Socialism to Christianity."

March 22—Rev. Frank O. Hall of New York, "The Moral Law."

March 29—John Cowper Powys of England, "The Economic Aspects of Woman Suffrage."

April 5—Mary Church Terrell, "Uncle Sam and the Sons of Ham."

April 12—Dr. Thomas C. Hall of New York.

April 19—Prof. Walter Rauschenbusch.