

## Lecture on "The Driving Power of Civilization"

The two topics will be the plurality of the calendars, which try to educate or to discipline us from the past. The other thing is: Which degree of discipline must a holiday or the calendar really have in order to reach you and me? That's the worst problem perhaps I shall take up this evening first.

But before, let me remind you that we have to do some work on this subject with the help of the papers I have distributed among you. "Time Bettering Days" and the book which I asked you to read, The Driving Power of Western Civilization, deal with holidays.

In "Time Bettering Days" many holidays are involved, especially Easter at the end. The book gives a story of the introduction of a holiday which is only known to the which has played a great part in the history of the last 1,000 years all over the Western world, the second of November, celebrating the memory not of the Saints, but of everyone - you and me - of the sinners and of the human race. It's a very strange celebration because it opposes the celebration of the Saints to the celebration of the common man. Since this allegedly is the era of the common man, this is the first celebration of the common man in our history; that's why I want you to write a paper until the Easter vacation on this topic - your own experiences of holidays in the light of these two papers; the chapter on the All Souls in the West Driving Power and the "Time Bettering Days" paper. I want you to at least analyze two - you must have had many experiences of holidays - analyze two of them in your own life. I thought I'd put you onto a holiday of <sup>to</sup> your own choosing. As I did in former years, you would just go <sup>to</sup> the Encyclopedia Britannica, misunderstand it and then copy it wrongly. So the only way in which I can make you, perhaps, see the importance of this whole problem today is to ask you to make use of your experiences in your family, or in your college, or in your summer vacation.

In include into the holidays, obviously, your vacations. It doesn't matter to me whether your holiday is one day, or two days, or five days, or three months. That's after your own choosing - what you call a holiday!

Probably in your experience the only holidays you've ever had are the summer vacations. If you call this a holiday or a vacation it makes no difference to me. You will see in the light of these papers what the importance is; that it is a landmark in your life; and that you look to this time before it is lived; and that you look back on it after it is lived. You see it as something different from the run of the mill days - that they have been "Time Bettering" or, perhaps you say, time deteriorating days - that they constitute a gradation, a difference in time. So this will be the theme.

Right away we have vacations breaking our on March 28 and I wish to have your papers by that time, and again once more based on my dealing with the problem of the holiday in these two texts, and of course here in class, and the analogies of at least two of your own experiences. You can be critical of your experiences; you can be critical of my text. That's the same to me!

It is very difficult, at this moment gentlemen, to even understand why a holiday should be important. You think it is a day off, and the word of course means that it is of no significance. A day off is a day in which you have to do nothing, and in which you can stay at home, in which you can lie in bed, in which you don't have to work. This morning my little granddaughter excused herself. She has a terrible cold and they have a school vacation. She said: "I'm delighted that I have my cold now, because you know I'd really like to go to school next week", and then she blushed and said: "Well, in a way I'd like it." Of course it isn't done that any child is allowed to say that she likes school better than staying home. So you have always to be very cheerful, gentlemen, if one of my classes is called off, instead of going in black mourning over that

fact. So you really only know that a holiday is a negation of something. It's a pure minus, it's a gap, it's a hiatus. The reason for this is, gentlemen, that the Greeks, the Greek Spirit, the spirit of the arts and sciences, only knows of leisure. The character, gentlemen, of a Greek holiday, or a Roman holiday is a negation of something - is leisure. Leisure is less life than otherwise. Today in this country holidays are always completely confused with leisure. "Give me free time" they say, "Give me more than our 32 hour week and we will end up in a 2 hour week", and then people will know what to do with their leisure. And you can see that today there is a terrible confusion.

Then the Greek spirit, gentlemen - of the mind, and of the muses, and of the arts, and of the entertainment industry, and of the burlesque show, and the movies, and television careers - then everything you know of a holiday is only entertainment. And what is entertainment? - to get between real times and fill in the gap. "Enter" is like "inter." And what is "inter" like? What's between the nations? What is entertainment? What keeps you busy between times? Therefore, is you treat today, the holiday, as leisure, as entertainment, as a time for your hopes you miss the point totally.

And I'm afraid that this is so today. Instead of having holidays the people who govern us or who want to be elected, give people more and more leisure. That's meant by the famous term of course, on ancient Rome, that you give them all bread and games and that's how they are ruled. And by and large, the American people are ruled in this way - by baseball and orange juice. Keeps the people happy - keeps them happy! Therefore, gentlemen, if the Greek Spirit rules, there are no holidays.

Now I venture to say that since 1945 in this country there has been an awareness that if you break all the classical values of Greek and Latin civilizations, if you don't have a latin's regard for school anymore, you have no

language requirements, as you practically have none because

It means the opposite from former days. You learn a language in order to forget it. That's the whole purpose of the two years of the language studies you undergo. So you have this gentlemen; you try to gain leisure. We shorten all hours and we save you all kinds of entertainment. And even the great books are entertainment.

Everybody asks of such a serious course as this: "What do I get out of this?" Gentlemen, whenever a man asks "What do I get out of college?", he is a Greek mind who wants to be entertained. You don't get anything out of this course, but the world at large may at least exclude the fact that you might be otherwise a very harmful individual, and it may mean you less harm.

One of you came up after class and said to me: "Give me an immediate solution to the holiday problem." My only answer to you, gentlemen, is you have to enter those before you can be useful instruments in helping us to find the solution. If you think that I have the solution without your getting terribly upwrought about it, you are quite wrong. It takes many people before you can reform the world. You have to enter upon the spirit of the enterprise. He thinks I know the solution without him - of course I don't. As long as you are dickering about too much holidays and too little holidays, so it takes you three months before you understand that you need it in this reform of this leisure generation - which will perish from leisure and boredom. You are all bored because you have too much leisure. So the first thing I would like to throw out as a suggestion, is that obviously a holiday is not to be identified with leisure. That's why I prefer your vacation time as a holiday today. It's a more serious holiday, gentlemen, than the leisure you have in the week by here sleeping through class.

It's very serious to find after a complete collapse of the holiday tradition,

why holidays may have some potency, and why for example, the Navajo Indians are able to remain Navajo Indians just because they have sword dances and holidays. And as soon as you abolish the holiday of the tribe with their dances, there is no tribe. Gentlemen, the existence of any people depends upon the celebration of holidays together. We can say that there are as many people as there are holidays celebrated in the different nations. If you had all over the world as the only holidays, only Christmas, Easter and Pentecost, you would have the Christian people all over the earth. But since we also have the Fourth of July and Thanksgiving, we still have an American people. So, gentlemen, peoples are made by holidays; they disappear without holidays and they become immortal. Why is that so? Because, gentlemen, holidays are something quite different from what you think in astronomy. And so I have stated to you that what I first meant by holidays means absolutely nothing to do with the physical length of 24 hours. It may be 48 hours, it may be three months, it may be a whole sabbatical year for professor who goes every seven years on a sabbatical year, and it may be a Roman holiday - as the American nation took after the World War to celebrate for nine years its going to sleep again, and then have a breakdown of communication in '29. That was such a mistaken holiday. It was a holiday; however, only in a strange sense. The length of a holiday, gentlemen, cannot be measured by the yardstick of astronomical time. That's the first law.

The second is that we must pass through opposite experiences of our heart. If you have not the eve of Christmas, as unfortunately you don't have in this country in the puritanical tradition of the country, Christmas is not celebrated as an evening of gifts and as a morning of worship, but it's all telescoped; because for 200 years Christmas was not celebrated in the United States. The Puritans were against it. When it was imported, it was totally misunderstood.

That is why you have it now commercialized and all packed together. The importance of any holiday is that there is more than one moral status during the day; you have Good Friday mourning, and you have rejoicing on Easter Sunday, and in the middle you have Baptism and ritual and suspension. If you do not celebrate Good Friday you cannot celebrate good Sunday. Now it is very difficult for you to understand this because the Puritans abolished here in this country the holidays, and only left the Sundays - the Sabbath of the Lord - 52 Sundays, one like the other - and no holidays. Everything we have in the form of Easter and Christmas here, is later employed by the Germans, as the Swedes or Danes, you see. And it was never here again the power of forcing people to give Christmas, Easter and Pentecost its full range of developing opposite sentiments in one stretch. Rejoicing and mourning are, of course, the most natural opposites of feeling - laughter and tears. A holiday must be a day in which both feelings come to their rights; for example, take a very small way of celebrating a little holiday like Sunday in a non-Puritanical country, be it Germany, or Sweden or be it Italy. The relation on a small Sunday in the morning in between laughter and tears is very simple. The people go to church solemnly and seriously, then go the imm cheerfully and joyfully and dearly and have their drink there together.

A friend of ours was hired as a minister in the South because he was of a Lutheran denomination and became a minister in the Methodist Church . He used to sit with his parishoners after the service and indulge in a glass of beer. That was part of celebrating the Sunday - after being serious he also was cheerful. So they fired him because a minister cannot indulge in beer. He didn't know that the ups and downs of the human soul are destroyed of the American, and not the flatness and platitude of one hypocritical solemnity. They want to make these ministers into solemn asses who always have to look sour

or always have to grin - they are both equally terrible - to keep smiling is just as wrong an attitude as to keep weeping. The human problem is to weep and to smile, one and the other. Therefore, a holiday is a way of extracting from us our potent charities, and of course our potent charities are all of a different nature. Whether you say rejoicing and mourning, or whether you say war and peace, for the greatness of life you have to have opposites because God wanted us to live through Winter and Summer, through Spring and Fall, through tears and laughter; so any holiday must include two climaxes - heaven and earth, black and white, joy and sorrow. If it doesn't, it isn't a holiday because it doesn't mean the whole man. A holiday is a day in which we become holy and not hollow.

Therefore, all holidays in the United States are hollow because they all are on one tone - at least they try to tell you. It isn't true of course of any serious men, but you poor people are misguided. If you see the march of Macy toys through the streets at Christmas, it always seems to be all just games. The sentiment that there was no room at the inn for the child that was born in the manger is forgotten - the very sorrowful aspect of the birth of Christ. It was not a joyful story but it was a joyful story despite the tears that were shed on that day. That's the whole story. So this is the second thing.

The first thing was that leisure is not a holiday. The second thing is gentlemen, that any holiday must be a composition of opposites. The third, I repeat this, the length of the holiday must be measured not in terms of astronomical time. Any normal holiday will overblow 24 hours, gentlemen; it will be totally indifferent to the striking of the clock and that's why the eve of the holiday usually belongs to it, and the Puritans, gentlemen, who were very religious people and only had some reason to abolish the super-



stitutions that preceded them, helped themselves by celebrating the afternoon of the Saturday. They would sit down at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and

call this Christmas week, and for this reason that when a peddler came along he found the people on a Saturday afternoon in every house he visited, reading the Bible - meditating in a relaxed intellectual study group, so to speak. So that's how the Puritans went through different moods of celebrating the Sabbath of the Lord. On Saturday afternoon they made an intellectual effort and on the Sunday Morning they made an emotional effort; and in this sense I would say that the heart of any holiday was observed by the Puritans. That's why Puritanism is a great power of forming character in this country - because they had the opposite attitudes. The intellectual is some-different thing/from emotional enthusiasm. If you go through two opposites you can have a holiday. The afternoon of the Saturday, therefore, is a revelation to anyone who studies Americanism; because see that even where these people fought the low celebration of the Romans, of the King James Court with their drunkenness and their revelry and their theatre plays, they at least gained weight to a certain range; because sitting with your family at home with your Bible and interpreting it is certainly something quite different from singing hymns on Sunday with a larger congregation, where you meet in a festive mood because you've come 3 or 4 miles in your horse and buggy over land to meet people and come out of the solitude of your single thoughts. So you understand that I'm here at this moment rectifying the impression I might have given that I think that the Puritans were only of a negative impact on this country. Quite the contrary. The one formative power that has made America a great country are the Puritans. They had a very peculiar way of celebrating the Holiday of the Lord by taking the Sabbath very seriously and beginning it in due time. There was no work done on Saturday afternoon long before there were any laws against keeping the stores open. Now



we keep the stores open until Saturday evening at 11 o'clock which means of course, the Sunday cannot be celebrated because people cannot prepare themselves. You cannot celebrate Sunday, gentlemen, if you run into the evening of the Saturday heedlessly, without any expectation of what's going to be tomorrow. Then you scratch your head in the morning and say: "oh my, it's Sunday. I have to go to church."

The fourth element, gentlemen, of the holiday is the sum of the 3 preceding things: the opposites of feeling, the opposites of human behavior, of human impressions of mourning and rejoicing. This circulation of our whole character in various stages makes the holiday into the image of much longer periods of life. In my "Time Bettering Days" I've quoted there the fact that the oldest of which we know is the Babylonian holiday which imitates the course of the whole year. In 24 hours the people run through all the seasons and through all the 12 months and through all the attitudes a man takes while he lives in one year. So what you have lost, we all have lost. It's the power to recognize what you all learn about, and it is simply true that the self is built in the image of the whole body and that today, therefore, is built in the image of all time. A day is not 24 hours gentlemen, and then add another 24 hours for the next day, but a holiday which is taken so seriously that during this one day you march through eternity. If you cannot get this you will not be able to write your paper and you will not understand why it is at all important to think of holidays. You cannot at this moment, I think most of you, afford the idea that 24 hours could have the significance in which the whole of your life may be expressed or symbolized or lived. Let me give you a number of examples to ascertain if you understand what I mean.

The first example is the Olympic Games. To you it is accidental that they are celebrated all 4 years. It helps us, however, to see that you can have a

holiday which is not every year. The cycle of the Olympics is 4 years.

We do this because the Greeks did it. The Greeks met in Olympia in 776 B.C. for the first time. They met from Italy, from Asia Minor, from the Greek Islands, and from the Greek mainland; and so it was very difficult to have to leave home. It took them  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a year to come, and to go, and to meet. So you see that nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the period was taken up the the celebration of the Olympic Games. But is the four-year period meant to be for the Greeks?

As you know there is a circus in every arena, and the Greeks had their chariots driven around, and the charioteer was the greatest victor in the Olympic Games. When Pindar sings his oaths in favor of the Olympic Games it is for the victor in the chariot race that he sings his great Olympic hymns. That was very expensive. The tyrant of Syracuse might win, or some big shot - the Rockefeller of his days - some tremendous robber-baron; and Mr. Pindar would, for enough gold mines, sing and eternalize his fame and innoble him and say that now through his victory in the circus, he had become diefied or sanctified, which is just another word for becoming the name giving heroe of the holy day. Sanctity and holy mean the same thing - holy and sancrous mean perfect, accomplished, Saint. Don't think that Saints are something very

. You all want to be saved! What is a circus? Why is the chariot's race the center of the Olympic Games? Because the circus depicts the race of the sun in the sky. The Greeks, as pagans, had a religion which worshipped movement of the stars in the sky and the biggest star, the Sun. That's why horseracing today is done in this Olympic form - round, round, round again - every round being one day. But there's more to it. ~~The~~ The Greeks worshipped in these four years, gentlemen, practically 4 times 365 years. The so-called great year of inantiquity treated every year as one day of a greater year. After 1460 years, as you can easily find out by thinking of leap year, since  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a year is always lacking in our calender/<sup>in</sup>the 356 years, but since we have only one quarter of a year more after 1460 years, the Sun and the moon and the

stars are in exactly the same position as 1460 years before; because it takes 4 times one quarter day to make one day, times 365 to bring the whole thing to a final cycle. It was the discovery of the ages, gentlemen, that the so-called great year of 1460.....

The last great poem by the poet Goethe gives you quite another example, it is called the "Bridegroom." It was written when the man was eighty; and people at eighty - octogenarians- usually are not bridegrooms. But the human soul, if at all alive, is always the bridegroom. That's the essence of religion - that the human soul has the quality of a bride. If you haven't this quality you are not alive anymore; your soul has died. The human soul is a bride; and so Goethe, feeling very deeply about this, describes one day of his life - morning, noon, evening and mid-night. There are four verses to the poem, in which every verse takes up some human constellation in the morning of your life - at noon, in the evening and when it is over. He uses in his very concentrated poem which is considered one of the greatest, the day as expressing the whole of human life. You have another example here only of the fact that a day can be treated very differently from the way you treat a day. It can embody the whole of time; and it must if it is to be a holiday.

The third example - any Roman Catholic may know something about this; anybody who has taken a retreat may know something about this - is of course, the hours of a day in a monastery - the so-called canonical hours. The seven canonical hours - which also are, as you know, explained to you in "Time

Bettering Days" which begin early in the morning and end in the evening with the - again try to press into the human experiences of these seven occasions during one day: first of all, the experience of the whole week; then of the whole life operation; and that's why the Church always said the history of the world consists of the seven ages, so that the seven hours in one day could, so to speak, take men through the whole experience from the creation of men to the end of time. So we have on on the other end of this strange representative thinking, the fact that to this day in an old-fashioned church, the cathedral building is built in such a way that you are taken through the seven ages of the world. You enter that which is called Paradise; Paradise is only the Biblical name or expression for nature, for what is not yet history. Then it begins at the portals. In every mideaval cathedral you see Adam and Eve. Sometimes they have seven votes beginning with Adam and Eve and ending with the last letter. After Adam and Eve the first age of mankind, you have Noah; then you have the prophets; then you get Christ; then you get the Church; and then you get the era of the Holy Spirit; and then you get the last letter. So any man who goes to Church - not you, gentlemen because you are not men but just adolescents, - men who go to Church should live in Church as the eternal human being who knows that men have to go from nature to pre-history, to the yearning, to the promise of the ancient covenant, into the narrow gate of His crucifixion, and then rise again and reside with the Saints and expect the second coming of Christ. Now it is assumed in every mideaval Church, gentlemen, as being within the power of every faithful that he can live the seven ages of the Church by one visit in the Church; and before you have inkling of this you do not know what it means to celebrate a holiday. So the seven canonical hours at one point, gentlemen, pack into the day or the moment the seven ages; and the architecture of the Cathedral, taking you there from Paradise via the

the fall, and through the Flood, into the revelation and into the redemption. Try to do the same thing - to make every drop in the ocean as perfect as the whole ocean.

You will admit that in a drop of water you have the whole of the ocean; because all the other drops are just like it. You analyze this drop and you have the ocean water - the quality of the ocean water, and yet it isn't the same; because you can master a drop of water and you can drown in the ocean. That is the arrogance of you and me, because you can live down 24 hours and you cannot live down eternity. You think that the day is under your domination and about these three million years, you forget. If you could bring yourself to treat this drop in the water of the ocean with the same reverence as though it were the whole ocean - you cannot object to this as any superstition - the whole secret of the ocean is in this drop of water, is it not? There's no reason to think that your chemical analysis exhausts the significance of this water.

Think what it would mean if California had to go to Colorado because they had not enough water. Water is a very very intriguing thing; because you and I come from water and water is life giving and life directing and we would die without water. So there is a certain reverence for water most normal to everyone of us.

The Persians has as their religion two things: Don't pollute the streams, and don't say a lie. I think the religion most remote from America is this Persian religion. It's a very simple religion, gentlemen, which I think one could very well live by. I think our friend Cramer would say that this is a world religion which deserves to be recognized as a lasting religion. It hasn't to be ashamed of itself. It can hold up its head.

Do you really never say a lie and never pollute a stream? Sir, you are a believer in God; because you believe in his creation, you see, and you believe that you are his creature, which is all that is demanded for. If you don't say a lie you'll say that speech is a divine gift, and if you don't pollute a stream you say that the earth is a divine gift. That's all that's needed for good living.

I only mean to say, gentlemen, that the problem of the holiday is the same as the problem of the drop of water. If you teach your children to throw away bread, or if you say bread cannot be thrown away, that's all the difference in your religion. If you feel that no food can be destroyed wantonly, you are on the side of the Angels; that is, you are able to see in a crust of bread the whole creation, just as you see in a drop of water - the whole of God's very pure creation. If you ever say, "I can shit into the water" as they did for years there at the Mary Hitchcock Clinic - literally they put their feces into the Connecticut River - then you have no religion, that is, no relation to your own existence with regard to creation. I may worship God as the maker of the whole universe, but when it comes to practical application, the Connecticut River is excluded from what is creation and the Mary Hitchcock, too.

Everything then depends, on a holiday, gentlemen, on reversing our weekday attitude. On a weekday we are forced to use parts of the universe as our slaves, our servants. On a holiday we reverse the process, gentlemen. What is a Roman Holiday? A Roman Holiday is a day in which the servants become kings and the kings become servants. That's something very profound. You can't have a holiday without this reversal. In any holiday, all your usefulness, all your exploitation, all your ~~negotiable~~ right to be with other men or with nature as you please, ceases. You can't have a holiday without standing on your head - without reversing the order of your weekday behavior.

That only comes when you can suddenly see that these little things which you use or kill like fleas, the water which you pollute and which you drink, or which you deplete, or which you extinguish - that this part of the whole is much bigger than you. If you cannot see in the Babe in the Manger in Bethlehem the whole representative of the whole human race, you obviously cannot celebrate Christmas - if it is just one brat, one juvenile delinquent child, illegitimate and what not, no home, no nativity, not even

. That's why he would have to be born in a manger; because you cannot celebrate a holiday without reversing all your attitudes of the weekdays. If he isn't their Savior of the world, gentlemen, then there is no Christmas. But on the surface of things he isn't. He's just the tiniest most deserted and abandoned baby in the whole universe. The reversal of this then gentlemen, of the relation of you to the universe and of you to your fellow man comes only possible if this little of time can represent the whole of time. And that is totally your . I say that most people in this country laugh at even the suggestion that they should treat 24 hours or 48 hours or 3 months as representing the whole of the history of mankind. They think I am stark mad. I think that they are stark mad; and there is no compromise between us two.

Gentlemen, what I have said so far may suffice to show you why the individual experience of a holiday always is incomplete. That is: we'll all get into one year, perhaps, one corner of the whole meaning of a holiday; and the holidays are celebrated annually, because in the course of a life we may pass through all the aspects of a holiday. That's the first thing; that the individual layman can only share or participate in the meaning of such a celebration, that he cannot possibly get it all. In the Olympic Games, the Umpire, and the athletes and the spectators obviously get very different aspects



of the holiday. It can't be helped; yet in the real holiday, it all together vicariously communicates. It may be the priest only, or the Bishop who fully goes through all the excitement -- the ups and downs from the washing of the feet on Maundy Thursday, to the kindling of the lights, and the new colors of the Church on an Easter Sunday. Most of the faithful only get a very little glimpse of either the joy or the mourning. Protestants mourn on Good Friday and the Catholics rejoice on Easter Sunday, and so there is a very nice division of color between the various parts of Christianity.

This does not mean that I'm wrong in my saying that a holiday is the hour that faces . If there is no Fourth of July, gentlemen, or no Thanksgiving, there would be no United States of America. They are the conditions of your identity in the world. You must say how serious the total disappearance of such a holiday may be. You may only see <sup>the</sup> ~~that~~ turkey on a Thanksgiving as long as you admit that Thanksgiving imposes on you a discipline. That is, holidays wait for us. It isn't only true that we expect them; but the beneficial work of the Church for example, is that it has such patience. It is there all the time. If you should at some day in your life wake to the fact, it might be good to join a church, you will find her ready to receive you.

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