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## NEWS NARRATIVE

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To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

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Week ending Tuesday, September 15, 1908.

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### President Roosevelt's Appearance in the Campaign.

President Roosevelt entered the Presidential campaign (pp. 516, 538, 563) on the 14th through an open letter in answer to a friend, Mr. Conrad Kohrs of Helena, Montana. The letter is dated the 9th. It is a lengthy discussion, the principal purpose of which is to commend Mr. Taft as the representative of President Roosevelt's policies. Regarding the relation of Mr. Taft's candidacy to the railroad question, Mr. Roosevelt writes as follows, after analyzing the question itself:

The man to trust in such a matter as this is the man who, like Judge Taft, does not promise too much, but who could not be swayed from the path of duty by any argument, by any consideration; who will wage relentless war on the successful wrongdoer among railroad men as among all other men; who will do all that can be done to secure legitimately low rates to shippers and absolute evenness among the rates thus secured; but who will neither promise nor attempt to secure rates so low that the wage earner would lose his earnings and the shareholder, whose money built the road, his profits. He will not favor a ruinous experiment like government ownership of railroads; he will stand against any kind of confiscation of honestly acquired property; but he will work effectively for the most efficient type of government supervision and control of railroads, so as to secure just and fair treatment of the people as a whole.

A similar commendation with reference to the trusts is made in the letter; after which, turning to the labor issue, Mr. Roosevelt appeals with special urgency to organized labor to support Mr. Taft. On this subject he says in part:

If there is one body of men more than another whose support I feel I have a right to challenge on behalf of Secretary Taft it is the body of wage-workers of the country. A stancher friend, a fairer and truer representative, they cannot find within the borders of the United States. . . . Mr. Taft has been attacked because of the injunctions he delivered while on the bench. I am content to rest his case on these very injunctions; I maintain that they show why all our people should be grateful to him and should feel it safe to intrust their dearest interests to him. . . . His record as a judge makes the whole country his debtor. His actions and decisions are part of the great traditions of the bench. They guaranteed and set forth in striking fashion

the rights of the general public as against the selfish interests of any class, whether of capitalists or of laborers. They set forth and stand by the rights of the wage-workers to organize and to strike, as unequivocally as they set forth and stand by the doctrine that no conduct will be tolerated that would spell destruction to the nation as a whole. As for the attack upon his injunctions in labor disputes, made while he was on the bench, I ask that the injunctions be carefully examined. . . . No responsible labor organization would now hesitate to condemn the abuses against which Judge Taft's injunctions were aimed. . . . Judge Taft was a leader, a pioneer, while on the bench, in the effort to get justice for the wage-worker, in jealous championship of his rights; and all upright and far-sighted laboring men should hold it to his credit that at the same time he fearlessly stood against the abuses of labor, just as he fearlessly stood against the abuses of capital. . . . I have striven as President to champion in every proper way the interests of the wage-worker, for I regard the wage-worker, excepting only the farmer, the tiller of the soil, as the man whose well-being is most essential to the healthy growth of this great nation. I would for no consideration advise the wage-worker to do what I thought was against his interest. I ask his support for Mr. Taft exactly as I ask such support from every far-sighted and right-thinking American citizen, because I believe with all my heart that nowhere within the borders of our great country can there be found another man who will as vigilantly and efficiently as Mr. Taft support the rights of the workingman as he will the rights of every man who in good faith strives to do his duty as an American citizen.

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### Mr. Bryan's Reply to Mr. Roosevelt.

When President Roosevelt's campaign letter was brought to the attention of Mr. Bryan at Baltimore on the 14th he said:

A few, plain, simple sentences from Mr. Taft will be worth more than the eulogy that the President pronounces. The President's indorsement is of no value unless the President will agree to stay in Washington and see that Mr. Taft makes good. . . . If Mr. Taft were dead it would be interesting to know from Mr. Roosevelt what he knew of Mr. Taft's opinions and work, but as Mr. Taft is alive and able to speak for himself, it is hardly necessary for Mr. Roosevelt to tell us what Mr. Taft will do. Mr. Taft is running upon a platform which was so unsatisfactory that he had to amend it in several important particulars, and yet, even as amended it gives the public no definite idea as to what Mr. Taft stands for. Mr. Taft also has made some speeches and promises to make some more. The ones he has already made have not thrown any light upon the political situation, but it is to be hoped that he will yet conclude to define his position with sufficient clearness to enable the public to know what he stands for. It is not sufficient for the President to say that Mr. Taft is a friend of labor. That is a subject upon which the laboring man is entitled to an opinion, and Mr. Taft's friendship is to be determined not by the President's indorsement but by the

measures which Mr. Taft advocates. Mr. Taft believes that the labor organization should come under the operation of the antitrust law, thus dealing with the men who belong to the labor organization as if they were merchandise, for the antitrust law deals with the monopoly of products of labor. Mr. Taft is opposed to trial by jury in cases of indirect contempt, thus denying to the laboring man a safeguard which is guaranteed to every man tried in a criminal court. Mr. Taft does not agree with the laboring man in regard to the use of the injunction in labor disputes. No words of praise from the President can change Mr. Taft's attitude on this question or make that attitude more acceptable to the wage-earners.

Continuing, Mr. Bryan replies to all the other questions raised by President Roosevelt's letter.

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#### **Mr. Taft's Response to Mr. Bryan's Reply to Mr. Roosevelt.**

Mr. Bryan's reply to Mr. Roosevelt having been submitted to Mr. Taft at Cincinnati on the 14th, Mr. Taft said:

In my notification speech and in other speeches made since, I attempted to make clear my position on all the issues of the campaign. Mr. Bryan should devote a little time to his own record, from which he seems to be struggling to separate himself with all the adroitness acquired in a twelve years' hunt for an issue on which he can be elected President.

The remainder of Mr. Taft's response is devoted to Mr. Bryan's attitude in previous campaigns toward the gold and silver question, the question of imperialism, and the question of the futility of railroad regulation. He says nothing of the issues raised in this campaign by organized labor.

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#### **Mr. Bryan's Rejoinder.**

At Philadelphia on the 15th, Mr. Bryan made the following rejoinder to Mr. Taft's response to Mr. Bryan's reply to Mr. Roosevelt:

Mr. Taft is dodging. He cannot escape from the issues. He will not be permitted to run away from them. He has accepted the nomination of his party. Now let him take the people into his confidence and interpret his platform so that the public will know where he stands and what he intends to do.

Mr. Bryan followed with a discussion of each of the criticisms of his career that Mr. Taft had made. Mr. Taft on the 15th refused a further interview on the subject.

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#### **Mr. Bryan's Speaking Tour.**

Following his original plan of campaign Mr. Bryan (p. 563) set out from Chicago on the 8th for an extended speaking tour. His first important speech was made on the 9th at the Democratic State convention in Peoria, and after a speech in Speaker Cannon's congressional district he went East, speaking in Ohio, Kentucky and

Maryland. On the 15th he was at Philadelphia and Trenton.

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#### **Mr. Taft's Campaign Plans.**

The original plans for Mr. Taft's speaking through the campaign have been altered. It was intended that he should receive deputations at his brother's house in Cincinnati (p. 492) as Mr. McKinley did in 1896 at his own home in Canton; but it is announced now that he will follow Mr. Bryan's plan of going directly to the people throughout the country.

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#### **Organized Labor in National Politics.**

The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor has taken official action in support of continuing the political policy which Mr. Gompers has announced. At its meeting at Washington on the 12th it unanimously adopted the report of the labor representation committee calling on "the workers of our common country to stand faithfully by our friends, oppose and defeat our enemies, whether they be candidates for President, Congress, or other offices, whether executive, legislative, or judicial." The report recommends that another appeal be issued to procure the election of men "favorable to securing the justice, rights, and equality before the law to which the toilers are entitled and to defeat such candidates as are indifferent or hostile to such legislative reliefs." This means that Mr. Taft will be opposed and Mr. Bryan supported for President, but that it will be upon a non-partisan basis.

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#### **The Election in Maine.**

Maine, like Vermont, is one of the States that hold important elections two months in advance of the general elections, and toward which politicians are accustomed to look in Presidential years for indications of the drift of public opinion. In Vermont (p. 539) there were no pointed indications either way; but as the Republican plurality rose above 25,000 the Republicans drew favorable influences, whereas the Democrats ignored the result as coming from a State in which public opinion has long been impervious to national political influences. In Maine, on the other hand, the Republicans protest that local issues have overshadowed national issues to such an extent as to deprive the result in that State of national significance, whereas the Democrats regard the result in Maine as much more important than in Vermont because public sentiment in Maine is more in touch with the currents of national sentiment. Whatever its reason or its significance, the result in Maine is much more unfavorable to the Republicans than it has been in any other Presidential year for more than 35 years