

20th April 2021

Good

**“There is so much good in the worst of us,
And so much bad in the best of us,
That it hardly behoves any of us,
To talk about the rest of us.”**

Anonymous

Edward Wallis Hoch was an American politician in the early part of the 20th century who, after serving two terms in the House of Representatives, became the 17th Governor of Kansas in 1904. A printer and newspaper editor by profession, the verse above appeared in his publication, the *Marion County Record*, and, therefore, has often been attributed to him, though he disclaimed this at the time. But whoever penned these words knew a fair bit about human nature.

Even the worst of us has a core of innate goodness. If we are, as the Bible suggests, made in the image of God, then we were made for good things. We all have the potential, therefore, to do good. And, as we suggested a couple of days ago, when we face up to the “bad in the best of us”, we will always have the possibility of being better than we are.

But while we’re on this theme, it’s important to acknowledge that it “hardly behoves any of us” to judge the whys and wherefores of someone else’s life. “Judge not, that ye be not judged” is a good motto to live by. “People in glass houses shouldn’t throw stones” is another.

During his two terms as Governor of Kansas, Hoch saw many new laws enacted, relating to child labour, provision for the poor, bank guarantees and fair rates for the transportation of goods. He also oversaw improvements in the juvenile courts and other State institutions. In other words, Hoch saw his political life as a framework for doing good things. I don’t know enough about him to explore the balance of good or bad in his personal life, but I do know that the outworking of his service to others saw him doing much that was good for them. If good things can be seen in our actions, then it’s pretty fair to assume there is goodness in our heart.

A prayer for today

*Jesus said: “Let your light shine before people in such a way
that they will see your good actions and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

Lord, help me to live by that guidance today. Amen

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