ADDRESSES
MADE IN HONOR
OF
ELIHU ROOT

Elihu Root

PRESIDENT OF THE CENTURY ASSOCIATION

1918 · 1927

ADDRESSES
MADE IN HIS HONOR

AT THE CLUB HOUSE
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FOREWORD

On Tuesday evening, April 27, 1937, in its library, the Century Club held a special meeting in memory of Elihu Root, its President from 1918 to 1927 inclusive. The meeting was addressed, in the order named, by Mr. Royal Cortissoz, President of the Club, Col. Henry L. Stimson, who, like Mr. Root, had occupied the office of United States Secretary of State, and by Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University. A letter was also read from Mr. Newton Baker, Secretary of War in an administration subsequent to that in which Mr. Root was at the head of that Department. This volume records the words spoken at the meeting.

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ADDRESS BY MR. CORTISSOZ

GENTLEMEN: If the meeting will please come to order we will proceed upon our duty, which has a kind of happiness about it, the happiness of appreciation. In *Ecclesiasticus* it is said, *Let us now praise famous men,* and we have come tonight to praise a famous man. I feel, as I approach this subject, a peculiar inadequacy. I knew Elihu Root a little. I used to meet him from time to time at the house of an old friend of his and an old friend of mine and I remember how charming he was, and how kind. I remember especially that he would listen to talk about politics from a much younger man with the same courtesy and consideration that he would show to his colleagues in the Senate.

I knew him always as a kind of legend, too. You know, there is a legend of Elihu Root. He lived to such a great age, he was with us for so many years, that there came to be about him a kind of atmosphere, the atmosphere of the first citizen of the United States. Well, you can understand how inadequate I feel when I have to speak of the first citizen of the United States. But I remember something that James Russell Lowell once said when he was coming away from a lecture of Emerson's, a lecture that the philosopher was giving late in the evening of his career. Lowell remarked that he couldn't comprehend everything that Emerson had said, but he felt that something beautiful had passed that way. That is what I have

always felt about Elihu Root, he who touched life at so many points, of which I was only a distant observer, and touched it so richly and so generously in the service of his fellow men, in the service of the United States. I can't speak of those things with authority. They will be so spoken of later by Colonel Stimson and Dr. Butler. There are one or two points, however, one or two phases of his career, that I can speak of with some familiarity, and one of them is the way in which he entered by a kind of natural right into membership of the Century Club and was long its president.

He helped to make this place what it is today. He helped by his gentle presence, his quiet humor, his friendly companionship, and he helped also through his devoted attention to his duties. There is a story telling how George Wickersham once exclaimed with admiration over the manner in which Mr. Root faithfully came to the Board Meetings and to the monthly meetings. Mr. Root said that that was perfectly inevitable. He never undertook duties which he did not feel that he could fulfill. Also, he said that when the dates of those meetings were set, as they always are set in the autumn, he invariably put them down in his little book and religiously all other engagements were excluded from those evenings. He came, as you all remember, devotedly to the Century Club.

Then I would like to speak of the peculiar fitness there

was in his being president for so long of a club that is dedicated to the subject of the arts. He held the arts close to his heart, and he did for them some of the most signal services of his career. I can remember a meeting in which I was privileged to share, that was held at the National Academy of Design in 1929. Our late fellow Centurion, Cass Gilbert, had established what he called the President's Medal, a gold medal to be conferred for distinguished services in the arts. It was conferred that night upon Mr. Root. It was a very charming occasion. President Hoover sent a letter. Secretary of State Stimson was there and spoke. Secretary of the Treasury Mellon was there and spoke, and there were other tributes. And I remember that Mr. Root was so characteristically modest in the way in which he took all the honor that was done to him. He said that he accepted the Medal with grateful appreciation, but not with the garlands that were showered upon him on that occasion.

I remember another evening held here in 1935, up in the private dining room, when a number of us gathered together to celebrate the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the National Commission of Fine Arts. Mr. Moore, the distinguished chairman of that body, presided. The table was enveloped, so to say, by artists, architects and landscape architects, painters and sculptors and others. They all paid tribute to Mr. Root, for he was, as Mr. Moore said, *the author and finisher of our faith,* that is to say, the

faith that was embodied in the National Commission of Fine Arts.

I have now something I want to read to you, because it is really a contribution to history. Mr. Moore spoke that evening of the fact that nothing could better begin the proceedings than the letter of greeting that Mr. Root had sent. He was unfortunately not able to come, but he wrote this letter. It was a long letter, and I am not going to read all of it to you, but I must read certain passages of it because, as I say, it is history, the history of one of the most momentous things in the development of art in the United States, and that was the establishment of the National Commission of Fine Arts. This is part of what Mr. Root said:

"Sometime about the early spring of 1910 some Senator had introduced in the Senate a resolution providing for the purchase by the government of a number of paintings that nobody wanted to buy, and under the rule that resolution was referred to the Committee on Library. The responsibility for protecting the government against a waste of money was thus thrown upon the Committee. . . . In the discussion we recalled Theodore Roosevelt's appointment of a Fine Arts Commission which fell to the ground because it had no legal standing. . . . We finally determined to ask Congress to provide for the appointment of a Fine Arts Commission.

"Accordingly, in some way, Frank Newlands and I

found ourselves made responsible for drafting such an act. Newlands prepared a bill, admirably devised and expressed, for a commission which would have very extensive powers and containing clauses which would seriously limit the action of Congress in cases which did not receive the approval of the Commission, and I drafted a very brief statute, making the Commission purely advisory and not attempting any limitations whatever on Congressional action."

That was the statute that went through—Mr. Root's statute—and this is such a fine instance, I think, of the extraordinary wisdom that Mr. Root had, of the capacity that he had for looking all around his subject and understanding every possible aspect of it. He saw precisely the kind of bill that would not go through Congress and precisely the bill that would.

He goes on to say, "If the bill had undertaken to give any compulsory effect to the opinion of the Commission, it would not have passed. If the bill had been introduced in support of a general principle it would not have passed. But the narrow, definite, practical, little assistance that the Committee needed and asked for aroused practically no opposition whatever, and so without creation of any power of legal compulsion, there was brought to the service of the government the authority of competent opinion upon questions of art arising in the course of administration, and wide-spread and habitual deference

to such opinion has saved the government and the community from God knows how many atrocities."

(Applause)

He was wise, and he was in art, as in other things, with his magnificent integrity, always on the side of the angels. Everything about Elihu Root as I see him in this legendary garment which I spoke of a moment ago—everything suggests to me the wise and the good and the truly helpful man. How he stood behind the men who sought to rehabilitate Washington according to the famous plan of L'Enfant! Mr. Moore told us of one instance, I remember, when McKim, the leading architect in that great project, was asked to narrow the dimensions of the Mall, and McKim said, "No, one can compromise on anything but the essence. The Mall width is the essence. Not by one inch shall it be narrowed with my consent." Secretary Root, and Secretary Taft, and President Roosevelt stood behind him, and the Mall was not narrowed by so much as an inch.

He was the author, the creator, of the National Commission of Fine Arts. He was the president of the American Federation of Arts, one of the founders of it, and the honorary president of it for a long time. He was very helpful for a long period as trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art here in New York City. All his working life, that life that he gave so much to the public good, he gave wholeheartedly to what was, according to Keats' phrase,

Right and fine, in the things of the mind, in the things of beauty.

With that, I end what I have to say about Mr. Root's interest in the arts. I have spoken of my inability to touch on other phases of his career, but I have to read you something else before I present the first speaker to you. It is part of a letter which Mr. Newton Baker wrote to Mr. Noyes when we hoped that he also might be among the speakers tonight, paying tribute to Mr. Root, and Mr. Baker, as you may judge from his position during the Great War, was peculiarly competent to pay this tribute. He says,

"If I could be present, I would feel that my obligation would be to speak of Mr. Root as Secretary of War. The creation of the General Staff was not only his outstanding contribution to the national defense of the country, but the outstanding contribution made by any Secretary of War from the beginning of history. Without that contribution from him, the participation of the United States in the World War would necessarily have been a confused, ineffective and discreditable episode. The officers of the old army had all the ability and high ideals one could wish for, but the opportunity to make their ability and ideals effective came directly from the organization created under Mr. Root's counseling intelligence."

I wish that I might have the power to develop that theme, because I have felt these things, in spite of my

imperfect knowledge of them, in Mr. Root's career, but happily, Colonel Stimson is present to talk to us about that governmental world in which Mr. Root for so many years lived and moved and had his being. I have the honor to present Colonel Stimson! (Applause)

ADDRESS BY COL. STIMSON

MR. PRESIDENT, MY FELLOW CENTURIONS: Mr. Root's years were so many and his whole life was so crowded with achievements that it is difficult to prevent a memorial of him from assuming an almost encyclopedic nature.

For many years he was the unchallenged leader of our bar, both in the state and in the nation. His primacy at the New York bar followed close upon the heels of two other great Centurions, James C. Carter and Joseph H. Choate. He was a persuasive and successful advocate; the wisest of counselors; a skillful and constructive negotiator. He was trusted with the guidance of many great interests but he never allowed himself to become the servant of a single man or group. He was of the type of that era when the great lawyer was also the great citizen, preeminent in his community. By the time that American business had become large enough to dominate and compel the specialization of its legal advisers, Mr. Root himself had become so great as to overtower any client, corporate or individual. His success as a practitioner was outstanding and profitable, but the chief interest of his heart lay in the welfare of his profession rather than in its benefits to himself. He never outgrew his interest in the progress of the bench and the bar. Throughout his life he devoted himself to the constructive solution of problems arising in the administration of American justice. He served constantly in many organizations devoted to those

ends. Reference to two of these services will be sufficient to illustrate his professional spirit.

Toward the close of the last century the judicial system of New York was suffering badly from the rapid growth of population and business. Our Court of Appeals was overcrowded with work and far behind in its decisions. Merely palliative remedies had proved impotent to keep it abreast of its calendar. The delays in appeals amounted almost to a denial of justice. In the Constitutional Convention of 1894 Mr. Root as the chairman of the Judiciary Committee drafted the remedial system which put an end to these evils and has adequately served our state ever since. The jurisdiction of the Court of Appeals was effectively limited to the consideration of questions of law while a new group of intermediate appellate courts of ample power, prominence, and dignity was created to serve as a protection to the upper court, and at the same time to afford adequate review for litigants in other cases. For forty years the Court of Appeals has remained abreast of its calendar and the four Appellate Divisions have maintained the respect of the bar and of the state.

Thirty years later when he was seventy-eight years old, he laid the foundation of an institution of unique character which now promises to serve well in the solution of an even broader problem of jurisprudence. For many years the clarity and authority of the American common law have been threatened by the unchecked volume of its

growth. The state courts of forty-eight different sovereignties and the federal courts of an even greater number of federal districts have been pouring forth a volume of decisions which have threatened to overwhelm our common law in a sea of confusion and to render unattainable any such thing as certainty in the knowledge of legal rights. As Mr. Root himself pointed out, it was evident that the time would soon come, unless something were done about it, when courts would be forced practically to decide cases not upon authority but upon the impression of the moment. The evil had been long discussed; many remedies had been suggested; but finally it was by Mr. Root's originality and leadership that a great gathering of lawyers, judges, and professors of law from all over the country organized and put into operation the American Law Institute. This institution is devoted to making a compact restatement of the American common law which will become authoritative not by legislative fiat but merely from the accuracy and reputation of its authors. The Institute is already rapidly acquiring prestige and public approval, and its terse, clear, and concise statements are becoming recognized as the solution of a problem which for years had seemed insoluble.

These instances may serve to illustrate the constructive qualities which Mr. Root brought to a legal task. Others in a discussion might suggest remedies of approximate relevancy and value. When he came in, his analyti-

cal mind flew as if by instinct to the nub of the problem, and eventually a solution would follow which was at once simple, constructive, and permanent. He had another quality afterward apparent in his public work which those who knew him well had been privileged to witness also in his professional life. His entry into a legal conference not only brought to the subject of discussion clarity of analysis and ingenuity of suggestion but it also tended to lift the whole matter to a higher plane of consideration. He was as far as possible removed from chicanery and legal technicalities. He sought the permanent benefit of his client and he believed that it necessarily rested upon a basis of honor. In the light of the fables which tend to grow up in this cynical post-war age regarding problems of corporate and financial interest, I am glad to emphasize this fact. The influence which he universally wielded upon the younger men who came in contact with him is ample confirmation of my own observation.

The time eventually arrived when these professional qualities inevitably led him to the public service. At a meeting held in his honor by the members of the bar he has himself told how this came about:

"Sixteen years ago in the month of July, having just finished the labors of the year and gone to my country home, I was called to the telephone and told by one speaking for President McKinley: 'The President directs me to say to you that he wishes you to take the position of Secre-

tary of War.' I answered 'Thank the President for me but say that it is quite absurd, I know nothing about war. I know nothing about the army.' I was told to hold the wire and in a moment there came back the reply, 'President McKinley directs me to say that he is not looking for anyone who knows anything about war or for anyone who knows anything about the army; he has got to have a lawyer to direct the government of these Spanish islands and you are the lawyer he wants.' Of course I had then on the instant to determine what kind of a lawyer I wished to be and there was but one answer to make, and so I went to perform a lawyer's duty upon the call of the greatest of all our clients, the government of our country. And I have never felt for a moment that I have stepped outside of the noble profession to which I had intended to devote my life."

When in August 1899 Elihu Root took over the affairs of his new client, the United States with its habitual unpreparedness had just blundered successfully through one of its periodic wars. When he took office the war with Spain had been formally terminated by the Treaty at Paris. But in the War Department hostilities still lingered, and the attacks and counter attacks of various bureaus over the mistakes of the past campaign were reverberating in the press. Ten thousand miles away on the other side of the world the insurrection of Aguinaldo was flaming in full vigor and the scanty American forces in a

strange tropical country were maintaining precarious positions. In the islands of Porto Rico, Cuba and the Philippines some eight or ten million of helpless people were now entirely dependent upon the tender mercies of an American Congress, representing a nation which had not expected or desired to acquire dominion over them and was utterly ignorant of their history, their racial characteristics and their social and political aptitudes. As the wise prescience of Mr. McKinley had foreseen, the leadership for the solution of these great problems would center in the War Department. The problems themselves were without precedent and each and every one of them was of an emergent nature. Consider what would have happened if without farsighted and vigorous leadership their solution had been left to the dilatory treatment of a legislative body, enveloped in its concern with domestic matters and traditionally susceptible to the pressure of organized selfish interests. Then we might have had a shameful page of American history indeed, replete with neglect and suffering abroad and sordid scandal at home. Then indeed the fears of those who dreaded imperialism might well have been amply justified. Consider what actually did happen. After a few months of Titanic labors on the part of the new counsel to the American government, discipline had been promptly restored in the Department; a new force of nearly seventy thousand men had been raised, organized, commissioned and sent to the

relief of the existing forces in the Philippines; the insurrection had been broken and the perils to law and order reduced to the scattered raids made by guerillas; the problems of our three new dependencies had been carefully studied and plans for the solution of each one of them were already in motion; Leonard Wood had been selected and sent from Santiago to Havana in charge of the problem of Cuba; William H. Taft had been selected, instructed and sent to the solution of the problem of the Philippines; steps to insure the return of Cuba to the Cubans were already under way; and the magnificent charter of the future rights of the Filipinos was already operating in those far distant islands to terminate military rule and perform the unique task of educating an Oriental people in the problem of free government according to American standards. That charter was comprised in the instructions to the Philippine Commission drawn by Mr. Root and signed by Mr. McKinley in April, 1900. Two of its paragraphs should be remembered in every history of this country. Let me read them:

"The Commission should bear in mind that the government which they are establishing is designed, not for our satisfaction or for the expression of our theoretical views, but for the happiness, peace and prosperity of the people of the Philippine Islands, and the measures adopted should be made to conform to their customs, their habits, and even their prejudices, to the fullest extent consistent

with the accomplishment of the indispensable requisites of just and effective government.

"At the same time the Commission should bear in mind, and the people of the Islands should be made plainly to understand, that there are certain great principles of government which have been made the basis of our governmental system which we deem essential to the rule of law and the maintenance of individual freedom, and of which they have, unfortunately, been denied the experience possessed by us; that there are also certain practical rules of government which we have found essential to the preservation of these great principles of liberty and law, and that these principles and these rules of government must be established and maintained in their islands for the sake of their liberty and happiness, however much they may conflict with the customs or laws of procedure with which they are familiar."

Such a statement of principles was then without precedent in colonial history. It was criticized by neighboring governments as absurd and dangerous altruism. But its truth and wisdom have been demonstrated by the years. The momentum which it furnished, supported by the devoted service of a long line of American civil servants in the Islands, from governors to school teachers, has made the American effort in the Philippines a bright portion of our history and has borne fruitage in the loyalty and gratitude of a Filipino people. The original inspiration and

shaping of that noble effort was more fully the work of Elihu Root than of any other human being.

The solution of our insular problems was but a fraction of the labors of those four years in the War Department. Against bitter opposition from reactionaries both in the Department and Congress, he secured the creation of a general staff for our army. The War College at Washington bears on its entrance today a tablet testifying that its existence is due to his effort. He strengthened federal control over the National Guard and began the creation of a federal army reserve. When in 1904 he resigned, this country for the first time had adequate machinery to prepare the military plans for its national defense and it had also the foundation of an organization for the citizen forces upon which that defense must mainly depend. In over a century of our national history no such intelligent, constructive, and vital force had ever occupied the chair of the Secretary of War.

When in 1905 Mr. Root was called again from private life to public service, no such striking and unique opportunity for original effort awaited him in the State Department as had been the case in the War Department. Yet again his service was marked by outstanding achievements. I again confine myself to a few illustrative instances of his work.

Our consular service which theretofore had been notoriously a prey to the spoilsman was placed under the

Civil Service rules upon a basis solely of merit. Mr. Root's work in accomplishing this was an effective beginning toward the goal which was finally reached in the statutes of 1923 and 1930 creating a permanent foreign service, fit in character and spirit to be compared with that of the army and navy.

In 1906 he made a memorable diplomatic journey around South America in which he announced to the republics of that continent a broad policy of reassurance and brotherhood. At Rio de Janeiro he said:

"We wish for no victories except those of peace; for no territory except our own; for no sovereignty except the sovereignty over ourselves. We deem the independence and equal rights of the smallest and weakest member of the family of nations entitled to as much respect as those of the greatest empire, and we deem the observance of that respect the chief guaranty of the weak against the oppression of the strong.

"We neither claim nor desire any rights or privileges or powers that we do not freely concede to every American republic. We wish to increase our prosperity, to expand our trade, to grow in wealth, in wisdom and in spirit, but our conception of the true way to acomplish this is not to pull down others but to become greater and stronger together."

Later he announced that it was contrary to the policy of the United States that its armed forces should be used

for the collection of foreign debts. He thus effectively began that reassurance of our neighbors on this continent against military intervention which ultimately has been carried out during the administrations of Messrs. Hoover and Roosevelt by the withdrawal of all our armed forces in Haiti and Nicaragua, and which has facilitated the recent achievements of the Pan American congresses in Montevideo and Buenos Aires.

By the so-called Gentlemen's Agreement he solved the delicate issue which had arisen with Japan over the question of immigration and did it in a way which was as effective on the side of our interests as it was satisfactory to Japanese pride. By this last achievement he so won the friendly confidence of the statesmen of Japan that when a dozen years later at the Washington Conference in 1921 the vital questions of naval disarmament and the balance of power in the Far East were up for adjustment, the treaties which embodied that settlement were assented to by Japan largely through Mr. Root's efforts as one of the American delegates to the Conference.

While Secretary of State he founded the American Society of International Law of which he served as president for seventeen years, thus for the first time establishing in the city of Washington a permanent and influential association devoted to the development of international law and thus facilitating our official work on behalf of international peace.

The close of his term as Secretary of State was but the beginning of a long period of unofficial service in the field of foreign affairs which lasted till the end of his life. He became the outstanding American authority in such matters, known and trusted by the statesmen of other countries and during twenty more years he was constantly called upon for assistance and advice.

At the close of the war while the covenant of the League of Nations was under consideration and an approaching deadlock between the President and the Senate was apparent, Mr. Root was appealed to by friends who felt that a failure by the United States to ratify the covenant would be a great disaster to the world. He strongly sympathized with their views. While disappointed at some of its omissions and apprehensive of some of its affirmative provisions, he nevertheless felt that the articles of the covenant, particularly those which provided for the compulsory calling of conferences to consider impending controversies and for the investigation of and report upon such controversies by the council of the League, were of the highest value and a great step forward in international relations.

On the request of friends in both political parties he prepared amendments to the draft proposal of the covenant and these were sent through the State Department to the conferees at Versailles. Thereafter on the request of the chairman of the National Republican Committee he

wrote a full statement of his views, and this with the amendments and reservations suggested by him was submitted to the members of the Senate. In the light of retrospect it is now possible to appraise the wisdom of Mr. Root's suggestions. The provisions contained in Sections XI and XV of the covenant, which among other provisions he had thus approved, have formed by far the most important machinery which has been resorted to by the League in its efforts at conciliation and peace. Whether or not the presence of the representatives of the United States at those conferences, speaking for the most powerful nation in the world, with its record of impartiality and love of peace, would have been enough to save the world from the collapse of the peace structure which has since occurred, no one can now say. We can only be sure that the forces believing in the rule of law between the nations and in the establishment of a secure reign of peace would have been immeasurably strengthened.

A year later when the League of Nations took up the establishment of a court of international justice, Mr. Root was invited to become a member of an advisory committee of jurists to draft plans for that purpose. The creation of such a court had long been the cornerstone of his creed for the promotion of world peace. Thirteen years before as Secretary of State he had instructed the delegates to the second Hague Conference as to the importance of creating such a permanent court with an in-

dependent body of judges devoting their time exclusively to this judicial work. The project had broken down in 1907 over the question of how the judges of such a court should be selected. When the advisory committee of jurists met in 1920, Mr. Root became one of the leaders in the work of solving this difficult problem. By the general consensus of his associates the credit for the ultimate solution was primarily due to him. A successful agreement was obtained and the recommendations made by that committee became the foundation of the present statute of the World Court.

Nine years later after the American Senate had refused to ratify the statute for our adherence to the Court, except upon reservations which were distasteful to the other nations who were already members of the Court, Mr. Root was called upon again. He was then eighty-four years old but he crossed the Atlantic and again became the leader of the group of statesmen at Geneva who were seeking to solve this difficulty. So great was his influence and so successful his work that some fifty-five nations consented to a revised protocol seeking to meet the objections and reservations of the American Senate. On the basis of this revised protocol President Hoover directed the signature of the protocol of adhesion to the World Court and recommended its ratification by the Senate.

But the spirit of isolationism in the Senate continued to increase and ratification was again deferred. Three

years later at the age of eighty-seven Mr. Root accepted the invitation of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, came to Washington, and appeared before it advocating the acceptance of the protocol. When in January 1935 the Senate finally declined to ratify, the chance of himself seeing his dearest hope for the promotion of world peace on the part of his own government, was killed. Yet I believe that no one of his close friends ever heard him utter a word of impatience or complaint.

I have given you merely the most cursory outline of the efforts of a lifetime devoted bravely, patiently, and intelligently to the cause of peace and good will among men on this earth. Elihu Root believed that such a cause must be based upon law. It is not enough to desire peace; it is not enough to clamor for peace; or even to unite in occasional efforts for peace. Joint human endeavor is the most difficult task of man, and international cooperation is the most difficult form of joint human endeavor. Centuries of experience have taught us how slowly, even within the narrow limits of our own national boundaries, is developed step by step that form of human cooperation which we call law. Elihu Root believed that only in the same way by infinite patience, by unremitting effort, and by the exercise of the highest intelligence can a law of nations be established upon which alone will securely rest the foundation of a world peace.

Elihu Root was a master of constitutional government,

—not only a master of its fundamental principles but a master of its practice and its art. He well knew that it was not an affair of abstract theory, but of human habits of restraint; human poise; and precedents based upon wise human action. He once said to me: "Never forget that the man who wields the power of the United States government wields a battle ax. No man should swing a battle ax as if it were a riding whip." In his own exercise of enormous governmental powers he was always a model of consideration and restraint. His exquisite tact, his never failing humor, his constant recognition of the rights of the other party, enabled him to persuade and guide the most difficult of situations. Throughout his sixteen years of service in the Cabinet and the Senate his thoughtful personality was universally recognized as one of the most potent influences in Washington. It was said of him by a visiting diplomat that his entry into any room of statesmen was the dominating event of the assemblage. Yet he was the most modest and sensitive of men. His heart always remained loyal to the home and the surroundings from which he had sprung and these were the influences which inspired and dominated his character. In closing his speech against "Invisible Government" in the Constitutional Convention of 1915, he himself affirmed this creed of his life's conduct. He said:

"Mr. Chairman, there is a plain old house in the Oneida hills, overlooking the valley of the Mohawk,

where truth and honor dwelt in my youth. When I go back, as I am about to go, to spend my declining years, I mean to go with the feeling that I have not failed to speak and to act here in accordance with the lessons I learned there from the God of my fathers. God grant that this opportunity for service to our country and our state may not be neglected by any of the men for whom I feel so deep a friendship in this convention."

PRESIDENT CORTISSOZ: Gentlemen, I am sure that you would want me to express your appreciation of Colonel Stimson's giving us so illuminating an address, so beautiful an address, which he has come all the way from Washington to make. We thank you, Colonel Stimson, from the bottom of our hearts! (Applause)

Dr. Butler, like Colonel Stimson, knows a great deal about Elihu Root's public career. He knows, also, a great deal about the man, as one comes to know it in the intimacies of friendship. They were friends for I don't know how many years, but for a long, long time, and out of that long time, Dr. Butler, our fellow member and friend, will now address us! (Applause)

ADDRESS BY DR. BUTLER

MR. PRESIDENT AND MY FELLOW CENTURIONS: There have been seven statesmen in the history of our government who have been invited by Presidents of the United States to become first Secretary of War and then Secretary of State. They were: Timothy Pickering of Pennsylvania; James Monroe of Virginia; John C. Calhoun of South Carolina; William L. Marcy of New York; Lewis Cass of Michigan; Elihu Root of New York; and Henry L. Stimson of New York. We have just heard from the seventh name on that list, a most illuminating and affectionate presentation of the public service of the sixth name on that list. It is an interesting coincidence that both were members of the Century.

In July, 1899, being in the State of California, I received a telegram from President McKinley, asking me to use my influence to have Elihu Root accept his invitation to become Secretary of War. No appointment seemed to me more ridiculous. I could not imagine Root as knowing anything about war or of military organization, but I wired the President and I wired Root that I hoped he would do whatever the President wished. In the winter of 1905-6, my long-time friend, Richard Haldane, who had not then been made a peer, was invited to become Secretary of State for War in the Cabinet of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. I wrote him a word of con-

gratulation, but said I could not conceive anything more incongruous than his being Secretary of State for War. He was a philosopher, a lawyer, an intellectual of the highest type, who had never seen an army and who had very few generals among his acquaintances. When I met him a few months later in London and repeated my humorous observation, Haldane said, "Yes, but let me tell you how a philosopher may become a successful Secretary of State for War. The American Government has printed in a single volume five annual reports of Mr. Elihu Root as Secretary for War, and they are the last word as to the organization and management of an army in a democracy. I have nothing else to do but follow these reports."

It is not easy for me, even in this company of Centurions, to speak of Mr. Root. My affection for him was so intense, my admiration so profound, our association so long and so intimate, that it is much like baring one's heart to speak of him to any company, however intimate.

Root came into the Century a little more than a half-century ago. I, a mere youth, followed him three years afterward. It was at the Century that we first met, in the old house on East Fifteenth Street, and those names which he recalled with so much affection, when he stood here fifteen years ago, almost this very night, at the celebration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of our Association—those names, orators, lawyers, men of letters, artists, men of the world, who had been typical Centurions

—those names which he recited are the names which were my introduction to the Century, and great names they were. Of my guide, philosopher and seer for that half-century, associated in so many ways and in so many undertakings, you must excuse me for being unable to speak without very exceptional feeling.

One does not sorrow at the death of Root. One rejoices at his life. Had he died in early or in middle life it would have been different, but he has gone out over the long span of nearly ninety-two years of age. He has written his name on the very highest scroll of the immortal marble of human memory, and he went with the affection, the regard and the respect of his fellow countrymen, regardless of party, as well as that of the leaders of opinion and public action throughout this wide world. It was a remarkable career. Mr. Stimson has described it to us with accuracy and astonishing completeness of detail.

I should like to add, or to dwell upon, some personal aspects of his career, most of which are quite unknown to the public; but there is now no particular reason why the public should not know them.

Following this distinguished career as Secretary of War, with those lasting achievements which he accomplished, and his career as Secretary of State, with that magnificent demonstration of insight and constructive power of interpretation and leadership which he showed year by year and almost month by month, there came a

time in our history when a large portion of the thoughtful men of the country, especially, of course, those in his own political party, turned to him for leadership and sought to put in his hands the direction of the world's history at one of the most critical moments, perhaps the most critical, in modern times. In the autumn and early winter of 1915-16, leaders of the thought of the party to which he belonged, as well as leaders of the party organization, held many and frequent conferences as to what their attitude should be in the face of the problem which was growing graver day by day, both for this country and for the world. The Great War was under way. Its outcome was plainly uncertain. Traditional rules of international law were being discarded or neglected or overridden. It looked at one time as if without some interruption or check, the civilization of the Western World was to go to pieces in and through that great struggle. These men turned to Elihu Root and sought to have his party present him to the people as its candidate for the Presidency of the United States.

As a preliminary tactical step, the organization leaders invited Mr. Root to serve as Chairman of the Republican State Convention of 1916, held in the month of February at Carnegie Hall. They believed that the speech which he would then make and the resolution which they proposed to introduce and to have adopted, would go far towards securing his nomination for the Presidency by his party

convention in June. Mr. Root made his speech and it did have the effect that was expected of it, but he peremptorily refused to permit the introduction, discussion or passage of any resolution referring to him as a candidate for President.

The scene then moved to Chicago in June following. The convention assembled under conditions of exceptional difficulty and suppressed excitement. The opposition party had swept the country four years earlier, and Mr. Root's party had broken to pieces through the competing conventions of 1912. What was possible? What was practicable? In this situation the leaders of the party organization in New York and the leaders of party opinion determined to press for the nomination of Mr. Root. There were two obstacles, powerful and different.

The first came from men, great friends and admirers of Mr. Root, desperately anxious for party success in November, who believed that because of the fact that he had presided at the convention of 1912 and had been associated with the Taft element in his party, feeling against him would be so strong and so bitter that he could not receive the party vote and be elected. Among the men who held that view, who were most influential and who were great admirers of Mr. Root, were Senator Crane of Massachusetts and Mr. Charles B. Warren of Michigan.

There was another obstacle, and that obstacle was found in Senator Boies Penrose of Pennsylvania. Senator

Penrose resented desperately a statement, which I shall read to you in a moment, which Mr. Root had made ten years earlier, and would not listen to his nomination. The convention held two ballots. Mr. Root was second in the balloting, but the spirit of the convention was in favor of his nomination provided these two obstacles could be removed. Those who were in favor of another candidate pressed for a third ballot, believing that they could go forward to victory. The majority of the convention felt otherwise and by a vote of some six hundred fifty to two or three hundred voted to adjourn until the following day. This vote represented the desire to nominate Root were it possible to do so.

I do not wish to overstate, and it is not important that others should accept my opinion, but I believed then and I believe now that the events of that night changed the history of the world in your time and in mine.

Senator Penrose of Pennsylvania had been defeated for the control of the delegation from his state, but he still had thirty-six votes to do his bidding. After Senator Murray Crane and Mr. Warren had agreed that if Theodore Roosevelt did not come out against Root, and if Penrose would permit his nomination, they would accept it, I went to Penrose between two and three o'clock that morning. I had an argument which taxed my nerves to the utmost, but this was what stood in the way:

In 1905, when there were some complications and dif-

ficulties in the municipal government of Philadelphia, Mr. Root was called upon for advice and help and he wrote to the Mayor of the City of Philadelphia a letter in which occur these words:

"Crimes committed by men who have political power are often sheltered behind official indifference and inactivity. . . . There is more at stake here than the mere punishment of isolated offenses. There is the question whether your city shall continue to be governed by criminals or shall take its place on the list of American cities capable of honest self-government. . . . I have taken very great interest in the cases, because I have acquired absolute confidence in the sincerity of your purpose and in your pluck and persistency, and I have strong desire that the City of Philadelphia, whose history and good name are so dear to every American, shall be relieved from the stain which a corrupt and criminal combination masquerading under the name of Republicans has put upon her."

That was the sentence, gentlemen, which changed the history of your time and mine. Mr. Penrose would not give us a single vote, and he being unwilling to do so, Senator Crane and Mr. Warren and others said it was useless to proceed, and Mr. Root failed of the nomination.

It was my conviction then and it is my conviction now that had be been nominated he would have been elected, and under his leadership, with his insight into the funda-

mental conditions that were controlling world policies and the respect had for him by the chancellories of Europe, that everything which has happened since 1916 would have happened differently. You may call it prophecy if you choose, but from a pretty long and intimate association with politics, I call it fact.

Mr. Root treated that whole episode as if it were a plaything. He was profoundly moved by the admiration and the efforts of his friends, but he believed, and it was his nature to believe, that there was a higher purpose and a more controlling principle than any which he could manage to invent or to guide which would care for the world and bring it to a more peaceful, a more prosperous and a more progressive life. It was splendid of him that he had that mentality, that temperament and that outlook upon life.

Mr. Root made what may be called his last public appearance as he was approaching his ninety-first birthday in the month of December, 1935.

The Trustees of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, of which he had been the first President and the guiding spirit, were to hold their twenty-fifth anniversary meeting in the very room in Mr. Carnegie's residence in New York in which they had been assembled a quarter of a century earlier by Mr. Carnegie and handed the certificate of his great endowment. Could Mr. Root come? If he could not, it would be a curiously weakened

assembly. Only five of the original group of Trustees were living. There were many who had been added to the list who had never seen him or heard him speak, and who knew him only at a distance. But Mr. Root came. He responded to the greeting of these Trustees in a speech which lasted perhaps six or seven minutes, and which no one who heard it will ever forget. It was an outlook from the loftiest point of view, with the broadest mind, on the world of today and tomorrow. That man of almost ninety-one did not strike any pessimistic note. He spoke with hopefulness, with confidence and with good cheer, and he bade those of us who had so long been associated with him, and those who had come to join our ranks, to be also of good cheer and to march forward on our well-paved path despite the cloudy skies and storms that overhung and surrounded us.

Mr. Root has so often exercised constructive influence in great things and in small. With his pencil he would change the language of an almost insignificant pending resolution for its betterment. With his interpretation he would throw new light upon some great principle or some important public policy. Mr. Stimson referred just now to his letter of instruction to the delegates from the United States to the second Hague Conference of 1907. Oh, I wish that every American might read that document today! It is thirty years old, but it is a classic. It did what it was intended to do. It gave that group of excep-

tionally able men the guidance and the definite instruction which they needed, and, read as it was in every capital of the world, it profoundly impressed the world-consciousness that here was a voice to speak for America in terms of constructive leadership as a world servant and a world captain.

His was a great voice. When Mr. Root spoke, his manner was peculiar. Many of you will remember that it took him some little time to get oratorically started. He began with an almost nervous self-inhibition, and with this motion of his right hand, and then in a moment or two when the flow of thought and stream of words had been established, it all stopped and he went on to those beautiful passages as full of sentiment frequently as they were of convincing reason.

Our Century has had many tributes paid to it in the passing years, but it may well be questioned whether any was more significant and more touching than that which Mr. Root made as President, on the occasion to which I referred just now, fifteen years ago.

He said a very interesting thing at that time about our name. He commented upon the fact that it was the Century Association and not the Century Club, and he suggested that this signified that the Century was organized not to do something, but to be something, and that through association we were to be something together which we had not been able to be as individuals. We

were not merely a club, to do something objective and outside our immediate personal interests.

Going back over our roll of membership, select each for himself the great names in New York for the past three quarters of a century, and tell me where else you can find such representation of what is best in the American intellectual and artistic life? We have not chosen our associates for their wealth or for their personal distinction. Judged not by external and material standards, we have chosen them for themselves alone. We have chosen them because they were men of the type which could understand and appreciate Elihu Root.

One does not like to exaggerate. It is easy to exaggerate, and I wish not to do so; but in this presence I must say what I have so often said privately for twenty years or more, that to find in American public life a mind of like power, like insight, like capacity for interpretation, vision and courage, you must go back to Alexander Hamilton. Call the roll of great Americans—and great men there are—and you find that those outstanding traits of Root were the outstanding traits of Hamilton. That is acceded to by men who might not agree with the teachings or conclusions of either of them, when they are just enough and wise enough to stand off and see them as the great historic personalities which they are.

My friends of the Century, we are not speaking tonight of any ordinary man. We are not here in memory of the

greatness which we are so glad to acclaim among members of our group. We are here to record in our own simple Century fashion our affection, our understanding, and our undying applause for the great American who loved this companionship, who found here the home of his heart and of his mind, and who here got, week after week and month after month through the half-century, new inspiration for his great intellectual and moral service to his fellow men.

It is all summed up in those superb words of him who wrote *Ecclesiasticus,*

"Let us now praise famous men. . . .
Men renowned for their power,
Giving counsel by their understanding. . . .
Leaders of the people by their counsels. . . .
Wise and eloquent in their instructions. . . .
All these were honored in their generations
And were the glory of their times."

Such is your dear friend and mine—Elihu Root!

PRESIDENT CORTISSOZ: Gentlemen, we are indebted to Dr. Butler as we are to Colonel Stimson for bringing back Elihu Root to us tonight. It is as though his presence had been made real to us by both these eloquent speakers. I want to bring our proceedings to a close with a line of Elihu Root's own. When I wrote to congratulate him on his ninetieth birthday, and told him how affectionately he was remembered here, he said in the course of his reply, "I am living in memories now, and you make the Century Club a warm, a cheerful place to remember."

You see, he remembered us and we remember him.

GEORGE PAGE ELY
OLD LYME
CONNECTICUT

TELEPHONE LYME 143

A BAR RELIEF PICTURE ~~XXXXXX~~ OF MR. ROOT

During the early days of Prohibition the House Committee, of which I was a member, with the able guidance of Charles Platt did over the old serving bar into a more cheerful little hideout where members who had lockers in the adjoining room could find sanctuary and some palliating ingredients to mix with their illgotten, bootlegged stimulants and be served to the betterment of their dispositions if not for their tummies.

When the final bar rail and brass foot rail, presented by Dick Rathborne, had been installed with an appropriate latin inscription and the job completed Ingalls Kimball* that as Mr Root happened to be in the Club we take him in and get, as we hoped, his approval of what wehad done. So we led him in, not without some misgiving.

On arrivalhe examined the black trim, the Chinese red wall, the bar rail, then turning tous and putting his foot on the brass rail at the bottom said "Gentlemen, this is a step in the right direction."

* suggested

He further indicated his love of good fellowship by a very generous contribution to a private fund controlled by certained thirsty indivduals who at all monthly dinners presented to the club the where-with-all by which gloom was banished and good cheer established. This custom continued all through the arid peroid from 1919 to 1933 and whenever the " Fund" needed sweetening Mr Root was the Abo Ben Adam Of the Club.

G.P.E. 2/25/'58

GEORGE PAGE ELY
OLD LYME
CONNECTICUT

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This incident told to me by Charles Bartlett as coming from a friend of his, attorney Dggett of New Haven, who vouched for its authenticity, seems worthy of recording in that it was brought to light during a discussion of the disadvantages oldage.

At some gathering or dinner given in honor of Mr. Root Mr. Stimson, not having seen Mr. Root for a long period, grasped Mr. R. by the hand and said "Root you are wonderful- you look just as you always have and as if you could do just as much as you ever could." Mr. R. laid his hand on Stimson's shoulder and said "Stimson, you are right, I can, for an hour and a half."

G.P.E. 3/7 ---1958