

VII

THE POLITICIAN

SOON after Mayor Johnson had taken office it became apparent that a new political era was to begin for Cleveland. He had succeeded in uniting around his banner the democracy of Cuyahoga County, with the exception of a small coterie of old-time Democrats. These men promptly declared him a fraud and a humbug, but their voices found only an echo in the ranks of the Republican politicians. The people were with Johnson, who had returned to Cleveland with new doctrines. Being, however, an astute politician, he was no doctrinaire, and did not always follow his own preachings.

His experience in Washington and New York had shown him the difficulty of winning a great mass of people to new ideas. He therefore used as the slogan of his may-

oralty campaign: "Three cent fare on the street cars." It was a seductive war cry and led to victory. Home rule, municipal ownership, tax reform and single tax were all parts of his creed, but less emphasized. That he was a free trader everybody knew, and many called him a socialist, which he was not and could not have been.

Tom L. Johnson, the politician, was never well understood. His alert nature drove him instantly toward new things. His practical bent of mind prevented him from entertaining extreme views, and from drawing the last conclusions. Being a selfish, rich man, he would not quite emancipate himself from his riches, even in thought. He declared repeatedly that he was no philanthropist and he knew how to hold on to his belongings. But, having given up money-making to satisfy his political ambition, he saw with keen insight the great wrongs of our political and industrial systems. Feeling in himself the strength of a Hercules, the cleaning out of the Augean stables became a great tempta-

tion. He might do an immense service to his country, as mayor, governor, and finally as president. There is no doubt that he cherished such a thought, and—*honi soit qui mal y pense*.

As a former monopolist he was not opposed to large enterprises and saw their necessity under the prevailing conditions. He himself wished to be one of the conquerors of the earth. Yet, he could foresee the dangers lurking behind too much rapaciousness, and he felt for mankind in general. He wished to avert the day when a hungry and infuriated populace would not only plunder plutocracy, but also strangle it. They called him an anarchist and a socialist. He was rather the former than the latter. His anarchism consisted in enough disrespect for the law to demand its alteration for the good of the masses. It was rendering a service to his enemies, according to his views, to warn them in time of impending danger, by pointing the way to safety. Of course, it meant sacrifices to them, which they were not willing

to make. He on his side was ready to force them to yield through the courts, the State Legislature or Congress, or through pressure of public opinion.

He was not a socialist because he did not believe that nature made all men equal or that natural differences could be overcome by human precept. Neither did he believe man equal to the task of formulating a ready-made economic system.

Political economy was with him a matter of development, and his whole political activity was based upon this view. The great enterprises of the "interests" could therefore be regulated, but their right of existence was not questioned. He favored labor unions as long as they did not interfere with the success of legitimate business.

When Johnson became Mayor of Cleveland the movement to purify the administration of American cities was becoming a fashion, and he was about the first to give it a practical demonstration. Cleveland had at that time another distinguished citizen,

Mark A. Hanna, the friend and "maker" of President McKinley, and the most powerful member of the United States Senate. The political and personal interests of the two men were as antagonistic as their natures. They had fought each other in street railway wars that were to be renewed, and in addition stood upon different political platforms. The citizens of Cleveland began to see interesting times.

Senator Hanna had not been in politics as long as Mayor Johnson, but his experience was on a larger scale. He was the better business man of the two, and also a more forceful character. Behind him stood the most powerful interests. He was not a politician in the accepted meaning of the word, but a business man in politics. Of Johnson it might be said that he was also a politician in business. Hanna, in his sometimes brutal frankness, remarked on one occasion that if he could not combine business and politics he would give up politics. Johnson gave up business to go into politics.

The senator's enemies saw in this declaration a frank confession that he meant to make money out of politics. Of course, they could not accuse him of stealing in a legal sense, but rather declared that he manipulated legislation in his and his friends' favor.

There is no doubt that he was perfectly sincere in his political convictions. It was his opinion that the prosperity of the business world meant also the well being of the workingmen. In this sense he worked and toiled for his country and his fellow citizens. He was of a generous disposition and wished to advance everybody's welfare. But he found little time to study the wretchedness in the huts, and had a rather dangerous conception of the power of money. He was accused of supporting the old adage that every man has his price.

The business men saw in him their champion, the labor unions an enemy to their cause. He answered them with the "full dinner pail" and won them over.

His friendship and devotion for McKinley

was one of the strangest traits of his character. He had put him up as an idol and became its most pious worshipper. There was a certain grandeur in this adoration. During the campaign following the untimely death of McKinley, he would speak of him with an earnestness and a depth of feeling that turned a political audience under a flapping tent canvas into a congregation of believers. Mark Hanna was not a fluent speaker but he spoke with great force. When aroused he was as a volcano in eruption. His words exploded like thunderbolts and were convincing, in spite of poor argument.

Contrast with this the easy-flowing conversational speeches of Tom L. Johnson, interspersed with humorous stories and keen remarks upon things and men. He amused while teaching his lesson, and spoke rather to the intelligence than the hearts of men. His speeches reminded one of the picture of a beautiful butterfly, descending here and there for a moment upon a chalice flower to sip its honey. He would never delve deeply.

into a subject in his speeches, but seemed only to skim the surface of things. His thunder was of the nature of the sharp crack of a whip.

The battle between the two men was like the fight between Siegfried and the dragon. Subtlety, ruse and perseverance on one side; strength, ferocity and hatred on the other. The skirmishing had begun during the mayoralty campaign, but the fighting line soon extended beyond the city and county lines into the territory of the State. Mayor Johnson was the first to use a tent for his political meetings. He was derided and ridiculed as a circus clown but the time came when even the stately Mark Hanna found the use of a tent expedient. Yea, he was not adverse to having a band of music or a negro quartette upon the same platform with him.

Tom L. Johnson abhorred these things and would have none of them. Neither would he contribute during campaign times one cent toward charitable undertakings of any kind,

declaring that it was not his intention to buy votes in that or any other way.

"I have no use for boodlers," he was wont to say, "and any man who thinks he can get money out of me might just as well stay away."

His enemies called him stingy, and would not believe that he made his rules in the interest of the purity of elections, but treated his action as a personal convenience and as a safeguard against spending his private funds. They pointed to the liberality of Mark Hanna, who would generously give to hospitals and churches while a campaign was in progress. Of course, his enemies called this bribery and vote-buying. Johnson spent large amounts of money during his campaigns for printed matter and for his tents, of which there were soon two in use. He never forced any city employé under his direction to contribute toward the campaign fund, but the money nevertheless was forthcoming. The executive committee of his party would see to those details, without

troubling its head, the Mayor. On the other side, Senator Hanna was famous as a getter of money for political purposes.

Both men entertained an intense desire to win in the game of politics. Johnson had drawn first blood, and was quick in following up his advantage. The citizens of Cleveland generally favored his claim and on November 5, 1901, he also won the county election. Mark Hanna was furious and had recourse to a desperate measure. The Republican State Attorney General Sheets was prevailed upon to bring an ouster suit against the city of Cleveland a month after the election. The city's affairs were at that time administered under the so-called "federal plan," which held the Mayor responsible for all municipal acts and gave him the power to appoint his board of directors. The plan had worked to the general satisfaction of the citizens of Cleveland and had been devised ten years before by some of the best of legal lights. All at once it seemed to have become illegal and impractical. The Supreme Court of

Ohio was of that opinion and said so. The result was that all city governments in the State were destroyed, all improvements stopped. In Cleveland the hand of the law rested heavily upon the City Council and the administration. Another suit was brought to oust the Council, and an injunction granted to prevent passage of any franchise ordinances. Street railway franchises were the particular subject of attack.

The indignation of all classes of citizens knew no bounds, and Mark Hanna was roundly denounced. Nobody believed, of course, that the obscure citizen who had lent his name to the ouster suit, was acting of his own volition. The people comprehended fully the significance of combining business with politics. It is possible that Senator Hanna understood much better than the people the danger of having a Tom L. Johnson in his way. He thought to annihilate his enemy with one great stroke and set courts and Legislature in motion. The move was clever enough, but it miscarried, after all.

The cities of the State having no longer any legal standing were unable to forward even urgent business. It became necessary to call a special session of the Legislature, which convened on the 25th of August, 1902.

The so-called Nash code had already been prepared by friends of Senator Hanna and Boss Cox of Cincinnati. It sheared the mayors of their powers and placed the administration of the cities in the hands of boards, their members to be elected by the people. The governor of the State was given power to remove the mayor of any town if that official could be convicted of malfeasance in office. The deliberations of the Legislature were of short duration. On one of the early days Senator Hanna appeared before that august body and spoke in favor of a perpetual franchise clause.

Mayor Johnson, at home, fairly "boiled over" with wrath when he heard of this demand. He, too, went to Columbus, where he informed the lawmakers that perpetual franchises for present monopolies meant indus-

trial servitude for unborn generations. He also told them that the people could always be trusted to protect their own interests and to do justice to those with whom they deal. He demanded that all franchises to public service corporations be submitted to a vote of the people for ratification. This demand was a plank of his platform.

The Legislature, of course, paid no heed to his speeches, which made quite an impression at home, and passed the code as originally planned. Yet Senator Hanna was not able to secure enactment of his perpetual franchise proposition. That demand was too much even for a legislature. It was an unreasonable demand in the light of our present-day teachings on municipal subjects. It had been asked in the spirit of the fortune hunter and not in that of a wise statesman. It was one of those propositions which illustrate the forgetfulness of our leading business men of the general welfare of their fellow citizens. It was one of the things that make a Johnson necessary, or a La Follette, or an Altgeld,

or even a Roosevelt. Senator Hanna embodied the feeling and thinking of his class of men, who conjure up revolutions by their insatiable thirst for power and riches. An Olympian spectator can well understand their dominion of worldly affairs, for they are the men of brains, energy and enterprise. He, too, sees their limitations, their human short-comings, and their blindness to a higher life. The exploitation of the treasures of the earth and of the discoveries of science would still be carried forth on the largest scale possible if it were done for the benefit of all instead of the few. The doctrine of "The survival of the fittest" represents a hard truth, but the ethical side of mankind is also a reality and will perhaps prevail at the end. At least let us hope so. *Et per se muove.*

Johnson, shorn of his power as Mayor under the decision of the court, busied himself with politics more than ever. He did not fear to criticise the Supreme Court of the State, nor the Legislature, scandalising

thereby the law-abiding citizens. While the General Assembly was in session to pass the new municipal code, he entered state politics and succeeded in nominating Rev. Herbert S. Bigelow of Cincinnati as the democratic candidate for secretary of state. Bigelow was an old friend of his, a splendid speaker and a man of advanced ideas. He attacked Senator Hanna. It was he who coined the phrase, "Mark Hanna preaches the Golden Rule and practises the Rule of Gold." Both Johnson and Bigelow went out into the state, speaking in many counties. They travelled in an automobile belonging to the Mayor, a powerful machine which became known as the "Red Devil" and aroused much curiosity. A report of this method of campaigning even reached Europe, where the newspapers published a highly ludicrous legend. Heralds and trumpeters preceded the procession to announce the coming of the prophet. The villagers and farmers gathered everywhere in great numbers to see the "Red Devil" and its pas-

sengers. They listened to their speeches, which told them of the iniquity of the tax laws and how the people bore the burdens of the corporations. Then they heard of home rule and how every community should make its own laws; that the citizens should not give away franchises of any kind without retaining full control over them. They also learned that Senator Hanna was a boss who sought to "run things" to his own personal satisfaction.

The Reubens listened with mouths and ears open, then shook their heads in astonishment and went back to their ploughs. A few days later Senator Hanna and his friends arrived, speaking from the rear-end platform of a special train. The Senator told the same audiences with all his earnestness, that they had listened to a hot-air artist, a humbugger, and a socialist. He told them that a wise man "leaves well enough alone" and refrains from speculative politics and new fads. And lo, they applauded him, and believed in him, and when the 4th of Novem-

ber had come and gone Herbert Bigelow and his friend Tom L. Johnson found themselves buried under an avalanche of state ballots. In Cleveland and Cuyahoga County the Mayor, however, had once more beaten Mark Hanna.

Next in order were preparations for the great home battle to be fought in April, 1903. The Republican politicians, filled with the joy of their victory in the fall, had Johnson buried in anticipation before his time. The judgment of the average politician is always poor, because he never sees but one side (his side) of a question. Senator Hanna was less confident and left nothing undone in the formation of a strong phalanx against his enemy. Under the leadership of the Senator the Republican party was stronger than ever and had the means to accomplish great things. The debts of the county committees were promptly paid, the interests were liberal and the workers not without means.

On the other side Mayor Johnson worked his street railway bugaboo for all it was

worth. "One more victory," he said, "and the people will ride on the cars for three cents." He told them of his tax fight and how the public service corporations had made secret settlements to avoid the payment of larger sums. He told them what so far had been done under his administration, what was being done, and what would be done in the near future. Of course, the people knew all this and recognised it and went wild over him at his tent meetings.

These tent meetings were different from the customary political gatherings with their brass bands or negro quartettes. Tom Johnson believed more in arguments than in entertainments. Besides, he himself was entertaining enough. His speeches were never long, but bright, easily understood, to the point and in a popular vein. He caused the public to take part in his meetings by inviting them to ask questions which he would answer with much alertness, humor or wit. Here he was at his best.

Of course, most questions put were of little



or no value and frequently stupid or foolish. Some poor ignoramus, sometimes under the influence of liquor, would ask a question not pertinent to the subject matter under debate.

"Throw him out," a voice would be heard from a corner.

"Let him ask his question," Mr. Johnson would say, and then proceed to answer with a witty remark that caused convulsions of laughter among the easily satisfied.

"Give it to him, Tom," some enthusiast would cry out amid this general hilarity, and Tom would "give it" to him.

It must be stated that his answers were usually fair, though he did not entirely refrain from trickery. He understood in a masterly manner how to handle a large and unruly crowd of men. His remarks often became as sharp and cutting as a whip and were quite authoritative. It was always his desire to speak in the camp of the enemy, but he never found an adversary among the

other side courageous enough to invite him to the platform.

Once in a while he would appear in a Republican meeting during a campaign to hear what the speakers had to say. His presence created uneasiness among the politicians, who on one or two occasions lost their heads and demanded his retirement. Of course he did not remain where he was not wanted, but told afterward with much pleasure of his little adventure in a chilly atmosphere.

"Poor politics to allow Tom Johnson to talk at our meetings," the Republican committee-men would say. Yet he invited their speakers constantly to his tents. The invitations were accepted very rarely. He always saw to it that his guests were protected against insult but proceeded to down them in argument to the best of his ability. His joy was great when he could down an adversary.

After Johnson came Newton D. Baker, who was the better speaker of the two. He made

a speech while Mr. Johnson gave what was really more of a talk in his easy, natural way. Mr. Baker would speak of Mr. Johnson as his chief, as a man whom the people ought to follow because he was leading them to great achievements, who had made Cleveland the City on the Hill and who was the great leader and tribune. But Mr. Baker would also treat the questions of the day with precision and clearness, and was deservedly much applauded. The hit of the evening was generally made by Peter Witt, who received a noisy welcome from the audience. Peter's specialty was the taxation question, and the people liked to hear him, because he told them who was who when it came to dodging the payment of taxes. He would spare no name. Peter, too, invited questions, but woe to the brute who might step upon his toes. His sarcasm was like acid, his repartee quick and killing like a stroke of lightning. The unfortunate victim found no sympathy among the audience but was hooted and laughed at.

The good people and the cautious politicians shook their heads at the fierce onslaught of Peter Witt. Even Mayor Johnson would reprimand him, but one could perceive that he was not in earnest in so doing.

The Johnson meetings were always interesting and brought many Republicans to the tents. There is no question that Mayor Johnson put new life into the political campaigns. He forced his adversaries finally to adopt his methods. Mark Hanna himself would answer questions, though he never liked the new kind of warfare. Johnson's influence over an audience was remarkable. There was a strong personal magnetism ever going out from him toward the people. In his light and easy manner he would speak to them about municipal matters, state or national questions. He brought them something new, something that was of interest to them, and after a half-dozen campaigns, the citizens of Cleveland were different people, politically speaking. Thanks to him, they were among the first ones in the country to

see the dangers of great monopolies, of plutocracy whose rule has ruined wherever it has held forth.

He gave a practical demonstration of his preachings by attacking the street railway companies and had also planned to overcome the electric lighting company of Cleveland at the time he was himself overcome. Nevertheless, he was never able to persuade a number of the people of his sincerity. He was constantly accused of serving the people not from the heart, but because of political ambition. Events toward the close of his public career seemed to confirm this belief. He was not always consistent in holding holy the principles he advocated. His political life demonstrated that opportunity played a great factor in his doings, especially after the first four years of his successes. There was nothing in this to those who had a chance to study the man Johnson. The people at large saw in him their champion as they saw in Mark Hanna the representative of the rich. In April, 1903, they had not forgotten

what happened to them the year before and when the municipal election was over, Tom Johnson saw himself re-elected with a plurality of 5,985, and with him were chosen the men who had worked under him before the Legislature had deprived the mayors of the cities of Ohio of the right of making their own appointments. Thus Mr. Johnson's victory was complete, in spite of the opposition of the mighty Hanna. About those times the friends of Johnson used to say that the Senator could not be elected a constable in his home city.

The Democrats were jubilant and celebrated their victory with great enthusiasm. Mayor Johnson, with face radiant, smiling and happy, conceived still greater things. He now thought the time had come to expand. The prestige of his great victory secured him the much coveted leadership in state politics, in spite of a strong opposition from many politicians in his own party. They feared him, and he despised them openly. It cannot be said that Tom L. Johnson was

very diplomatic. On the contrary, he was outspoken in his likes and dislikes. He would go into a county in any part of the State and fight a member of the Legislature who was up for re-election and who had voted in favor of measures obnoxious to the Mayor of Cleveland.

It was soon rumored that Mr. Johnson was striving for the gubernatorial nomination. His friend, Charles P. Salen, who was in a way a better politician and organizer than the Mayor, was during the spring and summer of 1903 frequently out of town. He undertook diplomatic missions among the Democratic state leaders, who hated Johnson. The astute Mr. Salen won them over, for he, too, had a winning smile for men of his kind. By and by the rumors became more persistent. The true friends of Johnson took alarm at them and hastened to question him.

“To be Mayor of Cleveland is good enough for me,” he answered. “I have no desire to be Governor of Ohio.”

Such were his words to the best of his friends a few days before the meeting of the Democratic state convention of that year. Notwithstanding his denials, they warned him against an undertaking that looked like nothing more than a "gamble" lost in advance. Senator Hanna was seeking reelection from the next Legislature and would, no doubt, make the supreme effort of his life to beat his arch-enemy. Johnson had never shown any strength outside his own county and city, yet, here he was, ready to contest a state election under such circumstances. It was not an easy matter for him even to secure the nomination from his own party. Without Salen he could not have done it. He knew all this, must have known it, for he was an able student of political currents. But, as said before, there was something of the gambler and plunger in his nature. He would take a risk as long as it did not cost his head. He would still be Mayor if defeated as a candidate for Governor. After all, who knows? There was his luck, which

might carry him into the state capitol. Such things had happened before.

For his own justification, and as a reason for his candidacy he made up a programme. He declared that there could not be good municipal administration so long as it was controlled by the State and corrupted by corporations. Also did he find it necessary to become Governor in order to carry out this programme. He received the nomination from his party, and forthwith began a most vigorous campaign. The people of Ohio now had their turn in surprises. His great circus tent was erected in many counties where Johnson was not personally known. Good speakers travelled with the candidate, not excepting Peter Witt, who made many a flying trip through the State. John H. Clarke, a very intelligent and highly respected citizen, and chief counsel of the Nickel Plate Railway, was Johnson's candidate for United States senator and therefore running directly against Mark Hanna. Mr. Clarke, who was a fine and forcible speaker,

won many admirers. Though a corporation lawyer, he was a man of independent views and thoroughly democratic, though not always in the Johnson sense. He differed on some big questions with the candidate for Governor and said so at their meetings. But Johnson was broad-minded and rather liked opposition as long as it was not directed against his own plans.

The Democratic State ticket of that memorable year contained the names of fearless and progressive men. The legislative ticket of Cuyahoga County represented well the Johnsonites. On the other side of the battle field stood Senator Hanna with a guard, old and tried in Ohio politics, and well equipped for the great strife. The onslaught of the Democrats was fierce. Their main fire was directed against the Senator and Boss Cox of Cincinnati. The former was accused of favoring government by injunction, of perpetual franchises for public service corporations, of unjust taxation, and of threatening to take away the jobs of workingmen who did

not vote for him. Johnson, the Democratic speakers declared, was leading the fight for the people and their rights. A great stir was made but the Johnson candidacy created no enthusiasm among the people. The Mayor in his impetuosity had tried to create a psychological moment and missed his guess. Two years later would have been the right time for Tom L. Johnson.

Senator Hanna went into the campaign with much confidence but yet with some trepidation. He knew his adversary to be a man of many resources and of great energy. Wherever the Mayor's "Red Devil" went, the Senator followed to undo the damage wrought by the enemy. He depicted Johnson, just as on former occasions, as a charlatan, an anarchist, and a bad man on general principles, bent on creating unrest and dissatisfaction, a demagogue who wanted to empty the dinner pail of the workmen, filled by the Republican party. He evoked the ghost of McKinley in a tremulous voice and thereby greatly impressed his audiences.

The result of the campaign was a most inglorious defeat. Never before had a Democratic candidate for governor been beaten with such a majority of votes against him. Johnson came home, and two days after the election his laugh was as gay as ever. He was still Mayor of Cleveland. Yet it was the last time that he played a rôle in state politics. The Democratic leaders and corruptionists dropped him as if he were a hot iron that had been forced into their hands. They had certainly voted against him. Well-informed politicians were emphatic in their declaration that Johnson had been given the nomination in order to exterminate him from state politics. The scheme, if such existed, had worked well. But as before, Cuyahoga County stood by Mr. Johnson, gave him a majority and elected his delegation to the legislature. It was of no avail. The Republican majority ignored the little group from Cleveland, and would not listen to the best of propositions. Senator Hanna caused the spring elections to be abolished in the

hope that he might beat Johnson in a fall election, when the people would vote on a state ticket.

Destiny spared him a bitter deception. Mark Hanna had greatly exerted himself during the campaign. He was a vigorous man, but much older than Johnson and hardly in condition to follow the latter in his travels over the State. In December he showed signs of a collapse and his physicians urged him to recuperate in the South. He refused, as the legislature was to be arrayed in line for his re-election to the United States senate. Thus he continued working and at the beginning of 1904 he was re-elected. Congress being in session, Senator Hanna returned to Washington to take up his duties there, having hardly taken any rest. At the capitol his work was arduous. He was still a leading spirit though the advent of Roosevelt had relegated him to his seat in the senate chamber in place of his former sphere of activity in the President's private rooms. "The Interests" urged him to run for the

presidency and many politicians there were who prophesied his nomination and election.

Suddenly the news came from Washington that Mark Hanna had fallen sick with typhoid fever. Grave fears were entertained from the first, for his weakened condition was known. He died in March, begging of his physicians, who tortured him with efforts toward resurrection, to permit him to depart in peace. The old Roman sentiment, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, being out of date in our days, Senator Hanna's death was rejoiced over by his diabolical enemies, who forgot that they too were mortal and of much less consequence. Whatever might be said against Mark Hanna as a politician, he was a man of strength, a Bismarck, in a certain sense, who with a strong hand and sure of his purpose, went straight toward his goal. It could be argued that a Bismarck had no place in a republic, but the iron chancellor of the German Empire was not less hated and admired than Mark Hanna. The senator had no patience with the new movements

of our times; he was old-fashioned in his political views, a practical man of affairs, using the means at hand to gain his point, which was adverse to socialistic preachings of any kind.

Tom L. Johnson regretted the untimely demise of his enemy, the only one he found truly worthy of his steel. He had beaten him a half dozen times at home, and was defeated by him a few times in the state. Thus honors were about evenly divided. The death of Hanna, however, caused a disintegration of the Republican party in Cuyahoga County. It split into factions after Charles Dick, Hanna's hireling, was selected to be the successor of the dead giant. A pigmy was put in his place, and, of course, had no influence or power over restless and ambitious politicians.

Mayor Johnson had smooth sailing from that time on, as far as politics were concerned. In the fall of 1905 he was re-elected Mayor by a plurality of 12,169, carrying with him the entire city ticket, a few councilmen

excepted. As a Democratic governor was elected at the same time, Mr. Johnson was hopeful of becoming once more influential in state politics. But the governor died before he could accomplish much and was succeeded by a Republican lieutenant governor. Johnson inaugurated an organization of the mayors of the State to establish home rule measures. A bill was drawn up, and things looked bright for a time. However, his hopes were not realized. The organization did not last, and the bill fell to pieces. But it was through his original efforts that another bill was passed in time by the legislature, the bill that made a rate of two cents per mile a reality on the railroads within the State of Ohio. It was also through his initiative that a law reforming the taxation system was enacted and another law prescribing the referendum in connection with street railway franchises. Considering that all his recommendations were opposed by a hostile legislature on political principles and personal spite his achievements are the more

remarkable. His enemies at home and throughout the State were so strongly bi-
assed against him that they would not think
of considering his propositions on their mer-
its.

Mr. Johnson, however, saw clearly the
trend of the times, and was convinced that
nothing could prevent the ultimate success of
his ideas. He was not deceived. By and
by they would appear in the camp of the
enemy, find supporters, and be finally en-
acted into laws. Of course, nobody in con-
nection with his bills thought of the name
Johnson, but they were his ideas just the
same. In Cleveland his public activities had
created a new standard for municipal affairs;
in Ohio they spread the seed of an awakened
political conscience. We already perceive
the sprouts raising their little heads here and
there, and nobody needs to give up hope for
a better future. All over the country good
men are at work to save the Republic from
destruction; men who are not destroyers but
up-builders, not demagogues but level-headed

citizens; men who have the welfare of the human race at heart, who want to see happiness instead of desolation, and who clearly feel that we have wandered too far away from the principles of our great Constitution. "Back to the Declaration of Independence," must be our slogan, if we are to be saved.

The law which abolished spring elections carried also a proviso that municipal elections alternate with the county and state elections. Many politicians deplored the suppressing of the spring elections, but the people were glad to get a breathing spell. Mayor Johnson, who now spent nearly all of his time in carrying on his war against the street railway company, sought another reelection in the fall of 1907, and won with a greatly reduced plurality. It was his last victory at the polls.

A year before the county had gone Republican, and a year after, in 1908, history repeated itself. In 1909 Johnson himself was defeated after being beaten in several street

railway battles during the year. The business world had become tired of the continuous strife, and aroused itself to a great effort, which succeeded. In reality it was not the Mayor who was discharged by the public, but Tom L. Johnson, the street railway man.

The storm clouds could have been seen gathering for a year before a feeling spread that Mr. Johnson had lost himself in a *cul-de-sac*, and that there was no more help for him. He did not even try to turn back when he was loudly accused of neglecting the general affairs of the city. He knew that many parts of the municipal machine were running by themselves under the care of his directors, and that he gave them all the personal attention necessary. His great working capacity was still with him. But outside appearances were against him, and he was too self-reliant to heed them.

His friend Salen had had several quarrels with him and was accused of trying to overthrow the Johnson régime. On several occasions Salen essayed the capture of the city

council, but with poor success. He allied himself on different occasions with the anti-Johnson forces in the State and threatened to run for Mayor against his old master. Tom L. Johnson, who was usually quite outspoken in his likes and dislikes, never said an unkind word against Salen. He openly acknowledged the right of the latter to become a candidate, most likely because he knew from his thorough understanding of the man that Salen would side-track at the last minute, and also because he did enjoy that right. As an acute politician Mr. Salen never announced his candidacy but permitted others to spread the rumor, which he would not directly contradict. Occasionally, Johnson and Salen would become reconciled, when a campaign was coming on and help each other. It was somewhat of a comedy the two were playing. Salen liked to display a certain independence as becoming a political boss and Johnson had no objection. The thing was harmless, but Mr. Salen had bitter enemies among the friends of Johnson, the foremost

of whom was the irascible Peter Witt. These men berated Salen as a traitor, and accused him freely of having contributed to the downfall of Johnson.

Both the Mayor and Mr. Salen were in need of each other during the election times and did not deceive themselves on this point. It is not unlikely that Salen at one time counted on Johnson's support for the mayoralty nomination, and was therefore willing to see him elevated to the governor's chair. He was undoubtedly dismayed at the Mayor's great failure as a candidate for governor and went his own way to a certain extent. It was generally known that Salen's one ambition was to become Mayor of Cleveland.

As a statesman Mayor Johnson entertained high ideals and advocated the cause of the common people. As a politician in working clothes he played the game of politics in the ordinary fashion. He valued his men in accordance with their utility and their devotion to him. He would mercilessly crush actual opposition in his camp and would befriend

men whose reputations were unsavory. He would even employ them in minor positions. On the other hand, only the best were good enough for places of importance. His tendencies were of a liberal nature, and he would not judge too severely the morals of men as long as they were honest and steady in the fulfilment of their duties.

Diplomacy was not a part of his character, but he was cunning, resourceful and quick in action. He would become exceedingly aggressive and would not, in such moments, listen to the best of his friends. It was one of his shortcomings not to seek advice from old and tried friends, who had opinions of their own. He preferred to work out his political schemes without assistance from those sources. Impatient by nature, he would, once in a while, make a grievous political *faux-pas* which could not be retracted. As an example of this kind may be mentioned his extremely violent and personal attack on Governor Harmon in the Democratic state convention of 1908. The great majority of delegates

were against him but, undaunted by this fact, he undertook to denounce the candidate of the convention in one breath as a reactionary and as an agent of the brewery interests. Harmon was nominated and elected and Mr. Johnson found himself afterwards in a position where he was obliged to ask favors of the governor.

No, Johnson was not a Marcus Antonius. His friends ever claimed that he was not in politics for personal ambition, but for the cause of the people. Yet neither his actions nor his character warranted such an assumption. It is more likely that he espoused the cause of the people because it would serve him as a ladder to climb into high office. Being of a domineering spirit he naturally could not ally himself with men of his own class, but was rather prompted to rise in arms against them. Ambitious, he wanted to lead; curious, he espoused new things; without imagination, he entered politics. His declaration of love for the people had a false ring; yet, he would serve them, and fight for

them with all his strength and power. Neither was it ambition alone that prompted him to enter the public arena. The vastness of the arena had its allurement. Here he could display his overflowing strength, his natural inclination for combat. Here he would be seen and heard; here he could do great things, useful to his fellowmen. The immensity of the practical tasks he planned for himself drove him into the camp of the people, made him believe that he took a real interest in them. It was an unconscious self-deception. Whenever he lost sight of his ideals there was nothing of a Jones of Toledo in him. But those ideals do him great credit, and directed even his indiscretions towards the betterment of the general conditions of mankind.

Those who could only judge him from a distance and through the newspapers were easily led to believe in the cry that he was insincere. He was honest in his great struggle for the people's rights and welfare, but his motive was not an inherent love for his

fellow-beings. It was a love for the mastery of great things, combined with an ambition to shine and to be a leader of men. That he did not succeed was due entirely to his own failings, for he had the intellect, the force of character, the energy, the power of endurance and the tenacity to overcome every obstacle that men could put in his way. Later on, his achievement as a politician will be seen more clearly and also more appreciated. He has done more than one man's work in his day and due credit should be given him.