

Now, to get to the bottom of any such difficulty, one must first find where the trouble lies, and here we shall find it at the lowest step of our great political system, in the primaries. It is not meant that the primaries themselves are wrong, but the utter indifference with which most people regard them is most decidedly wrong, for it is there that it is most often decided who is to hold any particular office. A choice between two evils is no choice at all, it is compulsion, and compulsion with reference to the selection of public officers is contrary to the spirit of our form of government. Let every good citizen, therefore, use some of the energy that he devotes to other matters in bringing about a healthier condition of affairs in our political life, and the professional politician, as we know him to-day, will either become a thing of the past or he will be honestly earning the salary that the people see fit to allow him.

But there is a still more important phase of the question. This is the establishment of a great national individuality. The chief characteristics of any nation which has played a part in the world's history can be indicated by one or two words: with Carthage it is commercialism; with Greece, intellectuality and originality; the Romans were natural rulers and politicians; with the French it was fickleness of mind even as far back as the time of Caesar; with the English it has been dogged tenacity of purpose; now, what shall be the distinguishing quality of our great American republic? We are yet too young a nation to say what this shall be. During the last century or so our political life has been a development and an isolation from anything which might check our growth, and, although we have as yet by no means reached our full stature, we are entering upon that period which shall determine our standing among the nations. Let us hope that the name American shall go down in history for all that is fair and just in dealing with a sister nation. We have made a fair start in this direction