

ROOSEVELT CALLS WILSON A MICAWBER

Likens Him to Dickens's Character Because of His Numerous Notes to Germany.

ASSAILS EMBARGO IDEA

And Characterizes Acceptance of Lusitania Indemnity as "Sordid Baseness."

Theodore Roosevelt attacked the foreign policy of the Wilson Administration yesterday in a speech before the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He likened President Wilson to Wilkins Micawber, characterized the proposal to accept indemnity for the Lusitania disaster as "a proposition of sordid baseness," expressed himself in favor of universal compulsory military service in this country, and departed frequently from the prepared manuscript of his speech to make his comments more emphatic than he had written them.

In one of these departures from manuscript Colonel Roosevelt said that in its failure to take any action when Germany violated the neutrality of Belgium "this nation played the part of the Levite toward Belgium, while the Allies played the part of the Good Samaritan." Again, he said: "If you tell a man you'll hold him to strict accountability when he slaps your wife's face, and he repeats the offense, the issue isn't met by eleven months' conversation."

Colonel Roosevelt said that he didn't want war. But he would go to war if war between this country and another were declared, he said, and said his sons would also go, and his daughters would "take their part."

"Mr. Micawber's specialty was to issue notes," Colonel Roosevelt said. "He never honored these notes when they came due. His mind was so constituted that he felt that when a note became due he met it adequately by writing another. His creditors, however, did not take so charitable a view of the performance. They did not have single track minds. To those acquainted with diplomatic history during the last year or two there will be no necessity of pursuing the analogy further."

It was "dishonorable conduct" on our part, Colonel Roosevelt said, to take no action when Belgium's neutrality was violated, for Germany by breaking The Hague Treaty broke the supreme law of our land. It would be an act of gross infamy on our part, he asserted, if we should impose a munitions embargo against the Allies.

"Haggling Over Dollars."

"A year ago," he continued, "this Government notified Germany that it would hold her to a strict accountability if she sank passenger ships and murdered women and children. Again and again and again, in contemptuous defiance of this warning, Germany has sunk these ships and killed noncombatants until the number mounts up into the thousands. Whether the acts were done by German submarines or by Austrian submarines or, as is now claimed, by Turkish submarines, or, as may possibly be claimed in the future, by Bulgarian submarines, represents merely the contemptuous desire of Germany—the directing and dictating mind of the Central Powers—to give this Government a chance to crawl out of making good its fine words. We took no effective action whatever to stop these repeated murders. They were finally stopped simply because the British fleet destroyed so many submarines that the warfare ceased being profitable to Germany. Now it is announced in the press that the German Government and our Government are actually haggling over the number of dollars which they think the American people will pocket as a payment for their murdered women and children.

"A policy of milk and water in one nation encourages a policy of blood and iron in another nation. We have sat by without protest while Belgium has been trampled into bloody mire by Germany, and while Germany has killed literally thousands of noncombatants, men, women, and children, on the high seas, including hundreds of our own citizens, and while women and children by the hundred have been killed in the bombardment of unfortified towns; and our failure to protest—that is, to square our performance with our promise—has made us partly responsible for these criminal misdeeds.

"Unfortunately, it is evident that many of our public men are afraid of Germany, afraid of the professional German-American vote, and are willing to sacrifice the honor of this country to their fears. There is practically no French-American or English-American vote, and these politicians feel therefore that they can act against England and France with safety, and their motto is 'safety first.'"

Colonel Roosevelt said that he approved of proposals to establish a world league for the enforcement of peace, but only on condition that we should show that we keep our promises and that we are able to make our promises effective by our action. He believed in entering into such treaties of The Hague Convention, he said. "But when we do," he added, "we must face the fact that we have abolished by just so much our right to be neutral and that we have entered into alliances which entangle us to the extent of making it necessary for us to keep our word where we have given it.

Duty Shirked in Mexico.

"As regards Mexico, our indignation must be directed against the men of both parties who have been responsible for our shrieking our duty during the last five years. I wish every one would read the great speeches of Senator Fall of New Mexico on this subject. For five years the representatives of our people in Washington have submitted to every species of infamy in Mexico, having allowed our men to be killed; our women to be raped, our property to be destroyed, not once but again and again and again in many hundreds of cases; and no effective steps of any kind have been taken by our representatives during those entire five years. Our policy has meant untold suffering and bloodshed not only for our people, but for other foreigners in Mexico, and, above all, for the Mexicans themselves. For five years we have pursued a policy of both cowardice and infamy in the face of our duty toward Mexico.

"We should have a mobile army of 150,000 men, which means a total regular army of about a quarter of a million men. There is no use of half-way measures and empty phrases. If we mean to prepare, we should prepare in good earnest. Thirty years ago I served for a time as Deputy Sheriff in a cow country of the West, which was at that time a rather lively country. We grew to accept several rules of conduct as binding. One was never to draw unless we meant to shoot. Conversation not followed by action was not looked on favorably. As has been well said, the policy of speaking softly and carrying a big stick is, in the long run, infinitely safer than the policy of indulging in irrelevant noise and brandishing an olive branch. Again we found it wise not to carry a gun at all unless we carried a good gun. Either be armed or not armed. To be half armed combines the disadvantages of both attitudes. That was before the days of automatics. When I was on business as a Deputy Sheriff I carried a self-cocking .45 calibre revolver. I was instructed not to use it unless it was absolutely necessary. I obeyed the instructions. But if I had been given a .22 calibre muzzle-loader I would have promptly thrown up my job. The proposal for the so-called Continental Army is a proposal to meet Uncle Sam's need for an automatic or a self-cocking .45 by giving him a muzzle-loading .22.

"The majority cannot be expected thoroughly to know the international

situation or to know our military needs, and it is quite possible to deceive them by advocacy of a make-believe preparedness, a sham preparedness.

Continental Army Impossible.

"The men who advocate the so-called continental army are the real enemies of true preparedness. They are seeking to get Uncle Sam to arm himself with a .22 calibre muzzle-loader under the belief that he will then have an efficient weapon. The proposed continental army would be thoroughly undemocratic. The young man eager to serve his country but obliged to earn his own livelihood in keen competition with his fellows cannot possibly under ordinary circumstances leave his business for two months every year during three years at the very beginning of his career. To ask him to do so would be to ask him to put himself at a disadvantage compared to his competitors, to make him run the risk of losing his job and almost certainly lose the chance of promotion, and perhaps have to put off the day when he can marry and have a home of his own.

"We need universal training for military service so that this country may be prepared to defend itself in time of war. I no more believe in permitting a man to volunteer to stay at home or refuse to enlist in time of war than I believe in permitting him to volunteer not to pay his taxes in time of peace. One duty should be made as obligatory as the other; and no man should be allowed to shirk either. But the great benefit that would come from universal obligatory training would be in time of peace. Our young men would be trained to a sense of solidarity, of social cohesion, of self-respect, of power to command and readiness to obey, of orderly sense of duty, which would be invaluable in the industrial and social life of this nation.

"The professional pacifist who clamors for a peace which will consecrate successful wrong is an ignoble creature unfit for citizenship in this republic. The materialist who for the sake of selling cotton or copper or beef wishes this country to take action that would hinder Belgium being restored to its own people is false to every principle of the great men of this republic's past. I ask that we stand for property rights, but that we put human rights ahead of property rights, and, finally, that we show that we have it in us to dare to risk something and to suffer some discomfort and some loss, and, if necessary, some danger on behalf of a lofty ideal. It is by no means necessary that a great nation should always stand on the heroic level. But no nation can be called really great unless it can sometimes rise to a heroic mood."