THE HUMAN SPIRIT

time when they will be generally opened; their contract calling for completion not later than nineteen hundred and seventeen. Individual sections of the great systems, however, will be opened by degrees, as soon as completed.

The new subways will be larger than the present one and the high temperature that has made riding disagreeable to many people will not be repeated in the newer roads. Less waterproofing will be used, which will permit the escape of hot air, and an effort will be made to minimize friction such as that of wheels and brake-shoes on tracks. Where the roads become elevated the construction will be very different from that at present seen in New York. It will be less ungainly and in many places like Queens Boulevard, a real effect of beauty will be courted to prevent the structure from marring the landscape. It is likely also that the operation of trains when they reach the open will be comparatively noiseless.

In building these new roads the Public Service Commission has shown that it has profited by experience, both citizens and property owners benefiting greatly thereby. No great open cuts in busy streets mark their way; the work progresses almost entirely under the surface of the ground. Traffic is not obstructed and inconvenience to the general public is guarded against as much as possible.

The completion of these subways will mark a new era in the civic advancement of the city, bringing the prophecy of the old man, that "New York would be a fine place when completed," nearer than ever to fulfilment.

THE HUMAN SPIRIT: BY CHARLES GRANT MILLER

The potter's wheel is still made of ash and the thrower works upon it now in the same way as did the thrower thousands of years ago in Egypt. As it whirls and whirs he fashions the wet, soft clay upon it into what forms he will. The shapeless, dead mass grows into beautiful, spinning shapes under the deft touch and press of his hands. Now he makes the wheel go slowly; now he makes it go fast and faster. It spins and sings and sighs in unison with his spirit. He must have a sure eye and a sense of weight and form and size to guide him; and he must have a still further sense in the love for the beautiful. As you watch him working you may feel that vast lapses of time make but little difference in essential things.

586
THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The hand of the man of now is no more than was the hand of the man of ancient Egypt. The beginning and the end of making good ware from the earth is the simple potter’s wheel of cheap ash. The texture of the ware and the beauty of its form depend on the spirit and senses of the potter.

Great pictures are painted today in the same way they were in the time of Michaelangelo. Each pigment is separately put on with minutest care. The great design, seemingly so simple, is a combination of infinite detail. Every deft touch is the result of long years of earnest striving and deep feeling. He who conceives and paints a great picture has first felt and yearned deeply. The spirit of the picture can be no nobler than the spirit that conceives and paints it. The artist’s own soul, awakened, broadened and mellowed by yearning and striving, is the soul that shines out from the canvas.

Great thoughts come today, just as they came in the day of Socrates, from minds developed in humble thinking and hearts inured to noble feeling. Inspiration is no chance thing. It comes only to minds prepared; there must first be the perfected soil of knowledge, suffering, sympathy.

Until the ear has been held close to the heart of humanity the lips can utter no word worth while. Genius can no more flash from a barren mind than a rose in full bloom can spring from desert sand. And the great thoughts, springing from the deeps of the soul and fashioned into speech by feeling minds—how homely they ever are!

Advancing civilization has made great progress in many things. The man of today in the midst of his myriads of mechanical devices, is enabled to do in a day work for which his grandfather would have required weeks and months. But how much of this work is really worth while?

When we contemplate life in its larger and lasting issues, and look upon it as a matter of souls and sublimities, not of days and of fleeting joys, we must be irresistibly moved by the fact that the success of this existence is dependent not upon the splendid things and the magnificent events, for what it holds of joys worth having, and noble happenings, but upon the unseen, unheard quality, the human spirit.

The pictures that have any real meaning for mankind are the ones into which the true artist has toilsomely yet lovingly worked a part of himself. The thoughts that enlighten and inspire come from the deep wells of human understanding and sympathy. Dead senses are quickened only by human spirit, as the dead clay is given shape and temperament only by the senseful touch of the potter.