

the most influential politicians, could sway him a hand's-breadth. He believed that a public man was bound to do what he thought right, even if his constituents went wrong; and he acted on his belief. The sincere regard and respect which his fellow legislators felt for him needs no stronger proof than the heartfelt grief which every one of them whom I have seen showed on hearing the news of his lamentable death.

Walter Howe led a fine and true life; and his death is a most real loss to the city.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Theodore Roosevelt on Walter Howe

SAGAMORE HILL, August 25th, 1890.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CRITIC:—

As a friend and former fellow-legislator of Walter Howe, I am unwilling to let his death pass without expressing in some public way my sense of what the city of New York owes him. Although a man keenly appreciative of artistic and literary work, and himself fond of using both pen and brush, the services by which he especially rendered the city his debtor were done in public life. He was for three years a member of the State Legislature, during most of which time I was his colleague; and for the last three years he has been a member of the very important Aqueduct Commission. But this by no means represents the sum total of his public life. He was one of those men, by far too few in our city, who understand that a good American citizen is in honor bound to keep at all times actively interested in our politics. Whether in or out of office he was always a power for good in the primaries and conventions which settle beforehand, in so many cases, what can be done at the polls. He never shirked his work because it was disagreeable, because he had to leave his own attractive home in order to do it, or because he could often see no immediate result from his labor and self-sacrifice. He possessed the rare capacity of combining a high ideal on the one hand with the power and desire to do practical work on the other. He knew how to make allowances for the shortcomings and imperfections of his fellows without losing his own high standard. It would be hard to overestimate the effect such a man, when strong, earnest and sincere, and with Walter Howe's wise commonsense, exerts in elevating and purifying the tone of public life wherever his influence extends.

In the Legislature his course was marked by a peculiar disinterestedness and unselfishness and a singularly high and noble conception of duty. He was much more than merely faithful, alert and industrious—though he was all these, too. He was far-seeing, and keenly alive to the city's real interests; and he was willing to do what few indeed of our public men will do—that is, incur unpopularity for the sake of what he deemed right. He never let a personal jealousy interfere with his course of public conduct; and when he had, by careful study, convinced himself that he was bound to act on a given line, as a question of principle, then no amount of pressure, no threat of popular displeasure, no efforts of