

THE UPLIFT OF NATIONS

Address Delivered by Theodore Roosevelt Before the University of Berlin.

I very highly appreciate the chance to address the University of Berlin in the year that closes the first century of its existence. It is difficult for you in the Old World to appreciate the feelings of a man who comes from a nation still in the making to a country with an immortal historic past; and especially is this the case when that country, with its ancient past behind it, yet looks with proud confidence into the future, and in the present shows all the bounding vigor of lusty youth. Such is the case with Germany. More than a thousand years have passed since the Roman Empire of the West became in fact a German Empire. Throughout medieval times the empire and the Papacy were the two central features in the history of the Continent. With the Ottos and the Henrys began the slow rise of that Western life which has shaped modern Europe, and therefore ultimately the whole modern world. Their task was to bring the society and to keep it from crumbling to pieces. They were castle builders, city founders, road makers; they battled to bring order out of the seething turbulence around them; and at the same time they first beat back barbarism and then slowly wrested from it its possessions.

Conditions After Fall of Rome. After the downfall of Rome and the breaking in sunder of the Roman Empire, the first real crystallization of the forces that were working for a new uplift of civilization in Western Europe was round the Karling House, and, above all, round the great emperor, Karl the Great, the seat of whose empire was at Aachen. Under the Karlings the Arab and the Magyar, the driven back beyond the Pyrenees; the last of the old heathen Germans were forced into Christianity, and the Avars, wild hordes from the Asian steppes, who had long held tented dominion in Middle Europe, were utterly destroyed. With the breakup of the Karling Empire came chaos once more, and a fresh rush of savagery. Vikings from the frozen north and new hordes of outlandish riders from the steppes of the East, the Magyar and the Slav peoples as well, so that Europe began to take on a shape which we can recognize to-day. Since then the centuries have rolled by, with strange alternations of fortune, new well-nigh barren, and again great with German achievements in arms and in government, science and the arts. The center of power shifted hither and thither within German lands; the great House of Hohenzollern rose, the house which has at last seen Germany spring into a commanding position in the very forefront among the nations of mankind.

America's Debt to Germany. To this ancient land, with its glorious past and splendid present, to this land of many memories and of eager hopes, I come from a young nation, which is by blood akin to, and yet different from, each of the great nations of Middle and Western Europe, which has inherited or acquired much from each, but is changing and developing every inheritance and acquisition into something new and strange. The German strain in our blood is large, for almost from the beginning there has been a large German element among the successive waves of newcomers whose children's children have been and are being fused into the American nation, and I myself trace my stock to that which the Low Dutch stock which, raised Holland out of the North Sea. Moreover, we have taken from you, not only much of the blood that runs through our veins, but much of the thought that shapes our minds. For generations American scholars have looked to your universities, and, thanks to the wise foresight of your Empire, to the friendly connection between the two countries is now in every way closer than it has ever before.

Germany is pre-eminently a country in which the world movement of to-day in all of its multitudinous aspects is plainly visible. The life of this university during the period during which that movement has been felt throughout every continent, while its velocity has been constantly accelerating, so that the face of the world has changed, and is now changing, as never before. It is therefore fit and appropriate here to speak on this subject.

The Development of Man. When, in the slow procession of the ages, man was developed on this planet, the change worked by his appearance was at first slight. Further stages passed, while he groped and struggled by infinitesimal degrees upward through the lower grades of savagery; for the growth of that life force, advanced and complex, whatever its nature, changes more quickly than simple and less advanced forms. The life of savages changes and advances with extreme slowness, and groups of savages influence one another but little. The first rudimentary beginnings of that complex life of communities which we call civilization marked a period when man's civilization had been by far the most important creature on the planet. The history of the living world had become, in fact, the history of man, and therefore something totally different in kind as well as in degree from what it had been before. There are interesting analogies between what has gone on in the development of life generally and what has gone on in the development of human society, and these I shall discuss elsewhere. But the differences are profound and go to the root of things.

Throughout their early stages the movements of civilization—properly speaking, there was no one movement—were very slow, were local in space and were partial in the sense that each developed along but few lines. The numbers of years that covered these early stages were not recorded. They were the years that saw such extraordinary discoveries and inventions as fire, and the wheel, and the bow, and the domestication of animals. So local were these inventions that at the present day there are half-breed savage tribes, still fixed in the half bestial life of an infinitely remote past, who know none of these except the bow, and the discovery and use of fire may have marked, not the beginning of civilization, but the beginning of the savagery which separated man from brute.

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seats it was overwhelmed by a wave of barbarism from among those half-breed people from whom you and I, my hearers, trace our descent. In the south and east it was destroyed later, but far more thoroughly, by invaders of an utterly different type. Both conquests were of great importance, but it was the northern conquest which in its ultimate effects was by far the greatest importance.

Humanity in the Dark Ages. With the advent of the Dark Ages the movement, of course, ceased, and it did not being new for many centuries, while a thousand years passed before it was once more in full swing, so far as a European civilization, so far as the world civilization of to-day, is concerned. During all these centuries the civilized world, in our acceptance of the term, was occupied, as its chief task, in slowly climbing back to the position from which it had fallen after the age of the Antonines. Of course, a general statement like this must be accepted with qualifications. There is no hard and fast line between one age or period and another, and in no age is either progress or retrogression universal in all things. There were many points in which the Middle Ages, because of the simple fact that there were no barbarians, were able to do things which succeeded them has sunk below the level of the ages which saw such mighty masterpieces of poetry, of architecture—especially cathedral architecture—and of serene spiritual and forceful leadership, which they were unable to do. There was, however, a certain amount of violence, perhaps that of cruel injustice, and there was, so little heeded that the noble and daring spirits who sought it, especially in its scientific form, did so in deadly peril of the fagot and the halberd.

Islam's Power in Europe. During this period there were several very important extra-European movements, one or two of which deeply affected Europe. Islam arose and conquered far and wide, uniting fundamentally different races into a brotherhood of feeling which Christianity has never been able to effect. It produced a civilization of its own, brilliant and here and there useful, but hopelessly limited when compared with the civilization of which we ourselves are the heirs. The great created peoples of South-eastern and Eastern Asia, who have been the chief of the world we live in, and also an extraordinary increase in the power of utilizing the forces of nature. In both directions the advance has been very great during the last four or five centuries, and in both directions it has been with equal rapidity during the last century. After the great age of Rome had passed the boundaries of knowledge shrank, and in many cases it was not until well on our own times that her domain was once again pushed beyond the ancient landmarks. About the year 1500 A. D., Ptolemy's geographical knowledge of the world was not only regained, but was extended far beyond the ancient boundaries of the Nile, and this map was more accurate than any which we had as late as 1500 A. D. More was known of the physical world and more of the truth about the physical world was guessed at in the days of Ptolemy than was known until the days of the modern mercenary sailor. At the close of the Middle Ages the weapons were what they had always been—sword, shield, bow, spear—and any improvement in them was more than offset by the loss in knowledge of military organization, in the science of war and in military leadership since the days of Hannibal and Caesar.

Changes in Traffic Systems. A hundred years ago, when this university was founded, the methods of transportation did not differ from the essentials that we know of to-day. It was among the highly civilized nations of antiquity, travelers and merchandise went by land in wheeled vehicles or on beasts of burden, and by sea in boats propelled by sails or by oars; and news was conveyed as it always had been conveyed. What improvements there had been had been in the steam engine and not in the methods of transportation. In some respects there had been retrogression rather than advance. There were many parts of Europe where the roads were certainly worse than the old Roman post roads; and the Mediterranean Sea, for instance, was by no means so well policed as in the days of the ancients. Navigation had advanced, but it was not a complete revolution; and the resulting immensely increased ease of communication has in its turn completely changed all the physical questions of human life. A voyage from Egypt to England was nearly as serious an affair in the eighteenth century as it is to-day. The sea was not materially improved. A graduate of your university to-day can go to mid-Asia or mid-Africa with far less consciousness of performing a feat of note than would have been the case a hundred years ago with a student who visited Sicily and Andalusia. Moreover, the invention and use of machinery worked a revolution in industry as great as the revolution in transportation; so that here again the difference between ancient and modern civilization is one not merely of degree but of kind. In many vital respects the huge modern city differs more from all preceding cities than does the city of the future from the city of the past.

Effect of Military Triumphs. In the first place, representatives of this civilization, by their conquest of space, were enabled to spread into all the practically vacant continents, while at the same time, by their triumphs in organization and mechanical invention, they acquired an unheard of military superiority as compared with their former rivals. This was the primary cause of the further fact that for the first time there is really something that approaches a world civilization, a world movement. The spread of the European peoples since the days of Ferdinand the Catholic and Ivan the Terrible has been across every sea and over every continent. In places the conquests have been of a more or less purely political character, and in many of the peoples, and new commonwealths have sprung up in which the people are entirely or mainly of European blood. This is what happened in the temperate and sub-tropical regions of the Western Hemisphere, in Australia, in portions of Northern Asia and Southern Africa. In other places the conquests have been of a more or less purely political character, and in many of the peoples, and new commonwealths have sprung up in which the people are entirely or mainly of European blood. This is what happened in the temperate and sub-tropical regions of the Western Hemisphere, in Australia, in portions of Northern Asia and Southern Africa. In other places the conquests have been of a more or less purely political character, and in many of the peoples, and new commonwealths have sprung up in which the people are entirely or mainly of European blood.

Outlook for Conquest of Air. Steam and electricity have given the race dominion over land and water such as it never had before; and now the conquest of the air is directly impending. As books preserve thought through time, so the telegraph and the telephone transmit it through the space they annihilate, and therefore minds are swayed by the same motives and have the same reactions of space and time which formerly forced each community to work in comparative isolation. It is the same with the body as with the brain. The machinery of the factory and the farm enormously multiplies bodily skill and vigor. Countless trained intelligences are at work to reach us in the same proportion as from the same motives, and at the same time. Taken as a whole, it was, even more than the Revolutionary War, a true citizens' fight, and the armies of Grant and Lee were as emphatically citizen armies as Athenian, Theban or Spartan armies in the great age of Greece or as a Roman army in the days of the republic.

Relations of Politics and Wealth. Another striking contrast in the course of modern civilization as compared with the later stages of the Graeco-Roman or classic civilization is to be found in the relations of wealth and politics. In classic times, as the civilization advanced toward its zenith, politics became a recognized means of accumulating great wealth. Caesar was again and again on the verge of bankruptcy; he spent an enormous fortune, and he recouped himself by the money which he made out of his political-military career. Augustus established imperial Rome on firm foundations by the use he made of the huge fortunes he had acquired by plunder. What a contrast to the same motives in the Revolutionary War! There were few fortunes in ancient days, but the immense majority of the Greeks and the Romans as their civilization culminated accepted moneymaking on a large scale as one of the incidents of a successful public career.

A Higher View in Politics. Now all of this is in sharp contrast to what has happened within the last two or three centuries. During this time there has been a steady growth away from the theory that moneymaking is permissible in an honorable public career. In the respect the standards have been constantly elevated, and during which statesmen had no hesitation in using three centuries or two centuries ago,

and which did not seriously hurt a public career even a century ago, are now utterly impossible. Wealthy men still exercise a large and sometimes an improper influence in politics, but it is likely to be an indirect influence; and in the advanced stages of the civilization, the influence of the public is increasing. It limits the cost—which is Economy. It limits the profit—which is Equivalence. It limits the time—which is Efficiency. Economy means a reasonable cost. Equivalence means dollar for dollar. Efficiency means speed of construction. One without the other may mean anything. The three together make for the proper ratio of income.

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Fighting Power a Necessary Quality. There are plenty of scientific men whose hard arrogance, whose cynical materialism, whose dogmatic intolerance, put them on a level with the bigoted medieval ecclesiasticism which they denounce. Yet our debt to scientific men is incalculable, and our civilization of to-day would be a mere shadow if it had not been for the great masters of science during the last four centuries who never had a moment's rest from their work. They have not only done their part, but they have done it with a spirit which is a model for us to-day. They have not only done their part, but they have done it with a spirit which is a model for us to-day. They have not only done their part, but they have done it with a spirit which is a model for us to-day.

Passion Play Pictures. The little village of Oberammergau, Germany, has been the scene of "The Passion Play" each tenth year since 1663. During that year the community was struck by a terrible plague, and the inhabitants vowed that if Heaven would intervene they and their descendants forever would render the Play of the Passion every decade in perpetual gratitude. The coming summer the sacred drama will be given in all its beautiful form, and tourists from all over the earth will journey to the valley of Oberammergau to witness it. Every one is interested in it, and so The New-York Tribune has arranged to present FREE to its Sunday readers a series of handsome Oberammergau pictures in colors of scenes of Oberammergau and personages taking part in the play, beginning next Sunday, May 15, and continuing for several weeks. These pictures are of postcard size, arranged six on a sheet, and must not be confounded with the series of hand-colored photographs secured by the company. They include interesting views of the Passion Play theatre, scenes of the beautiful Oberammergau Valley and likenesses of the many varied and picturesque characters, including Christ and his saluted mother, Mary, and Judas and the other disciples, and the other various characters depicted in religious history. There is a great demand for the SUNDAY TRIBUNE interesting pictures. It is suggested, therefore, that orders for the Sunday paper be left well in advance with your newsdealer.