

The moral element was too often given less importance than was its due. It was not too much to say that upon that element alone could be reared a social superstructure free and enduring. The word liberty was much maligned, misused, and misunderstood. Some people were pleased to define it as the desire to do what one liked, but it really consisted in a desire to do right. Otherwise it would be a liberty which would rapidly degenerate to lawlessness. To have true liberty in the true sense, the moral and spiritual nature of man must be quickened. Where the carnal element influenced conduct, there the foundations of despotism were laid. Whatever tended to lower man's power in the moral, religious, and intellectual domains led to despotism, while the freedom they loved as good citizens grew and flourished in the sunshine of morality and religion. Whatever spiritualized character helped the growth of liberty; on the other hand, whatever vitiated the public conscience would end in tyranny.

After warning his hearers against the evils of monopoly and its debasing influence on the public mind, he applied the doctrine of his discourse to the duty of the hour. Municipal questions, he said, bulked largely in the public eye at present, and they could but deeply deplore the revelations which cast a hideous shadow over the city. The people had a sacred duty to perform at the municipal elections if they would preserve the public conscience and retrieve their character. And while speaking of these things at their doors, which had caused them so much grief, he must allude to the corruption manifested in public life at Ottawa, and impress upon them that all these demoralizing actions led to despotism, the worst kind of crime which could be committed against the freedom of a people. In view of these facts it was all-important that the people should take heed how they discharged their public duty. All secular appointments