

MCKINLEY'S NEW DEPARTURE.

At the very moment when Senator Hoar, at the Boston dinner of the Home Market Club, was falling down in the old fashion before the idol of Protection, President McKinley at Memphis was doing despite to that heathen divinity almost as if he were a convert to the true faith. Many have wondered what might be the main purpose of the President in travelling about the country at this time. The minor motives he has are obvious. A skilled *populachero*, as unlucky De Lome declared him to be, he delights to mingle with his fellow-citizens, and to give back in showers that flattery which he receives from his audiences as mist—to apply to him Gladstone's definition of oratory. When plain *citoyen* Loubet develops the arts and graces of a royal progress in his journeys through France, we need not be surprised if Mr. McKinley displays similar talent. But that he has a serious aim beneath all the flowers, we are bound to believe; and what it is, we think the evidence already shows. He is bent, it seems to us, on preparing the people, and especially his own party, for a great change in the commercial and fiscal policy of the United States.

He gave distinct warning of this new departure of his in his inaugural address last March. He broke off his pæan over our prosperity to say, in words which did not at the time attract the attention they deserve, "Our diversified productions, however, are increasing in such unprecedented volume as to admonish us of the necessity of still further enlarging our foreign markets by broader commercial relations." What he meant, and proceeded specifically to refer to, was "reciprocal trade arrangements." A whole series of these the Senate had just refused to ratify. The chief objectors were Republican Senators—Aldrich, Lodge, Platt, Depew. They rested their opposition on solid and selfish protectionist grounds. Keep out foreign goods as you would the plague; the foreign market be hanged. But the President reasserted his programme. The reciprocity treaties have been extended, and will again come before the Senate, and Mr. McKinley is off on a campaign of education to secure their acceptance this time. Not maxims but markets, he said at Memphis, which, being interpreted to fit present circumstances, obviously means, "Don't stick to your outworn protectionist creed if it prevents you from selling your goods." The world-market, with not a word about the home-market, "the great markets of the Orient"—how to secure these was the burden of his story, and the problems involved we were to solve "untrammelled by the past." To show how completely he had broken with his own past, he proceeded to read with ap-

proval resolutions adopted by the Legislature of Tennessee in 1847. They were practically free-trade resolutions, dwelling upon the importance of enlarged commercial intercourse with the rest of the world. Thus we have the author of the McKinley tariff, who used to rail at the "delusory" foreign market, going back to the days of the Walker tariff to find true guidance for the present.

He recurred to the subject on May 1:

"It is your business," he said, "as well as mine to see to it that an industrial policy shall be pursued in the United States that shall open up the widest markets in every part of the world for the products of American soil and American manufacture. We can now supply our own markets. We have reached that point in our industrial development, and in order to secure sale for our surplus products we must open up new avenues for our surplus. I am sure that in that sentiment there will be no division, North or South."

Nothing in Mr. Kasson's correspondence with the Home-Market Committee was more heretical than this, and it is all the more poisonous that it is embodied in generalities and is thus liable to be swallowed by innocents like the *New York Tribune*. This sheet quotes and commends the foregoing extract, and gives especial point to it by saying that we are to look for expansion of American trade abroad, not merely in the Orient, where our cottons are in demand, but in Europe, where our growing general manufactures may find a market. Evidently this is a sly reference to the treaty of reciprocity with France, which the Boston protectionists opposed with such lively expressions of indignation in a letter to the President, and which Mr. Kasson so ably defended.

Such a sea change is wonderful in our eyes, and we are not going to waste time in disputing or in glorying over it. The President is right now, whatever he may have been in the past. The very fact that he is an opportunist by nature is the strongest proof that he is but responding to powerful and unmistakable tendencies in the business world, when he declares that the building up of our foreign trade in manufactured goods is the strategic duty of the hour. The thing is so plain that it has convinced Mr. McKinley, and has swung him from his ancient high-tariff moorings. He has lived to be ready, at the risk of the odium of inconsistency, to speak and work for a policy which he had denounced. Sir Robert Peel did it, and so may William McKinley; and those who, all these years, have labored for the peaceful expansion of trade with all the world will not quarrel with the result, even if it come about in ways of which they did not dream.

What we are seeing is simply the fulfilment, somewhat earlier than most people expected, of the old prophecies of convinced economists. Mr. Gladstone, for example, long ago predicted the industrial supremacy of the United

States. What he saw was a vast continent of inexhaustible and varied resources, inhabited by a homogeneous, an educated, an inventive people. That they would come to the front in an industrial age was certain, sooner or later. The one thing they needed to go with their unlimited natural resources was unlimited capital, and this they have now got. That they are rapidly becoming the manufacturing monarchs of the world is but the necessary consequence.

President McKinley merely interprets the sense of the business world when he urges such "broader commercial relations" as will make the path of this great and peaceful conquest by American industry easier and more secure. Everything is going forward now by leaps and bounds, but the pinch of competition is yet to come. It is for us to fortify ourselves in advance for an era of world-wide industrial depression. Everybody knows what the sure bulwark of manufacturing is in such a crisis. It is free raw materials and the open door. A Russian Consul, speaking the other day in England, said with much force that the "staying power" of English manufactures had been in the free-trade policy. From this no trained Chancellor of the Exchequer will depart. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach resisted all the pressure to tax raw materials, on the ground that it would be a step towards national suicide. To this must we come—to it Mr. McKinley is obviously willing to come—if we are to strengthen and safeguard the wonderful expansion of American commerce, especially in finished products. Great changes are in the air. By the time Congress meets, the situation may have so developed, and the appeals of the American manufacturer may easily have become so urgent, that we may see the President's plan for adopting reciprocity under the guise of "extending" the protective system carried into execution.

AMERICAN LEADERSHIP IN CHINA.

Gen. Chaffee, with all his troops, guns, and transport, is leaving Pekin and will soon leave China. The fact rounds out an episode in American diplomacy in the highest degree honorable to the country. Whatever the future of the Chinese problem may be, our contribution to its solving during the past nine months has been of a sort to quicken the pride of the patriot at the same time that it cheers the heart of the philanthropist. The work has not been done by a man sounding a trumpet before him. Indeed, not being accompanied by the thunder of the captains and the shouting, it has not attracted as much attention and won as much praise in the United States as we think it deserves. But we know that it has profoundly impressed the leaders of thought and of public life in Europe. They have seen in it a transcendent

exhibition of American leadership in the world of ideas and the world of action. The vaunted Spanish war as an eye-opener was nothing compared with the part played by America in the intervention in China. We have shown ourselves, to those having eyes to see, to be guided by a diplomacy unsurpassed in its grasp of the situation, in its clear and consistent policy, in its patient moderation, its firmness, its moral impulse.

In Mr. William Vaughn Moody's finely imagined poem, "The Quarry," he gives a poet's rendering of the service performed by America in China. Under the image of a sacred elephant, decrepit with age, he pictures China fleeing from pursuers. Good need was there to haste, for

"— panting, foaming, on the slot
Came many brutes of prey, their several hates
Laid by until the sharing of the spoil,
Just as they gathered stomach for the leap,
The sun was darkened, and wide-balanced wings
Beat downward on the trade-wind from the sea.
A wheel of shadow sped along the fields
And o'er the dreaming cities. Suddenly
My heart misgave me, and I cried aloud,
'Alas! What dost thou here? What dost thou
here?'

The great beasts and the little halted sharp,
Eyed the grand circle, doubting his intent.
Straightway the wind flamed and he came about,
Stooping to take the vanward of the pack;
Then turned, between the chasers and the chased,
Crying a word I could not understand—
But stiller-tongued, with eyes somewhat askance,
They settled to the slot and disappeared."

There may be about this just the touch of exaggeration necessary to give it the due effect of truth, but no one can deny that, at many critical times and in many critical ways, the American eagle has taken "the vanward" in China. In those haggard days last July and August, it was the American Secretary of State who maintained his faith, in the face of the jeering chancelleries of Europe, that the legations in Peking were holding out. It has since become easy for the Powers to trust the educated Chinese Ambassadors, to lean upon the great Chinese Viceroy. Mr. Hay did it then. A very simple thing, but it occurred to no one else to do it. Genius might be defined as a knack at doing the easy and natural things which other people immediately curse themselves for not having thought of doing. Genius for statecraft, at any rate, lay that way in the Chinese difficulty, and it will be to the lasting honor of American diplomacy that it was an American diplomat who displayed it.

It is not for us to insist with Pharisaical complacency upon an absolute primacy in the restraint shown by our forces in China. War being what it is, we must not be surprised that the brute got uppermost in some of our soldiers, and that they took their shameful part in the shameful work of needless slaughter and burning and robbery. But this we may say, with honest pride, that in our detachment the skulking and attendant horrors of the march

from Tientsin to Peking were reduced to the minimum; that no other force had a better attested reputation for good discipline; and that the administration of the quarter of the capital city under American control won praise from the most impartial observers and gratitude from the natives themselves. Gen. Chaffee's letter of protest to the Commander-in-Chief against recurring outrages was undiplomatic, was in strictness unsoldierly, and was properly recalled and apologized for; but it was an instinctive utterance of the best American feeling, for which the man must always be thanked and congratulated, even if the General had to be disavowed.

The deliberate withdrawal of our troops marks the determination with which our Government has clung to its first clear conception of our duty in China. Other countries have vacillated, and do not yet know their own minds. Our policy was plainly stated at the beginning, and has not been departed from all through. We sent a military force primarily to rescue imperilled American citizens. Our subsequent stay was only to negotiate an honorable and lasting peace. In all the drawn-out conferences the position of America has never been in doubt. We have been for the integrity of the Chinese Empire—China for the Chinese. We have opposed laying a crushing burden of indemnity upon an impoverished, a starving people. The only American right in China for which we have been insistent is the right to trade there on equal terms. We do not need to seek an unfair advantage. An open door and no favor infallibly means for the United States, as so clear-sighted an economist as Paul Leroy-Beaulieu has admitted, the greater share and gain in the commercial exploitation of China.

American leadership in China may thus fairly be asserted in an early and sure sense of the facts in hand, in moderation and humanity in both military operations and the efforts for a settlement, and in a wise and far-seeing policy, vividly conceived at the start and made the norm of action to the end. The whole makes up a record which the future historian may well single out as the proudest in either of Mr. McKinley's Administrations. To Mr. Hay, who planned and executed, as also to the President who approved, and who has generously given the Secretary the credit which is his due, it should be a source of enduring satisfaction to look back upon the troubled and trying year of American intervention in China.

INTEREST IN PARLIAMENTARY ORATORY.

The exciting debate in the House of Commons on Thursday night came right on the heels of a widespread lament in

England over the decay of Parliamentary oratory. Mr. Alfred Kinnear had a doleful article in the last *New Liberal Review*, mourning the evil days on which the House of Commons had fallen. There were no more great speakers. A "great debate" had come to mean only a great bore. The country had lost interest in the House, and was rapidly losing respect for it. Lord Hugh Cecil bluntly told the Commons, the other day, with a rash cynicism worthy of his father, that it never stood lower in public opinion. The London *Economist* grieved recently over the "shunting" of the House of Commons. These were the prevailing complaints—when lo! suddenly there was a crowded House, a nation hanging breathless upon the speeches, strong men grappling in eager argument, the old traditions apparently in full vigor again. What was the cause?

Partly, the subject of debate. It was one which appealed to powerful interests and which roused strong passions. A shilling tax on exported coal might seem poorly fitted to excite noble rage, but it really goes to the centre of English industry, English finance, and English party politics. A tax on coal means the modification, for good or ill, of the conditions affecting British manufactures, railways, shipping. It is a revolutionary step in taxation. Above all, it is, or threatens to be, a solvent of parties. This is the main thing which turns all eyes upon the scenes at Westminster, and which makes the debate run high with excitement. The speeches may change votes, may upset the Government, or at least compel a reorganization of the Cabinet. In other words, when the old prizes of Parliamentary oratory are again in sight of the orators, the old ardor returns, the old kindling enthusiasm leaps along the benches, and eloquence responds to hope.

Neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor Sir William Harcourt, the protagonists of the debate, is what can be called a great orator. Sir William is, however, a tremendously effective speaker—not a Rupert, but a Nasmyth hammer, of debate. His vigorous directness, his sweep and rush of utterance, his impatience of contradiction, make him an adept in the "art of abating and dissolving pompous gentlemen." But he overbears rather than persuades, breaks through obstacles instead of flanking them, and is almost wholly without that *magna eloquentia* which is as a flame nourished on its own substance, and which *clarescit urendo*. Representing, as he does, a Welsh constituency, he naturally comes forward as the champion of a peculiarly Welsh industry, and delivers his hardest blows at the coal tax. In defending it, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach shows himself the very type of the hard-headed, clear-headed, and unemo-