

# THE URGE OF THE HOUR

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The call for culture is the most imperative urge of the hour. During the very time when the dark, uncultured forces acutely resent everything which reminds them of the existence of that culture which they so despise, other elements, desiring to identify themselves in some manner with the movements of culture, begin to imitate whatever has already expressed itself in life. A limited mentality is often wrathful at imitation and simulation; but this is precisely unworthy of the realization of culture. On the contrary, it is necessary to rejoice at each evidence of simulation and imitation. Permit all kinds of centres to grow. Some may be enriched with money; others grow through a deepened consciousness and fire of heart; let each one progress accordingly, if only they avoid deadening limitation.

It is not simulation and imitation which are terrible, and which we can notice and over which we can rejoice. Terrible are the breeding places of ignorance where the pronouncement of the word 'Culture' is forbidden—where, because of the limitations of the mind, it is desired to destroy all who think and express culture. It is sad that there are still existent these fossilized monsters of a pre-historic epoch, who try to harm culture as well as those who are its representatives. To our sorrow, we have evidence that such dark forces still exist. And not only do they vegetate, under cover of their casually acquired social positions, but they even attempt to style themselves as the voice of the public, thus indicting

humanity with the heinous and unjust stigma of ignorance.

The voice of the people is the expression of the people's consciousness. In its substance, this consciousness is always progressive, because all civilization has been created precisely through its offices. Of course, under the term 'People's consciousness' we do not refer to a quantitative thing; it is expressed through quality and through the minority. But such a minority seemingly appears as the hidden potentiality of mankind and therefore these leaders, this sacred legion of heroes, must be verily regarded as the treasure of the people. For it is these bearers of its pan-human heart-felt wishes that the people's consciousness in due time, always puts forward and leans upon in the hour of difficulty.

Special signs exist of these foci of heart-felt thought of the people. The dark forces, which fundamentally spread disunion and destruction, and a return to chaos, are especially wrathful at the glowing manifestation of light. The stake of Joan of Arc; the guillotine of Lavoisier; the burning of Giordano Bruno; the martyrdom of Hypatia, and all other countless evidences of the inexplicable wrath against the heroes of culture, appear to us as the contemporaneous signs of recognition by the dark forces of that which threatens their dusky kingdom with destruction.

It is time for us to have lists not only of the friends of culture but also of its enemies. For history, the oblivion of these does not sufficiently transmit the picture of the true circum-

stance of things. It is not necessary to be aware of their array of forces. Unexpectedly there will appear among them names eminent in the various branches of life. Such information will facilitate the precision of future historical writings. It is useful that history has preserved the name of the destructive Herostratus.

Without risking to fall into truisms of sentimentality, we must admit that the present upheavals threaten destruction to all cultural concepts. It is a sad fact that a general financial and economic crisis is commonly reflected first upon the entire domain of education. The people fear to lessen or do away with the manufacturing of poisonous gases, but with distinct ease they are ready to close educational institutions or, at least, to reduce the salaries of the much-tried worker in education. One may quote many of the saddest instances in human history, where the numbers of the unemployed and starving grew enormously while at the same time, the precious seed was destroyed and the ingress to national riches was closed through fear of over-production. Yet over-production itself is no more than a sign of petty thinking and lack of observation. But conventional standards are so greatly shaken that even the Golden Calf, the Valuta of Gold, is wiped away without the substitution of some other conditional sign. The shaking of such a stronghold of convention as gold, only indicates the degree of obsessed agitation and confusion.

It is precisely now, notwithstanding all the assaults of the dark forces, that the thinking circles of humanity must hurriedly turn towards the realization of culture. This is not the time for the

workers and the questors for culture to acknowledge any barriers between themselves. This is not the time for dogmatic discussions, for rivalries, for quarrels behind each other's backs. This is the time when there must be hurried building, construction, assembling of anything which, if only partially and imperfectly, can already think and act in the name of culture. It is necessary to forget all the rudeness, the kicks and conflicts. Why to think of such!

It is necessary to hasten with all means in substituting the ragged standards with vital and unwithering foundations of creativeness and of high quality. It is sad to see how at times those who might think in accord, often seek to resurrect the memories of dead malicious offences and contentions. He who in himself finds the spiritual force to forget all pettiness and discomfort for the sake of general construction shall thereby express the most vital need of the present hour.

The necessities of our life, which at times could have been expressed in terms of years, now in their acceleration must be measured by a day or even an hour. In the same swift way must be measured also the striving towards the unification of all those who can think of culture; who dream not of obstructions but who feel inwardly the potentiality of applying this creative thought in action, without fearing all the bovine derision, the venomous darts and the cudgels of contemporary barbarians.

Hence, he who within himself finds the strength of construction and of unification shall express the urge of the hour.

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