

THE HARRIMAN-ROOSEVELT CLASH

The correspondence and the story of the sensation is told by the Associated Press in this way:

THE HARRIMAN LETTER

New York, April 2.—A sensation was created here today by the publication of a letter written in December, 1905, and addressed to Mr. Sidney Webster of New York and signed "E. H. Harriman." Following is the letter:

"Mr. Sidney Webster, No. 5 East Seventeenth Street, New York.—Dear Sir: I am glad to see that you are in town and hope soon to have an opportunity of talking matters over with you. I had printed copies of the testimony sent you, in hopes that you would, after reading them, give me some idea of where I stand, for I confess that I feel somewhat at sea in the whole insurance matter. The trouble originated in allowing myself to be drawn into other people's affairs, and partly from a desire to help them at their request. I seem to be like the fellow who got in between the man and his wife in their quarrel.

"As to my political instincts, to which you refer in your letter of December 13, I am quite sure I have none, and my being made at all prominent in the political situation is entirely due to President Roosevelt and because of my taking an active part in the autumn of 1904, at his request, and his taking advantage of conditions then created to further his own interests. If it had been a pre-meditated plot it could not have been better started or carried out.

"About a week before the election in the autumn of 1904, when it looked certain that the state ticket would go democratic and was doubtful as to Roosevelt himself, he, the president, sent me a request to go to Washington to confer upon the political conditions in New York state. I complied, and he told me he understood the campaign could not be successfully carried on without sufficient money, and asked if I would help them in raising the necessary funds as the national committee, under control of Chairman Cortelyou, had utterly failed of obtaining them, and there was a large amount due from them to the New York state committee.

"I explained to him that I understood the difficulty here was mainly caused by the up-state leaders being unwilling to support Depew for re-election as United States senator; that if he, Depew, could be taken care of in some other way I thought matters could be adjusted and the different contending elements in the party brought into alliance again. We talked over what could be done for Depew, and finally he agreed, if found necessary, he would appoint him as ambassador to Paris.

"With full belief that he, the president, would keep this agreement, I came back to New York, sent for Treasurer Bliss, who told me that I was their last hope, and that they had exhausted every other resource. In his presence I called up an intimate friend of Senator Depew, told him that it was necessary, in order to carry New York state, that \$200,000 should be raised at once, and if he would help I would subscribe \$50,000. After a few words over the telephone the gentleman said he would let me know, which he did, probably in three or four hours, with the result that the whole amount, including my subscription, had been raised.

"The checks were given to Treasurer Bliss, who took them to Chairman Cortelyou. If there were any among them of life insurance companies, or any other like organizations, of course Cortelyou must have informed the president. I do not know who the subscribers were other than the friend of Depew, who was an individual. This amount enabled the New York state committee to continue its work, with the result that at least 50,000 votes were turned in the city of New York alone, making a difference of 100,000 votes in the general result.

"There are between 2,200 and 2,300 districts in Greater New York and in a campaign such as that the expenditure of, say \$50 in each district for campaign purposes, not including the watchers on election day, would take more than \$100,000.

"Some time in December, 1904, on my way from Virginia to New York, I stopped and had a short talk with the president. He told me then, that he did not think it necessary to appoint Depew as ambassador to Paris, as agreed; in fact favored him for the senate. I had not expected that he was the one to say as to what would be necessary, but he arrogated that to himself, and I, of course, could say nothing further. After that I used what influence I could to have Depew returned to the senate, as I considered there had been an implied obligation which should be lived up to.

"This is the way I was brought to the surface in the political matters, as I had never before taken any active part and had only done what I could as any private citizen might, so you see I was brought forward by Roosevelt in an attempt to help him, at his request, the same as I was in the insurance matter by Hyde and Ryan by their request for my help; and in the case of Ryan I probably would have dropped the matter after our first interview had it not been for my desire to save Belmont from taking a position for which he could have been criticised by the public press, as he was the one Ryan desired me to influence from opposing Morton for election as chairman of the Equitable board, and Belmont afterward thanked me for taking his part, as, if he had voted against Morton in view of his local traction contentions with Mr. Ryan, it would have been misconstrued.

"Ryan's success in all his manipulations, traction deals, tobacco combination, manipulation of the State Trust company into the Morton Trust company, the Shoe and Leather bank into the Bank of Commerce—thus covering up his tracks—has been done by the adroit mind of Elihu Root, and the present situation has been brought about by a combination of circumstances which has brought together the Ryan, Root, Roosevelt element.

"Where do I stand? Yours sincerely,
"E. H. HARRIMAN."

Sidney Webster is a lawyer and a writer on political subjects. His wife is a sister of Stuyvesant Fish, who lost the presidency of the Illinois Central railroad a few months ago after antagonizing Mr. Harriman.

MR. ROOSEVELT'S RESPONSE

Following is an Associated Press dispatch:

Washington, April 2.—President Roosevelt today emphatically denied the statements contained in a letter published this morning purporting to have been written by E. H. Harriman to Sidney Webster of New York, in the latter part of December, 1905. In Mr. Harriman's letter the statement is made that at the request of President Roosevelt, he, Harriman, assisted in raising a fund of \$250,000 to be used in carrying New York for the republican party in the election of 1904. This statement the president characterizes as "a deliberate and willful untruth—by right it should be characterized by an even shorter and more ugly word. I never requested Mr. Harriman to raise a dollar for the presidential campaign of 1904."

The president's denial was contained in a brief statement, and copies of letters written to Representative Sherman of New York. The letters are dated October 8 and October 12, 1906, respectively.

The president, after furnishing the letters to the press, dictated the following statement:

"After writing these letters to Congressman Sherman the president was assured that Mr. Harriman had not made the statements which Mr. Sherman credited him with making. Inasmuch as the same statements appear in the major part of the letter of Mr. Harriman, now published, the president deems it proper that the letters he sent Congressman Sherman last October shall now themselves be made public."

In the first letter reference is made to a conversation between Mr. Harriman and Mr. Sherman, which was repeated to the president, in which Mr. Harriman is said to have given as a reason for his personal dislike of the president, partly the latter's determination to have the railroads supervised and partly the alleged facts that after promising Mr. Harriman to appoint Senator Depew ambassador to France, he, the president, failed to do it. It appears from the conversation repeated to the president that Mr. Sherman had gone to Mr. Harriman to ask him for a contribution for the campaign. The president says that Harriman also urged him to promise to make Mr. Depew ambassador because this would help Governor Odell by pleasing certain big financial interests. The president said he informed Mr. Harriman that he did not believe it would be possible to appoint Mr. Depew and furthermore expressed his surprise at his (Harriman's) saying that the men representing the big financial interests of New York wished the appointment made, inasmuch as a number of them had written asking that the place be given to Mr. Hyde. Mr. Harriman, on learning Mr. Hyde was a candidate, hastily said that he did not wish to be understood as antagonizing him.

The president, it appears, was unwilling to appoint either Depew or Hyde as ambassador, and also left unchanged his recommendations to congress concerning the interstate commerce law, notwithstanding suggestions and criticisms by Mr.

Harriman of the president's course in that regard as expressed in certain letters which Mr. Harriman wrote to the president.

"So much for what Mr. Harriman said about me personally," says the president in concluding his first letter to Mr. Sherman. Far more important, the president regards the additional remarks which Mr. Sherman said Mr. Harriman made to him when he asked him if he thought it was well to see "Hearstism and the like" triumphant over the republican party.

"You," says the president, "inform me that he told you that he did not care in the least because those people were crooks and he could buy them," and other similar remarks. This, the president says, was doubtless partly in boastful cynicism, and partly in a burst of bad temper, but it showed, in the president's opinion, a cynicism and deep-seated corruption which he denounces in strong words.

The second letter to Mr. Sherman simply contains an addenda to the first.

The text of the first letter to Mr. Sherman is as follows:

"October 8, 1906.—My Dear Sherman: Since you left this morning I succeeded in getting hold of the letters to which I referred and I send you a copy of Governor Odell's letter to me of December 10, 1904.

"As I am entirely willing that you should show this letter to Mr. E. H. Harriman, I shall begin by repeating what you told me he said to you on the occasion last week when you went to ask him for a contribution to the campaign. You informed me that he then expressed great dissatisfaction with me, and said in effect, that so long as I was at the head of the republican party or as it was dominated by the policies which I advocate and represent, he would not support it, and was quite indifferent whether Hearst beat Hughes or not, whether the democrats carried congress or not. He gave as a reason for his personal dislike of me partly my determination to have the railroads supervised, and partly the alleged fact that after promising him to appoint Depew ambassador to France I failed to do it, and I understand you to say that he alleged that I made this promise at a time when he had come down to see me in Washington, when I requested him to raise two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the republican presidential campaign which was then on.

"Any such statement is a deliberate and willful untruth—by rights it should be characterized by an even shorter and more ugly word. I never requested Mr. Harriman to raise a dollar for the presidential campaign of 1904. On the contrary our communications as regards the campaign related exclusively to the fight being made against Mr. Higgins for governor of New York, Mr. Harriman being immensely interested in the success of Mr. Higgins because he regarded the attack on Higgins as being really an attack on him, Mr. Harriman, and on his friend, Governor Odell, and he was concerned only in getting me to tell Mr. Cortelyou to aid Mr. Higgins so far as he could, which I gladly did. He also (I think more than once) urged me to promise to make Senator Depew ambassador to France, giving me in detail the reasons why this would help Governor Odell, by pleasing certain big financial interests. I informed him that I did not believe it would be possible for me to appoint Mr. Depew, and furthermore expressed my surprise at his saying that the men representing the big financial interests of New York wished that appointment made, inasmuch as a number of them had written to me asking that the same place be given to Mr. Hyde, and that, as a matter of fact, while I was not prepared to announce any decision, I doubted whether I could appoint either Mr. Depew or Mr. Hyde to the place. As soon as Mr. Harriman heard that Mr. Hyde was a candidate and had asked the names of his backers he hastily said that he did not wish to be understood as antagonizing Mr. Hyde, and would be quite willing to support him; and though I understood that he still preferred Mr. Depew, he left me strongly under the impression that he would be almost as well satisfied with Mr. Hyde and was much discontented at my informing him so positively, not once, but repeatedly, that I did not think I should be able to appoint either."

"His and my letters now before me of the fall of 1904 run as follows:

"On his return from spending the summer in Europe on September 20, he wrote me stating that if I thought it desirable he would come to see me at any time, either then or later (he had been, as you remember, a delegate to the republican national convention, having voted for my nomina-