

Be a Politician.

An election was recently held in one of our large cities. Voters, as usual, were scattered about discussing the candidates and the general situation. Presently one of them was approached by a very pleasant looking man, who leisurely sauntered up to our voter, shook hands, chatted a few moments, and gave him a cigar, which was of course put to use. Then after some more chatting he produced a ticket having on it the names of some special friends—good, straight forward men—for whom he'd like the voter to cast his ballot; indeed, he would give him a dollar to do so. And to complete the little episode, the voter presently dropped the ticket into the ballot-box, and the dollar into his pocket. Then our genteel friend wandered on to fresh pastures.

That man was a politician, as we generally consider the term; but not the politician I have in mind. The one to whom I would ask your indulgence is not he whose livelihood depends upon his success at bribery among the voters; but he is the voter himself—the voter not led by unprincipled demagogues who would

keep him in ignorance of the good qualities of
 an opposing platform or candidate and fire him
 with passion against the other party; but the
 voter who investigates for himself, thinks for
 himself, and acts for himself, — the voter who
 reads both parties' papers, hears both parties'
 speakers, and studies the question under dispute
 from the lofty standpoint of a truth-seeker —
 not that of an office-seeker —, and the voter
 who then applies the knowledge thus acquired
 with the laudable intention of benefitting as much
 as possible the public. Such is the pol-
 itician I would have you be, — seldom met,
 it is true; so is the ideal philanthropist or patriot
 or Christian: but all the more need of having them.
 All the more need, from their very scarcity, of having
 more Christians and philanthropists and patriots
 and true politicians. The world wants them.
 Our nation wants them. And while we are
 supplying the first three, while not also
 the last — true politicians? Surely we have
 no higher earthly duty than that of earning
 for our country, of giving it our most earnest
 endeavor to do good by correcting the many
 evils under which it staggers. We admire
 the philanthropist who cares for the wants of

individuals near about him. But what of the man who extends his efforts, not simply to a few, but to the sixty million people in America? Ah, too often we fail to see the hero in this work; but God in Heaven smiles his benediction on the man - our politician - whose spirit swells to public good for his many fellows. And when, as students, we go forth to take our part in the work before us of determining our nation's career, let us not think it beneath us to be in this - the highest - sense loyal to our country. We cannot perhaps fight her battles mid the smoke and carnage of war. But we can study the political questions as they arise, and duty calls us to the task. We can work for principle's sake and vote intelligently for principle's sake with the hope and assurance that the right will prevail.

If we do this and others do it, there need be no apprehension about our nation's future. When public questions appear for disposal we can then know that ignorance and prejudice and passion will be cast aside by the voter - by the politician, and that candid and intelligent consideration will reveal the proper solution to the problem. And when such matters as that of subsidizing steamship lines arise, and the newspapers and party

leaders seek to inflame the people to a blind support of their side of the dispute, — then, with our voters intelligently inguiring into the subject with the honest intention of treating it to the best end, we shall have no fear but that the best policy will be followed.

Likewise will this be happily true in the great question of our currency, when gold men and silver men and paper men seek by every pretence to coarce the voters support.

Or when the vexed Indian problem seems insoluble; when the governmental policy is upbraided by the newspapers for its futility, and the noble Red Man yields not to the persuasions of education, religion, or Winchester, but persists in remaining a worthless pauper and a menace to his inauspicious neighbors. Then, perhaps and not till then, will our voters see the way to a definite settlement of the matter and succeed in ridding themselves of that deadweight they are now obliged to support and carry.

Or when Protection and Free trade continue in their historic struggle that has from the beginning engrossed so largely the public attention, and the voter is flooded with multitudinous tables of tariff rates, corresponding prices, and the general

contemporaneous condition of the country as proof, positive and unquestionable, of the necessity of high duties - or low duties.

Or when the "better half" stirs up the country for an extension of the right of suffrage, and the voter is button-holed by an agitator who pours at him a relentless stream of argument, vituperation, and entreaty till an opposing advocate comes along and likewise unloads himself upon the bewildered voter and the poor fellow is persuaded into the illusion that both are right - that woman ought always to vote and that she ought never to vote.

If in these emergencies the voter acts candidly and thoughtfully we shall have no fear when steamship after steamship glides up to the wharf at New York City, runs out the gang-plank, and opens the way for an influx of European immigrants till the very support of the American laborer seems threatened.

Or when the conflict between the capitalist and the workman grows fiercer, and strikes and lock-outs but add fuel to the flame.

Or when want and misery in our cities becomes deeper (the luxury and extravagance

of some only making the shadow darker). When vice and trickery are employed to widen the chasm between the rich and the poor and our most cherished institutions totter in apprehension of a revolution such as a century ago whelmed France with a deluge of blood.

— When these conditions arise our only hope must lie in the intelligence, integrity, and independence of the voter. Party magnates will continue in their efforts to whip the voter into line to elect men to rich offices regardless of the evil effect upon the country at large. Circulars and public speakers will continue in their endeavors to promote party interests. Impostors and schemers will continue to pose as the friend of the people and champion of all that is holy. These agencies are now at work and are redoubling their efforts. We as citizens of the greatest republic that ever existed, reaping the benefits of the freest, best government with which a people were ever blessed, should recognize our responsibility to this government and our duty to promote its interests. Upon our generation will soon devolve the task of guiding our country in its onward march. The world

is looking anxiously at this attempt for self-government. Do not let it fail. Give us true politicians - leaders of intelligence and honesty, and voters to support them in the right. Then shall we know that all is well. Then shall we know that our Revolutionary fathers' faith was not a fond dream; that their bright hopes for Columbia are to be realized; that the monument of free government they erected is still to tower through the years to come - an immortal tribute to their wisdom and love for the right.