

# Ben Daniels at "The Door of Hope"

Mr. Roosevelt recently nominated to be United States marshal for Arizona Ben Daniels, "Rough Rider." Soon after this nomination was made public it was alleged and admitted that Ben Daniels had served a term in the penitentiary on the charge of having stolen a mule from a government agency. Mr. Roosevelt wrote a letter to Senator Clark of Wyoming in support of Daniels' nomination. In that letter the president dwelt at length upon this man's career, saying "he was born and brought up in the west when it was a very wild west indeed;" also "he finally got in with a set of men of bad character and took part in the robbery under arms of a band of horses or mules from a government agency. The older criminals escaped, the younger man was captured, tried and convicted and served a term in the penitentiary."

Mr. Roosevelt urged Daniels' confirmation particularly in view of his good record since emerging from jail. The president declared: "A more gallant, more loyal and more trustworthy soldier never wore the United States uniform." Referring to Daniels' record during the Spanish-American war the president said:

"He was devoted to his comrades in sickness as he was indifferent to his own life in battle. He nursed his comrades when down with the fever with assiduous care, at the very time that he himself was so sick with the fever that he came right to death's door. In battle I repeatedly intrusted him with the performance of hazardous duty. For example, I intrusted him with the leadership of the sharpshooters, who were to lie all day in the jungle between the Spanish lines and ours so as to keep down their fire on our trenches. He was always at the front in any emergency, and his coolness was absolutely unshaken, either by day or by night, and when the fighting was over and the fatigue had been so great as to exhaust all but the very strongest, I would employ him, although a sick man, in conducting on foot the carts, containing the fever-struck men, whom we had to send to the fever hospitals in the rear, being certain that he would care in every way for those in his charge."

The senate confirmed Daniels' nomination. While it is true that in the appointment of Ben Daniels President Roosevelt took upon himself a great responsibility, who will say that "the door of hope" should have been closed upon Daniels because of his old sin? Of course "the door of hope" does not necessarily swing on political hinges. As a general proposition it may be safer for the public welfare that one who has sinned as Ben Daniels sinned be permitted to work out his salvation "in the cool, sequester'd vale of life." But it may be that the picture drawn by Mr. Roosevelt showing Ben Daniels at times bending over his sick and wounded comrades and ministering to their necessities, and at other times fighting faithfully in the front ranks in defense of the flag, is a better description of the real Daniels than is provided in the act for the commission of which he served a term in prison.

Most men who will tell the truth will admit that they have been guilty of things which they would very quickly insist do not provide a fair basis for judgment. In the language of the deaf juror in "The Resurrection" by Tolstoy: "There are none of us saints." If we were held accountable for every misstep it would be necessary for most of us to spend a lifetime upon our knees.

A British general, addressing John Wesley, said: "I never forgive." Promptly Wesley replied: "Then I hope, sir, you never sin." As a rule the man who is without mercy in his treatment of others most needs mercy for himself. "Mercy among the virtues is like the moon among the stars—not so sparkling and vivid as many, but dispensing a calm radiance that hallows the whole. It is the bow that rests upon the bosom of the cloud when the storm is past. It is the light that hovers above the judgment seat."

The chances are that Ben Daniels will make a creditable record in the office of United States marshal. No one questions his bravery. No one doubts his tenderness for those who suffer or his willingness to make sacrifices for them. Courage and tenderness are not found among men whose cases are hopeless. As most other men having with them a preponderance of good have recovered ground which, in many cases all unknown to the world, they have lost, so men who like Ben Daniels have fallen in full sight of the

world may yet have the opportunity of redeeming themselves in the critical eyes of society, even as they have always had the opportunity of redeeming themselves in their own consciousness.

There is a lesson for the old as well as for the young in that little verse familiar in the nursery:

"Mildly judge ye of each other,  
Be to condemnation slow  
For the best have many fallings  
And the worst some good can show.  
The sun itself has spots of darkness  
On its radiant front, they say,  
And the clock that never goeth  
Speaks correctly twice a day."

We have not been so particular in the selection of our public officials that one need get excited over the Daniels appointment. Ben seems to have reformed and to that extent he has the advantage of some of the men who have been elected and re-elected, appointed and reappointed to public office in this land of the free. Some very important offices have been filled and are yet occupied by men whose offenses compared with that of Daniels may be likened to the glare of a locomotive headlight alongside of a tallow dip. There have been United States senators and representatives who have persistently betrayed the public interests and the only instance where such as these have been held to account is in cases like those of the late Senator Mitchell and Senator Burton. Mitchell and Burton were poor and had lost prestige in financial circles. They won't permit Burton to occupy his seat in the senate, but Depew—who wrongfully acquired thousands where Burton wrongfully took pennies—is welcomed with open arms when he has the courage to show his face. And while Depew has better standing than Burton and the men of his class, there are men who, while having committed greater wrongs than Depew committed, stand higher than Depew. Aldrich, for instance, would disdain to resort to what is commonly called a theft; he might reject a retainer for his appearance for an individual or firm before a department; but, notoriously, he represents the Standard Oil interests on the floor of the United States senate. Aldrich is the stumbling block in every effort made to require at the hands of the Standard Oil or its allied interests justice for the people. And although Aldrich's skillful work has wrought to public interests greater damage in an hour than the cheaper efforts of Depew and Burton could accomplish in a lifetime, Aldrich moves in select circles where Burton is actually ostracised and where Depew's welcome is not quite so effusive as of yore.

If "the door of hope" in the political chamber is to be barred to the Daniels who have stolen mules and repented, it should not be open to the Aldrichs who oppress a patient people and remain defiant to the end.

There are many men in every state prison who are far less dangerous to society and who if free would be of far more service to the world than some of the men who have been honored with high office and some of the men who are admitted to the tea parties of the "400." We often hear that those who belong to "the criminal classes" must be restrained for the benefit of society. True, but what are "the criminal classes?" Commonly we mean the man who, raised in a criminal environment, takes to robbery and other forms of crime, and gives no recognition to the rights of property or of persons, and has no regard for the laws of God and the statutes of man. Such as these should, of course, be restrained. But what of the better educated man who, reared in wealth or grown to it early during his manhood years, hungers for more gold, and in the effort to accumulate violates laws human and divine, becomes blind to the picture of children made naked by his greed and deaf to the cries of women made hungry by his crimes? What of these men? Do they not properly belong to the criminal class? Should they not be restrained as the common thief is restrained and visited with the same unrelenting condemnation which society now gives to the lowly criminal?

In his book "The Jungle" Upton Sinclair tells awful stories of the packing of diseased meats for consumption among the American people. By other investigators these stories are substantially corroborated as, for instance, in The World's Work for May, in which Thomas H. McKee and Doctors Jaques and Hedges print the

result of their investigations in Packingtown.

The packers recently escaped conviction on a criminal charge by resorting to a technicality, and they are today openly violating the laws of the land. Are they entitled to move in circles from which the common malefactor is barred? Do they not in fact belong to the front rank of "the criminal classes?"

In an eastern city several years ago efforts were made to purify the water supply. The accomplishment of these efforts was defeated by political bosses who were anxious to fill their own pockets with ill gotten gains. For a period of eighteen months this all important work was delayed and during that period 1,200 men, women and children died from drinking impure water. They were the victims of greed. Do the men responsible for this crime belong to "the criminal classes?"

It is true that for the protection of society crime in every degree should be vigorously condemned. But the world will grow better in proportion to the charity shown not for persistent sin but for penitent sinners. We may fool some of our neighbors, but we can not fool ourselves. Fighting against error within ourselves we come to understand the weaknesses of our fellows. Sympathetic with their struggles we gain strength for our own. Honest enough to condemn in a Daniels the theft of a mule, we should be brave enough to condemn in a Rockefeller the rape of a nation.

"There are none of us saints." But men have plundered their fellows on the highway who would scorn to profit through the sale of diseased meat. Men have stolen mules from government corrals who would not think of poisoning the water supply of a great city. And whatever the fault of Ben Daniels may have been, society has less to fear at the hands of such as he than at the hands of the well dressed rogue, who posing as the "defender of national honor" trafficks in the nation's virtue, and who, pretending to be an intelligent patriot, is, in truth, an artistic plunderer.

RICHARD L. METCALFE.

## REVISE CONGRESS

Representative Burlison of Texas, addressing the New England Cotton Manufacturers' association, said: "The way to revise the tariff is to revise congress." That is worthy of preservation in every well regulated scrap book.

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