

protoplasm and its nourishment comes from living growth. To look back over the long and jagged history of opinion is to discover that opinions rise and fall but that only the making and testing of opinion go on forever; and it is to discover that opinion has always prospered most when it was most nearly allied with the creative forces of youth. Perhaps one should hardly call it opinion at all when those who cherish it are following it in full pursuit. Perhaps, then it is instinct and little more. But the instincts of youth are precious as nothing else is precious. Youth, viewed broadly, is always right.

Viewed thus broadly, conservatism is the element of death and radicalism is the element of life. The human tribe, straggling through the wilderness of the world, perpetuates itself by begetting and bearing its young, who, at first protected by bosom and counsel, eventually detach themselves and move toward the front while their parents gradually slip toward the rear and are left behind. The process is cruel but it is real; and it is irresistible. What other course, after all, is there to take? Who knows where we come from or where we are going to? If youth has now and then plunged blindly along blind roads, so has age wrought incalculable evil by inquisitions and oppressions aimed to check the march of mankind in its natural advance. Experience grows cynical and lags heavily back, scorning the impulse to create. Youth staggers under the burden of freeing itself, as if it were not enough to perform the hard tasks and fight the bitter battles which the old men of the tribe "wish" upon it. No wonder high hearts falter under their fate when they do not rebel; no wonder they grow old so soon and take up the immemorial complaint; no wonder the youth of any particular generation always does so little. It is right but it is in the minority.

Fortunately years alone are not the final evidence of youth or age. Always there are wise men who, like Socrates or Goethe in their days, or like Bernard Shaw or Anatole France in ours, refuse to grow old as the seasons increase upon them. They put forth new leaves, they unfold new blossoms, with a continuous rejuvenescence. They are the links between young and old. Through their intercession youth grows conscious of the meaning of its urges, as it is already conscious of its essential rightness. Through their interpretation age is reminded of what, left alone, it would always forget: the generous intentions and the authentic power of youth. They are the true spiritual parents of the race. Yet what they do is no more than what all parents do who are not jealous of their children. They watch them at their wild games with joy that they are so strong. They offer advice which, they hope, may save them the experience of unnecessary pain and may help them to realize their potentialities, but they do not feel too much chagrin when the advice is slighted, knowing that wisdom is incommunicable and must be learned over again in person by each new apprentice to life. Alas that there are so few good or wise parents! It is the fault of the bad and the unwise if they find youth wilful, heedless, insolent. They have fixed their eyes upon individuals who go astray and not upon the larger drift in which life is perpetually renewed. Is life itself good or bad? There are, it is true, divergent answers to the question, but few are better than that of E. W. Howe, who says: "We have it, and must make the best of it. And as long as we do not blow our brains out, we have decided life is worth living." At least life is best where it is most vivid—in the heart and ways of youth.

## In Lieu of the Laureate

WE are distressed to see that the Poet Laureate has failed to produce an official ode for the British royal wedding. We are so distressed that we hardly know whether to rummage through the archives of the Hanoverians for a substitute manufactured for some earlier occasion or to manufacture a new article ourselves. But let learning and poetry both serve us, with the aid of E. K. Broadus's agreeable new study of "The Laureateship" (Oxford).

Here, for instance, is a part of what the elegant Henry James Pye, George III's laureate, wrote when the Princess Charlotta Matilda of England married Prince Frederick William of Stuttgart:

Awhile the frowning Lord of arms  
 Shall yield to gentler Pow'rs the plain;  
 Lo! Britain greets the milder charms  
 Of Cytherea's reign.  
 Mute is the trumpet's brazen throat,  
 And the sweet flute's melodious note  
 Floats on the soft ambrosial gale;  
 The sportive Loves and Graces round,  
 Beating with jocund step the ground,  
 Th' auspicious nuptials hail!  
 The Muses cease to weave the wreath of war,  
 But hang their roseate flow'rs on Hymen's golden car!

Or if this seems a shade heroic and a little old-fashioned, here are certain lines of Tennyson on the marriage of Princess Beatrice to Prince Henry of Battenberg:

The Mother weeps  
 At that white funeral of the single life,  
 Her maiden daughter's marriage; and her tears  
 Are half of pleasure, half of pain—the child  
 Is happy—even in leaving *her*!

And yet that seems to us to have a touch of insinuation that we should be the last to intend—though Tennyson cannot have meant it. Let us turn instead to Thomas Warton and his admirable compliments to a king with the same name as that of the present husband of England's queen:

Lo! the fam'd isle, which hails thy chosen sway,  
 What fertile fields her temperate suns display!  
 Where Property secures the conscious swain,  
 And guards, while Plenty gives, the golden grain. . . .  
 These are Britannia's praises. Feign to trace  
 With rapt reflections Freedom's favorite race!  
 But though the generous isle, in arts and arms  
 Thus stands supreme, in Nature's choicest charms;  
 Though George and Conquest guard her sea-girt throne  
 One happier blessing still she calls her own—

and that happier blessing was of course the bride.

We find ourselves coming back to the bride, as one does when mortals are married. Here suddenly the homely muse of one of our republican poets overtakes us:

This George and Mary Windsor must have lots of sense as well as dust, to let their only daughter marry a man who is quite ordinary—a man at least who never had as good a start in life as dad, but is a boy of their own town, grew up there and there settles down. Well, that is how it ought to be, and if he sticks to business he will thrive and prosper till he may stand before kings and queens some day. And what if the new couple have to work and plan and scrimp and save a few years till they make their pile and can put on a better style? If they attempt it nothing loth it will be better for them both. Then hail the bridegroom and the bride! Let the nuptial knot be tied! Whatever others may prefer, her for him and him for her!

# Our Naval Autocracy in Samoa

By SAMUEL S. RIPLEY

*In the last two years The Nation has shown how American imperialism, with its mailed fist, has invaded the Caribbean. The story below, with accompanying documentary material in the International Relations Section, shows that the same system has reached out into the Pacific. We present at this time a personal story and opinion. Later we shall take up other aspects of the American occupation of Samoa, including a statement by the Navy Department in defense of its attitude and administration.*

I WAS born on the island of Tutuila, Samoa, where my mother and my father, an American citizen, now reside with several members of the immediate family. Both individually and collectively we have property interests of some value in the Samoan Islands. I left Samoa as a youth in 1904, going first to Hawaii and later to California, where I have since lived, except for the period of my enlistment during the war. Shortly after I returned from overseas, my parents urgently requested me to visit Samoa to help in private business. For this purpose my wife and I left San Francisco for Samoa in June, 1920, ignorant of any naval controversies respecting the conduct of Samoan affairs or of any injustices perpetrated upon the Samoans.

However, shortly after reaching Samoa, we were informed that the Samoan people were enduring many abuses at the hands of the naval officers and appointees sent from the United States. The grievances of the Samoans ranged from personal outrages to serious charges of governmental and financial mismanagement. Contrary to general belief, the United States has no proprietary interests in the Samoan Islands. The Samoans are the owners of the soil and have always maintained their own government, which has been recognized by the United States, Great Britain, and Germany in various solemn treaties. The governing body under the Samoan system of government is an assembly of all the chiefs, called the Fono, who in so-called American Samoa number about 400. The Navy officials sent to Samoa, however, have gradually come to assume that they have the right to govern the Samoan people autocratically and to administer all the civil affairs of the Samoan Government.

Shortly after our arrival, the Naval Commandant then stationed at Samoa refused to allow the Fono to meet, since each time it convened the chiefs demanded an accounting of funds collected from the Samoans in taxes, of the customs fund of the Samoan Government, and of various Samoan public funds. And the Commandant did this, in spite of the fact that the Codification of the Rules and Regulations for the Government of American Samoa, issued by the naval commandants at Samoa, specifically states "That the councils consisting of the hereditary chiefs shall retain their own form or forms of meeting together," and that the customs of the Samoans shall be preserved. The Fono, not wishing open conflict with the Commandant, supported as he was by armed force, did dissolve, but not until it had appointed a committee with full power to act in all matters for the Samoan Government. Finally, in July, the chiefs, feeling that they had exhausted every hope of relief from the Navy officials then stationed in Samoa, addressed a written petition to Josephus Daniels, then Secretary of the Navy, and besought President Wilson for help by radio. But not

even the courtesy of an acknowledgment was vouchsafed.

When I had been reliably informed of the wrongs perpetrated upon the Samoan people I advised them to be patient and asked for a full, fair statement of their grievances, which I received with the understanding that they were to be properly compiled and presented to the President and various interested departments of government, unless the Navy Department was able and willing to right the injustice and iniquity. Having accomplished all possible in our private matters, my wife and I departed from Samoa at the end of September, 1920.

The following November, after charges had been preferred by a naval officer concerning the scandalous maladministration of Samoan affairs, the Navy Department held a court of inquiry in Samoa. The Commandant, after receiving the election returns and knowing that the Administration would change, assumed that the board would really investigate and committed suicide; but he made a fatal mistake since it applied copious coats of whitewash to the blackest spots. No testimony was accepted unfavorable to the naval officials involved by the charges, and no inquiry whatever was made into the grievances and demands of the Samoan Government and people. For instance, this court announced "There is no evidence of financial dishonesty," meaning that the court refused to accept any evidence to that effect, since for some reason not stated the naval auditing board audited the books of the Samoan Government for only the last two months out of a period of more than twenty years in which no public audit had been made of the naval handling of Samoan funds. The president of this court of inquiry, Captain Waldo Evans, U.S.N., was made the new Commandant at Samoa.

After the Navy Department had thus showed its attitude and the committee of chiefs had advised me that there was no amelioration of conditions, I secured the services of an attorney, Mr. C. S. Hannum, to assist in compiling the grievances of the Samoan people and to present the matter to the proper authorities in Washington, both of us agreeing that it was useless to attempt anything until after a change in Administration. The compiled statement of grievances [p. 324] was prepared and transmitted to the committee of chiefs for their sanction and approval, which were heartily given; they also unanimously agreed on the selection of Mr. Hannum as their attorney and gave me full power and authority to represent the Samoan Government in all matters between it and the United States.

Early in April, 1921, Mr. Hannum accordingly went to Washington and presented Samoan matters and the compiled statement signed by me as the properly constituted representative of the Samoan Government, to the President, the State Department, the Navy Department, the Agricultural Department, and the Bureau of Education of the Department of the Interior, as well as to the proper committees of Congress. As a result of his efforts the Secretary of the Navy, Edwin Denby, wrote in May: "Permit me to assure you that this Department does, indeed, entertain a sincere and abiding interest in the progress and welfare of the Samoan people, and is even now giving their affairs very