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THE AMERICAN GOSPEL DAY BY DAY

By MARY ANTIN

Neighbores, friends, brothers and sisters—I don't know what name to give you, to make you realize that I feel myself one with you, no matter where I have lived since I left these parts. I feel myself so much at home here, though until yesterday I never was inside this hall, that I am going to take you into my confidence. If you go to the theatre it is better not to look behind the scenes, thou you may be disillusioned. But when I take you behind the scenes and tell you how I prepared myself for this appearance, I think your confidence will be strengthened. I have been speaking to all sorts of people and in all sorts of circumstances for the past few weeks, and wherever any number of people takes the trouble to come and hear what I have to say I feel that I owe them my best. I have cared very much every time whether I have got my message to these people. But to me this is the most important occasion of them all. It means so much whether I make it worth your while to come out of your way to hear me—you, many of whom have so little allowance of leisure—your precious Sunday evening out of all the week—I know it because I lived your life. And what did I do to prepare myself? I didn't look into any books, for it is a testimony of my life that I am bringing. And so I went down to the beach and rested on the rocks and consulted with the waves. And here I am. And what am I going to say to you? That which is nearest to my heart— the fruit of all these years since I was a little girl in Boston town.

And the great thing I have discovered in these years, what is it? That we in America are brothers and that we each of us owe our neighbor the same chance that we would like for ourselves. It is all there in the Declaration of Independence, if we take it literally enough. "All men are born free," you say, "and entitled to the same opportunities in life." And the scattered colonies stood out for that as a people and announced their mission to the world. Nothing new happened this story until the issuance of the Declaration of Independence. For the first time a people demanded full human rights in the name of all humanity. The wording of the Declaration of Independence is as universal as the wording of the Ten Commandments. Never mind whether the Puritans meant it literally—perhaps they did build better than they knew. But we who live in a later day may not give their words a narrow application. What would have become of the Children of Israel if they had tried to limit the Mosaic code to their generation only? They made every man and woman and child responsible for the fulfillment of the whole law under all circumstances. The glory of the American people must be that the law which was vouchsafed to their forefathers, they carried onward. It is only if we live for the idea that all men are brothers that we have anything to boast of. We are responsible that our brothers have the same opportunities we ask for ourselves.

Rabbi Hillel 200 years before Christ, told a heathen who was willing to be converted to Judaism if he could get instantly a statement of its creed: "What is hateful to thee, do not that to thy fellow man. This is the whole law: the rest is commentary." And the great truth which came out of the East as an ethical code, centuries later came out of the West as a political code. And if the law of Moses is holy, is not the American idea holy? We are the champions of an ideal as a people. We cannot know ourselves as a nation apart from others except as we are loyal to the ideal of our forefathers. Patriotism in Europe is expressed by hatred of your next-door neighbor. Here it is expressed by loyalty to the ideals of our fathers—and that means the championship of mankind, the identification of all the people of the earth as brothers and sisters. Anyone who understands the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence is a good American, no matter where he hails from. Citizenship in America is not a matter of geographical accident. It is a matter of conversion. A good Christian is one who confesses Christ, and a good American is one who acknowledges all men as his brothers and tries to give his neighbor a fair chance. (Applause.) We have nothing but this to go by. The constitution of the United States and the constitutions of the various states are in the same relation to the Declaration of Independence that the huge writings of the Jewish Talmud are to the Mosaic code—they are commentaries.

How can we achieve such a program of life? How shall we live so that everyone gets a fair chance? Why, write a constitution—draw up directions how to get to the right road. And it must be modified from time to time, according to circumstances.
I have cared very much every time whether I have got my message to these people. But to me this is the most important occasion of them all. It means so much whether I make it worth your while to come out of your way to hear me—you, many of whom have so little allowance of leisure—your Sunday evening out of all the week—I know it because I lived your life. And what did I do to prepare myself? I didn’t look into any books, for it is a testimony of my life that I am bringing. And so I went down to the beach and rested on the rocks and consulted with the waves. And here I am. And what am I going to say to you? That which is nearest to the heart—the fruit of all these years since I was a little girl in Boston town.

And the great thing I have discovered in these years, what is it? That we in America are the apostles of a sacred ideal, which we need to realize and to take as a holy burden at the beginning of each day of our lives. Many talk of the privileges, but not many of the burdens, of American citizenship. People have asked me if I have not grown somewhat disillusioned as the days go by. No, on the contrary, the deeper I look, the more am I filled with the conviction that this is the Promised Land of the nations. But side by side with this has grown the conviction that a great many Americans are not conscious that American citizenship is a duty as well as an opportunity. This is the thing I must talk of when I come before my brothers and sisters who want to know what I am thinking.

And where do I get my sense of the burdens of American citizenship? In a study of American history no more than any boy or girl gets that goes through the grammar grades. I am not a profound student of American history. It is so simple. Twice in the history of the world has a nation come into being as champion of an idea—once when the Jews announced the law of Moses, and once when the Puritans announced the brotherhood of man. The Declaration of Independence is the fundamental doctrine of state that the Americans can use as guides. Just as the Jews are always repeating the law of Moses, so should we always be rehearsing our fundamental law. And what is that? Merely the idea that all their words a narrow application. What would have become of the Children of Israel if they had tried to limit the Mosaic code to their generation only? They made every man and woman and child responsible for the fulfillment of the whole law under all circumstances. The glory of the Jews was not that they received the law, but that they kept the law. The glory of the American people must be that the law which was vouchsafed to their forefathers, they carried onward. It is only if we live for the idea that all men are brothers that we have anything to boast of. We are responsible that our brothers have the same opportunities we ask for ourselves.

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THE QUESTIONS

Q: You lay great stress upon patriotism. Does not the American capitalist, in trying to create war with Mexico, also lay great stress upon patriotism?
A: I do not understand patriotism to mean the willingness to shoot down our fellow-men.
Q: Isn't it true that the Socialists reluctantly recognize class lines only as facts of existence, and seek to make one class eliminate all classes? (Applause.)
A: I am longing for a program that will eradicate class. I do not want to recognize classes as they exist.
Q: How is the brotherhood between a good American and a bad American to express itself?
A: By a brotherly chastising of the bad American, in the hope of making a good American of him.
Q: Why is the immigrant a burden? Is he not a producer?
A: I do not consider the immigrant a burden. 
Q: Aren't the Irish as a race as downtrodden and despised as the Jews?
A: I am afraid they are, and that gives us Jews and Irish another bond of sympathy.
Q: Wouldn't literal application of the Declaration mean the unrestricted immigration of the Chinese, and haven't the American people a right to protect themselves against the evil that would thus result?
A: We have to accept the conditions at any cost. We are here, not to watch over our own interests, but over those of all mankind. (Applause.)
Q: If the signers of the Declaration came to life again and viewed modern conditions, what do you think they would say?
A: I wouldn't like to introduce the vocabulary they would use. (Laughter.)
Q (Mr. Sagerman): Is not the class vocabulary the y would use. (Laughter.)
A: Roosevelt appointed Straus to important office when he wasn't looking for votes.
Q: Was not Straus nominated to draw the Jewish vote for Roosevelt? (Applause.)
A: If I were convinced of that I should not be supporting Roosevelt and Straus.
Q: If self-preservation is the first law, can you blame the Americans for trying to protect themselves against immigration?
A: I can't blame them for reacting to animal instincts, but I am asking them to take a spiritual view of the situation.
Q: Don't you think there are enough unemployed people here now?
A: There are too many unemployed. But I know where there is plenty of work. (A number of voices: Where?) By taking some of these long, ten-hour-a-day jobs, and cutting them up small. (Applause.)
Q: Ought a Jewish employer to treat his employees badly, as did one I know?
A: No; he was a bad Jew.
Q: Didn't we get our ideas for the Declaration of Independence from the French?
A: Very likely. But I don't care where they came from as long as we hold on to them.
Q: What do you think of the chances of workers in this country when they have to fight for their existence, as they are now doing in Colorado, where the troops are shooting them down?
A: The troops are doing it according to law. If you don't like the process, demand the heathen and get them all on our side.
Q: Was not Straus nominated to draw the Jewish vote for Roosevelt? (Applause.)
A: Roosevelt appointed Straus to important office when he wasn't looking for votes.
Q: Is it not inconsistent to lay stress on the Mosaic law, and at the same time favor men like Roosevelt and Straus?
A: If I were convinced of that I should not be supporting Roosevelt and Straus. (Applause.)
Q: Do you object to organized labor's voting for its class?
A: I do object to its voting as a class against other classes.
Q: As a factory inspector of Illinois, do you object to organized labor's voting for its class? (Applause.)
A: I do believe it. That is why I speak out.
Q: Whoever heard of American fundamental law and driving idea? Q: Doesn't the saloon stand in its objection to organized labor's voting for its class?
A: I do believe it. That is why I speak out.
Q: Are you familiar with the nationalist revival among the Jews? What is your opinion of it? Are you in sympathy?
A: I know it well, and it is one of the most inspiring things that I have discovered in recent years. (Applause.) I am very much in sympathy with it, because I see in it an attempt to do that very thing, one-half of which we have to do in this country.
Q (Mr. Sackmary): What progress is the cook making?
A: I am glad you got interested in the cook. (Laughter.) It is better with her than it was some months ago. Among other things she is married. (Laughter.)
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Q: Wouldn't literal application of the Declaration mean the unrestricted immigration of the Chinese, and haven't the American people a right to protect themselves against the evil that would thus result?

A: We have to accept the conditions at any cost. We are here, not to watch over the natives, but to act as a spiritual agent, trying to make them, and others, better, as we are trying to improve ourselves. (Laughter.)

Q: Would you have the native, in every place where there is plenty of work, send off some of these young, ten-hour-a-day jobs, and taking some of these long, ten-hour-a-day jobs, and cutting them up small?

A: The troops are doing it according to law. You don't like the process, mend the law.

Q: Isn't the citizen who voted for Taft because he wanted to be left alone now an enemy of the American people? What reason have you for thinking that history will not repeat itself?

A: We are not nearly all that as a nation we ought to be. And that is why we are discussing these things. But I do think it is in this country that we, the people, have got the meaning it has today. We have got to start here in our spiritual heritage.

Q: Isn't there a bond of sympathy as we, the people, rule the government of New Mexico?

A: There are too many unemployed. But I know where there is plenty of work. We have to accept the conditions at any cost. We are here, not to watch over the natives, but to act as a spiritual agent, trying to make them, and others, better, as we are trying to improve ourselves.

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A: I am not good at conundrums. I can't blame them for reacting to an attack. Taft because he wanted to be left alone owes that state of mind to the Anglo-Saxon in him.

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A quiet little old lady objected to the applause that was given the prayer last Sunday night. Maybe she was more used to hearing people shout Amen. A young woman social worker sitting next to her said she thought the applause was all right, but she didn’t see any use in praying, anyway. They both reminded me of the good woman sitting on the platform on another occasion who was heard to remark: “Them prayers wouldn’t hurt nobody nohow.” Whoever supposes that the habits of Ford Hall think all alike on any subject has been very much misjudged.

Did you mark the peculiar effect that Mary Antin had on the audience? Although there was the deepest sympathy with her, and the warmest appreciation of her message, she had spoken at least twenty minutes before there was a sound of applause. And when it came to the questions, for another considerable spell the audience seemed almost dumb. I never saw anything like it before at Ford Hall. The crowd acted more like a congregation listening to a sermon, and well they might for it was as impressive a message on religious patriotism as could have been given to that company of people.

It was really heart-sickening to see the immense crowd outside the doors last Sunday night. There were more than twice as many outside as there were inside after the doors had been shut. They began to gather at half-past five. At half-past six there was a longer line than I had ever seen before at that hour. The doors were opened a little ahead of time, and the hall was filled in less than five minutes. At seven o’clock even holders of platform tickets could not get in.

It has been suggested many times that we ought to move to a larger hall. I do not think so, although I wish Ford Hall were fifty per cent larger. We would work we are doing and told Mary Antin how he had been recommending her book to audiences all over the country.

How eager the folks were last Sunday to talk with the speaker at the close of the meeting. It was difficult to clear the hall.

It was an entirely new experience to Business Manager London to find his edition of Ford Hall Folks completely exhausted before the meeting was over. A second edition has been printed, and those who missed getting a copy last Sunday can procure one at the next meeting. To reach a circulation of eight hundred or more with the second issue of the season is most gratifying. When shall we be able to push it up to a thousand? Can we hold it at eight hundred?

Some one remarked to me that it was a great sight to see the young women taking part so naturally and fearlessly in the questionnaire. She was herself a woman of middle age and confessed that she could not possibly rise to her feet in the midst of a thousand people and ask the speaker a question, and yet she greatly envied those of her own sex who were getting that training early in life. Our forum is a great training school in a variety of ways.

The chorus made an excellent showing in response to the unexpected call that was made upon them. They are well entitled to the reserved seat that is theirs because of the service they render. They meet for practice every Sunday at half-past six, and are eager to increase their numbers.

“Uncle Dudley” of the Boston Globe editorial column gave a handsome report of the meeting, as usual.
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It has been suggested many times that we ought to move to a larger hall. I do not think so, although I wish Ford Hall were fifty per cent larger. We would overflow any ordinary auditorium wherever we were to move, and in a very much larger hall we would lose a good deal of the family feeling which has become such a vital element in our meetings. And what would we do if we had any more questions than we have now, as we certainly would have with a larger audience? As it is now, we can hardly give everyone who wants to participate a fair chance and get through by ten o'clock.

Instead of seeking a larger hall, why not have another forum like ours? There is abundant room for several such enterprises in the different centres of Boston. What a magnificent opportunity there is for such a gathering of the people in the Roxbury District with a hall in the neighborhood of the Dudley Street Terminal! Who will grasp the opportunity? There is no better field of investment for money, time and strength in Boston. Will some church in that neighborhood grasp the situation and grow more public-spirited? The Dudley Street Terminal! Who will grasp the opportunity? There is no better field of investment for money, time and strength in Boston. Will some church in that neighborhood grasp the situation and grow more public-spirited?

Dr. L. C. Barnes of New York City, a well-known Baptist missionary secretary, had a stand-up seat in the gallery last Sunday afternoon. He was very enthusiastic over the

discourse. She was seated a woman of middle age and confessed that she could not possibly rise to her feet in the midst of a thousand people and ask the speaker a question, and yet she greatly envied those of her own sex who were getting that training early in life. Our forum is a great training school in a variety of ways.

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"Uncle Dudley" of the Boston Globe editorial column gave a hands-on report of the meeting, as usual.

OUR POLITICAL OBLIGATIONS.

"Don't go into politics," is the advice often given by good men, especially churchmen. Their point of view is something like that of Mary Antin's neighbor, who preferred Taft in the last national election because he

Ford Hall Folks

Edited by Thomas Dreier.

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Mrs. Pankhurst
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THE AMERICAN GOSPEL DAY

BY DAY

(Continued from Page 1.)

Israel met with difficulties in living up to their law. It may be that our forefathers did not foresee the hordes of Europe at our shores; but I doubt if Moses foresaw that the Children of Israel would have to go to the stake for their belief. The only way out of it would be to reject the law, and we are not prepared to do that. There are practical difficulties. That is not the question. Have we accepted the law as it stands?—the brotherhood of man, the rule of the people? Are we citizens by conversion? Then there is no choice for us. Two classes of people have been misled in this immigration muddle—those who, through no fault of their own, see no horizon beyond the rim of an empty dinner-pail, and those whose view is obstructed by the kitchenmiddens of too many dinners. (Laughter.) With both we must be patient. There is no wisdom in an empty stomach, and no great thought comes from the over-full. (Laughter.)

We must each decide for ourselves whether we wish to carry the burden. Unless we do that we are not a people, but a lot of beings who happen to live in this particular place instead of elsewhere. I know myself an American only by whether I am willing to take upon myself the burden of this school, which then bore the name of Emerson and now, remodelled, bears that of Elizabeth Peabody. This was fitting, because the Elizabeth Peabody Settlement House, of whose classes Freda soon availed herself, and to whose staff she is now attached as a paid worker, was to mean much to her—almost as much as Ford Hall, which the eager child early discovered—and because of which her educational career came abruptly to an end soon after she had been graduated from the grammar school in 1905.

The occasion of Freda’s break with Boston’s educational system was Shakespeare. Her class in high school was studying the
The occasion of Freda's break with Boston's educational system was Shakespeare. Her class in high school was studying the Merchant of Venice, and one of the girls in the class spoke slightly of Jews by reason of the bloodthirstiness she thought she saw in Shylock. "That is not true, Freda flamed up. "The Jews are a peaceable race. There is nothing murderous about them. How many Jews have been sent to the electric chair in Massachusetts? Rather is it the Christians who show themselves blood-thirsty when they massacre our people. Shylock seems to me a far more noble character than Antonio, who asks Shylock to give up his religion. I go to Ford Hall and there they say that every person should stick to his own religion and be earnest about his life in his own way. If only you would all go there you would see . . ."

Very likely there was more in the heated moment, something which might have justified the teacher in asking Freda for the apology the girl steadfastly refused to give. Neither would yield, so Freda had to leave school. She has not stopped studying, however, as the following schedule shows: Sunday, Ford Hall; Monday, the School of Social Science; Tuesday evening, preparation at the Public Library for the college extension course in English composition which she is taking this year for the second time.

All of which, when added to work every weekday at the Settlement and attendance every Sunday morning at the Temple Israel, must make Freda's life in the Promised Land a very full one at present.

We must each decide for ourselves whether we wish to carry the burden. Unhappily, as the following schedule shows: Sunday night, Ford Hall; Monday, the School of Social Science; Tuesday evening, preparation at the Public Library for the college extension course in English composition which she is taking this year for the second time.

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