

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND MAYOR JOHNSON AS TYPICAL REPRESENTATIVES OF OPPOSING POLITICAL IDEALS.

JOSEPH DANA MILLER IN THE ARENA.

Always during periods of social progress, where the forces that make for the supremacy of ideals are gathering for conflict, may be selected individuals who in themselves typify the opposing elements. Their acts and their aims will be, accurately enough, the measure of these ideals, though intellectually or morally the individual may fall below them, for behind all movements of the people is a spiritual element that is greater than man. "Two things fill me with awe," said Kant, "the starry heavens and the sense of responsibility in man." And he might have added, "the upward movements of peoples, by which overcoming all resistance, they rise ever higher and higher, touching the godlike in the final goal."

Yet as a testimony to the indestructible individuality of man, there will, nevertheless, as we have said, be two or more men who stand out more prominently than the rest as representative of the two tendencies making for progress or for retrogression. And in the conflict of to-day, in which the relations of these two forces are but superficially changed, two individuals prominent in public life may be selected as typical of all that the present worldwide social reform movement involves. These two men are Theodore Roosevelt and Tom L. Johnson.

No two individuals can be more unlike. The first is instinctively an aristocrat. For this he is not to blame; it is due to his bringing up. He has certain manly qualities, but it is questionable if these would stand the test of a great crisis. They failed him, at all events, on a notable occasion—*viz.*, at the time of Blaine's nomination. He is hardly the stuff that moral heroes are made of; he will have the courage to do right if he has "good backing," but to be alone and right—that, we suspect, would be a different story. He is a safe man—too safe. The dominant forces that surround him, if fairly respectable, will keep him so, but this is a negative virtue, and may make a man either useful or the reverse. It may seem ridiculous to say that of a man with Roosevelt's stubborn jaw, but that jaw denotes pugnacity rather than strength. Morally he will be swayed, as he always has been, by expediency. He will probably be well behaved, as the country goes, or as the forces nearest him, or most powerfully with him go. He has impulsiveness, the first forward direction of which is probably toward what is right and just, but he lacks the staying quality absent in most pugnacious and impulsive temperaments.

We might, indeed, trust to his impulses if these could not be seen, or bought, or bribed—in no purely sordid sense, be it said, but as effectively for the purposes of suppression. For his second thought is of the calculating kind, and he will dare little at the risk of success. For he yearns to succeed, to surmount all obstacles—and for this he will work, though his first impulse is to do right in the face of consequences. Later comes the calculating thought, and the man, superficially the man of impulses, becomes the merest slave of his ambition.

How often has he shown this—in the Cuban reciprocity question, in his first brave threats against trusts, in his absolute words pledging a continuance of the policy of President McKinley as outlined in the almost great speech of the latter on the eve of his assassination. Theodore Roosevelt is a President without a policy—he is as perfect a type of the opportunist as ever sat in the presidential chair.

He has crowded a good many achievements into the forty-odd years of his life—his industry has certainly been marvelous. He has been civil service reformer, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, ranchman, writer of many books, and he has climbed San Juan Hill—his friends say in the face of a galling fire—and he is a hard-working Chief Executive. His books are good examples of the book-making art, and are not without interest—some of them. But compare his Cromwell with the Cromwell of another, a contemporary who has failed as a politician where Roosevelt has succeeded. It is perhaps not a fair comparison, for John Morley is a consummate literary artist. But seek the President's writings for estimates of the men of the past—here, if anywhere, even if the writer were to fail when tested by the highest literary canons, we might hope for impartial and accurately judicial estimates. It is, perhaps, the best test to apply to one chosen to guide the destinies of the Republic to ask how he has dealt with great reputations. Roosevelt has dealt with them in the spirit of a "broncho buster," with all the assurance of an unenlightened mind that finds itself confronted with new and unfamiliar facts. Nothing is a surer index to a man than his judgment of men. By this, make what pretensions he may respecting his ideals, will his actual ideals be known. Let us present some of these most astounding estimates of men.

Tom Paine the President calls an atheist, and repeats about him all the libels of history, the falsity of which were long ago demonstrated. President Monroe is spoken of as "a colorless, high-bred gentleman of no especial ability, but well fitted to act as presidential figurehead." Of Martin Van Buren it is said that he "faithfully served the Mammon of unrighteousness." But it is for Thomas Jefferson that this aristocrat reserves all the concentrated contempt of which he is capable. He is described as a "scholarly, timid, and shifting doctrinaire, the father of nullification, and, therefore, secession." He speaks of the "cheap pseudo-classism that he borrowed from the French Revolutionists." Here speaks the natural Toryism of the President's mind, and these instances might be multiplied *ad infinitum*. The task, however, would be an ungrateful one.

There is much that is true in many of the things that President Roosevelt has said in public speeches. A man of the President's active mind could not be talking constantly without saying some things that were true. But he is a man of *unapplied maxims*. Much that is true in his public utterances is at war with his public acts and his theory of statesmanship. When at the dedication of a Carnegie library in the city of Washington recently he said, "The man who will submit or demand to be carried is not worth carrying, and if you make the effort it helps neither him nor you!" This is a fruitful maxim that would make President Roosevelt an utterly "unavailable" candidate for renomination. For his whole theory is that men and industries need to be carried to be profitable at all. But this is so like Roosevelt, who if he were called upon to make a single application of his many maxims for one short day would relegate himself to private life and a distinguished station as a civilian. This he has no intention of doing.

With all his versatility we imagine that the President's real admirers will prefer to dwell upon the Civil Service Reform epoch of his life rather than upon any subsequent period of his career. For here his attitude was less equivocal, more resolute, and his ideals less objectionable. But here, as since, we can see how this man was governed by his environment. The reform of the Civil Service was not, is not, a small thing. But it is essentially a class reform, and young Mr. Roosevelt had no opposition in his class, and had everything to strengthen a backbone popularly supposed to be something like adamant in its unyielding perpendicularity, but really quite like jelly fish to the least formidable handling.

The character of Tom L. Johnson, Mayor of Cleveland, is at once more simple and more complex than that of the President. Superficially one might imagine that here was a man whose sympathies would be plutocratic. Of Southern birth and a man of wealth, whose wealth is the result of privilege—by what strange chance is it that this man should represent, in himself and in the ideals and convictions he voices, the hopes and aspirations of the disinherited? Behind that smiling face, the jovial, keen, characteristic and blunt personality that holds the attention, that is at once insinuating and ingratiating—who does things with a confidence born of his success in nearly all things he has touched, and yet who asserts this mastery so tactfully and unobtrusively—behind all this can it be that there lurks the passionate hatred of injustice, the great love for the unfortunate that marks those whose Samson-like hands have torn at the pillars of hoary wrong, or those who in the great march of history have at different periods led the hopes of the oppressed? Among all of these we search in vain for an *insouciant* Johnson. Surely, then, we are mistaken. Neither physiognomically nor temperamentally are the ranks of the reformers recruited from the Johnson type of man. We do not look to such types for the moral enthusiasm which glows in your Mazzinis, Georges, Phillips, and Garrisons.

Yet this man's career is the best proof of his sincerity. He has, indeed, dedicated himself to a task which has for its object nothing less than the reconstruction of society on a righteous basis—the making of the Golden Rule part of the legislation of the land, and the securing of economic equality for all the people. Not that he expects to accomplish this—no one man can do so much, but one may do what in him lies, and to the extent of his great abilities Johnson has already done much. It is to this Quixotic task to which this practical man has devoted all his energies and all his hopes. He may never attain the presidency—indeed, those who are the Warwicks of social revolt rarely attain to high places—but he will be the kingmaker, and out of the new political thought he is creating will emerge some individual who will represent, as Lincoln did, the compromise between the compromisers and the uncompromising. You make thought and we profit by it, said (in substance) William H. Seward to Wendell Phillips, and Johnson is making thought, though not in the same way that Phillips did, for Johnson is not only a reformer, but a very sagacious and practical politician.

He is audacious to the point of recklessness in his methods—apparently. An instance of his audacity was his challenge to his Republican opponent in his first campaign for Congress. Johnson at this time was an inexperienced speaker, and his opponent was one of the best debaters in Congress. But Johnson realized that he had entered the arena for a finish fight, and he has never yet run away from any foe. Burton declined on the ground, as he said, that he feared the hall would be packed with Johnson partisans. Johnson's counter-proposition was worthy of him. He proposed that admission be by ticket and that Burton take all the tickets.

The majority of the people of Ohio do not yet believe in Johnson. The hardest thing in the world, and the most puzzlingly funny at times, is the difficulty of convincing people who are in reality very easily deceived when their cupidity is appealed to by dishonest men, that any man is really honest. The prey of every "get rich quick" concern, and of every confidence man—the men who accept the protestations without question of the politicians of their party, and who grow fairly tipsy with fervor at the declarations of political charlatans and the tricks of every Cagliostro, are amazingly skeptical when they are told that any man may have the good of all men at heart. And the more honest he is the greater difficulty some men have in believing in him. For he is "so different." Thus, in a community of charlatans the man who

speaks his mind with simplicity and candor will manifestly appear as a humbug.

Is it a strange thing that one should wish to bring about a reign of righteousness in the community—especially after he had made a fortune for himself? Yet this is held to be just Johnson's weakness, whereas by ordinary methods of reasoning it might be accounted his strength. For he is safe whatever happens.

But suppose the pride of opinion urges him?—that and his ambition, Even from this low point of view is his sincerity inconceivable? May not one be ambitious to accomplish good, to plant institutions that will endure, and in view of which men will arise and call him blessed? Is there not a passion for righteousness as well as other passions? May it not be a source of pleasure to lead men to a goal of justice, with the incidental enjoyment that comes from being hailed as a leader? And in view of all this is not the public skepticism about some men, combined as it is with their unfathomable credulity respecting others when their prejudices or their cupidity is appealed to, one of the most amazing characteristics of vast masses of men?

There is no reason why we should not accept Johnson's statement of his motives. He is nothing of a demagogue. He does not tell men that they are wise and good and virtuous, for he knows better. He is often frank to the point of rudeness, and he has never retreated an inch for the sake of temporary success. He has more real backbone than Roosevelt ever dreamed of, and the resoluteness of his character has made him what he is. He does not owe his place to any adventitious aid of popular feeling—he has not ridden on the crest of a wave; he has fought his way through the rough waters and against the tide. The glamour of San Juan Hill is not upon him; he has not said the things people like to hear, but, on the contrary, has awakened the anger and opposition of the most powerful forces in the community by speaking unpalatable truths. Nevertheless he has triumphed, measurably, at least. And it is all due to the tremendous personality of the man, and the truth with which he is armed.

A presidential campaign, if such there might be, in which these two men should meet in the lists would be worth going a long way to see. The man who has never retreated against the man who forever retreats—the brave in words against the brave in deeds, the showy against the solid reputation. But more than that—typified in the two the struggle for a righteous social system against a blind acquiescence in things as they are, the intelligent, keen spirit of social reconstruction against the conservatism and respectability of all existing privilege.



## SOCIAL REFORM THE ALTERNATIVE OF SOCIALISM.

(*For the Review.*)

BY EDWARD HOWELL PUTNAM.

Prof. Richard T. Ely, in his book (*Studies in the Evolution of Industrial Society*), in the last chapter, under the caption, "The Possibilities of Social Reform," argues that social reform is the alternative of socialism. Prof. Ely calls attention to the actual interference of government in many instances, and to the sentiment in favor of public ownership of natural monopolies, and the extension of governmental control of public utilities. He says that our present competitive system modified by reform, is both the scientific and practical alternative of socialism. This is undoubtedly true, for, Prof. Ely well says