# Front Matter

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ROOSEVELT AND THE NEGRO

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## Roosevelt and the Negro

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By KELLY MILLER,

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The late Senator Ingalls, in one of his luminous flashes, defined politics as "the metaphysics of force." This definition fits with philosophic fineness the nature of Theodore Roosevelt, who is its most strenuous exemplar. In effective political dynamics and intensity of accelerative energy, he easily surpasses all the present day rulers of the earth. He has no reserved physical or psychical potencies. All the energies of his nature are in the active voice and present tense. With him pure reasoning is a burden, and disquisitional niceties a waste of while and a weariness of flesh. His one superlative passion is how to bring things to pass. His mind works with the celerity of feminine intuition. He reaches conclusions and settles issues with a swiftness and self-satisfying certainty that startles the more cautious statesmen who rely upon the slower processes of reason and deliberation. He has diagnosed the case, prescribed the remedy, and cured, or killed, the patient before the ordinary physician has finished feeling the pulse. After the deed is done, he leaves to the college professor or the senile moralist to discuss the moral quality of the method employed. If he has not a jesuitical disregard of means, he at least considers them as but subsidiary processes, which must not too seriously embarrass the righteous end in view. He is the greatest living preacher of righteousness; but it is always righteousness as it is in Roosevelt. He holds to his conception of public duty with the tenacity of infallible assurance. If others are too stubborn to accept or too dull to appreciate his more enlightened point of view, the worse is the perversity, or the more the pity. He never reaches either intellectual or moral sublimity, but is transcendent only in action. His deeds are never dull. Even in dealing with the common places of life he infuses into them the energizing spirit

of hs own nature. He dramatizes the Ten Commandments and vitalizes time-worn moral maxims with a spirit and power as if they were fresh pronouncements to arouse the energies of a lethargic world. A man almost or wholly without

Anglo-Saxon blood, he is the ideal embodiment of the Anglo-Saxon spirit which glorifies beyond all things else the power of doing things.

"The Celt is in his heart and hand,
The Gaul is in his brain and nerve."

He is absolutely self-centered, and believes that he was sent into the world to set things right. The world has accepted him at his own appraisement, as it is prone to do with all ardent natures, especially if they be serious and incessant in the advocacy of their high pretensions. He accomplishes his sovereign purposes while his fellow citizens stand amazedly at gaze, as an astronomer when a new luminary flashes suddenly upon his vision and pursues its uncomputed orbit across the skies.

**HIS EARLY CAREER.**

He began his public career by defying James G. Blaine, the magnetic statesman, who, like Agamemnon was a born king of men. He leads a little handful of rough and ready dare devils up a little hill in a little skirmish, and is covered with the military glamor and glory of a great hero in a great conflict. Our party captains, fearing the exorbitancy of his foreshadowed power, forced him into the vice-presidential office as a sure political quietus, but it proved to be merely an instance of the folly of men trying to defeat a career marked out by destiny. The assassin's bullet takes off McKinley, the beloved, and installs Roosevelt, the strenuous. His high place but affords a vantage ground for the exercise of his strenuousness and power. By the word of his might, he commands two powerful nations engaged in titanic struggle to stay their strife and sue for peace, and forthwith they obey him. He commands peace or war, according to the dictates of his high conception of righteousness. With one bold Rooseveltian stroke he acquires a canal connecting the mighty waters which had washed separate shores since recorded time, a consummation which American statesmanship had sought for half a century in vain. He regulates railroads, throttles trusts, defies labor cliques, and holds in leash both the millionaire and the mob. He makes even the wrath of Tillman to praise him, and the remainder of his wrath he holds in contempt. The unversality of his sway was never more strikingly illustrated than by the grotesque spectacle afforded by the last session of Congress, where the spectator might look and see Roosevelt's mighty hosts advancing against the stronghold of plutocracy,

with Tillman leading on! There is no question of human interest whose magnitude or minuteness is beyond his strenuous handling. He gives the Amercan women salutary advice as to their domestic function and duty; with an offhand stroke of the pen seeks to reform English orthography, which has been slowly modifying from Chaucer to Mark Twain; sets up as expert critic of the habits of wild animals; while Americans, of however high reputation and standing, who persist in seeing things under other than his own angle of vision, may regard themselves as lucky indeed if they escape being relegated to his famous "Index Praevaricatorum."

**THE WEAK AND HELPLESS.**

When one considers what manner of man is this whom the strong and mighty hold in awe, the man who gives the word and the nation obeys, he who speaks and it is done, he might feel disposed to ask who is the despised Negro that he should be mindful of him, or that he should bestow upon him one moment of his august consideration and regard! There is little room for

the weak and helpless in a strenuous philosophy which glorifies the valiant man. What hope has the feeble and the heavy laden in a dispensation whose gospel relegate the hindermost to the mercy of his satanic captor? Roosevelt has never been the champion of manhood rights. But rather, like Lyman Abbott, he believes in manhood first and rights afterwards. He has little of the humanitarian sentimentalism that would stoop to the infirmities of the weak. His motto is "all men up"' who can get up and stand up. But if some men allow themselves to be pushed down, the overthrowers rather than the overthrown command his higher respect because they manifest the geater degree of power. Had he been born at an earlier season, he doubtless would have opposed the reconstruction scheme as he now opposes independence for the Philippine Islands. His very nature revolts at the idea of clothing weakness with authority.

**ROOSEVELT NOT BAPTIZED WITH THE FIRE OF OUR CIVIL WAR.**

He is the first commanding statesman of his party who was not baptised with the spirit of the Civil War. The political and civil equality of all men was burnt into the soul as the outcome of that great struggle. Orthodoxy in this doctrine was at one time the one determinative test of patriotism, the only passport to public favor and power. But now we have a new Pharoah who knew not Joseph the black. With the new issue have come new issues. Tax and tariff, trade and transportation, plutocracy and trusts, expansion and subjugation now monopolize public attention. The issues of life to-day are material rather than moral, and are placed on a hard, unsentimental metallic basis. The dollar is the highest common divisor of values, in terms of which we measure all forms of excellence -yea, even human rights. Indeed, whoever is so archaic in this material day as to insist on the political doctrine of a generation ago is apt to be waived aside as a doctrinaire enthusiast, or perhaps as a moral molly-coddle. Roosevelt embodies the new spirit rather than the old, which he espouses with a moral enthusiasm and a preachment of a type of righteousness which well befits the new faith.

**ALTERNATION OF GOOD AND ILL WILL.**

Roosevelt's relations with the Negro have been marked by an almost whimsical alternation of good and bad impressions. At one time he elicits his highest praise, only at the next turn to evoke his bitterest curses. He is a man of instantaneous impulse and promptitude of action, and is unhampered by the tedium of logical coherence or consistency of procedure. He follows the last impulse. The Negro is by no means the only alternate beneficiary and victim of his impulsive caprice. The Southern whites have also experienced like vicissitudes. No president has been so bitterly abused or so highly extolled by the white South as its half-son who claims a national poise by reason of the balance of his blood. The people who but yesterday were heaping upon him maledictions which exhaust the lexicon of malignity, are now proclaiming him their hearts' idol and chief delight. The praise and blame which he receives at the hands of the white South and the black race are at the same time antithetical and complementary. Like the illumined and bedarkened portions of the moon's surface, the one increases at the expense of the other. In dealing with the delicate questions complicated by race antagonisms he has not as yet found a policy that is satisfying to all -a statesmanlike consumation devoutly to be wished. And so whites and blacks alike have experienced, with fluctuating humor, the variable phases of the amplitude of his impulse.

"But through the shift of mood and mood
Mine ancient humor saves him whole
The cynic devil in his blood
That makes him mock his hurrying soul.

**AS CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONER.**

Theodore Roosevelt entered upon his public ministry as an ardent advocate of administrative purity. He believed in righteous methods applied to public business. It was as Civil Service Commissioner that he first came in practical contact with the race issue. He served as Commissioner under the second administration of Grover Cleveland, who himself was a consistent disciple of administrative reform. It was the boast of many of the supporters of the new administration that they would take the departments at Washington out of mourning by removing all the darksome embellishments in the shape of colored employes. But Grover Cleveland was made of the same sort of stern, dogged integrity as his doughty young commissioner. Mr. Roosevelt strenuously insisted that all applicants should be treated according to their degree of fitness on the established scale of merit, to the utter disregard of such extraneous issues as race, color or political alignment. It was due in large part to the courageous insistence of this intrepid Republican official under a Democratic administration, backed up by the stubborn honesty of his chief, that black applicants for clerical positions were not black balled by a party which had posed as their traditional political adversary. It cannot be claimed that Commissioner Roosevelt assumed this attitude out of any special regard for the brother in black, or rather the brother in colors, but to preserve the integrity of his principles. It is a very imperfect philosophy which breaks down at the color line. That scheme of political or moral ethics which awaits answer to the query: "Of what complexion is he?" before applying its beneficence cannot be entertained by a noble nature or a broadly enlightened mind. There is nothing in Roosevelt's strenuous philosophy that would cause him to propound this query or await its answer. If the Negro can drink of the cup of which the white man drinks and be baptised with the baptism with which he is baptised withal, he holds that he should share with him the glory, honor, and power of his kingdom. If his faith in the Negro is small it is only because he has not been impressed with sufficiently numerous examples of strenuosity and success to guarantee it as a race characteristic.

**AS ROUGH RIDER.**

Roosevelt's second point of contact with the Negro race was during the Spanish war. In that famous charge up San Juan Hill -or was it Kettle Hill? -the courage and intrepidity of the Negro troops saved Col. Roosevelt and his Rough Riders from

utter destruction. Had it not been for their courageous intervention he would have been cut off in he flower of his youth, and his dazzling career lost to the American people. Gratitude is not characteristic of a self-centered nature. When one is over-burdened with a sense of his ordained primacy, he naturally looks upon lesser men as being put into the world as auxiliaries to his higher mission. While the whole world was extolling the prowess of the Negro soldier, it was reserved for the chief beneficiary of that prowess to sound the sole discordant note. In a notable magazine article, where our present day warriors are wont to fight their battles with an ingenuity and courage rarely equaled on the tented field, Col. Roosevelt either discredited their valor or damned them with such faint praise as to dim the luster of their fame. This ungenerous criticism dumfounded the Negro race. Disparagement of the Negro soldier as subsequent developments have clearly shown, touches the pride and arouses the resentment of this race as nothing else can do. TheNegro's loyalty and patriotism, as exemplified in all the nation's wars, is perhaps the chief tie of endearment that binds him to the heart of the American people. If that tie becomes tenuous his hold upon the nation's affection would be precarious indeed. For a time there was no more up-popular man in America throughout Afro-Americandom. But election time was approaching. Political exigencies made him the available

candidate for the governorship of the Empire State of New York. The chief factor in this availability was the military glamor that gathered about him because of San Juan Hill, where the colored troops fought so nobly. The results at this election depended upon the colored vote, whose resentment he had aroused. Candidate Roosevelt so mollified and qualified the strictures of Col. Roosevelt as to take away much of the keenness of the sting. By the use of such blandishments as the politician knows well how to apply to salve the sores of an aggrieved class during the unrest of a heated campaign, the injury was forgiven, or at least held in abeyance. Under the rallying cry of the grand old party the Negro vote came to the rescue and supported him almost to a man. The slender margin of his victory showed that his success was due to that support. Had the Negro persisted in a spiteful spirit and sought vengeance at the polls his political career doubtless would have been cut short and the pent up energies of his nature must have sought outlet through a different channel. It was thus that the Negro saved his political life at the ballot box as he had saved his physical life on the battle field.

**AS GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK.**

During his brief service as governor he appointed one or two colored men to unimportant positions and entertained a colored artist at the gubernatorial mansion. He accepted an invitation to deliver the dedicatory address at the unveiling of the Frederick Douglass monument at Rochester. Perusal of this address enables one to sympathize with an official who feels forced to perform a ceremony in which he has little spirit or zest, in order to accommodate a constituency whom it is desirable to keep in good humor. On the whole his administration as governor preserved the general attitude of his party toward its black allies without any notable departure either to their benefit or disadvantage.

Both as vice-president and as president he not only secured the black man's loyal support, but commanded his most enthusiastic, yea, rapturous applause.

**THE APPOINTMENT OF CRUM.**

Towards the latter part of McKinley's administration there were mutterings of disquiet and unrest among the Afro-American contingent. After the unfortunate outcome of the Lake City horror, it was reported that the president had abandoned the policy of appointing colored men to federal offices in the South. It was also whispered that he was giving aid and encouragement to the propaganda of the lily whites, a breed of political exotics which neither toils nor spins, but delights to array itself in all the spoils and splendor of office. An open revolt was narrowly averted during the campaign of 1900. When Theodore Roosevelt became president the Negro's hopes revived. Here was a man of granitic character whose courageous righteousness on all national questions admitted of no variableness nor shadow of turning. The test was not long in coming, and Roosevelt stood it unfalteringly. Dr. William D. Crum, a most highly capable and respected citizen of Charleston, South Carolina, became his party's choice for collector of that ancient and honorable port. His name was sent to the Senate for confirmation. The whole white South became enraged and lashed itself into fury. Was this a reopening of the issue at Charleston supposed to have been settled at Lake City? Political agitation, especially when tinged with race antagonism, never obeys the formulas of logic. It booted nothing to point out that colored men had held throughout the South the highest federal places since the days of Grant. It was also shown that both at Savannah and Wilmington, more important ports environing Charleston

on the south and on the north, colored men sat at the receipt of customs.

All sorts of direful predictions filled the air. The ear of the nation tingled with the alarum of blood shed, race war, Negro domination, Anglo-Saxon superiority, and like rhetorical fustian which such an occasion is calculated to evoke. But Roosevelt stood by his guns as he always does while the firing continues. The sleepy old city by the sea had not had so much national attention focused upon it since the firing upon Fort Sumter. The Republican leaders became frightened. Some were disposed to balk, others to dodge. It was Roosevelt who applied the whip and inspirited his party to stand by its great traditions. In the midst of this raging controversy he took occasion to announce to the world that he would not shut the door of hope upon any class of American citizens. The principle was established. Crum was confirmed. The door of hope still stands ajar; albeit few there be who enter thereat. The swarthy collector now sits calmly at his window overlooking Fort Sumter, straining his eyes for sight of an occasional ship in quest of unlading or clearance at his port. The citizens are again tracing their favorite phantoms. The good old city has sunken into its traditional ways, reveling in the glory of bygone days, dreaming of things of yore in the shadow of Calhoun's Monument, and basking in the soft, silvery moonlight over the Battery. No more heed is taken of the racial personality of the dignified and leisurely collector than of the cut of his coat or the color of his necktie.

**THE INDIANA POST OFFICE.**

At Indianola where an irascible community defied the national authority because of the unfashionable color of a federal official, the President upheld the national dignity and prestige with a firm and unflinching hand.

**THE BOOKER WASHINGTON DINNER.**

A simple act of civility on part of the President towards an eminent colored American, called down upon his head the fires of wrath of his white brethren in the South. Dr. Booker T. Washington, the consulting statesman for the Negro race, was invited to dinner at the White House. There is, perhaps, no other person in America of like standing and relation to public questions, who has not received such semi-official courtesy. But immediately a mighty storm arose. Had the President suddenly turned traitor and flagrantly violated our most sacred religious or moral

code he could not have been more bitterly or blatantly denounced. That two gentlemen of world-wide reputation and of congenial temperament should occasionally sit together at meat might naturally be expected anywhere outside of the Brahmin caste. Mr. Washington is our only domestic ambassador.

He has been picked out and set up as the representative of an overshadowed nation surrounded by an overshadowing one. An ambassador usually has immediate access to the presence of the chief ruler to whom he is accredited without the intermeddling of official understrappers. Nice courtesies and high civilities usually accompany diplomatic procedure. Should the representative from Corea or Hayti or Turkey be invited to dine alone with the president at the White House the act would hardly be construed into one of social intimacy, but it would be regarded merely as a convenient opportunity to consult over some weighty matters of state. Indeed, only a few days after the famous Washington dinner a red Indian chief who had not passed beyond the blanket and feather stage of civilization was received by the president and the incident only excited curious pleasantry. Mr. Washington has mingled in close pleasant personal touch with princes and potentates of the old world and with merchant princes and money barons of the new. He is entirely familiar with high social favors. The colored race has not the slightest concern with whom Mr. Washington, in his personal capacity,

may or may not be invited to dine. A man's dinner list is his private affair. It is the prerogative of every citizen to extend, accept or decline such invitation, according to the dictates of his own taste and pleasure. But to affirm as a principle that the man who is looked upon as the chiefest among ten million, in his ambassadorial capacity, is not eligible to the established modes of courtesy, at the high court of the nation, cannot be accepted with satisfaction by any manly man of the blood thus held in despite.

These acts on the part of the president evoked the highest plaudits from the colored race. It was felt that his views were broad, based upon the fundamental principle of our institutions which accord to all classes of citizens the same official consideration and courtesy. Indeed, these laudations became so loud and fulsome that they must have proved embarrassing to one who did not pose as the special champion of an unpopular class.

**POLICIES NOT SUSTAINED.**

But it must be said that these evidences of friendship and good will have not been systematic and sustained, nor followed up to their logical coclusion. Roosevelt never surrenders, but often seems to evacuate his stronghold as soon as he has demonstrated the enemy's inability to capture it. In the final estimate of history, if his reputation falls short of superlative greatness, it will be because he lacks consecutiveness and persistence of purpose and policy. He is not permanently wedded to any one question as the dominant note of his career. He suddenly takes up a measure, settles it and drops it, and goes in quest of issues new. And so in dealing with the Negro. He has established the principle, but has desisted at the point of practical operation. Crum was made collector of Charleston in face of a frowning South, but he makes no more such appointments against local opposition. He closed the post office at Indianola, but it was shortly reopened in substantial harmony with the contentions of its white patrons. He preserved a dignified and becomng silence while the storm of wrath raged over the Booker Washington dinner, but no more do he and the famous Tuskegeean break pleasant bread and shake the friendly glass while conferring over weighty matters of the nether state.

**SOUTHERN REFEREES.**

The tentative policies which President Roosevelt has pursued concerning the political welfare of the race have not been calculated to command their cordial co-operation and cheerful acquiescence. These may be considered under three distinct heads.

1. His scheme of selecting referees with whom to consult on political dealings in the South is something new under the political sun. While he has sought diligently to find men of the highest standing and character to serve in this consultive capacity, yet his selections have usually been of the Democratic persuasion, and sometimes of strong anti-Negro bias. According to the universal method of American politics, the administraton is controlled in its local matters by the leaders of the organization of the same party faith. When an administration discards ts own party supporters and seeks advice from its political adversaries it may not expect the approval of the regular workers who have borne the brunt and burden of battle. This feeling is by no means confined to the Negro race, but is shared in or perhaps it would be more accurate to say is directed by, the white manipulators of the shattered Republican fragments in the South.

**BOOKER WASHINGTON AS SPOKESMAN.**

2. Dr. Booker T. Washington has been chosen as refree at large and as the sole spokesman for the entire Negro race. His selection was not due to his political activity or experience, for the whole tenor of his teaching has been to persuade his race to place less proportional stress on politics and to concentrate its energies upon things economic and material. But by reason of his general prominence and the world-wide esteem he was put in command of political forces, to the relegation of war-scarred veterans who had borne the heat and burden of the day. Othello naturally objects to his loss of occupation. Most of them have yielded, but only after they learned that the only road to official favor was the straight and narrow path that leads to Tuskegee. No Negro, whether in Vermont or Texas, whatever has been his service to the party, can expect to receive consideration at the hands of the president unless he gets the approval of the great educator. It should, in all fairness, be said that this position was not of Mr. Washington's own seeking. It has on more than one occasion caused him serious embarrassment. It might seem that active participation in politics would impair his usefulness along other lines to which he has devoted the chief energies of his life. It is needless to say, as some are wont to aver, that Mr. Washington's function as adviser to the president does not make him a practical political participant. The procurement of office and the manipulations incident thereto are the chief concern of the typical politician. Mr. Washington was impressed into this service on the demand of the president which no patriotic citizen feels inclined to refuse. Indeed there is no prominent Negro who would not have accepted the assignment upon the slightest intimation that he might be the presidential choice. That Mr. Washington has filled the assignment with an eye single to the best interest of his race is wholly aside from the merits of the question. Mr. Roosevelt would readily assent to the proposition that the political boss is an undesirable person. And yet he has set up Mr. Washington as the boss of ten millions, and commanded the rest to obey him on penalty of political disfavor. He has put at his disposal the means by which all bosses retain their influence -the persuasive power of public patronage. For where the patronage is, there the subserviency of the politician will be also. This policy is not calculated to teach the Negro the needed lesson in self-government and manly political activity.

Should succeeding administrations follow Mr. Roosevelt's example in this regard the Negro would remain in perpetual thraldom

to an intermediary boss set up at the whim or caprice of whoever happens to be president. We cannot hope that every administration will be as fortunate in its selection as Mr. Roosevelt has been. Contemplation of the continuance of such conditions is repugnant to every principle of manly American politics.

**FEDERAL OFFICES FOR NORTHERN NEGROES.**

3. Strangely enough, one of the most significant moves of the president affecting the political life of the Negro has almost or wholly escaped attention. He has shifted the center of gravity from the South to the North. Hitherto the important federal places accorded the race have gone to persons below the Mason and Dixon line. This recognized the race as a factor in local Republican organizations and gave some prestige at national conventions. It also recognized the potential political rights of the Negro which neither suppression nor temporary nullification can take away. To withhold recognition because suppression has rendered non-effective the exercise of political power seems to be equivalent to an abandonment of the principles for which the Republcan party has stood from the days of Grant until now. The Minister to Hayti, the Register of the Treasury, the Fourth Auditor of the Treasury, the most conspicuous positions given to the race, are filled by Negroes from the North. Such

appointments have not been made solely on the basis of the local weight and influence, but as recognition and satisfaction of the claims of the entire race. But one commanding national position is now held by a Southern Negro, and that is the recordership of deeds for the District of Columbia, a purely local office which has widespread fame as being the conceded allotment to the Negro, whether Democrats or Republicans are triumphant. The favorites of political fortune have come from the North and from the South, from the East and from the West, and escounced themselves in this snug office, while the voteless sons of the District have been ignored. Damerumor has it, or had it, that among the first acts of the present administration was the shifting of the colored collector of the port at Wilmington, N. C., to the District of Columbia to relieve embarrassment to the lily white propaganda, which he at that time is said to have encouraged. Judge Jeter C. Pritchard, who was then the administration's intermediary in Southern politics, could write an interesting inside account of this transaction. It would seem from present tendency that there are to be no more new Negro appointees in the South, but merely a continuance in office of those officials against whom local Democratic protest

is not too loud and boisterous. It requires little power of prevision to foresee the outcome of this policy. In a few years there will not be a Negro federal official south of the Mason and Dixon line. This would prove to be a blow to the race" for which the appontment of Northern Negroes were but a poor compensation. When the Southern Negro has been eliminated from the political equation with the connivance and implied sanction of the party of Grant and Sumner, it will not be long before his Northern brother will begin to feel its baleful effect. With a rare political sagacity the Northern Negro feels that in order to preserve his own liberties, he must insist upon the rights of his brethren in the South. In shifting the stress of political emphasis from the region where the Negro is to the section where he is not is like placing the center of gravity outside the basis of support. The result must be unstable political equilibrium. But here again the president is displaying his characteristic disposition which glorifies the effective component of force, and takes little heed of power, reserved or suppressed, which fails of effective expression. The Negro vote in the North is a practical present political dynamic. In the South it is an inert potentiality, whose unfoldment, like faith, is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen. The president deals with the real and the tangible rather than the remote and the contingent. While this policy may seem to answer the immediate demands of political exigencies, it will prove disastrous to the Negro political outlook and vista.

**THE BROWNSVILLE AFFAIR.**

The chief irritating issue between the president and the Negro race is the outcome of a most deplorable incident. The Negro soldier has ever been an object of detestation to the Southern whites. The solderly spirit is incompatible with the status to which the black man is assigned in their political and social scheme. Every Southern state has disbanded its colored militia. This feeling was accentuated by the Spanish war where Negro and Southern white troops were placed on a footing of soldierly equality, and where the black troops gained the higher meed of glory. Occasional friction between local authorities and Negro troops passing through the South to and from the front but added fuel to the flame.

In face of this feeling a Negro battalion was quartered in an obscure town on the remote frontier of Texas. The air about Brownsville became tense with trouble. Citizens goaded soldiers to the point of acute irritation. One dark night some shooting

was done in the streets, resulting in the death of a barkeeper and the wounding of an officer of the law. The alarm was sounded that the Negro soldiers have "shot up the town." Race passion was stirred to the utmost. Brownsville would have been drenched in blood had it not been for the firm attitude of the gallant commander of the fort. The local grand jury could not find sufficient regular evidence for indictment of the hated troops quartered among them. Word was flashed to the commander in chief at Washington, who forthwith proceeds to deal with the matter out of hand. The army inspector was dispatched to the scene to investigate and report. Unfortunately the inspector was a man of Southern birth and bias. The distress cry of the city through the undercurrent of communication made its sub-conscious appeal with Masonic secrecy and force. Every thoughtful student knows that where race passion is aroused the judicial tempermanent takes flight. Suspicion or even suggestion of wrong-doing on the part of the Negro if reiterated with loud outcry and demand for blood is assumed to be confirmation strong as holy writ. Instantaneously every white man aligns himself on the side of his race. Where racial instinct is appealed to the laws of evidence have little weight. "Lynch the brutes!" was on the the lips of every citizen, and the execution was stayed only by the too fearful aspect of Uncle Sam's bayonets. In the midst of this inflammable state of things a son of Georgia as inspector general repaired to Brownsville. Instantly he assumed the feeling of the community. The investigator acted the role of prosecutor with preconceived conviction of guilt. He accepted the representation of the citizens of Brownsville and propounded a few shrewdly calculated questions to the suspected soldiers, whose answers were designed to confirm their guilt. No opportunity was afforded them to prove their innocence. Assuming the existence of a criminal conspiracy, he demanded of the non-commissioned officers the names of their guilty companions. Compliance with this request would inevitably have been self-incriminatory, convicting the respondent of murder if personally involved or of guilty knowledge if a non-participant. Following the method of the mob in dealing with a black culprit; he declared them guilty, and graciously offered them the opportunity to confess. Affirming their innocence, they refused to confess; and declaring their ignorance, they decline to inform on their fellows. The inspector hastened to Washington and reported to the president that some fifteen or twenty men out of a total of one hundred and sixty-seven had shot up the town, murdered and maimed its citizens, while the rest had guilty knowledge of the deed, but were disposed to shield their companions in crime. The city of

Brownsville had worked out the case with such circumstantial confirmation of detail as to deceive even the commanding colonel, who reluctantly assented to the findings of the inspector general. On fuller investigation, however, Col. Penrose changed this opinion and now stoutly affirms his belief in the innocence of his men.

When this report was presented to President Roosevelt he was bound to accept in good faith the findings of the inspector general, the regularly authorized agent for such service, and especially so when concurred in by the chief officers of the command.

A flood of righteous indignation welled up within him at this outrage upon the national arm. He would teach the wrong doers a lesson which would never be forgotten. The color of the offenders, he stoutly avers, neither mitigated nor magnified the character of the offense in his mind. The discipline of the army must be upheld. It is easy to believe that the president's conduct at this stage was not based upon consideration of color. He is himself of a military mold of mind. In military matters, as elsewhere, he is a law unto himself and has little reverence for those above, around or beneath him. He shatters a military idol with as little hesitancy as he would reprimand a common soldier. Did he not criticise and discredit the

sagacity of his own commanding general with a little round robbin? The man who spoke disparagingly of the troops who saved his life on the battle field, who unceremoniously reprimanded Gen. Miles, the gallant head of the army and hero of many battles, who imputed cowardice to Admiral Schley, our only naval hero who has triumphed with modern guns over modern armor, might naturally be supposed to act vigorously in case of reported wrong-doers at Brownsville.

Basing his action on Gen. Garlington's report, the president with ruthless hand, though righteous purpose, ignored all forms and precedents of military, judicial or executive procedure and proceeded to mete out drastic punishment. Although there was no pretense at determination of individual guilt, and although not more than ten per cent of the battalion could possibly have participated in the outrage, the whole number was dismissed without honor, and in the hot indignation of his wrath he imposed upon them serious civil disability by executive fiat. The disqualifying feature of his order was flagrantly ultra vires and void by virtue of its own nullity. It was afterwards rescinded, but its original issuance stands as a memorial of the state of mind actuating the president at the time.

This order of the president violates every principle of our jurisprudence. It assumed that the men were guilty and imposed

upon them the onus of proving their innocence; it condemned them without even the formality of a trial; it imposed punishment without proof of individual culpableness; by it one hundred and fifty probably innocent men were made to suffer in order that fifteen possibly guilty ones might not escape.

The president must have foreseen or forefelt the tumult which the issuance of this order was calculated to excite, for with prudent political sagacity he held it up till the day after the election, in which the Negro vote might prove a determining factor, and especially in the congressional district where the political fate of his son-in-law was involved. In the meantime he had betaken himself to the high seas, planning to return, it would seem, after the clouds had rolled by.

But instead of rolling by to accommodate the return of the president, the clouds continued to gather in density and ominousness. The whole Negro race was dazed. Theodore Roosevelt had for the second time struck at the Negro soldier, the pride and idol of the race. Protest, indignation, cries of outrage flew thick and fast from the Negro press, pulpit and platform. The great papers of the country with practical unanimity condemned the order as one of unusual and unnecessary severity. Those versed in constitutional lore declared that the president had set a precedent which might prove dangerous to the principle of American liberty. It was reserved for Senator Tillman to describe the act as executive lynching, a description which characterizes the deed with his wonted picturesque aptness of language. It possesses the essential characteristics of mob vengeance. It inflicts punishment on demand of the rabble rather than by judicial process. It furnishes victims to appease popular vengeance without nice regard to the identity of the perpetrator. The punishment of the possibly innocent effectually destroys the evidence by which the guilty might subsequently be apprehended. The Secretary of War with political forethought sought to have the order suspended until further investigation, but to no avail. What was written was written.

From a racial point of view it was doubly unfortunate that the president should have selected the weak and helpless Negro, the increasing object of the nation's contumely and despite, upon whom to make this drastic departure from the usual procedure. The disciplinary value of the

example would doubtless have been more effective had he applied it in the first instance to the white troops guilty of the offense charged against the colored troops in Ohio some months previous. Coming, too, as it did, swiftly upon the heels of the Atlanta riot; it added the color of justification to that awful slaughter. Indeed, John Temple Graves, the

justifier of this atrocious murder of innocent men, employs the same line of justificatory argument as that used to defend the president's position. But the most unjust and unkindest cut of all is when the president acridly assuming a defensive attitude, holds the race up to the world, by executive decree, as fostering a criminal fellowship.

**ANNUAL MESSAGE.**

In the meantime the session of Congress was approaching. In his annual message the president undertook to discuss the subject of lynching. In this document he imputed to the colored race of lecherous tendency, which is not justified by the infrequent occurrence of clearly proved cases of assault. He placed upon the whole race the responsibility of restraining and controlling the wild passion of the dastardly few. In his eagerness to effect the wished for consummation, he overlooked the absurdity of imposing upon a race studiously deprived of governmental power and authority, without the means of inflicting punishment the obligation of reaching, correcting and coercing the criminally disposed. This vicarious burden is imposed upon no other class of citizens. The alleged infirmities of the Negro race are thus set forth and embalmed in an official document and held up to the gaze of all the world. However holy and righteous may have been the president's intentions, this message is calculated to do the Negro more harm than any other state paper ever issued from the White House. Construed as it was in connection with the Brownsville order and the recent Atlanta barbarities, this message seemed to accentuate the Negroes' rapidly culminating ills.

With the opening of Congress the Brownsville order assumed the character of political discussion. It threatened to split in twain the triumphant Republican party. The president's closest personal and political friends felt forced to uphold his contentions, though not without apology. The Southern Democrats, with a single and grotesquely singular exception, reversed the tenor of their teachings and traditions and upheld the president in the unwarranted exercise of executive power. The aroused passion of race has twisted their immemorial political doctrine. Then came Senator Foraker, like a gallant knight of old, and stepped into the arena as the champion of the helpless and overborne. The voice of ten million Americans, unheard and unheeded in the conduct of the nation's affairs, found expression in this eloquent and fearless Ohioan. And yet not so much he proclaimed because the victims were black, but because the method

employed was violative of the principles of American jurisprudence and liberty He assumed neither the innocence nor guilt of the accused, but planted himself firmly on the bed rock principle of the law, that a full and fair trial should precede conviction and punishment. The country and the Senate sided with Mr. Foraker, although by the nice amenities of legislative verbiage they refrained from wounding the presidential pride. An inquiry by the Senate was ordered. In the meantime the president had dispatched a law officer to Brownsville in quest of confirmatory evidence. He found what he was sent for. By a prudential intuition these government agents seem to divine the conclusion of the presidential mind. His method was of the same ex parte character as that of the army inspector, and of course the foregone conclusion was confirmed. The president became incensed at the persistent attitude of the colored race, and in several special messages reiterated his innuendoes with redoubled vim and

emphasis. Senator Foraker became the principal object of his wrath. It was rumored that at a social function, where secrecy was imposed upon all present, a personal colloquy between the two was sharp and bitter. All of this served to make Senator Foraker the hero and idol of the Negro heart. Roosevelt lost what Foraker gained. The Ohio Senator is the only commanding statesman of our day who has risked his public career on an issue involving the Negro's cause. Whatever may be the immediate outcome of the issue, he has, and will have, his reward, for no one who devotes his powers to the defense of the helpless will fail to receive the highest meed of praise when the rancor and heat of the conflict have passed away.

**FORAKER, THE NEGROES CHAMPION.**

Under the guidance of Senator Foraker the Senate inquiry has now proceeded for several months. At the instance of the president several eminent Republican Senators reluctantly consented to reinforce the Democrats in upholding his hand. The accused soldiers have been given a hearing. Their straightforward, manly, unwavering testimony in their own behalf has raised in the public mind a reasonable doubt of their guilt. That one hundred and sixty-seven men, ignorant and unlettered, unskilled in the art of double-tongued dialectics, should unite and persist in one straightforward tale and suffer loss of livelihood and honor without one confessing or informing voice would be the most remarkable psychological phenomenon in the history of criminal procedure.

**FAR SIGHTEDNESS AND MYOPIA.**

On the other hand the citizens of Brownsville have given the most positive and circumstantial evidence of guilt. These far-sighted witnesses have testified under oath that they saw these men in the act and distinguished their uniform, color and visage at a distance of a hundred yards on a dark night, when the trained eyesight of army officers could not recognize a brother officer ten feet away. The weight of this testimony is weakened by the prepossessions of the witness as well as by its inherent incredibility. Aroused race passion is as heedless of fact as it is of reason and logic. It blunts the physical as well as the moral sense. For any white citizen of Brownsville to say one word contradictory of the popular prejudice means permanent banishment or sure and sudden death. The wealthiest man of the town was assassinated because he had the temerity to question the accuracy of certain of this testimony. Had these Spring-field rifles in the hands of men who have never failed to use them when ordered by their commanders proved less dissausive from violence, and had half dozen Negro soldiers been lynched on the broadest street of Brownsville in broad daylight, neither the army inspector, nor the president's law officer, nor the Senate committee could have found a single citizen who was able to see such happenings under the bright sunlight of a Texas sky. These same citizens with far-sighted vision in the gloom of night would have developed suddenly a case of myopia that could not distinguish objects of their own handling in open day. The rule works both ways. A witnesswho will not see that which he does not want to see can easily compound for the failure by seeing things which do not exist in obedience to the demand of prejudice or passion.

As the matter now stands before the bar of public opinion, this black battalion is at least entitled to a Scotch verdict -"not proven." There is all but a universal concurrence in this verdict except among those whose racial sentiment renders them incapable of considering the case with judicial calmness and poise. But whatever may finally be proved as to the guilt or innocence of some or all of these men, they have not received a "square deal" at the hands of its author, who borrowed the phrase from the gaming table and consecrated it to a higher and worthier ideal.

This affair has shaken the prestige of the president as has no other occurrence in his public career. It gives him no end of keen concern. There is every reason to believe that he could wish the deed undone. He has sought to conciliate the Negro

with the blandishment of office, but to no avail. With the double view of disconcerting Foraker and reconciling the colored brother, at the psychological moment, when the Ohio Senator was booked to make a strategic move in the Brownsville affair, announcement was made of the intention to appoint a colored citizen to the leading federal office in the Senator's own state and home city. But as this move seemed to embarrass the president's own friends, including his son-in-law, as much as it did the offending Senator, it was abandoned. But not to be outdone, on the day of the evening that Senator Foraker was announced to sound the keynote of his position in a speech to his constituents, the Associated Press announced to the country that Ralph W. Tyler, a worthy colored citizen of Ohio, had been appointed Auditor of the Treasury Department at Washington. But this conspicuous appointment had not the slightest effect upon racial sentiment, except to intensify it against the the president. A nice young man got a nice fat office without changing the attitude of a single Negro in or out of Ohio. The whole race is wounded and sore. There is no division of sentiment. Never before has there been such unanimity. The balm of office cannot heal it. Even the colored members of the president's official household can only preserve a prudent and salutary silence.

**THE NEGRO'S JUST GRIEVANCE.**

There has recently appeared a cartoon by a clever Negro artist representing the "Black Man's Burden." It is in the form of a cross, not a crown of thorns, but a cross of skulls. At the top of the vertical upright is the head of Roosevelt; Hoke Smith and Tom Watson are arranged underneath; on the left of the crosspiece are Thomas Dixon and John Temple Graves; on the right Tillman and Vardaman. An athletic Negro with broken body is bowed beneath this awful load. Theodore Roosevelt, America's most passionate civil patriot, whose every impulse beats in sympathetic resonance with the welfare and betterment of the nation, who had stood firmly by the Negro at Charleston and Indianola, and who had proclaimed to the race the gospel of a "square deal" and an open door, is placed as chief among those who breathe out hatred and slaughter against the Negro with every vital breath. It is the law of human passion that friendship which lapses or seems to lapse begets the bitterest hate. The good deeds are forgotten; the hurtful act rankles in the soul. A deliberate and candid judgment would declare this attitude unjust; but it would be equally uncandid to deny that it is real.

President Roosevelt is easily the most popular man in America. The whites who join issue with him on the Brownsville incident regard it as a thing apart. With the Negro it overshadows all else. With a consenting nod he can be re-elected president almost by acclamation. Not only so, but he is easily the foremost man of all the world to-day. Should the Peace Congress now sitting at the Hague usher in Tennyson's prophesied "Parliament of man, the Federation of the world," Roosevelt, by unanimous consent of the participating nations, would be chosen speaker of this world-controlling body. And yet he has so wounded his colored fellow-citizens that to-day they stand apart from this world acclaim. As he treads the dizzy highway of universal fame, he must feel a certain sad, unsatisfied something prompting him to become reconciled to his black brother who may justly have aught against him.