

(December 19th, 1911.)

The Brotherhood of Man.

BY MR. ELBERT HUBBARD.*

ADDRESSING the Canadian Club on Dec. 19th, Mr. Elbert Hubbard said:—

Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen of the Canadian Club,—I congratulate myself this afternoon that I am addressing an audience that can fill in between the lines, that will understand a great many things I leave unsaid, that will require no blue-prints, and will put the very best possible construction on all my faltering words.

If you were to ask me here this afternoon what in my mind is the best book published during the last decade, I would say that it is a little book of Maurice Maeterlinck's entitled "The Life of the Bee." And in that book Maurice Maeterlinck makes this point, that the bee, taken four miles from its hive, is lost and undone and can never get back, that the bee alone makes no honey, the bee alone has no intelligence; but a hive of bees has a great and magnificent intelligence, the hive knows things that man will never know, the hive of bees is close to some great secrets of infinity—I will name you one thing: the hive knows the secret of sex, the hive produces a queen, workers and drones at will; if the queen is destroyed they take the larva, feed it in a certain way, and they produce a queen. And that intelligence of the whole Maeterlinck calls the spirit of the hive. If the bees have more drones than they can use in their business they know what to do with the excess number, a thing that society has not yet determined and has not yet worked out. The bees have teachers. They have inspectors. They have janitors. And they have undertakers. But so far as we know they have no doctors, no lawyers, and no preachers. (Laughter.) And whether they are wise in this omission or not, it would be indelicate to ask on this occasion.

I am not to talk to you this afternoon on the subject of bees. I am going to talk to you about men and women, and

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the first point I make is this, that a man alone, separated from his kind, has no intelligence. Separated from the mass, separated from your fellows, your reason reels, and your mind totters. All of our activities in life have their possibility in mind, and any man who says, "Go to, I will succeed," and leaves humanity out of the equation, is a sick man or a criminal. There are just two places where we send men who forget the rights of other people, we send them to the penitentiary and to the insane asylum. The badge of sanity is co-operation, and the more people you can work with, the more people you can sympathize with, the more people you can help, the more you will be helped, and the greater and better are you.

I said that the badge of sanity is the ability to co-operate, and co-operation means getting along with the other fellow instead of scrapping with him. When you give him a lift, don't do it with a No. 9 boot. Why do I say this? I will say it, if you please, for a social reason: self-preservation is a strong motive in the human heart, and in the matter of self-preservation in order to help ourselves we have to recognize as thinking people that we have got to help other people, and as a business man I make the proposition to you, that to sell a man anything he does not want or need, or to sell him anything beyond what it is worth, is a calamity for you. We make our money out of our friends—our enemies will not trade with us. And when you make a sale you want to make a friend. Why do I say this? Because you are the other fellow. For the first time in the history of the race business men have accepted the idea of the brotherhood of man and the solidarity of the race.

Ideas are born, they have their infancy, their time of stress and struggle, they succeed, and everything that succeeds dies; to succeed is to disintegrate, to deteriorate, and fruit that ripens, too much loved by the sun, falls; only the failure lives. The only man on whose tomb we carve the single word "Saviour" was a failure. That is the rule, always, for ever. So ideas have their manhood, they succeed, they need sleep, they look backward, they die, they are laid in their graves, and there they lie long ages, to come again, to slaughter and slay, to liberate and inspire, and this perfect resurrection goes on and on for ever. Only the rising and falling all the infinite day,—nothing is permanent but change.

Thus with that idea of the brotherhood of man. Those who held it were called dreamers, idealists, Utopians, to them has been passed the hemlock, their portion has been the scap-

fold, the noose, the knife, right down the centuries from the dawn of history to our own time. The idea of the brotherhood of man and the solidarity of the race has never been accepted, so far as we know, in all history as a working maxim or motive by the people. But here we are, working men, business men, of all professions, from the various walks of life, in competition with each other, here we meet as a brotherhood, and for a little while we turn out of our hearts prejudice, fear, hate, we are one people. I look at you with your bronzed, happy faces, you are listening to me, you don't resent what I say, you are not obliged to accept it, but all you take away is that which you bring, as the dead carry in their clenched hands only what they have given away. Emerson says that if you go to Europe you bring back much only when you take much with you. I can't tell you the right thing, if you slight what I say. Because I bring back to you some things you know, I don't give you any tale I tell you. If I expressed for you a new idea, you would resent it; we resent everything and anything for an innovation. The first man who deserved a Carnegie medal was the man who ate raw oysters. Truth is not a thing to be imparted, but to be achieved. So I am talking to myself: you are me, I am you. Do you remember how when John Wesley saw a man taken to Tyburn, there to be hanged, he turned to a friend and said, "But for the grace of God, there goes John Wesley?" Do you remember, when old Dr. Johnson sat in a tavern, with Oliver Goldsmith opposite, he saw a man come in, and said, "Goldy, I hate that man!" Goldy says, "Dr. Johnson, who is he?" Dr. Johnson had a subtle intellect, and was sensitive. He said, "I don't know who that man is, that's the trouble, if I knew him I'd love him!" To know all is to forgive all. We have more imagination now than we have ever had before. We are pretty nearly getting enough imagination to put ourselves in the place of the other fellow, and some day we are going to try the Golden Rule in business. It has been recommended, you know. And some day we are going to try it. We work from the complex to the simple. I heard of a man who said this: "I have traveled all the world over, I have climbed the mountain peaks of thought, I have read all histories, I know all religions, I have been one with Mohammed and one with Christ on Calvary, I have been everywhere, I have achieved, I have succeeded, and now I have come back home, and I am going to look out of the window." Do you get it? Well, the idea is this: (Laughter)—Never mind! What's the use? You've got it, or you haven't. You have! only I paralyzed

you for a moment! That's all! But the idea is, I carry the world in my heart, and all the world I have is the world I see. How many beautiful things, magnificent things, miraculous things, you can see out of the window. Let down your bucket! Only water! Why famish? That's the proposition. Walt Whitman speaks of a hospital where he saw a dying man brought in. The old world says, "I am that man." We are partakers of the woe of the world, and of the joys of the world. We are one people. You ask me what a man is: I will tell you; I will make bold to tell you. You don't have to accept it, I will visit on you no threat of punishment, you know, if you reject what I say; also, I give you no hope of reward. (Laughter.) You have it! And your punishment, if you write a fool poem, is that you get it published! We are punished by our sins, and not for them. A lady said to me over at the King Edward Hotel this morning, a dear good lady, a woman of a lot of intelligence—she must have had a lot of intelligence, otherwise she would not have come to call on me!—for there are some people who show they have intelligence and she had good taste, and I admit it! (Laughter)—and in the course of conversation she said to me, "You write lots of things I don't believe," and I said, "Neither do I." But I believed them when I wrote them." Now sometimes being unable to find anything as interesting I read my own amusing works, and reading things I wrote ten years ago I wonder why I wrote that fool stuff, so perhaps you have been perplexed by the same proposition; if so, we have a point of sympathy. Now hear that story—a bromide! A lot who read Robert Browning, a writer of obscure verse, a man we talk about but never read—(Laughter) but it is a wonderful thing to have a literary reputation! because people would rather admit you are a great man than read your stuff, as Dr. Johnson said to the poet, you know,—"I praise your book, but damn ye if I'll read it!" Now this lady says, "You write lots of things I don't believe." I said, "Neither do I." Then we both smiled rather foolishly. The lady taking a book out of her reticule said, "Won't you tell me what you meant by that?" "Madam," I replied, "I don't know what I meant when I wrote that." "Does it mean anything to you?" "Indeed it doesn't!" "Doesn't it mean anything to you then?" Everybody smiled. It is the most natural thing in the world: you are young, you are in certain circumstances, you are amid things, in an environment of a certain kind, certain situations come to you; your point of view changes, you move out, you forget, you wonder why you thought that. I am being

polished, I am only in process, I am not yet made, and these days are not yet up with me or you, they have not really begun.

Now I will tell you what a man is: a man is a practising, thinking, reasoning, and usually unreasonable, manifestation of divine energy; he is sent into life without his permission, and is sent out of it against his will,—we come in one door, we are going out by another; we are being used by an unknown power for an unseen end. My idea is, man is a part of Nature—spell it with a capital. When I used to go to the Baptist Church—now, don't laugh, this is a serious matter—I used to sing "All days will be Sunday by and by," "Sweet rest in heaven." I don't sing those songs now. I want to remember the week day to keep it holy. And if we should go to heaven and find it a place of rest, harps always in tune, robes always laundered out, plumbing never out of order, everything found, I wouldn't want to be there. That's just what it seems to me. Work is the only rest I want. In order to preserve our health, our independence, our good cheer, we must have work. You change your work from time to time, that's the nearest approach to Paradise I know anything about. I would like to live every day as if I knew I were to die to-night; and I would like to live every day as if I knew I were to live for ever. My idea is that the best preparation for the life to come is to live here now right up to your highest and best, so if we are going to heaven we will be used to it when we get there. Now I am not preparing to die, I am preparing to live, and one of the great accomplishments of the time, of the spirit of the time, is the idea that death is not a calamity, that death is a form of life; and we know there is no pain in death; that if you have a pain you should thank God, because dead ones have no pain. And also when death comes to you, no devils will ever dance on your footboard; if ever devils do dance for you, they will dance on your sideboard! (Laughter.) So my plea this afternoon is to live this afternoon right up to your highest and best, to find out and fix the idea in your life if possible, that you are here, and what you are here for. But I would say, that we are here for co-operation, to assist each other. Once in a while you gentlemen who look a payroll in the eye, as I do, wonder if your employees will come and say to you, "Well, if you keep that man, I won't stay!" What do you do under those conditions? Why, you fire 'em both (Laughter) provided you can't bring peace about between them. The man who succeeds in any big departmental store is the man who

makes peace between the furniture department and the book department. Keep down clique. Keep down whatever would prevent full play for exultation, exhilaration, happiness, health. We believe in work, in the hands that work, in the brains that think, in the hearts that love. That's the proposition! As one business man talking to another, I am not talking ethics to you, I am not talking religion to you, I am just talking to you about a business policy, and I am expressing to you the spirit of the times. For we are ruled not by our own individual intelligences, but we are ruled by public opinion, and we have had to go across the sea and borrow a word from our German friends to express the idea—the "Zeitgeist"—we are ruled by the Zeitgeist. And my mission is the transformation of the Zeitgeist, the intelligence of the many, to let it play through you, and my desire is to be a good transmitter of the divine energy; I am the divine machine; God speaks to you, and I would listen.

I have a deal of sympathy with that old expression of the Quakers, the Friends, they "listen to the Voice"—they spell it with a capital—they believe in the Divine Spirit that speaks to them when they are in tune, and I would love so to be in tune, if you please, and catch the divine electric spark when it flashes. So I believe not only in the divinity of a Man who lived two thousand years ago, but in my own divinity, and in yours, the divine energy of which we are a part, and of which we are a manifestation.

So, as a business man, my business is to supply a human want—for a consideration. (Laughter.) I don't believe in charity, I don't believe in philanthropy. I saw your beautiful hospital here this morning; I admire it in an architectural way, but let me tell you, that beautiful hospital is wrong, I don't wonder you wax poor—you are running on full capacity. You should be ashamed of your hospital, your jails, your policemen, and some day we will all be ashamed of these things. We should keep well, a man's business is to keep well. Men go to a hospital because they can't keep well, and men can't send to Massey's or Oliver's or the International Harvester Company's to make a part, these men can't make a part, so you go to a hospital and they give you ether and remove your—pocketbook (Laughter). Now the practice of medicine until our own time has been a practice of palliatives: if a man has a pain, he goes to a doctor, instead of thinking back, working back and deciding why he has the pain, and then—cutting it out! (Laughter.) Do you follow me? When I talk about "cutting it out," do you follow me? I don't refer to your appendenda vermiforme, I refer to your bad habits—

I assume you have a few—(Laughter) I am talking to myself, you know. I advertise for Gillette and his razor! (Laughter.) There is a reason why I should advertise for Gillette: I want every man to shave himself so he can see his own face in the mirror every morning. I believe that any man who gets a good look at his own homely old mug once a day will never blame any man for any thing!

Now, what we want to do is to size up our own case to diagnose our own case, and look after one man, and that's the man right under your own Derby. And if you will look after this fellow and keep him straight, keep him from interfering with other people, and if you realize that his rights end where another man's begin, you have pretty nearly solved the problem. We have said it was a disgrace to be in the penitentiary; it is, because you have violated some law of the land; and if you are in a hospital, you are there because you have violated some law of nature. Of course, you may have been run over by a benzine buggy. I know the automobile has divided the world into two parts, the quick and the dead (Laughter)—but in order to be on the safe side, you want to buy one, and then the other fellow takes the chance, that's the proposition!

Now, we live in the richest world we have ever known or heard of or can imagine, there is enough for everybody, and as I said to my friend here, no one will ever die here in Canada of starvation. I see you are talking of collections for poor people—there are no poor people in Toronto! There may be a few defectives, but you don't evolve them, with this magnificent climate—you have weather and you have climate. (Laughter) you have the richest country the world has ever known, and the resources of Canada are not yet tapped! (Cheers) You don't know Canada! We need your wheat;—we scorned reciprocity until we got hungry, but now only 33 per cent. of the inhabitants of the States are farmers, and only that country is safe where one-half of the people of the land are partners with nature and tillers of the soil. The farmer has never been respectable until we had dollar wheat and ten cent hogs! It is one thing to go and visit a farmer as I did not long ago in Saskatchewan and ride with him to town in his "Chalmers 36," and help him calculate his rent. That was a great experience. If any man in the world should be respectable and happy, it is the farmer. The farmer to-day has paid off his mortgages, is coming into possession of his own. But our population in the States is two-thirds of it in the cities, so we want food! We wanted a while ago pulp to make white paper for muck-raking magazines; we wanted

cheap paper, because we have a lot of cheap men, and so we took the duty off wood pulp; and we got what we wanted. And when we are hungry enough, we are going to take the duty off food stuffs, and they will flow in! (Applause.) It is coming, sure! I am ashamed of my country and of the tariff laws passed by my country, passed as retaliatory laws, the result of hate, prejudice and fear, three bad things. You had our property and you refused to return it. (Laughter.) Yes, they came over here, past all guards, they were our property; it came over here and you kept it, and we said, "We will put up a perpetual spite fence!" You know what happens to the fellow that puts up a spite fence? He gets astride of it, and then he gets his breeches caught, and he can't get off. And that's just what happened to us! It was coming to us, and we got it! (Laughter), where Mrs. Potter Palmer wears her pearls! Now we think more of you than ever before (Applause), because you have shown your ability to do without us. (Cheers.) Now, isn't the spite fence an outrageous, disgraceful thing? And isn't it bad policy as business men to build a spite fence? I will quote you Elizabeth Fry, in her Quaker dress, mother of sixteen children! going to call on the King of France, wearing her simple Quaker garb, she said to His Majesty—he was building a prison,—“You Majesty, I have visited the prison, and I say to thee now, that thee shall build no dark cells.” And the King of France looked at her, and said “Why?” She said, “Thee shall build no dark cells, for thee and thy children shall occupy them.” A great and poetic truth. And you read in French history—and you all know French history—you know how truthfully that woman spoke. Behind her words was this great truth; everything you do, you do for yourselves; everything you build, you build for yourselves. Build no spite fence! for you spite yourselves. When you try to injure another, you injure yourselves. I myself fear to entertain a thought of hate, fear, jealousy, revenge. Why? Because I injure myself. When I hate, I disturb my circulation; and when I disturb my circulation I impair my digestion. And most of the bad theology in the world has come to us from indigestion. And when I disturb my digestion I disturb my thought processes; they cease to act sanely, efficiently; I look both ways, I doubt, I wonder; and the first thing I know I have chills of fear; I send for the doctor, and he calls it “nerv. pros.”—nervous prosperity, which is worse than nervous restitution—the thing the Standard Oil and the Steel Trust have! (Laughter.) So the argument is, I would act sanely, and laugh, and exercise my diaphragm.

As for wealth, well, I should like to have a little bank balance, not too much but just a little; and I should like it to appear in black, not red. There was an old farmer in my town not long ago and accidentally his bank balance was in red just a very little while, and they notified him. You will think "They will take care of that for the present." But they didn't; they sent him word several times about that balance till finally he told them, "If you badger me any more I will come around and draw it out!" Now a little bank balance is a good thing, and so is the savings bank habit. And I have a little savings bank account in the Crown Bank. Do you know, when the Millerites over in Buffalo prophesied that the world was going to come to an end on a certain day, do you know what they did? they hiked over to Canada! Now, I sympathize with the move and with the proceeding. My heart is in Canada, part of it, and I have bought a little farm not long ago—out there in Saskatchewan, I like them so much, I like to have a little Canadian real estate. Also, the *Fra* magazine, that I have the honor of publishing, circulates in Canada at the second class rate,—now there's reciprocity! (Laughter)—you get it in Canada, just as cheap as in the United States, two dollars a year! (Laughter.)

Now friends, the proposition is, that we are living in a new world. The common people, and we are common people, plain people, we have hold of the idea of the brotherhood of man; we know, the only way to help ourselves is to help other people. Rome at her heart, and Greece at her flower, never knew it. They knew something about the business of production, creation, and distribution. I prophesy—will the vision ever come true? It is for you and me to make it come true. We will leave this world better.

Three men have conquered the world—exploitation, taxation, oppression, tyranny, death! Not long ago in a great art gallery in Germany I saw a picture. It was a great canvas at the top of a stairway, and I stood at the bottom of the marble stairway. Three men come riding out of the canvas on horseback. In the centre is a big bay horse, and the man with face white looks at you. It is the face of the Imperial Caesar, the Pope of Rome, the greatest man of initiative the world has ever seen. He conquered the world—or all he could find of it. The jealous Caesar's brows are bound with victory, but his face is white and anxious. Then at the end is a black horse, bearing a man whose face is yellow, ghastly, with dark lines. It is Alexander, Captain-General of Greece at twenty. He conquered the world, and died at thirty-one sighing for more worlds to conquer. You and I will never

die from that disability—we see a Milky Way of worlds to conquer. He succeeded. Everything that succeeds dies. He died. Here he comes riding out of the canvas on a big black horse Bucephalus, the man-eating horse, but Bucephalus is tired now, he lifts his foot and reels as he walks like tired. I see another man riding, a little man, grey-cloaked and with a cocked hat, on the mare he rode at Austerlitz. His hand reaches out and pats the mane, the hand is thinking of her but he is looking at you, his face white, ghastly, as he pats the mane of the little white horse. Slowly they come riding close together out of the canvas. You wonder why they come riding so slowly; your eyes become accustomed to the dim light, and you see why: they are riding over a sea of corpses. All you men who know and love a horse, you know no horse will ever step on a body of a man if he can help it. And as they are riding the hands of the dead men reach up and grasp the empty air, their sightless eyes look up. You look at these three faces, white and anxious; you know whose they are. What have they won? what have they conquered? They have conquered, and died, and the net result of their conquering is death! The world will be conquered, but by the forces of creation, distribution, industries, by the forces of co-operation, by the blessed trinity of man, woman and child. This will conquer the world!

Two things happened in the year 500, only two things. One of them was that three little German tribes sailed down around their coast where they lived, the coast of the Baltic, the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes, with their wives and children with them, their horses and their cattle, and they landed on the coast of Brittany; they made peace with the black, brawny Britons, they sowed and reaped. In the year 1000 William the Conqueror came and he conquered England, he married an English wife. Now, as Webster says, "the drum taps of the British union circle the globe and greet the rising sun." We are one people! Rome went down, and Greece is gone; Assyria and Bablyon are in the dust; Egypt has been a dream; but these people, the Teutonic tribes, lived on! We are one people: your Shakespeare is mine, your history is mine, my ancestry were partners of yours. We are one people; to-day as one people we recognize thoroughly this idea of the brotherhood of man, the solidarity of the race. It is the achievement of the time in which we live. It is for us to idealize it, to throw it out so the world may see it. It is for us as business men to bring it about. We will die, pass away, but we will leave this world better than we found it, and the Power that cares for us here will never desert us—there!"