

to pay great sums. Why? and with what understanding?

They are generally men totally unfit for such public trusts, but peculiarly fitted to be party tools. Their grade of intelligence forbids the expectation of useful public service, but it especially qualifies them to be the unscrupulous agents of party bosses. They are made to pay heavily for nominations which are equivalent to elections, because it is understood that they will reimburse themselves by selling their legislative votes. This is so generally understood that when a bill is introduced in the Legislature which is known as "a strike"—a bill, that is to say, which threatens great injury to private property in the city—the property-holders do not depend upon their representatives—their representatives are the strikers; they do not confide in the intelligence and honor of the Legislature—they have had too much experience; but they raise a purse and send an agent with it to defeat the bill. How? By buying the votes of legislators.

This, of course, is not the universal practice or situation, but it is a very common event, and good citizens justify their conduct as they justify the payment of black-mail to freebooters. Indeed, dependence upon the Legislature as a representative of the people, from which due consideration of public projects and intelligent action are to be expected, has so far declined that citizens who are interested in pending measures think it necessary to employ agents to press them through the Legislature; and even when they are passed, the Governor is reported to have said in some instances that although passed by the body constitutionally elected to represent the will of the people, he would not approve the bills, because nobody appeared to advocate them.

In this condition of affairs Jacob Sharp wishes to secure for himself, and for nothing, an exceedingly valuable franchise which is at the disposition of the Aldermen. He knows that legislation may be bought at Albany, and he naturally infers that it is for sale at the New York City Hall. He consequently selects his agents and makes his purchase. He does what it is notorious that great and respectable corporations do, what political committees and respectable politicians do. He "soaps" the ways, and buys what he wants. And why do the politicians and Jacob Sharp buy? Because of a situation produced by the theory that public office is private plunder, a theory which is maintained by the practice of supporting parties and paying party expenses by assessing public officers, and which is constantly strengthened by sneers at all declarations and efforts toward simple honesty and clean-handedness in politics as namby-pamby sentimentality, and affected dudism, and a Pharisaic assumption of superior virtue.

The most vitally important of all public questions at present is corruption in govern-

ment—a corruption which is largely due to the doctrine that public place is the proper spoils of party. This principle, when applied to the whole subordinate body of administration, means simply that party work of any kind is to be rewarded by the public money. The venality of politics necessarily follows, and the sale of nominations, the corruption of elections, and the bribery of legislators are the logical consequences. Jacob Sharp is the type of this tendency and of its result. He is a text worth pondering—and improving.

THERE is an evident disposition to restore the old-fashioned Fourth of July. Indeed, there is an association which has been formed for that very purpose. It would begin the reform at the beginning, and renew the cannon salute at sunrise. The association plainly supposes that patriotism is becoming sluggish and disposed to lie abed in the morning, and proposes to turn it out of bed betimes. The parent society of the renaissance is that at Harlem, New York, which promulgated for this year a startling programme. The glorious day of independence was to open with the sunrise salute of cannon and bell-ringing; then the national flag was to be raised by a company of Sunday-school children, and an address was to be delivered to them upon the significance of the anniversary. Later, the procession, the reading of the Declaration, and the oration were to take place. Games were to succeed in the afternoon, and the sun was to be rung and thundered down as at his rising, and the stars in the evening were to be outshone by fireworks of patriotic device.

The mere mention of such a day's delights recalls the ancient Fourth of July within the memory of men yet living. But the Mayor of New York peremptorily challenged the proposition. Are these sane people, he asked, substantially, who seriously suggest this horrible nuisance of cannon thunder at some unknown hour of early morning, and without thought of the comfort or life of the sick and suffering? It is right to celebrate the glorious Fourth, but it is wrong to make every reasonable creature hate and dread its coming. These were the sentiments of the Mayor, John Adams to the contrary notwithstanding. Undoubtedly that sturdy old Colossus of Independence joyfully anticipated resounding festivities upon the annual recurrence of the day. But he was not a moral monster, implied the protesting Mayor; he did not anticipate, much less propose, pandemonium broke loose as a fitting observance of a happy and humane anniversary. Yes—we can imagine the Mayor tentatively meditating—yes, John Adams was a true patriot, but could he have forecast fire-crackers and—ye infernal gods—bomb-crackers, I do not say that he would have gladly abandoned the cause of American independence, but—

The Harlem association was compelled to forego that thunderous delight at dawn, and postpone the crack of tympanums and crash of glass until noon, or some hour when mankind has arisen and breakfasted and is measurably prepared for the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. But the purpose of the association is admirable. Dr. Johnson prided himself upon keeping his friendships in repair, and it is a wisdom which may be well applied to patriotism. The observance and due commemoration of cardinal patriotic events foster patriotism itself. This is all the more desirable and even necessary in this country, where the instinct of patriotism is by no means coextensive with the population.

When John Adams made his famous forecast he spoke to nearly three millions of people who shared—or, if they did not all share, at least all understood—his feelings as well as his words. They were native-born Americans, cherishing traditions common to every colony, and while there were Swedes in Delaware, and Dutch and Huguenots in New York, the great preponderating element was English, and all were natives. When his son John Quincy Adams delivered in 1793 the Fourth of July oration before the authorities of the town of Boston, every listener and every citizen of the town was in the strictest sense an American, and, as the young American of today might say, he knew what the orator was talking about. But in all our great cities today a very large part of the crowd which the celebration of the Fourth of July assembles has no conception whatever of its significance, and can have none of the patriotic emotion which is traditional in the blood and in descent. The very language in which they express their feelings betrays them. What to them is Bunker Hill and Valley Forge, Saratoga and Yorktown? What instinctive American conception have they of the sacredness of the word liberty as spoken by Sam Adams and Patrick Henry, and as embodied at last in the Constitution one hundred years ago?

In a country of population so heterogeneous, the careful observance of the anniversaries of historically patriotic days and events is a peculiar duty. The old-fashioned oration need be no longer an address of mutual congratulation, but it may be most properly devoted to restating the event and expounding its significance, thus introducing America to the new Americans. The events of every day show us how carefully and naturally the new-comers cherish their own native traditions. We can see how much they affect both our usages and our legislation. Indeed, an obsequious deference to what we might call the foreignism of the new Americans is conspicuous in our public life, and engrosses the thoughts of many of our public men, who consider carefully before speaking and acting, not so much how speech and action will impress the old and traditional American as the new-comer.

In this situation we cannot count in this country, as countries less enriched by immigration can safely count, upon a universal instinct of patriotism which perennially renews itself, and needs no aid of days and occasions. A great part of the crowd in New York that watches the parade upon the Fourth, when there is a parade, or the fireworks in the evening, could not read the Declaration of Independence in the language in which it was written, and have never heard of John Adams. That part of the crowd, when intelligent and well-behaved, has done much in many ways to develop and improve the country to which they have come. But one of the ways in which they have helped it is not in improving its politics, and the want of the native patriotic instinct in any considerable part of the population is unfortunate for any country.

The revival of the suitable observance of the glorious Fourth which is proposed by the Harlem association may be in this sense a public service. The roar of the cannon—at a reasonable hour—and the ringing of bells and the general holiday will cause the new American to ask the meaning of the commotion. That is the orator's opportunity, and he can eloquently expound the truth that American liberty is not individual whim but constitutional law, and that revolution is the last dreadful resort, only justifiable when the general public desire cannot be made known and the general public will cannot be made law. The orator might add pertinently that the freest and most independent country may justly refuse to receive from other lands their paupers and criminals and lunatics and vagrants of every kind and degree, and not only may, but should, watch carefully the increase of a population which has no tradition or language or faith or usage or sympathy in common with those of the country to which it comes, and in which it is presently admitted to political power.

It is toward the end of June and in the first days of July that the great college aquatic contests occur, and it is about that time, as the soldiers at Monmouth knew in 1778, that Sirius is lord of the ascendant. This year it was the hottest day of the summer, as marked by the mercury in New York, when the Harvard and Yale men drew out at New London for their race. Fifty years ago the crowd at Commencement filled the town green and streets, and the meeting-house in which the graduating class were the heroes of the hour. The valedictorian, the saluatorian, the philosophical orator, walked on air, and the halo of after-triumphs of many kinds was not brighter or more intoxicating than the brief glory of the moment on which they took the graduating stage, under the beaming eyes of maiden beauty and the profound admiration of college comrades.

Willis, as Phil Slingsby, has told the story of that college life fifty and sixty years ago.