

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 9, NO. 246.

NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 1909.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

EXIT ROOSEVELT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IT matters little whether the article by Senator Thomas Collier Platt in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine* for next month, and advance proofs of which are now being issued, is merely the issue of a garrulously indiscreet old mind in its dotage, or whether it is a Scythian's parting arrow that reveals all the keenness of mind that the Senator is still given credit for.

Senator Platt's term expires this month. It expires on the minute with the term of Roosevelt. At this psychologic moment the Senator issues some "reminiscences of famous political events" in which he took a conspicuous part, and he chooses as the initial reminiscence one that has all the appearances of settling once for all scores with some men whom he made, and who latterly have been turning up their noses to him. Of these men he chooses Roosevelt, to begin with.

Theodore Roosevelt has been blown about—nor has he himself been the softest tooter into that horn—as one who, whatever his defects, was a muster *{sic}* of civic virtue, brave and honest. Civic-virtuous, brave and honest Roosevelt emerges in poor plight from Senator Platt's reminiscences.

The tale runs thus:

Right after the Spanish war Senator Platt invented Roosevelt. He hit upon him for the candidate for Governor in this State. Approached upon the subject, Roosevelt pronounced himself "delighted." Pipes began to be laid to consummate the scheme. Everything was moving smoothly along when a snag was struck. The snag was in the shape of an affidavit made shortly before by Roosevelt, in which, to avoid paying taxes in New York, he declared that Washington was his legal residence.

If the reminiscence went no further, here was a solar plexus dealt to the vaunted civic virtue of Theodore Roosevelt. He—a New Yorker, with his property located here, and but temporarily residing in Washington as Assistant Secretary of

War,—swears off his taxes, and thus escapes his contribution to the support of the machinery of Government needed to protect his own savings!

But the reminiscences go further:

“At this juncture Mr. Roosevelt took me aside and said with a trepidation I had never before and have never since seen him display, ‘I cannot remain in this fight.’”

Why trepidation? An honest man, who honestly took an affidavit to the effect that New York was not his legal residence, and discovering that legal residence in the State is necessary to run for Governor—an honest man, especially if also brave, finding himself in such a position, feels no trepidation. He may regret the “technicality”; but candidly and courageously he will admit the bar, and, without a tremor of trepidation, withdraw his name.

The reminiscences proceed:

“In order to emphasize my determination and restore his courage I said with brutal frankness: ‘Is the hero of San Juan a coward?’ He replied with his customary vehemence, ‘No, I am not a coward.’”

And proved he was one by cravenly submitting to the Senator’s bullying, and brazenly standing for the nomination, which he received, and whereupon he was elected.

Exit civic-virtuous, honest and brave Theodore Roosevelt—truly a reflex of his class.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

Uploaded July 2010

slpns@slp.org