

**CHICAGO,
SATAN'S SANCTUM**

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Chicago, Satan's sanctum by L. O. Curon

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L. O. CURON

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"I am to speak of stories you will not believe;
of beings you cannot love; of foibles for which
you have no compassion; of feelings in which you
have no share."

— W. MC PRAED.

By L. O. CURON.

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Собрание общества
J. G. GORDON

PREFACE.

The present Mayor of the City of Chicago was recently re-elected. A large number of independent voters, deeming one issue a dominant one, which, in fact, was no issue at all, assisted in again bestowing on him the most important office in the municipal government.

The legislature had repealed a law under which evil, through the threatened action of corruptionists in the Council, might have been visited upon the city. That they were powerless to inflict it had been demonstrated prior to the repeal of that law and prior to the election. His competitors entertained, upon the question of the extension of street car privileges, the same views as his own. Both were men of as great ability as he, and each had, and still has, a reputation for personal integrity not surpassed by his. Both were men more mature in years, and possessed wider business experiences than he. Hence, either of them could have been safely entrusted with the

powers of the executive. Neither of them, however, could invent, for campaign purposes, so catching, so powerful, and yet so sophistical, a political phrase as "The streets may be dirty, but they still belong to the people." To the inventor of that cry the Mayor owes no small political debt.

It might be inferred from the large vote he received that, as a public servant, he had been tested and not found wanting. With respect to his persistent opposition to the extension of street car privileges, without adequate compensation to the city, and for a period not in excess of twenty years, it should be said he bravely and manfully did his duty, following, however, not leading public opinion on that question. All danger from that source had disappeared when the polls opened in April last. His competitors stood, on that morning, as honorably pledged to throttle it, if it again appeared, should either of them be elected, as he did.

It cannot, however, be said that during his first administration he did his whole duty. It is a pe-

culiarity of the American people that they always praise, with exaggeration, an official who partly does his duty, if the part performed is regarded by them as especially serviceable to the public. He had the benefit of so much exaggerated praise from a press that, for nearly two years then last past, had been condemning him, that some people were charmed into a sort of hysterical admiration for him. He had the happy faculty of concealing the shortcomings of his first administration, under cover of a supposedly overshadowing danger. Thereby he caused his previous record to appear as if free from blemish, and that he had performed every duty—and performed it well. The very adroit use of this faculty is the only reason why he received a plurality of votes so much larger than that of any other candidate nominated on the same ticket with him for a minor office.

His best friends did not contend that he did his full duty. They now only hope he will do so. A public official is not entitled to praise, or thanks, for doing his whole duty. He is elected for the purpose of its performance. But full performance

is so rare that the people seem to be content if a public servant will do his duty only fairly well.

The vices which prevail in the city, and which grew to their enormous, threatening, and hideous proportions during the Mayor's first administration, were known to the people to exist, but were forgotten by them; at the polls, were known to the police, and are still known to them, and upon no conceivable basis of belief can it be supposed their existence may not have been known to him, and that he does not know of their continued existence.

It is for him to utter the command "Stop," and they will cease, in so far as they can be kept within bounds by his authority. Their absolute suppression, under existing legislation is, perhaps, impossible, but their regulation thereunder is not wholly impracticable. Ordinances demanding, for instance, the imposition of a fine of \$200 per day for keeping a house of ill fame, have, he may say, never been enforced, and have fallen into a condition of "innocuous desuetude."

The field of observation on matters such as these is too wide to be entered upon here.

During the Mayor's first term, one of his best friends, in the columns of his widely circulated newspaper, severely criticised his administration, but supported him for re-election, and explained in its columns, in response to an inquiry made by a correspondent just prior to the election, his reasons for doing so as follows, viz. :

"If Mayor Harrison shall receive the support of the independent voters because of the good points of his administration, that will show that his strength consists in doing right, not in doing wrong. It stands to reason that he would rather have the approval of honest and respectable men than of the vicious elements of the community. The R— believes that Mayor Harrison's present administration from first to last has improved and not deteriorated. The mayor himself ought to know what are the weak points in it, and if he has acquired wisdom by experience he should choose his heads of departments for his second term with a view to curing the evils and failures of his first term. The relations of the police department with gambling resorts, all-night saloons and other forms