

Nobody Wastes
Time to Hate
Nobody.

Herbert Kaufman's Weekly Page

Keep Faith, Keep
Still, Keep
at It.

A Method Is Bigger Than a Million

BY HERBERT KAUFMAN

Ways are far more important than means at the present minute—a method is bigger than a million.

History isn't written on checks. The Nation's fortunes can't be entrusted to men whose only claim to notice is a bankbook—the information therein won't solve our problems.

There's no sense in a dunce's dollars. If you just have and can't do, stand back. Shoulder straps are for wisdom, not wealth.

Commanders of resources are not always resourceful commanders. Unless you possess initiative and executive strength, the rest of your possessions are negligible.

Commercial and social ratings do not sufficiently differentiate between pockets and heads or rapacity and sagacity; so we aren't selecting our leaders this year from club registers and Bradstreet's.

But somewhere among the ninety-nine million unknown folk who recently sought and wrought, convinced of insuperable obstacles to their bolder ambitions, there are shrewd, daring Americans with ideas and ideals that deserve and will receive prompt appreciation instantly they assert their unsuspected talents.

Any nation that expects to win its wars must be a just and merciless judge of capacity. And because republics impose no class barriers between the obscure mass and the vital office, the urgent hour never seeks the needed man in vain.

The President's call to arms pronounced a changed order of things in these United States.

It potentially reduced the entire population of the country to one level. All previous licenses to place and power became subject to pre-emptory cancellation.

Anybody who can do anything better and cheaper and quicker than those who bossed the job yesterday will supplant his inferior tomorrow.

War signs no contracts, but hires and fires captains and privates alike without notice. If we do not ever fight with the fittest weapons and workers, defeat yeasts within our own lines.

Customary rules and practices are obsolete—the personal feelings of individuals are not to be considered when the fate of governments is in jeopardy.

Now's your chance. Opportunity has wiped her slates. We've all got to start afresh and strive from the scratch.

Reserved seat tickets for past performances are not hereafter valid. Influence and affluence are smashed stilts.

While peril impends, the solitary path to promotion is the road of merit: none are too humble in purse or parentage to presently supersede the mighty of the moment.

Democracy—1776 Democracy, has returned to the land.

Fate is tailoring a brigadier's uniform for many a farmhand and taking more than one clerk from a drudge's stool to preside at decisive councils.

Victory demands recognition of eminent qualities wherever to be found.

Immediately forthcoming issues of "Who's Who in America" will be crowded with surprises—will perhaps contain your name. Why not? Handicaps exist only in will and imagination.

Experience has failed the emergency. Originality is at a premium. Colleges couldn't anticipate current developments.

"Trained brains" aren't stocked with applicable notions. Tons of technical textbooks are slated for the ash heap.

"Aristocrats" and "plutocrats" and "high-brows" for the once have slight advantage over you. Ancestors can't plan battles. Stocks and bonds have no sense of strategy. Familiarity with Caesar's Commentaries and Bismarck's career won't furnish systems of administration or expedition—won't prevent wastes or design engines suitable for 1917 theories of warfare.

Native genius has a clear field from Washington to France.

Whistles

EVERY fish in the sea knows that it is fatal to venture beyond his depths—we humans are not always so wise. We yearn to swim in waters for which environment and practice have not prepared us.

The flounder tried it and emerged from the adventure utterly unrecognizable. No one but an ichthyologist can be convinced that he was a well-balanced, regular fish before he wandered from his level.

A number of gentlemen with distinguished records in special branches of business are (unfortunately for themselves and the rest of us) hastily plunging into the war situation in the mistaken belief that their wish to serve is synonymous with the ability to perform, and even at this early date it is apparent that they are floundering.

Since we were not at all organized to participate in the Great Struggle, Washington had no recourse but to choose from the various departments of trade and industry a body of highly esteemed citizens to help out. Their expert opinions, their intimacy with processes and procedures, are signally expediting the production of needed merchandise and will undoubtedly save for the Government a very tidy sum.

But it was inevitable that some misappointments would be made—the circumstances under which we are laboring invite an occasional blunder and a series of replacements to the distinct improvement of National service may be shortly anticipated.

The head that chances to lift the highest at a given period does not necessarily contain the most advanced thought of the hour.

An abler man may be just then bending over a desk puzzling out decidedly superior methods and thus escape general attention.

We seldom become widely acquainted with an individual during the phase of his maximum competence. He hasn't time to think of himself, to formulate a public attitude. When a man reaches the spotlight period in his career, he has usually ceased to be a compelling factor in the concern of which he previously was the master spirit.

Chairmen of boards, presidents of companies and heads of famous firms are often the whistles of the engines for which they were once the power. The noise they make is furnished by younger officers and partners who really keep the wheels turning and supply the steam, while the more evident persons press buttons, review digests and read reports. They gradually lose touch with fundamentals, confine their attentions to totals, not intermediate figures—pass upon results and delegate the study of causes to associates.

Their public utterances are inspired, if not prepared, by lieutenants, who, as it were, valet their brains—invest them with mental toupees. They are not live wires, but charged batteries. They can deal quite authoritatively with problems when notified long enough ahead, but in situations that require snap estimates—on occasions demanding swift and unerring decisions, they're exceedingly liable to bungle.

We are passing through an ordeal for which back-dated experience is a treacherous servant. America must think on her feet, issue orders as she runs to the front, discard and revise on the sprint. Men with the push-button habit consequently accept important offices very much to the threat of their established positions, to say nothing of the Republic's disadvantage.

Anyone who has not been intensively playing his game up to the moment of invitation to participate in the conduct of the war—invites loss of status and retards essential works.

It is every whit as culpable to assume supremacy when greater efficiency is available, as it would be for a schooner captain to ask for the bridge of a passenger steamer, or a fresh water pilot to point the course of a transport through a strange and mined stretch of ocean.

VERSES
by Herbert Kaufman

**Vim
Vigor
Victory**



Do it—go to it,
Pitch in and get through it.
The road to your goal is in plain
sight, pursue it.
The ruts and the rocks in the way
will diminish
In number, as you press yourself
to the finish.
Hesitation won't shorten and doubt
won't reduce
The distance or effort, so what is
the use
Of hemming and hawing and wast-
ing the clock?
Each life has just so many hours in
stock.
Today is the time—do it now—do
it now!
Experience can only teach a man
how
To handle his problems and learn
to prevail;
You timid, unconfident folk always
fail.
Success is a habit of mind; if you
dare.
And persist long enough, you'll ar-
rive anywhere.

Too Many Laws and Jaws

LAW knows no necessity—it never looks at the clock and therefore seldom operates in time to help folks in a hurry. Its forward mechanism is leisurely and exasperating—its reverse action slow and complicated. We have too many laws—too much hasty, ill-considered legislation, to be a truly efficient people. They thwart development, retard progress, confuse and confound enterprise. Just as internal medicine knows only three specifics for disease, law likewise is so empirical that it is practically impossible to select from the agglomerate of statutes a certain remedy for any pressing situation.

If this were not so, America would not find herself hampered at a thousand points while endeavoring to meet her enemies with properly armed and provisioned forces.

We are behind schedule, not because we lack facilities, but because dilatory and obdurate members of Congress can so easily brake the plans of the Government and indefinitely quibble and quarrel over details of measures in which our very security is involved. The White House, thoroughly cognizant of the uncertainties along the Western front and the ghastly cost of miscarried calculations, plans to rush decisive forces to the front while we may still turn the tide with the least expenditure of men and minutes (minutes and men are equivalent—every day wasted upon Capitol Hill dooms another regiment to slaughter, adds another burden to our weight of taxation and permits Germany to strengthen her defenses) and Congress still stews and blusters, orates for the Record, stalls the vote and routes pressing legislation over labyrinthine tracks. No sooner is one Gordian knot cut, than another is snarled for Alexander's sword. The best intelligence of the country is spent upon our fools at a critical juncture which should find it bent upon our foes.

Absolute monarchies have a few desirable characteristics—especially for extremists. Authority is sufficiently centralized to obtain lightning action. The scepter, on occasions, is a magician's wand, which with a single sweep can break legislative shackles and alter political complexions to best advantage the community. In light of recent behavior at Washington, it is rapidly becoming apparent that an over-zealous democracy can menace its own existence. There's too much authority of a sort in the United States for our own good. We can quite profitably dispense with some laws and laws. Let us have peace at home, that we may attend to our war abroad. We're impatient to hear from our sons and guns. It's time for them to do our talking.