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NEW MEXICO'S FIGHT FOR STATEHOOD 1895-1912

By MARION DARGAN

1. THE POLITICAL LEADERS OF THE LATTER HALF OF THE 1890'S AND STATEHOOD

DURING THE first decade of the twentieth century, the attention of both Congress and the nation was much occupied by the struggle of three territories, New Mexico, Arizona, and Oklahoma, for admission to the union. Conceptions which run through the whole course of American history fought for supremacy: the natural desire for self-government, jealousy of the development of the west on the part of older sections of the country, fear of democracy and of increased taxation on the part of taxpayers and corporations in the territories, the lust of politicians for office, and the tendency of the majority to silence the minority. The statehood fight involved such national figures as Theodore Roosevelt, Albert J. Beveridge, Matthew S. Quay, and Joseph B. Foraker, as well as many local leaders. It had its dramatic moments: the silencing of the opposition within the territories, the visit of the senate committee to the southwest, the long-fought duel between Beveridge and Quay in the senate, and the desperate effort for joint statehood in 1906.

It is proposed in a series of articles to follow the statehood fight from 1895 to 1912. The subject will be dealt with largely from the standpoint of New Mexico, but her sister

territories cannot be left out of the story altogether. The sources used include government records, newspaper files in New Mexico, Arizona, and the Library of Congress, the McKinley and the Roosevelt papers in the Library of Congress, letters and papers of Albert J. Beveridge at Beverly Farms, Massachusetts, letters and scrapbooks of Miguel A. Otero, Thomas B. Catron, Bernard S. Rodey and William H. Andrews, as well as interviews with leaders and other survivors of the period.¹

Beginning with a resume of the attitude of the East toward the development of the West and a brief glance at New Mexico's fight for statehood prior to 1895, the present article will deal *chiefly* with the first term of Miguel A. Otero as governor. After discussing those factors—personal and otherwise—which seemed to point to the admission of the territory early in the twentieth century, the paper will introduce the outstanding political leaders of the period, and describe the part they took in the movement for statehood. The conclusions arrived at will necessarily be only tentative, since one can never be sure that he has fathomed the purposes of individuals.

The vast region between the Appalachian Mountains and the Pacific Ocean has developed into self-governing commonwealths with the same rights and privileges as the original thirteen states on the Atlantic seaboard. The United States has probably followed the most liberal colonial policy the world has ever seen, yet throughout our history there have been Eastern leaders who opposed the growing in-

1. I am greatly indebted to Mrs. Catherine S. Beveridge of Indianapolis, Indiana, and Beverly Farms, Mass., for permission to use her husband's correspondence; to Mr. Charles C. Catron of Santa Fé for permission to use his father's papers; to Ex-governor Miguel A. Otero of Santa Fe for the loan of scrap-books, letters and manuscripts; to Mr. Pearce C. Rodey of Albuquerque for the loan of his father's scrap-book and several letters; to my wife and the following graduate students who assisted me in research in Washington: Charles Edgar Maddox, Mary Jane Masters and Dorothy Thomas; to Alice Olson Greiner, Vioalle Clark Hefferan, and Le Moine Langston, who collected newspaper material in Santa Fé, Deming, and Silver City, and Roswell and Phoenix, Arizona, respectively; and to more than a score of "old timers" who have helped me in my efforts to estimate the men and events of thirty or forty years ago.

fluence of the West. In the seventeenth century the Massachusetts Puritans put forth lying propaganda in the hope of discouraging emigration to the fertile Connecticut valley.² Two centuries later their descendants declared that the children of pioneers who moved to the west would grow up "in such rudeness and barbarity that it will require one or two generations to civilize their habits."³ Certain Eastern leaders at the Constitutional Convention opposed proportional representation because they dreaded the growing influence of the western states that might be formed beyond the mountains. Pennsylvania had been a wilderness only a century before, but one of her representatives in the convention disparaged the frontiersmen by declaring that "the Busy haunts of men, not the remote wilderness, was the proper school of political talents. If the Western people get the power into their hands, they will ruin the Atlantic interests. The Back members are always most averse to the best measures."⁴ Sixteen years later a congressman from Massachusetts made an impassioned protest on the floor of the House against the admission of Louisiana. The mere thought of "Representatives and Senators from the Red River and Missouri, pouring themselves" upon the floors of Congress, "managing the concerns of a seaboard fifteen hundred miles away" and "having a prepondency" in the councils of the nation brought New England to threats of secession.⁵

Eastern leaders have done much to promote the development of the West; others from the same section have fought every stage of that development. America's colonial policy has been that the western settlements were not to be kept in permanent subordination, but were to be admitted to the union as states with full privileges. However, fears

2. Hulbert, Archer B., *Soil: Its Influence on the History of the United States* (New Haven, 1930), pp. 98-99.

3. Turner, Frederick Jackson, *The Significance of Sections in American History* (New York, 1932), p. 256.

4. Farrand, Max (editor), *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* (New Haven, 1911), Vol. I, p. 583.

5. Turner, Frederick Jackson, *The frontier in American history*, (New York, 1921), p. 208.

that new states would add to the power of section or party have lead forces in control of Congress to postpone the admission of many a territory. There is nothing exceptionable about New Mexico having to struggle for statehood, except that her fight was the longest of any and probably the most dramatic.

The treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (1848), by which New Mexico was acquired by the United States provided that the people of the annexed territory "shall be incorporated into the Union of the United States and be admitted at the proper time (to be judged of by the Congress of the United States) to the enjoyment of all the rights of citizens of the United States to the principles of the Constitution."⁶ During the famous debates of 1850 Congress considered carrying out this provision of the treaty by the immediate admission of New Mexico to statehood. Senator William H. Seward of New York, while supporting such action, at the same time touched upon one of the arguments which helped to keep New Mexico out of the union for seventy-two years. He declared that the majority of its inhabitants were Indians, "more or less mixed in blood," and that we were following an extraordinary policy: "That while we exclude Indians from the rights of citizenship at home, we have conquered the aborigines of Spanish portions of the continent for the purpose of making them citizens, and have extended to them the rights and franchises of citizens."⁷ Seward's amendment failed to pass, and Congress organized New Mexico as a territory whose officials were appointed from Washington. In the critical days of the slavery controversy, the Civil War and Reconstruction, New Mexico basked in territorial obscurity, although in 1863 congress remembered it long enough to set Arizona apart as a separate territory. Some years after the Civil War, General Sherman, who disliked

6. Malloy, William M. *Treaties, conventions, international acts, protocols and agreements between the United States of America and other powers, 1776-1909.* (Washington, 1910) Vol. I, page 1112.

7. Baker, George E., (editor), *The Works of William H. Seward* (Boston, 1887), Vol. I, p. 124.

both the arid country of the southwest and its inhabitants, wrote a friend: "I take it no sensible man, except an army officer who could not help himself, ever went to Utah, New Mexico, or Arizona, or even proposes to do so . . ." ⁸ He also jokingly suggested to General Lew Wallace that the United States ought to declare war on Mexico and make it take back New Mexico. ⁹

The census of 1850 showed that the territory (including Arizona) had 61,547 inhabitants. ¹⁰ Due to greater attractions found elsewhere, the fact that the best land had been issued in large grants by the Spanish and Mexican governments, and to the presence of large numbers of Indians, there was no rush of settlers to this part of the frontier. The census of 1890 showed a population of only 153,593, located largely in the valleys of the Rio Grande and the Pecos, with an average density for the whole territory of 1.25 persons per square mile. ¹¹ Only one of the older states, Nevada, was less populous, as well as three which were submitted in 1889 and 1890: Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Railroads were building into the territory and thus reducing the isolation from the outside world; but ignorance and lawlessness prevailed; mining, a leading industry, was highly speculative, and there was no great interest in statehood.

By 1890 New Mexico had twice come near to being admitted to the union, and three different constitutions had been drawn up for the new state. ¹² Yet it is doubtful if many of the leaders of the territory—not to speak of the majority of the citizens—had any great interest in statehood. Of the thirteen governors who served between 1851 and 1893, L. Bradford Prince was the only one who persistently advocated the admission of New Mexico to the union. Three out of twelve delegates who represented the territory in Con-

8. Lewis, Lloyd, Sherman, *The Fighting Prophet* (New York, 1932), p. 130.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 596.

10. *Seventh Census of the United States*, p. 993.

11. *Eleventh Census of the United States*, vol. I., part I, pp. 2, 6.

12. This paragraph is based on Prince, L. Bradford, *New Mexico's Struggle for Statehood: Sixty Years of Effort to Obtain Self Government* (Santa Fe, 1910). This little book of 128 pages is very sketchy, especially for the period from 1895 to 1912.

gress gave effective support. Jose Francisco Chaves, who was honored in 1901 as the father of the statehood movement, made a vigorous speech in the Fortieth Congress in favor of the admission of New Mexico to the union. Stephen B. Elkins secured nearly a three-fourths vote of both houses of the Forty-third Congress for statehood, but the session came to a close without the House having voted to accept certain minor changes made in the bill by the senate. During his first four years in Congress, Antonio Joseph, who represented the territory for ten years, took the position that the people of New Mexico cared nothing for the honor of statehood and were opposed to assuming the expenses of the state machinery. Furthermore, he opposed the admission of New Mexico under the constitution framed by the constitutional convention of 1890, on account of the partisan character of that body. However, during his last six years in Congress he introduced four different statehood bills, and gave much of his time to statehood.

What little chance New Mexico had of being admitted to the union in 1889 and 1890 with the northern territories was weakened by opposition at home. The Fiftieth Congress received several petitions for admission, but the only non-official one ordered printed was a "Protest of the Citizens of New Mexico Against the Admission of that Territory into the Union of States." This document declared that the business interests of the territory were opposed to statehood, that New Mexico was "at present totally unfitted for such responsibilities, and that federal control from Washington was preferable to 'home rule' by unscrupulous politicians." Accordingly, the petitioners recommended that statehood be withheld until land titles in the territory—jeopardized by claims under Mexican and Spanish grants—should be settled, and English had been made the language of the courts and public schools.¹³ Fear of democracy was no new thing in America, and there is no doubt that this protest made a

13. *Senate Documents*, No. 52, 50th Congress, 2nd Session.

strong appeal to the conservative East—signed as it was by prominent bankers and merchants “and thousands of others, if necessary.” Yet statehood bills continued to be introduced, and were sometimes reported favorably by committees. Populism and free silver raged in the West during the hard times of the early nineties, and threw the East almost into a panic. The New York *Evening Post* declared, “We don’t want any more states until we can civilize Kansas,”¹⁴ while the New York *Tribune* gave as one of the reasons for the opposition to statehood for New Mexico that “by the admission of this Territory the strength of the free-silver men in the Senate will be increased by two votes.”¹⁵

In congress and in the nation at large, as well as in the territories concerned, the creation of new states has usually been considered from the standpoint, not of national welfare, but of advantage to party, section or locality. Thus during the 1880’s the Republican senate voted three times to admit the southern half of Dakota as a state. Each bill, however, was defeated by the Democratic House, which feared that the division of this populous territory would add to Republican strength in Congress and in the electoral college. When the Republican victory in the campaign of 1888 had made the admission of the northern territories inevitable, the Democratic house adopted the strategy of passing a

14. Quoted by Hacker and Kendrick, *The United States Since 1865*, Revised Edition (New York, 1934), p. 308.

15. New York *Tribune*, March 11, 1896. This idea was frequently expressed by Eastern papers, and there can be little doubt that the fear of “the free silver menace” did much to keep New Mexico out of the union. The Albuquerque *Morning Democrat* (April 3, 1896) came to the conclusion that “the two territories of the southwest are further from statehood than at any time in the past ten years and they will not in all probability draw nearer to that goal until the question of the free coinage of silver is effectually disposed of one way or the other.” Republican papers in the territory, however, claimed that New Mexico favored the gold standard. Thus the Albuquerque *Citizen* for June 30, 1899, said: “This territory has never favored free silver. The present delegate to congress, Hon. Pedro Perea, was elected on a platform squarely in opposition to cheap money. The native people of New Mexico, familiar with the poverty caused by the cheap silver money of Mexico, and on every occasion have opposed its adoption in this country. New Mexico is in favor of the gold standard, and if admitted to statehood would choose United States senators pledged to that financial policy.”

bill which would make one state of Dakota, and admit Democratic New Mexico together with Washington and Montana. But it was too late. "Political manoeuvring defeated its own end," says Frederick L. Paxson. "At any time between 1883 and 1888 the Democrats might have bargained New Mexico and Arizona against the inevitable Dakotas; now they had held out so long that they had nothing to offer and no strength with which to withstand the bludgeon of Republican success at the polls in 1888."¹⁶ Wyoming and Idaho had scarcely the population or developed resources to warrant the admission to the union, and the delegate of the latter stated in the House in January, 1889, that his territory was not asking for immediate statehood,¹⁷ yet both were admitted the next year since they were bound to add to the strength of the party in power.

In New Mexico statehood was considered desirable if it came when the right party was in control; otherwise, it should be opposed. Thus the Albuquerque *Citizen* in January, 1895, charged that the Democrats had stolen the legislature¹⁸ and were scheming "to steal the proposed state of New Mexico and give the senatorships to Fall¹⁹ and Ferguson, . . ."²⁰ On January 5, the *Citizen* remarked editorially: "The native people of this territory are in no humor to

16. Paxson, Frederick L., "The Admission of the Omnibus States" in *Proceedings of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* (1911), (Madison, 1912), pp. 77-96.

17. *Congressional Record*, vol. 20, part 1, page 878.

18. T. B. Catron wrote his wife on Jan. 9, 1895: "I suppose you have seen from the papers what our democratic friends did in organizing the legislature. I am afraid this will ruin our prospects for statehood, yet I am doing all I can to prevent it from injuring it." To a friend in St. Louis, he wrote: "It seems now that the democrats have buried our statehood bill in Washington. Our New Mexico legislature, as you are aware, was stolen bodily by the democrats from the republicans, that being accomplished by means of the Secretary of the territory, who alone is authorized to swear in the members. He refused to swear in some republicans and swore in defeated democrats in their stead. This legislature has been the worst we ever had and I am confident this contributed materially to weaken our prospects for statehood. Their own party has no confidence in them, and the republicans of course can have none." Catron to R. C. Kerens, Feb. 14, 1895.

19. Albert B. Fall was a Democrat at this time but later became a Republican. He was United States senator from New Mexico from 1912 to 1921. As Secretary of the Interior under Harding he was connected with the Tea Pot Dome scandal.

20. For Harvey B. Fergusson, see p. 30.

create a state for the benefit of the Texas gang of politicians now in charge of the territory."²¹ Having concluded that the "disgraceful row" in organizing the legislature had "killed statehood," the *Citizen* hardly mentioned the subject during the next three months.²²

By the beginning of the twentieth century, free silver had become a dead issue, and the press was pointing out that the East no longer feared the opinions of New Mexico and Arizona on important national issues.²³ The territories shared in the prosperity of the nation. "The farms, the ranges, the mines," declared the *Albuquerque Journal Democrat* of October 8, 1901,— "all the resources of the territory —promise the most prosperous year in the history of New Mexico. Now is the accepted time to make a long, strong united effort to secure statehood." Indeed, prospects for statehood seemed never brighter. Both of the great political parties appeared favorable. Even in 1896 the politicians had been desperate, and had been willing to barter statehood for half a dozen delegates at the national convention. As a result, the Republican platform of that year had declared: "We favor the admission of the remaining Territories at the earliest practical date, having due regard to the interests of the people of the Territory and of the United States."²⁴ Four years later, the Republicans declared: "We favor home rule for, and the early admission to statehood of the Territories of New Mexico, Arizona, and Oklahoma,"²⁵ while the Democrats denounced the failure of the Republicans to carry out their earlier pledge and promised 'immediate statehood' for the three territories.²⁶

Moreover, high officials in Washington were believed to be friendly to the territories. In March, 1901, Bernard S.

21. The *Rincon Shaft* expressed its sentiments tersely as follows: "To hell with statehood." Quoted by *Citizen*, Jan. 11, 1895.

22. Only two brief allusions to statehood were found in the *Citizen* between April 1 and June 29, 1895.

23. *Denver Republican*, quoted by *Albuquerque Citizen*, Oct. 1, 1901.

24. Porter, Kirk H., *National Party Platforms* (New York, 1924), pp. 205-206.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

Rodey, Delegate to Congress from New Mexico, was reported to have "had a long conversation with President McKinley, the subject being New Mexico, her wishes and needs." Rodey told a reporter of the Albuquerque *Journal-Democrat*: "You make a great mistake if you imagine the president doesn't keep posted on what's going on down here. And he's mighty well disposed towards the territory, too. When the statehood bill comes up, it is sure to be befriended by him."²⁷ Two months later, while on his way to San Francisco to attend the launching of the battleship Ohio, the president stopped at Deming, and thus gave New Mexico an opportunity to present its case directly to him. While unable to persuade the chief executive to change his route so that he would see less of the desert and more of the valley of the Rio Grande,²⁸ officials and citizens gave him a hearty welcome somewhat "in the nature of a statehood demonstration." Statehood banners were seen everywhere, and the desire for statehood was put in the limelight. In a brief address, the president expressed the hope that at some future time congress would see fit to make New Mexico a state.²⁹ Commenting on this indefinite statement, the Denver *Republican* declared that McKinley did not wish to appear to be trying to influence the legislative branch of the government, that New Mexico must make her fight before congress, and there seemed "no doubt that he would cheerfully sign an enabling act" if passed.³⁰ This comment was in accord with McKinley's conception of the presidential office, and the press generally spoke of him as "friendly to the territories."

27. Albuquerque *Journal-Democrat*, March 17, 1901.

28. Otero to McKinley, March 16, 1901; Otero to George B. Cortelyou, March 16, 1901.

29. Governor O. N. Murphy succeeded in getting the president's party to make a change in the proposed route and visit Phoenix. In his speech in that city McKinley expressed the hope that the people of Arizona "soon may be able to show the Congress of the United States that they have builded well and strongly and wisely the great territory and are prepared to be admitted into the union of states." O. N. Murphy to McKinley, January 24, 1901. *Arizona Republican*, May 8, 1901.

30. Denver *Republican*, quoted in *Albuquerque Citizen*, May 9, 1901.

If the president was somewhat non-committal, the vice-president expressed his sentiments freely. In order to understand why a rising political leader from New York should concern himself with the prospects of a territory he had never seen, it is necessary to go back to the war with Spain and some of the personal associations it had created. Soon after the declaration of war, Congress had authorized the raising of three volunteer cavalry regiments, wholly apart from state contingents.³¹ Telegrams were sent to the governors of the four southwestern territories to request their assistance in recruiting men who were "young, good shots and good riders."³² Twenty-three years later the governor of New Mexico said that having received this call: he "communicated with every ranch in the territory. I was particularly anxious to have New Mexico well represented, because many newspapers of the East were dubious about our loyalty we having such a large Mexican population."³³ The result was such a generous response that Theodore Roosevelt wrote in 1911: "Half the officers and men of my regiment came from New Mexico . . ."³⁴ Nor were these men ordinary soldiers—witness "Dead Shot" Joe Simpson, who, according to reports from camp at San Antonio, could "put a rifle bullet through a jack rabbit's eye at one thousand yards while riding a wild horse."³⁵ No wonder such men won the admiration and affection of their colonel. Roosevelt never forgot his heroes, who were constantly writing him, fre-

31. *Congressional Record*, vol. 31, part 5, p. 4180.

32. Pringle, Henry F., Theodore Roosevelt (New York, 1931), p. 184.

33. Interview in the *Baltimore Sun*, Dec. 5, 1921. The *New York Herald* and the *New York World* telegraphed Governor Otero enquiring as to the probable attitude of the militia of New Mexico in case they should be called upon for duty in Cuba. *Denver Republican*, March 25, 1898. It was even reported that the Spanish flag had been raised over the Catholic church in Santa Cruz. *Ibid.*, July 13, 1899. The *Denver* papers contained several references to rumors of "Spanish sympathizers" in New Mexico, but invariably defended the loyalty of the inhabitants of the territory. See *Denver News*, April 27, 1898.

34. Roosevelt to R. E. Twitchell, Nov. 12, 1911. The fac-simile of this letter is given in Twitchell, *op. cit.*, opposite p. 528.

35. Pringle, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

quently because they were either in trouble,³⁶ or needed his influence to get a government job.

He was especially indebted for "news of the boys in your neck of the woods" to Major W. H. H. Llewellyn,³⁷ one of his staff officers and a man to whom he was strongly attached.³⁸ The major, who had had considerable experience in rounding up bandits and bad Indians on the Nebraska frontier,³⁹ served as Indian agent to the Mescalero Apaches in Lincoln County, New Mexico, in the early 1880's, and gave the territory immunity from severe trouble with his charges.⁴⁰ When his term expired, he moved to Las Cruces. As a captain in the "Rough Rider" regiment, Llewellyn showed himself a gallant soldier at San Juan Hill⁴¹ and won the personal friendship of his colonel. A keen politician, he served at one time as Speaker of the House of Representatives of New Mexico, and later as United States attorney for the territory. Llewellyn was over six feet tall, and weighed considerably over 200 pounds. Besides, he was a very likeable fellow, and Roosevelt could not resist him. He wrote

36. Thus Comrade Brite of Grant County, New Mexico, wrote: "Dear Colonel: I write you because I am in trouble. I have shot a lady in the eye. But, Colonel, I was not shooting at the lady. I was shooting at my wife." Roosevelt gives this letter in his *Autobiography*, p. 123, but does not reveal the name or the fact that its author was from New Mexico. After Brite had served his term in the penitentiary, Roosevelt wrote Llewellyn: "I only hope that Comrade Brite will devote his attention purely to electricity and quit shooting at ladies." Roosevelt to W. H. H. Llewellyn, July 4, 1905.

37. Roosevelt to W. H. H. Llewellyn, March 4, 1903.

38. When Llewellyn was ill in March, 1899, Roosevelt wrote his wife: "Give my warm regards to your husband. You know how I valued him as a soldier and how I prize his friendship." Roosevelt to Mrs. W. H. H. Llewellyn, March 23, 1899. There can be no doubt that Major Llewellyn gained added prestige from press notices of his relations with Roosevelt. Thus the *Albuquerque Citizen* (August 17, 1900) announced that Governor Roosevelt had invited Llewellyn "to accompany him on his western campaign trip to the Pacific coast," while the *Silver City Independent* (Dec. 3, 1901), remarked: "Our own Major Llewellyn is undoubtedly 'some pumpkins' back in Washington just now." The editor then quoted a Washington despatch which said that the major "was also a caller on the president and urged the claims of the territory for statehood. He was a guest of the president at dinner and tonight escorted Mrs. Roosevelt to the theatre."

39. *Omaha Herald*, quoted by *Albuquerque Citizen*, May 29, 1900.

40. *New Mexican*, July 30, 1882.

41. Twitchell, *op. cit.*, p. 541, note 452.

John Hay that "the major" was "a large, jovial, frontier Micawber type of person, with a varied past which includes considerable man-killing."⁴² He read his old comrade's letters with great interest, and after he became president wrote him: "I keep the Cabinet and Justice Holmes, together with two or three choice spirits among the Senators, informed as to all the news you give me concerning the members of the regiment."⁴³

Roosevelt—who once persuaded the Governor of Arizona to make a Rough Rider warden of the penitentiary in which he had recently served a sentence for homicide⁴⁴—was inclined to feel that the men he had led up San Juan Hill were better qualified for political appointments than their rivals.⁴⁵ He gave of his support so generously, that he was finally forced to admit that "the administration looks with what I might call good natured impatience upon any request of mine for any man connected with my regiment. They think that the regiment has already received a very disproportionate amount of attention and they simply will not pay heed to a suggestion of mine unless there is additional local backing."⁴⁶

With such feelings of partiality toward his old comrades, he must have found it equally difficult to acquiesce in the denial of the fullest rights of American citizenship to men who had shown themselves so brave and so loyal. The first occasion apparently on which he was forced to express himself on the subject of statehood for New Mexico was in June, 1899, while he was Governor of New York. It was the year after the war, and the Rough Riders were holding their first reunion at Las Vegas, New Mexico. Roosevelt had written Major Llewellyn: "As you know, I particularly want to visit New Mexico."⁴⁷ Later he wrote that he was "pretty

42. Roosevelt to John Hay, August 9, 1903.

43. Roosevelt to W. H. H. Lewellyn, March 13, 1903.

44. Pringle, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-199.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

46. Roosevelt to Frederick Muller, April 3, 1901.

47. Roosevelt to Llewellyn, April 17, 1899.

well tired out," but that with great difficulty he arranged matters so that he could come.⁴⁸ When he arrived, clothed in a Rough Rider uniform, the Governor was much in the limelight. His speech was brief but significant and was to be long remembered in the territory. He said:

I cannot say how glad I have been to come here. I never was in New Mexico before, but I never felt like a stranger for one moment among you. I claim the same right that each of your sons claims of glory, and take pride in the name and fame of New Mexico. I am an American as you are Americans, and you and I alike have the right to claim as our own every acre and rod of country from Maine to Oregon: from Florida to California.

The heavens have been more than propitious so far and we must not complain of this shower. All I shall say is if New Mexico wants to be a state, you can count on me in, and I will go to Washington to speak for you or do anything you wish.⁴⁹

This enthusiastic pledge from such a distinguished Republican leader doubtless made many who heard it feel that with such hearty support New Mexico's long fight for statehood would soon be over.⁵⁰ During the next two years, Roosevelt's promise was often quoted and often renewed. After his nomination for the vice-presidency by the Republican convention in June, 1900, he is reported to have called upon the New Mexico delegation at their hotel, where he expressed himself in no uncertain language in regard to supporting New Mexico's claim for statehood.⁵¹ A month later, at the second reunion of the Rough Riders, held in

48. Roosevelt to Llewellyn, June 1, 1899.

49. Las Vegas *Optic*; June 24, 1899.

50. Under the caption, "Statehood Near," the Albuquerque *Citizen* (June 28, 1899) published an editorial in which it said: "The celebration at Las Vegas has greatly helped the territory in its struggle to secure statehood. The eastern visitors were surprised to see at Las Vegas a modern city with every convenience and comfort, and a crowd of 10,000 people celebrating the victory of a New Mexico regiment in Cuba. They had expected to find Indians, cowboys, and desperadoes."

51. This statement was made by Frank A. Hubbell, who had just returned from the convention, where he served as a delegate. Santa Fe *New Mexican*, June 28, 1900.

Oklahoma City, Ralph E. Twitchell, a former officer in his regiment who was to become a leading historian of New Mexico, and who was then serving as a correspondent of the Albuquerque *Citizen*, spoke to Roosevelt regarding his promise to help New Mexico be admitted to the union. The governor said: "Say to the people of New Mexico that I stand ready now and always to help them with Statehood or anything else they want."⁵² He added, however, that he did not feel that the old comrades and friends whom he had met at Las Vegas would need his assistance since the plank in the Republican platform "is a guarantee that the Republican party will admit them to statehood." He declared that he believed in carrying out every pledge in the platform, and that as a delegate to the Philadelphia convention he would not have voted for the platform, if he had not believed in it.

Roosevelt, who thought very highly of Twitchell,⁵³ renewed his pledge to help secure statehood for New Mexico in a letter to the latter.⁵⁴ He also expressed his sentiments regarding New Mexico in a public speech during the campaign of 1900. The issue was imperialism, and William Jennings Bryan, Democratic candidate for the presidency, speaking at Yonkers a few days before, opposed the American occupation of Porto Rico and declared that it was better for Mexico that the United States had not kept possession of that country.⁵⁵ Referring to this argument a few days later at Binghamton, New York, Roosevelt declared that if his opponent would compare the progress made by New Mexico since the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo with its condition before, he would "speedily make up his mind that it has greatly profited by being put under our flag." Having asserted that we had governed New Mexico at first just as

52. Albuquerque *Citizen*, July 6, 1900.

53. In support of Twitchell's candidacy for the position of United States District Attorney for New Mexico, Roosevelt wrote Attorney General Griggs: "He is a good lawyer, a good soldier and a first class citizen in every way." Roosevelt to John W. Griggs, Dec. 15, 1900.

54. Albuquerque *Citizen*, August 27, 1900.

55. Albuquerque *Journal-Democrat*, Oct. 28, 1900.

we were then governing Porto Rico, Roosevelt declared: "I believe New Mexico should now be a state, but it would have been folly to have admitted it to statehood for forty odd years after we took possession."

Roosevelt also pledged his assistance in letters to territorial leaders. On March 21, 1901, he wrote Delegate Rodey: "As for New Mexico, of course, I shall help it to the best of my capacity, I want to see it a state."⁵⁶ Again to the same correspondent, he said: "I shall be only too glad to aid you in every way in trying to get statehood for New Mexico."⁵⁷ On September 7, 1901, the day after President McKinley had been shot, Roosevelt wrote from Buffalo, New York, to O. N. Marron, stating that while New Mexico had "a very great claim" upon him, it would be "absolutely out of the question" for him to attend the statehood convention to be held in Albuquerque the following month, "even when I sympathize as strongly as I do with the purpose of your convention."⁵⁸

Naturally when President McKinley was succeeded—one week later—by such "a warm and energetic friend" of the territories,⁵⁹ the chances for statehood were regarded as improved.⁶⁰ Eight days after Roosevelt's inauguration, the Albuquerque *Journal-Democrat* under the caption "Roosevelt for Statehood" published Roosevelt's letter to Marron in full, together with the significant parts of the two letters to Rodey. The editor added:

There is no dodging the question in these letters. Roosevelt as president will have the same sentiments as Roosevelt as vice-president, but from his position as chief executive it will not be becoming or right for him to express these senti-

56. Roosevelt to B. S. Rodey, March 21, 1901.

57. Albuquerque *Journal-Democrat*, Sept. 22, 1901.

58. Roosevelt to O. N. Marron, Sept. 7, 1901. Mr. Marron was mayor of Albuquerque at the time, as well as chairman of the executive committee of the fair association.

59. Las Vegas *Record*, Sept. 18, 1901.

60. See editorial entitled "Friend of the West" in the Albuquerque *Citizen*, Sept. 18, 1901.

ments with the same freedom. That he will display his friendship when opportunity offers, we may all be certain, and it may be confidently anticipated that in his first message to congress he will recommend the admission of New Mexico.⁶¹

Newspapers outside of the territories also noted that prospects for statehood had brightened. The Denver *Republican* anticipated a friendly policy toward the territories from the new president, while the *Chicago News* asked: "How are you going to keep Oklahoma and New Mexico out of the union any longer, with all those husky Rough Riders down there eager to help their old colonel run the government?"⁶²

For assistance in organizing the New Mexico troops which became a part of the Rough Riders, Roosevelt was indebted to the governor of the territory, Miguel Antonio Otero.⁶³ Appointed by President McKinley in June, 1897, to a position for which he had not applied—when about twenty candidates had been fighting for months over the prize⁶⁴—Otero had the double distinction of being the

61. Albuquerque *Journal-Democrat*, Sept. 22, 1901.

62. *Chicago News*, Sept. 16, 1901.

63. Otero's early life is well portrayed in his *My Life on the Frontier* (1864-1882) (New York, 1935), which was published when the author was seventy-five. Vol. II of this work and a third volume entitled "My Nine Years as Governor," were also consulted in manuscript form.

64. Among the leading candidates were George H. Wallace, Pedro Perea, T. W. Collier, and Hugh Price. T. B. Catron, Republican boss in New Mexico and the *Citizen* and *El Mundo*, both published in Albuquerque, supported Pedro Perea of Bernalillo. According to the translation which appeared in the Albuquerque *Morning Democrat*, *El Mundo* made a rather striking "Plea for Pedro." The translation is as follows:

"Never, never has it been thought in Washington to fulfill the terms made in the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo, and hitherto vain have been all the efforts which the Spanish-American press has made for this purpose. Its eloquence, its justice has always been dashed to pieces before the indifference of congress and the executive of the nation which, preoccupied with subjects of tariffs, problems of unimetalism or bimetalism, or much absorbed in the subjects of Hawaii, Venezuela, Cuba and their exaggerated Monroe doctrine, do not trouble themselves with our poor territory. It is enough that the federal government sends to us every four years a "Yankee" governor and some agents for the Indian reservations and perhaps with this it feels well pleased and fully satisfied. * * * The majority of the New Mexicans, and even the good American element, beg with justice that Hon. Pedro Perea be appointed; but the intrigues in the capital city of Washington are working their influence in order that President McKinley may name Prince, Wallace or Collier. What benefit does the population of New Mexico owe these gentlemen?"

youngest governor New Mexico had had since the American occupation and the only Spanish-American ever appointed to that office by an American president. While a native of St. Louis, Otero was reputed to be "of pure Castilian blood," and belonged to a family long prominent in New Mexico, both his father and an uncle having served the territory as Delegate to Congress.⁶⁵ His education had been obtained in part at St. Louis University and at Notre Dame, but mostly on the ever receding frontier between Westport Landing and New Mexico. His father was a member of a firm of commission merchants, who had followed several railroads as they were being built west. As he grew older, young Otero clerked for the firm, hunted buffalo and antelope, and scraped acquaintance with Wild Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane, Billy the Kid, and other picturesque characters of the frontier. Finally settling down in Las Vegas at the age of twenty, he became a bank cashier, but yet found time to do some prospecting, but without any great success. Strongly inclined to stand up for his rights, he incurred a jail sentence for contempt of court in a dispute over mining property.⁶⁶

At the age of thirty-eight, when he became governor of New Mexico, he was an energetic, businesslike man who was well known and well liked in many parts of the territory. He was especially "available" for the appointment because he and his Las Vegas friends were chiefly responsible for getting the territorial Republican convention of 1896 to endorse the party's gold platform, in spite of the silver sentiment

65. Otero's father, Don Miguel Antonio Otero I represented New Mexico in the Thirty-fourth, Thirty-fifth, and Thirty-sixth Congresses. He was appointed Secretary of the Territory of New Mexico in 1861, but on account of his southern sympathies, was not confirmed by the senate and accordingly only served from April until September, 1861. *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1774-1927*, (Washington, 1927), p. 1375: See also Otero, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-5, 280-283. Otero's uncle, Mariano Sabino Otero, represented New Mexico in the Forty-sixth Congress. *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress*, p. 1375. The Governor's mother was Mary Josephine Blackwood before her marriage. She was born in New Orleans and educated in Charleston, South Carolina. Otero, *op. cit.*, pp. 283-285.

66. *Chicago Times-Herald*, June 11, 1897. The story appeared under the title "From Jail to Honors."

natural in a mining country.⁶⁷ Furthermore, he had the advantage of being personally known to McKinley, who finally decided upon his appointment as a happy solution of the knotty problem.⁶⁸ While the appointment was a surprise, the press spoke of the new governor's personal popularity, his loyalty to friends, his high principles, and the fact that he was "a live wire."⁶⁹ After the governor had served four years, Twitchell wrote President Roosevelt: "Governor Otero has proven the most capable, painstaking, worthy and dignified executive we have ever had. * * * Politically, Governor Otero is about the only leader we have had since the time when Senator Elkins was a power in New Mexico."⁷⁰

Evidently Twitchell meant to ignore a man who had been a college class-mate of the former Delegate from New Mexico, his law partner in the territory, and a most influential leader in the Republican party there for years. A native of Missouri, Thomas Benton Catron had graduated from his state university in 1860, and served for four years in the Confederate army.⁷¹ Debarred from practicing law in his native state on account of his military record, the young Missourian had in 1866 followed his friend, Elkins, to New Mexico, where after a short time in Mesilla, they had estab-

67. *Albuquerque Citizen*, June 3, 1897.

68. Otero says that from thirty to forty New Mexicans were in Washington in the spring of 1897, each pulling wires for his particular candidate. Finally a meeting was held to see if they could agree upon one man. Jefferson Reynolds, formerly from McKinley's home town in Ohio, who had been supporting George H. Wallace (see files of the Appointment Division, Department of the Interior, under "New Mexico under the McKinley Administration") spoke in favor of Otero. Otero, *My Life on the Frontier*, II. (Ms.), 319. A special despatch to the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* (May 31, 1897), stated that the conference endorsed him for governor. Otero had been a candidate for the position of U. S. marshal for the territory. The *Pittsburg Leader* (June 20, 1897) publicized him as a "political Nimrod . . . capable of the remarkable feat of firing at a sparrow and bringing down a plump canvas-back duck."

69. *Washington Post*, Aug. 13, 1898; *Washington Star*, Dec. 19, 1898; *Albuquerque Journal-Democrat*, June 8, 1902.

70. R. E. Twitchell to Roosevelt, May 14, 1901.

71. *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress*, p. 797; Twitchell, *op. cit.*, pp. 519-520; biographical sketch for "Once a Week," Catron Press Copy Books, vol. 11, p. 175. This sketch was probably written on or about Feb. 16, 1895.

lished themselves in Santa Fe. A brainy man, Catron had become one of the leading lawyers in the territory, and had accumulated a fortune through his extensive practice and the acquisition of old Spanish and Mexican land grants. According to the *New Mexican* for January 13, 1883, he was "one of the largest land holders in the nation," while Catron claimed to be the biggest individual tax-payer in the territory.⁷² He was an omnivorous reader, and collected a large library, even buying a number of rare Spanish books from the Father Fisher collection in Mexico.⁷³ A gruff man who frequently rubbed people the wrong way, he made many enemies, who declared that he "always used his 'brains and energy' to advance his own selfish interest" at the expense of the people. His correspondence shows that as a member of the Legislative Council, he served railroads and express companies by blocking unfriendly legislation, but that he was not devoid of consideration for "the people." Thus in 1899 he wrote to Delegate Perea, urging him to protest against one hundred poor people who had goats and sheep on the Gila River Forest Reserve being ordered to vacate in the dead of winter.⁷⁴ The next day he wrote again, urging Perea to protest against the "outrageous robbery of the public lands" by certain parties who had leased the Zuni Salt Lake for "grazing."⁷⁵ Catron declared that there was probably "not an inch of grazing in the whole four sections," but that the lease-holders would make a profit of thousands of dollars by selling the salt to the poor people of the territory.

In 1894 Catron performed no small service to his party by defeating a Democrat, Antonio Joseph, who had occupied the office of Delegate to Congress for ten years. The election of the Santa Fé County boss was doubtless due to the

72. Catron to Robert Black, April 9, 1895.

73. *New Mexican*, April 21, 1890. Father Augustine Fisher was once private secretary to Emperor Maximilian. This collection, minus the books on Mexican law, has been loaned by the Catron family to the University of New Mexico.

74. Catron to Pedro Perea, Nov. 23, 1899.

75. Catron to Pedro Perea, Nov. 24, 1899.

intelligent leadership and campaign funds which he supplied,⁷⁶ as well as to the disgust of New Mexico sheep, wool, lead and silver interests with the Cleveland administration. The two years during which he served as Delegate proved disappointing. He was unable to get New Mexico admitted to the union, and his reputation and influence were seriously damaged in the territory and at the national capital. Accusing him of tampering with witnesses in the infamous Borrego case, his enemies tried to disbar him. Catron wrote Elkins: "Instead of attempting to convict the defendants in that case, the whole effort of the prosecution, including the entire democratic party in this country, has been to try to connect me with the murder."⁷⁷ While the disbarment proceedings were dismissed, and Catron was immediately elected president of the bar association, copies of the opinion of the one dissenting judge were distributed widely among federal officials and congressmen in Washington.⁷⁸ Apparently his absence from the territory aided the younger men in the party, "the colts," as they were called, in a revolt against his "dictatorship." Major Llewellyn also joined the fight, and with the assistance of two other members of the New Mexico delegation to the St. Louis convention, deprived the Santa Fé leader of his cherished position as national committeeman for New Mexico.⁷⁹ Furthermore Catron had originally supported Thomas B. Reed of Maine for the presidential nomination,⁸⁰ even though it was reported that the powerful Speaker of the House opposed the admission of

76. Catron to Jefferson Reynolds, Dec. 16, 1897.

77. Catron to Elkins, Aug. 24, 1895.

78. Catron to Elkins, Aug. 23, 1895; Aug. 24, 1895. For the proceedings, see "In Re Catron" in *Reports of Cases Determined in the Supreme Court of the Territory of New Mexico* (Columbia, Mo., 1897), vol. VIII, pp. 253-327.

79. Catron to Jefferson Reynolds, Dec. 16, 1897; *New Mexican*, June 27 and 29, 1896.

80. Early in 1895 Catron was supporting *Reed*. On Feb. 14, 1895, he wrote to R. C. Kerens: "It looks to me as if Reed ought to be the coming man. His expressions on silver certainly make him strong in the west. McKinley, while strong in the east, was too boisterous in his opposition to silver in the west, and his tariff record is regarded as being extreme."

any more territories.⁸¹ Although Catron shifted his support to McKinley later, and was promised the patronage in New Mexico,⁸² the following year he was not only defeated for re-election as Delegate, but was further chagrined to see his nominee for the governorship, Pedro Perea,⁸³ rejected, and one of "the colts" appointed instead.

While hostile newspapers hailed Otero's appointment as the end of Catron's political power in New Mexico,⁸⁴ the latter pledged his support to the new governor, who in turn promised to support the Santa Fé leader for the position of United States attorney for the territory.⁸⁵ In Washington, however, the governor apparently decided that Catron's reputation had been damaged to such an extent that it was impolitic to support him.⁸⁶ In time, Catron realized that Otero was working systematically to undermine his influence in order to build up his own machine.⁸⁷ Catron thus became a bitter opponent of Otero. The young governor and his advisers, however, proved skilful politicians and able administrators and consequently enjoyed the support of the majority of the party and practically the entire territorial press. Three papers only were conspicuous for their opposition: the Las Vegas *Optic*, an old paper published in the town in which Otero had made his home for some years, and the *Capital* and the *Eagle*, new papers established in Santa Fé by his enemies. These "yellow sheets," as they were called, continually denounced the corrupt ring which they declared surrounded "the little governor." His enemies, led by Catron, made a strong fight against his reappointment by McKinley in June, 1901, preferring a variety of charges

81. Albuquerque *Morning Journal*, Jan. 16, 1896, March 17, 1896.

82. Catron to Elkins, Aug. 23, 1898.

83. Catron to William McKinley, April 30, 1897. A press clipping in the Otero Scrap Book, vol. II., p. 18, says: "The Catron-Perea republican organization has been sat upon, yes, spit upon, by the administration. Their Reedish actions at St. Louis last summer settled their destiny politically."

84. Albuquerque *Morning Democrat*, June 23, 1897.

85. Catron to Jefferson Reynolds, Dec. 16, 1897.

86. Catron to W. J. Mills, April 2, 1898.

87. Catron to Elkins, April 8, 1899; Catron to Silvester Davis, Jan. 14, 1900.

supported by affidavits. New Mexico, however, was notorious for making charges against her governors, and nothing came of them, even though they were renewed after Roosevelt became president. Otero was strongly supported by Major Llewellyn and other Rough Riders,⁸⁸ and thus he remained in office until his second term expired in January, 1906.

Nine years in office is a remarkable record for a Governor of New Mexico. Otero, however, gathered around him able advisers such as Solomon Luna, H. O. Bursum, Charles Springer, and W. A. Hawkins. These men represented corporate and livestock interests which dictated legislation, and influenced the Governor in the matter of appointments and policy. According to Catron, Solomon Luna was "the strongest and best politician in the territory amongst the Spanish-speaking element."⁸⁹ Bursum's ability was to be recognized later by a seat in the United States Senate. Charles Springer was the skilled draftsman who drew the bills that it was intended the legislature should pass. Hawkins was attorney for the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad. If the census of 1910 showed great gains for New Mexico, this was due in part to the prosperity felt throughout the nation, and in part to the able administration of "the little governor" and his advisers. A rather favorable summary of his achievements was given by the *Ft. Sumner Review* ten years after he left office. The *Review* said: "He came into office to find an empty treasury, a large territorial debt, bonds selling at a low figure and hundreds of thousands of dollars in unpaid accounts. When he went out of office the territory's credit was on a cash basis, the debt had been reduced \$60,000 a year, accounts due had been paid in full and there was several thousand dollars in the treasury. He established the offices of traveling auditor, insurance commissioner and game warden, vetoed the infamous Haw-

88. Frederick Muller and W. E. Dame were the most conspicuous former members of Roosevelt's regiment who opposed Otero.

89. Catron to Elkins, Oct. 26, 1897.

kins bill, prevented the building of the international dam at El Paso instead of at Elephant Butte pocket, vetoed many graft bills, removed the Hubbells from office in Bernalillo county, helped secure 1,500 soldiers in New Mexico for the Spanish war, and secured legislative appropriations for state institutions."⁹⁰

In commenting on the claim that Governor Otero was an enthusiast for statehood, the Albuquerque *Weekly News* stated that unfortunately "our governors with some notable exceptions heretofore have been for statehood when their terms expired, but showed no disposition to do anything that might cut short their tenure of office."⁹¹ On entering politics in 1885, Otero had opposed the admission of New Mexico at that time, since he believed that the people were too poor to assume the responsibilities of statehood, and that increased taxation would make it a hardship.⁹² Otero says in "My Life on the Frontier," that in 1888, when the *New Mexican* published the opinions of many prominent citizens of both parties on statehood, he "was greatly interested in reading them."⁹³ He states that he agreed with the opinion of Numa Reymond of Las Cruces who said: "I notice all the politicians on both sides favor statehood, and all the business men and tax payers on both sides are not in favor; so I am not in favor of statehood at this time."⁹⁴ Otero adds: "For a great many reasons I did not think New Mexico ready for statehood at this time. The taxes I thought would be much too heavy for our citizens to carry, and, as we were without a system of public schools in the territory, I believed that this condition would prove very unsatisfactory to the people generally throughout the United States."

90. Ft. Sumner *Review*, Oct. 21, 1916. Clipping found in Catron Newspaper File.

91. Press clipping in the Otero Scrap Book, vol. II., p. 37.

92. Otero, "My Life on the Frontier (*Ms.*), vol. II, p. 186.

93. *Ibid.*, pp. 235-236.

94. The opinion of Mr. Reymond appeared in the *New Mexican* for Jan. 19, 1888.

After Otero became governor, his enemies charged that he and the other territorial officials were secretly opposed to the cause. Thus Catron wrote the publisher and editor of the *Albuquerque Citizen*: "I do not believe that they (the governor and the territorial officials) are honestly in favor of statehood. They would throw it overboard in order to hold their offices."⁹⁵ *The New Mexican*, however, declared: "Governor Otero puts in a good word for statehood upon every possible occasion and the hints of a few Democratic newspapers that he is opposed to statehood are but idle vaporings."⁹⁶ As was customary, Otero included a plea for statehood in nearly all of his annual reports to the Secretary of the Interior, and called the matter to the attention of the territorial legislature from time to time. These reports, which were much more comprehensive than those of his predecessors, were distributed widely by the New Mexico Bureau of Immigration, and doubtless did much to dispel the ignorance of the East regarding the resources of New Mexico.⁹⁷ Furthermore, the governor made frequent visits to Washington, and through interviews in the press and conversation with friends and acquaintances did much to give publicity to the territory and its demand for statehood.

Otero was frequently thrown into contact with N. O. Murphy, Governor of Arizona from 1898 to 1902, and the two became warm friends. In December, 1899, when the two governors were returning from the capital city, they persuaded friendly federal officials to come out with them as their guests. The *Albuquerque Citizen* announced: "The Senate Committee on Territories will visit New Mexico and Arizona during the holidays with a view of investigating the actual conditions of the two territories applying for statehood."⁹⁸ As a matter of fact, this was not an official

95. Catron to Hughes and McCreight, Jan. 11, 1900. See also Catron to George W. Pritchard, Jan. 13, 1900.

96. *New Mexican*, Nov. 29, 1902.

97. *Denver Republican*, Nov. 17, 1900; *Albuquerque Citizen*, Aug. 1, 1900.

98. *Albuquerque Citizen*, Dec. 21, 1899. This episode was a forerunner of the official investigation made in 1902 by the Beveridge committee, which will be discussed in a later article in this series.

investigation, and the only member of the Senate Committee who came was the chairman, Senator George L. Shoup, of Idaho. The party made several stops in both territories, and were welcomed by leading citizens. Many speeches were made, and Senator C. D. Clark of Wyoming, the only other senator in the party, told how a \$50,000 lobby in Washington had helped to get Wyoming into the union a few years before.⁹⁹ The press reported that at a reception tendered them in Phoenix, "The visitors . . . expressed themselves surprised by the wonderful resources of Arizona and declared themselves in favor of admitting both Arizona and New Mexico."¹⁰⁰ Forgetful of the unofficial character of the visitors, the Albuquerque *Citizen* enthusiastically declared that "if statehood is secured for New Mexico at this term of Congress, the greatest honor is due to Governor Otero, for it was through his effort that a committee for the first time in the history of the territory visited New Mexico with the express purpose of conferring with its people about Statehood."¹⁰¹

In June, 1900, Otero served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention at Philadelphia, and helped to get the statehood plank into the platform. Apparently, New Mexico attracted a good deal of attention at the convention. While some asked, "Are the people of New Mexico as rough and wild as they are pictured?"¹⁰² a Boston *Journal* correspondent concluded that the territory "must be launching a special boom for statehood,"¹⁰³ and it was reported that New Mexico was making a good impression."¹⁰⁴ Regarding the methods used, the Governor told a Washington correspondent: "We went to Philadelphia early, engaged rooms at a leading hotel, and talked and entertained for New Mexico. The result was the strong recommendation for

99. Albuquerque *Journal-Democrat*, July 28, 1901, Aug. 30, 1901.

100. *Ibid.*, Dec. 27, 1899.

101. *Ibid.*, Dec. 25, 1899.

102. Albuquerque *Journal-Democrat*, June 27, 1900.

103. *Ibid.*, June 26, 1900.

104. *Ibid.*, June 27, 1900.

statehood in the party platform."¹⁰⁵ He might also have added that the whole delegation under his leadership refused to say what they would do in the vice-presidential fight, but intimated that they would not allow personal feeling to influence them, but would "Vote as a unit for what seems to promise most for New Mexico."¹⁰⁶

In his first inaugural address, Otero made no mention of statehood. In his second, however, he promised to work indefatigably for it, and predicted that New Mexico would be a state before his term of office expired. This pledge, however, was regarded as insincere in some quarters, as is shown by the following editorial comment: "His (Otero's) strong declaration in favor of statehood is not taken seriously in Raton, and there will be no kick so long as it is all talk."¹⁰⁷ As a matter of fact, none of the men in power dur-

105. Washington dispatch to the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, quoted by Santa Fé *New Mexican*, gave the credit for the insertion of the statehood plank in the platform to the New Mexico delegation under the leadership of Gov. Otero, and to Solomon Luna, national committeeman. *New Mexican*, June 25, 1900. Doubtless the pledge given New Mexico was due in no small measure to the increased representation of the territory in the convention. While a member of the National Democratic Committee, Neil B. Field of Albuquerque, had secured from the committee recognition of the rights of the Democrats in the territory to representation in the convention equal to that of the smallest state. The territories had previously had two delegates without votes. From that time until statehood they were given six delegates without votes. This resulted in forcing the Republican National Committee to do the same thing. *Ft. Sumner Review*, Oct. 21, 1916. Clipping found in Catron Newspaper File.

106. *Journal-Democrat*, June 27, 1900. This dispatch gave special credit to Edward A. Cahoon of Roswell, New Mexico's representative on the committee on resolutions, for his part in getting the statehood plank into the platform. The dispatch stated that the plank had been left out, but "Mr. Cahoon brought the matter up in committee and ably presented the claims for the territories. Several speeches were made against the plank, but every objection was met and the clause was inserted by unanimous vote." *Ibid.* For the charge made in congress in 1902 that Lemuel E. Quigg of New York, "smuggled" the statehood plank into the platform of 1900, see the fourth article in this series.

107. Press clipping in *Otero Scrap Book*, vol. I, page 45. Colfax County had a large proportion of Anglo-Americans, and they were not enthusiastic over statehood. According to the Albuquerque *Citizen*, the *Raton Range* even advocated "annexing the northern portion of New Mexico to Colorado for statehood purposes." *Citizen*, May 24, 1900. Trinidad, Colorado, and Amarillo and El Paso were also suggested at various times as suitable capitals for states carved partly out of New Mexico. Some years earlier the Silver City *Enterprise* (May 18, 1888) had suggested a new state to be made up of the southwestern counties of New Mexico and portions of Mexico and Arizona. The *Enterprise* reported that the scheme was "meeting with great encouragement," and little opposition, "except by the Santa Fé ring and eastern place hunters."

ing the first few years of the Otero administration was enthusiastic about the admission of New Mexico to the union, but they advocated it as a matter of policy.

On the other hand, the men who represented the territory in Congress during the latter half of the 1890's were all sincere workers for statehood. Perhaps it is not too much to say that each of these three leaders made a unique contribution to the cause.

The letters of Thomas B. Catron, Delegate from 1895 to 1897, show that statehood was constantly in his thought. Moreover, they reveal why he wished to see the territory admitted and how he sought to achieve the desired end. As a large land-holder, he found it difficult to persuade capitalists to invest in a territory, but hoped that the coming of statehood would boom the value of both real estate and mining property.¹⁰⁸ An ardent Republican, he was convinced that admission would mean two more votes in the Senate in favor of the right policies.¹⁰⁹ A dynamic personality, whose leadership had been recognized for many years in the territory, he naturally aspired to a seat in the Senate himself, especially after Elkins, his friend since boyhood, attained that honor.¹¹⁰ The ways in which Catron sought to

108. On Sept. 10, 1895, Catron wrote Mrs. Kate E. Coons of Strother, Missouri, as follows: "I am unable at present to sell the interest of Mr. Coons in San Miguel Springs grant. There has been no revival of business in this territory. Capitalists are making considerable enquiry with reference to property, but it seems to be almost impossible to get one of them to invest. I have offered property at ruinous rates, but the answer is that they don't desire to go so far west. I fear nothing can be accomplished until New Mexico is admitted as a state. Then I believe property will be on a boom. To Elkins, Catron wrote on Aug. 31, 1896: "If New Mexico goes republican the statehood bill will be passed without doubt, and the property of this company (New Mexico Mine Grant Co.) will be doubled in value." He wrote Don Matias Contreras, July 30, 1896: "Si Nuevo Mejico esta admitido como Estado, cada acre de aquella tierra valdra tres pesos endonde no vale mas de uno ahora. Todas las tierras de aquel pueblo tendran much valor."

109. Catron to H. M. Teller, Feb. 14, 1894.

110. Catron to E. McB. Timony, Jan. 5, 1898. Even the Albuquerque *Morning Democrat* believed Catron was sincere in his statehood efforts. Just as he was taking his seat as Delegate in the Fifty-fourth Congress, it remarked editorially: "One reason for placing confidence in Catron's sincerity of purpose in working for statehood is that he has so much at stake personally, both in the gratification of his political ambition and in the way of enhancing the value of his immense property interests. As this selfish motive has been the key note of his past record, it gives

hasten statehood were characteristic of the man. He thought it foolish to expect a Republican administration to admit a Democratic territory, so worked constantly to assure Republican control of New Mexico, and to convince party leaders that it was "sound upon all the national issues."¹¹¹ In the spring of 1896 he wrote from Washington, urging Otero to see to it that the territorial convention did not endorse free silver.¹¹² An opportunist in politics, he also urged that the convention should not commit itself to any presidential candidate, but should leave the impression that the delegates from New Mexico to the national convention would support those who would help them get statehood. Catron was always a schemer. Before taking his seat in Congress, he tried to pull the wires to have himself appointed chairman of the Committee on Territories.¹¹³ Having been advised that this would be "against all precedent,"¹¹⁴ he urged George D. Perkins of Iowa, who had expressed himself in conversation as "decidedly friendly to the admission of New Mexico," to "secure, if possible the chairmanship of the committee . . ."¹¹⁵ He also wrote Speaker Reed, urging that western men and those who were special friends of New Mexico be placed on the committee.¹¹⁶ Finding later that the committee was "almost equally divided,"¹¹⁷ he did not despair and his confidence that he would secure a favorable report was finally justified.¹¹⁸ Two years after he left Washington, when his friend Perea was about to take his old seat, he

111. Catron to Thomas C. Reed, August 2, 1895.

112. Catron to M. A. Otero, March 5, 1896. Letters written by Catron from Washington are apparently not in the Catron collection. Ex-Governor Otero, however, permitted me to make a copy of the original of this letter.

113. Catron to R. C. Kerens, Jan. 23, 1895; Catron to Elkins, Jan. 23, 1895.

114. Catron to R. C. Kerens, Feb. 14, 1895; Catron to Elkins, Feb. 14, 1895.

115. Catron to George D. Perkins, Aug. 2, 1895.

116. Catron to Thomas C. Reed, Aug. 2, 1895.

117. Catron to Otero, March 5, 1896.

118. Catron reported for the committee on June 6, 1896. *Congressional Record*, vol. 28, part 7, p. 6197. The report is given in *House Report*, 54th Congress, 1st session, vol. 9, no. 2259.

ground for basing expectations of the honesty of his purpose at the present time in this respect." *Morning Democrat*, Dec. 7, 1895.

wrote more letters urging that a favorable committee be appointed.¹¹⁹ Many of his suggestions were disregarded, but he was not easily discouraged. A bold and resourceful fighter, Catron looked forward to statehood for years. In the end he won the coveted seat in the Senate, but found that taxes went up immediately, but real estate did not.

Catron's successor in Congress was Harvey B. Fergusson. The Democratic press, always strongly biased against Catron, drew quite a contrast between the two men, claiming that the former served property interests, while the latter was the champion of the people.¹²⁰ While he was the son of a plantation owner in Alabama,¹²¹ the brilliant Albuquerque lawyer was never rich. On several occasions he addressed the negroes of his city on Emancipation Day, and defended the rights of labor. A graduate of the law department of Washington and Lee University, he had very definite ideas as to what the constitution of the state of New Mexico should contain. In the constitutional convention of 1910 he was to fight vigorously for provisions which at the time were regarded as not only progressive but radical and dangerous, only to be defeated by conservatives like Fall and Catron. Fergusson, who was an eloquent, fiery speaker, made a very active campaign in 1896,¹²² emphasizing free silver rather than the admission of the territory to the union. While his efforts for statehood naturally proved futile in a Republican Congress, he secured the kindly interest of Speaker Reed,¹²⁴ and was thus able to make a unique contribution. A strong believer in education, he persuaded Congress to pass the Fergusson Act,¹²⁵ which gave millions of

119. Catron to D. B. Henderson, Nov. 14, 1899; Catron to Pedro Perea, Nov. 24, 1899.

120. Albuquerque *Morning Democrat*, Oct. 17, 1896. See also the Las Vegas *Optic*, Oct. 7, 1896.

121. See a biographical sketch of Fergusson, prepared by Mrs. Janet Smith Kromer for the Federal Writers' Project.

122. Albuquerque *Morning Democrat*, Oct. 10, 1896.

123. Las Vegas *Optic*, Oct. 5, 1896.

124. Twitchell, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

125. For his very able speech, see the *Congressional Record*, vol. 31, part 2, pp. 1369-1373.

acres of land to the territory in trust for public schools and institutions of higher learning. This act, passed by Congress on June 9, 1898,¹²⁶ proved the foundation of the public school system in New Mexico, and did much to prepare the people of the territory for admission to the full privileges of American citizens twelve years later.

Like Catron and Fergusson, Pedro Perea, who represented New Mexico between 1899 and 1901, was a college man, having been graduated from St. Louis University in 1871.¹²⁷ A member of an influential Spanish-American family which founded the town of Bernallilo, Perea had a large following among the native people of the territory. He was strongly supported for the governorship in 1897, but, according to one account, "failed because of the neglect of Senator Elkins to keep an appointment with the president and the secretary of the interior."¹²⁸ In writing to McKinley to urge the appointment of Perea, Catron pointed out that two-thirds of the Republican party in New Mexico were "native people of Mexican descent," that for fifty years they had been kept in the background, but now felt that the governor should be selected from one of their number, and were a unit in favor of Perea.¹²⁹ The latter was a wealthy man, owning "over 40,000 head of sheep," according to Catron and a large stockholder in the First National Bank of Santa Fe of which he had been president for four years. Catron further described Perea as a man "of the strictest integrity" who possessed popular confidence especially that of the native people.

One historian of New Mexico has dismissed Perea's record as Delegate in six words by saying: "Very little was accomplished in congress by Mr. Perea, . . ."¹³⁰ Yet he doubtless accomplished something of value, though intangible. There was so much ignorance and prejudice concerning the

126. *Ibid.*, part 6, p. 5670.

127. *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress*, p. 1401.

128. Twitchell, *op. cit.*, p. 523.

129. Catron to William McKinley, April 30, 1897.

130. Twitchell, *op. cit.*, p. 543.

native people of New Mexico that it must have been significant for the distant territory to be represented at the national capital by one of the ablest of her native sons. A mild-mannered man who may not have attracted as much attention as Catron or Fergusson, Perea surely helped to break down Eastern prejudice against his own people,¹³¹ and thus made his contribution toward the admission of the territory to the union.

T. B. Catron was not the only political leader of New Mexico who aspired to represent the new state in the United States Senate, as the following editorial from the *Las Vegas Optic* shows:

"The strong effort for immediate statehood brings the senatorial plum nearer to those who are longing for it. To desire senatorial honors is a commendable ambition. It is well known that Hon. T. B. Catron has long felt that a place in the senate beside his old time friend, Steve Elkins, would be the consummation of a life long aspiration. In every part of New Mexico he has warm friends who hope for this result, but Governor Otero is not among them. Until the latter came into office, Mr. Catron was recognized as the leader of his party and it was generally conceded that he should be senator. The advent of the Otero administration entirely changed this current, and the young and ambitious Otero at once grappled with Catron with courage and cunning and so far has proven the stronger man. Not only has Mr. Catron been retired, but his intimate friends, and his supporters, also. This is true of Fiske and Prince and Freeman and Baca and would be true of Don Eugenio Romero, were it not for the fact that he has a local following that will not down. Otero and Luna have come forward as the controlling giants in the Republican party, and in proportion as they have come into the ascendant, the old leaders have waned in influence. The battle at Washington is the prelim-

¹³¹. Washington dispatch, signed by Olive Ennis Hite, in *Albuquerque Journal-Democrat*, Jan. 13, 1901.

inary struggle for the senate. The evident combination between Gov. Otero and Sol. Luna is to make the governor one senator from the north and Mr. Luna the other from the south. It was for this that Manuel C. de Baca was sent in retirement to his cow ranch in Guadalupe. It was to aid in breaking this power that Mr. Baca went to Washington. However, new Richmonds are likely in the field. Hon. Benj. S. Baker who succeeds Judge Crumpacker, is an astute politician from Nebraska. He has been leading in his own state and may become a political factor to be reckoned with in New Mexico. Governor Prince is not yet dead. Fiske is a very lively corpse and Catron may yet carry the battle successfully. All in all the political and senatorial situation in New Mexico is interesting."¹³²

The second article will discuss the attitude toward statehood of the press and the people of the territory in the last half of the 1890's.

132. Las Vegas *Optic*, Dec. 19 (1901?). From a clipping in the Otero Scrap Book, vol. I, p. 63. This issue is missing from the file of the *Optic* at the University of New Mexico.