

COLONEL WOULD GIVE VOTE TO WOMEN NOW

Says War Has Brought the Day
Nearer When They Shall
Receive the Ballot.

HOPES AMERICA WILL LEAD

Roosevelt Denounces "Shrinking
Sisterhood and Bleating Broth-
erhood, the Pacifists."

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OYSTER BAY, L. I., Sept. 5.—Colonel Theodore Roosevelt opened the 1917 suffrage campaign in New York at a meeting at his home, Sagamore Hill, today, where he addressed about 500 persons, guests of the Colonel and the New York State Woman Suffrage Party. His speech was on the general subject, "Suffrage and the War," and the Colonel divided his attention impartially between urging votes for the women and heaping invectives on the heads of that "shrinking sisterhood and bleating brotherhood, the pacifists."

The Colonel said that he believed the war brought the day nearer in every country when women should be given the same political rights as the men, because in each warring nation the woman force has had to be put squarely behind the man force to carry on the struggle. He said in part:

"Next to the woman who is the good wife and mother, I put the man who will fight and work for the home. If any community does not contain as its average type of citizen the good mother and the hard-working man who will fight when it is necessary, then that community is on the down grade, and no other form of activity and no other attribute will atone for the loss of those three vital attributes. I do not ask the ballot for woman as a favor. I say that it should be given to her as a right; that it is her right to have the ballot. People say that if women are given the ballot they will fail to perform their other duties. I notice that the average man who is most apt to say that is the individual who is not particularly of the duty-performing type himself.

"We have heard a good deal about the conscientious objector to serving in the war. Nineteen times out of twenty the conscientious objector is simply afraid or else he is lazy, but in the twentieth case, where the man is a conscientious objector, it is where he won't do anything to serve the country. If his conscience bothers him I would not do anything to interfere with his conscience, but I would understand that my conscience forbids him to vote in the country that my sons have to help save. I would hate to see the woman who does not raise her boy to be a soldier, but I hate to see the boy get the vote if he does not want to be a soldier. I hold that in each case the right to vote should be co-

related with the performance of full duty toward the State."

"Again, people have said to me that we must not have women vote because they would all be pacifists. The Lord knows I despise a pacifist. And I have made no special effort to dissemble my feelings about that. But I have failed to notice that among them the shirking sisterhood of pacifists outnumbers the bleating brotherhood of pacifists. This white rabbit special that has been going around the country has not found a place for the soles of its feet to rest. It was perfectly impartial—it contained both sexes. Of course when we look at things rightly, we will hold that no one can be called a patriot unless he or she will perform any vital service that the nation needs, and there can be no more vital service than that of self-defense. The pacifist who won't fight for the nation is entitled to precisely the respect, and no more, that the man is entitled to who won't fight if his wife is slapped, or try to rescue his daughter from the white slaver. He should defend one exactly as he should defend the other, and to no further extent.

"On general grounds, I have absolutely no question that suffrage must come, as a matter of right, if we are to continue our democratic experiment of Government—it must come. Now for the special needs created by this war; one of the curious things of this war is that it has brought much nearer the day when every country participating in it and every country adjacent to the participating countries—much nearer the day when women will be given political rights, just as men are given them, because it has been proved by the actual event that, in this, the greatest and most terrible war of history, the war in which the greatest demands have been made, the whole woman force of each country has had to be put squarely behind the whole man-force of that country."

"Now let us make a beginning.

"Let the United States as its first act of leadership in the war, as its first act of leadership in planning for the immense social and industrial reconstruction which is to follow, let the United States as a matter of right and justice take the lead and in this country put the women in fact on a level with the men by saying that every woman who does her duty shall stand at the ballot box exactly as every man who does his duty is entitled to stand, and shall exercise the privilege of a free man, the privilege of voting, a privilege which should be granted neither to a man nor to a woman who fails in the performance of duty, and which should be withheld neither from the man nor the woman who performs the duty allotted to him or her in peace or in war."

The suffragists present were headed by Mrs. Norman DeR. Whitehouse, State Chairman of the party. There were a number of persons present who did not favor suffrage, but who had been invited in the hope that the words of the Colonel might incline them to become supporters of the cause.