

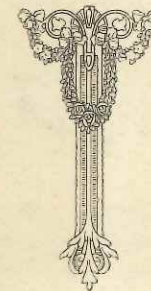
HISTORICAL  
Carl Schurz  
monument

## DEDICATORY ADDRESS

of Emil Baensch, Manitowoc,  
Wisconsin, at the

# Unveiling of the Carl Schurz Monument

OSHKOSH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
OSHKOSH, WIS.



Delivered in

Oshkosh, Wisconsin, July 4, 1914

**HISTORICAL COLLECTION  
OSHKOSH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901**

**FOR REFERENCE**

**Do Not Take From This Room**

OSHKOSH - STATUES, DEDICATION OF  
Government, CARL SCHURZ STATUE  
Parks + monuments  
Carl Schurz  
monument

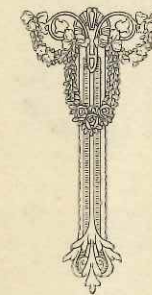
*Schurz, Carl*

DEDICATORY ADDRESS

of Emil Baensch, Manitowoc,  
Wisconsin, at the

Unveiling of the Carl Schurz  
Monument

OSHKOSH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
OSHKOSH, WIS.



Delivered in

Oshkosh, Wisconsin, July 4, 1914

HISTORICAL COLLECTION  
OSHKOSH PUBLIC LIBRARY  
Oshkosh, Wisconsin 54901

**FOR REFERENCE**

Do Not Take From This Room





CARL SCHURZ

(A replica of the above monument was presented to the city of Oshkosh, Wis., by Col. John Hicks on July 4, 1914. It was unveiled by Miss Marianna Schurz, a daughter of Carl Schurz.)

## DEDICATORY ADDRESS

of Emil Baensch, Manitowoc, Wis., delivered in Oshkosh, Wis., July 4, 1914, at the unveiling of the Carl Schurz Monument

### HIS CAREER

This statue represents a life of rapid progress along a straight and luminous path, a character that stands out clear and strong and unblemished.

Carl Schurz states that he was "born near that beautiful spot where the Rhine rolls his green waters out of the wonderful gate of the Seven Mountains and then meanders with majestic tranquility through one of the most glorious valleys of the world." The environments of his youth were academic and cultured, and the augurs trustfully noted that he would follow in the footsteps of his father and enter the modest yet power-building profession of the German schoolmaster.

But his college days fell in a time when the underground streams of republicanism came to the surface, and rolled and tossed against the walls of monarchy. With heart aflame for a German republic, we find him earnest in the preliminaries, prompt in joining the army of liberty, active in the field.

And when discipline wins over enthusiasm and easily dams and banks the flood, we find him, on the eve of surrender, making his escape through the besieging lines to the safe haven of Switzerland. But Kinkel, his teacher, has remained and been sentenced to imprisonment for life. To rescue him is now the one aim of Schurz's life. Patiently he prepares his plans, persistently he carries them out, bravely he frees his imprisoned professor.

Then to Paris, and to London, where the young student becomes a teacher of music and a newspaper writer. And here he takes the next upward step. At the age of 23 he marries the maiden of 18 who was thereafter to be his helpmate and his inspiration, and who, by the way, deserves the title of mother of the kindergarten in America.

A few weeks later we see the young couple embarking for America, where they were to find a realization of their hopes and dreams. Several years are passed in Philadelphia, undergoing a thorough Americanizing process.



Then Westward Ho! to Wisconsin, where he meets an unprecedented welcome. Not yet privileged to vote, he is mentioned for the legislature, and the following year is nominated for lieutenant-governor, and two years later, having just been made a citizen, receives a flattering vote for governor.

His effective services in these campaigns induce an invitation to take part in the celebrated Lincoln-Douglas battle. Here his addresses attract wide attention and bring him onto the lecture platform, which thereafter provides him a substantial source of income.

At the momentous convention of 1860 we see him as leader of the Wisconsin delegation, taking active part in the proceedings, and emerging therefrom as one of the executive committee of seven in charge of the campaign which places Abraham Lincoln in the president's chair.

Then comes his appointment as minister to Spain, his resignation after six months' service, followed by a commission as brigadier-general, with subsequent promotion to major-general, and after the war sent as emissary of the president through the South to report conditions.

And then back to private life with newspaper work at New York, Detroit and St. Louis. And here a Wisconsin welcome and treatment await him, for, after a brief residence, he is elected United States senator from Missouri.

Shortly after the expiration of his term Hayes comes into power and Schurz enters his cabinet as Secretary of the Interior.

Again to private life, with its journalism and literature, the ambitious dream of student days. With his life of Henry Clay he writes his name on America's roll of authors, and finally crowns his work with his *Reminiscences*, incomparable in diction and self analysis.

This, in brief, sketches his career, a career with which this State is intimately interwoven. It was at our City of Jefferson that Schurz delivered his first political speech and which gave him his start. Half a century later he delivered the commencement address at our State University. As part of the program the Madison Maennerchor sang "Weh dass wir scheiden muessen," the words of which had been written by his Professor Kinkel and the music composed by Mrs. Kinkel, all in the long ago when Schurz had been their guest.

Thus Wisconsin witnessed the sunrise and gladdened and gilded the sunset of his life.

In the annals of our statecraft there are few careers that parallel his. From start to finish he walked his course erect, never "crooking the pregnant hinges of the knee that thrift might follow fawning." Unswerved by temptation, undismayed by storms of obloquy, looking neither to the right nor to the left, but with face ever toward his ideal, he moves majestically, like Father Rhine, through a useful, beautiful life.

## CONSISTENT

Throughout his life he is consistent to his youthful ideals, consistent in that all his actions are guided by a moral standard. The abolition of slavery is a moral issue and he has no patience with those who ignore or seek to postpone it. He hewed straight to the line. And what some call the practical questions, such as the treatment of the negro and of the Indian, public lands, civil service, conservation, and currency, were each also viewed by him in their moral aspect, and his position taken accordingly.

In every field he entered he was a student engaged in original research, viewed it in the light of fullest information, made a survey in the most literal sense of the word, and then laid his course, always in straight lines, and with the painstaking accuracy of an engineer. Thereafter he followed that course, and neither the bugle call of party leaders, nor the appeal of old comrades-in-arms, nor the urgency of intimate friends, even unto Chas. Sumner, could move him from that course.

And when the astute Math. Carpenter suggests a higher plane with "my country, right or wrong, my country," Schurz flashes back the addenda—"if right, to be kept right; if wrong, to be set right."

Fortunately for his posthumous reputation the course of events confirmed the correctness of his views in a majority of instances, for civil service, conservation of forests, currency, are fixed facts, while the other policies are trending toward the position he held. Whether this was due to his foresight, or to his uncompromising nature,—either would be to his credit.

## FRANK

Such a character is naturally frank, a frankness that friends call courage and foes term rudeness, or tactlessness. When Schurz is introduced to Jefferson Davis, the first public man he met in America, he attempts to obtain his views on the Nebraska bill. When Justice Chase inquires as to his presidential preference, he tries to quiet the buzzing of the troublesome bee. When Greeley has been nominated for the presidency, he writes him plainly why he is disappointed at his nomination.

In his forensic battles with his party chiefs in the senate there is no braggadocio, no posing as if it were a matter of courage. The thunders of a Morton, the frown of a Conkling, produce no fear and trembling in him. He is simply a seeker of truth, and having found it, tells it, and that's all there's to it. Whether the truth, as he sees it, suits this party, or that faction, is immaterial and irrelevant, in fact, has never entered his mind.

And he is equally frank with himself. The nomination of a newcomer for lieutenant-governor, and then booming him for



governor, seem rash to him. And he analyzes these actions. He finds that the young Republican party is anxious to placate the German-Americans as to their fear of knownothingism. He finds a personal element in the agreeable surprise that a German speaks English so correctly and fluently.

He fears this popularity is too sudden to be permanent. But can it not be taken advantage of and made permanent by making good? He catches the true American spirit that one can qualify for any public position to which he may be chosen. And when, in later years, he becomes a diplomat, serves in the army, sits in the senate, enters the cabinet, it is always with this idea in mind and he qualifies himself thoroughly.

### GENIAL

There is a general impression that he was not magnetic, did not try to be, but had something of the schoolmaster about him. Yet I am told by those who met him in social intercourse that his was a most engaging personality, that he could adapt himself to any company he happened to be in. And this agrees with the conclusion one reaches after considering various phases and episodes of his life.

He speaks of the congenial atmosphere which greets him on his first arrival in Milwaukee, where the 48'ers "brought a wave of spring sunshine," a poetic statement of *Gemuethlichkeit*. He describes with much gusto the amazement of the staid burghers of Watertown when a merry group of masqueraders are seen leaving his house in the wee small hours of the morning, after enjoying a mask ball he had arranged and managed.

He sees the humorous side of things, even among hardships. He relates the experiences of Galusha A. Grow and himself while campaigning in wilderness towns and their starving tribulations trying to subsist on roast pork and boiled onions. He graphically describes meeting a man from Missouri far out on a bleak and lonely prairie, and the genial parting when the Missourian brings forth a bottle, and he drinks to the health of Hon. Frank F. Blair, who, in return, drinks to the health of Hon. Carl Schurz. He holds up his tent orderly in the army, a genial Suabian, as a model for a picture of Sancho Panza (including the donkey), but finds the pleasant memory somewhat marred because he used to darn Schurz's stockings with thick, hard twine.

He was a lover of music, trained in its technique, absorbed in its pleasure. When he tells of the "pure, deep, and dreamy delight" of listening to Jenny Lind, speaks of the music poets Mozart, Beethoven and others, describes Wagner's *Parsifal* "whose grand harmonies swell and rise toward the mystery of heaven," and then takes you through the *Nibelungen Ring* whose tone poems are in "the original language of the eternal elements,"

and which "touch the true chord of the saga hovering over my native land,"—then the veriest tyro becomes an enthusiast.

And he was an optimist, and such can naught but be genial and cheery and healthy of heart. After his wedding he writes to a friend:—"Fate has been kind to me. Without effort have I won the realization of bright dreams, and the near future beckons me to a life of strenuous action in a mighty world, with an inexhaustible field for development. I will combine the happiness of family with the dashing waves of the forum, and new viewpoints and new avenues are opening to me." This youthful enthusiasm and optimism remained with him to the last and gave to his old age that buoyancy of spirit and mental strength which left his influence unimpaired.

### ORATOR

But it was his wonderful power as an orator that brought prominence. The speech at Jefferson made him known locally. His acceptance of the nomination for lieutenant-governor was so eloquent as to fairly take the delegates off their feet and make him at once a state celebrity.

The fight that Lincoln made against Douglas was really a national campaign, and Schurz's effective participation therein made him known throughout the land. In the presidential campaign of 1860 his celebrated speech, which became known as "the dissection of Douglas," materially helped to shatter the presidential aspirations of the "little giant."

He had resided in Missouri barely two years when he was put forward as a candidate for United States senator in opposition to the candidate selected by the ruling boss and whose election seemed assured. He had neither the liking nor the aptitude for a practical politician. But the opponents of the boss hit on a new move in the game. They arranged for a joint debate between Schurz on one side, and the boss and his candidate on the other side. The result was so one-sided that when the vote was taken on the following day the boss had fled precipitately, and Schurz was triumphantly elected.

The same fire and force was in him when he had nearly reached the allotted three score and ten. It was in 1896 that he delivered an address on the currency, a subject on which he was not a specialist, yet it was so lucid and logical that it has been pronounced a classic.

His speeches were most carefully prepared and all his statements verified. He took no recourse to funny stories nor eagle soaring. Prominent as a reformer, his speeches have no preamble appealing to prejudice, no reference to the decadence of the age, but go constructively to the heart of the subject. When you read them, you admit the logic of his argument; when you heard



them, you felt the sincerity of the speaker. The secret of his success as an orator was that he "pointed his tongue on the anvil of truth."

## INDEPENDENT

Although exceptional opportunities were offered him to create a personal following, to build up a political machine, he waved them all aside. Follow no one blindly, but use your own judgment. Take your place on measures, not under men. Let there be no political union of Germans, for you have no special interest as such, but your interests are identical with those of other American citizens. Such was the material for his platform. "We can not think and act alike, but we can all think and act honestly." Such was his method of constructing platforms.

He declared that he never "worshipped at the shrine of party discipline," and he acted accordingly. And such action brought upon him the most bitter criticism. That criticism is justified only when the declaration is carried to its extreme. But under a reasonable construction the criticism fails, for, while parties are necessary to keep the people in motion, the independent is necessary to keep the party in check.

He desired independence within the party so that when it became dishonest it could be struck down. "My heart would behold with grief and sorrow its degradation, but it would have no tears for its defeat." And he goes at the root of the evil in that he blames, not the politicians, but the people, who "demoralize the politicians by culpable indulgence. The virtue of many a public man has thus been victimized by the indulgence of his constituency." In other words, let the rank and file be vigilant, and the leaders will be upright and honest.

## GENIUS

When we view the variety of his work, campaigner, lecturer, diplomat, soldier, legislator, administrator, journalist and author in two languages, and when we see him making good in each, we are tempted to call him a genius. But this would bring from him swift censure and calm dissection.

To perfect himself in English, he studied the vernacular in the Philadelphia Ledger, the literary in Dickens, the legal in Blackstone, and each with the constant aid of a dictionary, never passing a word until he knew its meaning. And to prepare himself in the handling of words he translated the Letters of Junius into German and then back again into English.

He prepared himself for the performance of duties by the same thorough method with which he prepared his speeches. When sent to Spain he delved into international law and diplo-

matic correspondence and succeeded in maintaining friendly relations between the two countries. Before he entered the army, he thumbed the manual, and read up on military maneuvers and management, with the result that his brigade, and later, his division, were among the best equipped and disciplined and the best cared for in the army. As Secretary of the Interior he worked from early morn till late at night to get an insight into the details of his department, forcing even John Sherman to the encomium that as secretary he was as industrious and practical as he had been forcible and eloquent as senator.

It was hard work at the beginning, unflagging industry at every progressive step, intelligent application until the close of life,—these produced efficiency,—but it was not genius. His life, with its ins and outs of public service, is a convincing refutation of the oligarchic doctrine that we need experts in government, specially trained thereto. With his handicap of foreign birth, his life is an encouraging example of the American ideal that we may safely choose our public officials from the rank and file of the people.

## REPUBLICAN

And his career was in harmony with his views of a Republican form of government. Shortly after his arrival he writes to a friend in Europe:—"Here in America you can see how little a people need to be governed. There are governors, but no masters. There are governments, but they are servants. Here you witness the productivity of freedom, for this freedom to do something awakens the desire to do it."

It is not a Utopia to him for he clearly recognizes its shortcomings. "It is not an ideal state," he says, "but it is one in which the forces of good have a free field as against the forces of evil, and in which the victories of virtue, of enlightenment and progress are not achieved by some power or agency outside of the people, but by the people themselves."

Its influence on the individual is also noted for he finds that the immigrant takes to self-government as a duck takes to water, although in his native country he looks upon the state as a superior being, ordained to watch over and do everything for him.

And when, in later years, he is permitted to visit his fatherland and even invited to meet the mighty Bismark, he is asked whether he is still as much of a Republican as he was in '48. He promptly answers "yes." And he emphasizes and amplifies his answer. A republic is not perfect, but it is of more practical benefit to the people than any other form. Matters of detail may not be well attended to, because there is little government, but the government in general is good. In a monarchy, with its obtrusive and all-pervading government, matters of detail run more smooth and easy, but on the whole the government is bad. And then he



shocks Bismark by asserting that "the American people could never have developed into a self-reliant, energetic and progressive nation if a commissioner or a policeman had been stationed at every little puddle to warn the people from falling in."

He was not in accord with that theory which finds in supervision, regulation and inspection the remedies for all political, economic and social ills. Rather did he believe in the time-tested maxim that "that government is best which governs least."

## IMMIGRANT

Besides a personal career this statue represents a type of American citizenship, that large body who have become Americans from choice,—the immigrants. This is pre-eminently the land of immigrants, colonized by them, its government founded and preserved by them, its agriculture, industry and commerce built up by them, and the American race a mixture of them.

This statue typifies one of the important streams of that immigration—the German. It came at an early date, brought merchant princes into the coast cities and skilled hands into colonial industries, made the Shenandoah Valley the gateway to the then West, the Mohawk Valley the granary of the colonies, and Pennsylvania the Keystone of the arch. It supplied the revolutionary army with one-eighth of its rank and file, with eight of its famous generals, and with its indispensable and providential drill master (Steuben). It furnished Georgia its first governor (Treutlin), the colonies their first treasurer (Hillegas), and the new nation its first speaker of the House (Muehlenberg).

This statue typifies one branch of that stream, the 48'ers. At this distance of time an impartial review of that immigration justifies the statement that the like of it, in quantity and in quality, has never before nor since reached our shores. Their coming gave an overwhelming impetus to the anti-slavery feeling, made possible the election of Lincoln, and rendered certain the maintenance of the Union.

As to them I can do no better than quote from a panegyric penned by a true-blooded American (Robert Wild), a descendant of a 48'er:—"They came, the children of intellectual and political emancipation, in the full tide of their young manhood, with high ideals and lofty inspirations, and with eternal springtime in the hearts. They brought not only their thrift and industry, their binding sense of individual and civic duty, their moral fervor and love of home, but also the literature and art of a cultured people, brought the science, the learning, the light. And on the broad prairies and in the forests primeval of the great, free Northwest, in peace and in war, in every branch of human endeavor and human achievement, by brave and honest service, they made compensation to the land of their adoption."

## ACTIVE CITIZEN

But above all else this statue brings a message, the message of an active citizenship, a message much needed at this time. The clarion call to arms has never gone unheeded, but has always met spontaneous and enthusiastic response. But the call to vote has within the past decade witnessed a lessening number of enlistments, to such a degree that now but one-half of the vote is cast, while in the preliminary skirmish there appear but skeleton regiments. So serious are the conditions that thoughtful men are suggesting fines, or a partial remission of taxes, or the loss of franchise, as methods of compulsory voting.

*If this bronze could now speak, it would ask, in tones of surprise,—Why this inconsistency? Why more willing to speed the bullet than cast the ballot? Why ready to sacrifice life and prospects in the military service, and yet be averse to giving a tithe of time to civic service?*

*And it would ring forth in an appeal to every citizen to be up and doing, to put on his thinking cap, to enlist under some political banner, or to go it alone, as it best suits him, but under all circumstances and at every opportunity, to think and act and vote.*

*When this appeal is heeded, then, and not until then, will the destiny of the nation be in safe and trusty hands.*