

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Willis
Baum Henry Nietzsche Dumas Flaubert Turgenev Balzac
Leslie Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
Darwin Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Potter Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Harte
Kant London Descartes Cervantes Burton Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells Voltaire Cooke
Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Irving
Bunner Richter Chekhov Chambers Alcott
Doré Dante Swift Shaw Wodehouse
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Four Americans Roosevelt, Hawthorne, Emerson, Whitman

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[Pg 1]

FOUR AMERICANS
REPRINTS FROM THE
YALE REVIEW



A Book of Yale Review Verse
1917

War Poems from The Yale Review
1918

War Poems from The Yale Review
(*Second Edition*)
1919

Four Americans: Roosevelt, Hawthorne, Emerson, Whitman
1919

[Pg 3]

FOUR AMERICANS

ROOSEVELT
HAWTHORNE
EMERSON
WHITMAN

BY

HENRY A. BEERS

AUTHOR OF
STUDIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE
A HISTORY OF ENGLISH ROMANTICISM



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[Pg 4]

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ROOSEVELT AS MAN OF LETTERS

In a club corner, just after Roosevelt's death, the question was asked whether his memory would not fade away, when the living man, with his vivid personality, had gone. But no: that personality had stamped itself too deeply on the mind of his generation to be forgotten. Too many observers have recorded their impressions; and already a dozen biographies and memoirs have appeared. Besides, he is his own recorder. He published twenty-six books, a catalogue of which any professional author might be proud; and a really wonderful feat when it is remembered that he wrote them in the intervals of an active public career as Civil Service Commissioner, Police Commissioner, member of his state legislature, Governor of New York, delegate to the National Republican Convention, Colonel of Rough Riders, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Vice-President and President of the United States.

Perhaps in some distant future he may become a myth or symbol, like other mighty hunters of the beast, Nimrod and Orion and Tristram of Lyonesse. Yet not so long as [Pg 8] "African Game Trails" and the "Hunting Trips of a Ranchman" endure, to lift the imagination to those noble sports denied to the run of mortals by poverty, feebleness, timidity, the engrossments of the humdrum, everyday life, or lack of enterprise and opportunity. Old scraps of hunting song thrill us with the great adventure: "In the wild chamois' track at break of day"; "We'll chase the antelope over the plain"; "Afar in the desert I love to ride"; and then we go out and shoot at a woodchuck, with an old double-barrelled shotgun—and miss! If Roosevelt ever becomes a poet, it is while he is among the wild creatures and wild landscapes that he loved: in the gigantic forests of Brazil, or the almost unnatural nature of the Rockies and the huge cattle ranches of the plains, or on the limitless South African veldt, which is said to give a greater feeling of infinity than the ocean even.

Roosevelt was so active a person—not to say so noisy and conspicuous; he so occupied the centre of every stage, that, when he died, it was as though a wind had fallen, a light had gone out, a military band had stopped playing. It was not so much the death of

an individual as a general lowering in the vitality of the nation. America was less America, because he was no longer here. He should have lived twenty years more had he [Pg 9] been willing to go slow, to loaf and invite his soul, to feed that mind of his in a wise passiveness. But there was no repose about him, and his pleasures were as strenuous as his toils. John Burroughs tells us that he did not care for fishing, the contemplative man's recreation. No contemplation for him, but action; no angling in a clear stream for a trout or grayling; but the glorious, dangerous excitement of killing big game—grizzlies, lions, African buffaloes, mountain sheep, rhinoceroses, elephants. He never spared himself: he wore himself out. But doubtless he would have chosen the crowded hour of glorious life—or strife, for life and strife were with him the same.

He was above all things a fighter, and the favorite objects of his denunciation were professional pacifists, nice little men who had let their muscles get soft, and nations that had lost their fighting edge. Aggressive war, he tells us in "The Winning of the West," is not always bad. "Americans need to keep in mind the fact that, as a nation, they have erred far more often in not being willing enough to fight than in being too willing." "Cowardice," he writes elsewhere, "in a race, as in an individual, is the unpardonable sin." Is this true? Cowardice is a weakness, perhaps a disgraceful weakness: a defect of character which makes a man contemptible, [Pg 10] just as foolishness does. But it is not a sin at all, and surely not an unpardonable one. Cruelty, treachery, and ingratitude are much worse traits, and selfishness is as bad. I have known very good men who were cowards; men that I liked and trusted but who, from weakness of nerves or other physical causes—perhaps from prenatal influences—were easily frightened and always constitutionally timid. The Colonel was a very pugnacious man: he professed himself to be a lover of peace—and so did the Kaiser—but really he enjoyed the *gaudium certaminis*, as all bold spirits do.

In the world-wide sense of loss which followed his death, some rather exaggerated estimates made themselves heard. A preacher announced that there had been only two great Americans, one of whom was Theodore Roosevelt. An editor declared that the three greatest Americans were Washington, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. But not all great Americans have been in public life; and, of those who

have, very few have been Presidents of the United States. What is greatness? Roosevelt himself rightly insists on character as the root of the matter. Still character alone does not make a man great. There are thousands of men in common life, of sound and forceful character, who never become great, who are not [Pg 11] even potentially great. To make them such, great abilities are needed, as well as favoring circumstances. In his absolute manner—a manner caught perhaps partly from Macaulay, for whose qualities as a writer he had a high and, I think, well-justified regard—he pronounces Cromwell the greatest Englishman of the seventeenth century. Was he so? He was the greatest English soldier and magistrate of that century; but how about Bacon and Newton, about Shakespeare and Milton?

Let us think of a few other Americans who, in their various fields, might perhaps deserve to be entitled great. Shall we say Jonathan Edwards, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Marshall, Robert Fulton, S. F. B. Morse, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Daniel Webster, Horace Greeley, Henry Ward Beecher, Admiral Farragut, General W. T. Sherman, James Russell Lowell, Nathaniel Hawthorne, General Robert E. Lee? None of these people were Presidents of the United States. But to the man in the street there is something imposing about the office and title of a chief magistrate, be he emperor, king, or elected head of a republic. It sets him apart. Look at the crowds that swarm to get a glimpse of the President when he passes through, no matter whether it is George Washington or Franklin Pierce.

[Pg 12]

It might be safer, on the whole, to say that the three names in question are those of our greatest presidents, not of the greatest Americans. And even this comparison might be questioned. Some, for example, might assert the claims of Thomas Jefferson to rank with the others. Jefferson was a man of ideas who made a strong impression on his generation. He composed the Declaration of Independence and founded the Democratic party and the University of Virginia. He had a more flexible mind than Washington, though not such good judgment; and he had something of Roosevelt's alert interest in a wide and diversified range of subjects. But the latter

had little patience with Jefferson. He may have respected him as the best rider and pistol shot in Virginia; but in politics he thought him a theorist and doctrinaire imbued with the abstract notions of the French philosophical deists and democrats. Jefferson, he thought, knew nothing and cared nothing about military affairs. He let the army run down and preferred to buy Louisiana rather than conquer it, while he dreamed of universal fraternity and was the forerunner of the Dove of Peace and the League of Nations.

Roosevelt, in fact, had no use for philosophy or speculative thought which could not be reduced to useful action. He was an [Pg 13] eminently practical thinker. His mind was without subtlety, and he had little imagination. A life of thought for its own sake; the life of a dreamer or idealist; a life like that of Coleridge, with his paralysis of will and abnormal activity of the speculative faculty, eternally spinning metaphysical cobwebs, doubtless seemed to the author of "The Strenuous Life" a career of mere self-indulgence. It is not without significance that, with all his passion for out of doors, for wild life and the study of bird and beast, he nowhere, so far as I can remember, mentions Thoreau, [A] who is far and away our greatest nature writer. Doubtless he may have esteemed him as a naturalist, but not as a transcendentalist or as an impracticable faddist who refused to pay taxes because Massachusetts enforced the fugitive slave law. We are told that his fellow historian, Francis Parkman, had a contempt for philosophers like Emerson and Thoreau and an admiration for writers such as Scott and Cooper who depicted scenes of bold adventure. The author of "The Oregon Trail" and the author of "African Game Trails" had a good deal in common, [Pg 14] especially great force of will—you see it in Parkman's jaw. He was a physical wreck and did his work under almost impossible conditions; while Roosevelt had built up an originally sickly constitution into a physique of splendid vigor.

Towards the critical intellect, as towards the speculative, Roosevelt felt an instinctive antagonism. One of his most characteristic utterances is the address delivered at the Sorbonne, April 30, 1910, "Citizenship in a Republic." Here, amidst a good deal of moral commonplace—wise and sensible for the most part, but sufficiently platitudinous—occurs a burst of angry eloquence. For he was always at his strongest when scolding somebody. His audience in-

cluded the intellectual *élite* of France; and he warns it against the besetting sin of university dons and the learned and lettered class in general, a supercilious, patronizing attitude towards the men of action who are doing the rough work of the world. Critics are the object of his fiercest denunciation. "A cynical habit of thought and speech, a readiness to criticise work which the critic himself never tries to perform, an intellectual aloofness which will not accept contact with life's realities—all these are marks, not, as the possessor would fain think, of superiority, but of weakness.... It is not the critic who counts; [Pg 15] not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better.... Shame on the man of cultivated taste who permits refinement to develop into a fastidiousness that unfits him for doing the rough work of a workaday world. Among the free peoples who govern themselves there is but a small field of usefulness open for the men of cloistered life who shrink from contact with their fellows."

The speaker had seemingly himself been stung by criticism; or he was reacting against Matthew Arnold, the celebrated "Harvard indifference," and the cynical talk of the clubs.

We do not expect our Presidents to be literary men and are correspondingly gratified when any of them shows signs of almost human intelligence in spheres outside of politics. Of them all, none touched life at so many points, or was so versatile, picturesque, and generally interesting a figure as the one who has just passed away. Washington was not a man of books. A country gentleman, a Virginia planter and slave-owner, member of a landed aristocracy, he had the limited education of his class and period. Rumor said that he did not write his own messages. And there is a story that John Quincy Adams, regarding a portrait [Pg 16] of the father of his country, exclaimed, "To think that that old wooden head will go down in history as a great man!" But this was the comment of a Boston Brahmin, and all the Adamases had bitter tongues. Washington was, of course, a very great man, though not by virtue of any intellectual brilliancy, but of his strong character, his immense practical sagacity and common sense, his leadership of men.

As to Lincoln, we know through what cold obstruction he struggled up into the light, educating himself to be one of the soundest statesmen and most effective public speakers of his day—or any day. There was an inborn fineness or sensitiveness in Lincoln, a touch of the artist (he even wrote verses) which contrasts with the phlegm of his illustrious contemporary, General Grant. The latter had a vein of coarseness, of commonness rather, in his nature; evidenced by his choice of associates and his entire indifference to "the things of the mind." He was almost illiterate and only just a gentleman. Yet by reason of his dignified modesty and simplicity, he contrived to write one of the best of autobiographies.

Roosevelt had many advantages over his eminent predecessors. Of old Knickerbocker stock, with a Harvard education, and the habit of good society, he had means enough [Pg 17] to indulge in his favorite pastimes. To run a cattle ranch in Dakota, lead a hunting party in Africa and an exploring expedition in Brazil, these were wide opportunities, but he fully measured up to them. Mr. W. H. Hays, chairman of the Republican National Committee, said of him, "He had more knowledge about more things than any other man." Well, not quite that. We have all known people who made a specialty of omniscience. If a man can speak two languages besides his own and can read two more fairly well, he is at once credited with knowing half a dozen foreign tongues as well as he knows English. Let us agree, however, that Roosevelt knew a lot about a lot of things. He was a rapid and omnivorous reader, reading a book with his finger tips, gutting it of its contents, as he did the birds that he shot, stuffed, and mounted; yet not inappreciative of form, and accustomed to recommend much good literature to his countrymen. He took an eager interest in a large variety of subjects, from Celtic poetry and the fauna and flora of many regions to simplified spelling and the split infinitive.

A young friend of mine was bringing out, for the use of schools and colleges, a volume of selections from the English poets, all learnedly annotated, and sent me his manuscript to look over. On a passage about the [Pg 18] bittern bird he had made this note, "The bittern has a harsh, throaty cry." Whereupon I addressed him thus: "Throaty nothing! You are guessing, man. If Teddy Roosevelt reads your book—and he reads everything—he will denounce you as a

nature faker and put you down for membership in the Ananias Club. Recall what he did to Ernest Seton-Thompson and to that minister in Stamford, Connecticut. Remember how he crossed swords with Mr. Scully touching the alleged dangerous nature of the ostrich and the early domestication of the peacock. So far as I know, the bittern thing has no voice at all. His real stunt is as follows. He puts his beak down into the swamp, in search of insects and snails or other marine life—*est-ce que je sais?*—and drawing in the bog-water through holes in his beak, makes a booming sound which is most impressive. Now do not think me an ornithologist or a bird sharp. Personally I do not know a bittern from an olive-backed thrush. But I have read some poetry, and I remember what Thomson says in 'The Seasons':

The bittern knows his time with bill ingulf'd
To shake the sounding marsh.

See also 'The Lady of the Lake':

And the bittern sound his drum,
Booming from the sedgy shallow.

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See even old Chaucer who knew a thing or two about birds, *teste* his 'Parlament of Foules,' admirably but strangely edited by Lounsbury, whose indifference to art was only surpassed by his hostility to nature. Says Chaucer:

And as a bytoure bumblith in the myre."

My friend canceled his note. It is, of course, now established that the bittern "booms" — not in the mud — but in the air.

Mr. Roosevelt was historian, biographer, essayist, and writer of narrative papers on hunting, outdoor life, and natural history, and in all these departments did solid, important work. His "Winning of the West" is little, if at all, inferior in historical interest to the similar writings of Parkman and John Fiske. His "History of the Naval War

of 1812" is an astonishing performance for a young man of twenty-four, only two years out of college. For it required a careful sifting of evidence and weighing of authorities. The job was done with patient thoroughness, and the book is accepted, I believe, as authoritative. It is to me a somewhat tedious tale. One sea fight is much like another, a record of meaningless slaughter.

Of the three lives, those of Gouverneur Morris, T. H. Benton, and Oliver Cromwell, I cannot speak with confidence, having read [Pg 20] only the last. I should guess that the life of Benton was written more *con amore* than the others, for the frontier was this historian's favorite scene. The life of Cromwell is not so much a formal biography as a continuous essay in interpretation of a character still partly enigmatic in spite of all the light that so many acute psychologists have shed upon it. It is a relief to read for once a book which is without preface, footnote, or reference. It cannot be said that the biographer contributes anything very new to our knowledge of his subject. The most novel features of his work are the analogies that he draws between situations in English and American political history. These are usually ingenious and illuminating, sometimes a little misleading; as where he praises Lincoln's readiness to acquiesce in the result of the election in 1864 and to retire peaceably in favor of McClellan; contrasting it with Cromwell's dissolution of his Parliaments and usurpation of the supreme power. There was a certain likeness in the exigencies, to be sure, but a broad difference between the problems confronting the two rulers. Lincoln was a constitutional President with strictly limited powers, bound by usage and precedent. For him to have kept his seat by military force, in defiance of a Democratic majority, would have been an act of treason. [Pg 21] But the Lord Protector held a new office, unknown to the old constitution of England and with ill-defined powers. A revolution had tossed him to the top and made him dictator. He was bound to keep the peace in unsettled times, to keep out the Stuarts, to keep down the unruly factions. If Parliament would not help, he must govern without it. Carlyle thought that he had no choice.

Roosevelt's addresses, essays, editorials, and miscellaneous papers, which fill many volumes, are seldom literary in subject, and certainly not in manner. He was an effective speaker and writer,

using plain, direct, forcible English, without any graces of style. In these papers he is always the moralist, earnest, high-minded, and the preacher of many gospels: the gospel of the strenuous life; the gospel of what used to be called "muscular Christianity"; the gospel of large families; of hundred per cent Americanism; and, above all, of military preparedness. I am not here concerned with the President's political principles, nor with the specific measures that he advocated. I will only say, to guard against suspicion of unfair prejudice, that, as a Democrat, a freetrader, a state-rights man, individualist, and anti-imperialist, I naturally disapproved of many acts of his administration, of the administration of his predecessor, and of his [Pg 22] party in general. I disapproved, and still do, of the McKinley and Payne-Aldrich tariffs; of the Spanish war—most avoidable of wars—with its sequel, the conquest of the Philippines; above all, of the seizure of the Panama Canal zone.

But let all that pass: I am supposed to be dealing with my subject as man of letters. As such the Colonel of the Rough Riders was the high commander-in-chief of rough writers. He never persuaded his readers into an opinion—he bullied them into it. When he gnashed his big teeth and shook his big stick,

. . . The bold Ascalonite
Fled from his iron ramp; old warriors turned
Their plated backs under his heel;

molycoddles, pussy-footers, professional pacifists, and nice little men who had lost their fighting edge, all scuttled to cover. He called names, he used great violence of language. For instance, a certain president of a woman's college had "fatuously announced ... that it was better to have one child brought up in the best way than several not thus brought up." The woman making this statement, wrote the Colonel, "is not only unfit to be at the head of a female college, but is not fit to teach the lowest class in a kindergarten; for such teaching is not merely folly, but a peculiarly repulsive type [Pg 23] of mean and selfish wickedness." And again: "The man or woman who deliberately avoids marriage ... is in effect a criminal against the race and should be an object of contemptuous abhorrence by all healthy people."

Now, I am not myself an advocate of race suicide but I confess to a feeling of sympathy with the lady thus denounced, whose point of view is, at least, comprehensible. Old Malthus was not such an ass as some folks think. It is impossible not to admire Roosevelt's courage, honesty, and wonderful energy: impossible to keep from liking the man for his boyish impulsiveness, camaraderie, sporting blood, and hatred of a rascal. But it is equally impossible for a man of any spirit to keep from resenting his bullying ways, his intolerance of quiet, peaceable people and persons of an opposite temperament to his own. Even nice, timid little men who have let their bodies get soft do not like to be bullied. It puts their backs up. His ideal of character was manliness, a sound ideal, but he insisted too much upon the physical side of it, "red-bloodedness" and all that. Those poor old fat generals in Washington who had been enjoying themselves at their clubs, playing bridge and drinking Scotch highballs! He made them all turn out and ride fifty miles a day.

Mr. Roosevelt produced much excellent [Pg 24] literature, but no masterpieces like Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and Second Inaugural. Probably his sketches of ranch life and of hunting trips in three continents will be read longest and will keep their freshness after the public questions which he discussed have lost interest and his historical works have been in part rewritten. In these outdoor papers, besides the thrilling adventures which they—very modestly—record, there are even passages of descriptive beauty and chapters of graphic narrative, like the tale of the pursuit and capture of the three robbers who stole the boats on the Missouri River, which belonged to the Roosevelt ranch. This last would be a capital addition to school readers and books of selected standard prose.

Senator Lodge and other friends emphasize the President's sense of humor. He had it, of course. He took pains to establish the true reading of that famous retort, "All I want out of you is common civility and damned little of that." He used to repeat with glee Lounsbury's witticism about "the infinite capability of the human mind to resist the introduction of knowledge." I wonder whether he knew of that other good saying of Lounsbury's about the historian Freeman's being, in his own person, a proof of the necessity of the Norman Conquest. [Pg 25] He had, at all events, a just and high estimate of the merits of my brilliant colleague. "Heu quanto minus

est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!" But Roosevelt was not himself a humorist, and his writings give little evidence of his possession of the faculty. Lincoln, now, was one of the foremost American humorists. But Roosevelt was too strenuous for the practice of humor, which implies a certain relaxation of mind: a detachment from the object of immediate pursuit: a superiority to practical interests which indulges itself in the play of thought; and, in the peculiarly American form of it, a humility which inclines one to laugh at himself. Impossible to fancy T. R. making the answer that Lincoln made to an applicant for office: "I haven't much influence with this administration." As for that variety of humor that is called irony, it demands a duplicity which the straight-out-speaking Roosevelt could not practise. He was like Epaminondas in the Latin prose composition book, who was such a lover of truth that he never told a falsehood even in jest — *ne joco quidem*.

The only instance of his irony that I recall — there may be others — is the one recorded by Mr. Leupp in his reply to Senator Gorman, who had charged that the examiners of the Civil Service Commission had [Pg 26] turned down "a bright young man" in the city of Baltimore, an applicant for the position of letter-carrier, "because he could not tell the most direct route from Baltimore to Japan." Hereupon the young Civil Service Commissioner challenged the senator to verify his statement, but Mr. Gorman preserved a dignified silence. Then the Commissioner overwhelmed him in a public letter from which Mr. Leupp quotes the closing passage, beginning thus: "High-minded, sensitive Mr. Gorman! Clinging, trustful Mr. Gorman! Nothing could shake his belief in that 'bright young man.' Apparently he did not even yet try to find out his name — if he had a name," and so on for nearly a page. Excellent fooling, but a bit too long and heavy-handed for the truest ironic effect.

Many of our Presidents, however little given to the use of the pen, have been successful coiners of phrases — phrases that have stuck: "entangling alliances," "era of good feeling," "innocuous desuetude," "a condition, not a theory." Lincoln was happiest at this art, and there is no need to mention any of the scores of pungent sayings which he added to the language and which are in daily use. President Roosevelt was no whit behind in this regard. All recognize and remember the many phrases to which he gave birth or currency:

"predatory wealth," [Pg 27] "bull moose," "hit the line hard," "weasel words," "my hat is in the ring," and so on. He took a humorous delight in mystifying the public with recondite allusions, sending everyone to the dictionary to look out "Byzantine logothete," and to the Bible and cyclopedia to find Armageddon.

Roosevelt is alleged to have had a larger personal following than any other man lately in public life. What a testimony to his popularity is the "teddy bear"; and what a sign of the universal interest, hostile or friendly, which he excited in his contemporaries, is the fact that Mr. Albert Shaw was able to compile a caricature life of him presenting many hundred pictures! There was something German about Roosevelt's standards. In this last war he stood heart and soul for America and her allies against Germany's misconduct. But he admired the Germans' efficiency, their highly organized society, their subordination of the individual to the state. He wanted to Prussianize this great peaceful republic by introducing universal obligatory military service. He insisted, like the Germans, upon the *Hausfrau's* duty to bear and rear many children. If he had been a German, it seems possible that, with his views as to the right of strong races to expand, by force if necessary, he might have justified the seizure of Silesia, the [Pg 28] partition of Poland, the *Drang nach Osten*, and maybe even the invasion of Belgium—as a military measure.

And so of religion and the church, which Germans regard as a department of government. Our American statesman, of course, was firmly in favor of the separation of church and state and of universal toleration. But he advises everyone to join the church, some church, any old church; not because one shares its beliefs—creeds are increasingly unimportant—but because the church is an instrument of social welfare, and a man can do more good in combination with his fellows than when he stands alone. There is much truth in this doctrine, though it has a certain naïveté, when looked at from the standpoint of the private soul and its spiritual needs.

As in the church, so in the state, he stood for the associative principle as opposed to an extreme individualism. He was a practical politician and therefore an honest partisan, feeling that he could work more efficiently for good government within party lines than

outside them. He resigned from the Free Trade League because his party was committed to the policy of protection. In 1884 he supported his party's platform and candidate, instead of joining the Mugwumps and voting for Cleveland, though at [Pg 29] the National Republican Convention, to which he went as a delegate, he had opposed the nomination of Blaine. I do not believe that his motive in this decision was selfish, or that he quailed under the snap of the party lash because he was threatened with political death in case he disobeyed. Theodore Roosevelt was nobody's man. He thought, as he frankly explained, that one who leaves his faction for every slight occasion, loses his influence and his power for good. Better to compromise, to swallow some differences and to stick to the crowd which, upon the whole and in the long run, embodies one's convictions. This is a comprehensible attitude, and possibly it is the correct one for the man in public life who is frequently a candidate for office. Yet I wish he could have broken with his party and voted for Cleveland. For, ironically enough, it was Roosevelt himself who afterward split his party and brought in Wilson and the Democrats.

Disregarding his political side and considering him simply as man of letters, one seeks for comparisons with other men of letters who were at once big sportsmen and big writers; Christopher North, for example: "Christopher in his Aviary" and "Christopher in his Shooting Jacket." The likeness here is only a very partial one, to be sure. [Pg 30] The American was like the Scotchman in his athleticism, high spirits, breezy optimism, love of the open air, intense enjoyment of life. But he had not North's roystering conviviality and uproarious Toryism; and the kinds of literature that they cultivated were quite unlike.

Charles Kingsley offers a closer resemblance, though the differences here are as numerous as the analogies. Roosevelt was not a clergyman, and not a creative writer, a novelist, or poet. His temperament was not very similar to Kingsley's. Yet the two shared a love for bold adventure, a passion for sport, and an eager interest in the life of animals and plants. Sport with Kingsley took the shape of trout fishing and of riding to hounds, not of killing lions with the rifle. He was fond of horses and dogs; associated democratically with gamekeepers, grooms, whippers-in, poachers even; as Roosevelt did with cowboys, tarpon fishers, wilderness guides, beaters,

trappers, and all whom Walt Whitman calls "powerful uneducated persons," loving them for their pluck, coolness, strength, and skill. Kingsley's "At Last, a Christmas in the West Indies," exhibits the same curiosity as to tropical botany and zoology that Roosevelt shows in his African and Brazilian journeys. Not only tastes, but many ideals and opinions the two men [Pg 31] had in common. "Parson Lot," the Chartist and Christian Socialist, had the same sympathy with the poor and the same desire to improve the condition of agricultural laborers and London artisans which led Roosevelt to promote employers' liability laws and other legislation to protect the workingman from exploitation by conscienceless wealth. Kingsley, like Roosevelt, was essentially Protestant. Neither he nor Mr. Roosevelt liked asceticism or celibacy. As a historian, Kingsley did not rank at all with the author of "The Winning of the West" and the "Naval War of 1812." On the other hand, if Roosevelt had written novels and poetry, I think he would have rejoiced greatly to write "Westward Ho," "The Last Buccaneer," and "Ode to the North-East Wind."

In fine, whatever lasting fortune may be in store for Roosevelt's writings, the disappearance of his vivid figure leaves a blank in the contemporary scene. And those who were against him can join with those who were for him in slightly paraphrasing Carlyle's words of dismissal to Walter Scott, "Theodore Roosevelt, pride of all Americans, take our proud and sad farewell."