

THE CANDIDACY OF MR. TAFT

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Seven years ago *The Outlook* had the pleasure of printing an article on William H. Taft written by Mr. Roosevelt when he was Vice-President of the United States. That Mr. Taft has carried out Mr. Roosevelt's prediction then made that he would "meet crisis after crisis with courage, coolness, strength, and judgment" is affirmed in the following letter just made public by the President. It should be explained that the letter of Mr. Kohrs to which the President replies was called forth by the statement of Mr. Bryan that he is the President's heir and natural successor. Mr. Kohrs is an old-time Montana cattleman. He and the President came into close relationship more than twenty years ago when they were both members of the Montana Stock Growers' Association. The intimacy has been kept up ever since. Mr. Kohrs is one of the pioneer citizens of the Northern Rocky Mountain region, and has taken a leading part in its great development—THE EDITORS.

Oyster Bay, N. Y.,
September, 9, 1908.

My dear Mr. Kohrs :

I have received your letter about the candidacy of Mr. Taft, the man who I feel is in an especial sense the representative of all that in which I most believe in political life.

Every good citizen should desire to see both prosperity and justice, prosperity and fair and righteous dealing as between man and man, obtain permanently in this great republic. As a people we are justly proud of our business industry, of our energy and intelligence in our work; and it is entirely right that we should ask ourselves as to any given course of conduct, "Will it be profitable?" But it is also no less emphatically true that the bulk of our people, the plain people who found in Abraham Lincoln their especial champion and spokesman, regard the question, "Is this morally right?" as even more important than the question, "Is this profitable?" when applied to any given course of conduct. Indeed, in the long run our people are sure to find that in all dealings, alike in the business and the political world, what is really profitable is that which is morally right. The last few years have seen a great awakening of the public conscience and the growth of a stern determination to do away with corruption and unfair dealing, political, economic, social. It is urgently necessary that this great reform movement should go on. But no reform movement is healthy if it goes on by spasms; if it is marked by periods of frenzied advance, followed, as such peri-

ods of frenzied advance must always be followed, by equally violent periods of reaction. The revolutionary and the reactionary really play into one another's hands to the extent that each by his excesses necessarily tends to arouse such disgust, such a feeling of revolt, in the minds of quiet people, as temporarily to restore the other to power. To permit the direction of our public affairs to fall alternately into the hands of revolutionaries and reactionaries, of the extreme radicals of unrest and of the bigoted conservatives who recognize no wrongs to remedy, would merely mean that the Nation had embarked on a feverish course of violent oscillation which would be fraught with great temporary trouble, and would produce no adequate good in the end.

The true friend of reform, the true foe of abuses, is the man who steadily perseveres in righting wrongs, in warring against abuses, but whose character and training are such that he never promises what he cannot perform, that he always a little more than makes good what he does promise, and that, while steadily advancing, he never permits himself to be led into foolish excesses which would damage the very cause he champions. In Mr. Taft we have a man who combines all of these qualities to a degree which no other man in our public life since the Civil War has surpassed. To a flaming hatred of injustice, to a scorn of all that is base and mean, to a hearty sympathy with the oppressed, he unites entire disinterestedness, courage both moral and physical of the very highest

type, and a kindly generosity of nature which makes him feel that all of his fellow-countrymen are in very truth his friends and brothers, that their interests are his, and that all his great qualities are to be spent with lavish freedom in their service. The honest man of means, the honest and law-abiding business man, can feel safe in his hands because of the very fact that the dishonest man of great wealth, the man who swindles or robs his fellows, would not so much as dare to defend his evil-doing in Mr. Taft's presence. The honest wage-worker, the honest laboring man, the honest farmer, the honest mechanic or small trader, or man of small means, can feel that in a peculiar sense Mr. Taft will be his representative because of the very fact that he has the same scorn for the demagogue that he has for the corruptionist, and that he would front threats of personal violence from a mob with the unquailing and lofty indifference with which he would front the bitter anger of the wealthiest and most powerful corporations. Broad though his sympathies are, there is in him not the slightest tinge of weakness. No consideration of personal interest, any more than of fear for his personal safety, could make him swerve a hair's breadth from the course which he regards as right and in the interest of the whole people.

I have naturally a peculiar interest in the success of Mr. Taft, and in seeing him backed by a majority in both houses of Congress which will heartily support his policies. For the last ten years, while I have been Governor of New York and President, I have been thrown into the closest intimacy with him, and he and I have, on every essential point, stood in heartiest agreement, shoulder to shoulder. We have the same views as to what is demanded by the National interest and honor, both within our own borders, and as regards the relations of this Nation with other nations. There is no fight for decency and fair dealing which I have waged, in which I have not had his heartiest and most effective sympathy and support, and the policies for which I stand are his policies as much as mine.

It is not possible in the space of this

letter to discuss all the many and infinitely varied questions of moment with which Mr. Taft as President would have to deal; let him be judged by what he has himself done, and by what the administration, in which he has played so conspicuous a part, has done. But, to illustrate just what his attitude is, let me touch on two matters now prominent in the public mind.

Mr. Taft can be trusted to exact justice from the railroads for the very reason that he can be trusted to do justice to the railroads. The railroads are the chief instruments of inter-State commerce in the country, and they can neither be held to a proper accountability on the one hand nor given proper protection on the other, save by the affirmative action of the Federal Government. The law as laid down by the Federal courts clearly shows that the States have not and cannot devise laws adequate to meet the problems caused by the great growth of the railroads doing an inter-State commerce business, for more than four-fifths of the business of the railroads is inter-State, and under the Constitution of the United States only the Federal Government can exercise control thereover. It is absolutely necessary that this control should be affirmative and thoroughgoing. All inter-State business carried on by the great corporations should, in the interest of the whole people, be far more closely supervised than at present by the National Government; but this is especially true of the railroads, which cannot exist at all save by the exercise of powers granted them on behalf of the people, and which, therefore, should be held to a peculiar accountability to the people. It is in the interest of the people that they should not be permitted to do injustice; and it is no less to the interest of the people that they should not suffer injustice. Their prime purpose is to carry the commodities of the farmers and the business men; they could not be built save for the money contributed to them by their shareholders; they could not be run at all save for the money paid out in wages to the railroad employees; and, finally, they could not be run judiciously, or profitably to any

one, were it not for the employment by them of some masterful guiding intelligence, whether of one man or of a group of men.

There are, therefore, several sets of interests to be considered. Each must receive proper consideration, and when any one of them selfishly demands exclusive consideration the demand must be refused. Along certain lines all of these groups have the same interests. It is to the interest of shipper, farmer, wage-worker, business man, honest shareholder, and honest manager alike that there should be economy, honesty, intelligence, and fair treatment of all. To put an effective stop to stock-watering would be a benefit to everybody except the swindlers who profit by stock-watering; it would benefit the honest shareholder because honest investments would not be brought into competition with mere paper; it would benefit the wage-worker because when the money earned does not have to go to paying interest on watered capital, more of it is left, out of which to pay wages; it would benefit the shipper because when only honest stockholders have to be paid interest, rates need not be improperly raised; it would benefit the public because there would be ample money with which to give efficient service. Similarly, the prevention of favoritism among shippers does no damage to any one who is honest, and confers great good upon the smaller business man and the farmer, whom it relieves of oppression. Again, such supervision of accounts and management as will prevent crookedness and oppression works good, directly or indirectly, to all honest people. Therefore everything that can be done along all these lines should be done; and no man's legitimate interest would thereby be hurt. But after this point has been reached great care must be exercised not to work injustice to one class in the effort to show favor to another class; and each class naturally tends to remember only its own needs. The stockholders must receive an ample return on their investments, or the railroads cannot be built and successfully maintained; and the rates to shippers and the wages to employees, from the highest to the lowest,

must all be conditioned upon this fact. On the other hand, in a public service corporation we have no right to allow such excessive profits as will necessitate rates being unduly high and wages unduly low. Again, while in all proper ways rates must be kept low, we must always remember that we have no right and no justification to reduce them when the result is the reduction of the wages of the great army of railroad men. A fair working arrangement must be devised according to the needs of the several cases, so that profits, wages, and rates shall each be reasonable with reference to the other two—and in wages I include the properly large amounts which should always be paid to those whose masterful ability is required for the successful direction of great enterprises. Combinations which favor such an equitable arrangement should themselves be favored and not forbidden by law; although they should be strictly supervised by the Government through the Inter-State Commerce Commission, which should have the power of passing summarily upon not only the question of the reduction but the raising of rates.

This railroad problem is itself one of the phases of one of the greatest and most intricate problems of our civilization; for its proper solution we need not merely honesty and courage, but judgment, good sense, and entire fair-mindedness. Demagoguery in such a matter is as certain to work evil as corruption itself. The man who promises to raise the wages of railroad employees to the highest point and at the same time to reduce rates to the lowest point is promising what neither he nor anyone else can perform; and if the effort to perform it were attempted, disaster would result to both shipper and wage-worker, and ruin to the business interests of the country. The man to trust in such a matter as this is the man who, like Judge Taft, does not promise too much, but who could not be swayed from the path of duty by any argument, by any consideration; who will wage relentless war on the successful wrongdoer among railroad men as among all other men; who will do all that can be done to secure legitimately low rates to shippers and absolute evenness among

the rates thus secured; but who will neither promise nor attempt to secure rates so low that the wage-earner would lose his earnings and the shareholder, whose money built the road, his profits. He will not favor a ruinous experiment like government ownership of railways; he will stand against any kind of confiscation of honestly acquired property; but he will work effectively for the most efficient type of government supervision and control of railways, so as to secure just and fair treatment of the people as a whole.

What is here said as to his attitude on the railway question applies to the whole question of the trusts. He will promise nothing on this subject unless he firmly believes he can make his promise good. He will go into no chimerical movement to destroy all great business combinations; for this can only be done by destroying all modern business; but he will in practical fashion do everything possible to secure such efficient control, on behalf of the people as a whole, over these great combinations as will deprive them of the power to work evil. Mr. Taft's decision in the Addystone Pipe Line case while on the bench is proof, by deeds not by words, of the far-sighted wisdom with which he serves the interests of the whole people, even when those of the most powerful corporations are hostile thereto.

If there is one body of men more than another whose support I feel I have a right to challenge on behalf of Secretary Taft, it is the body of wage-workers of the country. A stancher friend, a fairer and truer representative, they cannot find within the borders of the United States. He will do everything in his power for them except to do that which is wrong; he will do wrong for no man, and therefore can be trusted by all men. During the ten years of my intimate acquaintance with him, since I have myself, as Governor and President, been obliged to deal practically with labor problems, he has been one of the men upon whose judgment and aid I could always rely in doing everything possible for the cause of the wage-worker, of the man who works with his hands, or with both hands and head.

Mr. Taft has been attacked because of the injunctions he delivered while on the bench. I am content to rest his case on these very injunctions; I maintain that they show why all our people should be grateful to him and should feel it safe to intrust their dearest interests to him. Most assuredly he never has yielded and never will yield to threat or pressure of any sort, as little if it comes from labor as if it comes from capital; he will no more tolerate the violence of a mob than the corruption and oppression and arrogance of a corporation or of a wealthy man. He will not consent to limit the power of the courts to put a stop to wrong-doing wherever found. This very fact should make the labor people feel a peculiar confidence in him. He has incurred the bitter hostility of foolish and bigoted reactionaries by his frank criticism of the abuse of the power of injunction in labor disputes, and he is pledged to do all he can to put a stop to the abuses in the exercise of the power of injunction. He will never promise anything that he will not do all in his power to perform. He can always be trusted to do a little better than his word, and the fact that before election he will not promise the impossible is in itself a guaranty that after election all that is possible will be done.

His record as a judge makes the whole country his debtor. His actions and decisions are part of the great traditions of the bench. They guaranteed and set forth in striking fashion the rights of the general public as against the selfish interests of any class, whether of capitalists or of laborers. They set forth and stand by the rights of the wage-workers to organize and to strike, as unequivocally as they set forth and stand by the doctrine that no conduct will be tolerated that would spell destruction to the Nation as a whole. As for the attack upon his injunctions in labor disputes, made while he was on the bench, I ask that the injunctions be carefully examined. I ask that every responsible and fair-minded labor leader, every responsible and fair-minded member of a labor organization, read these injunctions for himself. If he will do so, instead of condemning them he will heartily approve of them.

and will recognize this further astonishing fact, that the principles laid down by Judge Taft in these very injunctions, which laboring people are asked to condemn, are themselves the very principles which are now embodied in the laws or practices of every responsible labor organization. No responsible organization would now hesitate to condemn the abuses against which Judge Taft's injunctions were aimed. The principles which he therein so wisely and fearlessly laid down serve as a charter of liberty for all of us, for wage-workers, for employers, for the general public; for they rest on the principle of fair dealing for all, of even-handed justice for all. They mark the judge who rendered them as standing for the rights of the whole people; as far as daylight is from darkness, so far is such a judge from the time-server, the truckler to the mob, or the cringing tool of great, corrupt and corrupting corporations. Judge Taft on the bench—as since, in the Philippines, in Panama, in Cuba, in the War Department—showed himself to be a wise, a fearless, and an upright servant of the whole people, whose services to the whole people were beyond all price. Moreover, let all good citizens remember that he rendered these services, not when it was easy to do so, but when lawless violence was threatened, when malice, domestic and civic disturbance threatened the whole fabric of our government and of civilization; his actions showed not only the highest kind of moral courage, but of physical courage as well, for his life was freely and violently threatened.

Let all fair-minded men, wage-workers and capitalists alike, consider yet another fact. In one of his decisions upon the bench Judge Taft upheld in the strongest fashion, and for the first time gave full vitality to, the principle of the employers' liability for injuries done workmen. This was before any National law on the subject was enacted. Judge Taft's sense of right, his indignation against oppression in any form, against any attitude that is not fair and just, drove him to take a position which was violently condemned by short-sighted capitalists and employers of labor, which was so far in advance of the time that it

was not generally upheld by the State courts, but which we are now embodying in the law of the land. Judge Taft was a leader, a pioneer, while on the bench, in the effort to get justice for the wage-worker, in jealous championship of his rights; and all upright and far-sighted laboring men should hold it to his credit that at the same time he fearlessly stood against the abuses of labor, just as he fearlessly stood against the abuses of capital. If elected, he has shown by his deeds that he will be President of no class, but of the people as a whole; he can be trusted to stand stoutly against the two real enemies of our democracy—against the man who, to please one class, would undermine the whole foundation of orderly liberty, and against the man who in the interest of another class would secure business prosperity by sacrificing every right of the working people.

I have striven as President to champion in every proper way the interests of the wage-workers; for I regard the wage-worker, excepting only the farmer, the tiller of the soil, as the man whose well-being is most essential to the healthy growth of this great Nation. I would for no consideration advise the wage-worker to do what I thought was against his interest. I ask his support for Mr. Taft exactly as I ask such support from every far-sighted and right-thinking American citizen; because I believe with all my heart that nowhere within the borders of our great country can there be found another man who will as vigilantly and efficiently as Mr. Taft support the rights of the workingman as he will the rights of every man who in good faith strives to do his duty as an American citizen. He will protect the just rights of both rich and poor, and he will war relentlessly against lawlessness and injustice whether exercised on behalf of property or of labor.

On the bench Judge Taft showed the two qualities which make a great judge; wisdom and moral courage. They are also the two qualities which make a great President.

Sincerely yours,
THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

Mr. Conrad Kohrs,
Helena, Montana.

TURKEY AND THE CONSTITUTION

BY JAMES L. BARTON

Corresponding Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions

WHAT are some of the general conditions in Turkey which led directly to the uprising in Macedonia soon after the 20th of July, 1908, resulting in the revival of the Constitution for all Turkey which had remained inactive since 1877? Sultan Hamid II has been an absolute ruler. His pride has centered in his complete personal mastery over every department of government and all officials, both civil and military. As he advanced in years he became increasingly suspicious of every one holding office or occupying a position of influence. He seemed so morbidly afraid of a popular uprising that any mention of an Armenian revolution or reference to a constitutional government or suggestion of a Young or New Turkey party threw him into a state of nervous panic. In order to protect his own person, to guard his administration from corruption by men who thought in terms of modern government, and to suppress any and all movements toward reform, he gradually built up about him a cumbersome, cruel, and expensive system of espionage. Every official, from the Grand Vizier at the Porte to the postmaster in a remote inland village, was watched and reported upon. One official was directed to make secret reports upon a colleague; and all men of wealth and consequent influence, and especially all who had received a degree of modern education, were always under sleepless surveillance from the watch-dogs of the palace.

No one knows how many of these men were engaged in the secret service, but there were undoubtedly many thousands. Some drew salaries of large proportion, while others were paid according to the service rendered. These spies well knew that they, too, were under observation by others who had been commissioned to see that they were loyal to their chief. The gates of the foreign embassies were guarded, and the names of all Ottoman subjects who

entered them were reported to the police. Everywhere these sleuth-hounds of Yildiz were doing their best to justify their appointment, and, if possible, to secure a rise in salary or a handsome bonus. It is reported that this large corps of secret service men were the only officials who received liberal pay, and who got it regularly, and in cash.

Through information thus obtained strange things took place. Of course there were never any hearings or trials. None were necessary when trusted spies had reported adversely. Groups of students in the Government schools disappeared, and the parents even did not dare ask a question. Men of wealth found themselves bundled off to Arabia in poverty, and officials in honor on one day were in exile, if not in their graves, on the next. The only thing certain about the life of an influential and intelligent Ottoman subject was his being under strict surveillance by those who were mainly concerned to satisfy their chief of their own efficiency.

During recent years the one horror of the Sultan has been the "Young Turks," which meant Turkish subjects who know about good government and are eager to see it tried in Turkey. All who were suspected of harboring such ideas were summarily treated. Many such have been banished into interior provinces such as Macedonia, Asia Minor, Armenia, and Syria. Some were given minor officers in their place of banishment, but all have been diligent in promoting their ideas. There is hardly a town of importance in Turkey to which one or more of these intelligent, thinking Ottoman subjects have not been exiled, and where they have not propagated their principles of reform as opportunity offered. This seed-sowing of modern ideas has been broadcast, and the seed has fallen into rich soil. During these years, secretly and in the dark, multitudes of Ottoman subjects have been studying the science of government with