

# THE TWO AMERICAS

SPEECH AT THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE PAN-AMERICAN  
EXPOSITION, BUFFALO, MAY 20, 1901

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**T**O-DAY we formally open this great exposition by the shores of the mighty inland seas of the North, where all the peoples of the western hemisphere have joined to show what they have done in art, science, and industrial invention, what they have been able to accomplish with their manifold resources and their infinitely varied individual and national qualities. Such an exposition, held at the opening of this new century, inevitably suggests two trains of thought. It should make us think seriously and solemnly of our several duties to one another as citizens of the different nations of this western hemisphere, and also of our duties each to the nation to which he personally belongs.

The century upon which we have just entered must inevitably be one of tremendous triumph or of tremendous failure for the whole human race, because, to an infinitely greater extent than ever before, humanity is knit together in all its parts, for weal or

woe. All about us there are innumerable tendencies that tell for good, and innumerable tendencies that tell for evil. It is, of course, a mere truism to say that our own acts must determine which set of tendencies shall overcome the other. In order to act wisely we must first see clearly. There is no place among us for the mere pessimist; no man who looks at life with a vision that sees all things black or gray can do aught healthful in molding the destiny of a mighty and vigorous people. But there is just as little use for the foolish optimist who refuses to face the many and real evils that exist, and who fails to see that the only way to insure the triumph of righteousness in the future is to war against all that is base, weak, and unlovely in the present.

There are certain things so obvious as to seem commonplace, which, nevertheless, must be kept constantly before us if we are to preserve our just sense of proportion. This twentieth century is big with the fate of the nations of mankind, because the fate of each is now interwoven with the fate of all to a degree never even approached in any previous stage of history. No better proof could be given than by this very exposition. A century ago no such exposition could have even been thought of. The larger part of the territory represented here

to-day by so many free nations was not even mapped, and very much of it was unknown to the hardiest explorer. The influence of America upon Old World affairs was imponderable. World politics still meant European politics.

All that is now changed, not merely by what has happened here in America, but by what has happened elsewhere. It is not necessary for us here to consider the giant changes which have come elsewhere in the globe; to treat of the rise in the South Seas of the great free commonwealths of Australia and New Zealand; of the way in which Japan has been rejuvenated and has advanced by leaps and bounds to a position among the leading civilized powers; of the problems, affecting the major portion of mankind, which call imperiously for solution in parts of the Old World which, a century ago, were barely known to Europe, even by rumor. Our present concern is not with the Old World, but with our own western hemisphere, America. We meet to-day, representing the people of this continent, from the Dominion of Canada in the north, to Chile and the Argentine in the south; representing peoples who have traveled far and fast in the last century, because in them has been practically shown that it is the spirit of adventure which is the maker of com-

monwealths; peoples who are learning and striving to put in practice the vital truth that freedom is the necessary first step, but only the first step, in successful free government.

During the last century we have on the whole made long strides in the right direction, but we have very much yet to learn. We all look forward to the day when there shall be a nearer approximation than there has ever yet been to the brotherhood of man and the peace of the world. More and more we are learning that to love one's country above all others is in no way incompatible with respecting and wishing well to all others, and that, as between man and man, so between nation and nation, there should live the great law of right. These are the goals toward which we strive; and let us at least earnestly endeavor to realize them here on this continent. From Hudson Bay to the Straits of Magellan, we, the men of the two Americas, have been conquering the wilderness, carving it into state and province, and seeking to build up in state and province governments which shall combine industrial prosperity and moral well-being. Let us ever most vividly remember the falsity of the belief that any one of us is to be permanently benefited by the hurt of another.

Let us strive to have our public men treat as axiomatic the truth that it is for the interest of every commonwealth in the western hemisphere to see every other commonwealth grow in riches and in happiness, in material wealth and in the sober, strong, self-respecting manliness, without which material wealth avails so little.

To-day on behalf of the United States I welcome you here—you, our brothers of the North, and you, our brothers of the South; we wish you well; we wish you all prosperity; and we say to you that we earnestly hope for your well-being, not only for your own sakes, but also for our own, for it is a benefit to each of us to have the others do well. The relations between us now are those of cordial friendship, and it is to the interest of all alike that this friendship should ever remain unbroken. Nor is there the least chance of its being broken, provided only that all of us alike act with full recognition of the vital need that each should realize that his own interests can best be served by serving the interests of others.

You, men of Canada, are doing substantially the same work that we of this republic are doing, and face substantially the same problems that we also face. Yours is the world of the merchant, the manufac-

turer and mechanic, the farmer, the ranchman, and the miner; you are subduing the prairie and the forest, tilling farm-land, building cities, striving to raise ever higher the standard of right, to bring ever nearer the day when true justice shall obtain between man and man; and we wish god-speed to you and yours, and may the kindest ties of good will always exist between us.

To you of the republics south of us, I wish to say a special word. I believe with all my heart in the Monroe Doctrine. This doctrine is not to be invoked for the aggrandizement of any one of us here on this continent at the expense of any one else on this continent. It should be regarded simply as a great international Pan-American policy, vital to the interests of all of us. The United States has, and ought to have, and must ever have, only the desire to see her sister commonwealths in the western hemisphere continue to flourish, and the determination that no Old World power shall acquire new territory here on this western continent. We of the two Americas must be left to work out our own salvation along our own lines; and if we are wise we will make it understood as a cardinal feature of our joint foreign policy that, on the one hand, we will not submit to territorial aggrandizement on

this continent by any Old World power, and that, on the other hand, among ourselves each nation must scrupulously regard the rights and interests of the others, so that, instead of any one of us committing the criminal folly of trying to rise at the expense of our neighbors, we shall all strive upward in honest and manly brotherhood, shoulder to shoulder.

A word now especially to my own fellow-countrymen. I think that we have all of us reason to be satisfied with the showing made in this exposition, as in the great expositions of the past, of the results of the enterprise, the shrewd daring, the business energy and capacity, and the artistic and, above all, the wonderful mechanical skill and inventiveness of our people. In all of this we have legitimate cause to feel a noble pride, and a still nobler pride in the showing made of what we have done in such matters as our system of wide-spread popular education and in the field of philanthropy, especially in that best kind of philanthropy which teaches each man to help lift both himself and his neighbor by joining with that neighbor hand in hand in a common effort for the common good.

But we should err greatly, we should err in the most fatal of ways, by wilful blindness to whatever is not pleasant, if, while

justly proud of our achievements, we failed to realize that we have plenty of shortcomings to remedy, that there are terrible problems before us, which we must work out right, under the gravest national penalties if we fail. It cannot be too often repeated that there is no patent device for securing good government; that after all is said and done, after we have given full credit to every scheme for increasing our material prosperity, to every effort of the lawmaker to provide a system under which each man shall be best secured in his own rights, it yet remains true that the great factor in working out the success of this giant republic of the western continent must be the possession of those qualities of essential virtue and essential manliness which have built up every great and mighty people of the past, and the lack of which always has brought, and always will bring, the proudest of nations crashing down to ruin. Here in this exposition, on the Stadium and on the pylons of the bridge, you have written certain sentences to which we all must subscribe, and to which we must live up if we are in any way or measure to do our duty: "Who shuns the dust and sweat of the contest, on his brow falls not the cool shade of the olive," and "A free state exists only in the virtue of the citizen." We all accept these statements

in theory; but if we do not live up to them in practice, then there is no health in us. Take the two together always. In our eager, restless life of effort, but little can be done by that cloistered virtue of which Milton spoke with such fine contempt. We need the rough, strong qualities that make a man fit to play his part well among men. Yet we need to remember even more that no ability, no strength and force, no power of intellect or power of wealth, shall avail us, if we have not the root of right living in us; if we do not pay more than a mere lip-loyalty to the old, old commonplace virtues, which stand at the foundation of all social and political well-being.

It is easy to say what we ought to do, but it is hard to do it; and yet no scheme can be devised which will save us from the need of doing just this hard work. Not merely must each of us strive to do his duty; in addition it is imperatively necessary also to establish a strong and intelligent public opinion which will require each to do his duty. If any man here falls short he should not only feel ashamed of himself, but in some way he ought also to be made conscious of the condemnation of his fellows, and this no matter what form his shortcoming takes. Doing our duty is, of course, incumbent on every one of us alike; yet the

heaviest blame for dereliction should fall on the man who sins against the light, the man to whom much has been given, and from whom, therefore, we have a right to expect much in return. We should hold to a peculiarly rigid accountability those men who in public life, or as editors of great papers, or as owners of vast fortunes, or as leaders and molders of opinion in the pulpit, or on the platform, or at the bar, are guilty of wrongdoing, no matter what form that wrongdoing may take.

In addition, however, to the problems which, under Protean shapes, are yet fundamentally the same for all nations and for all times, there are others which especially need our attention, because they are the especial productions of our present industrial civilization. The tremendous industrial development of the nineteenth century has not only conferred great benefits upon us of the twentieth, but it has also exposed us to grave dangers. This highly complex movement has had many sides, some good and some bad, and has produced an absolutely novel set of phenomena. To secure from them the best results will tax to the utmost the resources of the statesman, the economist, and the social reformer. There has been an immense relative growth of urban population, and, in consequence,

an immense growth of the body of wage-workers, together with an accumulation of enormous fortunes which more and more tend to express their power through great corporations that are themselves guided by some master mind of the business world. As a result, we are confronted by a formidable series of perplexing problems, with which it is absolutely necessary to deal, and yet with which it is not merely useless, but in the highest degree unwise and dangerous to deal, save with wisdom, insight, and self-restraint.

There are certain truths which are so commonplace as to be axiomatic; and yet so important that we cannot keep them too vividly before our minds. The true welfare of the nation is indissolubly bound up with the welfare of the farmer and the wage-worker—of the man who tills the soil, and of the mechanic, the handicraftsman, the laborer. If we can insure the prosperity of these two classes we need not trouble ourselves about the prosperity of the rest, for that will follow as a matter of course.

On the other hand, it is equally true that the prosperity of any of us can best be attained by measures that will promote the prosperity of all. The poorest motto upon which an American can act is the motto of "some men down," and the safest to fol-

low is that of "all men up." A good deal can and ought to be done by law. For instance, the State and, if necessary, the nation should by law assume ample power of supervising and regulating the acts of any corporation (which can be but its creature), and generally of those immense business enterprises which exist only because of the safety and protection to property guaranteed by our system of government. Yet it is equally true that, while this power should exist, it should be used sparingly and with self-restraint. Modern industrial competition is very keen between nation and nation, and now that our country is striding forward with the pace of a giant to take the leading position in the international industrial world, we should beware how we fetter our limbs, how we cramp our Titan strength. While striving to prevent industrial injustice at home, we must not bring upon ourselves industrial weakness abroad. This is a task for which we need the finest abilities of the statesman, the student, the patriot, and the far-seeing lover of mankind. It is a task in which we shall fail with absolute certainty if we approach it after having surrendered ourselves to the guidance of the demagogue, or the doctrinaire, of the well-meaning man who thinks feebly, or of the cunning self-seeker who endeavors to

rise by committing that worst of crimes against our people—the crime of inflaming brother against brother, one American against his fellow-Americans.

My fellow-countrymen, bad laws are evil things, good laws are necessary; and a clean, fearless, common-sense administration of the laws is even more necessary; but what we need most of all is to look to our own selves to see that our consciences as individuals, that our collective national conscience, may respond instantly to every appeal for high action, for lofty and generous endeavor. There must and shall be no falling off in the national traits of hardihood and manliness; and we must keep ever bright the love of justice, the spirit of strong brotherly friendship for one's fellows, which we hope and believe will hereafter stand as typical of the men who make up this, the mightiest republic upon which the sun has ever shone.

**THE  
STRENUOUS LIFE**

**ESSAYS AND  
ADDRESSES**

**BY  
THEODORE ROOSEVELT**



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