

Address at

Polish Day Celebration of
United Polish-American Citizens Clubs of Beaver County
Ambridge Borough Park, Pa.
September 6, 1936

Believe me, I am positively pleased to be here with you this afternoon.

This pleasure arises from two sources: first, knowledge of the fact that I am among firends, and second, knowledge of the fact that we have a common aim and purpose to do what we can toward the promotion of the welfare of the people of the United States.

It is always a pleasure to make human contact. Those serving in any public capacity must necessarily keep in touch with the people, their human conditions and wants. No human being on this earth can ever cease to be human - that is naturally essential to his makeup. We are all the same. We all strive toward the same end.

Frequently imaginary barriers arise between people. Mingling tears down the barriers and makes for cooperation in the attainment of our end.

It has been related that a long time ago a prominent lawyer was appointed to a very high office in the cabinet of one of our past presidents. After serving in Washington for a number of years he returned to his home town on a visit. The first one he saw on the streets was a mail carrier. He walked up to him extended his hand and said: "You know me, don't you?" This mail carrier said: "Yes, I know you, Mr. So-and-So." "Do you know I am now in the cabinet of the President of the United States?" "Yes, I know" was the answer. "Do the people here know that I am in the cabinet of the President of the United States, serving as Attorney General?" The mail carrier replied "Yes, they know it." "Well, what do they say?" "Oh, they just laugh," came the surprising but human reply. Contact is the leveler of all men - none too big - none too small.

The area of this country is very large, but in each section live human beings - the same as you and I. No matter where you live or what you do, you all hold an important place in the economic and political structure of this country. This area from which you are assembled has grown primarily because of its natural conditions. Originally you owe its establishment to military considerations, because of the union of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers to form the Ohio River, which made it a point of strategic importance in the period when the French and English were contending for ownership of the Ohio valley, but because of its unusual situation, its commercial importance resulted in a natural growth as a shipping center for the transfer of supplies between the Atlantic Seaboard and the Ohio valley. The exploitation of the rich fields of bituminous coal and iron ore helped this section of the United States. The presence of the ore and fuel for smelting of the ore led naturally to the development of the iron and steel industry, and even when other great ore deposits were discovered to the west, the presence of the fuel and Pittsburgh's command of easy water transportation enabled it to maintain its position as an iron and steel center.

The availability of large deposits of glass-sand combined with the presence of natural gas which could be used in making glass, developed

another important industry; and the exploitation of oil fields contributed from still another angle to this section's economic activity.

Railways followed the natural low water levels of the rivers and made Pittsburgh their center. The production of iron and steel led to the manufacture of various kinds of machinery. Railway and electrical equipment began to be fabricated. With the growth of a large population, the production of food became important, and a market was created for vegetables, fruits, and meats.

Quite naturally, therefore, with the development of all these natural resources and an increase in population, there was a growth of banks, newspapers, and of religious and educational institutions. Organizations of various kinds were formed wherein men and women could express their views freely and whereby they could join in a common activity for the further development of their physical, mental and moral elements - to the benefit of our nation.

You are therefore assembled here today as a group of men and women who know what it is to work - and to work hard; who know what it is to give of one's self unstintingly for the good of your fellow citizen, in order that all might live and live happily.

We are of Polish extraction. You have heard the Polish language spoken here today. It is the language of those from whom we descend. You know their history and you are proud of it. From it you have taken ideals which it is your aim to contribute to the ideals of the United States. You are citizens of and you take an active part in the everyday life of the people of the United States. You point to your citizenship here with a great deal of pride - and justly so.

Your sons and daughters, following in your footsteps, are striving to make a place for themselves in American ranks in order that each succeeding generation might build higher and higher upon the accomplishments of the preceding generation.

Of first concern is their education - their physical, mental and moral development. They learn to use their senses and their intellect in order to form new ideas, in order to make a new and a fresh contribution to America. The high school and the college afford them opportunities to obtain a better knowledge of the fundamentals so that - entering upon their field of endeavor - they might specialize in some particular work for the good of society and to become your pride and your glory.

To them you look for a realization of your dreams - in them is your future. Nothing, therefore, should be left undone to promote their quest for knowledge, for the more they know and the more they do, the greater monument you leave behind when you pass on into the next world.

No one knows everything - no one can know everything. This basic truth should therefore be a source of inspiration to the young people who seek to learn. Many problems remain unsolved. Perhaps your son or your daughter will aid in the solution of these problems. Some of those present today will some day take their places to assume heavy responsibilities, and if they are equipped mentally and morally they will be

able to bring happiness to others, personal satisfaction to themselves and glory to their country.

We learn also by mingling with other people - obtaining their views and their opinions - and giving them full opportunity to express them. There is no one so small that he does not know something that you and I do not know - and there is no one so big that he can not learn something new from even the smallest.

Human nature is the same the world over. It was written that "The greatest study of mankind is man."

The better we know other men, the better we know ourselves. Besides being essential, the study of human nature is interesting because it deals with our own natural selves. It is natural that we should wish to know ourselves.

A wife called at the haberdashery and said: "I wish a collar for my husband." The clerk asked her for the size of collar desired. She said: "I don't know, I will go back and ask my husband." The clerk, who thought he knew something of human nature, said: "I think I know the size of the collar your husband wears." She said: "really!" The clerk said: "Yes, I think he wears a size 11 1/2 collar." She said: "That is right - I remember now - but how did you know?" The clerk said: "Generally a man who sends his wife out for a collar wears about that size."

This of course is only a humorous story, but its point is that we can learn much by observing others.

Education alone is not sufficient, however. Hard work is necessary. Trials and tribulations come, and when we are accustomed to working hard we face these trials and tribulations and overcome them. There are times when we feel we just can't go on - perhaps something close to ourselves or to our home has happened that almost staggers us. It is then that we have to rely upon a backbone that has been strengthened by labor and its influence on character; for many people start out well, some go half way others go three quarters of the way, but very few go all of the way, passing over all obstacles. It is the finish that counts.

Something fine comes into the soul of man when he begins to feel that he knows his duty and has tried hard to meet it. A confidence is created by means of which he progresses to the end without much difficulty.

This is your day. Let us take from it something that we can use in our everyday life - tomorrow and all of the other tomorrows that follow.

Let us here dedicate ourselves to our own individual tasks; to the education of our youth. Let us here dedicate ourselves to a loyalty to the United States that could never be questioned one bit by even the most extreme critics. Let us here dedicate ourselves to the ideals of our forefathers whose spirit descends upon this gathering.

Having done that, we can then continue our everyday efforts, bearing our burdens and striving to go higher and higher, no matter what the

weather - unto the end. The poet expresses this very beautifully in
"THE COMMON STREET":

"The common street climbed up against the sky,
Gray meeting gray; and wearily to and fro
I saw the patient common people go,
Each, with his sordid burden, trudging by.
And the rain dropped; there was not any sigh
Or stir of a live wind; dull, dull and slow
All motion; as a tale told long ago
The faded world; and creeping night drew nigh.

Then burst the sunset, flooding far and fleet,
Leavening the whole of life with magic leaven.
Suddenly down the long wet glistening hill
Pure splendor poured - and lo! the common street,
A golden highway into golden heaven,
With the dark shapes of men ascending still."