

Books in Review

Mayor McKeldin's Vision of Baltimore

NO MEAN CITY. By Theodore R. McKeldin. Published by the author in cooperation with the Maryland Historical Society. \$2.50.

Eve. Sun

IT is characteristic of Theodore R. McKeldin that this little book he has written contains not a blueprint for Baltimore but a call for expression of a civic spirit that once made it great.

Mayor McKeldin goes beyond 1964's activities in a wistful search for a large pride in Baltimore.

For the inspiration of this pride he looks back to three Baltimoreans of the Nineteenth Century, only one of whom was a native. In George Peabody, Enoch Pratt and Johns Hopkins, the city had three men who became best known to posterity for the institutions they founded rather than for themselves, although they were business giants in their own right.

It is Mr. McKeldin's view, as a native son who loves his city and its past, that they were pioneers not only in the sense of opening new horizons with the money they gave to enrich Baltimore, but in arousing the spirit of civic responsibility.

Reaching further back into civilization, he finds their forerunners in Pericles, "who could claim truthfully that in his time Athens was the school of all Greece," and St. Paul, who proudly told a Roman, "I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a citizen of no mean city."

Mayor McKeldin would like to

be remembered also as a citizen of no mean city, but says that it needs more than elected officials to create an environment worthy of being thus known. "The answer," he writes, "will be returned by all those inhabitants of the city — still perhaps a minority, but numbering many thousands — who see Baltimore with at least a touch of the emotion that St. Paul felt for Tarsus."

Is this emotion abroad in Baltimore? The pioneer instinct that drew Peabody and Pratt here from their native New England has apparently long gone, just as the age that produced giant personal fortunes for the Pratts, Peabodies, Carnegies and Rockefellers has given way to an era of corporate, impersonal wealth.

Nevertheless, Mayor McKeldin remains optimistic. Although he knows that the Baltimore of the three great benefactors is no more, he believes "the spirit that created those cities of the past is still capable of creating a new city, entirely different, yet one of which men can truly say that it is the school of a nation."

The book has a preface, appropriately enough, by Dr. Milton Eisenhower, president of the Johns Hopkins University.

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