

PRESIDENT TO BUSINESS MEN

President Says American Business Has Been 'Entered at Home.'

Speaking before the chamber of commerce at Columbus, Ohio, Friday night, the President said in part:

"You, gentlemen, are perhaps more interested in those matters of policy which affect the business of the country than in any others; and yet it has never seemed to me possible to separate the business of a country from its essential spirit and the life of its people. They are inseparable in their principles and in their expression. I must say that in looking back upon the past there is something about the history of business in this country which is not wholly satisfactory. It is interesting to remember that in the early years of the republic we felt ourselves more a part of the general world than we have felt since then. Down to the War of 1812 the seas were full of American ships. American enterprize was everywhere expressed in American commerce, when we were a little nation, and yet now that we are a great nation, the seas are almost bare of our ships, and we trade with other countries at the convenience of the carriers of other nations. The truth is that after the War of 1812 we seem deliberately to have chosen to be provincial, to shut ourselves in upon ourselves, exploit our own resources for our own benefit, rather than for the benefit of the rest of the world. Now American industry in recent years has been crying for an outlet into the currents of the world. There were some American minds, some American business men, who did find their way into foreign markets; but others seemed deliberately to refrain or not to know that there were opportunities to be availed of.

Banking Act.

"Until the recent banking act you could not find, so far as I am informed, a branch of an American bank anywhere outside of the United States, whereas other nations of the world were doing their banking business on foreign shores through the instrumentality of their own bankers.

"I was told at a meeting of the American Bankers' Association that much of the foreign banking business the business in foreign exchanges, had to be done in our ports by branches of Canadian banks established among ourselves. Being literalists, we interpreted the national bank act to mean that the national banks could not engage in this business and some of the natural, some of the necessary, functions of banking, were not performed by American bankers.

"I refer to this merely as an evidence of what I take leave to call our provincialism. Moreover, during this period American business men were so interested to be protected against the competition of other business men in other countries that they proceeded by organization to protect themselves against each other and engaged in the politics of organization rather than in the statesmanship of enterprise."

The President said that organization is necessary to both politics and business, but its object ought to be efficiency, not exclusion.

"The only legitimate object of organization is efficiency," he continued. "It can never be legitimate when it is intended for hostile competitive purposes. The spirit of exclusion and monopoly is not the American spirit. The American spirit is a spirit of opportunity and of equal opportunity. So I say that we have reason to look back upon the past of American business with some dissatisfaction; but I for my part, look forward to the future of American business with the greatest confidence.

"I have sometimes heard exhortations to the effect that politics ought not to be injected into business. It is just as important that you should not inject business into politics, because so far as the business of this country is concerned, there ought not to be any politics.

Is a Democrat.

"I, gentlemen, am a Democrat, as you probably have heard, and I am a militant Democrat, but it is Democracy will be of more service to the country than any other principles. I find that I am one of the few men of my acquaintance who absolutely believe every word, for example, of the Virginia bill of rights. This says that when a government proves unsuitable to the life of the people under it (I am not quoting the language but the meaning), they have a right to alter or abolish it any way that they please. When things were perhaps more debatable than they are now about our immediate neighbor to the south of us, I don't know how many men came to me and suggested that the government of Mexico should be altered as I thought that it ought to be altered, but being a subscriber to the doctrine of the Virginia bill of rights I could not agree with them. The Mexicans may not know what to do with their government, but that is none of our business; and so long as I have power

to prevent it, nobody shall 'butt in' to alter it for them.

"That is what I mean by being a Democrat built on the original plan of the bill of rights.

"Now these bills of rights say some things that are very pertinent to business. They assert the absolute equality of right on the part of the individuals to access to opportunity. That is the reason I am opposed to monopoly, not because monopoly does not produce some excellent results of a kind, but because it is intended to shut out a lot of people who ought not to be shut out; and I believe that Democracy is the only thing that vitalizes a whole people instead of vitalizing only some of the people of the country. I am not fit to be the trustee of prosperity for this country, neither are you; neither is any group of men fit to be the trustees for the economical guidance of this country. I believe in the common man. The country consists of him. He is the backbone of the country. The man who is above the average uses him and ought to respect his tool, ought to respect his instrument, ought to respect the veins through which the very life blood of the country flows.

Future of Business.

"Now, with regard to the future of business in this country, no man can speak with confidence, because it happens that the distressing month since the great European war began have put America in a peculiar relation to the rest of the world. It looks as if we would be the reserve force of the world in respect to financial and economic power. It looks as if in the days of reconstruction and recuperation which are ahead of Europe we would have to do many of the things, many of the most important things, which hitherto have been done through European instrumentalities.

"No man can say just how these matters are going to shape themselves, but every man can see that the opportunity of America is going to be unparalleled and that the resources of America must be put at the service of the world as they never were put at its service before. Therefore, it is imperative that no impediments should be put in the way of commerce with the rest of the world. And for the first time, gentlemen, it happens—I believe providentially—that the business men of America have an instrumentality in the new banking law such as they never had before for the ebb and flow and free course of the natural processes of credit. For the first time we are not bound up in an inelastic currency. Our credit is current and that current will run through all the channels of commerce in every part of the world."

The President said the new banking law furnished the business men of this country with an instrument such as credit never possessed before. "Credit is a very spontaneous thing," he continued. "Its excursions ought not to be personally conducted. There have been times in this country when the expeditions of credit were personally conducted. I could name some of the agencies where guides were provided.

Vision of Democracy.

"The vision of a democracy that I have is this: that you must not be presumptuous enough to determine beforehand where the vitality is going to come from. The beauty of a democracy is that you never can tell when a youngster is born, what he is going to do with you and that no matter how humbly he is born, no matter where he is born, no matter what circumstances hamper him at the outset, he has got a chance to master the minds and lead the imaginations of the whole country. That is the beauty of democracy, that you don't beforehand pretend to pick the vital centers, but they pick themselves out.

"So I want you to share with me those visions of the future of American business — of a cosmopolitan spirit, of a spirit of enterprises out of which the old timidity has gone. For you will have to admit, gentlemen, that American business men have been timid. They have constantly run to Washington and said: 'It looks like rain; for God's sake give us shelter.' You don't need Washington. There is genius enough in this country to master the enterprise of the world and it ought not to ask odd of anybody. I would like to have the thrilling pride of realizing that there was nobody in America who was afraid to match wits with the world. When I move about this country I feel as you do, the vitality of the thing that is going on in it, the quick organization of minds when they meet new circumstances, the readiness with which Americans adapt themselves to new circumstances—that is the spirit of conquest."

CARD OF THANKS

I desire to express through The Courier my gratitude to my friends in Randolph and Montgomery for their assistance in winning a prize for me in the Courier contest.

HENRY STUART.

The Christmas Season

Not a Day but Weeks Needed to Manifest Its Spirit.

CHRISTMAS proper is never a day. It is really a week or about a month. When the autumn says December has come, then all hearts begin to feel the presence of that midwinter festival. Each day adds to this feeling.

The Romans perceived that one day did not contain all the import of the midwinter season. Their Saturnalia continued seven days. It began as a one day celebration and was observed Dec 19; but, as it was soon found that the period was a cup too small to contain the wine of pleasure, it was extended to three days. At last it was enlarged by the Emperor Claudian so as to take in the 25th. In form the festival has now been changed back into the one day shape, but in reality Christmas is much larger under our presidents than it was under Claudian and Caligula.

It is a great midwinter period and may well be looked upon as a type of the public happiness or the public misfortunes of a given date. In the early Christian church it became a single day, because being asked to stand for the birth of Jesus it had to be a formal day rather than a week, let no such limitation could keep it from having adjacent times which partook of its spirit as dawn partakes of day.—Professor David Swing.

The Old Christmas Story



The Story of the Magi.

The story of the Magi, as it is given by the evangelist Matthew, is astonishingly brief and unadorned. He tells us without profane that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem certain foreigners arrived at Jerusalem.

He does not tell us how many they were nor of what race nor of what station of life, although it is fair to infer from the consideration with which they were received at the court of Herod and from the fact that they carried treasure boxes with them that they were persons of distinction.

The most important statement in regard to them is that they were Magians—that is to say, disciples of Zoroaster and members of the sacred or priestly order of Persia, which was then widely scattered among the oriental nations and included men of exalted rank. They came from the east, a word which to the dwellers in Palestine could hardly have any other meaning than the ancient region of Chaldea, lying beyond the Jordan and the desert.

Their explanation of their journey to Herod was that they had seen an appearance in the heavens (whether one star or many or a comet they did not say) which led them to believe that the King of the Jews had been born, and they had come to do reverence to him. Herod was greatly troubled at hearing this and sent for the chief priests and scribes to inquire where the prophets had foretold that the Messiah should be born.

They answered at once that Bethlehem was the chosen place. Then Herod, having asked the Magi how long it was since they first saw the appearance in the sky, sent them away to Bethlehem, promising that when they had found the young Christ he also would come to do reverence to him.

Having set out on their journey, they saw once more the celestial sign, and its motion was such that it guided them to the place where Jesus was. Coming into the house—for Joseph had now found better shelter than a stable—they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and prostrated themselves before him in worship. Opening their treasure chests, they presented to him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. Then, being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they took another road into their own country.

The conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn is one of the rarest of sidereal events. It occurs only once in 800 years. This conjunction, all astronomers agree, happened no less than three times in the year 747 A. U. C., shortly before the birth of Christ.

It may be that we have here, in this 'fairly tale of science,' a confirmation of this beautiful story of religion, a hint and trace of

The light that led the holy elders with their gifts of myrrh.—Rev. Dr. Henry van Dyke in Harper's Magazine.

Sing a Song of Christmas.

Sing a song of Christmas,
Gladdest day of all;
O'er the hills and valleys
See the splendor fall.
Sing of cleansing holy;
Sing of restful ease—
Sing a song of Christmas
Everywhere you go.

Sing a song of Christmas,
Holy, happy day,
Sing of Bethlehem's manger,
Where the Christ Child lay,
Sing of love unbounded,
"Peace, good will to men."
Sing a song of Christmas
O'er and o'er again.

Sing a song of Christmas;
Then on this glad day
Those who grieve and heartaches
All about the way,
Hearts that wait the uplift
Of some note of cheer—
Sing a song of Christmas,
Sweet and sweet and clear.

—Edith Virginia Bradt in Ladies' Home Journal.

A CHRISTMAS GIFT



The Christmas Forest

[The region between Jerusalem and Bethlehem was formerly covered with a forest of pines, which has since entirely disappeared.]

THE forest in a whisper spoke,
Yule to flower and pine to oak,
From holy hills of Jerusalem
To where, upon its leafy hem,
The humble village clung—
Calm Bethlehem, dark, yet like a gem,
Embraced with light, as jewels are,
By tremulous radiance of the star.

The trees a coming wonder told
While yet the birds, their songs unsung,
Dreamed of the coming of their young.
But, though of solemn brightness
The forest breathed, its boughs were hung
With white shade; no taper's beam
Cast through that dusk its happy gleam.

The angels sang; the shepherds came;
In the long manger shone a flame
That burned with supernatural light.
The stars trembled whisp'ered through the night.

And, though the Saviour's birth
Changed not their shadowy gloom to white,
They in a patient dumbness still
Hushed, agonized, and obeyed his will.

Vanished is that old forest now
And withered wholly, root and bough,
Yet in all Christian realms of earth
Springs a new forest, full of mirth
That lights with radiant cheer
The evergreen's enduring worth,
And to that whispering prophet brings
A glory of the King of kings.

For all our merry Christmas trees
Glow fair with boughs and berries
This gladden you from year by year,
And far and so, far or near,
Live sprightly, gladly die,
Knowing that they to God are dear,
And bring to man, illumined,
A torch that leads to heaven's gate.

Even so the measure slow of time,
Like a rhythm closed with rhyme,
Keeps the patient soul on high,
Brings joy to life, even from a sigh,
And in conclusion sweet
Dark grief with gladness can ally.
So shines the forest when we meet
With light and song, Christ's birth to greet.
—George Parsons Lathrop.

The Singing of Carols.

The custom of singing carols is still maintained in Italy—indeed, on the continent caroling at Christmas is almost universal—and particularly in Rome, where, during the season of Advent, pilgrims may be seen and heard performing their novenas.

The pilgrims, who, by the way, are shepherds from the Calabrian mountains, annually flock to Rome at this season. Their picturesque costume is thus described: "On their heads they wear conical felt hats, adorned with a frayed peacock's feather or a faded band of red cord and tassels. Their bodies are clad in red waistcoats, blue jackets and small clothes of skin or yellowish homespun cloth. Skin sandals are bound to their feet with cords that interlace each other up the leg as far as the knee, and over all is worn a long brown or blue cloak, with a short cape buckled closely round the neck. Sometimes, but rarely, this cloak is of a deep red with a scalloped cape."

Good Fellows' Christmas Tree.

The Good Fellows, an organization of men who help to make poor children happy every Christmas, are behind the municipal Christmas tree here in Columbus, Ind. They will erect a big tree in Commercial park, which is just across Franklin street from the city hall. Christmas carols will be sung around the tree on Christmas eve by the combined church choirs of the city. The other exercises will be held in the city hall, where the poor children of the city will receive presents. Baskets of provisions for the needy adults of Columbus will be distributed also.



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