

How to Build a Great And Splendid Municipality

An Address by HON. WILLIAM H. KING, in the Salt Lake Tabernacle, Sunday, December 13, 1908.

(Reported by F. W. Otterstrom.)

I AM informed that in various churches in this city today, subjects relating to government, municipal reform, and civic righteousness are being discussed and presented for the consideration of the people. I have been invited to submit a few observations, upon this occasion, respecting this and kindred subjects—not because of any particular fitness, upon my part, to discuss them, but probably because of the fact that we have in this city what is denominated the Civic Improvement League, with which I have been identified for some time.

I desire it to be distinctly understood, in what I may say this afternoon, that I am not committing any individual, church, or organization to the views which I may express. They will be my own views, and I alone am responsible for them. But I think it warranted in assuring our friends who may be here this afternoon that this great organization known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is not only interested in the social and moral welfare and development of the people of that Church and of the world, but is likewise profoundly interested in the industrial and economic welfare and development of the people of the world. The growth of the world and the complex conditions of society must be taken account of by religious systems and teachers, if they would serve fully the cause of humanity. There is greater necessity for moral teachers and the inculcation of religious and altruistic principles, where the complexities of the social and governmental organizations are so pronounced as in the case today. The simpler the social organization, the simpler the laws and principles necessary for the government and welfare of the people. New conditions demand new remedies. These new remedies, however, may consist in the application of fundamental principles properly interpreted and applied.

The horizon of the people has expanded with the growth of civilization and the inter-linking of peoples and nations. The forces at work in the world have affected so greatly all peoples, must be taken cognizance of by religious teachers and systems. So it is more or less of a truism to say, that all questions relating to the advancement and progress of the world are religious in their character; because while religion primarily seeks the soul's salvation and man's exaltation hereafter, it must recognize the fact that the conditions which envelop humanity determine more or less man's faith and his spiritual development. In my opinion, religion, to be the power in the world that it should, cannot commit itself to mere orthodoxy or to what might be denominated doctrinaire policy. While the true faith of the Redeemer constantly holds before our view the life hereafter, in my opinion it is a mistake for a creed to be concerned only in what George Eliot calls "other-worldly happiness." We have problems confronting us relating to our physical as well as our moral welfare—social problems, economic and industrial problems, to the solution of which all good citizens, Christian and non-Christian, should give the best that is within them. Religion in my opinion fully performs all its functions if it stands dumb before these and other social problems which affect for good or evil the present and future of humanity.

WIDE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION.

Whatever relates to man's growth and stands in the path of his moral development must come within true religion's influence. It is a function of the true faith to seek to purify society, improve industrial and economic conditions and to remove the barriers which enslave and enslave the nations, and to make of each individual unit a stronger factor in the moral, industrial and political life.

Because a Savior came and announced divine laws, and because in this republic we enjoy political liberty, we are not warranted in the position that the future has no obstacles or dangers, and that the happiness and security of mankind are assured. The true Christian, and the true patriot look with anxiety to the future and do not disguise the fact that industrial, economic and political conditions loom across the threshold of national and individual life.

It is well nigh impossible to take a segment from the great circle of life, and consider it apart from the remainder. The plan of life is one of law and orderly progress, and running through all the departments and activities of life, and through all the ages, there is a single mighty question, a law, a law and mistake view of life, which confines the investigation of the laws of progress to one particular phase or aspect of life, and seeks to deduce the laws which make for the advancement morally and otherwise of the world from an examination of some particular phase of humanity. This error is manifested in the works of sociologists, and those whose effort has been to read the riddle of life. Religious enthusiasts see only the religious doctrines and movements in the world, and fail to consider too often other factors which have powerfully affected the progress of humanity. Scientists, fierce utilitarians, philosophers and sociologists, have each in turn ascribed the progress or decadence of peoples and nations to particular and limited forces, and have failed to see that in all the ages there have been locked and woven together many forces which in orderly movement have forced humanity to higher levels. Each of these things and all philosophies, men are beginning to realize that there is a moral and ethical law, and that there can be no permanent success and no true progress aside from ethical and moral conditions, favorable to the maintenance of a high standard of social efficiency.

RELIGION A SOCIAL QUESTION.

Spiritual development is the outgrowth of the triumph of ethical and moral principles. So that after all, religion is a social question, and is concerned in the social and industrial conditions of mankind. It has been truly said that slavery, at bottom, was a religious question. Slavery affected the social and economic conditions of the people. Religion directly and indirectly, therefore, was concerned in the industrial condition of the people. I think it is too narrow a view to take of religion to say that it is concerned exclusively in the life to come. To the credit of Christianity it can be said that it has profoundly contributed to the material and social development of the world. Problems in which humanity is interested, whether social, economic or religious, have had the aid of religion in their solution. Wherever there has been a wrong, an injustice, oppression, unjust and unequal distribution of wealth, caste and class distinctions, in other words, wherever there has been unethical and unworthy conditions, religion has appeared to correct them, and has been and is the foremost to battle down evil and sin wherever entrenched. Whenever any tree, reared in the garden of human activity, has borne fruit, which in any degree poisoned the social, economic, spiritual or political atmosphere of life, true religion has been the ax laid at the root of such tree, to hew it down and cast it into the fire. Religion is, therefore, not a pure academic question, a mere catalogue of orthodox views, and a catechism based upon a religious creed. Everywhere men are beginning to realize that deeds, righteousness and purity of life lie at the basis of human progress, and constitute the holiest form of faith. Men are beginning to realize that religion is revealed not only to "save men, but man," and is as much concerned in teaching us how to live and to be, as in teaching us how to die. That we may discharge all social and governmental functions and obligations, as it is in teaching us how to die. A condition of society in which there is equality, justice and liberty, and in which the individual units develop the powers within, will produce lofty ideals, a living faith in a Divine Ruler, and an unextinguishable hope in the progress of humanity. Eminent divines in all churches are beginning to realize that churches and religious organizations must become factors in the social and industrial affairs of the world. They are beginning to realize that the economic environments of a people largely create and control their activities, and their attitude of mind towards God and religion. Preachers and teachers are more and more beginning to realize that their service to the world is measured largely by the aid which they can give in helping meet the problems and difficulties of life, whether religious, economic, social or industrial or of any other character; and this attitude does not involve any lack of reverence for the Creator or diminish one's concern in the great question of the immortality of the soul and of the life beyond the grave. But the feeling is that whatever will make man a higher moral being, a stronger ethical force, a more efficient social factor, will better equip him for whatever is waiting him in the "mansions beyond the stars."

The transition along the lines indicated has been so marked, that it is something of a shock when we hear, as was stated not long ago by an ecclesiast of the Anglican church, that "it is a mistake to attempt to turn Christ's kingdom into one of this world; that the kingdom of God can never be of this world."

It seems to me, therefore, that any faith that draws men together, improves their physical and industrial conditions, and, by showing their common religion, teaches that the hurt of one is the hurt of all, is an element to be considered by thinkers and teachers, and the influence of which should be invoked by earnest and conscientious people.

I think it a good religion that brings the kingdom of God into the world, into the lives and homes of the people, into cities, states and nations. It is a pretty good faith that brings us to a recognition of the fact that we are better citizens of the kingdom of God when we are better citizens of the kingdoms of men and that we are better servants of the Infinite Father, when we are better neighbors and better citizens of city, state and nation.

Municipal government presents problems which have not yet been solved by the people of this republic. The American people are beginning to rise to supreme heights and deal with many great national and moral problems with high patriotism and with a sublime faith; but there are many matters of a political character in which we are deficient, in which we lack patriotism and moral courage. We are transported with frenzied enthusiasm when we read of our fathers overthrowing secular and religious tyrannies and securing that all power springs from the consent of the governed. This pronouncement we feel forever establishes liberty and righteous governments; but the truth is being forced upon us that our system of municipal government presents dangers which are more or less of a menace to republican institutions. The corruptions of municipalities have in some sections degenerated the moral sensibilities of the people, and paralyzed the arms of patriotism. It is a maxim I think announced by Plato that republics live by virtue and

Why They Were Certified

Being a state official and authorized to authenticate documents, I have been called upon in my official capacity to authenticate hundreds of statements that are so at variance with the popular beliefs, and the evidence of the text books, as to the curability of chronic diseases, that they have been regarded with suspicion by the public. Text books declare that inflammation of the kidneys in the chronic form is incurable.

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I further certify that the recoveries certified as above were made by Fulton's Renal Compound. In attestation of the foregoing, I hereby attach my signature and official seal at my office in Montgomery Block, San Francisco, California, this 28th day of February, 1908.

(Seal) THOMAS S. BURNES, Notary Public.

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the maintenance of a high level of public spirit and justice among the citizens.

The promulgation of a great Constitution with guarantees of liberty and equality, the enactment of statutes just and humane, will not alone make a nation great. Above and beyond and greater than all human constitutions is the spirit of justice and the law of morality. When they are departed from, the institutional form of government no matter how great its source or splendid its achievements, will wither and fall into an open grave.

AMERICAN DEMOCRACY CRITICIZED.

It sometimes touches our pride to be told that there are faults in our American democracy, and that we fall to manifest in our political and municipal life those high ideals and Christian virtues more or less reflected in our lives and in communal conduct. James Bryce, the great English statesman and historian, points out with great clearness some of the faults which characterize our American democracy. Among them he enumerates a certain "commonness of mind and tone, a want of dignity and elevation in and about the conduct of public affairs, an insensibility to the noblest aspects and responsibilities of national life. A want of knowledge, tact and judgment in the details of legislation as well as of administration with an inadequate recognition of the difficulty of those tasks and of the need for work of special experience and skill in dealing with them. Laxity in the management of public business. Persons entrusted with business being only average men with a defective sense of honor and ethics, who may succumb to the temptations which the control of legislation and the public funds present, in cases where persons of a more enlarged view and with more of a social reputation to support would not do so. Indifference to the duties of public office. Without fully agreeing with him, his criticism is worthy of examination.

Plato and other great philosophers attribute to republics and the people within their borders weaknesses which they thought fatal to moral and political stability and to the perpetuation of the nation. It is to be observed, however, that they had in view the small Greek republics of antiquity and the republics of the middle ages, and of them it may be said, that recognizing slavery and the people being devoid of those moral and other strong qualities necessary for good government, such republics were doomed to failure and destruction.

While it is true there are weaknesses in our system which particularly manifest themselves in our municipal life, I believe there is that spirit of patriotism and virtuousness in the citizenry which will overcome the evils complained of and give to the people not only a higher form of national life, but a pure and more exalted form of municipal government.

Many travelers in our republic have expressed the same view announced by Bryce when he said in effect that the tone of public life in the United States is lower than one expects to find in so great a nation. It is a fact that the American people are too optimistic; carried away by the greatness of the republic and believing that the golden age is come, they lose sight of the questions and problems that are before them. They are too ready to dream of the Utopia, and the task is so felicitous to speak of the collective majesty of the nation, that we forget to look at our homes and cities, and fail to appreciate the fact that the work of the government is a task perhaps more difficult and important than the government of the nation. And so Bryce and others are somewhat surprised when they find such lofty national patriotism and Christian virtues of such high order, and then discover that we, partially at least, fail to apply our faiths and doctrines to social, municipal and industrial problems. We must not forget the fact that the people of this republic, as well as national greatness, National decisions follow individual and local weakness. The corruption of the unit in society, in the cities and towns, precludes the corruption of the state and the destruction of the nation.

PROBITY THE ONLY SECURITY OF THE NATION.

The prosperity of nations and peoples, as stated by Sir W. H. Lecky, is the result of the highest and noblest virtues. The foundation of a nation is laid in pure domestic life, in commercial integrity, in the high standard of moral worth and of public spirit, in simple habits, in courage, uprightness and a sense of duty. The moral character of a nation is the result of the moral character of its citizens. If you would form a mere judgment of the future of the nation, observe carefully the character of the citizenry, increasing or decaying. Observe especially what qualities count for most in public life. Is character becoming more or less important? Are the men of the highest rank in the nation men of whom it is proud to be the respective of party, competent judges speak with genuine respect? Are they of sincere convictions, consistent lives, indisputable integrity? It is by observing this moral character of the nation that we can best estimate the character of a nation.

The growth of cities not only in this republic but in other nations, is marvelous. Urban life attracts the people from the country, and the cities are becoming the new centers of the world. As early as 1844 Emerson wrote that "the cities drain the country of the best part of its population. The flower of the youth of both sexes goes into the towns." With this massing of population increasing problems are developed. Perhaps the criticism is warranted that our municipalities have not reached that high standard of efficiency and morality, and of honest government that should characterize integral parts of the republic. Shameless abuse of power, political corruption, party demagoguery, cliques and rings have added chapters of humiliation if not of disgrace to our national life. Conditions in San Francisco are fresh in the minds of all. For years that great city, endowed by nature with such splendid possibilities, was in the grasp of a corrupt political machine. The people became the prey of soulless corporations, franchise-grabbers and political buccanniers. The morality of the people was corroded and social ties loosened. There was a decadence of civic pride, of official and political integrity. Other great cities of the nation have been held in the grasp of similar conspirators. So frequent have been the exhibitions of corruption and dishonesty in connection with municipal government, that the public conscience has ceased to be shocked, and many good people have come to look upon cities as the inevitable, not the legitimate, prey of political parties and corrupt oligarchies. Prometheus like, these great giants of our social and political life have been bound to the rock of political partisanship and the vultures of graft and greed have gnawed at their vitals.

Political machines have battled for control of city governments in order to secure for themselves franchises and franchises to corrupt individuals or corporations. Back of the ward and the city political organization, has been found the ramifications of railroads, franchises, interests, and special privileges, and they have been the forces controlling and destroying the people.

Efforts to secure special privileges, franchises and franchises for special interests have led to oppression and corruption in our municipalities. Public conscience has been dulled and the people have silently and without protest permitted themselves to be bought, gagged and robbed. The vicious, corrupting and predatory elements have been united, and have jointly preyed upon the people. Streets have been turned over to politicians and corporations. Vandalism has been the order of the day. The public utilities and favored partisans and the public utilities which belonged to the people have become the price for which schemers have waged relentless and cruel warfare.

NEED OF MORE PATRIOTISM.

What we need is a moral awakening along political and governmental lines. We need more patriotism and less partisanship. There should be no greater desire for good government, and less desire for mere party government. In this statement I do not mean to depreciate the work of political parties or argue for their abolition, but I do insist that everywhere in this republic there should be a love of country and state and city; a broad and generous patriotism which is paramount to partisanship. An honest government, not mere party triumph. I think it was the great philosopher Locke who said that the object of government should be to secure happiness to the people. When governments fail to accomplish this end either by evolution or revolution they should be changed. If political parties do not serve the people they should be changed. Before the birth of our nation it was thought by the fathers that the parent government was tyrannical and oppressive and that the purpose for which government was instituted among men was being realized. Accordingly they asserted the inalienable right to establish that form of government that would conduce to their happiness, liberty and moral advancement. They asserted the right to alter or to abolish the government by the consent of the governed was thus established and it has been the beacon light of liberty to all the world. With the birth of the republic political parties were formed to carry into effect the principles accepted by the people and they sought to crystallize into executive and legislative conduct the views accepted by the people as their political guides. But some of those parties became corrupt and oppressive. They departed from the great principles of justice and liberty upon which they were founded. Failing in their object for which they were organized, some of them died and others, rebuked by the people, returned to principles of justice and liberty.

Today we have great political organizations. So long as they represent that which is best in human government and contend for the principles of liberty and justice, for national honor and for moral and ethical development, they should receive the support and confidence of the people. But if political leaders and parties fail in their high mission they should be rebuked by the people and dragged down into the mire. The necessity which leads to the formation and perpetuity of political parties in municipalities. The party system in municipalities is a part of our institutional life and I think has been of immense advantage to the people of the republic; but the opinion is being forced upon many, though reluctantly conceded by the people, that the municipal governments of political parties and the conduct of municipal affairs upon national lines, is not productive of good, but results in the corruption found in cities today.

DANGER OF APATHY.

Another reason for the manifest imperfection in our municipal government is the apathy of the people. They remember the heroic and courageous work of the fathers in building the republic and they are relying upon the proposition that the republic will take care of itself. They seem to think that there are no rocks or breakers upon the political sea. Their conduct is something like that of the captain of a strong ship, who, in a storm, sleeps, and the ship is wrecked. His pride is so great that he fears no storm or danger. In this state of mind he takes no precautions for the safety of his vessel. Lulled by the security he sleeps when he should watch, but awakes too late and finds himself wrecked upon a hidden rock. Too many of us, believing that this government was founded by the great fathers and that the seal of divinity is found upon the Constitution, become apathetic and trust the institutions and government and liberties of the people into the hands of corrupt politicians, combines and monopolists, who use the government for personal ends and party aggrandizement. It is a dangerous condition when the people permit business and municipal affairs to be controlled by corrupt politicians and monopolists. There is no inheritance that can more quickly be squandered, no patrimony that can be more effectively lost than that of liberty. Watchfulness and constant vigilance and earnest participation in government are demanded if the people would be secure in life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Governments do not run themselves, no matter how great or strong they may be. Back of all institutions whether political, municipal or social, there is a strong public conscience and high moral sentiment. The most effective institutions in the world and the highest expression of religious faith, will fall to save and exist, if the people do not stand on their feet and live their lives. The great truths taught by Christ did not save the people who failed to observe them and make them a part of their lives. No government can be a people from slavery or give them industrial liberty. It is the people that determines their situation.

MORAL SENTIMENT GOVERNS.

We cannot have good government in this city or state unless there be a strong moral sentiment behind it; there must be virtue and an awakened conscience among the people. We may have good government in the sense of having good laws, but there will be no government in the results obtained unless there is morality and a strong public conscience behind it. The view of the people is illustrated in the respect to the liquor question. There is much talk at present of legislation looking to the suppression of the liquor traffic, but no laws that may be passed will destroy the liquor traffic unless there is an enlightened and moral public sentiment behind the law. The evils of the world cannot be cured by mere legislative fiat. If such were true they would have been destroyed by legislative declaration and

the millennium day of righteousness and rest would have been ushered in. Enactments alone do not take character or create public sentiment. Public sentiment, based upon an enlightened judgment, enact laws and secure their enforcement and work human advancement, but mankind advances by slow processes. Progress comes through evolution, not so much by revolution. We build for tomorrow upon the foundation which we lay today, and we can judge largely of the future by the character of the work that is the result of our hands today.

While desiring a radiant future we must not overlook the fact that its brightness results largely from the labor of the hour. We are inclined to look beyond the limit of the pastures upon Juras mountain "to see the vision of the future," and in the distance, we are dazzled by the prospective glories of the future, forgetting that the splendor of the morrow will be measured by the fidelity with which service is given to the present. If we have good government tomorrow and enlightened institutions, we must look to the present.

NEED OF GREAT MORAL AWAKENING.

In order to determine the kind of government our children and children's children will have, we need only to examine the lives and institutions of today. Because it is well understood that there is a great moral law underlying governments as well as human conduct. There is a philosophy uniting binding together all things, and ethical and moral laws governing individual conduct. Conduct like wise affecting peoples en masse as cities and nations, and government or city can no more do injustice and work unrighteousness with impunity than can any individual violate the moral law of his existence without bringing him down to defeat and destruction. I repeat, my friends, that there should be a great moral awakening among the people in order to produce municipal and moral reforms demanded by our civilization and by the Christian faith of the people. Good citizenship demands more earnest service upon the part of the people in behalf of their cities and local communities. We are not performing our full duty as citizens of a city, state or nation or members of a church by merely discharging with fidelity the daily labor of the location in which we labor. The feeling must be developed that we are a part of the municipality in which we live, and it and its life is a part of us; that we are so thoroughly identified with it that its glory or shame is our glory or shame. There is too much of selfishness among the people which leads them to give their undivided attention to mere personal affairs. The interests of the public, the welfare of the ward or city do not excite their concern and if domestic, social and municipal problems are hanging about their heads like ominous clouds, do not awaken their patriotism or compel public service. Upon the other hand, we find some patriotic citizens whose conceptions of civic duty lead them to a participation in all public movements and when meetings are called to discuss measures for the benefit of the city and the people, to improve sanitation and to advance the interests of all, they sacrifice their time and leave their business engagements and bring to bear their judgment and knowledge for the common good.

CITIZENS RESPONSIBLE.

The government of a municipality is much like the control of any private business. It requires attention and devotion and the application of sound business and moral principles. All people should have a pride in their city, its growth and development, and should be solicitous to give it a reputation for civic righteousness and purity that will enable it to take high rank and station in the world. It is unpatriotic for the mass of the people to say that they have no time to bestow upon municipal problems and other public questions. As stated, our cities are a part of us and of our lives, and every citizen is more or less responsible for the kind of government in which he lives. Whether just or unjust, the character and lives of the people are somewhat measured by the reputation of the city in which they live. The moral worth, integrity and purity of the people are oftentimes judged by the reputation of their home towns. If the city is known for cleanliness, wholesome, sanitary regulations, wise and humane laws which are justly and impartially enforced, honesty and integrity, in the public administration of the city's affairs, progressive and enlightened policies, the application of its business and Christian principles to its business affairs, it will soon become known of all men, and like the city in the parable, it will be as one placed upon a hill, and its light cannot be hid. It will attract men and women of character, those who desire a clean and wholesome environment, and it will make for the growth and influence of the city.

A municipality which has unjust laws or is controlled by corruption and graft, will soon establish the undesirable reputation, and the people within the city will be the sufferers from such reputation. It is upon the same theory that the good are judged by the company which they keep, and the reputation of bad associates and their directions will be the basis of judgment applied to those who associate with them. We should desire that our city become renowned for business integrity, a high standard of morality, religious ideals, sane and wholesome laws, well and efficiently executed, for a love of justice and civic righteousness, for education and a development along the lines of music and fine arts and those aesthetic features so essential to make a rounded and perfect citizenship. We need a crusade against municipal partisanship and the development of a love for law and government in the cities in which we live.

CIVIC PRIDE EXEMPLIFIED.

In many of the great cities of the world the most prominent and conspicuous men seek positions in order to serve their homes and to improve the cities in which they live. They have a pride for their own homes that leads them to make sacrifices. They select high public stations of national character in order to serve their own home. There is a civic pride about them that manifests itself in an earnest and conscientious desire to give to their own towns a reputation in the world. We read in history that in ancient and medieval times the most renowned men gave their great genius to the development of the cities in which they lived. They sought to perpetuate their own names by building magnificent palaces, mighty temples and structures of no wonderful in architecture that their fame still survives, art galleries, roads, bridges, aqueducts, those and other great public improvements which were the work of their hands. There was a spirit of rivalry between cities, the result of local patriotism and civic pride. As a result these cities became famous as the great centers of learning, art, science, literature and industry. They became the cradles of liberty and developed that spirit of civilization which contributed so much to the advancement of the world.

We all remember the cities of the Hellenistic League and other great municipalities of interior Germany and central Europe, and the splendid work which they performed for civil and religious betterment. The people of those cities became renowned for their patriotism, integrity, civic pride and the cities were known because of their improvements, growth, development, moral worth and standing. It has been said of the cities of the world that the people laid the foundation of the civilization and led to the wresting of the authority from the hands of tyrants.

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