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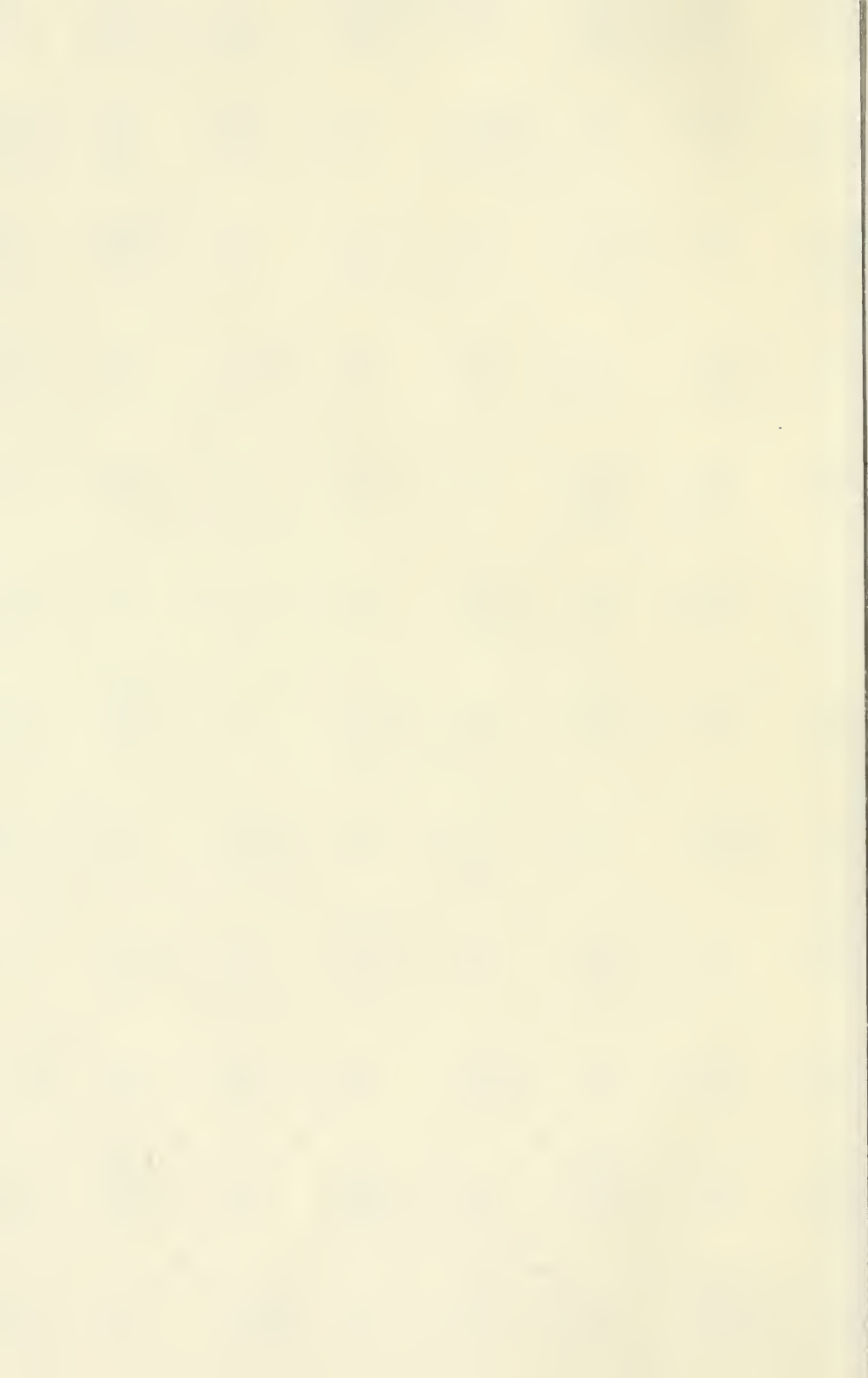


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# THEODORE ROOSEVELT

1858-1919

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

OF

HONORABLE CHARLES E. HUGHES



ADDRESS OF  
HONORABLE CHARLES E. HUGHES

AT THE

MEMORIAL SERVICE

IN HONOR OF

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

AT

THE REPUBLICAN CLUB  
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY THE NINTH  
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND NINETEEN

1919

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*Address of Honorable Charles E. Hughes at the Memorial Service  
in Honor of Theodore Roosevelt, at the Republican Club of  
The City of New York on Sunday, February 9th, 1919.*

The heroes of democracy are the springs of its life; its sources of vigor and confidence. We increasingly realize in the midst of our abounding activities, that it is the man and not the mechanism that counts, and that the hosts of the industrious, the efficient, and the just must depend for their triumphs on the worth and strength of leadership. We are not paying tribute to the distinction conferred by office, even the highest office; nor are we commemorating mere achievements although extraordinary and varied. Our tribute is of unstinted admiration and deep affection for one who was great in office, but even greater out of office, whose unfailing faith, courage and energy caused personality to eclipse achievement; whose constant industry and self-discipline, whose sound democratic instinct, elemental virtues and wholesome living, whose restless, alert and indomitable spirit, impatient at all obstacles, made him more than any other the representative of free America,—the typical American not only of the nineteenth century, but of the twentieth,—the embodiment of patriotic ardor, of lofty ideals, of practical sense and invincible determination. Deeply conscious of the irreparable loss of his immediate leadership, we turn to consider the fructifying influence of a life which has no parallel in our annals. "He is great," says Emerson, "who is what he is from nature, and who never reminds us of others."

The life of Theodore Roosevelt presents strange contrasts in its constant escape from the limitations of environment. He was city bred, but he became a naturalist of eminence and a hunter of no mean prowess. He was reared in the most exclusive circles of the East, but he breathed the free spirit of the Western plains. He was educated in private schools, and his early training was amid cultural surroundings tending to separate him from the masses, but he was closer to the thought of the plain people than any leader in America. As a boy, he was of delicate physique, but by the careful discipline of years he made himself an athlete. He spent about

two-thirds of his life in public office, but never was any one less official or less mastered by routine. He was engrossed with the grave practical concerns of his time, but he was one of its most prolific authors. He was in politics from the beginning of his career, but he was a master and not a servant of the political order. In every activity, the spirit of Theodore Roosevelt escaped the limitations of all associations and traditions and emerged dominating, triumphant, and he thus represents to us neither locality nor vocation,—not the author, or the traveller, or the naturalist, not the political leader or the officer, not even the statesman or the President, but the *man*—who in his human worth and virile personality transcended all distinctions of place and circumstance, whose defects were only the shadows which made his virtues stand out the more impressively, and whose memory will ever remain an abiding inspiration.

Theodore Roosevelt was born in the City of New York on October 27, 1858,—the descendant of the Roosevelt who came to New Amsterdam in the year 1644. From that year, as Colonel Roosevelt has told us, for the next seven generations, from father to son, each of his line was born on Manhattan Island. While he thus represented the best Knickerbocker tradition, his grandmother's ancestors were of those who had settled in Pennsylvania with William Penn and his mother's family were of Georgia and mainly of Scotch descent. He was a scion of the sturdiest and of the canniest stock, whose Americanism began with the making of America itself. While his father's family went back to the early days of the Dutch settlement of New York, his mother's great-grandfather was the revolutionary "president" of Georgia.

As a boy, Theodore Roosevelt had unusual advantages. Well born, of a family in comfortable circumstances, every educational opportunity was open to him. He was taken on a trip to Europe when ten years old. On a second trip, at the age of fourteen, he visited Egypt, the Holy Land, Greece and Constantinople, and spent a Summer in Dresden. After studying in one of the best schools of the day, he entered Harvard College in 1876, and graduated with good, but not exceptional, rank, in 1880. There were thousands of young men of similar advantages in the seventies and eighties, but there was but one Theodore Roosevelt. Ingersoll said that the col-

lege, as he knew it, was a place where pebbles were polished and diamonds were dimmed. Nothing could dim this diamond; and in the record of subsequent achievement it is not the training of school or university, or the advantage of family or fortune, that yields the secret of success, but these are almost forgotten in the amazing performance which was the result of individual avidity, insatiable curiosity, inexhaustible vigor and remorseless self-discipline. Where others would have been subdued to form, and sterilized by convention, he was individual,—a daily conqueror in some new realm self-sought.

He remarks that as a little boy he started on his career as a zoologist at a market on Broadway, where he saw a dead seal, which filled him "with every possible feeling of romance and adventure." Such was the message of a dead seal to this live Roosevelt. His boyhood summers in the country were excursions in natural history, and what he called the "Roosevelt Museum of Natural History," which started with the seal's skull, was later enriched by the ornithological specimens gathered by the boy naturalist. In college, his interests were chiefly scientific, and he had then no thought of going into public life. On leaving college, he undertook to study law, but he had little inclination in that direction. In a little over a year he was elected to the Legislature of New York and took his seat as its youngest member. And this affords a ready illustration of the way in which opportunity greeted this young American as he looked out on life eager to know and to serve.

It is true that he had one exceptional advantage in that it was not necessary for him to devote himself to money-making. With a modest competency, he could choose his work, not under the pressure of the necessity of earning his support, but with the desire to make the best use of his talents. The benefit of this position of independence he freely gave to his country. He never thought of using it for selfish protection; he consumed no part of his extraordinary energies in frivolous or unworthy pursuits; he courted neither ease nor luxury; and he despised dilettantism. He needed no spur of necessity; his freedom gave rein to the noblest ambition.

His course, with respect to politics, was characteristic. Nothing to him was remote or alien; whatever he did he must

do with all his might. We commonly think of his spontaneity, his impulsiveness. The quick play of his critical instinct, and his readiness to deal with new situations, have appealed to the public imagination. We are apt to think less of his deliberation, his careful choice of method, and the steady purpose of years with which he pursued his aim. Thus, as a boy, chagrined at his lack of physical strength as compared with that of his associates, he began a careful training in boxing, and though for years he made scarcely any progress, being, as he says, "a slow and awkward pupil," he kept at it until he attained proficiency. He mastered the equestrian art with equal deliberateness and with equal difficulty. With all his impulsiveness and his charm of spontaneity he was nothing if not methodical and painstaking.

He approached politics in the deliberate and resolute manner in which he developed his body and improved his mind. Anxious to do his full duty as a citizen, and belonging by virtue of his antecedents and convictions to the Republican Party, he at once planned to be an efficient member of that party. This he did not undertake to do by sitting in Fifth Avenue clubs during his leisure hours, and complaining of machine methods, of which at that time unhappily there was much to complain, or bewailing the little opportunity in Manhattan for a well-to-do young Harvard graduate of polite breeding. On the contrary, he inquired as to the whereabouts of the local Republican Association and the means of joining. His elders, men of business and social standing, scoffed at the young enthusiast. Those in active politics, he was advised, were not of his sort. But he had the Roosevelt idea. He was going to find out; he would take his part in the "rough and tumble." He proposed to be an American, not only in privilege but in complete performance of duty, and as a citizen in democracy he intended, as he put it, to be one of the "governing class." And, so, to the young Roosevelt, eager to do his part, opportunity came at once with outstretched hand.

His career in the legislature lasted three years. It was a career of distinction and gave rich promise. In the first year, he rose to leadership; in the second year, when the Republicans were in the minority, he was minority candidate for speaker of the Assembly; in the third year, with the

Republicans in control, he sought the speakership, and although he was defeated, the fight strengthened him. He was Chairman of a committee investigating conditions in the City of New York. And thus at the age of twenty-five he had won a notable place. The way in which he won it was more significant than the success itself. He brought to the stale atmosphere of politics the invigorating breeze of a worth-while idealism. He owed his success neither to artifice nor to demagogical appeal. At that time he was not even an effective speaker. He had then neither grace of manner nor skill in elocution. His was the appeal of courage, of social sympathy, of an honest desire to secure practicable measures of improvement. In every session, he had championed good causes and fought every sinister design. To young men he incarnated the hope of a better day.

It was in those early and impressionable years that he formed the basic principles of his political philosophy. He found that there were corrupt men in the legislature, but that there were far more who were honest, and he concluded that "if it were possible to get an issue of right and wrong vividly and unmistakably before them in a way that would arrest the attention of their constituents, we could count on the triumph of the right." It was to present his issue of right and wrong, as he saw it, vividly and unmistakably that was his life work. He also at once appreciated the worth of character and its indispensability as a condition of public service. It was obvious to him, in his own words, "that no man can lead a public career really worth leading, no man can act with rugged independence in serious crisis, or strike at great abuses, or afford to make powerful and unscrupulous foes, if he is himself vulnerable in his private character." But this essential character was to him not an end, but a means, a qualification for the battle in which he delighted. He demanded initiative as well as character. He bitterly scorned parlor reformers, the apostles of class, and all critics who lacked the "sinewy power to do." He left the legislature without illusions, without disdain, and without any relaxation of purpose. He was convinced that it was his business to combine "decency and efficiency," to be "a thoroughly practical man of high ideals and to do his best to reduce his ideals to actual practice."

It was at the very beginning of his public career that Theodore Roosevelt showed his deep interest in social betterment—in the improvement of conditions of living. He was never interested in the mere routine of government. His interest was in society, in human effort, in the opportunities of men—the workers—and in the thwarting of the pernicious practices and evil influences which made a mockery of the democratic hope. He was on a committee to investigate conditions in the tenement houses, and thus he became intimately acquainted with them. It was natural that with this knowledge he should have earnestly pressed the bill to prohibit the making of cigars in tenement houses. It is a keen pleasure to dwell on the picture of the youthful Roosevelt as he appeared before Governor Grover Cleveland, acting as he says “as spokesman for the battered, undersized foreigners who represented the Union and the workers,” and urging the Governor to sign this bill. The bill was signed, and in the subsequent fate of this measure—representing one of his earliest efforts at social improvement—we find an explanation of his attitude with respect to the function of the courts. He felt deeply that he *knew* the conditions which he sought to have remedied and that the Court of Appeals, in its decision declaring this act of the legislature invalid (in the *Jacobs* case), proceeded without proper knowledge of these conditions. We may be profoundly convinced that in later years he mistook the remedy in advocating what he described as the recall of judicial decisions, without denying the justice of his criticism of the particular decision. Perhaps he never fully realized how few decisions of this sort there really were and how numerous were those sustaining legislative action within the broad field of legislative discretion relating to health, safety, morals and the common welfare. The error lay not in the principle, but in the particular application. The principle was the right of constitutional protection against arbitrary interference with personal liberty,—a principle still of vital importance, but calling for the most careful application lest ignorance of the facts of life should wrongly impute the arbitrary quality to legislation. It was this ignorance of facts which drew his scornful and bitter criticism. Fortunately, the remedy is being found in a wider knowledge, a more careful presentation of cases, and a more discriminat-

ing regard for. . . . under our system, is the legislative as distinguished from the judicial function. But there is no doubt of the lasting influence of the Tenement Cigar case on the opinions of Theodore Roosevelt. It rose as a monument of error and so close was it to his own early experience that it stood in the way of that comprehensive survey which was necessary to a correct appraisal of the work of the courts.

In 1884, despite his youth, his political reputation was recognized by his appointment as one of the delegates-at-large from New York to the Republican National Convention, where he fought for the nomination of George F. Edmunds. "Why," said George William Curtis, "he is just out of school almost, yet he is a force to be reckoned with in New York. Later, the Nation will be criticizing or praising him." Twenty-five years later at his last Cabinet dinner, I had the pleasure of hearing him review in an intimate way some of the chief events in his political career, and it was evident that the contest in the convention of 1884 was one of the outstanding facts in his memory. He was then put to a decisive test. He was beaten, but he believed in party and declined to oppose the party choice. He regarded the nomination of Mr. Blaine as won in a fair and above-board fashion, because the rank and file of the party stood back of him. To the intense disappointment of many of his intimates, he publicly announced his loyalty to the ticket. "A man," said he, "cannot act both without and within the party; he can do either, but he can not possibly do both. \* \* \* It is impossible to combine the functions of a guerilla chief with those of a colonel in the regular army. One has greater independence of action, the other is able to make whatever action he does take vastly more effective \* \* \* I am by inheritance and by education a Republican; whatever good I have been able to accomplish in public life has been accomplished through the Republican Party; I have acted with it in the past and wish to act with it in the future."

Two years later, he was the Republican candidate for Mayor of the City of New York. It was a forlorn hope, in a triangular contest, against Henry George and Abram S. Hewitt, but I well remember the enthusiastic support he received from young Republicans, who looked upon him not only as a leader of rare capacity but as a party liberator.

With his defeat, he seemed to vanish from public life; but he was only in training for larger service. He had already (three years before) taken two ranches on the Little Missouri, and with the toil and hardship of the prairie, in company with the "hardy and self-reliant" who "with bronzed set faces and keen eyes that look all the world straight in the face without flinching," there was developed the Roosevelt that we knew in later years, of physical strength apparently inexhaustible, the hero of adventure, the idol of the cowboy, the man who knew most intimately our America in the making, the historian of the "Winning of the West,"—who carried with him through life the friendship of those who despised all the superficialities and pretenses of the polite world and to whom the courage and boldness of the frontier formed the essential password to esteem—the man who in the most crowded hours of official life, with its inordinate activity, never lost the sense of the "immensity and mystery of the wilderness" and of the "silences that brood in its still depths."

The rough life on the plains, with its emphasis on physical demands, instead of relaxing, quickened his intellectual efforts. His literary ambition was apparent even in college days, and before these were over he had written one or two chapters of his book on the "Naval War of 1812." This book, still an authority, was published in 1882. It was followed, in 1886, by "Hunting Trips of a Ranchman"; in 1887, by the "Life of Thomas Hart Benton"; in 1888, by the "Life of Gouverneur Morris" and "Ranch Life and Hunting Trails," and "Essays on Practical Politics." These were the contributions of Roosevelt, the ranchman, to history and literature.

It was with this record that he was appointed Civil Service Commissioner by President Harrison in 1889, and it would have been difficult to select a place better suited for the interment of political ambition. The work was in the last degree unpopular with those who were supposed to make and unmake political fortunes. Theodore Roosevelt did not shrink from it. He did not try to curry favor; he did not emasculate the new department in order to win his way to political preferment.

He was not a mere administrator, but a fighter for proper standards of administration. In his fight for Civil Service Reform, he was the object of ridicule and bitter attack, but

he, on his part, gave no quarter. He was not averse, though holding "a minor and rather non-descript office," to taking a "Cabinet officer by the neck and exposing him to the amused contempt of all honest Americans." When it was said that his penmanship would disqualify him at his own examinations for competitive positions, he replied that he might not be eligible for a clerkship, but he thought he was a good Commissioner, and that under the old system he might have secured the clerkship for which he was manifestly unfitted. He rejoiced in his ability to do justice, and, amid the difficulties of a subordinate position, he stood for the square deal. This was his platform: "We propose that no incumbent shall be dismissed from the service unless he proves untrustworthy or incompetent and that none not specially qualified for the duties of the position shall be appointed. These two statements we consider eminently practical and American in principle." Answering an attack from a Southern Congressman as to the appointment of negroes, he said: "As to this, I have to say that so long as the present Commissioners continue their official existence they will not make, and so far as in their power lies, will refuse to allow others to make any discrimination whatsoever for or against any man because of his color, any more than because of his politics or religion."

What was of greater value to the country than his specific efforts in this important field, was the intimate knowledge the future leader obtained of all the departments of government. He knew the government as well as he knew the prairie. And this long training is largely the explanation of his later rapidity of decision in all matters relating to departmental work. In the midst of the militant efforts of this Civil Service reformer, which lasted six years, and along with the numerous volumes of official reports, he continued to maintain his literary productivity. Between 1888 and 1895 (inclusive) he published six books, of which four related to hunting, another was a history of New York City and the remaining one was "Hero Tales from American History," of which Henry Cabot Lodge was a joint author. It was in this period, in the main, that he wrote the "Winning of the West," an important work of exceptional value, which appeared in the year 1896.

It was in the Spring of 1895, that he was called to a task

even less promising than his civil service commissionership—that of President of the New York Police Board. The Lexow Committee had caused a spasm of municipal reform and Mayor Strong's administration was the result. The disclosure of police corruption and blackmail created a demand for the most vigorous treatment and the Mayor turned to Roosevelt, buried in his Washington department. Nine years had passed since his defeat for the mayoralty, and Roosevelt had apparently failed to fulfill the promise of the early Assembly days. To New York, swift to forget, his return seemed like a resurrection. Roosevelt had been offered by Mayor Strong the Street Cleaning Department, but he declined, as he thought he had no special fitness for that sort of cleansing work. To him, the Police Department seemed a simple task. It merely called, as he viewed it, for administration "with entire disregard of partisan politics and only from the standpoint of a good citizen interested in promoting the welfare of all good citizens." He came to recognize, however, that the then government of the Police Department—a bi-partisan board of four Commissioners—was so devised as to render it difficult to accomplish anything good, while "the field for intrigue and conspiracy was limitless." To his efforts there was every sort of opposition; his enemies were legion. You doubtless remember that period when street vendors hawked about the caricatures of the Roosevelt visage,—when as he said "every discredited politician, every sensational newspaper, every timid fool who could be scared by clamor, was against us." But the improvement in the force was plain. Blackmail was rooted out; crime was checked; the law was respected; what was even more, the force achieved its own self-respect. "The improvement in its efficiency went hand in hand with the improvement in its honesty." His work on the Health Board—of which he was a member by virtue of his police office—was no less important. Night after night he walked the tenement house districts seeking to relieve distress, and his passion for social helpfulness was exhibited in countless ways. The threats and machinations of his enemies had no terrors for him. He proposed to stop law-breaking and to make decent living possible so far as it lay in his power. In all his dealings with the notorious evils which afflict our crowded cities, he repre-

sented practical sense, a stern morality, and an implacable demand for official honesty. When we sum up our municipal needs, we know how useless it is to put our trust in charters or in bureaus of research, in Albany rule or in home rule. There is one everlasting need—for men like Roosevelt. With such men, municipal government may be the crowning triumph of democracy; without the energy, character, sagacity and firmness of such men, we walk in shame. Well might E. L. Godkin, who was not given to praise, say to Roosevelt that in the Police Department he was doing "the greatest work of which any American was capable" and "was exhibiting to the young men of the country the spectacle of a very important office administered by a man of high character in the most efficient way amid a thousand difficulties."

In April, 1897, he was called to a new post, that of Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The Cuban situation was becoming acute. The new Assistant Secretary was an apostle of preparedness; he became convinced that war would come, and he did everything he could to get ready. It was our duty, he believed, "even more from the standpoint of national honor than from the standpoint of national interest, to stop the devastation and destruction in Cuba." The event showed that he was right. Meanwhile, as he described the situation, "too many of our politicians, especially in Congress, found that the cheap and easy thing to do was to please the foolish peace people by keeping us weak, and to please the foolish violent people by passing denunciatory resolutions about international matters—resolutions which would have been improper even if we had been strong." It was in this period that he developed, to its full intensity, his antipathy to the "mollycoddle." He used his influence unceasingly to strengthen our naval power. Back of the later victory at Manila was his foresight, for it was largely through his effort that George Dewey, as the ideal man for the place, was put in command of the Asiatic squadron. Jacob Riis tells us of the day when Roosevelt and he, with the former's bicycle between them, were walking down an avenue in Washington discussing Dewey. "Dewey," said Roosevelt, "is the man for the place. He has a lion heart." It was on February 25, 1898, that the Assistant Secretary sent this cable message:

Washington, February 25, '98.

"Dewey, Hong Kong.

Order the squadron, except the Monocacy, to Hong Kong. Keep full of coal. In the event of declaration of war Spain, your duty will be to see that the Spanish squadron does not leave the Asiatic coast, and then offensive operations in Philippine Islands. Keep Olympia until further orders.

Roosevelt."

It is also interesting now to note how Theodore Roosevelt prized the advice of another efficient officer. No one, he tells us, so fully realized how backward our Navy was in marksmanship as did the naval attaché at Paris, the then Lieutenant Sims—now Vice-Admiral Sims in command of the operations of the United States Navy in its operations with the Grand Fleet. The Assistant Secretary was much impressed by the letters of Lieutenant Sims, and it was to him that subsequently President Roosevelt gave the lead in introducing an improved system, and to him, said Mr. Roosevelt in 1913, "more than to any other one man was due the astonishing progress of our fleet which made the fleet, gun for gun, at least three times as effective in point of fighting efficiency in 1908 as it was in 1902."

But administration, either in preparation for war or in conducting war, was not enough for Theodore Roosevelt. He abhorred an unjust war, but he was a born fighter. To him the war was a call of the supreme duty which could not be denied. As he has said, the Spanish War was not much of a war, but "it was all the war there was," and he longed to be in it. His intimate friend, then Army Surgeon Leonard Wood, also a born soldier,—trained in arduous campaigns in the West—had the same feeling. At Roosevelt's request, in May, 1898, Wood was made Colonel and Roosevelt the Lieutenant Colonel of the mounted riflemen known as the Rough Riders and in June, Wood having been promoted after Las Guasimas, Roosevelt became Colonel of the 1st Volunteer Cavalry. In point of preparedness the War Department was found to be in far worse shape than the Navy Department. As Roosevelt put it, there were excellent men—soldiers of the best stamp—but on the other hand, when the Spanish

War suddenly burst upon us "a number of inert, elderly captains and field officials were, much against their own wishes, suddenly pitchforked into the command of regiments, brigades, and even divisions and army corps. Often these failed painfully." There was no failure for the Rough Riders. They drilled most carefully. Roosevelt, with all his other labors, had managed in some way to serve for three years in the New York National Guard—and he knew something of drill. It was his view that if the national guardsman realized that he had learned only five per cent. of his profession, he had some advantage, but none if he thought he knew it all. In the army, Roosevelt, as always, worked indefatigably. He was breveted for gallantry at Las Guasimas and Santiago. The brilliant exploits of the Rough Riders reached their climax in the battle of San Juan Hill on July 1, 1898. In recommending Colonel Roosevelt for a Medal of Honor, Major General Sumner said: "Colonel Roosevelt by his example and fearlessness inspired his men, and both at Kettle Hill and the ridge known as San Juan he led his command in person. I was an eye-witness of Colonel Roosevelt's action." Later, it was his privilege to disclose the conditions about Santiago and arouse Washington to its duty. Roosevelt not only had the courage to lead his men in battle,—he also had the courage to assume responsibility for the public statement which was necessary to secure measures for their protection from the disease and death to which they were exposed by official neglect. The Roosevelt letter and the officers' 'round robin,' also signed by him, had their effect.

The war was soon over, and it had as one of its by-products the effect of throwing Theodore Roosevelt out of subordinate departments of administration into political activity of the first importance. It made him Governor of New York. He won his election by a comparatively narrow margin, but the most extraordinary political developments have begun in narrow margins. As Governor, Roosevelt pursued his policy of combining idealism with efficiency. He worked in a difficult situation, but effectively. He secured the re-enactment of the Civil Service Reform law, the creation of a Tenement House Commission, various provisions for the safety of workers and the protection of women and children

in industry, laws against adulteration of foods, and the establishment of a state hospital for those suffering from incipient tuberculosis. In the administration of the State's business, there was marked improvement, due to the better quality of his appointments. The passage of the Special Franchise Tax law was due to his insistence that special privileges should bear their proper burdens. He showed his capacity for wise party leadership when, with respect to this bill, he wrote in answer to Senator Platt's remonstrance: "It seems to me that our attitude should be one of correcting the evils and thereby showing that whereas the Populists and Socialists, and others, do not really correct the evils at all, or else only do so at the expense of producing others in aggravated form; on the contrary, we Republicans hold the just balance and set ourselves as resolutely against improper corporate influence on the one hand as against demagoguery and mob rule on the other." He appreciated fully, what was told him, that any applause he got "would be too evanescent for a moment's consideration"—that those who loudly approved would forget the matter in a fortnight and that the powerful interests he opposed would never forget. But such suggestions only steeled the resolution of Roosevelt and the bill, on his urgent demand, was passed by the legislature.

The nomination in 1900, by the Republican Convention, of Governor Roosevelt for the Vice-Presidency undoubtedly fitted into the plans of the New York leaders, who had no desire that he should succeed himself at Albany. But it was brought about, despite the opposition of the Governor himself, because of the demand throughout the country which was the result of the success of his administration and his hold upon the popular imagination. By many of his friends his nomination was regarded as a grave mistake, as it was feared that it meant his political extinction. Of course, no extinction was possible to Roosevelt; he was destined for the Nation's highest office. "Men's lives are chains of chances and History their sum." Within a few months, the Nation mourned the martyred McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt became President of the United States.

Now, for the first time, he was in a place calling for the full play of his developed powers. No one knew the country better, no one could better voice its aspirations, no one had

a more intimate acquaintance with the imperative requirements of the time, no one had a more abounding vitality or could give a more ready and complete response to the vast demands of the Nation's leadership. He fully appreciated his responsibilities, but he met them without the weakness of dread. As he said,—“Life is a great adventure, and the worst of all fears is the fear of living.” That fear he never knew.

President Roosevelt stated that he would continue McKinley's policies. He asked all the members of the Cabinet to remain. He has told us, however, that his chief concern was not that of “either following or not following” in the footsteps of his predecessor, but “in facing the new problems” that would arise. There was really no danger that his administration, because of the circumstances of his succession, would lack an individual character. Roosevelt could not be other than himself, and he soon became the most fascinating figure in the country.

When John Morley, at the end of 1904, was returning home from his visit to the United States, he was asked what had most impressed him. “Undoubtedly,” he replied, “two things—the President and the Niagara Rapids.” The President dominated his party, and possessed the thought of the people everywhere. In 1904, his nomination to succeed himself was assured. His opponents sought in vain to frame a satisfactory issue. There was only one issue, and that was Roosevelt himself, and on that issue he was triumphantly elected.

It would be impossible on this occasion even briefly to sketch the seven years and a half of President Roosevelt's administration, still less to do justice to his achievements. There were certain distinctive features, however, which may be noted. He surrounded himself with the strongest men and delighted in their friendship and counsel. He found no sacrifice of leadership in the intimate association with the best minds of his day. He nourished his strength by such intimacy and, with all his eagerness and readiness, he welcomed the best advice he could get. It was characteristic of Roosevelt that his friends in every department of activity were the ablest, the keenest, the most expert, the most vital. To him democracy did not mean the triumph of the common-place or the rule of ignorance, but the best talent engaged in the

service of all. Hay, Root, Taft and Knox gave high distinction to his Cabinet, while in every department he was constantly seeking to maintain enlightened policies and the highest efficiency.

In international affairs, with such Secretaries as Hay and Root, there was constantly displayed a rare sagacity and the Nation enjoyed a greatly enhanced prestige. President Roosevelt knew how to avoid difficulties as well as to overcome them, and the archives of diplomatic correspondence, and his personal notes to our Ambassadors, will in time disclose the extraordinary influence which he helpfully exerted. Every foreign Chancellery knew that he meant what he said, and that his words were important because they were the sure harbinger of deeds. With such a man, there was no doubt as to action and no temptation to carry things too far. The "big stick" was an assurance of peace. He dared, but not recklessly. And he always had the gift of humor. The story is told that when one expressed the hope that he would not embroil us in any foreign war, he said, "What, a war? With me cooped up in the White House? Never, gentlemen, never."

The first case before the Hague Court was brought before it through his instrumentality, and this set the precedent for many others. The Alaska Boundary question was settled through the decision of a Joint Commission, removing, as he has well said, "the last obstacle to absolute agreement between the two peoples." But his great service to the cause of peace was in his contribution to the settlement of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. He conducted the preliminaries with consummate skill. On his invitation, the delegations of the two Nations met at Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Neither side got all it wanted; he felt that each side had as regards himself a feeling of injury, but this, as he told us, he did not resent. In appreciation of this service, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

But from our standpoint, the action he had earlier taken in regard to the Panama Canal was of even greater importance. Reviewing the events which led to the recognition of the Republic of Panama, he says in his autobiography:

"No one connected with the American Government had any part in preparing, inciting, or encouraging the revolution, and except for the reports of our military and naval officers,

which I forwarded to Congress, no one connected with the Government had any previous knowledge concerning the proposed revolution, except such as was accessible to any person who read the newspapers and kept abreast of current questions and current affairs. By the unanimous action of its people, and without the firing of a shot, the State of Panama declared themselves an independent republic. The time for hesitation on our part had passed. \* \* \* \* Every consideration of international morality and expediency, of duty to the Panama people, and of satisfaction of our national interest and honor, bade us take immediate action. I recognized Panama forthwith on behalf of the United States, and practically all the countries of the world immediately followed suit. \* \* \* \* If, as representing the American people, I had not acted precisely as I did, I would have been an unfaithful or incompetent representative."

In this matter, the President acted on his own responsibility. But John Hay said: "The action of the President in the Panama matter is not only in the strictest accordance with justice and equity, and in line with all the best precedents of our public policy, but it was the only course he could have taken in compliance with our treaty rights and obligations."

President Roosevelt then devoted his energies to the work of construction. He took this enterprise of transcendent importance out of politics; he put it on an efficient basis under the most competent management. His was an administration of deeds, and its crowning achievement was the taking of these measures to assure the building of the Panama Canal.

He also acted on his own responsibility in sending the fleet around the world. He knew that "neither the English nor the German authorities believed that it was possible to take a fleet of great battleships around the world." But his prime purpose was "to impress the American people and this purpose was fully achieved." It established the popular belief in the American Navy, and if in the world war our Navy has demonstrated an efficiency unsurpassed, let us not forget—while due credit is withheld from none—that naval efficiency is not produced in a year and that the feat of the past two years, which has been in large part the essential basis of the complete victory of the cause of civilization, is directly due to the foresight and intelligent vigilance of Theodore Roosevelt.

When we turn to domestic affairs, we realize that President Roosevelt came to national leadership at a time which needed his championship of the common welfare. It is difficult now to think of the day when lawyers of ability and distinction were asserting the unconstitutionality of the exercise by Congress, through an appropriate agency, of the rate making power in its regulation of inter-state commerce. The conclusions then reached after strenuous contests, are now the most familiar postulates. For President Roosevelt, the commerce power—till then but little used—was the instrumentality of an aroused opinion determined that the Republic should not be the victim of the opportunities it had created, and that greed, defying all control, should not make mockery of justice. The record of accomplishment is impressive—especially as so much was essayed in a comparatively new field. The Hepburn bill as to railroad rates, the Pure Food bill, the Meat Inspection bill, the Employers' Liability bill, the establishment of the Bureau of Corporations, his trust prosecutions, illustrate his efforts for the public welfare against what he regarded as the serious evils in our national life. The public had found an undaunted champion, and his blows in their interest fell thick and fast.

But he did not assail the foundations of society. He sought to purge, not to destroy; to secure the essential conditions of progress, not to impair stability. It was never his notion that he must burn down the house to get rid of the rats. He always sought what he believed to be the "just middle." It was his endeavor to cut out the abuses of property and to hold the scales even between "corrupt and unscrupulous demagogues and corrupt and unscrupulous reactionaries." "To play the demagogue for purposes of self interest," said he, was "a cardinal sin against the people in a democracy."

In the effort to secure a just solution of the problems of labor, he was indefatigable. To this end he used all his authority, legal and moral. It was the moral authority of his office that he exerted in the settlement of the anthracite coal strike in 1902. He was confronted, as Judge Gray said, with a crisis more grave and threatening than any that had occurred since the Civil War. Through the moral coercion of public opinion, directed by the President, an arbitration was agreed to and the dangers were averted. The Nation

never forgot this service or the way in which it was rendered. It was a service which only a man of rare courage and initiative could have performed. And for it, as Judge Gray said, President Roosevelt deserved unstinted praise.

In his relation to labor, he was actuated by the profound belief that we need never suffer from a class war, that "employers and employees have overwhelming interests in common both as partners in industry and as citizens of the Republic, and, that when these interests are apart, they can be adjusted by so altering our laws and their interpretation as to secure to all members of the community social and industrial justice." But he realized that in order that prosperity be passed around, it is necessary that "the prosperity shall exist," and that in order that labor shall receive its fair share in the division of rewards, it is necessary "that there shall be rewards to divide."

Of first importance, in his judgment, was the conservation of our natural resources, which he emphasized by calling the conference of State Governors in May, 1908. The administration of the national forests, the conservation of mines, the improvement of waterways, and the development of water power,—all were subjects on which he thought deeply and to which he constantly directed public attention for the purpose of promoting the common welfare and of avoiding the selfish exploitation of the Nation's riches.

He thrived on the hard work of the presidency and left office in the full tide of health and energy. His relaxation was a long hunting trip in Africa, and a tour of Europe in which he made numerous addresses and received the most distinguished honors. One of our Ambassadors, who was with him on the occasion of King Edward's funeral, has said that to see Theodore Roosevelt, the adequate democrat, furnishing the centre of interest as he discoursed in his free and entertaining manner to a delighted group of Kings, was to get a new vision of the essential worth of manhood which needed no trappings to establish its dignity.

On his return to the United States, he soon resumed the political activity which he could no more dispense with than he could forego his daily food. Those who supposed that he could have remained out of politics must construct another Roosevelt to fit their fancy. To the true Roosevelt, the earn-

est expression of political views, and the endeavor to put them into effect, were inevitable. One occasion or another might be presented, but there could be no question that in response to the insistent demand of his own nature, no less than in answer to the call of others, he would be found in the political arena.

Of the bitterness and animosities that were engendered, of the division that resulted, of the party catastrophe which followed, there is no need now to speak. We are deeply grateful that this period of the estrangement of old friends, of misunderstanding and strife, came to an end, and that in the common cause of liberty, which demanded the full strength of the Nation, a common patriotic endeavor restored the old-time amity, the wounds were healed, the party integrity restored, the friendships renewed, and the Republican Party once more rejoiced in the leadership of Theodore Roosevelt.

After the labors of campaigns a trip of exploration was taken in South America in the early part of 1914. The spirit of adventure was as indomitable as ever. The fires of youth were unquenched. But in his adventures, Roosevelt was always seeking not mere pleasure, but to add to the sum of knowledge. His achievements as an explorer were indubitable, but he did not seek to magnify them. As Steffansson tells us, Roosevelt thus expressed himself in a letter written shortly before his death: "I do not make any claim to the front rank among explorers \* \* \* \* but I do think that I can reasonably maintain that compared with other presidents, princes and prime ministers, I have done an unusual amount of useful work."

But this trip of exploration, useful as it was from a scientific point of view, was a fateful trip for the explorer. He never fully recovered from the fever with which he was then attacked, and he was unable to free his system of the seeds of disease.

Soon after his return to this country, the great war broke out. He was one of the first to appreciate its significance and our duty. His soul revolted at the wrongs of Belgium and he poured out the vials of his scorn upon the neutrality which ignored the call of humanity and sacrificed the self-respect of the American Republic. When the Lusitania was sunk, in May, 1915, he demanded action with "immediate

decision and vigor." "Centuries have passed," said he, "since any war vessel of a civilized power has shown such ruthless brutality toward non-combatants and especially toward women and children." None of the "old time pirates" had "committed murder on so vast a scale." "We earn, as a Nation," he cried, "measureless scorn and contempt if we follow the lead of those who exalt peace above righteousness, if we heed the voices of those feeble folk who bleat to high heaven that there is peace, when there is no peace. For many months our Government has preserved between right and wrong a neutrality which would have excited the tremulous admiration of Pontius Pilate—the arch-typical neutral of all times." Theodore Roosevelt, to his lasting honor be it said, was right, and had his voice prevailed and had the country earlier shaken off its lethargy, millions of lives and countless treasure might have been spared. Better late than never, but it is costly to be late.

Of inestimable value to his country had been his service in office, but now—a private citizen—he was to perform an even greater service. To a hesitant administration, and to a people lulled into a false security and lending ear to an unworthy pacifism, he preached the gospel of preparedness. Throughout the country, journeyed this courageous apostle of right-thinking, having no credentials but those of his own conscience and patriotism, and by his pitiless invective he literally compelled action. Back of all that was done was the pressure of the demand of Roosevelt. "For eighteen months," said he in the early part of 1916, "with this world-cyclone before our eyes, we as a nation have sat supine without preparing in any shape or way. It is an actual fact that there has not been one soldier, one rifle, one gun, one boat, added to the American Army or Navy so far, because of anything that has occurred in this war, and not the slightest step has yet been taken looking to the necessary preparedness. Such national short-sightedness, such national folly, is almost inconceivable." He denounced the proposed program as a make-believe program, as one entirely inadequate to our needs. "It is," he said, "a proposal not to do something effective immediately, but to do something entirely ineffective immediately and to trust that our lack will be made good in succeeding years."

He also demanded spiritual preparedness in a deepening sense of unity. He preached the gospel of undiluted and unhyphenated Americanism. "The foreign born population of this country," said he, "must be an Americanized population. No other kind can fight the battles of America either in war or peace. It must talk the language of its native born fellow citizens, it must possess American citizenship and American ideals." "There is no such a thing as a hyphenated American who is a good American. The only man who is a good American is the man who is an American and nothing else." "I," he said, "I am straight United States."

And when finally we could stand no longer the brutal assaults of Germany and declared that a state of war existed, he felt that his place was in that holiest of wars and he was ready to die fighting for his country. When he asked to be allowed to go to France, he had no thought of a return in glory. I well remember the night, shortly after the declaration of War, when at the close of a meeting at the Union League Club, he talked to a little company of his heart's wish. "I shall not return," he said, "my sons may not return, my grandchildren may be left alone"—and no one could doubt that he meant what he said. But the greatest desire of his life was denied him. We can but faintly imagine the measure of his disappointment, but we may conjecture that it had no small share in hastening the final break-down. His country at war, and Roosevelt at home! That was the cruelest blow that fate could deal him.

But if he could not fight for liberty and humanity on the Western Front, he could fight with pen and voice at home. There was not a moment lost. With increasing vigor he demanded adequate forces, adequate equipment, speed and efficiency. His lash knew no mercy, but it was a necessary lash. As it was, we were just in time. How late we should have been had it not been for Roosevelt, God only knows! But who can doubt the value of the service of that insistent demand in making it possible that we should arrive at the Front, in force, in time to make the last great German drive a failure? He quickened the national consciousness; he developed the sense of unity, and when the country awoke he was the natural leader of an aroused America. His priceless service at home made all the world his debtor. If America

by its aid at the critical moment made victory possible, it was the spur of Roosevelt that assured that aid, and while we acclaim the splendid service of officers and men, the pride of our Army and Navy, and of the host of willing workers, and are gratified at the vast achievements of the Nation, let it not be forgotten that yonder in his last resting place in Oyster Bay lies our greatest hero of the War. He incarnated the spirit of America and when he passed away, and controversy was no more and enemies were silenced, the country with one voice paid its tribute to the patriot who, without office or commission, had supplied the leadership which had not faltered or erred, and had fought to maintain the Nation's honor.

It is with pleasure that we remember the family life of this stout-hearted American. Worthy in public life, he dignified the American home. He spoke of his father as the best man he had ever known, and the spirit of his father's house blessed his own. An ideal husband and father, his home was the beautiful abode of all that was worthy and true. He transmitted his own courage to his four sons, and all of his sons won distinction at the Front. The last sacrifice for his country which his father longed to make in the battle for liberty his son Quentin did make, and in his heroic death achieved an imperishable honor of his own.

It is small wonder that such a career as that of Theodore Roosevelt has a lasting fascination for young men. There was nothing sordid or commonplace or unclean to mar it. His courage, steadfastness and faith, his deeds of daring, his physical prowess, his resourcefulness, his exploits as a hunter and explorer, his intellectual keenness, his personal charm, and his dominating patriotic motive, make their irresistible appeal, and in the shaping of the ideals of the American youth for generations to come his most important service is yet to be rendered.

He left us when we could ill afford to spare him. Against all that tended to destroy our Government, against all that is sinister and corrupt, against tyranny of every sort, against the exploitation of the weak and all injustice, against class hatred and class pride, against the enfeebling influence of pacifism, against the impractical schemes of visionaries, against every tendency to anarchy and Bolshevism, Theodore

Roosevelt would have led the fight with his invincible common sense and his sound Americanism.

In the coming struggle we can win the victory only by heeding his repeated injunction:

"All of us, no matter from what land our parents came, no matter in what way we may severally worship our Creator, must stand shoulder to shoulder in a united America for the elimination of race and religious prejudice. We must stand for a reign of equal justice to both big and small. We must insist on the maintenance of the American standard of living. We must stand for an adequate national control which shall secure a better training of our young men in time of peace, both for the work of peace and for the work of war. We must direct every national resource, material and spiritual, to the path not of shirking difficulties, but of training our people to overcome difficulties. Our aim must be, not to make life easy and soft, not to soften soul and body, but to fit us in virile fashion to do a great work for all mankind. \* \* \* In our relations with the outside world we must abhor wrong-doing, and disdain to commit it, and we must no less disdain the base spirit which tamely submits to wrong-doing. Finally and most important of all, we must strive for the establishment within our own borders of that stern and lofty standard of personal and public morality which shall guarantee to each man his rights, and which shall insist in return upon the whole performance by each man of his duty both to his neighbor and to the great Nation whose flag must symbolize in the future as it has symbolized in the past the highest hopes of all mankind."







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