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Roosevelt, a Trustee.

The great evolutions in human history have been wrought out when, after long preparatory struggle or waiting, the mass of mankind within the given and affected area is magnetized into readiness for the event or series of events. The hope of patriots in this nation, that a notable uplift is to be achieved in the present epoch, is based upon the fact that the necessary preparatory period has already passed into our national experience; and the declaration for a square deal between the government and the people and the people and the corporations, was but the echo of the general purpose. Not all the strenuous energy of any executive could have been effective, except for the fact that the vast majority of the voters of the country were ready and anxious for better things. Wanting this thrill of expectancy and this gratified acceptance of a vigorous onslaught upon acknowledged evils, the extraordinary self-assertion which has characterized the policy of the President of the United States, would have aroused instant and effective opposition. It would have been regarded as a mere determination of arrogance; it would have been reprehended as an invasion of our constitutional safety; and, under some personalities, it might have led to impeachment.

But into the Presidential purpose has entered the might of the people's will. The insensate seizure of governmental prerogative and authority, as well as the effective confiscation in some instances, of the people's property by law-breaking corporations, had aroused such general and such steadfast feeling of indignation that some millions of citizens of the country—not heretofore in political affiliation with the President or in an attitude of personal admiration toward him—were glad to give their voice of commendation and their co-operation as citizens in his warfare against the powerful evils of the times.

It was a mighty meeting—that of a people already tempered and prepared by reformers, and a man in the Presidential office asserting his determination to effect reform. The president is therefore but the trustee and not the originator of the purpose for REFORM; and as such trustee he must be held to a strict accountability in the utilization and expenditure of the superlative force at his command. It will not be sufficient that he shall display the people's will in spectacular assaults upon the citadel of wrong. He must do more than this; he must invest the resolute insistence of his fellow citizens in a permanent civic righteousness, whose just application shall insure its perpetuity and whose present achievement of good shall give abiding assurance that the special form of evils, now to be corrected, will not recur in the life of the republic.

No one doubts the zeal; no one questions the dynamic force of the President when he declares for the square deal. Only here and there one questions his authority or the wisdom of its exercise, when he goes further than any of his predecessors in directing the other departments of government, in waging legislative and judicial warfare against those powerful aggregations which have grown up under or in avoidance of the laws. Just as the prodigious achievements of our civilization in its conquering of the world's commercial mastery dazzled the eyes of our people, blinding them to iniquitous methods which were being fastened upon our civic system; so, too, in the glory of the President's repeated avowal for a square deal, in which the people should attain their rights, there is little visible tendency to inquire into the impartiality with which he applies his chosen and forceful remedy

of personal direction. And yet as the day of reflection came concerning the methods by which commercial grandeur had been reached for the nation—but owned by the few to the oppression of the mass—so a time of earnest consideration is at hand, during which the presidential methods will be scrutinized with watchful eye, to see wherein the great good has been consciously or unconsciously accompanied by unfairness.

Reform applied severely in some quarters and ignored in others, is not even half of good reform. Punishment administered to one offender and withheld arbitrarily from another, is merely persecution in the name of law, and evil perpetrated in the name of righteousness. To call one railway magnate an "undesirable citizen" because of his violation of the law in the administration of his financial power, and to elevate to a cabinet position another railway magnate who had confessedly violated the law in necessary rivalry with his competitors, is to the thoughtful man such an extravagant abuse of power as to make eventual nullification of much of the presidential purpose, and to work evil for the cause of reform by making reform itself an objectionable thing in the popular mind.

The executive of this nation is in the present hour possessed of an authority, by popular sufferance, never heretofore accorded to a President of this republic. Extra-constitutional privileges are freely allowed by the popular will. The danger to our institutions is ignored. An obliteration of the sharp dividing lines between the several departments of government is permitted. All these things are not only allowed, but welcomed and approved by the populace, because of a belief that, using extravagant authority, the President is devoting that authority to achieve the people's rights. Thus he stands at once upon the safest and most delicate ground ever occupied by a chief executive. Supported in admitted violation of our old ideals, he obtains his sustenance solely from the popular view that he is discharging his duty as trustee of the popular purpose, and that into his objects enters no vile ambition of his own—no favoritism—and that he and his successors will be as ready to relinquish the extra-constitutional privilege as he has been to use that privilege.

It will not be deemed by thoughtful men an unjust reflection upon the exercise of the presidential prerogative, if one shall call attention to the dangers which are associated with the exercise of unlimited power by a President, whose authority is by the letter and the spirit of our constitution a limited one. In the present case the danger is two-fold: First, that in the name of needed reform of specific evils the President shall achieve an abiding change in the character of our government; and second, that in the name of the square deal he shall punish such offenders as are personally repugnant to him, and shall cherish and foster such offenders as have the advantage of his personal regard.

The people of the United States want genuine reform impartially applied. In the belief that the present chief executive is actuated by this high and holy sentiment, they approve him; but if they shall find that, even in some small and yet appreciable degree, his resoluteness is vanity, his opposition to individual wrong-doers is personal dislike of the offenders and not the offense, and that he can protect other individual wrong-doers for the sake of personal friendship, there will be the most terrific shattering of an idol that the nation has ever seen.

The best friends of President Roosevelt, and the men who most vividly admire his policies, cannot render a better service to him or the nation than to

sound to him a note of warning. Too much adulation of the President, too much subserviency to his personal will, are dangerous to himself and to the republic. He is mortal; he is a citizen. Those men who hail him as a demigod, and those men who salute him as the king who can do no wrong, are the greatest enemies of the cause to which he has lent his striking personality and his great office. If they who are near to him in council will warn him that he threatens destruction to the cause of reform by the favoritism with which he administers upon the exalted trusteeship accorded to him by the people, they will render a benignant service.

The American people want no persecution through presidential frown and no protection to wrong-doers through presidential favor.

The safest adviser for President Roosevelt in this hour would be the man who would dare to tell him: "You are not the state." The danger is that the man would give mortal offense, who, however near to President Roosevelt, should say: "The square deal does not consist of a mere declaration in words but a fair dealing without prejudice and without favoritism, beginning in the executive office and extending throughout its entire sphere of influence."

An Oath For Crime.

The sentiment of the country has always been against oath-bound political organizations. In recognition of this, practically every fraternal society in the country, whose ritual is secret, contains in its basic law an inhibition of political discussion or activity within its lodges.

This sentiment constitutes the essence of one great objection to the so-called Mormon church—which is not a church in the conventional sense, but an aggregation of people under an absolute leadership, for the purpose of achieving commercial and political ends. In the strictest meaning of the word, this society is a secret organization. Its members are oath-bound. Its ritual is secret. That which answers in other societies for a fraternal obligation, is in this society a devotion, supreme and unquestioning, to the will of the superior officers of the society.

This is no chimera; it is the most indomitable fact of the commercial and political experience of the people in the intermountain country. One might go further and say, that, actuated by historical knowledge, the people of this country have been especially jealous of the influence of churches in political and business affairs; but that feeling is not necessarily applicable in this case, since the Mormon church is not a religious organization, being absolutely devoid of religion in the sense in which Christian communities use that word. In lieu of piety, its members have a superstition or a practical regard for the power of the superior officers of the organization. The superstition prompts the member to regard the power of the superior officers to punish and reward in the great hereafter; and the practical view prompts the member to entertain a wholesome awe of the power of the superior officers to punish and reward in the present day.

Viewed in this light—as a secret, oath-bound, political and commercial organization—how can the people of the intermountain country be quiescent under the domination of the Mormon church? If this organization were not called a church (and it is not such if any proper regard be paid to the conventional idea of the word) the great self-respecting citizenship of these states would overthrow the domination, no matter what the cost of the struggle might be. If for purpose of plunder; if to absorb

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