

*SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY, THEODORE ROOSEVELT,  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.*

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN: I know you will pardon me my saying one word before I speak to the toast allotted to me on a subject that is close to the heart of every man here to-night. I wish to say one word about the statesman and the good citizen who has passed way, Vice-President HOBART. Of Mr. HOBART it should be said, what ought to be the highest ambition of every decent man to have said of him, that he single mindedly and disinterestedly did his duty to the whole country, wholly without regard to any credit or glory accruing to himself. Mr. HOBART occupied the very trying position of one with great titular rank who nevertheless was not supposed to have any active share in formulating the policy of the Government, and helping carry it through. What he did was done, but not by force of position but by force of character; by his rare tact, his extraordinary common sense, and the conviction of sincerity he created in every man with whom he was brought in contact. [Applause.] In short, he had the quality of disinterestedness; the quality which more than any other is needed in a man who is to do work of genuine worth for the Nation. I am sure that the appreciation in which Mr. HOBART

was held was in direct proportion to the knowledge that men had of him and of what he did. Nothing that we can say, nothing that we can do will affect him now ; and it will be of very small moment to those nearest to him, in whom the grief at his loss must overcome any sense of the recognition of that loss outside, but we do owe it to ourselves to understand what he was and what he did ; to understand that the kind of work he did is the kind of work that must be done if this nation is to take and keep the place it should keep among the nations of the earth—the work that combines common sense and patriotic devotion to the interests of the nation as a whole. [Applause.] I am sure that all of those, and there are many here to-night, who have been brought in contact with him, realize how invariably eager he was when the chance occurred to do anything to help a good cause—and, mind you,—almost invariably to help it along without any thought of its being possible that his name should appear in connection with it. His name did not appear, the names of others did, but not his ; and his influence was great because of that very fact ; because men knew that he was not a self-seeker ; that he was not seeking his own renown, his own fame ; that what he was trying to do was to get the Government of the United States to do as it should. Mr. President, I am sure there is not a man here who did not feel glad that the first toast drunk to-night should be the toast drunk in silence to the memory of the upright statesman and good citizen who has just died, the Vice-President, and, as Americans, we have cause to be proud that we could put in that office an American of

that type as a representative of the United States.  
[Applause.]

Gentlemen, I am asked to speak to the toast of "The State." Now, the State is merely the aggregate of the people of the State, and the State of New-York is what we are proud to think it, because we have in it a good many citizens of the type that I meet here to-night. [Laughter and applause.] I have a certain ancestral right to come before you. Your President was just mentioning to me how he joined the Chamber of Commerce at about the time my father did and Mr. WILLIAM E. DODGE, and one or two others who were connected with them at that time. One of your first presidents—one of your first predecessors, Mr. JESUP—was Mrs. ROOSEVELT'S grandfather, old ISAAC CAROW, and you will find his picture among your archives. There is nothing which impressed me more in dealing with the government of the State during the last year than two things. In the first place the need of the disinterested service of men who are not in political life; and, in the next place, the readiness with which that disinterested service is rendered. It is impossible that the public men, that your legislators or your executives can, by themselves unaided, render you all the service that you have a right to expect. We must rely not merely upon keeping in touch with you, but upon the active assistance of these among you who have become acquainted with the different problems to be solved.

To-night I see before me more than one man who with absolutely no thought of reward, has done work of the utmost value for the State. Take the

question with which you are, of course, pecuniarily concerned, the question of the State's commercial interests as affected both by the commercial facilities here in what is not only the great port of the State, but the great port of the nation, and as affected by the State's waterways. When I came to deal with that, I found that I could not get what I wanted from any public official, because, I regret to say, it is not the policy of our commonwealth to provide remuneration in our greatest offices sufficient to attract the highest type of business talent. Sometime or other the State is going to realize that you always find difficulty in getting a \$50,000 man for a \$5,000 job. [Laughter.]

I mean for what is *paid* as a \$5,000 job, and especially if the job itself is a \$100,000 job, as regards the quantity and quality of the skill demanding it. I found that I had to make a frank appeal to the simple sense of civic duty in very busy, very able men, to make good this defect of our State Constitution. I had to ask a Committee of citizens to turn in and help me in looking over the whole question of the future canal policy of the State, to find out whether or not it was worth while to keep the canals, and whether, if it was worth while, in what form we should keep them. I take this chance, speaking to a representative gathering of the commercial interests of New-York City, of acknowledging our profound indebtedness to the five men, General FRANK GREENE, Mr. WITHERBEE, Mr. GEORGE E. GREEN, Major SYMONS and Mr. SCATCHERD, of Buffalo, who, at a great pecuniary loss, at the cost of great personal inconvenience, gave up a large part of their summer to going into the question, with the

certainty that whatever conclusion they reached would be violently disputed by a part of their fellow-citizens, and that they would be fortunate if they escaped without their motives being maligned. [Laughter.] They faced all that and they put me under an obligation which I am wholly unable to repay, save in the rather empty way of acknowledging it as sincerely and freely as I do to-night. [Applause.] When I came to deal with the school system of the State, there again I had to ask five men, men of affairs, men who were already busy doing their own work, to undertake a disagreeable task, the doing of which, if undertaken at all, would redound to no personal advantage to the men who undertook it; and to them, too, I would like to express my sincerest acknowledgment. So it has been all through. The State cannot go on, we cannot do our work, save by the assistance of such men as these, and particularly of such organized bodies as that which I am addressing. In a great popular government like ours, the weight of the individual by himself is comparatively small. It can be made effective only by his combination with others. The best man here to-night cannot begin to speak with the authority with which the Chamber of Commerce speaks in its corporate capacity.

And to those of us who have the honor to be for the time being your representatives in public life, and who are very sincerely anxious to try to find out what is best to do to forward the material and the moral well-being of the State, there is more than you can imagine off-hand in the feeling that we have the right to turn to a body like this for well considered action on any

problem that comes up affecting the well-being of the State.

I do not say merely the material well-being. The reason that it is a peculiar pleasure to address you is because, in speaking to you to-night—you, the men who are peculiarly connected with the great material interests of this City—I also speak to so many men who are foremost in furthering the moral welfare of the City. I think one often becomes very indignant at certain stock accusations brought against all men of means, all men of large wealth. You all know that one of the favorite accusations brought against not only men of means but legislators, is of unduly favoring corporate wealth. Now, after considerable experience up there in Albany, first of all for three years in the Legislature and now as Governor, I wish to say that I have had to work quite as hard to prevent corporate wealth from being blackmailed as I have worked against seeing anything improper done for it. [Applause.] And now let me add that, that the man who is loudest in indiscriminate denunciation of all corporations and of all forms of wealth on the stump before election, is very often the exact man who, after election, can be found doing what he should not do for the identical corporations that he has denounced. [Laughter and applause.]

Understand me. Do not think that I for one moment say that wrongs have not been committed by corporations. They have been, and where they have been committed I will stand just as far to the front as I can in seeing them remedied. [Applause.] Those of you who have followed, with whatever feelings, my

course in reference to the Franchise Tax Bill will probably believe that I am telling you what the facts are. But what impresses me more and more the more I have to deal with public questions is, that if you are going to have sound political development, if you are going to have a healthy political life, you cannot afford to take any stand which shall divide men according to their wealth or lack of wealth, according to their being in one business or one occupation or another; that you have got to have implanted in you that spirit of fellow feeling, of sympathy in its largest sense, which will make you judge each man on his worth as a man and the actions of each man according to those actions. The minute you get any man who goes into public life claiming to be against a certain class, with that as his stock in trade, you have got a man who is not merely dangerous to that class, but dangerous to the community as a whole. [Applause.] It is healthy to have political lines vertical so that banker is against banker, bricklayer against bricklayer, and so on, according to their conception of the needs of the country. It is absolutely unhealthy when you have the line horizontal so that the bricklayer is against the banker; so that one class is against another. [Applause.] And I will tell you why it is unhealthy. The experience of the past has been, from the days of the Great Republics of antiquity, through the days of the Mediæval Italian Republics, down to our own time, that the minute you get men who divide on the lines of class, of caste, each man substitutes loyalty to the class as the type virtue in place of loyalty to the ideal, loyalty to those virtues which

go to make up the welfare of the State as a whole. [Applause.] And that has two effects: In the first place, it makes him feel that just so far as he is loyal as a class he must be disloyal to the rest of the community; and, in the next place, it implants in him that moral twist which is absolutely sure to make him not merely disloyal to the community as a whole, but disloyal to the very class itself when the occasion arises. Let me tell you a very homely personal anecdote. Sometime ago I followed the business of a ranchman out in the West, out in a part of the country where there were no fences and the cowboy and the branding iron took their place. There the breeding herds are kept up by branding each calf with the brand of the cow that it followed, and if the round-up passes by a calf, next year, it is what they call a Maverick, and of course, unbranded. Mavericks have produced not merely race but county wars in different sections of the country—in our more youthful, bouyant days. In my time, the range law was that the Maverick should be branded with the brand of the ranch or range on which it was found. One summer out there I had hired a new cow puncher, and he and I were riding in across the range when we struck a Maverick, and he got out his rope and threw it, and we started to brand it. I said to him, knowing the range we were on, "It is the Thistle brand." He said, "All right, Boss; I know my business;" and, in a minute or two, I said, "Wait a moment, you are putting on my brand." He said, "Oh, yes; I always put on the boss's brand." [Laughter.] I said, "Oh, all right. Now you go back to the ranch and get your time." He said, "What is that



for? I was putting on your brand." I said, "Yes, my friend, but if you steal for me you will steal from me."

Now, there is a profound philosophic truth in that ; and it applies to a good deal more than the cow business. When you get the public man who will do what he ought not to do for you, he will do it against you just as soon as it suits his self-interest. [Applause.]

If there is one quality of which more than another I feel that we in America should beware, it is that quality which is sometimes euphemistically known as "smartness," by which we are all too apt to mean ability wholly disconnected with conscience. We all of us know instances of the man who succeeds in business, or the man who succeeds in politics, of whom some one says when you object that he is a rather shady character—"Oh, yes, but I tell you he is smart." Don't think that I am apologizing for the fool. I don't. I don't care for the fool. I don't even care for the good fool. I have had too much difficulty with him at times. [Applause and laughter.] Now, gentlemen, the unfortunate consequence of that remark will be that to-morrow I shall receive indignant letters from certain friends asking why I have attacked them. [Laughter.] We don't want the fool. We cannot afford to have him, but just as little, even less, can we afford to tolerate the able knave. You have got to have ability, but you have got to have honesty with it ; without it ability is simply a curse to the community. [Applause.] And the sooner that we make it felt by the crushing weight of public opinion that we give no quarter to the knave, and least of all to the knave that

succeeds, the sooner we shall put this country up to the standard of statesmanship where we have a right to expect that the country shall be put. [Applause.]

And it makes but little difference whether the knave frankly plays his own game, or, in even more dangerous guise, appears, for his own purposes, as playing the game of a certain class and asking them to advance him, because they think it will be for their interest and against the interests of another class.

I feel as though my toast, in a measure, overlapped the toast to which my friend, Ex-Speaker REED [applause] has to respond ; because his toast is the "gold standard," in other words, honest money ; in other words, one phase of honesty. Fundamentally, all the phases are the same ; and if there is one thing for which the State of New-York must stand and does stand, it is honesty. Honesty in finance, honesty in business, [applause,] and just as soon as you can make our people wake up and realize what their duty is and where their real interest is—honesty in every form of political life as well. [Great applause.]



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