



JOHN DENUES

EVERY man who does anything well commands both respect and interest. The world reveres good work and the good workers, and it usually crowns these two with success. "His work is good," says the world, "this man has succeeded! How has he gained the uphill way, the way I want so much to travel?" And the world looks again. Sometimes it says, "Magnetism," sometimes, "Hard Work," sometimes, "Luck," but usually these surmises are wrong; for the successful man, and he only, knows which motor helped to push him up the long, steep path.

I asked John Denues, supervisor of music in all of the public schools of Baltimore and organist and choir-master of Grace and St. Peter's Church, what had helped him in his work.

"Love of it," he replied, "and to my thinking no man can succeed unless he loves his work. Love your work and you'll not neglect it. Work, like anything else, when so cultivated will grow to its best!"

I asked whether a love of labor could not be assumed. Mr. Denues was doubtful. "Perhaps," he asserted after a pause, "perhaps. But—not if the subject has given his soul at another especial altar. My father wanted me to be a lawyer. I was, even before I seriously took up the study of music, a musician. I would have failed in the study of law. I have not failed in music, because, whatever the results are, I have given to it my best."

I nodded and I agreed with Mr. Denues in his estimate of success—his inside measure of it; but—his love

of his work and his devotion to it have had outward as well as inward manifestation. Many people consider the choir Mr. Denues trains among the very best in Baltimore, and his work in the schools more than marvelous.

"You would advise any young man to stick to his ambition?" I asked. Mr. Denues was emphatic in his reply.

"Is any man happy who marries the woman he doesn't love?" he counter-questioned after his "yes." I said I really didn't know, but I supposed he was not.

"I don't know from experience, myself," admitted Mr. Denues, with a look toward a picture of his wife and two charming little boys, that stood on the desk near at hand. "But, I suspect the poor temporizer is miserable, and—he should be. I once knew a chap who frankly married for money. I met him some two months after his marriage. 'Hang it all,' he said, 'she's declared dividends, but, Denues, I'm miserable!' and—I know that even if I had made money at the law (although I can't believe I would have done so), I'd have been miserable. Smaller dividends, coming from the right lady—or work—are preferable. They alone bring happiness and satisfaction."

After this little homily, Mr. Denues talked freely. He told me of his struggles, which have been many; of a father, who, in spite of a real love for his son, tried in every way to dissuade him from his chosen work; of how, at nineteen, he came to be organist and choir-master in York, Pennsylvania, and how there he had to endure the whims of the meddling and critical among those in authority and the pranks of mischievous choir boys.

"That was very difficult," he acknowledged. "My dignity was so extreme at nineteen and it was so constantly being injured!" . . . We both understood the joke as will everyone who has suffered through being that old.

"You conquered both meddlers and boys?" I asked.

"Oh, yes. I intended to—I had to."

"What made you leave York?"

"I had worked it out. No man stays where he has done as much as he can. He moves on, must move on, unless he wants to rust, to a spot where there is more than he can possibly do awaiting him."

"What do you like best about your work?" I inquired.

He told me. It is making monotones sing. He believes, because of health and the effect really-filled lungs have upon it, that everyone should sing. "The boy," he said, "who, before he has achieved full growth, smokes out back of the barn—no, it's garage now-a-days, isn't it—that boy needs to fill his lungs entirely

with real air at least twice a day. If he sings he does it; if he sings often enough, he acquires the habit of real breathing; if he has acquired that habit, he is well."

"But to go back to monotones," I prompted. "Can you really teach them to sing?"

He said he could and some of his assistants who happened in the office at that time backed up his statements and told me of wonderful examples. "He has taught Baltimore," said one of the assistants, "that anyone who has not a physically defective throat can keep a tune. He has made many people do it."

Learning to know tunes and to sing them is, according to Mr. Denues, a matter of mind. He assures me that if you go wheezing along like a slow freight it is a sure sign that you are not connecting—that the line from brain to throat is clogged—and often only because application is lacking. Mr. Denues' method of killing the monotone (long live Mr. D!) is to show the subject steps—ordinary stairs—and then to mount these with each human buzz saw. As they go up and down, he fixes in the pupil's mind the fact that tunes are, quite as much as stairs, rents, hills and the nation's heroes, affairs that waver. Going up, a rising in the mind and vocal chords; going down, the natural reaction. Honestly, this works! Seems pretty simple, doesn't it? But it took a man who has taught thousands of children to sing, to realize how important are the little things and the simple methods.

Yes, he makes them sing; and people who naturally sing become perfect canaries, under his handling. When Mr. Denues was working in a southern Pennsylvania town, I heard some four hundred children of his training, sing with Victor Herbert's orchestra. Mr. Herbert was so frankly delighted with the exhibition that he began to play for the children, adding for their enjoyment, several numbers to his program. Afterward he said: "Mr. Denues, that was splendid! My orchestra lately accompanied a chorus of children in one of the large cities and their singing was not anything like as good as this." Mr. Herbert's musicians were delighted over the children's ability to sing a chord after one note had been struck.

Mr. Denues has, in the three years he has been in Baltimore, made music a major study. Examinations on it are now taken, and credits are given in music and averaged with those of other studies.

I left feeling well, having warmed my hands before the enthusiasm of a man who had found his place, is content in his place, and who, from that and the feeling of good work, well done, is a success in the highest sense of the word.

Labor Rising as an Important Political Factor

ON FIVE continents today the political watchword is Labor. That doesn't mean Labor is ready to grasp the government of five continents; it doesn't mean that Labor expects to grasp the government of five continents, or even of one continent.

It does mean that for the first time in history Labor is everywhere a prime political factor. Not a general election held anywhere in the world during the year just passed but weighed Labor gravely; not a political crisis this year, not a campaign, from the Presidential campaign in the United States of America to the campaign in the Argentine Republic, from the Dominion Parliament to the Finnish Council but is scrutinizing it.

There is nothing to suspect in Labor. Labor is not a revolution. Labor is not even radical. Labor is a logical development of the idea of self-interest and advancement, by which a very large division of human beings has become cohesive and coherent. It represents a distinct idea; but the idea it represents is one well within the limits of constitutional government.

The way Labor looks at it everywhere is this: Labor wants to see put into action a very advanced program of social reform, designed to make life safer for the wage-earner, to guarantee a certain independence in his declining years, and to wipe out forever the bogey of the poorhouse. Labor would like to do this; if Labor can win a majority of the citizens of any country to its way of thinking, Labor will try out these interesting experiments; if this majority does not approve, Labor will preach and talk and demonstrate until the majority changes its mind.

In France Labor has driven home its idea to the professions. In Britain the hand and brain movement is linking the clerk class with the labor class—their objects are held in common. So it goes the world over. What has happened is that the Liberals who ten years ago were the Left—the Radicals—the Innovators, have become almost the Right, not because they have become conservative and moved over, but because on their left new groups have appeared, stretching away through the degrees of conservative Labor, moderate Socialism, Radicals, Direct Actionists.

If it had not been for the war, and for the peculiar character of Lloyd George's leadership, the Conservatives would not have had any power again. As a party

they remained, but not as the old traditional Tories of England; they became a historic minority, like the Monarchists of France and the fragmentary Conservatives of Spain.

Liberalism became the center of the stage, and what was happening in Britain under the names, Conservative, Liberal and Labor was happening everywhere else under different but corresponding titles.

There came the time when Liberalism was hard put to it to fight off with the one hand the Conservatives, and with the other the Socialists. The result, everywhere, was the coalition. It happened in the United States as elsewhere, for while the Cabinet remained a party Cabinet, the actual corps of executives who carried forward the war-activities of the nation was drawn from every rank and class, and was the most tremendous and significant coalition, and the truest and most sincere one ever known.

The war ended, and the Coalition's reason for existence was ended, too. The war itself had served the dual purpose of weakening the life-flow of Conservatism, and strengthening the more liberal movements; in some countries where the tension had been strong, or where progress has been autocratically checked and a natural growth impeded as in Russia, the reaction was overwhelming, and produced revolution. In other words Liberalism, held in a strait-jacket to prevent its expansion, swelled until it burst the jacket and, so released, expanded with such lack of control, such tremendous growth that it overstepped the limits of Liberalism and didn't stop until it reached almost the bursting point of Communism.

So the Peace found a doomed Conservatism, clinging desperately to its resurrected usefulness through a Coalition; and in Britain it found a leader to whom such a Coalition, including Conservatives, was a necessity. But it found also a Conservatism unable to stand any longer without a Coalition, while it found Liberal and Labor not yet ready to overthrow Coalition, but unwilling to compromise with it. The Conservatives cling to Coalition, through weakness; Liberals and Laborites defy it through a sense of inherent strength.

Liberal and Labor are the two significant parties of the coming era in politics; Conservatism drops back to

the useful minority position held in turn by Liberal and Labor and Irish Nationalism. Its power is done, but not its usefulness. It will always be a factor, occasionally and for the moment a determining factor—as often happens with minorities; but it will not be a permanent controlling factor as in the past.

The effort in Britain now is to shape a third party which shall stand where Liberalism stood before; the difficulty is that the proponents of the plan differ on the exact position to be occupied. The Tories, anxious to preserve the semblance of power, naturally favor a Center party which shall stand between Liberal and Labor on the one hand, and the people on the other.

But the Liberal supporters of the proposal have a different idea; they want to stand midway between the Liberals and the Laborites; they seek to force the Liberal party, as identified with Mr. Asquith, into the position formerly occupied by the Conservatives on the right, and so stand between, collecting advanced Liberals from Asquith and moderate Laborites from Labor.

The plan is a doubtful one. Labor itself, conservatively led, is suspicious by experience. Liberalism has a stouter hold on the British public than most people realize; and, important token, few of the men so far identified with a movement for a third party, commend themselves to substantial citizens.

Whatever may betide the older parties, or the new Center party—if it comes, Labor is there to stay. The potential opposition today, it will be the actual ranking opposition tomorrow, and the alternative government when a ministry shall fall. Labor has fought its fight alone, has nothing to gain from either Liberal or Conservative, and, moreover, knows that it is strong enough alone just in proportion as the older parties know they are weak alone.

It may be Labor against a united Liberalism and modified Toryism. It may be Labor against Liberalism, with Toryism harassing the flanks of either.

Figure it how you will, Labor is in. Translate the British struggle into the political terms of the other nations, and the same situation is reflected. Plain citizenship never so universally held its own.