

CHAPTER VII.

McKINLEY ON CIVIC PATRIOTISM.

Address at Rochester, N. Y.—Studying conditions of government—Public opinion the basis—Zeal after election—The people's business—Duty of business men—Manufacturing interests—Our best market—An extraordinary spectacle.

VERY rarely has there been a more powerful statement of the obligations and importance of civic patriotism than that by Governor McKinley, at Rochester, N. Y., before the Chamber of Commerce of that city. It is the more forcible because it is in the simplest business language—and the direct association of good citizenship with good business is remarkable and impressive.

CIVIC PATRIOTISM.

GOVERNOR McKINLEY AT ROCHESTER, N. Y., FEB. 13TH, 1895.

"MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:

"I cannot forego making grateful acknowledgment of the honor of the invitation of the Chamber of Commerce of the city of Rochester which brings

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me here to-night. It would have been more agreeable to me to have been a silent guest at your table, freed from the responsibility of making an address.

"These are times when the wisest words are wanted and the careless should be unspoken. I wish more than ever in my life for the power to speak the words which, at a crisis like the present, are so much needed. The people throughout the country are at this moment giving more sober consideration to the duties of citizenship than probably at any previous period. They are studying conditions in national, State, and city governments. They are reflecting upon their responsibility and power in relation to these conditions, having uppermost in mind the possibility to improve them.

"What can we do to better them?" is the inquiry engaging every thoughtful mind, and which comes almost unbidden from every tongue. The power, as well as the responsibility, the people are beginning to realize, rests with them. Their duty they want to know, and knowing it, they are ready to do it.

"Our government, National, State, and Municipal, rests upon public opinion. Public opinion creates free governments, and upholds them for good or for ill. Public opinion, however good, if indifferent, has no vital force. When aroused, it may check an evil in public administration, but the evil will resume its sway the moment the public sentiment which arrested it lapses into indifference. Public opinion, to secure real reforms and hold them, must not be fitful and

spasmodic; it must be vigorous, vigilant, steady, and constant, and as sleepless in its activity as the enemy of right is known always to be. Swift as public judgment sometimes is, and justly is, in the condemnation of public officials and public policies, something more than this is required. Execution of the public will must follow the public judgment. And this is only possible when the same public is alert and determined that its judgment shall not be a cold formality, but a living fact, to be respected and enforced.

"Zeal after an election is quite as essential as before. The cause which was successful at the polls demands constant zeal for its practical realization. The best agents of the popular will are made better by the incessant watchfulness of their principals. Not watchfulness alone, but support, reinforcement, and encouragement are necessary. The battle is only begun when the first line of intrenchments is taken. The army is quite as necessary in the engagements which are to follow. The election only determines public policy. It has then to be carried out. It requires the people co-operating continuously with the public officers to put into the forms of law and administration their declared purpose. The election settles much or little dependent upon how the election decrees are interpreted and executed. The election only declares the people's purpose. After this must come the fulfillment, for the promises of the election should always be sacredly kept. Here comes

'the tug of war.' Then is not the time for relaxation on the part of the citizen, but for renewed and redoubled effort and vigilance. If then the people become indifferent, you may be sure the public officer, however strong and true and well meaning, will be inadequate for the task. The official is quick to catch the spirit of the people.

"Lincoln said, as he journeyed to Washington in 1861, in response to the address of welcome by Governor Morton, of Indiana, at the city of Indianapolis:

"'In all the trying places in which I may be placed, and doubtless I will be placed in many such, my reliance will be upon you, the people of the United States, and I wish you to remember now and forever that it is your business, not mine alone.'

"No truth was ever more manifest or more significant, then and now, than that uttered by Mr. Lincoln.

"Government of the people is the people's business, and if they neglect it, government and people both suffer. The duty of the citizen does not end when the polls are closed on election day. He has, by the act of voting, performed an important duty, but the 364 days of the year remaining each has its own distinct duty, sometimes quite as important as the one on election day.

"Interest in public affairs, National, State, and city, should be ever present and active, and not abated from one year's end to the other. No American citizen is too great and none too humble to be

exempt from any civic duty, however subordinate. Every public duty is honorable.

"If the best citizens will not unite to serve the State or city, the worst may and generally will be in control. There is in every State and city a majority in favor of the best government, and when they fail to secure it, it is because the majority is indifferent and without unity of purpose and action. Business men cannot, with safety, stand aloof from political duties. Their success or failure in their own enterprises is often involved in good or bad government. The great danger to the country is indifferentism.

"This menace often comes from the busy man or man of business, and sometimes from those possessing the most leisure or learning. I have known men engaged in great commercial enterprises to leave home on the eve of an election, and then complain of the result, when their presence and the good influence they might properly have exerted would have secured a different and better result. They run away from one of the most sacred obligations in a government like ours, and confide to those with less interest involved and less responsibility to the community, the duty which should be shared by them. What we need is a revival of the true spirit of popular government, the true American spirit where all—not the few—participate actively in government. We need a new baptism of patriotism; and suppressing for the time our several religious views upon the

subject, I think we will all agree that the baptism should be by immersion. There cannot be too much patriotism. It banishes distrust and treason, and anarchy flees before it. It is a sentiment which enriches our individual and National life. It is the firmament of our power, the security of the Republic, the bulwark of our liberties. It makes better citizens, better cities, a better country, and a better civilization.

"The business life of the country is so closely connected with its political life that the one is much influenced by the other. Good politics is good business. Mere partisanship no longer controls the citizen and country. Men who think alike, although heretofore acting jealously apart, are now acting together, and no longer permit former party associations to keep them from co-operating for the public good. They are more and more growing into the habit of doing in politics what they do in business. Strong as the party tie may be, it is not so strong as the business tie. Men would rather break with their party than break up their business. They prefer individual and National prosperity to party supremacy, and a clean public service to party spoils. The business man cannot stand aloof from public affairs without prejudice to his own business and without neglecting the grave duties which he owes the State. Wholesome political activity in the business world is promotive of the general good. Interest in public affairs by spurts is probably better than no interest at all, but the steady, uninterrupted,

every-day interest is the crying need of the hour and the only path of safety. The best results in free government can be had in no other way.

"You cannot hope to improve public affairs by withholding your own good offices. If you would clear and purify the atmosphere of our political life, you must lend your own energy and virtue and intelligence and honesty to do it.

"The business men of the country have devolving upon them a grave responsibility. It is no easy task to keep the mighty wheels of industry in operation. Idle wheels mean idle men and idle capital. Both draw upon their accumulations, and each is unprofitable when the other is unemployed. Think of the vast capital invested in manufactures in this country, and what skill and watchfulness are required to keep it at work! The manufactures of the United States in 1890, engaged \$2,900,735,884 of capital, and the value of the output was \$4,860,286,837. The making of these products furnished steady and remunerative occupation to 2,251,134 persons; and the stupendous sum of \$1,221,170,454 poured into the then happy and prosperous homes of the American workingmen—nearly four millions of dollars for each working-day, and nearly one-half million dollars for every working-hour of every working-day of the year 1890. Our manufactures have made steady advance from 1865 to 1892; nearly one million more persons were employed in the year 1890 than in 1880, and more were employed in 1892 than had

ever been employed in any previous year in our history, and more, it is needless to say, than have been employed since; and the wages paid in 1890 were more than double the amount paid in 1880. The value of our manufacturing products in 1890 was more than 100 per cent. greater than in 1880. I do not think even the business men of this country appreciate—I am sure that the people at large do not appreciate—the full magnitude of the manufacturing interests of the United States, and the wealth which agriculture and manufactures and labor working together have made for the Republic. Our wealth in 1890 was \$61,469,000,000. In 1880 it was \$43,642,000,000. From 1870 to 1890 it increased \$31,391,000,000, or almost twice the entire wealth of the Empire of Russia. Take Great Britain, the richest nation in the old world, with the accumulations of centuries, and our wealth exceeds her's in 1880 by \$276,000,000.

"In 1880 our wealth was 23.93 per cent. of the wealth of all Europe. Our earnings were 28.01 per cent. of those of Europe, and our increase of wealth was 49.28 per cent. of European increase. From 1870 to 1880 the per capita of wealth of Europe decreased nearly 3 per cent., while in the United States there was an increase of nearly 39 per cent. The freight that passed through the St. Mary's Falls Canal in 1890 exceeded by 2,257,876 tons the entire tonnage of all the nations which passed through the Suez Canal in 1889. Our home mar-

kets have consumed heretofore five times as much of our manufactured products as Great Britain exported of hers to all the markets of the world. Our products are carried to our own people and distributed among them with greater facility and at cheaper rates, taking into account distance, than products are carried in any other country in the world.

"How are we to get back what we have lost? How is the vast capital now invested in manufactures to be preserved and made profitable? Only by keeping it busy and constantly at work. Capital scorns idleness; it loves work if for no other reason than that it loves gain. Capital in manufactories which are shut down is not like money on deposit subject to call, or in the strong box hoarded away, which, while it earns nothing, keeps the principal sum intact and unimpaired. The closed mill depreciates the value of machinery and buildings and land and everything connected with it, and it is ever wearing away the capital invested in it. This is followed by impoverishment to the owners, injury to the community in which it is located, and destitution to those who have been employed.

"Every business man would, therefore, rather run his factory than close it, because he wants his investment to earn him something. When closed, his capital, so far as any immediate profit is to come, is stopped. It is with him a question whether he can run with as little loss as he can stop. If he can, he

will always run. If he cannot, he is bound to stop. He cannot run at all if there is no demand for his product. Production requires consumption. Markets are inseparable from manufactures. The manufacturer must have a market; he wants the best market if he can get it, and he has come to learn where it is and how to get it. He knows, as he never knew before, how he lost it, and he knows how to regain it. We know, and we do not know it any better than our competitors in foreign lands, that the American market—our home market—is the best of all. We not only want to keep our home market, but we want a foreign market for our surplus products of manufacture and agriculture. We do not want it, however, at the loss of our home market. I am sure we do not want it when it shall involve the idleness and destitution and degradation of our own labor. We want not only to send our products abroad, but we want them to go abroad in our own vessels, sailing under our own flag. We should not depend upon our commercial rivals for the means of reaching competitive markets. We can well supply, and, for the general good, furnish our own transportation to foreign ports with fair encouragement, and it should not be withheld. Many markets of the world are open to us if we could reach them directly without trans-shipment, with our own ships.

"The general situation of the country demands of the business men, as well as the masses of the

people, the most serious consideration. We must have less partisanship of a certain kind, more business, and a better National spirit. We need an aggressive partisanship for country. There are some things upon which we are all agreed. We must have enough money to run the government. We must not have our credit tarnished and our reserve depleted because of pride of opinion, or to carry out some economic theory unsuited to our conditions, citizenship, and civilization. The outflow of gold will not disturb us if the inflow of gold is large enough. The outgo is not serious if the income exceeds it. False theories should not be permitted to stand in the way of cold facts. The resources which have been developed, and the wealth which has been accumulated in the last third of a century in the United States, must not be impaired or diminished or wasted by the application of theories of the dreamer or doctrinaire. Business experience is the best lamp to guide us in the pathway of progress and prosperity.

"What a spectacle to behold! A government, which, in thirty-three years, has passed through the mightiest war in human history, which created a debt to save the Union; that seemed most appalling at the time which, since that time, has paid off more than two-thirds of that great war debt, and which, in the three years preceding 1893, paid off nearly \$300,000,000 of it from the income of the treasury and its surplus, which from 1865 has en-

joyed a financial credit without a parallel in the world's history, to-day is without sufficient money from its own receipts to pay the ordinary expenses, and with a credit, upon the authority of the highest officers of the government, is threatened with impairment. We cannot longer close our eyes to the situation which affects every home and hearthstone and the government itself. We cannot afford to quarrel over the past; nor is it profitable to indulge in inquiries as to where the responsibility of the condition rests. It is enough for us to know it is here and upon us. Whatever differences we may have had, we must all agree now that the situation is one that requires the highest sagacity in statesmanship, and the broadest patriotism in citizenship. Let us, first of all, keep without stain and above suspicion the credit of our country, which is too sacred ever to be neglected. Let us provide somehow, and in some sensible, practical way, for the collection of enough money annually to pay all our current expenses, interest on the public debt, pensions to soldiers, and every other governmental obligation. Until that is done, if we have to borrow money, that should be done, and the sooner the better, but this will be only a temporary cure and provision. That must be supplemented by legislation that will raise in the taxes and tariffs a steady income, full and ample for every government need. The way to stop loans is to stop deficiencies. The reserve is sure to be drained if you cut off the supply. I agree with the President

that a 'predicament' confronts us, and I am sure there is wisdom and patriotism ample in the country to relieve ourselves from that 'predicament' or any other, and to place us once more at the head of the nations of the world in credit, production, and prosperity."

[AMERICAN ISRAELITE-JEWISH ORPHAN ASYLUM, JULY 15TH, 1893.]

EARLY EDUCATION AND THE JEWISH RACE.

"When we get out into the busy world with its duties and responsibilities we have little time for the acquisition of more than practical knowledge.

"It is so often a question of mere sustenance, with little time for earnest study, much less for mental labor. And if the opportunities present at an institution of this character are not improved they are lost to us forever. I enjoin upon you all to make the best use of the great opportunities you enjoy, and in after life you will find how much you have gained and how much embarrassment and blundering you will save yourself.

"The young men and young women who succeed nowadays must succeed because of superior knowledge. This is an age of exactness. What you know you must know well and thoroughly, and to reach prominence you must know it better than anybody else. It will not do to know a thing half any longer. You must know it all, and the man who knows a few things—worthy things, I mean, in science or art or

REPUBLICAN CONVENTION HALL AT PHILADELPHIA.

