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Mr. Root and Peace

Speech at the dinner given by

The Peace Society of New York

IN HONOR OF MR. ROOT

ON FEBRUARY 26, 1909



Mr. Root and Peace

I must first of all thank our illustrious Chairman, Mr. Choate, for the very kind manner he referred to Brazil. I can assure him that if we had to answer the question I see in the newspapers: "Who are the greatest living Americans?" his name would come to our minds one of the first, as the most complete personification of old America. While we wonder, like all the world, at the incredible growth of new America, it is to the old, as it will always survive in books like those of Tocqueville and Bryce, that we owe our noblest ideals.

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to take part in this magnificent demonstration in honor of Mr. Root, as I consider one of the greatest fortunes of my life to have been at my post of Washington and so close to him during the years when he impressed his mark on the foreign policy of the United States. He understood that that policy should be based upon the Monroe Doctrine. In other words, he read the Monroe Doctrine as a complete code of foreign policy: towards this Continent, solidarity; towards the rest of the world, good will and peace.

It is always an ungrateful task to try to separate the Secretary of State from the President, of whose Administration he is, although the greatest, only one of the tributaries. In the present case it would be a most futile one, as the Secretary of State followed throughout his course the guidance given him by the President with the most brilliant and far reaching act of his

Government: the mediation that led Russia and Japan to conclude their peace on American territory.

On that day the United States was recognized as the most potent factor for peace existing in the world. The work of Secretary Root was to make of that flash, which lighted the whole earth, a permanent beacon; to convert that personal impulse into a systematic national policy. He succeeded in it to such an extent that, if the charge of permanent Arbitrator for the Nations was created, I believe he would be their first choice. Indeed he stands to-day as the foremost representative of the cause of peace among the statesmen of the world. This position he owes to his impartiality, his serenity, his good judgment, his broad sympathy with mankind, but he must feel proud that he won it without ever having had to disguise from anyone his strong Americanism, in the sense of loyalty to the whole American Continent.



