VIEW OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION OF 1900 WHICH NOMINATED McKINLEY AND ROOSEVELT FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT

of it gave him a hold upon their gratitude that time only strengthened.

James G. Blaine, in his "Twenty Years of Congress," wrote: "William McKinley, Jr., enteted from the Canton district. He enlisted in an Ohio regiment when only 18 years old, and won the rank of major by meritorious services. The interests of his constituents and his own bent of mind led him to the study of industrial questions, and he was soon recognized in the House as one of the most thorough statisticians, and one of the ablest defenders of the doctrine of protection."

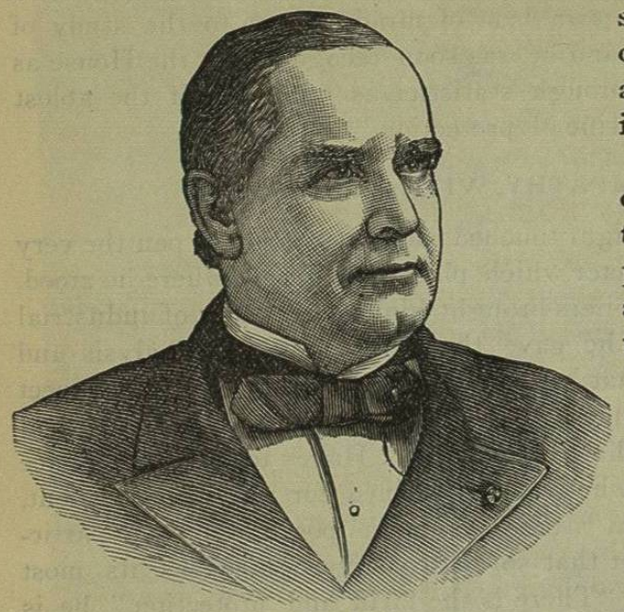
SYMPATHY WITH TOILERS.

The Plumed Knight touched with his trenchant pen the very needle's eye of character which placed McKinley where he stood. Sympathy with the toilers brought him to the study of industrial questions, to which he gave the same thorough analysis and intense application that he gave to his law cases. In this respect he was like Garfield, having given like thorough study to political subjects. It is said that Rutherford B. Hayes took occasion once to advise McKinley, who seemed destined for public preferment, to confine his political studies as far as possible to some particular subject, to master that so as to be recognized as its most learned expounder. "There is the tariff and protection," he is said to have advised. "It affords just the field for such endeavor as I have described. In the near future it is likely to become one of the leading issues upon which the voters of this nation will divide probably for many years."

This conversation may have occurred, but the fact remains that the natural bent of McKinley's mind and the tendency to sympathize with the toilers had early turned his intellect toward that precise question. That was his theme when very early in his legal career he took the stump and discussed political questions in his own and neighboring counties, to which his reputation as an attractive speaker early penetrated.

Major McKinley was only 34 years old when, in 1877, the people of the Canton district elected him to represent them in

Congress. Henry Clay and James G. Blaine are the most conspicuous statesmen who began Congressional careers at an early age. It was a Democratic House, and the new member began his service at the foot of the unimportant Law Revision Committee. His first term passed with no public speech of note to his credit, but Speaker Samuel J. Randall had noticed the studious application of the young Ohioan and his shrewdness in committee work.



HON. WILLIAM McKINLEY.

Hence, at the outset of his second term McKinley was placed on the Judiciary Committee next to Thomas Brackett Reed. His ambition and mental promptings led him to prefer the Ways and Means Committee, but he was disappointed at that time. However, early in the session the bill of Fernando Wood gave him his chance, and he riddled that measure with a grasp of fact and merciless logic that marked him as one of the masters of protection knowledge.

McKinley's Congressional prominence may be said to have fairly begun with the retirement of Garfield from the Ways and Means Committee after his election to the Presidency in 1880. McKinley was appointed to the vacancy, and from then until he retired from Congress in 1891, after ten years of service that would have been continuous except for that portion of the Forty-eighth Congress when the Democrats unseated him, he remained upon that most important committee. His work was so strong and incisive that the Democrats, fearing his abilities, three times sought

his second session debate on the tariff-revision bill to throw him out of Congress by gerrymandering his district. Twice placed in districts so fixed that the Democratic majority seemed assured, he nevertheless was elected by substantial majorities.

In 1890 an international contest was brought into the narrow limits of his Congressional district. The order had gone forth from Democratic free-trade headquarters that the peerless champion of protection must be beaten at any cost. So his district was patched up until it showed a nominal Democratic plurality of 3,100 votes. Most men would have shirked such a contest and retired upon laurels already won.

WENT BOLDLY INTO THE FIGHT.

Not so McKinley. His Scotch-Irish blood was up, and he threw himself into the fight with an impetuosity that he had never before exhibited. He actually carried three of the four counties of his district, but was beaten by a slender plurality of 302 votes. He had pulled down the Democratic majority 2800 votes, and what his enemies sought to make his Waterloo proved to be a McKinley triumph and turned Republican thought in the country toward him as the leader of the greater struggle of 1896. It, however, closed his Congressional career.

McKinley in Washington was a worker persistent, methodical and indefatigable. He was never found in the haunts of convivial men. That side of life which fascinates and has destroyed the usefulness of many brilliant men had no fascination for him. His work-day was spent in committee or in the House, and the business of the day over, he went straight to his home and his invalid wife. Tom Murray, who for years was manager of the House restaurant, says that for years he watched his daily coming for a bowl of crackers and milk, which consumed, he returned to his work and wrought while his colleagues regaled upon terrapin and champagne.

And yet the hard-working, non-convivial member from Canton was popular with his fellow-members on both sides of the House. He led a bare majority of twenty-two through all

the perils of conflicting interests. He, too, found time to champion the Federal Elections bill, and to draw to its support many men from widely separated territory, and representing many diverse local interests.

It was McKinley's Congressional record that made him illustrious. Beginning at the foot of the ladder in committee appointment, he forged steadily to the front. Leadership was won, not conceded. It was his presentment of the great tariff bill that crowded the House of Representatives on that ever-memorable May 7, 1890, when he reported it and opened a debate which has become historical. His contrast between protection and free trade, which closed that famous forensic utterance, paints at once a picture and a prophecy.

INDEPENDENCE AND PROSPERITY.

"We have now," he said, "enjoyed twenty-nine years continuously of protective tariff laws—the longest uninterrupted period in which that policy has prevailed since the formation of the Federal Government—and we find ourselves at the end of that period in a condition of independence and prosperity the like of which has no parallel in the recorded history of the world. In all that goes to make a nation great and strong and independent we have made extraordinary strides. We have a surplus revenue and a spotless credit.

"To reverse this system means to stop the progress of this Republic. It means to turn the masses from ambition, courage and hope to dependence, degradation and despair. Talk about depression! We would have it then in its fulness. Everything would indeed be cheap, but how costly when measured by the degradation that would ensue! When merchandise is cheapest, men are poorest, and the most distressing experiences of our country—aye, of all history—have been when everything was lowest and cheapest, measured in gold, and everything was highest and dearest, measured by labor."

When Major McKinley, in 1890, lost his gerrymandered district by the narrow margin of 302 votes, there was no doubt

in the minds of Ohio Republicans as to who should and must be their candidate for Governor. It was no consolation purse that he was to race for. It was simply and solely that the fortune of hostile legislative control had placed within reach as candidate for the Chief Executive of the State a man of spotless honor, whose many services made him the most popular man in the Commonwealth. The room in the northwest corner of the State House in Columbus is brimful of history.

A Secretary of the Treasury, a Chief Justice of the United States and a President sat there as the Chief Executive of the State before being called to higher preferment. Nearly every man who has occupied the chief chair therein has been or still is a vital force in the political or business history of the nation. No other State has ever contributed as many Governors to the National Executive in chair or council.

A FAITHFUL PUBLIC OFFICER.

Governor McKinley's career of four years in the Executive Chair of Ohio was exemplification of the fact that the most interesting period of a statesman's public service is not necessarily that in which he enjoys the greatest degree of public prominence. That office claimed, almost monopolized, his attention, and local interests were never in the remotest degree subordinated to wider political necessities. But this lessened neither the number nor loyalty of his friends in all parts of the country.

His solicitude for the toilers was marked. His sympathy with the eight-hour movement was early manifested. He was a conspicuous champion of arbitration in the settlement of labor difficulties. These convictions appeared in his recommendations of legislation to protect workingmen in hazardous occupations, to secure them more considerate treatment as well as more safety in the pursuit of their avocations. It was upon his recommendation that the Ohio law was passed requiring that all street cars should be furnished with vestibules to protect the motormen and conductors from inclement weather.

But it was along the line of arbitration—authorized but not

compulsory which he regarded as the true solution of labor troubles—that his best work was done. During his first term the State Board of Arbitration was created upon the Massachusetts plan, but he made its workings the subject of his personal supervision during all his administration. During the existence of the Board, twenty-eight strikes, some of them involving 2000 men, were investigated, and in fifteen cases the Board found a common basis upon which both parties could agree.

SENDS RELIEF TO MINERS IN DISTRESS.

No account of Governor McKinley's connection with labor problems would be complete without mention of the tireless energy he displayed in securing relief for the 2000 miners of the Hocking Valley mining district, who, early in 1895, were reported out of work and destitute. The news reached him at midnight, but by 5 A. M., on his own responsibility, a car, loaded with provisions, worth $1000, was dispatched to the afflicted district. Appeals made subsequently to the Boards of Trade or Chambers of Commerce of the great cities of the State increased this initial benefaction to $32,796 worth of clothing and provisions.

Governor McKinley's two terms as the State's Executive were on the whole smooth and harmonious, but he was repeatedly called upon to solve perplexing problems in the relations of capital and labor. In 1894 the State Government received no fewer than fifteen calls for State troops to aid in enforcing the law. No such demand had been made since the Civil War, but Governor McKinley, obeying the dictates of his judgment, answered with such popular acceptation that even those labor organizations which are most radical in opposing any action in labor troubles on the part of the State militia were forced to admit the wisdom of his course.

CHAPTER II.

A Man of Noble Ideals and Unselfish Aims—His Domestic Fidelity—A Governor of Rare Sagacity—His Successful Administration as President.

NO events in the history of President McKinley commended him more to the confidence and respect of his fellow-citizens than his honorable course in two national conventions of his party, when, had he shown a momentary departure in steadfast loyalty in support of the men he had been instructed to vote for, he might have himself been the nominee. Since 1876 he had borne a prominent part in Republican national conventions. He was a member of the Committee on Resolutions of the convention of 1880, when the man who led the Ohio delegation, pledged to the candidacy of Senator John Sherman, and who placed that veteran statesman in nomination in a speech that was one of the masterpieces of his public utterances, was himself made the nominee. This was James A. Garfield.

Again, in 1884, he was the chosen member of the Committee on Resolutions who drafted the party platform with such skill that a newspaper raised his name to its column head with the words, "Let the man who wrote the platform of '84 be our standard-bearer for 1888."

Perhaps McKinley himself realized in 1888 that he then hardly measured up to the standard of the tried and true veterans in the public service whose names were to go before that convention. Certainly no one could have declared such fact more unhesitatingly or earnestly than he did. It was an occasion never to be forgotten, and it demonstrated even then that Mr. McKinley was a Presidential possibility who could afford to bide his time and need not crowd veterans in public favor out of a nomination which for him could have no charm unless fairly won.

The balloting for President had reached the fourth call when