Social structures are made up of people, yet it would be rash to assume that they can have no tendencies of their own. There are structures so badly constructed that they would fail even if manned by saints; while there are others so shrewdly put together that they would render acceptable service even if manned by sinners. Nor should we overlook the fact that the long-lived organization which survives staff after staff and gathers tradition as an old wall gathers ivy is virtually a soul-mold. Although it takes the stamp of strong personalities, it tones down, keys up, twists about, inspires or deadens the ordinary person who becomes identified with it. Structures then will not be plastic because living beings compose them, nor healthy because their members are sound, nor serviceable because these members are busy. From being badly constituted or from wrong relations to their environment, structures are subject to diseases which hinder them from realizing the purposes they were intended to serve.

PATRONAGE

Someone has to pick the members of a staff, and it is not easy to prevent that one from assigning the desirable post to kinsman, or friend, or highest bidder rather than to the best-qualified applicant. Nepotism is an old abuse that now excites resentment whenever it is recognized. In China the claims of family are felt so much more keenly than any other claims that every kind of public organization is vitiated by nepotism. In the European Dark Ages the hereditary kingship superseded the elective kingship partly because it was cheaper to satiate one royal family than a series of such families. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries nepotism was the cancer in the Papal States. Each pope felt that
he could trust only those utterly dependent on himself, consequently he raised his own relations to wealth and influence. Each papal
clan hurried to gorge itself before the next pope should supplant
it with his own hungry kinsfolk. Under Clement VIII the
Aldobrandini, under Paul V the Borghesi, under Gregory XV
the Lodovisi, and under Urban VIII, with unparalleled rapacity,
the Barberini enriched themselves from a chronically depleted
treasury. To raise money for them, offices were sold and issue
after issue of government bonds marketed at ruinous rates.

Wherever there are good livings to bestow, nepotism or worse
will creep in. Eighty years ago, commenting on a proposal to take
away the patronage of the English cathedrals and confer it on the
bishops, Dean Sydney Smith wrote:

I do not want to go into a long and tiresome story of Episcopal nepotism;
but it is notorious to all that Bishops confer their patronage upon their sons
and sons-in-law and all their relations, and it is really quite monstrous in the
face of the world who see this every day and every hour to turn round upon
Deans and Chapters, "We are credibly informed that there are instances in
your Chapter where preferment has not been given to the most learned men you
can find, but to the sons and brothers of some of the Prebendaries. These
things must not be—we must take these Benefices into our own keeping";
and this is the language of men swarming themselves with sons and daughters,
and who, in enumerating the advantages of their stations, have always spoken
of the opportunities of providing for their families as the greatest and most
important.

Nepotism is the disease of well-endowed churches just as gout
is the ailment of rich men. On the other hand, the disposal of
places in return for money, political influence, or personal service
makes a black chapter in the history of the state. In England over
two centuries ago the policy of turning out all the lower officials
to make room for party men was adopted by the very generation
that originated party government. Under George III, who used
it to get the better of the party system, the patronage abuse reached
scandalous heights, but after the American Revolution the practice
of selling offices or letting them go by favor declined, and patron-
age was dispensed with a more and more strict regard to party
advantage. Between 1820 and 1870 England went over to the
merit system, established open competition for 80,000 government
positions, and laid the foundation for an unprecedented efficiency in her administrative departments. In the meantime the United States was moving in the other direction, and in the third quarter of the nineteenth century the sacrifice of fitness in public servants to favoritism and party work reached its climax. During the last thirty-five years, however, great progress has been made in delivering public office from subordination to private or partisan interest.

Patronage has gone to such lengths in the public service because the service is sustained by taxes rather than by voluntary contributions and because no constituency is so incompetent as the general public to judge what it is getting for its money. Nevertheless the canker may attack any structure that offers places worth having. Business enterprises, universities, churches, charities, and voluntary associations are by no means immune to it. Occasionally nepotism shows itself very clearly in the salary roll of banks and life insurance companies. Fortunately the disease is a patent one, and publicity, proper checks in the power of appointment, and scientific methods of testing qualifications and measuring performance afford the sincere foes of patronage effective means of getting rid of it.

**CORRUPTION**

The play of private motives in its personnel may cause a social structure to work quite otherwise than it was intended to work. Then, too, outsiders who have an interest in deflecting the servant from the path of honor study and plot how they may tempt him with the prospect of secret illicit advantage. Under the slang names of "graft" and "boodle" Americans have in recent years become familiar with the means by which their agents are seduced from their known duty. For a bribe the alderman votes to present a valuable franchise to a traction company, the supervising architect of the new city hall passes work "not up to specifications," or the police ignores the existence of outlaw vice shops. The gift of railroad passes or the promise of political aid influences the vote of the legislator. Contracts for public work are jockeyed into the hands of a favored firm instead of the lowest bidder. The purchase of supplies on the public account opens the door to jobbery. Clerks carry home office supplies as "perquisites," while
inspectors are induced to shut their eyes to evils which it is their duty to report.

But betrayal of the master is by no means confined to public servants. Railroad officials withhold freight cars from coal companies along the line that neglect to present them with blocks of stock. Buyers for retail firms swing orders to the wholesaler most lavish with presents or entertainment. Officials take advantage of their inside knowledge to speculate in the securities of their company. A ring of officials taps the treasury of a railroad with bills for needless or fictitious repairs on cars. The directress of an old ladies' home gets admitted to the institution an aged family servant whom she ought to care for herself. In order to attract a gift of tainted money a church muffles its moral message, while in order to hold in line a restive donor a college denatures its teaching in ethics or economics.

Nor is corruption confined to social structures. A great variety of legal relations, such as master and servant, principal and agent, ward and guardian, attorney and client, partnership, trusteeship, etc., opens a door to lucrative betrayal of trust. Indeed stealing, bribery, and illicit advantage are most difficult and dangerous in well-organized structures like a government bureau, or a railroad office, where accounting is thorough, responsibility definite, and every transaction leaves permanent traces of itself. While constantly new and ingenious tricks are invented to get around new safeguards, there are signs that precaution is overtaking rascality. More and more, undetected misconduct is confined to a ring of accomplices who are posted at the strategic points in the organization.

**RED TAPE**

In the endeavor to forestall corruption administrators sometimes bring on a disease nearly as bad, viz., a complication of procedure which makes prompt action impossible. Thus a French commission cites the case of an officer who, having received permission to have made for him at the Hotel des Invalides a pair of non-regimental boots, found himself indebted to the state for the sum of 7 fr. 80, which he was very willing to pay. To render this payment regular there were necessary three letters from the
Minister of War, one from the Minister of Finances, and fifteen letters, decisions, or reports from generals, directors, chiefs of departments, etc.\footnote{Cited by Le Bon, \textit{The Psychology of Socialism}, p. 176.}

Or take the ludicrous procedure cited by Wallace in his \textit{Russia} (pp. 206–7):

In the residence of a Governor-General one of the stoves is in need of repairs. An ordinary mortal may assume that a man with the rank of Governor-General may be trusted to expend a few shillings conscientiously, and that consequently his Excellency will at once order the repairs to be made and the payment to be put down among the petty expenses. To the bureaucratic mind the case appears in a very different light. All possible contingencies must be carefully provided for. As a Governor-General may possibly be possessed with a mania for making useless alterations, the necessity of the repairs ought to be verified; and as wisdom and honesty are more likely to reside in an assembly than in an individual, it is well to intrust the verification to a council. A council of three or four members accordingly certifies that the repairs are necessary. This is pretty strong authority, but it is not enough. Councils are composed of mere human beings, liable to error and subject to be intimidated by the Governor-General. It is prudent, therefore, that the decision of the council be confirmed by the Procureur, who is directly subordinated to the Minister of Justice. When this double confirmation has been obtained, an architect examines the stove and makes an estimate. But it would be dangerous to give carte blanche to an architect, and therefore the estimate has to be confirmed, first by the aforesaid council and afterwards by the Procureur. When all these formalities—which require sixteen days and ten sheets of paper—have been duly observed, his Excellency is informed that the contemplated repairs will cost two roubles and forty kopeks, or about five shillings of our money. Even here the formalities do not stop, for the Government must have the assurance that the architect who made the estimate and superintended the repairs has not been guilty of negligence. A second architect is therefore sent to examine the work, and his report, like the estimate, requires to be confirmed by the council and the Procureur. The whole correspondence lasts thirty days and requires no less than thirty sheets of paper. Had the person who desired the repairs been not a Governor-General but an ordinary mortal, it is impossible to say how long the procedure might have lasted.

\section*{INDIFFERENTISM}

Generally a social structure is less subject than an individual to the enlivening prick of competition. The people cannot turn
from one health department or school system to another as they turn from one dealer or physician to another. The taxpayers, moreover, have but the vaguest notion of what they ought to receive for their money, and their dissatisfaction with the service rendered registers itself in a smaller appropriation rather than in a "shake-up" in the organization. In the same way an ancient and renowned university will be patronized even if inept, and a church without a rival, dominating an ignorant and submissive peasantry whose whole mental outlook it controls, e.g., the Roman Catholic church in the tropical countries of South America, can with impunity sink into sloth. Whenever a structure is thus exempt from the natural penalty of poor service, the blight of indifferentism is likely to fall upon it.

Indifferentism is a senile rather than an infantile disease. As long as a social structure is new and on trial it will naturally be put in charge of energetic individuals who by agitating for it or by previous volunteer service have given proof of disinterested zeal and who will not tolerate listless subordinates. But after the service has struck root and made good its claims to support, after a certain good-will has been created and a guiding routine established, it excites the cupidity of the placeman and a type worms into it who thinks more of how much he can get out of his position than of how much he can put in.

It is commonly assumed that a structure is safe from dry rot if it is under a vigorous administrator who will weed out the lazy and promote the zealous. This indeed is just what a man does in order to get good service from his own employees. But the bureau chief does not own the bureau and hence cannot be trusted to deal always with his subordinates according to their merits. In order to guard against inferior posts being treated as patronage the incumbent is made so secure in his tenure that an energetic chief cannot promptly rid himself of languid underlings who are clever enough to avoid downright provable incompetency.

An extreme degree of indifferentism is possible when the personnel of a structure constitutes a self-governing body. Accounting for the negligence of teachers in an endowed university Adam Smith observes:
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If the authority to which he [the teacher] is subject resides in the body corporate, the college or university of which he himself is a member, and in which the greater part of the other members are, like himself, persons who either are or ought to be teachers, they are likely to make a common cause, to be all very indulgent to one another, and every man to consent that his neighbor may neglect his duty, provided that he himself is allowed to neglect his own. In the University of Oxford the greater part of the public professors have for these many years given up altogether even the pretence of teaching.¹

Indifference is so quickly felt and resented that a structure brought into direct relations with the general public will not be allowed to suffer long from this disease. A service like the police, fire-fighting, street-cleaning, the weather bureau, the post-office, or the school cannot go far in this direction without calling forth protest from influential persons. Save where there is a monopoly, indifferentism in a university is punished by loss of matriculates, in a clergy by loss of communicants, in a hospital by loss of patients. When, however, the sufferers from slackness are ignorant or lowly people—orphans, the ailing poor, enlisted men, borrowers, convicts, prostitutes, natives, negroes, or immigrants—the disease is not so promptly checked. So, also, when the structure is one that does not betray its sloth to the general public—a navy yard, an arsenal, a forestry bureau, or a customs service—the remedy must come from above.

In some cases inspiring leadership suffices to cure indifferentism. The tabulator yawning over his adding machine, the gymnasium instructor sweating over his awkward squad, may loathe his task because he fails to see it in relation to a worth-while end. Under a born leader who can fire him with a vision of the meaning of it all he may thrill with love of his work. In digging the Panama Canal it is said that the thousands of workers went at their daily task with a right good will because they felt it as part of a stupendous, everlasting achievement—the Canal. Sometimes an effete church, university, or religious order has been roused from its torpor, not by a thrust from without, but by the captaincy of a man of genius and ardor, who has radiated inspiration and kindled cold routinary souls with a vision of the greatness of their opportunity.

¹ Wealth of Nations, II, 346.
FORMALISM

It is the way of the dull person to content himself with going through the motions of rendering service without troubling himself to see whether the benefits intended are indeed realized. Either because formerly success attended them, or because they look as if they can produce the desired effect, he assumes that certain forms are efficacious and never thinks of testing their actual results. For example, a building ordinance is adopted by a city and an inspector is appointed to see that it is obeyed. At first he issues building permits on the basis of architect's plans submitted and later inspects the building to see whether the plans have been carried out as approved. But as the city grows he has less and less time for inspection, until at last he sits all day in his office issuing building permits on the strength of plans which builders later change to suit themselves. Without realizing it he has become a mere formalist.

Courts of justice are very subject to this disease, because one litigant or the other has an interest in urging technicalities, so that, unless the judge puts his foot down, rules meant to save time and expedite the court's business are used to waste time and obstruct this business by becoming the subject of wrangling between attorneys. An American observer comments as follows upon the difference between the American and the British consular court in China:

In the British Court the direct dive to the gist of the matter before the court, and the intolerance of technicalities is what astounds and impresses the American lawyer. The wearying, formal, perfunctory round of demurrers and motions is entirely missing. Mere technical objections are easily and impatiently waved aside, and exceptions to pleadings right speedily cured wherever possible without postponement. Hence, being unsuccessful in achieving any advantage, such objections tend to lapse into disuse.

Other formalisms of organs of justice are: record worship; the insistence on trying records rather than trying cases; the throwing of causes out of court because brought in, or taken to, the wrong court or the wrong venue instead of transferring them to the right one and saving all prior proceedings; inflicting "the monstrous penalty of a new trial" when the jury appear to have been influenced
by improper argument by counsel, or by confusing expert evidence, when the error might have been corrected very simply in an oral charge to the jury by the judge.

Institutions for dependent children are very subject to formalism, because the victims make no outcry and no one of influence takes a strong interest in the fate of the individual child. It seems incredible that a foundling asylum which loses 97 per cent of its babies should live; yet experience has shown again and again that good people, pleased at going through the motions of succoring foundlings, will keep on with it. A large orphanage is just the sort of thing a formalist loves. The money laid out makes a brave show, the bigness of the charity is obvious, and the children, made spick and span, can be collected in one place to feast the eyes of donors and visitors. It is overlooked that children cannot be raised well on the wholesale plan, that the institution-child lags far behind other children in development, that the best parts of its nature atrophy from disuse, that all through life it will never stand for much nor alone, and that it would be infinitely better off if placed in a normal family, even if thereby the service to the orphan sank out of public view.

The formalist loves visible material relief of destitution—baskets of food and bales of clothing distributed to dingy women in shawls—and he never thinks of visiting the tenements to see how the weekly dole at the poor-office affects the habits and morals of the poor. He sneers at charitable societies which dispense few groceries but waste their income in paying salaries to "a lot of trained workers who do absolutely nothing for the poor"—save to hunt a job for the out-of-work, overhaul the plumbing which has produced disease, arrange for the removal of the ailing family to a better neighborhood, persuade the landlord to wait for the rent, stand off the holder of the chattel mortgage, teach the mother to cook or earn, put the boy to a trade, or entice the children to the social settlement where they will get aspirations instead of alms!

But the paradise of the formalist is the school, because it works with the mind, and the mind is something we know little about. In less advanced countries one comes upon such atrocities as making pupils learn by rote, parrot-like recitation of the textbook, primers
made up of the sayings of sages, natural science taught without materials or laboratory. But then look at our own sins. Children are set to work upon spelling-books full of strange words instead of studying the few hundred words which experience has shown they are likely to misspell. They are drilled in grammar instead of being trained in the correct use of their mother-tongue. They agonize over arithmetic operations which no one uses in real life. They pore over books instead of handling what the books tell about or doing what the books describe. They are made to labor over stuff utterly without use or interest—Latin prosody, for example—in order to strengthen their mental faculties generally, although experiments show that facility gained in doing one thing is not transferred to the doing of other things.

Universities especially are infected with formalism, for usually they are too high and imposing to be much in fear of critics. In the sixteenth century Rabelais has his hero Gargantua educated in the scholastic universities. For twenty years the youth works with all his might and learns so perfectly the books he studies that he can say them off by heart backward and forward, "yet his father discerned that all this profited him nothing, and, what is worse, that it made him a madcap, a ninny, dreamy and infatuated." In the next century the philosopher Locke complained that at Oxford he had been obliged to waste his time in formal disputations. "In the universities," writes Adam Smith a century later, "the youth neither are taught, nor always can find any proper means of being taught, the sciences which it is the business of these incorporated bodies to teach." Indeed, as late as the time of the French Revolution Oxford students were still required, in order to receive their official certificates as trained thinkers, to repeat long "strings" of syllogistic affirmations and denials on some question in moral or natural philosophy.

Even in our own universities, goaded as they are by a sharp rivalry among themselves for gifts and students, we mark formalism in the abuse of the lecture system, in the endeavor to turn out examination passers, and in the refusal to grant the graduate student credit for supervised field work.

OBsolescence

The history of English charitable foundations is instructive as to the folly of regulating the present according to the will of the past. Owing to changes unforeseen by the testator, thousands of the twenty-eight thousand perpetual charities brought to light by the great survey instituted in England a century ago had become useless or even harmful. Funds had been left to provide forever for superannuated wool carders; for teaching children to card, spin, and knit; for apprenticing the children of poor Protestant soldiers in Cork, a city in which for a long time there had been no Protestant soldiers; for conducting services in the French tongue in the Walloon chapel of Canterbury Cathedral, although the congregation had known no French for a hundred years; for disseminating the doctrines of a sect that had died long since; for repairing causeways and bridges in a wet district which had been drained to the point of no longer needing causeways and bridges; for the ransom of Christians held captive by the Barbary corsairs; for the relief of those imprisoned for debt; for leper hospitals; for doles to needy persons who will stultify themselves by repeating some prescribed religious formula; for schools with fixed courses of instruction reflecting the educational ideas of the Elizabethan period.

The demand for thorough social reconstruction which has made such a stir in the last half-century gives color to the notion that people err chiefly in underestimating the stability of society. But it is likely that, taking one age with another, for one who looks upon society as a living plastic thing there are ten thousand who imagine the world will go on forever as they have known it. Even minds that have caught the idea of flux do not expect change to invade all departments or anticipate the changes which actually occur. Wisdom does not qualify men to read the social future, for the wise and farsighted testators have failed as egregiously as the ignorant in forecasting society's path of development. What then can be more foolish than to chain any perpetual endowment to the terms of a founder's will?

Even if it be not tied by the strict requirements in its deed of gift, a social structure will let itself fall behind the times unless outside pressure forces it to keep abreast of its opportunity. Thus
an old government office or bureau that can take its appropriation for granted wears a rut for itself, so that a "shake-up" may be required to get it onto the right lines. But then it will wear a new rut as deep as the old one, and if swift change is going on all about it in a score or two of years it will need another upheaval to adjust it to new conditions. Hence the more rapidly society changes, the sooner it develops away from its structures and the oftener it must overhaul them or inject into them "new blood."

Productive funds likewise exempt a social structure from the necessity of justifying itself in order to win favor and support. This is why the rich college or charity is likely to fall behind the times and do little good. Adam Smith, who knew well the English universities, characterized them as—

for a long time the sanctuaries in which exploded systems and obsolete prejudices found shelter and protection after they had been hunted out of every other corner of the world. In general, the richest and best-endowed universities have been slowest in adopting those improvements [in science] and the most averse to permit any considerable change in the established plan of education.

This, to be sure, is but one aspect of endowments. They do indeed make possible an obsoletism that would soon be the death of an institution with nothing to depend on but current support. On the other hand, they maintain men who devote themselves to rendering valuable services, which nevertheless do not command a fair price, either because they benefit all alike, or because those who receive them will not or cannot pay what they cost. The true policy with endowed institutions is not to suppress but to supervise them.

Various causes hinder a social structure from molding itself to the changing situation about it. One is the force of habit. This being strongest in the aged will be felt most when the structure is controlled by those who have grown old in it. If it is in a bad rut an outsider must be put in charge.

An organization composed of a number of parts resists needed changes in its functions or methods because of the extra trouble they involve. After the parts have come to work together smoothly

an alteration in a single part to adapt it to an outside situation may necessitate a whole series of adjustments between this part and all the others. The worry and friction until the machinery is again in good running order accounts for the stiffness of all intricate human organization. The more complex a structure the greater the pressure needed to keep it near its point of greatest usefulness.

It requires much more intellectual effort or ability to redirect the work of a school system, a bureau, or a charity than to continue on established lines. To go on doing the same thing in the same way is the line of least resistance. A growing sense of its futility will rarely rouse one to the exertion of studying the task afresh and devising new ways of tackling it. Often indeed mediocre minds are utterly incapable of originating a better adaptation of the structure to its opportunity, so that, unless able men are put in charge and given a free hand, the adaptation will not take place.

Finally an old, imposing social structure comes to have an atmosphere which in time soaks into and affects nearly everyone in it. One's subconsciousness becomes saturated with suggestions of the excellence of everything "we" do and the way "we" do it; of the greatness of the "institution" or "service" and its right to one's loyalty; of the bothersomeness of the pupils, orphans, patients, citizens, or enlisted men the organization serves and their ungratefulness for what "we" do for them; and of the ignorance, stupidity, and malice of the outsiders, who actually criticize "us" and want to change "our" ways. Steeped in this atmosphere, the man who is progressive in principle stands like a rock against reform in his organization; the man who pounces like a hawk on inefficiency anywhere else has no eyes for the red tape and circumlocution in his office; and the man with a keen sense of the absurd feels no twinge as he stores the gift toys to the orphan asylum in the loft, "where they won't get broken," or provides for a furnace in the plans of a government building in the cane belt!

ABSOLUTISM

Absolutism is a disease of social structures absolved from obedience to the judgment and wishes of their time. No doubt the instrument devised for carrying on some great and beneficent work of
public benefit ought to be withdrawn from the meddling of later
generations in case tomorrow will be more stupid than today and
will not know it. But if tomorrow bids fair to be as wise as today or,
if not, will realize the fact and cling to today's decisions, nothing is
gained by putting what we devise today beyond the reach of
tomorrow's judgment. To be sure, carefully framed and time-
tested establishments should not be changed at the passing whim
of a single generation, but unless there is reason to suppose that a
people is degenerating they ought to be subject to its settled will.

The living wills to which every social structure should be made
obedient are of such as know and care most about its problem. The
policy of an endowed charity hospital, for example, ought to reflect
the judgment not only of the dead founder, but also of the living,
who best understand and are concerned about the relief of the ailing
poor. This of course is altogether different from subjectection to the
state or to majority rule. It is quite possible that the educational
foundations of minor religious bodies would not survive a popular
vote, while in a time of bitter class strife a research institute in
economics or sociology would be perverted or suppressed, whichever
party were dominant. The power to redirect or modify a social
structure should therefore lie, not with the political organization,
but with some section of the intellectual-moral élite.

An unendowed institution will be kept in sympathy with its
time by its need of current contributions. It is the financially
independent establishment that is liable to be caught in an eddy.
Ever since the church lost general control of charities, the favorite
form of government for a foundation has been the board of trustees
which fills vacancies in its membership, i.e., the co-optative or
self-constituted board. The only alternative has been the board
chosen by the religious body—which admits the sectarian bias—or by the state—which lets in the taint of "politics."

But the self-constituted board easily gets out of step with its
generation. Any special tendency which may develop in it is likely
to become intensified and fixed. The element which happens to be
in the majority when a vacancy is to be filled picks a man of its way
of thinking. He in turn helps to get in others of the same kidney,
so that a passing bias becomes chronic. Just as the shifting of
portions of the cargo in a listing ship hinders her righting herself and increases the list, so a mistaken temporary leaning in a board may be made lasting. It would be hard to invent a system surer to bring the institution under a clique and set it at odds with intellectual advance, moral progress, or social development. What has prevented our private foundations from becoming ossified has been the necessity of wooing givers, owing to the fact that few of them were rich enough to be able to take full advantage of their opportunities in a rapidly growing society. It is to be feared that foundations of ample means, like those of Carnegie, Sage, and Rockefeller, will in time show the unadaptedness to be expected of self-continuing boards.

Then too the rivalry of public hospitals, charities, and universities has often obliged the private foundations to be more progressive than they wished to be. It needs but little acquaintance with the tendencies in well-endowed and therefore financially independent institutions of learning to convince one that but for the state universities—which are obliged to make their work a broad social service—they would have persisted in excluding women, requiring the classics, stressing the "culture" or enjoyment studies dear to the leisure class, and equipping youth for "success" rather than for usefulness.

The problem of the close corporation has been often met. We know what happened to the English rotten boroughs in 1832 and to the old governing bodies of the English municipalities in 1833. In 1853 England subjected the boards in charge of her thousands of endowed charities to a government body, the Board of Charity Commissioners. The French Revolution ended the autonomous establishments for public benefit in France and put education, poor relief, and other social-welfare concerns under the direct control of the state. In Germany the communities, corporations, and proprietors which carry on charities originally in charge of the church have been gradually losing their autonomy, since the state more and more interferes in their action or takes over their resources and responsibilities.

In this country the state has not asserted itself, but the public is becoming enlightened enough to resent the type of government
provided for the great foundations of recent years. Such oligarchic control is the less excusable now that we know of a better way of choosing trustees. Recently one of our greatest universities provided that the faculty, the alumni association, and the board itself shall take turns in filling vacancies in the board of trustees. The only security that a public-service institution shall constantly reflect in its ideals and policies the best thought of its time is to found it on the intellectual-moral apexes in society. Thus interest in the advancement of natural science apexes chiefly in universities, the government scientific bureaus, and the national scientific associations. Here then are given the groups that should share in selecting the trustees of a scientific-research institute. Enlightened concern about public health comes to a head in public-health associations, anti-tuberculosis associations, medical societies and colleges, and like groups. Where are better sources of judgment as to who should have a hand in governing a medical-research foundation? There is little intelligent solicitude for the poor that does not express itself in charitable societies, charity-organization societies, and a host of other philanthropic groups. Generally those included in such groups work with a deep and unselfish interest and are ahead of, rather than behind, their time. If boards in charge of endowed orphanages, rescue homes, and free hospitals filled vacancies from names submitted in turn by these groups, it would be impossible for the management to continue long at odds with the best contemporary knowledge and ideals. No doubt the board itself should fill every third or fourth vacancy in its membership in order that unorganized or minor interests should not go unrepresented. Moreover, when a nominee is personally obnoxious to a part of its members a board should have the right to call for another nomination.

Here then is a means of recruiting the governing boards of quasi-public institutions which insures their ready response to the best forces of their time and yet does not entangle them with the political organization and open the door to "politics." If the ultimate authority over the enormous blocks of wealth being left for public purposes is not linked in some such way with the living élite of society, it is absolutely certain that in a century, perhaps in much
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less time, the stately foundations rising about us will be cursed by our posterity as citadels of stupidity, prejudice, and perhaps even of political conservatism and class self-interest.

PERVERSION

Founders cherish the pathetic delusion that their college, charity, or religious house may be kept to the charted course; that what they launch with enthusiasm will look sunward through all time. This vain hope inspires the endeavors of the friends of a beneficent organization so to fortify it by means of irrepealable charter, autonomy, and gifts in perpetuity that no meddling hand may ever interfere with its blessed work.

But alas, no human foresight can save from degeneration a structure that has high aims and puts a strain on ordinary human nature. Despite your checks and safeguards, in a few generations perhaps it will have become the exact opposite of what was intended. Your beacon is now a will-o’-the-wisp, your rock of salvation a quicksand, your healing spring an infected pool. There is indeed no way to keep it true to its purpose save to make it responsive to those in each generation who are spiritual brothers of the founder.

In the higher realm nothing perverts like quick success. A furore floods a movement with enthusiasts incapable of rising to the plane of the founders. The warmer the reception of a new art, the sooner it will be discredited by imitators and quacks. The wider the response to the appeal of a young religious order, the sooner its impure fire dies in the rush of the unspiritual. With rapid expansion the membership grades down, and after the pioneers and their disciples are gone the character of the organization changes. Thus three centuries after St. Francis his “Little Brothers” were “arrogant mendicants, often of loose morals, begging with forged testimonials, haunting the palaces of the rich, forcing themselves into families, selling the Franciscan habit to wealthy dying sinners as a funeral cloak to cover many sins.” Erasmus dreamed that St. Francis came to thank him for chastising the Franciscans.

As a body expands, the man of organizing ability is called to the helm rather than the inspirer and prophet. A university which has grown rapidly owing to the rare learning and zeal of its teachers
may, a generation later, come under the control of men skilful in organizing the teaching force and handling large classes. Impatient at having to spend so much of their time on administration, the real scholars, bit by bit, relinquish their authority to organizers, and the spirit of the institution changes. In this way Frate Elias, skilful organizer and friend of the Pope, but not in the least a saint, succeeded St. Francis at the head of the Franciscan Order. After Constantine the bishop of the church becomes less apostolic, while the typical Methodist bishop of today is scarcely a spiritual son of Wesley.

With the organizer comes less faith in spontaneity and more stress on form as embodying the founder's ideal. The life of the monastery is directed less by religious impulse and more by rules, the work of the research institute less by fruitful ideas and more by routine. Everything runs "as if by clockwork," only the one does not produce great characters, nor the other great discoveries. While St. Francis lived the stern rule of absolute poverty was applied with "the genial concessions and exceptions he knew how to make," whereas half a century later, under St. Bonaventura, his monks had to follow a formal and lifeless discipline. To carry flowers or a staff, to twirl the end of one's girdle cord, to sit with crossed legs, to laugh, to sing aloud, were all unworthy of Franciscan decorum. St. Francis cherished the sweetest friendship with Santa Clara, but in time the friar was forbidden even to look at a woman, much less speak familiarly with her.

When by its merits a body has gathered momentum and won prestige it becomes a standing temptation to the unscrupulous. If they can worm into it or, better yet, gain control of it, they can convert its store of power to their private purposes. Thus the popes of the Renaissance enriched themselves and their families by misusing the vast authority of the Roman church, while the representatives of the East India Company employed the great power of the company to practice extortion upon the rulers and people of India in order to build up private fortunes.

As a body gains wealth and popularity, it holds its members by benefits, so that they will tolerate a concentration of authority which would wreck a young society. Masterful organizers who love power
for its own sake magnify their office. In a religious organization control becomes established in the clerical order. St. Francis was a mere layman, but Albert of Pisa, the first priest to become head of his order, instituted that laymen should no longer be elected as officers. In England by the middle of the sixteenth century the charitable foundations were regularly in the hands of monks and priests. A royal edict took the direction of hospitals from clergy and nobles and lodged their management in the hands of "bourgeois, shopkeepers, and laborers." Early in the same century the right of choosing officers in the English craft guilds was restricted to their liveried members, and later control passed from them to a still more select body, the Court of Assistants, which, beginning as an informal committee of the wealthier brethren in livery and especially such as had held the higher offices in the guild, became a co-optative council well-nigh absolute in the affairs of the society.

Thus the body becomes machine rather than organism. Without voice the rank and file lose the genial we-feeling that once warmed their hearts. They stick to the organization for the benefits it gives or the opportunities it offers, but their loyalty is less pure than when it was truly theirs. Moreover, just as control slips away from them to a higher class, so may the benefits leave them. The Roman baths were originally intended for the poor, but under the later empire they were the exclusive privilege of the wealthy and one of their most luxurious forms of enjoyment. The thirty-three endowed grammar schools of London were all metamorphosed to teach the children of the higher class. Harrow, one of the most expensive of English schools, was founded by a bricklayer for the free education of the ranks in which he had been born. Male trustees twist foundations left for the sexes equally, to the service of the male sex. For instance, the endowments of Christ's Hospital given for the most destitute classes and "for girls as much as for boys" were found in 1865 to be educating 1,100 boys and only 25 girls, nearly all from the middle classes.

Finally the institution becomes an end in itself. The university exists for the benefit of its dons. The state prison is conducted as a provider of cheap labor for the prison contractor. A local charity becomes the means of enhancing the social prestige of the ladies
back of it. The courts of chancery instituted for the protection of orphans whose money was liable to misappropriation by unscrupulous relatives had become in Dickens' time a machine which sucked up all their money in interminable lawsuits, the lawyers being far more dangerous to the orphans than the guardians from whom the lawyers were to protect them. Military orders like the Knights Templar and the Knights Hospitaliers, founded to defend the Holy Sepulcher, came to fight each other more than they fought the Mussulman. In a millennium and a half the assembly (ecclesia) of the believers in a religion of love was transformed into a great temporal monarchy throttling intellectual freedom and cruelly destroying its expositors and critics.

Since the independent structure is never safe from perversion, organized society should beware of bestowing upon it favors and privileges. An unmodifiable charter should never be granted. Buildings actually used for public worship, education, or relief may be left tax free, but the exemption should not extend to other property of a private corporation. The one-sided partnership, so common in some of our states, whereby the public furnishes an annual subsidy to be expended at the discretion of the private charity, has shown the ugliest tendencies and should cease. Public funds should never be given to an educational institution not under public control. No legitimate service should be withheld by the state in order to leave the field clear for the private agency. The public asylum, school, university, library, or research institute should be set up in order to correct and spur the private institute. The self-constituting governing board should be looked upon with suspicion, and the state's right of visitation, report, supervision, and revision should not be allowed to lapse through disuse.