

expediency. He would have gone unflinchingly to the stake or the gibbet to vindicate his convictions, had the sacrifice become necessary.

My first meeting with McMaster was on the occasion of his second visit to Chicago in or about 1857 or '58. He had been engaged to lecture under the auspices of the Catholic Institute. The lecture was a success in point of attendance and the lecture itself was greatly admired.

McMaster was not an "orator," as the term is popularly understood. He possessed none of the arts or tricks of declamation. He had something to say and he said it with earnestness and power and there was *thought* in his speech. On this occasion following the lecture he was entertained at a dinner or "banquet" given in his honor by the local Democratic Club—"The Chicago Invincibles." During the festivity he was presented with a gold-headed cane as a token and testimony of friendship and political fraternity. He came again to Chicago, I think, shortly before the breaking out of the war, and lectured on "The Truce of God," a subject which doubtless bore special application to the threatening political conditions of the time.

Once afterwards he visited Chicago. It was, I remember, during or immediately prior to the meeting of the National Democratic Convention which nominated McClellan and Pendleton. There was held in Chicago coincidentally a meeting of the Peace Democrats, sometimes known in the West as the "Sons of Liberty." It is known that McMaster was in the councils of this organization. If I do not mistake Vallandigham was at that time its chief. The Democratic camp was divided. There were "War Democrats" and "Peace Democrats."

The doings of the convention is matter of history to which I have no need to refer, but it was declared at the time that McMaster by his conservative declarations averted a "crisis" in the deliberations of the peace party. He was, in a certain sense, no doubt, an extremist and stood for states rights and constitutional limitations, but his love of country, the whole country, was never questioned. It is true, he wrote strongly, even bitterly, in his paper, of the administration and of the conduct of the war, though I doubt if he criticised one or

the other more severely than certain Republican editors noted then and since for their extravagant "loyalty." The autocratic War Secretary Stanton, who was bitter and unrelenting against those who ventured to criticise his methods and policies, summarily arrested the editor of the *Freeman's Journal* and had him sent manacled under guard to Fort Lafayette. This is only a war reminiscence, the details of which, no doubt, will more fully appear elsewhere in the present volume. After all, the public life and character of James A. McMaster are more truly illustrated and more perfectly seen in the *Freeman's Journal*.

In its columns is to be found his life work, and there unmistakably are recorded his faith and his convictions. He was no time-server. The *Freeman* was never for sale; its columns were unpurchasable and even in its advertising pages McMaster was scrupulous to exclude everything dubious and equivocal. He possessed a chivalrous and courtly manner and an inspiring presence.

I recall him now as he looked at me through his spectacles long, long ago, when we first met face to face, evidently wondering at my youthful appearance. I was at the time already admitted into the columns of the *Freeman* as a contributor, a fact of which I suspect I was not a little vain. I was quite young then.

From the first, Mr. McMaster won my respect. He continued to hold it to the end.

I can recall him now as I saw him on occasions in his own home in New York, surrounded by his family. It was a bright happy circle, his devoted wife, to whom he was tenderly attached, (I remember Mrs. McMaster always called him "Jimmie") and the charming bright-faced children. How joyous he was, how exuberant in spirits!

The death of that dear wife was a cruel blow to him and clouded, I am sure, the remainder of his life. The dutiful and affectionate care of his daughters could not wholly replace the devotion of the companion who was gone.

And then they too were to go from him, one by one, to consecrate their young hearts to a higher and holier service, one in the Sisterhood of the Holy Child Jesus, the