

Composition on If I Were A Millionaire

Alnaschar, who dreamt what he would do when he became a millionaire by selling his earthen pots and pans, was by no means unique. We are all, more or less, Alnaschar in this respect. We like to imagine ourselves greater and richer than we actually are, or ever expect to be. And so, if I do indulge in a bit of daydreaming as to what I would do if I were a millionaire, let no one smile at my folly.

I will be frank. I am not one of those idealists who will rush out with their checkbooks and distribute their wealth to do well to the world. That may come later. For the immediate present, charity, I feel, begins at home. So the first thing that I will do will be to get rid of everything that makes life disagreeable to me. I will, for example, get myself and mine out of the rented hovel in a crowded street where I live, and will move into a capacious house-(it need not be an Aladdin's palace) – where I can live comfortably. I will also try to fit up the house with the latest electrical labor-saving devices – an electrical cooker for the kitchen, washer for laundering, vacuum-cleaners for mopping up dust, – to mention a few by way of example.

Having comfortably settled in a comfortable house, I will utilize my millions in buildup industries. One of our proverbs says – money. If I can invest a part of my millions in business and industries, I will not only be multiplying my wealth, but I will be doing some good for my country. The prosperity of a country depends upon its industrial development, and I will be contributing my share towards ensuring this.

Frankly, I don't believe much in charities. Poverty can never be cured by charities. The only way to eliminate poverty is by creating wealth in the country and ensuring its proper distribution. Although

I do not despise my millions, I do not believe in the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. But to ensure that wealth is properly distributed, I must have some voice in my country's government. That will make it necessary for me to take to politics. I have to devote some time in some way to political activities. I may run a newspaper; I may contest parliamentary elections; in any case, I have got to put in my whole weight in favor of the equitable distribution of national wealth, so that none is poor or over-rich. Many will say that it is all utopian; some will say it is a communist idea. But I am not afraid of names and labels as long as the thing is good.

I do not know how much a million amounts to. It, after all, this, I have still something more to spend, I will spend it on the spread of education. Today educations are the greatest need of my country, for democracy can function properly if the people are well educated. When I have a voice in the government, I will see that education is made free and compulsory up to the age of sixteen at least. For this money has to be found by taxation, by expropriation, even by confiscation, if necessary. For education is the basis of a well-ordered society. But if I cannot influence state politics, I must do whatever I can in my humble way. I will see that the children of those who work in my industrial concerns get a free education out of the profits of the business. I will endow as many schools as I can for the spread of education.

All these are hazy notions, but surely they are not hazier than the millions which are to help me to carry these notions into practice. If the millions are there, the notions will soon cease to be hazy. Of course, there is the other view – that if the notions are clear and passionately held, the millions will not fail to come to make them effective.