

**AMERICAN
PATRIOTISM:
AN ESSAY**

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American Patriotism: An Essay by Putnam P. Bishop

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AN ESSAY**

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AMERICAN PATRIOTISM

AN ESSAY

BY

PUTNAM P. BISHOP

AUTHOR OF "THE PSYCHOLOGIST"

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AMERICAN PATRIOTISM.

GENESIS AND GROWTH.

Patriotism has been so mighty a factor in the history of the world, that we naturally regard it as having been ordained from above. Moreover, for one who is inclined to study the mental constitution of man, it is easy to see that the evolution of this affection is assured by structural necessity. Its fountain head, in common with the primary source of love of kindred, love of party and several other affections, is what I have elsewhere called "Susceptibility to Consciousness of Ownership." I mean by "Ownership" the relation denoted by the possessive pronouns. When I am so related to any object of contemplation, be it a person, a class of persons, an organization, or an aggregate, however simple or multifarious in its component parts, that I call it "mine,"—the apprehension of that relation is a cause of delight

to me, and that delight becomes inseparably associated in my mind with the object contemplated. Then, under an immutable law of my nature, my heart re-acts in affection toward the object which is occupying my thoughts when that special enjoyment is experienced.

It is evident that the emergence of patriotism in the young heart presupposes the intellectual conception of a country distinguished from all other countries, and the apprehension of this distinctive relation to it. Hence, the growth and character of the affection depend very largely on intellectual development. The conception may come far short of embracing all the territory and population subject to a common government. A clan, a tribe or a race, with the limited area inhabited by it, or a section whose people have exclusive interests and traditions in common, may completely fill out the mental picture of one's country and, in this case, the reach of the affection will be correspondingly restricted. Still in all such cases we have a territory and a population to which the individual is joyously conscious of a possessory relation ; and the structurally necessitated affection which responds to this consciousness,