

CHAPTER XIV.

SOME VIEWS ON PUBLIC QUESTIONS.

Humorous speeches—The feeder of Great Britain—A leap in the dark—Give the officials scope—Importance of agriculture—Arbitration—Respect and retrospect—Let England take care of herself.

IT will be interesting to quote a few paragraphs from the humorous speeches made by Governor McKinley. In support of the tariff commission in 1882 he aroused the attention of the country, and indicated to old politicians that a new force was arising in national politics, and that it was well to watch the career of William McKinley. In the House he said then:

"Who has demanded a tariff for revenue only, such as is advocated by our friends on the other side? What portion of our citizens? What part of our population? Not the agriculturist; not the laborer; not the mechanic; not the manufacturer; not a petition before us, to my knowledge, asking for an adjustment of tariff rates to a revenue basis. England wants it, demands it—not for our good, but hers; for she is more anxious to main-

tain her old position of supremacy than she is to promote the interests and welfare of the people of this republic, and a great party in this country voices her interests. Our tariffs interfere with her profits. They keep at home what she wants. We are independent of her; not she of us. She would have America the feeder of Great Britain, or, as Lord Sheffield put it, she would be 'the monopoly of our consumption and the carriage of our produce.' She would manufacture for us, and permit us to raise wheat and corn for her. We are satisfied to do the latter, but unwilling to concede to her the monopoly of the former.

"Manufacturers, farmers, laboring men, indeed all the industrial classes in the United States, are severally and jointly interested in the maintenance of the present or a better tariff law which shall recognize in all its force the protection of American producers and American productions. Our first duty is to our own citizens.

"Free trade may be suitable to Great Britain and its peculiar social and political structure, but it has no place in this republic, where classes are unknown, and where caste has long since been banished; where equality is a rule; where labor is dignified and honorable; where education and improvement are the individual striving of every citizen, no matter what may be the accident of his birth, or the poverty of his early surroundings. Here the mechanic of to-day is the manufacturer of a few years hence. Under

such conditions, free trade can have no abiding place here. We are doing very well; no other nation has done better, or makes a better showing in the world's balance sheet. We ought to be satisfied with the progress thus far made, and contented with our outlook for the future. We know what we have done and what we can do under the policy of protection. We have had some experience with a revenue tariff, which neither inspires hope, nor courage, nor confidence. Our own history condemns the policy we oppose, and it is the best vindication of the policy which we advocate. It needs no other. It furnished us in part the money to prosecute the war for the Union to a successful termination; it has assisted largely in furnishing the revenue to meet our great public expenditures and diminish with unparalleled rapidity our great national debt; it has contributed in securing to us an unexampled credit; it has developed the resources of the country and quickened the energies of our people; it has made us what the nation should be, independent and self-reliant; it has made us industrious in peace, and secured us independence in war; and we find ourselves in the beginning of the second century of the republic without a superior in industrial arts, without an equal in commercial prosperity, with a sound financial system, with an overflowing treasury, blest at home and at peace with all mankind. Shall we reverse the policy which has rewarded us with such magnificent results? Shall we abandon the policy which pursued for twenty

years, has produced such unparalleled growth and prosperity?"

The Morrison tariff bill, which proposed a horizontal reduction of the Act of 1883, was under discussion in the House on April 30th, 1884, and in closing his speech in opposition, Representative McKinley said in conclusion:

"Every one of the leading industries of this country will be injuriously affected by this proposed change, and no man can predict the extent of it. The producers of cottons and woollens, of iron, steel, and glass, must suffer disastrously if this bill is enacted into law; and the proprietors of these establishments are neither robbers nor highwaymen, as the free-traders love to characterize them. They have been real benefactors, and while some of them have grown opulent, in the main they do not represent the rich classes of the country. Their entire capital is in active employment. Many of them are large borrowers. Your proposed action will affect the values of their plants, unless except for the purposes employed, will diminish the value of their invested capital, will decrease their sales and the ability of their customers to buy, and in many cases result in total overthrow and bankruptcy. You can do this if you will. You have the power in this House to accomplish this great wrong; but let me beg you to pause before you commence the work of destroying a great economic system under which the country has grown and prospered far in advance of every

other nation of the world. A system established by the founders of the government, recognized by the first Congress which ever sat and deliberated in council in this nation, sanctioned in the second Act ever passed by Congress, upheld by our greatest statesmen, living or dead, vindicated by great results and justified by all our experience, achieving industrial triumphs without a parallel in the world's history. Its maintenance is yet essential to our progress and prosperity. The step proposed is a grave one. No man on this floor can determine its consequences or predict its results.

"It is a leap in the dark. No interest is pressing it. No national necessity demands it. No true American wants it. If it is a party necessity to enforce Democratic doctrines and discipline a little segment of the party, you can afford to wait, or clear your decks of mutineers in some other way: let the ship be saved, and punish your insubordinate associates without endangering great interests temporarily confided to your care. The interests of this great people are higher and greater than the ambitions or interests of any party. The free-traders have already demonstrated that they are in control of the Democratic party, and they are a large majority of that political organization; but they are happily in the minority in this country. They may dictate the policy here by party caucus, they may disturb the business of the country while yet in power, but they will not, under the policy

they are now pursuing, be long permitted to dominate the popular branch of Congress, happily the only branch of the government which they now control."

On July 14th, 1886, there was under discussion a resolution from the Ways and Means Committee directing the Secretary of the Treasury to pay a part of the surplus—which had given Grover Cleveland so much trouble, but which has not existed in his present administration—on the public debt. Major McKinley made an extended speech on the subject which teemed with figures. His remarks then are particularly important now, showing as they do that he did not believe the hands of the President should be tied; in other words were he in Congress now he would be active in opposition to the Democratic and Populistic proposition to repeal the authority to issue bonds. The Major said, among other things:

"I believe it to be a judicious thing to give the officers charged with the management of the financial affairs of the government, charged by the people, the power to call the bonds or withhold a call for bonds whenever the condition of the treasury will permit the one or the other. The hands of the President and Secretary should not be tied; they should have full power to act under the laws as they are, and then be held to the highest responsibility and strictest accountability. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, unless the amendment I offered at the beginning of this discussion, and another amendment

which will be offered by the gentleman from Maine (Mr. Reed), and still another which will be presented by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Long), shall be adopted by this house, I shall feel constrained to give a negative vote on the resolution presented by the Committee on Ways and Means. Of course, we cannot help, I cannot help, no gentleman on this side can help, the Democratic party voting to-day a want of confidence in its own administration. We cannot prevent you from passing a vote of condemnation on the President of the United States and his Secretary, and that is what this resolution means if it becomes a law, and that is what you are doing when you vote for it."

Major McKinley has always appreciated the importance of the agriculturist in our national life. He delivered a most eulogistic speech before the Ohio State Grange, on December 13th, 1887, of which the following are extracts:

"Farmers could manage to exist rather generously, if not luxuriously, without us, but we could not well exist without them.

"Agriculture may fairly be classed as the foundation of all industries; it is intimately related to every field of labor. No matter what our employment, we must draw our life every day afresh from the soil, and our daily necessities can be supplied from no other source. All trade, all commerce, all business is but the result, direct or remote, of the industrial pursuit in which you are engaged. Our

city, in its earlier and later progress, is peculiarly the offspring of agriculture. From it has been drawn our chief income; it has been the source of our revenue. We have been doing little else for thirty years but meeting the demands and supplying the wants of the farmers.

"Tell me how the land is held, and I can tell you almost to a certainty the political system of the country, its form of government, and its political character. When land is divided into small farms, the property, as a rule, of those who till them, there is an inducement, ambition, and facility for independence, for progress, for wider thought and higher attainments in individual, industrial life. Over such a population no government but a free one, under equal laws and equal rights, with equal opportunities, can exist for any length of time. The small farm, thoroughly worked, was the ancient model, commended by the early sages and philosophers; as old Vergil put it, 'Praise a large farm, cultivate a small one.' We must avoid in this country the holding of large tracts of land by non-resident owners for speculative purposes, and set our faces like flint against alien land-holding in small or large tracts. Our public domain must be re-dedicated to our own people, and neither foreign syndicates nor domestic corporations must be permitted to divert it from the hallowed purpose of actual settlement by real farmers.

"One of the great lessons of history is that agri-

culture cannot rise to its highest perfection and reach its fullest development without the aid of commerce, manufactures, and mechanical arts. All are essential to the healthy growth and highest advancement of the others; the progress of one insures the prosperity of another. There are no conflicts, there should be no antagonisms. They are indispensable to each other. Whatever enfeebles one is certain to cripple the rest.

"Let us accept the advice of the fathers of the Republic, heed their patriotic counsels, walk steadfastly in their faith, preserve the mutual helpfulness and harmonies of the industries, and maintain our independence, national, industrial, and individual, against all the world, and thus advance to the high destiny that devolves upon us and our posterity. I bespeak for you a pleasant and profitable meeting, and, with thanks and best wishes to all, bid you good-night."

To the laboring interests and to employers as well it is important to know what Major McKinley's views are on arbitration. They are shown in the closing paragraph of his speech on that subject in the House of Representatives, on April 2d, 1886:

"I believe, Mr. Chairman, in arbitration, as in principle; I believe it should prevail in the settlement of international differences. It represents a higher civilization than the arbitrament of war. I believe it is in close accord with the best thought and sentiment of mankind; I believe it is the true

way of settling differences between labor and capital; I believe it will bring both to a better understanding, uniting them closer in interest, and promoting better relations, avoiding force, avoiding unjust exactions and oppression, avoiding the loss of earnings to labor, avoiding disturbances to trade and transportation; and if this House can contribute in the smallest measure, by legislative expression or otherwise, to these ends, it will deserve and receive the gratitude of all men who love peace, good order, justice, and fair play."

The Republican Presidential candidate delivered a speech on "Prospect and Retrospect," on September 14th, 1887, before the Mahoning Valley Pioneer Association, of which this is a striking paragraph:

"We can hardly conceive that the next generation will be so rich in fruitage, so prolific in invention, so marvelous in achievement, so wonderful in its work; but who can tell? There seem to be a brain and a conscience and a manhood always ready to rise up and discover, at the appropriate moment, the forces and elements necessary in the onward march of mankind. The things you and I have seen, great as they are, may be insignificant contrasted with the things unseen and yet to be developed. The ax and the rifle, the courage and the conscience, the brain and the brawn, the faith in God of the pioneer, lay the foundations of the splendid institutions which make possible our matchless achievements. The New England school-house, which came simultaneous with his

cabin and stockade, was our flaming torch, which, carried grandly through the century, has filled the whole world with its light."

The Home Market Club, of Boston, invited Major McKinley to address them on February 9th, 1888. At that time he spoke regarding free raw materials. The following selection from that speech, in view of the events since it was made, is most striking:

"A revenue reformer who had recently visited your State, said to me a few days ago, that Massachusetts had already received all the benefits she could from protection, and that now her interests as well as her inclinations lay in the other direction—that of free trade. Enlarging upon it he was forced to confess that the manufacturing thrift and activity everywhere seen in your commonwealth, the high rank you had taken, and the perfection reached in production, were the outcome of the system of American protection; but now free trade, or its equivalent or approximation, would place you in a position of commanding advantage over those portions of the country marked with less industrial development. If I were to admit the truth of my friend's discourse—which I do not—the situation would, in simple language, be this: Massachusetts owes her proud industrial position to a Protective Tariff, which she has enjoyed by the help of other States not so far advanced in manufactures, and which have neither so long nor so advantageously enjoyed its benefits. Now she does not need it for herself, and is unwill-

ing that any of her sister States shall profit by its assistance and enjoy its blessings. She used it to attain her high commercial position and manufacturing development. The newer States are now moving upward on the ladder which carried her before and above them. Now, as my friend would have it, she is ready to push the ladder down with all that is upon it. [Laughter.] This I know to be a base and ungenerous reflection upon Massachusetts, which her industrial people will be quick to resent, and which nothing in her behavior in the past would justify."

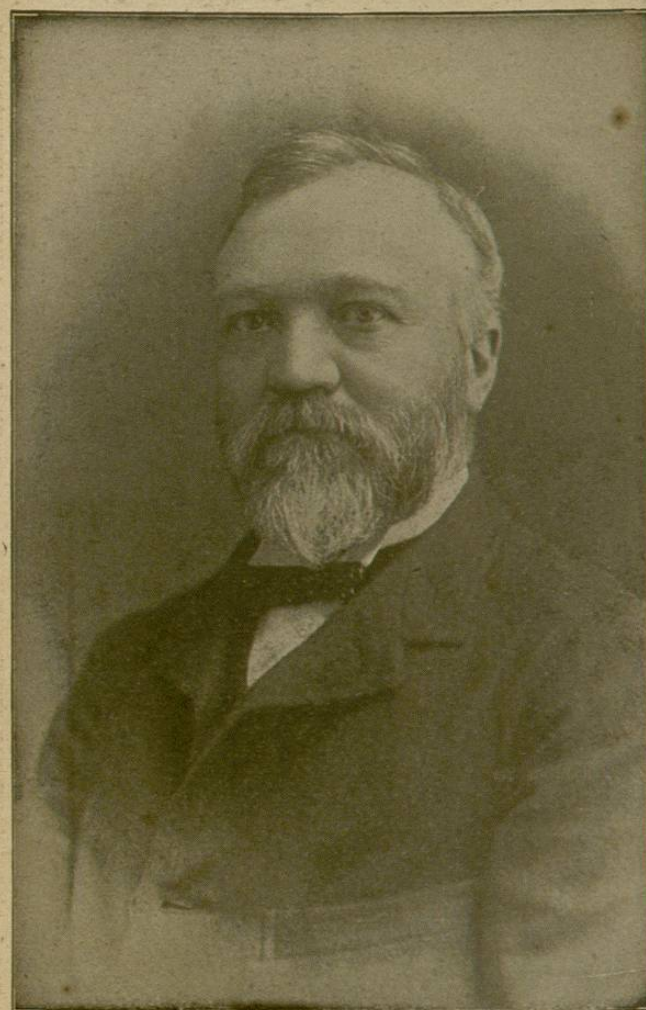
On this same occasion Major McKinley delivered these additional gems of thought:

"But if free wool will secure cheaper clothing to the people, by the same process of reasoning, cloth, duty free, and untaxed ready-made clothing will diminish the price still further, and give to the consumer the very consummation of low prices and cheap wearing apparel. If every consideration but the mere cheapness of the fabric be discarded, then no reason can be found why, with free wool, there should not come free cloth and free clothing. [Applause.] Things, however, are sometimes the dearest, when nominally they are the cheapest. The selling price of an article is not the only measure; the ability to buy, the coin with which to purchase, is an important and essential element, and must not be dismissed from our consideration. If a man is without means and without employment, and there

is none of the latter to be had, everything is dear to him. The price is of the smallest consequence, however cheap, if it is beyond his reach. If my only means is my labor, and that is unemployed, whether things are cheap or dear is of little moment to me.

"The manufacturers of New England, and more particularly the skilled labor employed by them, need a Protective Tariff, and require it equally with the industries and labor of other States. It is imperatively demanded, not only here, but in every section of the Union, if the present price of labor is to be continued and maintained. Your industries cannot compete successfully, even in this market, with the industries of England, France, Belgium and Germany, without a tariff, so long as the price paid labor here exceeds the price paid labor there from 50 to 75 per cent. This inequality can only be met by a tariff upon the products of cheap labor, high enough to compensate for the difference. You cannot compete except upon equal conditions and with like cost of the competing product. Free trade will either equalize the conditions by reducing your labor to that of the rival laborer on the other side, or it will close your factories and workshops and destroy home production and competition.

"Free trade means cheap labor, and cheap labor means diminished comforts—diminished capacity to buy, poor and enfeebled industries and a dependent condition generally. And every step taken in



ANDREW CARNEGIE.

