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GOVERNOR M'KINLEY.

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COLUMBUS, Ohio, August 24, 1895.

GOV. M'KINLEY is a queer presidential candidate. I have come from Washington to Columbus to see what he is doing to make himself President of the United States. Every one knows he is to be one of the leading candidates before the republican national convention. Ohio has declared herself for him, and McKinley clubs are being formed all over the Union. Columbus ought to be the headquarters of the campaign, and I expected to find a literary bureau at work here. There is nothing of the kind. The state house is as torpid as a snake in midwinter, and the governor apparently shows no more interest in wire-pulling than though he were the chief executive of one of the poorest territories of the west. He is not doing a stroke to help along the movement, and he refuses to say a word upon national politics for publication. He will not talk about the presidency, and he says his ideas on public questions are so well known that it is useless for him to make any statement as to the probable platform.

I have known Governor McKinley for years. He is one of the most modest men in public life. He seems to shun newspaper notoriety and is averse to talking about himself. Up to the present time he has systematically refused to give anything of this character to the newspapers, and my talk with him only came through my long acquaintance and upon the promise that I would be moderate in my expressions. I spent some time with him in his office at the state house. He is easier to get at than any government clerk in Washington. There is no red tape about his establishment. You walk through the rotunda, down one hall and up another and pass into the ante-room where his private secretaries work. If the governor is disengaged these direct you to go right in, and you find McKinley, who is now perhaps the most talked-of man in the United States, seated at a big, flat desk in a mahogany chair, with a pile of letters and telegrams before him. His private secretary may be on the opposite side of the desk, but as a usual thing you will find him alone, and if you have ever met him before he will be sure to recognize you. He has a phenomenal memory, and he seldom forgets a name or a face. He puts you at once at your ease, and evidently does not

consider himself to be any better or greater than you are. He is democratic in his feelings and actions, and he is a good, healthy specimen of commonplace humanity. He is a man of the people, and he believes in the people and can sympathize with them. He is a good talker and can tell a good story, though he never uses anecdotes upon the stump. As you talk with him you find that he has a humorous side to his nature, and he can laugh like a young Bacchus. He has a religious side also, and he never says anything against religion, even in jest. He is a member of the Methodist Church, but I do not think he is a doctrinal Methodist, and he has his jokes now and then at the expense of his friends who belong to other denominations. One of his stories, for instance, gives the reason why a prominent politician could not become a Baptist. It was because he could not bear to undergo immersion, as he could not stand being out of public view for any length of time, and another was as to the Scotch Presbyterian who was noted for keeping the Sabbath and everything else he could lay his hands on.

Governor McKinley has an immense correspondence, and the electric wires are kept hot with the business of his position. He dispatches his work quickly, dictating the answers to his letters rapidly, and seldom stopping for a word or an idea. He walks up and down smoking a cigar as he dictates. Tobacco, in fact, is his only vice. He never drinks, and consequently is free from that fault which the man excepted when he spoke of having a perfect wife. You may have heard the story. The man remarked:

"There is only one trouble about my wife. She will swear when she gets drunk!"

Well, McKinley never drinks, and he never swears. His closest friends tell me they have never heard him tell a story, nor utter an expression which could not be repeated in the presence of ladies. He is fond of the society of ladies, and there is no more devoted husband in the United States than he. His wife has been an invalid for the past twenty years, and he has devoted all his spare time to her. The relations which the two sustain to each other are most beautiful. Mrs. McKinley thinks there is no man in the world equal to her husband. She has an oil painting of him so hung that it will be the first thing she sees when she awakes in the morning, and she never tires of talking about him. She has grown much better within recent years, and she is now almost well. She is a beautiful woman, and a very bright one intellectually. She is very anxious that the governor should retire from politics, and she told

me that she hoped she could induce him to do so upon the anniversary of their silver wedding, which will occur next January. The two live very comfortably at the Neill House in Columbus, the governor walking back and forth to his work at the state house, which is just across the way.

The governor's life, in fact, is quiet, regular and comparatively uneventful. He is attending to the duties of his office, and now and then going off to make a speech in different parts of the United States. It is wonderful how many demands there are upon him for speaking. He receives scores of requests every week, and many of these are accompanied with offers of money. Just the other day he received a letter from Boston stating that the writer would give him \$500 if he would deliver a speech there. He replied that he could not go, whereupon the man sent a second letter stating that if the money offer was not enough he would make it twice the five hundred and his expenses. Governor McKinley, however, does not believe in speaking for money. He looks upon his speaking something as Tolstoi does upon his writings, and he has never accepted a dollar for any of his public utterances. He is a peculiar fellow in his ideas of right, and his views upon this question of public speaking came out this afternoon, upon my telling him that I thought he ought to make a good thing out of his speeches, and that I knew other men who were increasing their income in this way. Before he had replied I asked him what he got for a speech, and he then told me that he had never received a cent for such work. Said he:

"I do not know why it is, but there is a sort of repugnance in my mind against giving my views on public questions for pay. I may be all wrong about it, but I know it would take all the enthusiasm out of me if I knew that I was going to be paid at the end of a meeting for the remarks I made during it. I have had money offered me very often, but I have never taken it. I remember a speech which I made not long ago in debate at one of the big eastern universities on the tariff question. I took the protective side, of course, and a very prominent free trader had the other side. Shortly after I arrived in the city the president of the institution called upon me at my hotel. During the visit he took four \$100 bills out of his pocket and laid them down on the table.

"What is that for?" said I.

"That is for your speech tonight," was the reply.

"But I don't want any money for the speech," I answered. "I did not come here to talk for money, and I cannot take it."