The Basic Writings of Josiah Royce, Volume II
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I propose, in this address, to define certain issues which, as I think, the present state of the world's civilization, and of our own national life, make both prominent and critical.

The word "provincialism," which I have used as my title, has been chosen because it is the best single word that I have been able to find to suggest the group of social tendencies to which I want to call your especial attention. I intend to use this word in a somewhat elastic sense, which I may at once indicate. When we employ the word "provincialism" as a concrete term, speaking of "a provincialism," we mean, I suppose, any social disposition, or custom, or form of speech or of civilization, which is especially characteristic of a province. In this sense one speaks of the provincialisms of the local dialect of any English shire, or of any German country district. This use of the term in relation to the dialects of any language is very common. But one may also apply the term to name, not only the peculiarities of a local dialect, but the fashions, the manners, and customs of a given restricted region of any country. One also often employs the word "provincialism" as an abstract term, to name not only the customs or social tendencies themselves, but that fondness for them, that pride in them, which may make the inhabitants of a

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province indisposed to conform to the ways of those who come from without, and anxious to follow persistently their own local traditions. Thus the word "provincialism" applies both to the social habits of a given region, and to the mental interest which inspires and maintains these habits. But both uses of the term imply, of course, that one first knows what is to be meant by the word "province." This word, however, is one of an especially elastic usage. Sometimes, by a province, we mean a region as restricted as a single English county, or as the smallest of the old German principalities. Sometimes, however, one speaks of the whole of New England, or even of the Southern states of our Union, as constituting one province; and I know of no easy way of defining how large a province may be. For the term, in this looser sense, stands for no determinate political or legal division of a country. Meanwhile we all, in our minds, oppose the term "province" to the term "nation," as the part is opposed to the whole. Yet we also often oppose the terms "provincial" and "metropolitan," conceiving that the country districts and the smaller towns and cities belong even to the province, while the very great cities belong rather to the whole country, or even to the world in general. Yet here the distinction that we make is not the same as the former distinction between the part of a country and the whole country. Nevertheless, the ground for such an identification of the provincial with that which pertains to country districts and to smaller cities can only lie in the supposed tendency of the great city to represent better the interests of the larger whole than do the lesser communities. This supposition, however, is certainly not altogether well founded. In the sense of possessing local interests and customs, and of being limited to ideas of their own, many great cities are almost as distinctly provincial as are certain less populous regions. The plain people of London or of Berlin have their local dialect; and it seems fair to speak of the peculiarities of such dialects as provincialisms. And almost the same holds true of the other social traditions peculiar to individual great cities. It is possible to find, even amongst the highly cultivated classes of ancient cities, ideas and fashions of behavior as characteristically local, as exclusive in their indifference to the ways of outsiders, as are the similarly characteristic ways and opinions of the country districts of the same nationality. And so the opposition of the provincial to the metropolitan, in manners and in beliefs, seems to me much less important than the other opposition of the province, as the more or less restricted
part of the nation as the whole. It is this latter opposition that I shall therefore emphasize in the present discussion. But I shall not attempt to define how large or how well organized, politically, a province must be. For my present purpose a county, a state, or even a large section of the country, such as New England, might constitute a province. For me, then, a province shall mean any one part of a national domain, which is, geographically and socially, sufficiently unified to have a true consciousness of its own unity, to feel a pride in its own ideals and customs, and to possess a sense of its distinction from other parts of the country. And by the term "provincialism" I shall mean, first, the tendency of such a province to possess its own customs and ideals; secondly, the totality of these customs and ideals themselves; and thirdly, the love and pride which leads the inhabitants of a province to cherish as their own these traditions, beliefs, and aspirations.

II

I have defined the term used as my title. But now, in what sense do I propose to make provincialism our topic? You will foresee that I intend to discuss the worth of provincialism, i.e. to consider, to some extent, whether it constitutes a good or an evil element in civilization. You will properly expect me, therefore, to compare provincialism with other social tendencies; such tendencies as patriotism, the larger love of humanity, and the ideals of higher cultivation. Precisely these will constitute, in fact, the special topics of my address. But all that I have to say will group itself about a single thesis, which I shall forthwith announce. My thesis is that, in the present state of the world's civilization, and of the life of our own country, the time has come to emphasize, with a new meaning and intensity, the positive value, the absolute necessity for our welfare, of a wholesome provincialism, as a saving power to which the world in the near future will need more and more to appeal.

The time was (and not very long since), when, in our own country, we had to contend against very grave evils due to false forms of provincialism. What has been called sectionalism long threatened our national unity. Our Civil War was fought to overcome the ills due to such influences. There was, therefore, a time when the virtue of true patriotism had to be founded upon a vigorous condemnation of certain powerful forms of provincialism. And
our national education at that time depended both upon our learning common federal ideals, and upon our looking to foreign lands for the spiritual guidance of older civilizations. Furthermore, not only have these things been so in the past, but similar needs will, of course, be felt in the future. We shall always be required to take counsel of the other nations in company with whom we are at work upon the tasks of civilization. Nor have we outgrown our spiritual dependence upon older forms of civilization. In fact we shall never outgrow a certain inevitable degree of such dependence. Our national unity, moreover, will always require of us a devotion that will transcend in some directions the limits of all our provincial ideas. A common sympathy between the different sections of our country will, in future, need a constantly fresh cultivation. Against the evil forms of sectionalism we shall always have to contend. All this I well know, and these things I need not in your presence emphasize. But what I am to emphasize is this: The present state of civilization, both in the world at large, and with us, in America, is such as to define a new social mission which the province alone, but not the nation, is able to fulfill. False sectionalism, which disunites, will indeed always remain as great an evil as ever it was. But the modern world has reached a point where it needs, more than ever before, the vigorous development of a highly organized provincial life. Such a life, if wisely guided, will not mean disloyalty to the nation; and it need not mean narrowness of spirit, nor yet the further development of jealousies between various communities. What it will mean, or at least may mean,—this, so far as I have time, I wish to set forth in the following discussion. My main intention is to define the right form and the true office of provincialism,—to portray what, if you please, we may well call the Higher Provincialism,—to portray it, and then to defend it, to extol it, and to counsel you to further just such provincialism.

Since this is my purpose, let me at once say that I address myself, in the most explicit terms, to men and women who, as I hope and presuppose, are and wish to be, in the wholesome sense, provincial. Every one, as I maintain, ought, ideally speaking, to be provincial,—and that no matter how cultivated, or humanitarian, or universal in purpose or in experience he may be or may become. If in our own country, where often so many people are still comparative strangers to the communities in which they have come to live, there are some of us who, like myself, have changed our provinces during our adult
years, and who have so been unable to become and to remain in the
sense of European countries provincial; and if, moreover, the life of
our American provinces everywhere has still too brief a tradition,—
all that is our misfortune, and not our advantage. As our country
grows in social organization, there will be, in absolute measure, more
and not less provincialism amongst our people. To be sure, as I hope,
there will also be, in absolute measure, more and not less patriotism,
closer and not looser national ties, less and not more mutual sectional
misunderstanding. But the two tendencies, the tendency toward
national unity and that toward local independence of spirit, must
henceforth grow together. They cannot prosper apart. The national
unity must not kill out, nor yet hinder, the provincial self-conscious-
ness. The loyalty to the Republic must not lessen the love and the
local pride of the individual community. The man of the future
must love his province more than he does to-day. His provincial
customs and ideals must be more and not less highly developed, more
and not less self-conscious, well-established, and earnest. And there-
fore, I say, I appeal to you as to a company of people who are, and
who mean to be, provincial as well as patriotic,—servants and lovers
of your own community and of its ways, as well as citizens of the
world. I hope and believe that you all intend to have your commu-
nity live its own life, and not the life of any other community, nor yet
the life of a mere abstraction called humanity in general. I hope that
you are fully aware how provincialism, like monogamy, is an essen-
tial basis of true civilization. And it is with this presupposition that I
undertake to suggest something toward a definition and defence of
the higher provincialism and of its office in civilization.

III

With this programme in mind, let me first tell you what seem to me
to be in our modern world, and, in particular, in our American
world, the principal evils which are to be corrected by a further
development of a true provincial spirit, and which cannot be cor-
rected without such a development.

The first of these evils I have already mentioned. It is a defect
incidental, partly to the newness of our own country, but partly
also to those world-wide conditions of modern life which make
travel, and even a change of home, both attractive and easy to
 dwellers in the most various parts of the globe. In nearly every one
of our American communities, at least in the northern and in the western regions of our country, there is a rather large proportion of people who either have not grown up where they were born, or who have changed their dwelling-place in adult years. I can speak all the more freely regarding this class of our communities, because, in my own community, I myself, as a native of California, now resident in New England, belong to such a class. Such classes, even in modern New England, are too large. The stranger, the sojourner, the newcomer, is an inevitable factor in the life of most American communities. To make him welcome is one of the most gracious of the tasks in which our people have become expert. To give him his fair chance is the rule of our national life. But it is not on the whole well when the affairs of a community remain too largely under the influence of those who mainly feel either the wanderer's or the new resident's interest in the region where they are now dwelling. To offset the social tendencies due to such frequent changes of dwelling-place we need the further development and the intensification of the community spirit. The sooner the new resident learns to share this spirit, the better for him and for his community. A sound instinct, therefore, guides even our newer communities, in the more fortunate cases, to a rapid development of such a local sentiment as makes the stranger feel that he must in due measure conform if he would be permanently welcome, and must accept the local spirit if he is to enjoy the advantages of his community. As a Californian I have been interested to see both the evidences and the nature of this rapid evolution of the genuine provincial spirit in my own state. How swiftly, in that country, the Californians of the early days seized upon every suggestion that could give a sense of the unique importance of their new provincial life. The associations that soon clustered about the tales of the life of Spanish missionaries and Mexican colonists in the years before 1846—these our American Californians cherished from the outset. This, to us often half-legendary past, gave us a history of our own. The wondrous events of the early mining life,—how earnestly the pioneers later loved to rehearse that story; and how proud every young Californian soon became of the fact that his father had had his part therein. Even the Californian's well-known and largely justified glorification of his climate was, in his own mind, part of the same expression of his tendency to idealize whatever tended to make his community, and all its affairs, seem unique, beloved, and deeply founded upon some significant natural
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basis. Such a foundation was, indeed, actually there; nature had, indeed, richly blessed his land; but the real interest that made one emphasize and idealize all these things, often so boastfully, was the interest of the loyal citizen in finding his community an object of pride. Now you, who know well your own local history, will be able to observe the growth amongst you of this tendency to idealize your past, to glorify the bounties that nature has showered upon you, all in such wise as to give the present life of your community more dignity, more honor, more value in the eyes of yourselves and of strangers. In fact, that we all do thus glorify our various provinces, we well know; and with what feelings we accompany the process, we can all observe for ourselves. But it is well to remember that the special office, the principal use, the social justification, of such mental tendencies in ourselves lies in the aid that they give us in becoming loyal to our community, and in assimilating to our own social order the strangers that are within our gates. It is the especial art of the colonizing peoples, such as we are, and such as the English are, to be able by devices of this sort rapidly to build up in their own minds a provincial loyalty in a new environment. The French, who are not a colonizing people, seem to possess much less of this tendency. The Chinese seem to lack it almost altogether. Our own success as possessors of new lands depends upon this one skill in making the new lands where we came to dwell soon seem to us glorious and unique. I was much impressed, some years ago, during a visit to Australia and New Zealand, with the parallel developments in the Australasian colonies. They too have already their glorious past history, their unique fortunes, their romances of the heroic days,—and, in consequence, their provincial loyalty and their power to assimilate their newcomers. So learn to view your new community that every stranger who enters it shall at once feel the dignity of its past, and the unique privilege that is offered to him when he is permitted to belong to its company of citizens,—this is the first rule of the people of every colonizing nation when they found a new province.

Thus, then, I have pointed out the first evil with which our provincialism has to deal—the evil due to the presence of a considerable number of not yet assimilated newcomers in most of our communities. The newcomers themselves are often a boon and welcome indeed. But their failure to be assimilated constitutes, so long as it endures, a source of social danger, because the community needs well-
knit organization. We meet this danger by the development of a strong provincial spirit amongst those who already constitute the centralized portion of the community. For thus a dignity is given to the social order which makes the newcomer long to share in its honors by deserving its confidence. But this aspect of provincialism, this usefulness of local pride, is indeed the best known aspect of my topic. I pass at once to the less frequently recognized uses of the provincial spirit, by mentioning the second of the evils with which a wise provincialism is destined to contend.

IV

This second modern evil arises from, and constitutes, one aspect of the levelling tendency of recent civilization. That such a levelling tendency exists, most of us recognize. That it is the office of the province to contend against some of the attendant evils of this tendency, we less often observe. By the levelling tendency in question I mean that aspect of modern civilization which is most obviously suggested by the fact that, because of the ease of communication amongst distant places, because of the spread of popular education, and because of the consolidation and of the centralization of industries and of social authorities, we tend all over the nation, and, in some degree, even throughout the civilized world, to read the same daily news, to share the same general ideas, to submit to the same overmastering social forces, to live in the same external fashions, to discourage individuality, and to approach a dead level of harassed mediocrity. One of the most marked of all social tendencies is in any age that toward the mutual assimilation of men in so far as they are in social relations with one another. One of the strongest human predispositions is that toward imitation. But our modern conditions have greatly favored the increase of the numbers of people who read the same books and newspapers, who repeat the same phrases, who follow the same social fashions, and who thus, in general, imitate one another in constantly more and more ways. The result is a tendency to crush the individual. Furthermore there are modern economic and industrial developments, too well known to all of you to need any detailed mention here, which lead toward similar results. The independence of the small trader or manufacturer becomes lost in the great commercial or industrial combination. The vast corporation succeeds and displaces the individual. Ingenuity
and initiative become subordinated to the discipline of an impersonal social order. And each man, becoming, like his fellow, the servant of masters too powerful for him to resist, and too complex in their undertakings for him to understand, is, in so far, disposed unobtrusively to conform to the ways of his innumerable fellow-servants, and to lose all sense of his unique moral destiny as an individual.

I speak here merely of tendencies. As you know, they are nowhere unopposed tendencies. Nor do I for an instant pretend to call even these levelling tendencies wholly, or principally, evil. But for the moment I call attention to what are obviously questionable, and in some degree are plainly evil, aspects of these modern tendencies. Imitation is a good thing. All civilization depends upon it. But there may be a limit to the number of people who ought to imitate precisely the same body of ideas and customs. For imitation is not man's whole business. There ought to be some room left for variety. Modern conditions have often increased too much what one might call the purely mechanical carrying-power of certain ruling social influences. There are certain metropolitan newspapers, for instance, which have far too many readers for the good of the social order in which they circulate. These newspapers need not always be very mischievous ones. But when read by too vast multitudes, they tend to produce a certain monotonously uniform triviality of mind in a large proportion of our city and suburban population. It would be better if the same readers were divided into smaller sections, which read different newspapers, even if these papers were of no higher level. For then there would at least be a greater variety in the sorts of triviality which from day to day occupied their minds. And variety is the beginning of individual independence of insight and of conviction. As for the masses of people who are under the domination of the great corporations that employ them, I am here not in the least dwelling upon their economic difficulties. I am pointing out that the lack of initiative in their lives tends to make their spiritual range narrower. They are too little disposed to create their own world. Now every man who gets into a vital relation to God's truth becomes, in his own way, a creator. And if you deprive a man of all incentive to create, you in so far tend to cut him off from God's truth. Or, in more common language, independence of spirit flourishes only when a man at least believes that he has a chance to change his fortunes if he persistently wills to do so. But the servant of some modern forms of impersonal social organization tends to lose this
belief that he has a chance. Hence he tends to lose independence of spirit.

Well, this is the second of the evils of the modern world which, as I have said, provincialism may tend to counteract. Local spirit, local pride, provincial independence, influence the individual man precisely because they appeal to his imitative tendencies. But thereby they act so as to render him more or less immune in presence of the more trivial of the influences that, coming from without his community, would otherwise be likely to reduce him to the dead level of the customs of the whole nation. A country district may seem to a stranger unduly crude in its ways; but it does not become wiser in case, under the influence of city newspapers and of summer boarders, it begins to follow city fashions merely for the sake of imitating. Other things being equal, it is better in proportion as it remains self-possessed,—proud of its own traditions, not unwilling indeed to learn, but also quite ready to teach the stranger its own wisdom. And in similar fashion provincial pride helps the individual man to keep his self-respect even when the vast forces that work toward industrial consolidation, and toward the effacement of individual initiative, are besetting his life at every turn. For a man is in large measure what his social consciousness makes him. Give him the local community that he loves and cherishes, that he is proud to honor and to serve,—make his ideal of that community lofty,—give him faith in the dignity of his province,—and you have given him a power to counteract the levelling tendencies of modern civilization.

V

The third of the evils with which a wise provincialism must contend is closely connected with the second. I have spoken of the constant tendency of modern life to the mutual assimilation of various parts of the social order. Now this assimilation may occur slowly and steadily, as in great measure it normally does; or, on the other hand, it may take more sudden and striking forms, at moments when the popular mind is excited, when great emotions affect the social order. At such times of emotional disturbance, society is subject to tendencies which have recently received a good deal of psychological study. They are the tendencies to constitute what has often been called the spirit of the crowd or of the mob. Modern readers of
the well-known book of Le Bon's on "The Crowd" well know what the tendencies to which I refer may accomplish. It is true that the results of Le Bon are by no means wholly acceptable. It is true that the psychology of large social masses is still insufficiently understood, and that a great many hasty statements have been made about the fatal tendency of great companies of people to go wrong. Yet in the complex world of social processes there can be no doubt that there exist such processes as the ones which Le Bon characterizes. The mob-spirit is a genuine psychological fact which occasionally becomes important in the life of all numerous communities. Moreover, the mob-spirit is no new thing. It has existed in some measure from the very beginning of social life. But there are certain modern conditions which tend to give the mob-spirit new form and power, and to lead to new social dangers that are consequent upon the presence of this spirit.

I use the term "mob-spirit" as an abbreviation for a very large range of phenomena, phenomena which may indeed be classed with all the rest of the imitative phenomena as belonging to one genus. But the mob-phenomena are distinguished from the other imitative phenomena by certain characteristic emotional tendencies which belong to excited crowds of people, and which do not belong to the more strictly normal social activities. Man, as an imitative animal, naturally tends, as we have seen, to do whatever his companions do, so long as he is not somehow aroused to independence and to individuality. Accordingly, he easily shares the beliefs and temperaments of those who are near enough to him to influence him. But now suppose a condition of things such as may readily occur in any large group of people who have somehow come to feel strong sympathy with one another, and who are for any reason in a relatively passive and impressible state of mind. In such a company of people let any idea which has a strong emotional coloring come to be suggested, by the words of the leader, by the singing of a song, by the beginning of any social activity that does not involve clear thinking, that does not call upon a man to assert his own independence. Such an idea forthwith tends to take possession in an extraordinarily strong degree of every member of the social group in question. As a consequence, the individual may come to be, as it were, hypnotized by his social group. He may reach a stage where he not merely lacks a disposition to individual initiative, but becomes for the time simply unable to assert himself, to think his own thoughts, or even to re-
member his ordinary habits and principles of conduct. His judgment for the time becomes one with that of the mass. He may not himself observe this fact. Like the hypnotized subject, the member of the excited mob may feel as if he were very independently expressing himself. He may say: "This idea is my own idea," when as a fact the ruling idea is suggested by the leaders of the mob, or even by the accident of the momentary situation. The individual may be led to acts of which he says: "These things are my duty, my sacred privilege, my right," when as a fact the acts in question are forced upon him by the suggestions of the social mass of which at the instant he is merely a helpless member. As the hypnotized subject, again, thinks his will free when an observer can see that he is obliged to follow the suggestions of the hypnotizer, so the member of the mob may feel all the sense of pure initiative, although as a fact he is in bondage to the will of another, to the motives of the moment.

All such phenomena are due to very deep-seated and common human tendencies. It is no individual reproach to any one of us that, under certain conditions, he would lose his individuality and become the temporary prey of the mob-spirit. Moreover, by the word "mob" itself, or by the equivalent word "crowd," I here mean no term that reflects upon the personal characters or upon the private intelligence of the individuals who chance to compose any given mob. In former ages when the defenders of aristocratic or of monarchical institutions used to speak with contempt of the mob, and oppose to the mob the enlightened portion of the community, the wise who ought to rule, or the people whom birth and social position secured against the defects of the mob, the term was used without a true understanding of the reason why crowds of people are upon occasion disposed to do things that are less intelligent than the acts of normal and thoughtful people would be. For the modern student of the psychology of crowds, a crowd or a mob means not in any wise a company of wicked, of debased, or even of ignorant persons. The term means merely a company of people who, by reason of their sympathies, have for the time being resigned their individual judgment. A mob might be a mob of saints or of cutthroats, of peasants or of men of science. If it were a mob it would lack due social wisdom whatever its membership might be. For the members of the mob are sympathizing rather than criticising. Their ruling ideas then, therefore, are what Le Bon calls atavistic ideas; ideas such as belong to earlier and cruder periods of civilization. Opposed
to the mob in which the good sense of individuals is lost in a blur of emotion, and in a helpless suggestibility,—opposed to the mob, I say, is the small company of thoughtful individuals who are taking counsel together. Now our modern life, with its vast unions of people, with its high development of popular sentiments, with its passive and sympathetic love for knowing and feeling whatever other men know and feel, is subject to the disorders of larger crowds, of more dangerous mobs, than have ever before been brought into sympathetic union. One great problem of our time, then, is how to carry on popular government without being at the mercy of the mob-spirit. It is easy to give this mob-spirit noble names. Often you hear of it as “grand popular enthusiasm.” Often it is highly praised as a loyal party spirit or as patriotism. But psychologically it is the mob-spirit whenever it is the spirit of a large company of people who are no longer either taking calm counsel together in small groups, or obeying an already established law or custom, but who are merely sympathizing with one another, listening to the words of leaders, and believing the large print headings of their newspapers. Every such company of people is, in so far, a mob. Though they spoke with the tongues of men and of angels, you could not then trust them. Wisdom is not in them nor in their mood. However highly trained they may be as individuals, their mental processes, as a mob, are degraded. Their suffrages, as a mob, ought not to count. Their deeds come of evil. The next mob may undo their work. Accident may render their enthusiasm relatively harmless. But, as a mere crowd, they cannot be wise. They cannot be safe rulers. Who, then, are the men who wisely think and rightly guide? They are, I repeat, the men who take counsel together in small groups, who respect one another’s individuality, who meanwhile criticize one another constantly, and earnestly, and who suspect whatever the crowd teaches. In such men there need be no lack of wise sympathy, but there is much besides sympathy. There is individuality, and there is a willingness to doubt both one another and themselves. To such men, and to such groups, popular government ought to be intrusted.

Now these principles are responsible for the explanation of the well-known contrast between those social phenomena which illustrate the wisdom of the enlightened social order, and the phenomena which, on the contrary, often seem such as to make us despair for the moment of the permanent success of popular government. In the rightly constituted social group where every member feels his
own responsibility for his part of the social enterprise which is in hand, the result of the interaction of individuals is that the social group may show itself wiser than any of its individuals. In the mere crowd, on the other hand, the social group may be, and generally is, more stupid than any of its individual members. Compare a really successful town meeting in a comparatively small community with the accidental and sometimes dangerous social phenomena of a street mob or of a great political convention. In the one case every individual may gain wisdom from his contact with the social group. In the other case every man concerned, if ever he comes again to himself, may feel ashamed of the absurdity of which the whole company was guilty. Social phenomena of the type that may result from the higher social group, the group in which individuality is respected, even while social loyalty is demanded,—these phenomena may lead to permanent social results which as tradition gives them a fixed character may gradually lead to the formation of permanent institutions, in which a wisdom much higher than that of any individual man may get embodied. A classic instance of social phenomena of this type, and of the results of such social activities as constantly make use of individual skill, we find in language. However human language originated, it is certain that it was never the product of the mob-spirit. Language has been formed through the efforts of individuals to communicate with other individuals. Human speech is, therefore, in its structure, in its devices, in its thoughtfulness, essentially the product of the social activities of comparatively small groups of persons whose ingenuity was constantly aroused by the desire of making some form of social cooperation definite, and some form of communication amongst individuals effective. The consequence is that the language of an uncultivated people, who have as yet no grammarians to guide them and no literature to transmit the express wisdom of individual guides from generation to generation, may, nevertheless, be on the whole much more intelligent than is any individual that speaks the language.

Other classic instances of social processes wherein the group appears wiser than the individual are furnished to us by the processes that resulted through centuries of development in the production of the system of Roman law or of the British constitution. Such institutions embody more wisdom than any individual who has taken part in the production of these institutions has ever possessed. Now the common characteristic of all such social products seems to me to
be due to the fact that the social groups in which they originated were always such as encouraged and as in fact necessitated an emphasis upon the contrasts between various individuals. In such groups what Tarde has called "the universal opposition" has always been an effective motive. The group has depended upon the variety and not the uniformity of its members. On the other hand, the other sort of social group, the mob, has depended upon the emotional agreement, the sympathy, of its members. It has been powerful only in so far as they forgot who they individually were, and gave themselves up to the suggestions of the moment.

It follows that if we are to look for the source of the greatest dangers of popular government, we must expect to find them in the influence of the mob spirit. Le Bon is right when he says that the problem of the future will become more and more the problem how to escape from the domination of the crowd. Now I do not share Le Bon's pessimism when he holds, as he seems to do, that all popular government necessarily involves the tendency to the prevalence of the mob-spirit. So far as I can see Le Bon and most of the other writers who in recent times have laid so much stress upon the dangers of the mob, have ignored, or at least have greatly neglected, that other social tendency, that tendency to the formation of smaller social groups, which makes use of the contrasts of individuals, and which leads to a collective wisdom greater than any individual wisdom. But why I do insist upon this is that the problem of the future for popular government must involve the higher development, the better organization, the more potent influence, of the social groups of the wiser type, and the neutralization through their influence of the power of the mob-spirit. Now the modern forms of the mob-spirit have become so portentous because of a tendency that is in itself very good, even as may be the results to which it often leads. This tendency is that toward a very wide and inclusive human sympathy, a sympathy which may be as undiscriminating as it often is kindly. Sympathy, however, as one must recollect, is not necessarily even a kindly tendency. For one may sympathize with any emotion—for instance, with the emotions of a cruelly ferocious mob. Sympathy itself is a sort of neutral basis for more rational mental development. The noblest structures may be reared upon its soil. The basest absurdities may, upon occasion, seem to be justified, because an undiscriminating sympathy makes them plausible. Now modern conditions have certainly tended, as
I have said, to the spread of sympathy. Consider modern literature with its disposition to portray any form of human life, however ignoble or worthless, or on the other hand, however lofty or inspiring, —to portray it not because of its intrinsic worth but because of the mere fact that it exists. All sorts and conditions of men,—yes, all sorts and conditions of emotion, however irrational, have their hearing in the world of art to-day, win their expression, charm their audience, get, as we say, their recognition. Never were men so busy as now with the mere eagerness to sympathize with, to feel whatever is the lot of any portion of humanity. Now, as I have said, this spread of human sympathy, furthered as it is by all the means at the disposal of modern science, so far as that science deals with humanity, is a good thing just in so far as it is a basis upon which a rational philanthropy and a more intelligent social organization can be founded. But this habit of sympathy disposes us more and more to the influence of the mob. When the time of popular excitement comes, it finds us expert in sharing the emotions of the crowd, but often enervated by too frequent indulgence in just such emotion. The result is that modern mobs are much vaster, and in some respects more excitable than ever they were before. The psychological conditions of the mob no longer need include the physical presence of a crowd of people in a given place. It is enough if the newspapers, if the theatre, if the other means of social communication, serve to transmit the waves of emotional enthusiasm. A nation composed of many millions of people may fall rapidly under the hypnotic influence of a few leaders, of a few fatal phrases. And thus, as our third evil, we have not only the general levelling tendency of modern social life, but the particular tendency to emotional excitability which tends to make the social order, under certain conditions, not only monotonous and unideal, but actively dangerous.

Yet, as we have seen, this evil is not, as Le Bon and the pessimists would have it, inherent in the very fact of the existence of a social order. There are social groups that are not subject to the mob-spirit. And now if you ask how such social groups are nowadays to be fostered, to be trained, to be kept alive for the service of the nation, I answer that the place for fostering such groups is the province, for such groups flourish under conditions that arouse local pride, the loyalty to one's own community, the willingness to remember one's own ways and ideals, even at the moment when the nation
is carried away by some levelling emotion. The lesson would then be: Keep the province awake, that the nation may be saved from the disastrous hypnotic slumber so characteristic of excited masses of mankind.

VI

I have now reviewed three types of evils against which I think it is the office of provincialism to contend. As I review these evils, I am reminded somewhat of the famous words of Schiller in his "Greeting to the New Century," which he composed at the outset of the nineteenth century. In his age, which in some respects was so analogous to our own, despite certain vast differences, Schiller found himself overwhelmed as he contemplated the social problem of the moment by the vast national conflict, and the overwhelming forces which seemed to him to be crushing the more ideal life of his nation, and of humanity. With a poetic despair that we need indeed no longer share, Schiller counsels his reader, in certain famous lines, to flee from the stress of life into the still recesses of the heart, for, as he says, beauty lives only in song, and freedom has departed into the realm of dreams. Now Schiller spoke in the romantic period. We no longer intend to flee from our social ills to any realm of dreams. And as to the recesses of the heart, we now remember that out of the heart are the issues of life. But so much my own thesis and my own counsel would share in common with Schiller's words. I should say to-day that our national unities have grown so vast, our forces of social consolidation have become so paramount, the resulting problems, conflicts, evils, have been so intensified, that we, too, must flee in the pursuit of the ideal to a new realm. Only this realm is, to my mind, so long as we are speaking of social problems, a realm of real life. It is the realm of the province. There must we flee from the stress of the now too vast and problematic life of the nation as a whole. There we must flee, I mean, not in the sense of a cowardly and permanent retirement, but in the sense of a search for renewed strength, for a social inspiration, for the salvation of the individual from the overwhelming forces of consolidation. Freedom, I should say, dwells now in the small social group, and has its securest home in the provincial life. The nation by itself, apart from the influence of the province, is in danger of becoming an in-
comprehensible monster, in whose presence the individual loses his right, his self-consciousness, and his dignity. The province must save the individual.

But, you may ask, in what way do I conceive that the wise provincialism of which I speak ought to undertake and carry on its task? How is it to meet the evils of which I have been speaking? In what way is its influence to be exerted against them? And how can the province cultivate its self-consciousness without tending to fall back again into the ancient narrowness from which small communities were so long struggling to escape? How can we keep broad humanity and yet cultivate provincialism? How can we be loyally patriotic, and yet preserve our consciousness of the peculiar and unique dignity of our own community? In what form are our wholesome provincial activities to be carried on?

I answer, of course, in general terms, that the problem of the wholesome provincial consciousness is closely allied to the problem of any individual form of activity. An individual tends to become narrow when he is what we call self-centred. But, on the other hand, philanthropy that is not founded upon a personal loyalty of the individual to his own family and to his own personal duties is notoriously a worthless abstraction. We love the world better when we cherish our own friends the more faithfully. We do not grow in grace by forgetting individual duties in behalf of remote social enterprises. Precisely so, the province will not serve the nation best by forgetting itself, but by loyally emphasizing its own duty to the nation and therefore its right to attain and to cultivate its own unique wisdom. Now all this is indeed obvious enough, but this is precisely what in our days of vast social consolidation we are some of us tending to forget.

Now as to the more concrete means whereby the wholesome provincialism is to be cultivated and encouraged, let me appeal directly to the loyal member of any provincial community, be it the community of a small town, or of a great city, or of a country district. Let me point out what kind of work is needed in order to cultivate that wise provincialism which, as you see, I wish to have grow not in opposition to the interests of the nation, but for the very sake of saving the nation from the modern evil tendencies of which I have spoken.

First, then, I should say a wholesome provincialism is founded upon the thought that while local pride is indeed a praiseworthy ac-
companiment of every form of social activity, our province, like our own individuality, ought to be to all of us rather an ideal than a mere boast. And here, as I think, is a matter which is too often forgotten. Everything valuable is, in our present human life, known to us as an ideal before it becomes an attainment, and in view of our human imperfections, remains to the end of our short lives much more a hope and an inspiration than it becomes a present achievement. Just because the true issues of human life are brought to a finish not in time but in eternity, it is necessary that in our temporal existence what is most worthy should appear to us as an ideal, as an Ought, rather than as something that is already in our hands. The old saying about the bird in the hand being worth two in the bush does not rightly apply to the ideal goods of a moral agent working under human limitations. For him the very value of life includes the fact that its goal as something infinite can never at any one instant be attained. In this fact the moral agent glories, for it means that he has something to do. Hence the ideal in the bush, so to speak, is always worth infinitely more to him than the food or the plaything of time that happens to be just now in his hands. The difference between vanity and self-respect depends largely upon this emphasizing of ideals in the case of the higher forms of self-consciousness, as opposed to the emphasis upon transient temporal attainments in the case of the lower forms. Now what holds true of individual self-consciousness ought to hold true of the self-consciousness of the community. Boasting is often indeed harmless and may prove a stimulus to good work. It is therefore to be indulged as a tribute to our human weakness. But the better aspect of our provincial consciousness is always its longing for the improvement of the community.

And now, in the second place, a wise provincialism remembers that it is one thing to seek to make ideal values in some unique sense our own, and it is quite another thing to believe that if they are our own, other people cannot possess such ideal values in their own equally unique fashion. A realm of genuinely spiritual individuality is one where each individual has his own unique significance, so that none could take another's place. But for just that very reason all the unique individuals of the truly spiritual order stand in relation to the same universal light, to the same divine whole in relation to which they win their individuality. Hence all the individuals of the true spiritual order have ideal goods in common, as the very means
whereby they can win each his individual place with reference to the possession and the employment of these common goods. Well, it is with provinces as with individuals. The way to win independence is by learning freely from abroad, but by then insisting upon our own interpretation of the common good. A generation ago the Japanese seemed to most European observers to be entering upon a career of total self-surrender. They seemed to be adopting without stint European customs and ideals. They seemed to be abandoning their own national independence of spirit. They appeared to be purely imitative in their main purposes. They asked other nations where the skill of modern sciences lay, and how the new powers were to be gained by them. They seemed to accept with the utmost docility every lesson, and to abandon with unexampled submissiveness, their purpose to remain themselves. Yet those of us who have watched them since, or who have become acquainted with representative Japanese students, know how utterly superficial and illusory that old impression of ours was regarding the dependence, or the extreme imitativeness, or the helpless docility, of the modern Japanese. He has now taught us quite another lesson. With a curious and on the whole not unjust spiritual wiliness, he has learned indeed our lesson, but he has given it his own interpretation. You always feel in intercourse with a Japanese how unconquerable the spirit of his nation is, how inaccessible the recesses of his spirit have remained after all these years of free intercourse with Europeans. In your presence the Japanese always remains the courteous and respectful learner so long as he has reason to think that you have anything to teach him. But he remains as absolutely his own master with regard to the interpretation, the use, the possession of all spiritual gifts, as if he were the master and you the learner. He accepts the gifts, but their place in his national and individual life is his own. And we now begin to see that the feature of the Japanese nationality as a member of the civilized company of nations is to be something quite unique and independent. Well, let the Japanese give us a lesson in the spirit of true provincialism. Provincialism does not mean a lack of plasticity, an unteachable spirit; it means a determination to use the spiritual gifts that come to us from abroad in our own way and with reference to the ideals of our own social order.

And therefore, thirdly, I say in developing your provincial spirit,
be quite willing to encourage your young men to have relations with other communities. But on the other hand, encourage them also to make use of what they thus acquire for the furtherance of the life of their own community. Let them win aid from abroad, but let them also have, so far as possible, an opportunity to use this which they acquire in the service of their home. Of course economic conditions rather than deliberate choice commonly determine how far the youth of a province are able to remain for their lifetime in a place where they grow up. But so far as a provincial spirit is concerned, it is well to avoid each of two extremes in the treatment of the young men of the community,—extremes that I have too often seen exemplified. The one extreme consists in maintaining that if young men mean to be loyal to their own province, to their own state, to their own home, they ought to show their loyalty by an unwillingness to seek guidance from foreign literature, from foreign lands, in the patronizing of foreign or distant institutions, or in the acceptance of the customs and ideas of other communities than their own. Against this extreme let the Japanese be our typical instance. They have wandered far. They have studied abroad. They have assimilated the lore of other communities. And they have only gained in local consciousness, in independence of spirit, by the ordeal. The other extreme is the one expressed in that tendency to wander and to encourage wandering, which has led so many of our communities to drive away the best and most active young men. We want more of the determination to find, if possible, a place for our youth in their own communities.

Finally, let the province more and more seek its own adornment. Here I speak of a matter that in all our American communities has been until recently far too much neglected. Local pride ought above all to centre, so far as its material objects are concerned, about the determination to give the surroundings of the community nobility, dignity, beauty. We Americans spend far too much of our early strength and time in our newer communities upon injuring our landscapes, and far too little upon endeavoring to beautify our towns and cities. We have begun to change all that, and while I have no right to speak as an aesthetic judge concerning the growth of the love of the beautiful in our country, I can strongly insist that no community can think any creation of genuine beauty and dignity in its public buildings or in the surroundings of its towns and cities
too good a thing for its own deserts. For we deserve what in such realms we can learn how to create or to enjoy, or to make sacrifices for. And no provincialism will become dangerously narrow so long as it is constantly accompanied by a willingness to sacrifice much in order to put in the form of great institutions, of noble architecture, and of beautiful surroundings an expression of the worth that the community attaches to its own ideals.