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How to lead normal lives in abnormal times, 1942.

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HOW TO LEAD NORMAL LIVES IN ABNORMAL TIMES

By
Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
At
The Temple



On
Sunday morning, January 11, 1942

How to lead a normal life? That question has occurred to many people in these days. What is a normal life? Normalcy is a rather ambiguous term. You will recall that it was quite a popular term after the last war. "Return to Normalcy!" That was the slogan of the Harding Administration. The disillusioned ^{ed} call it normalcy. Actually it meant the unloading of moral responsibility, the responsibility of the solution of those problems which the war created, and which in a sense created the war. That return to normalcy was a flight from the hard and mocking problems of reconstruction, detachment which unfortunately led this country to a disastrous cycle of inflation and depression which led the world into political disintegration, dictatorship, war.

The return to normalcy meant a return to abnormal conditions, the return to international rivalries, competitive rearmament, international anarchy, and foolish which people called normal. Just because the times after the first world war appeared of the surface to be normal, the American people no longer talked about war or worried about Europe, and moved blithely along the crest of a riding boom. Those times were dangerously abnormal. Beneath the surface raged the menace of a day of reckoning which came when it did to the unsuspecting like the eruption of a volcano.

Normalcy is an ambiguous term. What does it mean when you say "leading a normal life"? Does it mean living easily, an easy-going life, a life without struggle, without hardship, without frustration? Not at all! Such a life is an abnormal life, an imaginary fool's paradise!

Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. Life is hard for the whole race of man. It always has been. The incidents of earning a livelihood, of providing for his family and children, the incidents of sickness, of old age, of unforeseen accidents, the incidents of bereavement, death -- all of these are the normal incidents of life and they bring to the average life an

element of strain, tension and anxiety. And few people escape these normal strains. And those who do, those who enjoy what some people think is unchecked tranquility are not necessarily the happier for it. A care-free existence, a bovine existence, an existence of comfortable imperturbability, is really a dangerous form of spiritual and intellectual decay. To lead a normal life, therefore, does not mean to remain placid, easy-going, denying, avoiding life.

It means to meet these hard incidents of existence in a normal way in a manly way, to master them and not allow them to master him. The normal life meets attacks made upon it with that normal equipment which is available to every human being - faith. The abnormal life meets life with heartaches, hysteria, despair. The abnormal life falls apart in the face of crisis and challenge or danger.

People forget that life requires the bite and stab of danger. And when life lacks the element of danger it goes out to search for them. Behind all human adventure is not only curiosity and wanderlust, but the lure of danger, man's need to meet danger, to outwit it. Therefore, to live dangerously or to live in dangerous times is not necessarily to live abnormally. To be danger-free and danger-proof is to die a slow death.

Now our days have an added measure of danger in them. Hence a larger draft upon the qualities, those normal qualities - courage, resourcefulness, faith -- is imperative. We must, because of these added dangers and stresses of our day be more courageous, more resourceful, have a deeper and stronger faith than ever before. We must guard ourselves against abnormalities. We must be on the alert and ever watchful against all forms of abnormal fear, hysteria, fear, despair. There is not only more danger in our world today, but there is actually a war of nerves stimulated between one people and another people,

deliberately fostered by governments, propaganda machines to unnerve people.

We must have ourselves, in other words, more in hand. We must pull ourselves together more often when we feel ourselves falling apart. Going to pieces is a form of flight, of attempted escape under some camouflage or another. It is an attempt to escape from what appears to be unbearable reality. Everyone at some time or another likes to run away from danger, turmoil, excitement, to find some peaceful haven: "Oh that I had the wings of a dove! Then would I fly away and be at rest!" we read in that beautiful Psalm this morning. But normal people know that it is not always desirable or decent to run away so they carry on. They don't like unpleasantness, turmoil, but they accept it as part of life, part of destiny. They stand up to it.

The weak, the abnormal try to run away. They try to run away to the only open roads, to some hysterical form of inner collapse such as neuroticism and break-downs. It is only a flight into the mother womb of chaos.

It is not easy to lead normal lives in abnormal times, of course not. But we will be helped if we keep in mind at all times a few simple thoughts and if we do a few simple acts. In the first place, a simple thought to keep in mind in these spurious hectic and excitable times is to take it out in action. Take it out in action. When you feel all churned up inside of your self, and you feel , stirred and agitated - and who of us does not frequently these days? -- give vent to your pent-up feelings not in conversation or self-pity, or in aimless fussing about. Do something! Do something substantial, purposeful, helpful, in that very area wherein your agitation lies.

"I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair". I must mix with action. For instance in this war, there are a hundred and one things a man can do as a civilian to help win the war, and so help to allay the fears which

keep him or her agitated. The day by day job which we do, in the mill or in the mine, the factory job or the office -- to do that job in these days with increased will and consecration -- in other words to build up an indefeasible production line behind an indefeasible fighting line -- that is the kind of action which will be a blessed relief to an individual in times of danger. The numerous civilian defense tasks -- blood donor, Red Cross work, relief fund work, for defense funds, looking after the needs of soldiers and sailors -- to do your work in these days and to do it with will and with consecration is to make you lose a great deal of that psychic perturbation in our day.

Lose your worries about the war in service, to winning the war. Think more about duties and less about yourself - this will help you win the war and save you from bad days, worry, fright. People who use their hands doing purposeful work do not have to bite their ~~thumb~~ thumbs. People who use pins and needles don't have to sit on them.. Take it out in work, not in conversation. Don't take it out on your friends. Your friends are not interested, nor will they be thankful for your lugubrious apprehensions, or your supposition.

In other words, let us act for victory and not ruffle our psychic feathers about the war. There was a story told of Abraham Lincoln that a woman once came to him to ask him to give work to her two sons and Abraham Lincoln wrote this letter to the War Department: "My dear Sir: The lady bearer of this says she has two sons who want to wlrk. Set them at it, if possible. Wanting to work is so rare a merit that it should be encouraged."

And in doing work, let us remember that our work is tremendously significant, however small the job seems to be that we as individuals are doing. The true way of evaluating the work which you are doing is to multiply it by twenty, thirty or fifty million and you will understand how tremendously important it is.

In the case of war - and people are engaged today in total war, nothing is trifling, absolutely nothing! Every scrap counts. To save a gallon of gasoline saved and multiply it by thirty, forty, fifty, sixty million, or if you multiply every scrap you save by hundreds of millions and you will understand how these little grains of sand build up into mountains of resources.... Multiply what you are doing. And must as you must multiply it with your acts in order to augment it, you must so divide your responsibility to lessen its weight upon you. After all, no one has been called on to run this war single-handed. Why should one of us try to monopolize all the worries. There are a billion people fighting on this side of the war. Let's leave some of it for them.

When a war communication comes over the radio, or appears in the press which is unfavorable to us ^{we} become depressed. Let us remember that there are millions and millions of people that are as vitally concerned as we are. Let us leave some of it to them. "The affliction, the worry of the many is as a consolation." Multiply the significance of your acts by the degree of your responsibility. Leave something to other men and leave something to God. He, too, is involved! "Cast upon the Lord, thy burden, and he will sustain thee." There are things which you and I can do. There are things which you can't do. Let's leave things you can't do to God.

When Abraham Lincoln left his home in Springfield, Ill, for his inauguration he said to his friends when he left: "I now leave, not knowing when or whether I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested on George Washington. Without the assistance of the Divine Being who always attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting the God who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently all will hope ~~that~~ be well." (Civil War reference).

There is another thought to help us to live normally in these abnormal times and that is perspective, to keep the larger outlook, look ahead. What seems very large today may be very small tomorrow. Many a battle is lost before victory is won. There is a grand strategy of wars fought on a world wide scale in which hundreds of battles may be lost before final victory is won. The day by day communique which you read is important, as reporting the fluctuations on the battle front. They are not the indices of the outcome. The outcome is assured in resources, in allied power, those of mounting strength, the assured cause of the rightness of the Allies. Let us keep our eyes steadily on that.

It took four years to win the Civil War. The North suffered one disastrous defeat after another. But it was inevitable that the North would win because of its superior resources, because of the mounting strength through the years, because of the rightness of its cause. It was so in the last World War. It will be so again. It is important to keep before us this larger outlook, this true perspective. This will save us from unnecessary apprehensions.

There is another thought. Let us not borrow trouble. Let us not anticipate trouble. It will come soon enough. There was a wise Roman philosopher who said: "It is indeed foolish to be unhappy now because you may be unhappy at some future time." "He suffers more than is necessary, who suffers before it is necessary." It is amazing the gift some men and women have to anticipate trouble, to imagine trouble. Most of the time those troubles never come, but the worry about them is nevertheless there. "There are times when we cannot see one step ahead of us, but five years later, we are still eating and sleeping somewhere." Let us not borrow trouble.

And lastly, this very simple, helpful act -- in these days of tribulation, the act of prayer. There is nothing better in the world to give you spiritual

calm, fortitude and uplift and resignation. There is nothing that will take the rush and turmoil out of your hearts like prayer. One quiet hour of prayer either alone or in the congregation of your fellow men will refresh your tired heart and your frayed and unsteady nerves. "I called upon the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my terror." It is too bad that we Jews are losing our racial genius for comforting and sustaining prayer. There is no normal spiritual life without it

Ours is a time of almost insufferable spiritual suspense; ^{we are} suspended, as it were, in mid air between a world crumbling and dying and a world not yet born. There is rest for us only in the everlasting mercy of God..

So, my friends, for the duration, however long the duration may be, let us meet our trying days as normal men and women with courage, faith, resourcefulness. Let us seek release for-charged spirits in action, in patriotic action, in purposeful days. Let us take our share of worry in the world, but no more than our share. Let us not borrow, anticipate and imagine disaster. Let us look ahead. Let us take time out for prayer frequently. Let us recharge our spiritual lives....

1) What is a "normal" life? "Normalcy" ambiguous term. Slogan after last war. tried - disillusions - "Return to Normalcy" - the slogan of Harding Admin - Actually - undoing of moral resp. for solution of problems created by war - & those which brot abt the war - Flight from hard & knotty problems & into isolationism and detachment - which led our country to a disastrous inflation and depression and the world to pol. disintegration, dictatorship and a second world-war. "Return to Normalcy" ~~spelt~~ return to abnormal conditions of inter. rivalry & re-armament of inter. anarchy - which foolish people called - normal - Just here, times seemed normal - ^{anyone} people no longer talked abt. war - or worried abt. Europe - and moved blithely along the crest of a rising boom - I did not follow that our nat. life was normal - It was dangerously abnormal. Beneath surface rapd the ~~was~~ gathering menace of a day of Retribution - which came, to the unsuspecting, like a ~~thunder bolt~~ volcano.

2) What does it mean to lead a 'normal' life?
A placid life? An easy-going life? A life without worries? ^{or struggles} - ^{or hardships} - ^{or frustrations} ~~at all~~. Such is abnormal life - an imaginary fool's paradise!
"Man is born for trouble - as sparks fly upward"
Life is hard for the whole race of man

(2)
- The incidents of earning a livelihood - of providing for family + children - of education, ~~of health~~^{of sickness}, of old age, of the unforeseen + inevitable accidents, of death + bereavement - all these ~~are~~^{are} ~~enmeshed~~^{enmeshed} in our life with an element of strain, tension and anxiety. Few people escape these "usual" strains. And those who do - unchecked ~~changeability~~^{changeability} - an ~~unusually~~^{unusually} happy for it. A care-free ~~bovine~~^{bovine} existence, a comfortable ~~imperturbability~~^{imperturbability} - is a ~~dangerous~~^{dangerous} ~~form~~^{form} of decay.

3/ To lead a usual life - is to meet these hard incidents of existence in a manly way - to work them + not to allow them to work us. The usual life - meets the attack of hard fortune - with courage, resourcefulness, and faith. The abnormal life - with fear, hysteria and despair. It falls apart in the face of crisis, challenge and danger.

Life requires the bite + stab of danger. When it lacks it - it goes out in search for it. Behind all human adventure is not only curiosity and wanderlust but the love of danger - to meet it + outwit it. To live dangerously is not necess. To live abnormally. To be danger-free + danger-proof - is to die a slow death.

4/ Our days have an added measure of danger in them - Hence a larger draft upon the qualities of our fully usual life - is imperative. We must be more courageous more resourceful, use deeper strengths in our faith

6

We must guard ourselves - guard ourselves + watch/policies -
against all forms of abnormal fears - hypnosis - despairs
→ Added - was of nerves
We must have ourselves more in hand - as others -
pulling ourselves together - when we feel ourselves falling
apart.

5/ "Going to pieces" - is a form of flight - of attempted escape -
under some camouflage - from hard unbearable reality.
All people, at one time or another, like to run away from
danger, unpleasantness, troubles - to some peaceful haven -
"Oh that I had wings like a dove! Then would I fly away
and be at rest"

But normal people know that it is not always possible
or desirable, or decent. They carry on! They are not refugees -
men. They don't like it any more than the next one - But
they accept it as part of life - as part of their destiny -
and they stand up to it.

The weak + abnormal - try to run away - into the
only haven you - neuroticism - break-downs - all
forms of inner collapse. They fall into the mother-
work of chaos.

6/ It is not easy to lead a normal life - in these
abnormal times. We will be helped if we keep for-
most in our minds at all times a few simple things -
and if we do a few simple things.

7/ In the first place! - take it out in action! When

You feel all churned up inside of yourself - stirred
and agitated - and which on you does not frequently
these days - give vent to your pent-up feelings
not in conversation - or self pity - or aimless
fussing about. Do something - substantial, purposeful,
helpful, in the very area wherein you are, labor
here -

"I myself must mix with action, but I write by despair"

In connection with the war - there are a hundred and
an things that a citizen can do - to help win the war -
and so permanently alleviate the pain which keeps him
or her presently so agitated. Outraged work - with
an increased will + consecration - in the mill, the factory,
the shop the labor + management all
civilian defense tasks - air wardens - blood donors -
Red Cross service - Relief Funds - Alleviate Funds -
looking after the wounds of soldiers and sailors -

Loose your worries about the war in a series
connected with the war of a good days work
to help win the war - will save you from
a bad days chafing + pining.

Use your hands. You won't have time to live your
thoughts - Don't be as passive as usually, use them!
Take it out in work! Not in conversation - nor

(5)

on your friends. They are not interested - nor will they be helped - by your ingenuous reflections on the war - or your apophorenses - or your suppositions -

Act for Victory - don't scribble your way farther into the war than you are now in it. My dear Sir, The only reason I have for this is that you had 2 sons who want to win. Set them at it, if possible. Wanting to win is no more a merit than it should be encouraged! -

(a) Significant. Here is the key to the proper evaluation of your work - Multiply it! by 30-40-50!! - A war effort is a vast, collective, cumulative effort - in which nothing is trifling! When you Every scrap is important. Time - space - read up on him - It is the principle of direct action, which lets us win

8) And just as you must multiply your act to argument its importance - you so you should divide your responsibility to lessen the weight upon you.

After all we as you has to run this war single-handed! Why should we manipulate all the way about it?

There are a million men - fighting this war on our side! Let's have some thing to them!

When a war-bulletin coming over the radio-press is unfavorable - + you are defeated - remember - myriad of other people are all over the world are vital concerned with it - as you - + have some of the burden to them. AND NO PIZZA AND COFFEE HERE - cannot fight this war alone! - Save us a good hardy laugh - on that sad, black day -

Multiply the steps you get
Divide the degree of your responsibility

9/ Learn something to God! He, too, is involved! 6

לֹא לֹא נִשְׁמָח! וְהַיְיָ

"Cast upon the Lord, thy burden and he will sustain thee"

hasten

There are things which God can do which we cannot - let's leave them to him.

we can do our duty!

God has not forsaken those who put their trust in him



B/ Keep the eyes out-look - Raise your sights! don't lose
your perspective! Look ahead!

What is large to-day, may be very small to-morrow.

Many battles are lost before victory is won. This is for the
grand strategy I was taught on a united scale.

The day-by-day commingling is important - as reporting the
fluctuations of the battle front. They are not the ~~front~~ ^{larger}
indices of the outcome. The outcome is assured - in
resources - in mounting strength - in ^(Civil War - last war) ~~victories~~ ^{cause.}

Keep your eyes steadily on that!

W/ Don't brow trouble! There is enough as it is
Don't anticipate trouble! It comes soon enough.

Seneeca: "It is wisest which to be unhappy now because
you may be unhappy at some future time"
"He suffers more is necessary, who suffers before it is
necessary" and

Don't torture yourself with imaginary
disasters! The evils which have ever happened
have given us our present worries.

There are times when we cannot see our steps ahead
of us, but 5 years later, we are still eating and
sleeping somewhere -

12/ Prayer - to give you sp. calm - and fortitude - and
aplomb and renovation. 68

To take the wish & fear out of your soul -
and the fear out of your heart -

On ~~your~~ ^{your} ground of prayer - alone or in the company of
fellow men - is refreshment to tired heart - and
foundation to frayed nerves - ^{and very ready} "I called upon the Lord and he heard
we Jews - are losing ^{rapid} our genius for confessing & trusting prop.
There is no normal spiritual life without prayer.

This is a time of almost unbearable sp. suspense -

In all of us - we are suspended in mid-air - bet. our
fear and our hopes.

There is not and no exchange for us only in the
faith everlasting mercy of God -

13/ And so for the duration - let us meet our dear
hour - as normal men and women - with the usual
human equipment - courage, resourcefulness & faith.
Let us seek release from our overburdened hearts
in active patience - in action, purposeful days.

Let us take our share - but no more than share of
worry. Let us lean something to God - ^{work} to God -
Let us not bother or anxiously or curiously probe -
Let us look ahead - the large unknown -

Let us set aside talk time - out for prayer -
for those bleared interruptions -
re-charge -

This is what trusting God means. It means doing all we can to manage the situations which are under our control, and then leaving with God responsibility for managing the situations before which we are powerless.

Do you realize what would happen if you drew this distinction between your responsibilities and God's responsibilities? Instantly your sense of strain would vanish. The hours and days, once exhausting and almost unendurable, would become quiet and easy. You would carry the burden of only one part of life; the burden of the other part you would leave with One who is infinitely stronger and wiser than you are.

Do any human beings actually win this victory? Thousands of human beings do. One rainy day in February 1861 Abraham Lincoln left his home in Springfield, Illinois, for his inauguration the following month in Washington. A group of friends and neighbors gathered at the railroad station to wave him farewell. The words he spoke to them as the train started are some of the noblest he ever uttered. Lincoln had more than the ability to laugh: he also had the ability to leave with God the parts of his life over which he had no control. "I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested on George Washington. Without the assistance of the Divine Being who always attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance I cannot fail. Trusting the God who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well."

The power to leave with God God's share of the load. The ability to make a hard life easier.

Wings

BY HENRY HITT CRANE

I HOPE I shall never outgrow my adolescent delight over the receipt of the morning's mail. The postman has always been to me a sort of perpetual compensation for the loss of my belief in the reality of Santa Claus. The surprises—some so good, some not so good—which he bears on his daily rounds almost validate my boyhood wish that Christmas could be every day. Not that I have failed to receive my full share of anonymous diatribes. Due to my incorrigible optimism, however, even these furnish their supplement of surprise. But fortunately such unexpected discords are invariably resolved into the happier harmony of the vast majority of beautiful messages that come my way. Even the sad letters are often lovely in their appeals for help, particularly when they reveal such sturdy faith in a friendship that invites the sharing of sorrow as well as joy.

And speaking of "life situations," where are they more vividly and poignantly presented than in a minister's mail?

I shall never forget three letters that arrived one dark morning. Like some startling conjunction of the planets these messages came together, making the dark sky bright and beautiful as with a newborn sun.

SONG TRIUMPHANT OVER TRAGEDY

The first letter I opened was from a valiant lady I had known all my life. Beautiful, richly endowed physically, but even more affluent in her mental and spiritual possessions, she had begun life with great promise. As a girl she early revealed outstanding artistic ability in many areas. But her major passion and delight was music. She was possessed of a heavenly voice. Her eager desire for adequate vocal training was amply gratified. She studied assiduously, and with excellent teachers. For three years she lived in Italy and France, working with some of Europe's best tutors. She returned to this country with great expectations. Her high hopes and her recognized ability promised a brilliant career as a concert soloist or an operatic star. But she "fell" in love. Although she was quite unaware of the direction of her emotional drive, it was a "fall," tragically enough, not an ascent. A smooth, accomplished, professionally successful medical doctor, recently made a widower, laid siege to her affections, and by the skillful use of his well developed wiles, eventually won her heart and hand. So they were wed—and lived unhappily ever after. With his incorrigible selfishness and his almost sadistic cruelty deftly disguised under a cloak of sanctimoniousness and deferential manners, he subjected this singing spirit to a domestic tyranny that was as ingenious as it was insufferable. Innumerable petty persecutions, restrictions, refusals were inflicted with honeyed words at one moment, and with vicious insinuations at another. Torn between an inherited aversion to divorce and an insuppressible yearning to be free, she yet suffered his cruelty with incredible endurance.

Finally, her husband died—and that helped some; but not much, for he contrived to leave her penniless. Undaunted, she supported herself and her growing daughter by giving music lessons. And now, with an urge to write prodding her, she has penned me a sort of thumbnail autobiography. For in this letter, with brilliant abridgments and clever aphorisms, she had recapitulated her life story—honestly setting forth the picture which was so full of shadows, distorted perspective and apparent frustration. But the last sentence stabbed me with its swift, turning thrust of unsuspected triumph. Resorting to the language she loved, she summed up the quintessence of her life: "*Vraiment, j'ai faite une chose ici bas: j'ai chantée!*" "Actually, I have done one thing down here on this earth: I have sung!"

With a sudden awareness I realized that it was true—utterly true. In spite of everything, she had kept on singing—not in public, to be sure; her selfish spouse had long since stopped that; but in her heart, and whenever alone, aloud. But how could she? I asked myself. Thousands who have never had to endure a tithe of her suffering have grown silent, or their songs

have soured into cynicism or self-pity; and yet she has kept singing—spiritually triumphant. How can one suffer so, and never lose one's song? I wondered.

THANKSGIVING OUT OF DEFEAT

A second letter in that memorable morning's mail was from a young man in a CCC camp—a winsome, unforgettable American, born in this country of Italian parents. I had met him some years before in a certain Pennsylvania college where I had been speaking. We had struck up an acquaintance there that had rapidly ripened into friendship. We had corresponded quite regularly. I knew well his story—and for concentrated misfortune it was prime. His parents, as a young married couple, had migrated to this land that they might have a family which would have a chance to amount to something. They settled in a coalmining town, and Peter, the young husband, went into the mines. In the course of a dozen years four children were born to these happy, loyal, new Americans—two boys and two girls. Dominic was the eldest, a bright, industrious, eager lad with vast ambition and sterling character. It was a great day when his parents sent him off to college to become an electrical engineer. But shortly after that proud beginning in his new academic world, Dominic received a telegram: "Father killed in mine explosion. Come home."

He went—but only to take up the burden which his father had had blasted from him. With characteristic ingenuity and resourcefulness, he not only worked his way through college, but he earned enough money on the side to keep the family intact and help his brother and sisters through their schools. At last he graduated, and secured a good job with the Western Electric Company. But his wrist began to trouble him unduly. In high school, he remembered, he had been hit there with a baseball. Upon examination, he was told that it was a malignant tumor. It was imperative that his hand be amputated. It was. But that was only the beginning. Three more operations were subsequently performed, and the last one took the entire arm well into the shoulder. He has been out of the hospital about a month, had secured a job as an instructor in a CCC camp. The letter before me had been written on a typewriter, picked out with one hand. But it was more than a letter—it was a song!

"It is wonderful here in the woods," it read. "I went out this morning as the sun was coming up. It seemed as though all the birds in the world had come together for a song fest. But actually they were there to furnish the sylvan symphony I needed for the solos I was singing in my soul. God! but it's good to be alive!"

Dominic—singing! But how could he? I wondered.

WINGS—THE KEYNOTE OF A LIFE

The third letter gave me the clue. It bore a message of great grief, but hidden at the heart of it was a gem of lustrous truth—like a pearl, the product of a secret power that can transform pain into something beautiful. It was from the son of one of the best

friends I have ever had. My greathearted friend had suddenly died in a western hotel, and his only son was asking me to conduct the funeral services. What a grand person the father was: pioneer in religious education, superb teacher, dauntless champion of great ideals, master of practical details, able administrator and best of all, a magnificent Christian! Yet he had been subjected to frightfully unjust and disgraceful treatment by certain less able colleagues. Their misunderstanding and jealousy would have embittered or broken an ordinary person. He did break, actually, but he rallied again—and wrote a significant book summing up his convictions and the major lessons of his varied experiences; yet in that volume there was not a hint of bitterness, resentment or desire for revenge. It was a swan song of pure spiritual triumph. And now he had gone to his rich reward.

I read the letter again. "Doubtless," it concluded, "you are aware of the keynote of my father's life, the secret of his amazing courage, power and faith. I think it is best expressed by his favorite little verse—a copy of which I found in his pocketbook. It's a translation of something by Victor Hugo, I believe:

On a branch that swings
Sits a bird that sings—
Knowing that he has wings!

There it was—the clue I had been groping for, hoping for—and all set forth so clearly and so simply. Now I understand how they could sing—my valiant lady, Dominic, my victorious friend—and the vast company of the undefeated everywhere. They had wings—and they knew it! And I understood, too, why so many others were songless. No wing power!

TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE

Isn't it a rather suggestive and fair generalization to say that there are, from this point of view, but two kinds of persons in the world: first, those with soul songs that cannot be stilled no matter how much they are made to suffer; and second, those whose souls are sinisterly silent, or are timorously sighing, or are furiously screaming whenever adversity even so much as threatens them.

It used to be that we could divide people into two groups called the haves and the have-nots, the rich and the poor, the secure and the insecure. But not now. When embattled nations are doing their utmost to blast everything to pieces, what guarantee has any man that his own good fortune will last the night? With war shaking entire continents in its mad convulsion, what property is immune from devastation, what person is exempt from suffering? No one is safe any more. Security is only a relative term. The whole earth is like a storm-swept tree, and the inhabitants thereof, like wind-driven birds, cling precariously to the swaying branches of awful insecurity. Who knows how long before his own branch will break? We are all in the same predicament. But even so, there's a difference—a very conspicuous difference—in the way we take it. Some keep right on singing, and others quit. He who