

**PATRIOTISM VS. PARTY.**

A Ta meeting of the Editorial Association of New Jersey, the following essay on Patriotism vs. Party was read by L. O. Stiles, of "The Jerseyman," and will be found worthy of the attention of every Canadian editor:

In civilized countries it must be admitted that there shall be order, and law to enforce that order, and in our form of government there must, of necessity, be political parties, closely connected with the people, through which the latter may legitimately declare their preferences.

The principle on which a government like ours rests and exists is that each qualified voter must have the right to vote without fear of violence, for whom he chooses, and that his vote shall be honestly counted and given its legal weight and effect in every respect. If this condition should prevail all over the land then should we have reached the perfect fruition of hope in this direction.

In the formation of political parties there must be those who lead and those who follow. This is true in everything, and it is right and necessary that it should be so.

Ours is a new country, and here free suffrage is on trial on a gigantic scale never before attempted in the world, and in viewing this matter let us not overlook the weaknesses that already threaten, and which no intelligent, thoughtful person can have failed to consider.

The particular weakness which has been made only too evident of late, is the hold that political bosses have obtained over large and ignorant masses of voters, together with another shameful fact, that many intelligent persons go with their party, right or wrong. Now it is a self-evident truth that no man should sacrifice a principle in order that he may adhere to his party. A wrong can never be made right, not even in appearance, by glossing it over with party paint. It would seem that very many have forgotten that we should be patriots before we are partisans, and failure to remember this, and to act upon it, gives the boss and the heeler the opportunity they so eagerly embrace to prosecute their nefarious work.

No man can be a good citizen in the highest and best sense of the word, who thinks more of party than country. The boss who makes merchandise of and speculates in reputations, cracks his whip, and with shame are we obliged to admit it nearly every one in the party straightway obeys orders and steps in the traces for fear of being called irregular, without stopping to consider morality, or justice, or very often, even decency, and so we have come to be, in large measure, a country ruled by corrupt bosses, coldblooded and heartless, who exact from their miserable victims the full pound of flesh, and always manage to take good care of themselves. They have no reputation to lose, are perfectly indifferent to the opinion of respectable people and care nothing for the reputations of others. They are in it for the gratification of their own selfish ends, and love of, or duty to, country never has a place in their miserable souls. When we have this state of affairs it is time that good people, regardless of party, waked up.

Now, what have we, gentlemen, to do with this as representatives of the press of New Jersey? Plainly and most evidently, we should have much to do with it. We are supposed to largely lead public opinion, and if we have in any measure forfeited this great privilege, then we should, straightway, take an inventory of our moral effects, and see whether or not there be any true patriotism remaining in us. Doubtless we shall find

a great deal left, even though it be a little rusty from lack of use; and we shall do well to nurse it carefully the times and our self respect demand it. We shall, however, be obliged to get down to rock bottom and true bearings in order that we may pursue a right course. When we find that party demands what is not right, what is not honest, what is not decent, then it is full time to protest in manner so forcible that the political boss will both hear and heed. He can do nothing against our united efforts. Let us declare our independence of him and all his devious and wicked ways, and, so far as we can, cleanse the political atmosphere. Surely it is time.

What is a newspaper for if not to lead the people aright and to sound the alarm when political corruption is rife in the land? Are we to be considered as mere hangers-on for the loaves and fishes which we may hope for because we are always "regular?" Shall we fear to speak lest we may possibly lose something from the party crib? Are we to be led up to the party stall and fed and fattened on these ignominious conditions of silence?

Let us never degrade ourselves or let anyone else degrade us, for when we have lost our good opinion of ourselves, then hath everything of moral worth fled with it. If the party call has the true ring, if the party leaders lead aright, we may, and should, follow; but when the call is to sacrifice honor and patriotism, let us "kick" and hard!

God and country first, and let our patriotism ever be in lead of party. This should be the motto of every one who wishes the best for his country, and who values its welfare above the mere demands of party.

Gentlemen, let us be true to our mission.

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