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The Central Deden of Wistery M. I. Cannon.

The futher science is advanced, The more clearly is shown the truth that all thing have their con tres of his and motion. Acting and interacting, moring now this way, now that, of at last lind in one di rection. The intellectual as well as physical world is goo ened by this same law. Nothing is insulated, nothing is inequelar." The stars revolve around their suns, and the suns them closs with attendant planets nevelve around a central orb, and these or to with allendant systems revolve around the "claral throne". So with man and Society. Oach frees whas a distinct centre by which his life and growth are governed, and each society also has its center, farming it own system, while they all form a single sys tem revolving around the center of the world - God himself The central idea then is led in history. Being such, it a fulfilled in the advent, around which we see all the for it, all succeeding history dates from it. With respect to this center then there are hor feelings, 1st a preparation va a development. Oach is the secret of the freques of event. The streams of life issuing from the same source and flowing in various directions, in intricate windinge, finally came together and flowed in the same channel-the great Roman Empire- when was the fulfilment: from which they diverged, and have ever since been
flowing in various channels. Though tending to the same
great ocean of clarity.

Mhough from this center there radiates a divine from influncing the affairs of men, a though from it there issues a

fluncing the affects of men, a though from it there is us a voice, which reaches every individual, the happines of whom depends about upon perfect obedience to it, yet this from it is the balance of power, which in the severe conflict between bruth and error, give success to the former, yet this vice is specien to the individual only as that of a safe quide through an un known and perilow journey, while to the world it is the voice of the commanding general, giving orders to the emblagmed host.

There or, who judging from the influence of this drive from, suppose that history then must record effects necessary and unchange the. Man is both its subject and its object. It that this center proves only the plant of his restoration. It shows the system of his progress, to be

and intellectual perfection.

heading of the part. It is the prophet stone which freedict the future desting of the human race. It is the mystic wand by one wave of which we can change every need of history into a mount Sinai where we can our verse with the Gody and from him receive governing law. It is the fulfilment of all hops, the perfection of all plail exply, the interpreter to all revolutions. It is the hey be all the seeming continuedins of the moral, physical and political world, It is life, it is immortality.

The function are twofeld - the preparation and dood - opment - so are the objects of history twofeld. Themed with this vision philosophy hustory has larght win the first place that Christianity is the great fact in this world of ours, shorting its desire rays book to the fall of mon and forward to the day of Millenial glory, and in the see and place that pure democracy - the freedom, purity and happiness of the incividual citizen - is the great posibility which we are approximating and will eventually attain"

These lies great result can now be seen even by the causal observer, of their progress to be the ends of our existence. In the first ago divine revolation was en municated by the original word, given to a frarticular nation though adapted for the universal race. These truthe, bong collected; were preserved till their completion was perfected in the new addition. And as som as the two most perfect languages had received the heavenly treasure they became obstite to so that they are now the law imperishable monument in which the devine buthe are crystalized for all future consultation. Ven christianity is embedied in principles, which are to work out its universal furfection. It has since been that lover which should move the world. Oynastic have usen and faller in reference to it alone. While nations have been sucht away and suffilanted by other, which did posses this vivifying power. The desert country has been made to rejoile and Mossom as the rese" the frietful one to become desolates, as the people of each were blessed with or cursed without its presence. It policy is the work of age, its field the whole race. Brosporty alone defends upon it, hence it will generally be found associated

ce wither it will assist in farming the stronger races. Who steeries the offair of the present time, but see clearly that its tending is to universal dominion? Feeling it frewer and historing jets efficiency the world is ofring with its furtale beneauce it in all its fundy and in all its fromer. The the world is affect imating to universal and perfect chris tianity, is can it be easily seen that it is also approxima: ting he a universal und perfect democracy. The form of government have ever been changing from the patriarchat he the representative. Overy Lucisive change has been but a step howards this Thuman perfection. The govern ing will has been removed from the one to the few, from The few to the many sand from the many he all. It was a long time before it colded he said that all the political power of a state his wholly and rolely with The people . This progress to, continued through contuins, has attained its highest state of perfection in our own he loved land of liberty. But this is not The torming the god man's existence for then there could be left for us no progress in the thouse ide of coming years. The universal and perfect enfranchisement of the human race is our end & object.

This is plainly seen in the present condition of offair. Liberty has been acknowledged the very watch word of our age. It the south of us. there is now a counby being laid waste by the devastations of officing truthe, In the old world nearly every government is making concession to this principle. But what mean that martial array, that gathering of continding armie which brood over the south of Europe like the fall of night. The classic There of Maly have been descorated by the feetfrint of tyrang. Her people once so frond and free say truly that the lie a Roman was quater thank a hing " have been galled by oppositions yoke. But new assisted by the gallant army of France and by the synspathies of the whole world, they are contending for their ancient and natural right - for liberty. Theretis efulorized the history of man. Liberty and tyr any , so opposite in their policy, so antagonatic in their freques, are in dread conflict. Upon the battle field where the richest treasures are wasted, and the most fire crow blood poured forth, freedom is ever to be obtained. The tree of liberty derives its best neurishment from human suffering. Such was it with our forefathers; po will it be with them. And as they conquer so will it ever be with offeressed and stringling man.

Are country increases in liberty so does it lend heatreen democracy. Hence we can't but conclude that our race must be free. Our fresent elevated position has been reached through successive & truggles. The agencies a complishing it are dinine and human. They With work ligether for one object-mans restriction. This is seen particularly in the lives of queat our. in revolutions and in different hatins and periods. Looking down the long line of centuries, there lower up before is, at certain interval, great master spirits who have borne the heat of the context, who now appear weather with times honored chaplet in token of praiseworthy deeds, In lively watchfulness they stand, Upon times hoary steep. And glory's flickering hence lights They have been the center of every separate movement of truth as the Sufinite is the center of the whole. As the finger board to the last traveller, so are these men who show us the true direction of the worlds progress. It the worlds drama advances new interests are awakened at every scene, and the nearwit appears to reveal the grand final. Semetimes the play swells into momentous importance as upon the stage appears universal man in dread commetin.

Such is the nature of revolutions - The outbursts of smothered but him dling flams, which mark the was of history. In this clearly are shown the working of providence. They stand forth he bright evidences that history has its center, its system and its ousting. This is exemplified in the early reunion of the races, when each diversified tribe having learned the peculiar been of nature, around there, hought their respective dis covered truthe to one common shrine, when all evuld enjoy The benefits of each. And when centralization had done its duty and Sulfilled its desting, we see this same quiaing former in the breaking up of the Roman Empire. It was the great turning front when christian ascendency, farme ating all governments, sewed the seed of constitutionality and civil liberty. Christianity was then and ever after, has been the basis and bulwark of the governing powers. This became a spell by which the wirld was covered, As the fullar of cloud was used in ancient times for the protection and quidance of the chosen hosts of old, so in the middle lages the darkness, glown, night, sleep and The like, with the modern seem inclined to attribute to them, we but other words for the same quiding and pro lecting cloud, the shadow of which voiled the intricate

and sublime workings of the Duty, Through the middle ago to the reformation, and through the refumation to the present time, awing contention and peace, has this truth been shown the more clearly, and now the Morrican is frond to acknowledge the fires ence of the quitging hand in our early struggles. The life of it here was such as to portray direct communion of man and divinity, for though he spake like other men, get he acted like a God. Such is history, with its centre & systems; without these the whole history of the world is nought ilse than a huge file of the blocks & fragments of an unfinished edifice, with these the temple is complete:

<u>Junior Prize Contest Oration of William L. Cannon, Class of 1860</u> <u>Transcribed by Michael M. Geduldig, June 19, 2006</u> Edited by Don Sailer, November 2009

The Central Idea of History

The further science is advanced, the more clearly is shown the truth that all things have their centres of life and motion. Acting and interacting, moving now this way, now that, all at last tend in one direction. The intellectual, as well as physical world is governed by this same law. "Nothing is insulated, nothing is irregular."

The stars revolve around their suns, and the suns themselves with attendant planets revolve around a central orb, and these orbs with attendant systems revolve around the "eternal throne". So, with man and Society.

Each person has a distinct centre by which his life and growth are governed, and each society also has its centre, forming its own system, while they all form a single system, revolving around the center of the world - God himself.

The central idea then is God in history. Being such, it is fulfilled in the advent around which we see all the forces of society to converge; - all preceding history prepares for it, all succeeding history dates from it.

With respect to this center then, there are two periods, 1st a preparation, 2nd a development. Each is the secret of the progress of events. The streams of lie issuing from the same

source and flowing in various directions, in intricate windings, finally came together and flowed in the same channel - the great Roman Empire - when was the fulfillment from which they diverged, and have ever since been flowing, in various channels, though tending to the same great ocean of eternity.

Although from this center there radiates a divine power influencing the affairs of men, although from it there issues a voice, which reaches every individual, the happiness of whom depends alone upon perfect obedience to it, yet this power is used only for the assistance of man's restoration, - it is the balance of power, which in the severe conflict between truth and error, gives success to the former, yet this voice is spoken to the individual only as that of a safe guide through an unknown and perilous journey, while to the world it is the voice of the commanding general, giving orders to the emblazoned host.

Those err, who judging from the influence of this divine power, suppose that history then must record effects necessary and unchangeable. Man is both its subject and its object so that this center proves only the [plan?] of his restoration. It shows the system of his progress. A progress, to be

culminated in the sublime consummation of his moral and intellectual perfection.

It is the master-key which unlocks to us the hidden treasures of the past. It is the prophet's stone which predicts the future destiny of the human race. It is the mystic wand by one wave of

which we can change every deed of history into a mount Sinai where we can converse with the Deity and from him receive governing laws. It is the fulfillment of all hopes, the perfection of all philosophy, the interpreter to all revolutions. It is the key to all the seeming contradictions of the moral, physical and political worlds. It is life, it is immortality.

As the periods are twofold - the preparation and development - so are the objects of history twofold. "Armed with this divine philosophy history has taught us" in the first place that Christianity is the great fact in this world of ours, shooting its divine rays back to the fall of man and forward to the day of Millennial glory, and in the second place "that pure democracy - the freedom, purity and happiness of the individual citizen - is the great possibility which we are approximating and will eventually attain."

These two great results can now be seen even by the causal observer, of their progress to be the ends of our existence. In the first ages divine revelation was communicated by the original word, given to a particular nation, though adapted for the universal race.

These truths, being collected; were preserved till their completion was perfected in the new addition. And as soon as the two most perfect languages had received the heavenly treasure they became obsolete. So that they are now the two imperishable monuments in which the divine truths are crystalized for all future consultation. Here christianity is embodied in principles, which are to work out its universal perfection. It has since been that lever which should move the world. Dynasties have risen and fallen in reference to it alone. Whole nations have been swept away and supplanted by others, which did possess this vivifying power. The desert country has been made "to rejoice and blossom as the rose" the fruitful one to become desolate, as the people of each were blessed with or cursed without its presence. Its policy is the work of ages, its field the whole race. Prosperity alone depends upon it, hence it will generally be found associated with

or rather it will assist in forming the stronger races. Who studies the affairs of the present time, but sees clearly that its tendency is to universal dominion? Feeling its power and knowing its efficacy the world opening wide its portals to receive it in all its purity and in all its power. As the world is approximating to universal and perfect christianity, so can it be easily seen that it is also approximating to a universal and perfect democracy. The forms of government have ever been changing from the patriarchal to the representative. Every successive change has been a step toward this human perfection. The governing will has been removed from the one to the few, from the few to the many, and from the many to all. It was a long time before it could be said that all the political power of a state lays layed wholly and solely with the people. This progress has, continued through centuries, has attained its highest state of perfection in our own beloved land of liberty.

But this is not the terminus, -a the goal of man's existence - for then there could be left for us no progress in the thousands of coming years. The universal and perfect enfranchisement of the human race is our end object.

This is plainly seen in the present condition of affairs.

Liberty has been acknowledged the very watchword of our age. At the south of us, there is now a country being laid waste by the devastations of opposing truth.

In the old world nearly every government is making concessions to this principle. But what means that martial array, that gathering of contending armies which brood over the south of Europe like the fall of night. The classic plains of Italy have been desecrated by the footprints of tyranny. Her people once so proud and free, who could say truly that "to be a Roman was greater than to be a king", have been galled by oppressions's yoke. But now assisted by the gallant army of France and by the sympathies of the whole world, they are contending for their ancient and natural right - for liberty.

There is epitomized the history of man. Liberty and tyranny, so opposite in their policy, so antagonistic in their progress, are in dread conflict. Upon the battle field where the richest treasures are wasted, and the most precious blood poured forth, freedom is ever to be obtained. The tree of liberty derives its best nourishment from human suffering. Such was it with our forefathers, so will it be with them. And as they conquer, so will it ever be with oppressed and struggling man.

As a country increases in liberty so does it tend to a truer democracy. Hence we can't be conclude that our race must be free.

Our present elevated position has been reached through successive struggles. The agencies accomplishing it are divine and human. They both work together for one object - man's restoration. This is seen particularly in the lives of great men, in revolutions and in different nations and periods.

Looking down the long line of centuries, there looms up before us, at certain intervals, great master spirits who have borne the heat of the contest, who now appear wreathed with time's honored chaplets in token of praiseworthy deeds,

"In lonely watchfulness they stand,

Upon times hoary steep.

And glory's flickering beacon lights

For coming ages keep."

They have been the centers of every separate movement of truth as the Infinite is the center of the whole. As the finger board to the last traveler, so are these men who show us the true direction of the world's progress.

As the world's drama advances new interests are awakened at every scene, and the nearer it appears to reveal the grand final. Sometimes the play swells into momentous importance as upon the stage appears universal man in dread commotion.

Such is the nature of revolutions - the outburst of smothered but kindling flames, - which mark the eras of history

In these clearly are sown the workings of providence. They stand forth as bright evidences that history has its center, its system and its destiny.

This is exemplified in the early reunion of the races, when each diversified tribe, having learned the peculiar lesson of nature, around them, brought their respective discovered truths to one common shrine, where all could enjoy the benefits of each.

And when centralization had done its duty and fulfilled its destiny, we see this same guiding power in the breaking up of the Roman Empire. It was the great turning point in the christian ascendency, permeating all governments, sowed the seed of contitutionality and civil liberty. Christianity was then and ever after, has been the basis and bulwark of the governing powers.

This became a 'spell' by which the world was covered. As the pillar of cloud was used in ancient times for the protection and guidance of the chosen hosts of old, so in the middle ages, the darkness, gloom, night, sleep and the like with which the moderns seem inclined to attribute to them, are but other words for the same guiding and protecting cloud, the shadow of which veiled the intricate

and sublime workings of the Deity. Through the middle ages to the reformation, and through the reformation to the present time, during contention and peace, has this truth been show the more clearly, and now the American is found to acknowledge the presence of the guiding hand in our early struggles.

The life of its hero was such as to portray direct communion of man and divinity, for though he speaks like other men, yet he acted like a God.

Such is history with its center & system; without these the whole history of the world is naught else than a huge pile of the blocks & fragments of an unfinished edifice, with these the temple is complete.