

Speech of Col. Roosevelt

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was a Quaker. The applause which followed this declamation was even more vigorous than the style to which Colonel Roosevelt had made it.

Colonel Roosevelt declared the present fight to be more than any mere fractional fight, more than any mere ordinary political contest. "I am fighting for the rights of the plain people everywhere," he said, "and I feel that I have a right to the support not only of every heir of the old North Carolina Whigs, but of every heir of the Jacksonian Democrats. The speaker declared that he stood for the principles in which the great bulk of the people of the south believe and expressed the personal belief that they were kept away from him only because of an idle name. "I am going to do my best to make you vote as you feel, without regard to names," he warned. "I am going to fight, and when I fight, I fight," he declared with an emphasis which was not missed by his hearers. Colonel Roosevelt then reiterated his purpose of coming into North Carolina and waging a campaign in the event he was nominated. "I want the Old North State, the old Tar Heel state, to vote right in the next electoral college," he declared with an enthusiasm which was immediately taken by those of the audience who held a similar hope.

Touching his platform he declared that it was founded on the fundamentals of American citizenship. "We are standing for the right of the people to rule," he said, "and also for the people to rule in a spirit of righteousness; to rule so as to do justice to every man and every woman within the boundaries of our great nation."

Colonel Roosevelt thought that on the fourth of July every standpoint in the country would express a sentiment similar to the one he had just felt and spoken. "But he forgets it when the legislature meets and when Congress comes together." Continuing in this vein Colonel Roosevelt said: "I ask you to stand up for those who live up to their fourth of July professions when Congress and the legislature come together. We are standing for the right of the people, not merely to vote at elections; we are asking that the rule of the people be made genuine and not a sham, and I am only appealing to what each one of you here, you North Carolinians, what each one of you do in your own life. You, I, each of us, wants to rule his own life."

"I know that now and then I make mistakes, but they will be my mistakes, and I want to make them myself. If I make them, I won't make the same mistake twice. If somebody else makes them for me, I don't know how often he will make them. It is the same with the people as a whole. I know that occasionally we make mistakes, but I know also that history has taught us that the American people will make very much fewer mistakes in governing themselves than any outsiders will make in governing us."

It was in making comparisons of his idea of the people's judgment and the president's gathered through his public expressions that Colonel Roosevelt first mentioned the name of Taft, his opponent for the Republican nomination. "Mr. Taft," began Mr. Roosevelt with a pronunciation of the name which was new in these parts, "said the other day that he distrusted the impulsive judgment of the people. I would a great deal rather have the deliberate judgment of the people than their impulsive judgment but if I have got to choose I will take the impulsive judgment of the people every time, rather than the deliberate judgment of the bosses and politicians."

"Again the other day the President said he tried the rather difficult task of improving on Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln said this was to be a government of the people, for the people, by the people Mr. Taft suggested as an improvement that it was to be a government of the people by a representative part of the people. In actual practice we can tell who that representative part would be by looking at the men who are managing Mr. Taft's campaign. Senator Aldrich, Messrs. Guggenheim and Evans in Colorado, Mr. Barnes, a cruelly misunderstood man known as Boss Barnes in my own state, Mr. Lorimer in Illinois, Mr. Penrose in Pennsylvania. Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Penrose are less

representatives than they were," declared the speaker, the audience laughing appreciatively and revealing a knowledge of results of the past few days.

"In Pennsylvania and Illinois we appealed to the unrepresentative part of the people" continued the Colonel, "and the unrepresentative part of the people went with us so largely that we have not counted up the majority yet. Our opponent's position was put in homely language by an adherent of Mr. Taft's Mr. Campbell of Kansas. Kansas is going like Illinois and Pennsylvania, only more so, and Mr. Campbell said that my proposals for government were like an appeal from the empire to the bleachers. You are on the bleachers, according to Mr. Campbell's theory. Mr. Campbell's theory was that the American people had nothing to do with politics except pay the price of admission and sit on the bleachers. My theory is that it is the American people who are playing the game, and my appeal is exactly as Mr. Campbell said, it is to the bleachers, and whenever I can get anything approaching a direct primary in nine cases out of ten the bleachers go with us, and Mr. Campbell will find that out."

In urging a genuine rule of the people that legislation in state and nation alike might be shaped so as to secure justice, so as to shape conditions as far as it is possible by governmental action in such fashion to destroy privilege, Colonel Roosevelt declared that affairs should be so shaped that no man might be helped by privilege himself or hindered by privilege in others. He declared his purpose to see the conditions of life and work, so far as he could arrange it by law, such that every American, every man, every woman within our bounds shall have a chance to lead his or her life as a self respecting American citizen should under conditions that will tend for his or her self respect and that will tend for the uplift of the next generation.

Elaborating upon the phase of his speech and appeal for laws which would better safeguard the farmer, wage earner and every class of bread winners as well as to curb the privileged class, Colonel Roosevelt said:

"There are scores of laws we need to pass, some of them affecting the farmers, some affecting wage workers, some affecting the small business man. I shall not try to enumerate them all. I have gone over them again and again in different places. Some of them must be passed by the nation, some of them must be passed by the state, and I hold as to that extent a progressive every man who honestly works with us for any of those laws so as to help the future generation. Remember, friends, we are in honor bound to work for the future. In every audience I am sure to see an occasional citizen carrying a small citizen. I am in the grandfather class myself, and I, and each father and mother here wishes to order his or her life so that the children may have a fair chance in the future. I wish that all of us as citizens shall shape the governmental action of the nation and state alike so that in the future more and more this shall be a country where justice prevails, for friends, if I were able to impress anything upon my multi-millionaire opponents I shall try to impress this upon them, that in their folly and blindness they are fighting against the interests of their own children and children's children, and that it is they who stand for justice who are there. I friends of their children, for as the sun is above us we may rest certain in this country those who strive for justice are not only striving for those to whom justice is denied but are striving to benefit those very people who deny the justice, and I am helping when I strive for fair play, for honesty, for equal opportunity for all men in this country. I am helping to make this country what it should be made, and what it must be made if the children and the children's children of the very wealthy are to be safe in it; for this country will not be a good place for any one to live in unless we make it a pretty good place for every one to live in."

Commenting upon those declared policies and beliefs Colonel Roosevelt said that he did not mean that by law a man could be made to succeed if he has not got in him the qualities that will tend for success. He realized, he said, that we cannot make a man, solely through laws, sober or intelligent or thrifty or hard working. "If he is vicious idle and

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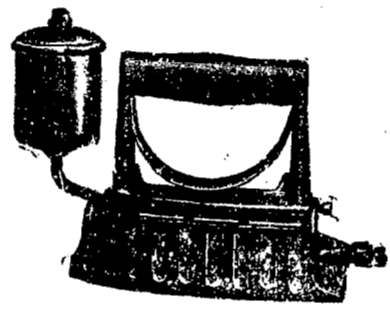
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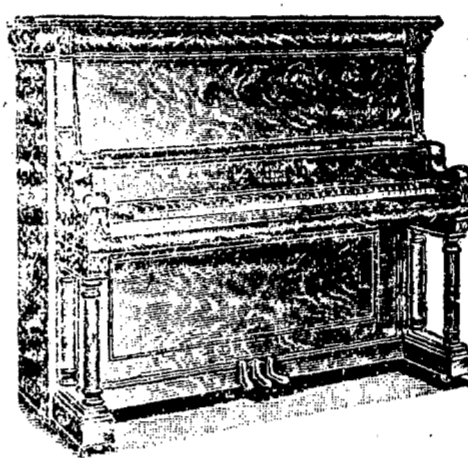
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