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CONSERVATISM:

THE ESSENTIAL IN AMERICAN CHARACTER
AND POLICY.



Address, delivered at the Auditorium, at Chicago, on
the afternoon of February 22d, 1902,

BY

SENATOR ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE.

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Senator Albert J. Beveridge

5-26-02.

CONSERVATISM :

The Essential in American Character and Policy.

Ladies and Gentlemen :

The meaning of Washington in American history is discipline. The message of Washington's life to the American people is discipline. The need of American character is the cultivation of discipline. Rep

Washington did not give patriotism to the American colonies. The people had that as abundantly as he. He did not give them courage. That quality was and is in the American blood. He did not even give them resource. There were intellects more productive than his. But Washington gave balance and direction to elemental forces. He was the genius of order. He was poise personified. He was the spirit of discipline. He was the Great Conservative. It was this that made all other elements of the Revolution effective. It was this that organized a nebulous independence into a Nation of liberty. The parts of a machine are useless until assembled and fitted each to its appropriate place. Washington did that. And so it is that we are a people. Rep

But we are not yet a perfect people any more than a youth is yet a perfect man. We are yet in the making. It is a glorious circumstance. Youth is the noblest of God's great gifts. The life of a nation is like the life of a man. Read the history of a people who have done things in their day. Read the life of a man who has done things in his day. They are as similar as sea and ocean. It is only a question of magnitude.

ref The American people are young? Yes! Vital? Yes! Powerful? Yes! Masterful? Yes! Disciplined? Not entirely. Reserved? Not yet, but will be. Moderate? Not yet, but growing in that grace. And therefore on this, his day, I bear you the message of Washington—he, whose sanity, orderliness and calm have reached through the century, steadying us when untamed passions of riotous youth had all but reached the climax of chaos.

The American people have finally overcome every convulsion? True. The element of sobriety has never failed to master the maddest agitations? True again. But the cost of the struggle in every instance has been measured by the strength of the instinct of discipline at the time. To-day we are calm, and are conscious of no need for self-restraint. Yes! But yesterday we were delirious, and the rumble of cannon on your streets and the rattle of musketry at your doors was hailed with feelings of security and relief. The necessity for this should never have occurred. And many crises may be recalled by men not yet old. The political convulsion of five years ago is a peaceful example of popular hysteria, overcome by strenuous work that tested the powers of conservatism to the ultimate limit. Popular reserve, the self-restraint of the people, the fireside conference, would have lessened every excited circumstance in our history, and prevented many or most of them. (Reason is better than bayonets.) Sober second thought is better than the destroying violence of a campaign over passion-born propositions.

THE LABOR AND CAPITAL ARBITRATION COMMITTEE.

In the daily press we read of a co-operative council of capitalists, clergy, workers and publicists to settle the conflicts between labor and productive wealth. We applaud it, and we should. But not because it will be effective—for it may not be effective. But we hail it as an evidence that the spirit of forbearance is spreading among the people. [It is an expression of the instinct of order which must become the ruling element in American civilization.] And this it is which, more and more, will settle strikes, and in the end prevent them. This it is

which, more and more, will take wildness out of our politics, until reasonable issues only remain. The remedy for friction between employer and employed is in the breasts of the men themselves and their employers. The saving of the people is in the hands of the people themselves, and nowhere else. Better than councils and commissions and congresses is the self-discipline, the reasoning reserve, the regulated conscience of a free people. And congresses and councils are effective only as they are expressions of this.

Indeed, we have awakened to the fundamental fact that written laws are not everything and that the people are everything. [Back of our statutes stands our Constitution, and back of our Constitution stands our institutions, and back of our institutions stands our race. Let us remember that the people are the real foundation; not laws, not even constitutions. It is the people from which statutes, constitutions and even institutions spring that give these forms of civil method their meaning.] The Constitution of this Republic would be a different instrument as the fundamental law of a Latin nation even though that nation copied it word for word. It would be interpreted by their racial spirit, expounded in the light of their racial institutions.] Every day since our Constitution was adopted we have been acting beyond the limits of its written word, but within the limits of its institutional meaning. If we had not done so we would not now be a Nation.

WORD OF THE CONSTITUTION INADEQUATE.

More and more this will be so. The growth of modern industry, the gradual change of competition into co-operation, the manifold and infinitely interwoven activities of modern business, the steady knitting together of all the agencies of production, distribution and exchange until the whole nation is well nigh an industrial unit as it is a political unit, the extension of this process until international relations are so interlaced that no nation, even by war, can entirely cut the golden cords of commerce and culture that bind her to her sisters—the processes of civilization, in short,—bring into play national necessities and national powers as much greater and more complex than those exercised by the Fathers, as the Nation and its

activities to-day are greater and more complex than they were a century ago. We cannot adopt new constitutions to meet these new conditions. They would be inadequate if we did adopt them; and each decade would make the constitution of the preceding decade obsolete if its letter alone were read. And so we rely on a law more permanent and more vital—the institutional law with its roots springing from the very soul of our race, by whose living meaning our written laws and constitutions are interpreted. Our hope is in ourselves. Our safety is in our racial customs and tendencies. Our salvation and supremacy is in the character of our people.

I do not mean that we should bind ourselves to custom. I am only a limited believer in the philosophy of precedent. Precedent becomes paralysis, if observed when customs no longer fit conditions. Conservatism does not mean adherence to existing order merely because it is existing order. Conservatism means the adaptation of means to ends naturally and without violence. Reason is the touch-stone of conservatism. And so it is that we must foster the element of conservatism in American character as we would fan the spark of life itself, for it is that vital spark. Let the American people write over the fire-side of every American home those words of inspired direction: "Prove all things—hold fast to that which is good." Time is the greater reasoner. Patience is the eternal method of accuracy and truth. Time and Patience, Patience and Time—these are the ancient counsellors who never err. These are the sages to consult when perplexing situations seem unsolvable. Beware of instantaneous processes.)

HOT-HOUSE LAWS INEFFECTIVE.

There can be no instantaneous settlement of any large question. To say that there can be, is to say that civilization itself could be completed by piecemeal. But that is not the method of civilization's progress. (Society is a growth—not a creation) And all social, industrial and political questions are related as a tree's branches to the common trunk. They are not, therefore, to be determined permanently by cure-all measures and put aside as settled, as you pack articles in a box and put it on the shelf, sealed and labeled. Conditions undergo

ceaseless change, and measures made for those conditions must also undergo ceaseless change. But if the change is wise it must be slow, and not sudden. The wrenching of the vast and delicate machinery of the Nation's business, the straining of the nerves of the whole people in unnecessary campaigns, has been due to impossible propositions to instantly enact felicity. This is not discipline, not sanity. It is not reason, but passion; not reserve, but rashness.

On the other hand, measures once enacted are not immortal. No economic statute can be perpetual. To say that it can never be bettered is to say that human conditions can never be bettered. But they can be bettered. Yesterday we lumbered in stages; to-day we fly in palaces. And the change from stage-coach to railway has required a new body of laws, which are themselves perpetually changing. Yesterday both capital and labor were individualized; to-day both are consolidated, systematized, co-operative. But these new conditions grew out of the old conditions — they were not suddenly created. And so we must let the new laws, regulating those new conditions, grow, and not suddenly create them. Quick creations always are ineffective. Conditions make laws, not laws condition. And when this order is reversed both the law-made conditions and the law which makes them are unhealthy, irritating and dangerous. Events are the greatest of law-makers. Deliberation, patience and the self-regulation of our activities are the surest of safeguards. Put not your faith in written word alone; put your faith in your own steady self-restraint. "The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life." As in your relations to morals, you remember the Master and strive to be like Him; so in your relations to the state and your attitude toward all questions that present themselves to you as one of a self-governing people, remember Washington and strive to be like him — reserved, considering, considerate and calm.

The national habit of self-control exercised in the current developments of each day, when times are not hot with friction, will act without effort in the hour when events flame with excitement. If the people will adopt this formula of conservative thought: Everything is not bad because it is new, and

everything is not good because it is old,—and upon that formula base conservative procedure, we shall always end with conservative results. And conservative results are safe results; and safe progress is permanent progress. Let us beware of rebounds.

TREATMENT OF TRUSTS OF LABOR AND CAPITAL.

We are in a period of growth which is itself a proof of our youth and enlarging vitality. It is inevitable that each year, almost each day, shall behold unheard-of developments in our industrial, commercial, financial methods. Let us be not startled at them. They may be beneficent or they may be malevolent, but denunciation, hasty action, conclusions which are jumped at instead of being thought out, are no proper test. The habit of mind which leads us to bitterly denounce or unreservedly praise, is not the temper which a free people should foster. For be it remembered that a free people must depend upon themselves and not upon some separate power which attempts to solve every problem for them, as is the case in autocracies. We are fond of saying that in a republic each citizen is a king. But saying so does not make it so. Each of us can be a king, and therefore the nation itself clothed with majesty as no people ever were arrayed; but only by each citizen acting as a king should act; thinking as a king should think, steadily, calmly, with balanced judgment and well-considered action.

The developments in the combinations of capital call for just such popular treatment; the developments in combinations of labor call for just such treatment. We behold millions of money which yesterday were acting separately, to-day massed in mighty organizations for the production, the transportation, the distribution of national products. Let us not be alarmed at their magnitude. Let us not be panicked at their novelty. It is not helpful to slap on the statute books hasty screeds and call them laws. It will throw no light upon the real question for excited meetings to grow frenzied over excited appeals. No great problem was ever illuminated by the torch of a mob; and between the conflagrations of the Commune and fiery talk of agitators who feel they must carry the next election at any cost, there is little

difference. Both may be useful in revolution; both may be useful in the bloody overthrow of tyranny; but neither are the method of a free people, who hold their own destiny in their own hands.

WORK OF THE TRUSTS.

It is apparent to the shallowest observer and certain to the profoundest, that the great combinations of capital recently developed are based upon some of the fundamental principles of progress. It is equally apparent and certain that in their development, evils and crudities have attended them. But this is true of everything. It is even true of the development of a child into a boy and of a boy into a man; and constant care is exercised in the training of the infant mind and character. Maturity is a hard process and slow, but it is a simple process. Let as simple a process be exercised in the new development of our social economy. As violence and hot words and stormy conduct spoil the vision of the parent; so will the same savage methods spoil the vision and make foolish the action of the people in the regulation of the development of capital and labor. [The great combinations of capital devoted to the production of steel or flour or meats or oil, systematize the industry, reduce the expense of production, simplify and make easy distribution, invade and conquer foreign markets.] The organizations of wealth devoted to the preparation of meats and other food stuffs sell their products abroad as well as here. Their vast resources enable them to put refrigerating ships upon the sea and furnish the breakfast tables of London and Berlin. And to supply that foreign demand the farmers of Illinois, Dakota and Kansas are called upon for cattle at profitable prices which otherwise they could not sell at all. So we see that this golden shuttle of modern enterprise shooting backward and forward, not only through our own land, but across the seas and into Europe and Asia, too, weaves occupation and prosperity for our citizens in its ministry to the wants of our fellow-men abroad.

These are a few of the benefits visible to all. On the other hand, the arbitrary raising and lowering of prices, the unjust exaction of unfair profits from our own consumers, are the evils.

But the benefits are fundamental, and the evils incidental. And you cannot shear away the good from the bad by some measure evolved over night from an excited brain and adopted next day as a party measure to carry an election the day after. The whole field of national and even international industry and trade must be considered. When you reflect that you cannot do the simplest thing without involving every activity of industrial civilization all over the world, you can appreciate how dangerous makeshift measures are. The simplest act of civilized life affects all human industry. Take, for example, your journey home this afternoon in the cab or railway or street-car. It involves the growing and felling of forests. It calls into play the energies of miners searching out the ore from which are made the wheels that carry you. It involves the cattle from whose hides are made the harness of your horses, or the leather used in cars. It involves the activities, the lives and the livelihood of ten thousand men immediately at hand; and broadening from this center of focused activity, it circles out to the remotest confines of the world's industry. If so simple an act as your journey home this afternoon, to which you give no heed, so commonplace has it become, is thus far-reaching, how infinite in consequence are measures controlling these industries, and how vastly greater even is the policy of a people with reference to them. Do I say, therefore, that no measures should be taken; no policy be formed? No, I say the reverse. But I say with greater earnestness, caused by the danger of unthoughtful and undisciplined action, that those measures and that policy should be well considered, cautiously adopted, executed with sanity and judgment.

CHANGE IN CHARACTER OF CAPITALISTS.

On the other hand, this development is having its beneficial effect upon the capitalists themselves. Responsibility always brings a broader understanding and a gentler consideration of others. And dealing, as the managers of these vast agencies of production and exchange are, with all the people of the nation, and well-nigh with all the world, a new comprehension of those people is forced upon the capitalist, whether he will or no. The financier of the twentieth century

has got to be more than a financier. *The modern financier must be a statesman.* The day of the local Wall Street capitalist is passed. (The hour when the wizard of tricks sat in his office and considered that the world of money was compassed by his eye-sight, was struck yesterday, and that hour is no more forever. To-day the capitalist can no longer indulge in the legerdemain of mere stock speculation. He must build machinery; he must erect mills; he must construct railroads; he must buy steamship lines. Therefore he must understand the people, he must consider the people. The financial rashness of the black Fridays of our history was as much a manifestation of our undisciplined and capricious state of undevelopment as was the burning of railroad properties at Pittsburg in the red days now almost forgotten.

CAPITALISTS MUST CONSIDER THE PEOPLE.

And so we see capitalists have got to understand that the opinion of the people is as definite a factor in their great plans as the quantity of coal remaining in the mine or the producing capacity of a mill. As much a factor? Yes, infinitely more of a factor. For, after all, it is the consuming and producing capacity of the people upon which all industries are built. It is the thought and settled resolve of the people which is the most important element in the mosaic of our national economy. Thus have the constructive capitalists of America come to understand that public opinion must be taken into account as much as the amount of cash on hand or bills receivable. They have been forced to this, let us say, or they have learned it. No matter, they have come to understand it; and so *we see that voluntarily the greatest corporation of the world has published to all the people a statement of its business and its operations, of its assets and its liabilities, of its products and its sales, of its history and its prospects. That is the thing which the financier of ten years ago would have called chimerical, foolish, the unwise pandering of the theorist to the curiosity of the crowd.* But the financier of the twentieth century no longer calls it so. He knows it is not so. He knows that it is a necessity of his business — a thing essential to the popular support of his enterprise. Another great corporation of Illinois

whose managing mind appears to be a statesman as well as a financier, began some three or four years ago to distribute the stock of his railroad among its employees, and to sell shares at lowest terms to the people living along its line. Ten years ago that would have been called socialism—to-day it is business. It is conservatism. (It is the realization of things as they are and the adjustment of the measures of wisdom and humanity to existing conditions, in order that the best of existing conditions may be preserved, and from them still better conditions may be evolved.) All this is sanity; all this is calm and gentle and considerate thought; all this is the beginning of that discipline which comes from self-restraint and the respect for the rights and opinions of our fellows.

LABOR TRUSTS.

Organizations of labor are cognate to the organizations of capital. Each is the outgrowth of that principle of co-operation which is the very spirit of civilized society. The family is co-operation; a partnership is co-operation; the simplest form of a state is co-operation; and as the state grows more perfect, its citizens more and more co-operate each with all and all with each. Neither labor organizations, therefore, nor those of capital are unnatural or harmful. But the tyranny of greed may pervert the one; the tyranny of passion may ruin the other. Considerate moderation is the safety of both, and if each were to adopt it, it would be their glory as well. And if capital will not be reasonable, if labor will not be reasonable, the people will be reasonable for them. There is no place in this country for the absolutist of capital. There is no place in this country for the absolutist of riot. The bully of wealth shaking his clenched fist of gold, is wealth's worst enemy. The bully of labor shouting denunciation, is labor's worst enemy. Let the wiser laborer elbow from his company, him of the flaming utterance and untruthful tongue. Let the wiser capitalists suppress their would-be Czars. Out with the element of unreason in both camps, and the divided hosts will be one! Out with unreason everywhere in the Republic! Let the spirit of Washington be monarch of the hearts and minds of men everywhere beneath the flag which Washington established.

CHANGE IN CHARACTER OF LABOR LEADERS.

As the twentieth century financier must be a statesman, so the twentieth century labor leader must be a statesman, too. He, too, must consider the people's thought. He, too, must measure popular tendencies. He, too, must counsel no act without weighing the effect that act will have throughout the whole complicated machinery of related and interdependent industries. And such statesmanship is being evolved. A man cannot long remain the head of one of the great armies of organized workers without developing conservatism. Necessity teaches him the value of moderation. When he feels his hand upon the lever that directs the movements of a hundred thousand toilers, his awful responsibility instructs him in self-restraint. The events of the last two years have proved that the directing heads of two of the greatest labor trusts are conservative counsellors. Their number will increase. More and more the organizations of labor will insist that their leaders shall be men of thought, slow to wrath, steady in action. More and more, they will come to appreciate that a leader is none the less loyal because he is wise.

How majestic is the majesty of moderation !

CONSERVATISM IN TARIFF RE-ADJUSTMENT.

These are the aggressive tendencies of the times when the calm of Washington councils prudence, self-restraint, the holding well in hand of the people's thought and action by the people themselves. And there are retrogressive tendencies as well to which the spirit of Washington equally applies. The fanaticism of existing conditions is the reverse of the shield. It is as unreasoning to say that an outgrown law shall not be modified as it is to say that immature statutes shall be enacted. One is the hysteria of precedent; the other is the hysteria of alarm. Men say "Down with the tariff"! Men say "Maintain the tariff," or "Lift it higher still." Conservatism says, "You both are wrong—adjust the tariff to conditions. Tariff merely for protection is no fetish; tariff for mere revenue is no God. No system of taxation is sacred. It is merely a means to an

end or many ends. It is not an end in itself." This is the voice of Conservatism and it is the voice of truth and soberness.

Even self-government is not an end in itself. It is a means to an end. With Anglo-Saxon peoples self-government is the means to the end of individual and collective human happiness. And all the laws of self-governing peoples are just that and nothing more. Tariff laws are no exception. If they are wise, they grow out of conditions; and so they become unwise when the conditions out of which such laws have grown, have themselves outgrown the laws. When this becomes true, such laws need re-adjustment, for the very same reason that calls for their original enactment.

HOME MARKET ; FOREIGN MARKET.

We have entered upon an era of production that overwhelms our very understanding. It was not so yesterday. Yesterday we made little we did not want ourselves, and so the "Home Market" was then the word of economic truth; and that word spoke into life a system of protection as perfectly fitted for its purpose as ever the mind of man devised. Mills, factories, railroads, farms, mines—a thousand forms of productive industry developed magically; and over all the busy genius of invention brooded, making one hand do that which thousands toiled to do before, fertilizing fields, abbreviating space, extracting gold from hopeless rocks, discovering wealth and human uses in the very refuse of a cruder day. And so it came to pass that our home market is supplied and the overflowing surplus threatens to choke the very machinery that produces it unless we find a place to sell that surplus. And so it is that to-day Progress speaks a new word of economic truth as needful now as was the old word then. As the "Home market" was the word of wisdom in its season, so "Foreign markets" is the word of wisdom now.

We have more coal, more iron, more skill in workmanship, more ability and experience in organizing capital for productive uses than any other portion of the globe—almost more than all of the rest of the world combined. And so we sell abroad our girders, beams and plates of steel, and the many forms into which wealth and work and genius have fashioned the useful

metals. We must sell them abroad. Otherwise, idle over his accumulated products, will sit the laborer; lifeless will be the throbbing mill; deserted the producing mine; chained to the rotting docks the ships of export. And this is true of the fabrics of cotton and of wool; true of meats, flour, and all the stuffs that feed and clothe the human race. For other nations have factories, too. Other nations spin and weave, and plant and sow and reap. They will not always permit us to supply their citizens. The words "Home market," which yesterday was our talisman, to-morrow will be theirs, and for the same reason that it was once ours. Conditions have turned the tables; and where yesterday we asked protection from them, to-day they are demanding protection from us. They will erect tariff walls against us as we once ✓ erected tariff walls against them. Where, then, shall we turn with our ships of merchandise? What, then, will be the destination of our weighted trains of freight? Not to ourselves, for we are already supplied, and it is our surplus that fills those ships and burden those countless cars of commerce. We cannot turn entirely to the Orient, for that market is not yet sufficiently understood, although it will be. It is not yet sufficiently exploited, although it will be. And when the Oriental market is opened in its fullness and occupied by us, it will be our commercial and financial salvation. Meanwhile our own consuming capacity will increase. But while it is increasing, our surplus cannot wait. It must be disposed of as it is produced. And, always, there will be a surplus. The productive capacity of a people beyond their own needs is the measure of their increasing wealth. And so, while the increase of our own consuming capacity is important, the development of our foreign markets is indispensable, too. Both are necessary to the consumption of our ever-increasing production. And of foreign markets, the Oriental field is virgin soil and awaits our intelligent cultivation.

RECIPROCITY.

But that is a question for to-morrow. We must consider the requirements of to-day. We must turn to "the instant need of things." We must make those common sense arrangements

with our neighbors among the nations by which our surplus of American products may be taken across the seas. This is the statesmanship of common sense. The eye of Blaine perceived it in the distance, and too soon announced its principle. The even more prophetic mind of Grant, whose elemental statesmanship will be better appreciated a hundred years from now than it is to-day, perceived it even before Blaine saw it. And even if both had failed to grasp its meaning, that meaning would be unmistakable at this hour. For, gradually, foreign statesmen are closing their markets to us. They will do it more swiftly in the future than they have done it in the past, or else they will fail in their duties to their peoples. On one hand the miraculous growth of our export trade is lessening; and on the other hand our productiveness waxes until its magnitude to-day makes little its proportions of yesterday, which then were wonderful. *Decreasing markets, increasing productions*—this is the situation. It is not a situation that calls for fanaticism in favor of any law; it is not a situation that calls for fanaticism in favor of the destruction of any law. It is a situation that calls for the patient, intelligent adjustment of means to ends. It is a situation that calls for the councils of conservatism. Out upon the selfish interest that would enrich itself at the expense of the permanent prosperity of the Nation! Out upon the passionate demand for the destruction of all protection! Up with the standard of moderation and let all the forces of American conservatism rally around it! So shall employment continue to wait on labor. So shall investment continue to plead with capital. So shall this marvelous American civilization, whose far meaning even the most prophetic mind cannot grasp to-day, continue to evolve out of the play of our free and unfettered activities.

CONSERVATISM AND OUR FOREIGN POSSESSIONS.

It was a wisdom higher than our own that drove us into the markets of the world. You may say that it was the wisdom of events. You may say it was the wisdom that springs from the wealth of our resources and the ingenuity of our brains and the skill of our fingers. I prefer to believe and do

believe that it was a loftier wisdom still, the universal wisdom of the Father. And it was His wisdom, too, that placed in our guardianship new peoples and alien races. You may say that it is a blunder that did that. I will not quarrel with you. You may say that it was a conjunction of circumstances. I will not argue the point. Whatever the compelling cause, the fact exists and the duty is ours. Call it circumstance, call it events, call it blunder, or call it the decree of destiny—other peoples are our wards and we will not desert them. Their lands are our trust and we will not betray it. All will admit that if we could succeed in discharging this trust so that these dependent peoples would be happier, our nation better and the civilization of the world thereby advanced, it would be a noble conclusion for which the most doubtful heart might yearn. All this we may accomplish. All this we will accomplish. Let no man doubt our ultimate success, for we will proceed according to the councils of conservatism. Moderation will direct us.

THE AMERICAN CHARACTERISTIC.

We daily hear dogmatic demands for the independence of our Malay wards, without considering concrete conditions. Is this moderation? Is this the method of calm reason? Is it not better to fit our acts to whatever the actual facts may be? Adaptability is the American characteristic. We are told that self-government is the American characteristic. We are told that this and that is the American characteristic. We are asked to frame our action upon this tradition or that, regardless of changed situations, of absolutely different facts. But adaptability is *the* American characteristic. Adaptability, adaptability, adaptability. The fitting of means to ends, the adjustment of measures to conditions—this is the heart of Americanism. The secret of American success has been that we have looked the facts squarely in the face and then made our measures fit those facts. We have done this regardless of maxims, indifferent to theories and even over the letter of our Constitution itself when it stood in the way. President Madison thought that the Federal Government had no power to build a national highway. The power to make internal improvements

was not conferred on Congress by the Constitution, he said. This was the view of the Fathers. Rivers, roads and harbors were matters of local concern, they thought. Their theory of local self-government, of the sovereignty of the State, of the independence of the community, required that the National Government should not better local conditions. If a river was non-navigable at a point within a state through which it ran, it was not the mission of the general government to dredge it. Its care was in the keeping of the people who lived upon its banks. Local self-government, they said, was an end and not a means. But Progress said that the prosperity of the people is the end, and local self-government, general government, or any other kind of government nothing but a means. Progress said, "The logic of strict construction is built on words; I demand logic built on facts." And so into the written Constitution, the necessities of national intercourse read the power of the General Government to make internal improvements. And to-day that power is so much a matter of course that not one man in ten thousand knows that that power was originally denied. Thus it was that the spirit of American adaptability triumphed even over the letter of the Constitution.

Business is the great expounder of our fundamental law. Conditions construe our Constitution more completely than all the lawyers who ever lived. Geography, invention, exploration, are continuous interpreters of that great instrument. Mountains, rivers, plains and lakes, railways, telegraphs, the planting of new communities, the discovery of new resources, the interchange of thought and products—to these great natural and human facts the spirit of American adaptability has conformed ancient customs, honored traditions, written constitutions. There is no written power in the Constitution for the National Government to charter banks, but a man would be considered mad to-day who denied that power to the National Government. The list of instances where the practical genius of the American people has adapted their Constitution to their needs is the most striking circumstance of our history and the profoundest proof of our vitality. From that saving wisdom of adapta-

bility we will not now depart. If Philippine conditions require Filipino self-government, self-government we will give the Filipinos because it is wise. If legislative participation in their government is permitted by Porto Rican conditions, we will give the Porto Ricans that because it is wise. If Cuban conditions require American suzerainty, we will maintain that because it is wise; if annexation, we will accomplish that because it is wise; if utter separation, that shall be done because it is wise. If facts demand that we administer government in our Far-Eastern possessions without the participation of an incompetent people, that government we will, ourselves, administer, because it is wise. We are wedded to no theory; we are chained to no catch-word; our free hand is not fettered by any unchangeable method. If Washington thought that Christmas Day, drunken Hessians and all the elements of surprise existed, he crossed the Delaware and attacked like another Attila. If he thought that overwhelming British forces discouraged American troops and all the elements of weakness in his own ranks required avoidance of conflict, he retreated like another Fabius. That is the American spirit. And so with our new and world-wide duties. If facts demand autonomy for our possessions, autonomy it shall be. If facts demand guardianship at our hands, guardianship it shall be. Over the American mind and heart and directing American action, the genius of the practical still presides. We are no China cursed with custom, drugged and dead with precedent. We are Americans—the people of the appropriate and the adaptable.

NO ABANDONMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES.

The treatment of our dependencies is the world issue now confronting us. Let us then plant ourselves on the fundamental certainties. And the first of these certainties is that not one single foot of soil over which American civil authority is established will be abandoned. "What we have, we hold!"—this is the voice of our race. People of our blood seldom leave land they have occupied. No master people ever yields while they remain a master people. Emerson declares that when the powers of a man decline he draws in his enterprise; he quits business;

he prepares for the inevitable end. The same is true of a people. But the American people are not on the decline. The American people are not ready to go out of business. The American people are stronger for the world's work now than any people ever were before. And our portion of the world's work, which Destiny has laid upon us in common with the younger and the growing races, is the duty and labor of guardianship. We are the executors of a trust estate in Porto Rico, in Cuba, in the Philippines. That trust we will execute as thoroughly as Americans do everything. And so American government in the Philippines will be permanent. The American Flag in Porto Rico will float there as long as the Republic's government itself shall stand. American suzerainty over Cuba will remain until time laces that island more closely to us with more enduring bonds. Events call for the conservatism of adaptability. Conditions demand the moderation of the free hand. The radicalism of ancient methods has no place among new conditions. Remember the parable of the new wine in the old bottles. What would we say if the Ancient Mariner should step from his vessel of wood and sail and spars and ropes onto the bridge of a twentieth century ocean liner, and declare that the steam which drove it, the electricity which lighted it, the steel plates, the copper bottoms and all the method of modern ship-building are sacrilege, because he had not done in that way? This hoary representative of a day that is dead would not be considered conservative. The board of directors that would place him in command of a Deutschland or a Lucania would not be considered conservative. Moderation means the progress of facts—not the daring of dreams on the one hand nor yet the cowardice of reminiscence on the other. And so with the dependencies of the American Republic, American statesmen must deal as practical thought directed to actual conditions demands that they should deal. They must not deal spasmodically. They must not deal retrogressively. They must deal practically, steadily. The free hand must be the steady hand if it is to be the hand of the master, and the free hand can be the steady hand only when its action is governed by actual, and not imaginary conditions.

But in this great problem of our dependencies, more even than in the surprising developments of our internal economy, patience is the word of power and of success. ¹⁰ A race cannot be transformed over night. The methods of three centuries cannot be remedied between sunrise and sunset. The character of a people is not to be altered even by the school-teachers' priceless work in a season or a year. Let us not be in haste. Let us have the serenity of the situation. We are dealing with an elemental problem, a racial problem, a world question. ¹¹ We must act, therefore, with a deliberation as large and a patience as steady as the problem is vast and historic. We must employ no magic but time, no legerdemain but that of steady and continuous effort unvarying and undismayed. There must be no spasms of extravagance, no spasms of retrenchment, no panic of retreat, no fury of advance. Let us not pine for the fruit before the seed is planted, or even the ground prepared.

So, fellow-citizens, we will go on in the spirit and method of Washington, practically, steadily, calmly, without prejudice and without fear. Whatever the future may hold for the American people in internal development or foreign dominion, that future will be met with that thoughtful moderation which adapts means to ends. If old methods suffice, those old methods we will use because they are approved. If present methods suffice, present methods we will use because they are at hand. If new methods are necessary, new methods we will invent because the case demands them. The fanaticism of the old will not influence the American people. The fanaticism of the new will not influence the American People. The conservatism of adaptability, the calmness of the appropriate, the patience necessary for the doing of the work in hand whatever that work may be—these are the saving influences which will govern American action now and hereafter. The discipline of the day's work, the balanced judgment that accomplishes real things, the steady sanity essential to the settlement of actual situations—these are the counsellors which now and henceforth the American People will consult. Neither passion nor fear, neither theory nor precedent, neither imagination nor impulse, shall corrupt in

the American character that orderly adaptability which has been the very soul of American progress. And before these influences of light every cloud that fear discerns on our horizon will dissolve; every impassable ocean which imagination sees in our pathway will be safely crossed; every foe which foresight beholds in the distance will be vanquished, and the flag which Washington unfurled will float over ever-broadening horizons brightening every hour with increasing glories of actual achievement.