

A STEP FORWARD

A Valedictory Article of H. J. Langoe, in
the Pacific Skandinaven on advancing
from the Ranks of the Foreign
Language Press.

(Translated from the Norwegian-Danish.)

THINKING PEOPLE of our day no longer protest the fact that with the coming of the Present, born of the Future, there are attendant new-born thoughts. People have come to understand that the requirements of Yesterday are insufficient for Tomorrow and the new conditions ushered in on the wings of each coming morn.

In the crimson glow of the glad new morning of Today new thoughts come to take the place of those of Yesterday. But the thought that has reigned for the day refuses to pass and reacts viciously against the new. Each new thought has its reactionary and the progressive of Yesterday usually becomes the reactionary of Today.

While the forces representing new thought are moving forward those incapable of further progress array themselves in opposition. The people of Yesterday's thought are ever busy building fortifications to repel those of Today, desiring only to remain in the thought-sphere of their cherished yesterday.

New ideas and new peoples have grown out of the grand old nations who lost step with Time and reached a limit of progress. So long as they moved forward with new thought there was progress. When they became content with their condition, and their hostility grew strong enough to resist they began to crumble and other people and nations more fitted assumed their places in the march of progress.

In the history of nations there probably never will be written anything more remarkable than the story of America. New shoots from many nations became transplanted here in the new soil. Their transplanting was the result of the reactionary thought forces in the world of Yesterday where the new thought was being strangled.

Here amid manifold opportunities a world-nation was born that possessed the greatest possibilities for achievement and perfection. So long as the country lay open and undeveloped the desire for expansion held full sway. In this development the people became unyielding. Liberty was abused and misused, and when the various races came in closer contact it became clear that each, in their reasoning on many things, had retained something from their native soil that typified a Yesterday—things that did not fit into the scheme and meet the requirements of the greater development. But when there came a call for changes in conformity to the new conditions, the reacting forces rose in opposition. Old customs had grown strong with deep hold on sentiment and against these the forces of new thought organized and called for a new national flower, each petal of which should be nurtured by and flourish in the same soil and be watered from the same spring.

From the Old World countries the oppressed had come to the New World. They gave of their culture to the new nation,

which in turn created a new and composite culture, with far-reaching possibilities. But that which, in the beginning was the privilege of the immigrants—to speak each their various tongues until they could learn the new nation's language of unity—developed in time into a straining of this liberty and misuse of the privilege. It became clear that this condition did not serve the best purposes. As time went on the national and racial fences were builded stronger and stronger until it came to an open declaration that each intended to keep and maintain separately and distinctively, the language of his nationality under this country's shield and flag.

An opposing mental attitude developed year by year against that which has been this nation's greatest purpose—to bring all who dwell under the protection of our

flag to one language standard. Without this it is impossible to create a nation embodying those qualities that will be demanded of us by the America of tomorrow, if the foundation on which we are building shall stand.

A pronounced unfriendliness to things commonly called American has, little by little, spread like a pall over the immigrant's mind. He feels like a stranger everywhere but cannot see or realize that the fault is with himself, because he exclusively seeks company with those who speak his native language in churches and societies, and as far as possible in other associations. He has, for the most part, read papers and books in his native language. Editors, writers and leaders in native language activities have fed the fire of feeling that he was "a stranger in a strange land," and have in this manner kept the immigrant loyal to the interests of the private activities which have yielded to them a livelihood.

As the vast homestead and colonizing stretches in America became smaller and smaller it became more evident that many openly claimed liberties in this country were not of the character that served the best interests of the greater national unity. Open alliances were formed between certain nationality colonies and the countries from which these colonists came.

Outwardly they had to a degree governed themselves in accordance with the civil regulations of the United States of America, but otherwise they had maintained contact with the mental attitude socially, and oftentimes politically, of the fatherland. Blind to the consequences which this isolation of the various nationality groups and the niggardly mental attitude toward the American viewpoint must bring. This state of affairs has aided materially in producing a situation in which the fellow citizen immigrant has, in all, save for political effect, in writing and speaking, been less intimately considered among the common American born class of our country's citizenship.

The constitution of the United States of America is broad and far-reaching. Though it does not deny the liberty to think and give expression in accordance with individual initiative, it makes the individual severely responsible for his every act. While there were new stretches to populate as ever westward the course of empire took its way, that intimate contact could be avoided. Now it is impossible to evade it.

It is now, for all progressives to rally to the support of the great and impelling nationality thought the object of which is to bridge between past, present and future enabling the progressive thought forces to move forward unhindered and prevent the possibility of disastrous clash between the madly rushing radical movements of the time and the rooted and reactionary. The former are the brood of the latter.

The war and its attendant trials which the people of this country both native and foreign-born, have passed through, has made the time ripe for reshaping many of the "private preserve" nationality prac-

ENDORSEMENT BY PORTLAND POST, AMERICAN LEGION

Mr. H. J. Langoe,
Portland, Oregon.

Dear Sir: At a recent meeting of Portland Post No. 1, of the American Legion, a motion was introduced by the Patriotic Campaign Committee and unanimously carried commending you for your recent stand on the great Americanization question and this Post consisting of 6000 members expresses its appreciation.

I am enclosing for your use a copy of resolution that was introduced in Portland Post and unanimously adopted at the meeting of March 1st, 1920.

Very truly yours,
JOHN A. BECKWITH,
Secretary.

Whereas, The American Legion took an active part in securing the passage by the last Legislature of the State of Oregon of the By-Lingual Newspaper Act, and

Whereas, this is considered by all Legion members to be a step in the right direction for the accomplishment of a true spirit of Americanism, and

Whereas, one Mr. Langoe, editor of a Portland Scandinavian paper, has taken up the fight for the stand taken by the American Legion and in doing so has suffered financial losses, and,

Whereas, such an act of true Americanism should be recognized by the American Legion as being worthy of commendation, now therefore,

Be it and it is hereby resolved that the American Legion extends to Mr. Langoe and his associates, their utmost appreciation for his stand in this matter and for the spirit which prompted it and also extends to him their heartiest wishes for his future success, and

Be it further resolved, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded by the secretary to Mr. Langoe with the compliments of the Legion.