The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt Study Guide

The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt by Edmund Morris

BOOKRAGS

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Plot Summary

The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt skillfully catalogues the early years of the man who eventually becomes president.

Born in New York City to Mittie and Theodore Roosevelt, their second child and first son suffers from delicate health immediately. Theodore Senior responds to this with admonishment that his son pursue as vigorous a lifestyle as possible. Roosevelt rises to the challenge and, against doctors orders, strengthens his body with a variety of physical pursuits.

The young "Teddie" also possesses an early desire for learning, especially in reading various volumes of natural history in his father's vast library. This education inspires a lifelong desire for reading and writing in Theodore Roosevelt. After homeschooling by his Aunt Annie, Roosevelt enters Harvard at seventeen years of age.

In college, Roosevelt pursues a variety of subjects, first specializing in natural history before turning to law. While in school, he mourns the sudden death of his father. He also meets and falls in love with Alice Lee. Shortly after his graduation, the two marry.

Moving his new bride back to New York City, Roosevelt becomes involved in state politics. Many react in amazement when the young man becomes a state assemblyman and moves, part time, to Albany. He gains a reputation as a man who strikes down much legislation, without proposing much of his own.

During his second year in Albany, he receives news of the birth of his first child, a daughter. A second telegram brings the unhappy news that both his wife and mother lay ill. Roosevelt rushes home and sees both women die within hours of one another.

Distraught, Roosevelt travels west, where he often found solace in the past. The openness of the Dakotas heals him somewhat and he eventually returns to New York City to visit him daughter and his sister, Bamie. After twenty-two months, Roosevelt rekindles a romance with childhood sweetheart, Edith Carow. The two travel, secretly, to England to be wed.

Roosevelt's first national appointment comes from President Harrison, for the commissionership of civil service. In this office, Roosevelt travels the country seeking to prevent appointments based on connections rather than qualifications. His works gains him national recognition. However, he seeks work that is more rigorous and gains it, in the form of New York City Police Commissioner.

In New York City, Roosevelt seeks to rid the city of corrupt officials and mob-like organizations. He makes much progress, but still suffers from unpopular press. After some frustrating losses and opposition, he seeks, instead, an appointment from upcoming president, William McKinley.

Roosevelt travels the country to campaign for the housebound McKinley. McKinley rewards the efforts with an appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Once again, in Washington, Roosevelt begins to push for war with Spain, specifically in the Philippines and Cuba. Just one year after his appointment, Roosevelt resigns his post to enlist in the army and travel to Cuba.

Roosevelt's regiment, the Rough Riders, prove instrumental in the victory on San Juan Hill, which proves a key vantage point in the small, island country. Roosevelt soon returns to America, as a war hero. He immediately campaigns to be governor of New York. After a heated race, he succeeds.

For less than two years, Roosevelt serves as a controversial governor. However, the death of Hobart, the vice president, raises rumors of a new spot for Roosevelt in Washington. Though he claims no desire for the vice presidency, his appointment passes. Just months after taking office, President McKinley is assassinated, elevating Roosevelt to a position he coveted many times in his career.

Prologue

Prologue Summary and Analysis

In the prologue, the author describes in detail the way in which President Theodore Roosevelt greeted guests on New Year's Day, 1907. While regular citizens wait in a line that stretches for one-half of a mile, the president greets various dignitaries from both American government and foreign monarchies.

As the author imagines waiting in the long line, he describes various habits of the President. Seemingly without effort, Roosevelt fills his days with matters of national interest ranging from peacekeeping talks to environmental preservation. The President also makes an impressive physical impression. His various sports interests such as wrestling, boxing and climbing, give him a strong physique which gain notice from each visitor on this New Year's Day.

Though success marks most of Roosevelt's presidency, it is not without its critics. Contemporaries such as Mark Twain remark negatively about the President's methodologies and even call him "insane." The author quotes many famous contemporaries of Roosevelt, both for and against the President. Edith Wharton calls him "delightful." Foreign dignitaries, though not all in support of Roosevelt's politics, all remark on his high moral standards and pleasant personality.

When one finally comes into the Blue Room of the White House, one finds the impressive man himself. Though guards file guests through at a fast pace, only a few seconds is necessary to feel the impact of the person holding the office of President. With efficiency, even in his precise speech, President Roosevelt greets each visitor with a firm handshake and his trademark greeting of "Delighted!"

After hours of handshaking, Roosevelt concludes the visits at 2pm. He retires into the country with his wife and five of his six children. They enjoy a visit with Roosevelt's sister before returning to the White House. The younger children go to bed while the older children roller-skate in the basement. The Presidential couple delights in reading together before Mrs. Roosevelt retires to the Presidential suite. Before retiring himself, the President reads an entire book; his interests range from classical to contemporary, from technical to fictional. He finally brushes his famous white teeth and slips into his blue striped pajamas. With the energy with which he performs every task, he falls asleep.

Chapter 1, The Very Small Person

Chapter 1, The Very Small Person Summary and Analysis

Theodore Roosevelt's life begins "in the late afternoon on October 27, 1858." He is born into a privileged New York City family, the second child of Theodore Senior and Martha Bulloch Roosevelt. Though the new baby's grandmother reported a clean and pretty baby, his mother remarked that the boy "looked like a terrapin."

From birth, however, the young boy suffers from various health problems, namely asthma. These maladies plague him through his youth. Through all the illness, Roosevelt remembers his father's care, as he paced the floor with the ailing child. Theodore Senior makes a strong impression on his oldest son in many other ways. His father's disciplined lifestyle and staunch support encourages Roosevelt to pursue all his dreams. The family's wealth also helps Roosevelt gain the time and education he needs. Roosevelt senior, in his own right, makes a name for himself in society, mostly due to his philanthropy towards the city's needy children. Mrs. Roosevelt, however, a native of the south, exhibits complementary personality traits to her husband. Mittie, as the family calls her, passes her days rather lazily, and exhibits an enjoyable sense of humor. In keeping with her station in society, Mittie Roosevelt exhibits remarkable beauty and style, which her contemporaries remarked on from her youth.

The author explains how the Roosevelt family came to the New World in the 1600s. The future president became the seventh Roosevelt born on Manhattan Island. While the family began in agriculture, they quickly moved up in rank. They also quickly became involved in politics. One ancestors of Roosevelt's helped to ratify the Constitution. From both sides of his family, Roosevelt descends from political and societal leaders. On his mother's side, he boasts six southern politicians.

However, his family finds turmoil at the outbreak of the civil war. Not willing to fight against members of his wife's family, Theodore Senior hires a soldier to take his place. The substitution leaves him feeling neglectful in his patriotic duties, however, and Theodore Senior begins a campaign for soldiers' rights. He travels all over the country, encouraging soldiers to take advantage of a program that will send some of their earnings directly to their families back home. After his father returned home from one such tour, the younger Roosevelt, or Teedie as he was then known, felt his father's corporal punishment for the first and last time, such was the impression the punishment made on the young boy. His father's personality and punishment left no doubt for the children that he was to be obeyed the first time.

As the war continues through Roosevelt's fourth year, he begins to recognize his parent's difference of opinions concerning the conflict. An impertinent young Theodore uses this information to torment his mother. After an instance of perceived injustice towards himself, Theodore prays for the sound success of the Union troops.

At nearly the same age, young Theodore also begins his studies, courtesy of his mother's sister Annie Bulloch. From this young age, Roosevelt enjoys stories, reading and history, but dislikes mathematics. His love for reading, coupled with his chronic illnesses, draw Theodore to the family's library, where he begins to read everything it contains. First, he scans scientific journals for pictures, then he begins to decipher the stories and descriptions they hold. Often, the family finds Roosevelt in a red velvet chair he claims for his own, pouring over yet another book. The pastime allows the sickly boy to learn of things he could never experience, given his illnesses.

The library's collection of books on wildlife and the outdoors feeds an "abnormal" fascination with Natural History, which remains a passion of Roosevelt's throughout his life. He sees wildlife even in the city and begins the "Roosevelt Museum of Natural History" in the family home. Yet in childhood, he writes theses on the Broadway seal and the Foregoing Ant. The author remarks that, for a young child, with limited spelling abilities, Roosevelt records amazing observations about the plants, animals and insects in his world. The growth of his "museum" causes much distress among various members of the family and household staff, causing Roosevelt to relocate the collection from his bedroom to a more remote part of the house.

Theodore Roosevelt's writing career begins at a very early age as well. The author shares many excerpts from the 150,000 letters that survive. The bulk of the personal history of Roosevelt's childhood and young life occurs in his diaries, however, which he begins in the summer of 1868.

Though his reoccurring bouts of poor health fail to even gain much notice for the young boy, his father begins to worry about his son's health. Likewise, each of the Roosevelt children suffers from various maladies, mostly asthma. Moreover, since the end of the Civil War, even Mittie seems to be in failing health. By way of remedy, Mittie suggests a European Tour, which Theodore Senior wholly supports. He feels it complements the children's education, all of which has taken place at home. In total, Roosevelt records 377 days in the Grand Tour. In spite of the historical surrounding, the young boy claims to have hated the trip.

On the onset, the children lament leaving their friends for such a long time. Seasickness on the slow trip across the Atlantic adds to their misery. The family finally lands on the shores of Great Britain, where Mittie reunites with members of her southern family in exile. They tour England for ten days, where Roosevelt records such sights in his diary as "Westnubster abby" and the Tower of London. Next, the family journeys to the Netherlands and Germany. The rainy weather causes a bout of sickness for young Theodore. Continuing on to Switzerland, he suffers from gastroenteritis, toothache and more asthma. On well days, however, he exercises exuberantly, climbing mountains and taking long walks. Such a habit continues into his adult life.

Half way through the tour, Roosevelt feels dreadful homesickness, yet his father "strides with giant steps, tirelessly encouraging, comforting, supervising and protecting his family." Shortly after his twelfth birthday, which takes place in Germany, Roosevelt makes his first comments about a pretty girl, showing his budding manhood.

When the family reaches Paris, young Roosevelt sees a doctor there, who prescribes treatment changes three times. The family travels along to the Riviera and Italy, where Roosevelt continues to have alternating bouts of illness and inexorable energy. In his own simple language, the young boy records detailed descriptions of the Mediterranean and the Catacombs. In a coincidental meeting, Roosevelt even kisses the Pope's hand while in Rome. March finds the family back in Paris, as they make their way to Liverpool. On May 14, the family sails for home.

Chapter 2, The Mind, but Not the Body

Chapter 2, The Mind, but Not the Body Summary and Analysis

Each chapter opens with a quote from one of Roosevelt's life long favorites in literature, The Saga of King Olaf by Longfellow. The poem illustrates many aspects of Roosevelt's personality.

For much of the summer and fall of 1870, Roosevelt's dairies read as those of a nature and book loving boy. One evening in September, Roosevelt even fails to record his introduction to John Hay, who one day becomes his Secretary of State. The young man continues to grow, though fails to fill out muscularly. His doctor prescribes fresh air and exercise. Upon hearing the doctor's recommendation, Theodore Senior challenges his son to make his own body. With his characteristic determination, the younger Roosevelt begins regular visits to the gym. His father outfits a piazza at home with training equipment as well. The new habits seem to agree with the young man, and he mentions no illness for many months.

Roosevelt's studies also continue, in classic language and science especially. He learns the art of taxidermy and thus expands his natural history collection. In keeping with this new hobby, his father presents him with his first gun. His struggles with targets bring to light his problems with sight. Once fitted with spectacles, he sees a clearer world than he ever imagined. The years with limited sight, however, have honed his impeccable hearing.

An onset of his asthma, however, proves that, for all his exercising, his body remains frail. Together, Roosevelt and his father decide to redouble their efforts and the young boy takes up boxing.

In October, once again, the family embarks on an international tour. This time, Theodore Senior adds tours of Egypt and the Holy Lands to yet more sights in Europe. Though Roosevelt's younger brother and sister look at the trip with sadness, the budding scientist prepares to make the journey a productive one for his growing natural history collection. His keen hearing and newly improved sight make birds his latest obsession.

Roosevelt takes in Europe with some boredom. He puzzles over a vendor in Liverpool who refuses to sell him arsenic, a key ingredient in taxidermy. When the family enters Egypt, however, the scenery captures the young man's attention. He records scores of exotic birds as they travel the Nile. His family, though, soon tires of Roosevelt's obsession with feathered creatures. Only his father remains supportive of his pursuits.

The trip through the land of the Pharaohs inspires Roosevelt for its historical significance as well. He rambles on at length in his daily journal. In contrast, his records turn from history to the outdoors when the family journeys to the Holy Lands. He records

little of his visions of Calvary and Jericho, but writes extensively about killing birds and even tracking a pair of jackals.

Illness returns to Roosevelt on the trip back to Europe. In an effort to encourage independence in his children, Theodore Senior arranges for them to stay with various families throughout Europe. The eldest, Bamie, travels back to London with her mother, making stops at Carlsbad and Paris. Roosevelt's younger sister, Corinne, goes to study German with one family in Dresden, while Roosevelt and his younger brother, Elliott, study the same, but with a different family, also in Dresden. Theodore Senior travels to speak at the Vienna Exposition.

At first, the Minkwitz family avoids much conversation with Roosevelt, mostly due to his strange looks and odd habits concerning taxidermy, which also cause an offensive odor to surround his person.

Roosevelt's regular letters to his mother show attempts at humor regarding his continued illness. Mittie, however, worries as mothers often do. She arranges to visit Dresden before leaving Europe. She takes Roosevelt for a three-week trip to the drier air of the Swiss Alps, where he makes improvement. After returning to Dresden, he implores the mistress of the house to speed up his German lessons, so he does not fall behind his siblings. The lady, Fraulein Anna, admonishes Mittie not to worry. She says of Roosevelt, "He will surely one day be a great professor, or who knows, he may become even President of the United States."

Upon returning to the States, Roosevelt, at fifteen, harbors dreams of attending Harvard. While not out of his grasp, the dream requires much study in the next one and one half years, before he must take the entrance examinations. He employs a tutor to aid in his studies, especially Latin, Greek and mathematics.

The family returns to New York to see their newly constructed mansion at 6 West Fifty-Seventh Street. There, Roosevelt studies with such vigor that his father worries about his health. Yet, the boy strives to match his peers in every endeavor, physical and academic.

As was tradition, in the spring, the entire family relocates to their property on Oyster Bay, Long Island, an estate nicknamed Tranquility. The daily life of the family proves anything but tranquil, however. Led by their father, the children maintain busy schedules of reading, recitation and physical activity. So varied are their interests that some other families of their societal caste consider them "eccentric."

One year before entering Harvard, Roosevelt begins to take notice of girls. He feels more excitement, however, at the news of his acceptance into the school. His continued schedule of rigorous studies and especially physical training leaves little time for socializing. This fails to dissuade girls from noticing him, however. Though not a handsome lad, lifelong friend Fanny Smith admires Roosevelt even at this tender age. Another young lady who appears frequently in Roosevelt's adolescence is Edith Carow,

who writes about the active boy in her own memoirs. The two young people develop, during these years, an intimate and intellectual relationship.

Chapter 3, The Man with the Morning in His Face

Chapter 3, The Man with the Morning in His Face Summary and Analysis

The first mention of young Roosevelt in politics occurs in regards to a Republican demonstration on the Harvard campus. Upperclassmen yell for the new coming freshmen to be quiet. The demonstration occurs on the eve of Roosevelt's eighteenth birthday.

The author continues by describing the attitude of privilege that pervades Harvard College at this time. In this culture, Roosevelt fits right in. The young man quickly whittles his class down to the few "gentlemen" that he deems worthy of his time. These gentlemen are the first to call him "Teddy." But all of the freshman class take notice of the spirited young man, who once out-skates the record holding weightlifter at the time. During the whole of his freshman year, more than a dozen of Harvard's social clubs seek Roosevelt for membership.

In deference to his health, Roosevelt opts to stay in a boardinghouse near campus, rather than in the freshman dorms. His elder sister, Bamie, helps him furnish the accommodations. To the dismay of the lady keeping the boardinghouse, Roosevelt also expands the collection of specimens in his room, including salamanders and a large tortoise. From college, he writes touching letters to his mother about the peaceful life he has led. He also describes for her his busy academic life, which begins at 7:30am and ends well past 11pm.

Though Roosevelt does not date yet, he describes many of the girls he meets as "pretty." However, the author points out that never in his life does Roosevelt show respect for women, or men, who practice anything less than a virtuous life. Such habits were not common among Roosevelt's peers. However, he never lacks in female companionship. He also strives to exhibit the latest in fashion from New York, though others at Harvard are slower to change. Therefore, his fashion sense receives some good-natured ribbing.

For all his studying, none of the professors at Harvard find Roosevelt to be remarkable. Nonetheless, he achieves honors in five of his seven subjects by the end of his freshman year. Before leaving Harvard for the season, many of his friends and family from New York City visit, including his childhood sweetheart, Edith Carow. He enjoys her time there, but goes for a time of bird watching in the Adirondacks instead of following her back to the city.

That summer, while spending time with his family at Tranquility on the shore, he publishes his first work, The Summer Birds of the Adirondacks. Within it, Roosevelt

records lengthy auditory observations about species of which some locals are unaware. His second work, Some of the Birds of Oyster Bay, follows soon after. Because of such scholarly achievements, Theodore Senior discusses with his son a future in Science. He explains that, due to Senior's financial success, he could support Roosevelt in such a pursuit. However, he advises his son "if I was not going to earn money, I must even things up by not spending it." After receiving all her father's advice, Roosevelt decides to pursue his new career choice upon returning to Harvard in the fall.

That fall, he signs up for eight courses at Harvard, including two electives in natural history. He manages honors in six of these. He also greets his classmates with more acceptance than before. He writes to his younger sister that his peers seem more interested in discussing academics and less likely to talk about athletics than the year before.

That same fall, Theodore Senior receives an appointment as Collector of Customs to the Port of New York by President Hayes. The appointment results more from a political power play between Hayes and Boss Conkling of the Senate than Roosevelt's actual qualifications for the job. Illness quickly sets in for Theodore Senior and he leaves politics.

By the beginning of the New Year, Theodore travels home with urgency, as illness continues to plague his father. What doctors diagnosed as peritonitis is actually a tumor of the bowel, which results in a painful death for Theodore Senior in February. The young Theodore arrives home just hours after his father, know in New York City as "Greatheart," dies. Roosevelt writes in his diary of his heartache that "He was everything to me." For months, his grief manifests itself in bouts of terror that hamper his everyday life. Eventually, his desire to uphold his father's name provoksd him to resume his studies and strenuous schedule with new vigor.

Though he finishes his examinations with high marks, his health suffers. He retires for the summer to Oyster Bay for a time of rejuvenation. The rest takes the form of regular rowing practice and other beach sports. He also resumes his close relationship with Edith Carow. He continues to write of his sorrow over the loss of his father, these months later.

For the first of many trips, Roosevelt travels to the backwoods of Maine for the final weeks of his summer break. There, he meets a woodsman named Bill Sewall. Sewall later reports that he found Roosevelt to be "headstrong and aggressive." Theodore remarks that Sewall resembles a character from his favorite epic poem, The Saga of King Olaf. Roosevelt spends his time in Maine tramping through forests in a much simpler way than he was accustomed to living.

In 1878, Roosevelt returns to Cambridge for his third year. He signs up for his most aggressive coursework to date, with twenty hours worth of coursework. He also entertains multiple offers for membership in the elite Porcellian Club. Torn between offers from two leading clubs, he labors over the decision for days before deciding to become a "porc man."

During his third year, Roosevelt makes a new and close friendship with Dick Saltonstall. Saltonstall's local home, Chestnut Hill, becomes like home to Roosevelt. There he also meets the Lee family, and chiefly their daughter Alice. The close relationship between the Saltonstalls and the Lees allows Roosevelt to quickly develop a relationship with Alice.

As the year ends, Roosevelt enjoys his initiation into the Porcellian club. He later records that, at twenty-one, he is "perfectly pure" and free of vices. He also makes repeated visits to Chesnut Hill, specifically to see Alice. Once she shows mutual interest in him, he vows privately that he will marry her.

Chapter 4, The Swell in the Dog-Cart

Chapter 4, The Swell in the Dog-Cart Summary and Analysis

Though Alice Lee quickly catches young Roosevelt's eye, she also garners praise from many other would-be suitors. The author points out, though, that Roosevelt's quick love for Alice extinguishes any romantic feelings he felt for Edith Carow. Instead, he pursues Alice with the same single-mindedness he directs at hunting and science. He makes remarks in his diary, pleading for his God's help in maintaining his high morals, especially out of respect for his father's memory.

Despite his pursuit of Alice, Roosevelt also maintains his studies and social life. In academics, Roosevelt begins to show a political side. Such studies attract Roosevelt, due in part to his hesitation to spend the requisite three years studying abroad that his natural history major requires. For her part, Alice Lee also supports a major in politics, perhaps because she wishes to keep Roosevelt nearby. As they spend more time together, no doubt her opinions hold more sway with the young man.

Late in the winter, Roosevelt, feeling confined by both his academic and personal life, takes a sudden vacation to Island Falls, Maine. Sewall remarks on Roosevelt's abilities to have conversations with the meanness of backwoods lumbermen, quickly finding common ground with such unlikely friends.

Within weeks, Theodore returns to Cambridge with renewed energy for his studies and his courtship. He also fights in a lightweight semifinal match. Alice Less watches as Roosevelt fights round after round against a much more fit opponent. Though he loses, he puts up such a remarkable fight that, years later, his peers recall the details.

In order to aid his pursuit of Alice, Roosevelt arranges for Lightfoot, his horse, to be shipped to Cambridge. Due to his fortune in academic and personal pursuits, he writes of himself "I can't conceive of a fellow possible enjoying himself more." He adjusts his schedule to allow for studying in the morning, freeing his afternoons for time with his sweetheart.

Though Roosevelt shows evidence of feelings of urgency towards securing his future with Alice, he also begins a habit of only recording the highlights of his life, leaving low points from his diary entirely. At the end of the academic year, the author speculates that Roosevelt asks Alice to marry him, at which she puts him off, but promises to remember him fondly. Down but not out, Roosevelt leaves Harvard for the summer.

Yet, Roosevelt fails to take it easy upon arriving in Oyster Bay. He immediately begins training Lightfoot to pull a "dog-cart." Such an act is evidence of his plans to woo Alice. He tries to show the same prowess at the reins that his father exhibited, but obviously needs much practice. He also spends much time in physical competitions with his

younger brother. They appear to be complementarily matched, with Theodore excelling in some areas and his brother in others.

When Roosevelt's marks for his junior year reach him, he considers his professor's advice to change his major to government. Because Alice cites Roosevelt's biological experiments and specimens as a reason for rejecting his proposal, the idea of a career change holds even more weight. He does spend a short weekend with Alice at Chestnut Hill, before continuing north to Maine and the outdoors company of Sewall.

On his third trip to Island Falls, Roosevelt sets out to climb Mount Katahdin, the highest in Maine. A fellow from Harvard, Cutler, joins Roosevelt and remarks on the man's stamina, hiking even after loosing his shoes and bedding. In other, harsh excursions, Roosevelt rejoices in how such exhausting labors make him enjoy the simpler things in life, such as stale food and a warm bed.

Back at Harvard that fall, Roosevelt shows off his dog-cart. though he assumes the attention he receives results from the admiration of his classmates. However, many of his peers regard his new equipment as over the top. The author assumes that, likewise, Alice fails to show excitement over the vehicle, because her reaction fails to show up in Roosevelt's diary.

Though Alice remains aloof for much of the fall of his senior year, Roosevelt passes his time in many of Harvard's social clubs. He celebrates his twenty-first birthday surrounded by his loving family.

Within weeks, though, it seems Alice will turn her attentions elsewhere completely. A depression sets in, and he responds by studying even harder. He also arranges for multiple meetings of the Lee and Roosevelt families. Though the two families get along well, Alice fails to be wooed. Shee continues to flirt with other eligible men during her own coming out season.

Not until Christmas does Roosevelt write again of Alice. He remarks that her presence at the family's home at 6 West Fifty-Seventh Street seems "so natural." Finally, on January 25, Alice accepts Theodore Roosevelt's proposal. Once both families react positively, the couple makes the engagement public.

Roosevelt's next task is to convince the Lees to a fall wedding, on his birthday in October. He approaches Mr. Lee diplomatically and wins on all accounts, with an official announcement on Valentine's Day and his desired date for the fall wedding.

Victory at winning Alice fails to temper Roosevelt's zeal in regards to her. In fact, his visits to Chestnut Hill become more frequent, regardless of the harsh, winter weather. Though he suffers some discontent over her playing hard to get, time softens these feelings. In April, he rejoices in being engaged to a woman who continues to receive so much attention, socially.

Though his romance fails to cause a drop in his grades, Roosevelt suffers some mocking from his professors and peers alike for his rise in sentimentality. His

relationship with Alice, however, seals Roosevelt's fate regarding his major. He resolves to study law the next year. He confesses to a classmate, just before graduation, that he desires to improve politics in New York City. To evidence his new interest in politics, he writes his senior thesis on equal rights for women, a highly controversial idea at this time. He advocates for a woman's right to vote, though not due to her qualifications, as men require no such thing for their own rights. However, he concedes to his opposition, on the count that only men can defend the rights for which they vote.

Theodore Roosevelt graduates magna cum laude from Harvard College in 1880. He remarks on his almost uncontainable happiness, just four months before he is to marry Alice Lee. Just months before, however, a doctor tells Roosevelt that he must take it easy, for his health's sake. However, Roosevelt tells the doctor, "I'm going to do all the things you tell me not to do. If I've got to live the sort of life you have described, I don't care how short it is." On that note, he proves the doctor wrong, hides the news even from his beloved and concentrates only on his own happiness.

When Alice visits Oyster Bay that July, Roosevelt plans to build her a home there, overlooking the bay itself. He records plans to name the property Leeholm. He also upholds his promise not to follow the doctor's orders. Within days, ill health returns. He complains to his sister that such symptoms as cholera morbus prove most "unromantic." However, he quickly comes to enjoy Alice's nursing of his health.

As a way of bidding goodbye to bachelorhood, Roosevelt plans a western hunting trip with his brother. He writes back home about the enormity of America, with farms larger than some European countries. Towards the end of September, Roosevelt compares his hunting trophies, 203, with Elliot's 201. In deference to the cold weather, Roosevelt makes for home. Roosevelt stops in New York for his suitcase and continues impatiently to Chesnut Hill. Upon being reunited with his fiancée, he waxes exceedingly poetic about her finer qualities. Dense activity marks the weeks before the wedding. Roosevelt spends the eve of his birthday with friends, including Fanny Smith and Edith Carow, before retiring to his room alone as a bachelor for the last time.

Chapter 5, The Political Hack

Chapter 5, The Political Hack Summary and Analysis

Friends of the Roosevelts remark that the wedding was lovely and the couple appear very happy. The festive mood at the reception at Chestnut Hill catches everyone, even Edith Carow, Roosevelt's former sweetheart. Of their wedding night, Roosevelt writes, "Our intense happiness is too sacred to be written about."

The couple enjoys two weeks at Oyster Bay before Roosevelt embarks on his studies at the newly established Columbia School of Law. By way of a proper honeymoon, Roosevelt promises his bride a five-month tour of Europe in the spring. The couple enjoys the private time at Oyster Bay, nonetheless. They spend nearly every hour together, reading both newspapers and classics aloud to one another.

After their time alone, The Roosevelt's move into 6 West Fifty-Seventh Street and Theodore seeks to fill his father's old shoes. He remarks, though, that he fails to live up to his father's standard.

On November 17, Roosevelt enters the fledgling law school at Columbia, founded by T. W. Dwight. Students crowd into small rooms and those who arrive late fail to gain a seat at all. In this atmosphere, Theodore Roosevelt exhibits his usual exuberance, frequently interrupting lectures with his questions. Roosevelt makes a positive impression on the Law School and remarks to himself that he enjoys his new studies.

Aside from his time in lectures at the Law School, Roosevelt spends hours in research at the Astor Library. Though his diaries of the time remain vague about the subject of his research, the author remarks on Roosevelt's talent with the pen, as evidenced in his earliest letters. His flair, along with the volume of his work, turn writing into a therapy for Roosevelt, according to Morris.

The earliest evidence of his talent for writing appears in his technical book, The Navel War of 1812. Started during his pursuit of Alice while at Harvard, Roosevelt spends years researching and writing about both the American and the British sides of the conflict. The book enjoys success on both sides of the Atlantic.

However, he remains balanced and disciplined in his research, leaving the library promptly at three, to spend time with his new bride. The couple frequently enjoys sleigh rides though the city and surrounding countryside during their first winter as husband and wife.

The Roosevelts' high place in New York City society is evidenced by their attention from Mrs. Astor, the "grande dame" of City society. The author describes the society as a mix of old and new, of the old money of the Astors and the new money of the Vanderbilts, and wines, architecture and technology.

The social calendar of the young couple barely leaves room for Theodore to sleep. Nearly each night, they attend parties or balls. Yet, he keeps a full daytime schedule of study at the Law School and research in the library.

Another pastime begins to fill Roosevelt's time as well. He begins to attend meetings of the Twenty-first District Republican Association. The politicians that represent Roosevelt's district meet in a gloomy room not far from Roosevelt's residence up to twice a month.

The men themselves, though, are part of a much meaner class in society than Roosevelt. When his family learns of his political pastimes, they respond with horror. They encourage him to distance himself from the dirty business of politics. When they remark that there are nobler ways to enter politics, from the top, Roosevelt responds passionately that he can hold his own with the rougher crowd. He wishes to learn about the machine that is politics from the ground up. He also desires to avenge his father against that machine, and its engineer, Boss Roscoe Conkling. For all his eventual success, the Roosevelt family never fully supports his move into politics.

The workers that make up the Republican meetings fail to be impressed by the young newcomer. His first cause involves a bill bound for state legislature concerning equal street cleaning for every neighborhood in New York City. Though the bill fails, Roosevelt remains undaunted. He does, however, take time off from his newest pursuit to take his wife on the promised European Tour.

The trip begins with discontent, however. Such travels still fail to excite Roosevelt. In addition, Alice suffers seasickness on her first Atlantic voyage. Upon landing in Ireland, however, the couple begins their tour with vigor. Roosevelt records his joy at travelling with his wife, who proves to be athletic enough to match Roosevelt on many physical excursions. During their tours of the Continent, Roosevelt learns of the assassination of President Garfield.

Meanwhile, Roosevelt sets out to climb the Matterhorn. Having accomplished this, the couple makes their way back to Liverpool to return home. During any down time in the trip, Roosevelt concentrates on perfecting the manuscript for his work on the War of 1812. Reflecting upon his third trip out of the country, Roosevelt writes that "I am an American; free born and free bred."

Back in New York City, Roosevelt dives back into all his work—research, school and politics. One well-respected member of the Republican Party, Joe Murray, takes notice of Roosevelt during a speech at a preconvention meeting. Hess seeks a new face for the party, to replace the likes of Conkling and Joe Hess. He feels that, with his family name and Ivy League education, Roosevelt fits the bill. In addition, he shows the marks of a good politician, to prove the bad days of the party have passed. Murray knows that, with his sway within the party, any candidate he backs will receive nomination.

After the meeting, Murray approaches Roosevelt, who rejects the idea of nomination. He fears giving the impression of selfish motives. However, the next night, Murray

approaches Roosevelt for an idea for a new candidate. When Roosevelt fails to produce a name, Murray once again asks him to consider the nomination personally. Roosevelt accepts the offer with hesitation. A mutual friend reassures Roosevelt in his decision.

On October 28, 1881, Roosevelt gains a nomination for state senate at the age of twenty-three. He quickly plots a moderate platform that follows his entire political career, regardless of the way the rest of the political machine tilts.

The nomination gains approval for Roosevelt from some members of his extended family. Friends of his and his father alike pledge their support. Even the press writes with praise for the young man. Such praise results in what the author describes as an arrogant confidence on Roosevelt's part, so sure is he of his victory.

Roosevelt takes the actual news of his victory in passing. He spends much of the day in research at the library. He finishes the manuscript for his book by early December. Though largely dry with facts, the book receives international acclaim as a manual for naval war. Having accomplished this feat, Roosevelt concentrates on entertaining his young wife though the holiday social season, before leaving for Albany in the New Year. In a letter to a classmate, though, Roosevelt writes, "But don't think I am going into politics after this year, for I am not."

Chapter 6, The Cyclone Assemblyman

Chapter 6, The Cyclone Assemblyman Summary and Analysis

Early January in Albany proves cold and lonely for the young politician, as Alice travels to Montreal with friends. On ice-slick streets, Roosevelt makes his way to the Republican Caucus. He makes an impression on his fellow assemblymen with his appearance alone. They compare him to his contemporary, Oscar Wilde. He receives criticism from both sides of the assembly for his age and assumed weak spirit. Roosevelt quickly proves such assumptions false. When some men of the Assembly make condescending remarks, Roosevelt reacts passionately, even coming to blows on at least one occasion.

He does, however, make his own observations about his fellows. Many represent the machine politics that he despises. Few hold the same breeding and education as Roosevelt, which draws contempt from the young man. Most notably, Roosevelt quickly witnesses corruption among even high members of the house.

Roosevelt quickly becomes frustrated by the business of electing a Speaker. Hold-outs within the Democrats cause a stalemate that lasts some weeks. Roosevelt does find a friend, though, in fellow freshman Isaac Hunt. Hunt also becomes Roosevelt's first ally.

After two weeks in sessions, Roosevelt collects his bride and brings her to Albany, where they secure rooms near the Capital. With her company, Roosevelt loses some of his impatience over the lingering deadlock, until some Republicans suggest a compromise to resolve the tie.

At this, Roosevelt calls for the floor. He speaks to his fellow assemblymen about the folly of such action. He keeps the speech simple, in deference to his uneducated audience. Newspapers, even in New York City, report on Roosevelt's "favorable impression" in Albany. Most importantly, the party takes Roosevelt's advice and the elections remain deadlocked.

Finally, in February, Charles Patterson, a Democrat, gains the position of Speaker. He appoints Roosevelt to a committee on Cities, a reponsibility which Roosevelt gladly assumes. He quickly introduces several bills, one of which achieves passage.

Roosevelt, along with other freshman Republicans, form a group of assemblymen independent from the machine and gains notice by many, including Spinney of The New York Times. The other men instruct Roosevelt in the procedure of the Assembly. For his part, Roosevelt adds his passionate support to their causes. Roosevelt's moral standings breathe fresh air into New York politics.

By spring, Roosevelt comes to recognize the extent of corruption within state politics. A case involving the Manhattan Elevated Railroad and the city of New York comes to symbolize the corruption at this time. Roosevelt investigates the case, which exposes judicial corruption at the state level. At Hunt's suggestions, Roosevelt looks deeper into the case. What he finds prompts him to demand investigation of both Judge Westbrook of the state Supreme Court and Attorney general Ward.

What becomes known as the Westbrook Resolution meets with the expected opposition. The Resolution is immediately stalled. However, Roosevelt remains on the case, demanding days later that the investigation begin immediately. Finally, the day before the Easter recess, Roosevelt gains a vote for his resolution, but fails to get a majority. Nonetheless, the resolution gains press over the holiday. One week later, after much play in the newspapers, the assembly gives the motion an overwhelming majority vote. Regardless of the outcome of the investigation, Roosevelt counts the vote for his motion as a resounding success.

In other regards, Roosevelt gains the nickname of "cyclone assemblyman" for his habit of striking down the bills of others while drafting little legislation of his own. In regards to his Westbrook Resolution, days before the end of the legislative session, rumors spread that the committee will recommend impeachment. Hours before the public reading, however, the resolution is changed, after some well-placed bribes, and Judge Westbrook escapes impeachment. Though Roosevelt makes an impassioned speech against the findings, the assembly votes to accept the report. Days later, Roosevelt retreats to Oyster Bay.

Roosevelt spends the summer in his characteristic schedule of athletic pursuits. Republican papers throughout the state tout his first year in politics as a success, despite the failure of his resolution. In fact, should the Republicans gain a majority for the next session, there is talk of making Roosevelt the Speaker.

Chapter 7, The Fighting Cock

Chapter 7, The Fighting Cock Summary and Analysis

When the Republicans of the New York legislature nominate Roosevelt for speaker of the house, predictions fly throughout the country about the young man's future in politics. Though they prove to be true, Roosevelt himself scoffs at such flattering predictions. Nevertheless, he fights stiff opposition for the appointment.

Also in Albany in 1883 is the New York governor, Grover Cleveland, a future president. The author points out that Cleveland is known for both his political ambitions and physical size, weighing "well over three hundred pounds." Early in the legislative season, Roosevelt receives a summons from Cleveland and the three men discuss, for hours, their strategy to pass a Civil Service Reform bill.

Socially, Roosevelt charms much of Albany. However, his wife, Alice, remains in New York City, nearer to family and friends, given Roosevelt's busy schedule in Albany. Back on the house floor, Roosevelt begins to gain a reputation as a man that speaks passionately, but offends many of other parties, as he blames many of the state's problems on the Democrats.

During the session, the topic of the New York Elevated railroad arises. Roosevelt supports a measure to lower the fare from ten cents to five. However, Cleveland strikes the measure down, stating that he must stand by the original contract between the railroad and the state. For this, Cleveland gains unexpected acclaim. For his part, Roosevelt issues a renouncement of his original vote, favoring fairness, but his peers call such an admission cowardly. When one of Roosevelt's supporters is then dismissed, on unrelated charges, Roosevelt feels much frustration about the party politics in Albany, The press begins to notice that any newspaper with Roosevelt's name in the headlines gains readership, as the young assemblyman rises in popularity throughout the country.

In other areas of legislation, Roosevelt continues to push for the passage of the civil service reform. However, certain Democrats from New York City oppose the bill. It finally passes on the last day of the Senate's session. The author cites that such reform makes a large impact on Cleveland's own election to the White House, and Roosevelt has much to do with its passage in the legislature. Civil Service Reforms Act is a bit of foreshadowing for Roosevelt as well, one day taking him to Washington DC, in a different capacity.

Returning to New York City, Roosevelt gives speeches about his reform. He meets Commander H. H. Gorringe at one party, who suggests Roosevelt accompany him to Dakota. Roosevelt accepts, wishing to hunt buffalo before they are wiped from the plains. However, news of Alice's pregnancy causes Roosevelt to put off his trip in order to plan the construction of Leeholm, his mansion on Oyster Bay. However, Roosevelt's

own failing health hampers the construction. Instead, he and Alice retreat to Richfield Springs for the month of July. Returning to Oyster Bay in August, Roosevelt buys a large tract of land, bringing his property there to 155 acres. Initial plans for the house itself resemble the facade of the Capitol in Albany.

The next month, Roosevelt leaves for his second trip out west. Gorringe does not accompany him. Yet, Roosevelt remains excited.

Chapter 8, The Dude from New York

Chapter 8, The Dude from New York Summary and Analysis

Roosevelt's trip to the Dakota territory begins at the Pyramid Park Hotel, a rough establishment with one huge room full of cots. The author describes the town of Little Missouri as rough, with no law enforcement nearby. Roosevelt hires Joe Ferris as a local guide. Many of the locals treat Roosevelt coldly.

The two men use the Lang's cabin as their base for operations. Roosevelt hunts all day and spends all night philosophizing with the senior Lang while his son listens rapturously. Before going back East, Roosevelt buys the Maltese Cross property from Ferris's brother and employs the men to run it as a cattle ranch.

Chapter 9, The Honorable Gentleman from the Twenty-First

Chapter 9, The Honorable Gentleman from the Twenty-First Summary and Analysis

Roosevelt returns to Albany for this third term as assemblyman. He campaigns hard to become speaker of the house, but loses. However, he succeeds in pushing three pieces of legislations through, including a reform of New York City's aldermen. As he begins an investigation into political corruption in New York City, Alice nears her due date for their first child.

On Feb 13, Roosevelt receives a telegram announcing the arrival of a daughter. Later the same day, he receives another message, employing him to return home, for Alice and Mittie both lie near death. Shortly after Roosevelt arrives, both die. In sympathy, the state house calls for an adjournment. Roosevelt mentions Alice very few times through the rest of his life.

Chapter 10, The Delegate-at-Large

Chapter 10, The Delegate-at-Large Summary and Analysis

Bamie immediately becomes primary caretaker for the new baby, Alice Lee. Roosevelt sells both his house and his mother's, moving Bamie and Alice Lee to a smaller place on Madison Avenue.

Roosevelt responds to the sorrow by making himself busier than ever. In less than one week, he returns to Albany. At the Republican Convention, Roosevelt leads the independents for candidate Edmunds. While there, he learns Cleveland plans to veto several of his bills. Even a visit to the governor's office fails to make a difference. After the fight for presidential nominee, the Republicans choose Blaine. Roosevelt responds to these disappointments by travelling west.

Chapter 11, The Cowboy of the Present

Chapter 11, The Cowboy of the Present Summary and Analysis

The best medicine for the twenty-five year old widower proves to be a solo hunting trip. The face of the territory changes, as the new town of Medora takes traffic from Little Missouri. Near Medora, Roosevelt claims a new stake. He employs his friends from Maine, Sewall and Dow, to manage the new ranch.

Excited once again, Roosevelt returns to New York City to await the arrival of his new ranch managers. He spends time with Edith Carow and Alice Lee. Also, he visits Henry Cabot Lodge in Boston. Lodge was Roosevelt's partner at the Republican National Convention, where they swung the vote for Blaine. Roosevelt and Lodge rue the ensuing political fallout.

Upon first returning to Dakota with Sewall and Dow, Roosevelt takes them hunting. Over the course of the trip, he enjoys much success as a hunter, even killing a small grizzly. One local tycoon, a Frenchman named de Mores, challenges Roosevelt's newest land claim, but Roosevelt wins the rights.

Briefly, Roosevelt returns East, out of duty to his party. He gives speeches in support of Blaine, who holds a commanding lead. However, when a speaker at a Blaine rally makes a comment against "run, Romanism and rebellion" Blaine loses many voters to democrat Grover Cleveland. Lodge also looses his race for Congress. A depressed Roosevelt returns west for a bitterly cold winter.

Chapter 12, The Four-Eyed Maverick

Chapter 12, The Four-Eyed Maverick Summary and Analysis

As Roosevelt tries to write about his experience in Dakota, he suffers writer's block and attempts to remedy this by removing himself from the scene at hand. In New York, the pages flow quickly. His second book, Hunting Tips of a Rancher, goes to the printer's, resplendent with photos. It enjoys instant success. The author points out a bit of irony, in that the man who claims to be such an animal lover also enjoys a successful hunting career.

Back at Elkhorn Ranch, Roosevelt sends the men to buy more cattle in Montana. He also participates in a western cattle roundup. For days, he rides with professional cowboys, impressing them with his strength and stamina. Even after injuring a shoulder when he falls from his horse, Roosevelt keeps up with any cowboy present.

Shortly after the roundup, Roosevelt returns to New York. In Oyster Bay, he sees Leeholm for the first time. Not wanting the constant reminder of his deceased wife, Roosevelt renames the property Sagamore Hill. He spends his time in New York playing with Alice Lee, pausing to observe the funeral of Ulysses Grant. The author also points out that future first lady Eleanor Roosevelt is now 10 months old; she is the daughter of Roosevelt's sister, Corinne.

In August, Roosevelt returns to Medora. He finds de Mores in jail on an old murder charge, which de Mores claims was self-defense. When de Mores writes to Roosevelt, wanting to know if the younger man had a hand in his capture, Roosevelt reacts with offense. He visits the Frenchman in jail and the two part on friendly terms, as gentleman.

In addition, Roosevelt encounters Native Americans personally for the first time. He writes about the experience, but says little about other developments in his life, namely his engagement to Edith Carow.

Twenty months after Alice's death, Roosevelt becomes reacquainted with his childhood friend. They both agree to secrecy, out of respect for Alice's memory. During his courtship in New York, Roosevelt takes up a new sport—hunting with hounds. On his first time out, he falls, injuring once again his newly mended shoulder. Bruised and cut, he finishes the hunt. Upon returning, Alice Lee runs scared from her monsterly looking father.

Chapter 13, The Long Arm of the Law

Chapter 13, The Long Arm of the Law Summary and Analysis

All winter, Roosevelt attends social functions in the company of Edith. Due to their long friendship, no one suspects the truth about their relationship. Both Roosevelt and Edith exercise caution in their writings to and about one another.

Due to the success of previous books, a publisher contracts Roosevelt to write a biography about statesman Thomas Hart Benton. With this task, and Edith sailing soon to Europe, Roosevelt once again goes west.

To ease traversing the river which runs along his ranch at Elkhorn, Roosevelt, Sewall and Dow build a boat, which they tie up nightly outside the ranch house. The continuous ice jambs, however, prevent them from using the boat much early in the spring. When they awaken one morning to find the boat gone, Roosevelt insists on building another to pursue the culprits, believed to be Redhead Finnegan and his gang, known cattle thieves.

For days, the three men pursue the thieves. Sewall and Dow steer the boat, as Roosevelt waits in the bottom, reading his newest literary purchases. Roosevelt and his crew catch the thieves, with Roosevelt's boat. Ably, Roosevelt brings them to justice after grueling days in the bitter cold, with nothing for food but flour dipped in water. On the trip back to civilization, Roosevelt breezes through Anna Karenina. He remarks to his sister that he finds the book to be mediocre. In addition, he asks that his sister send Edith flowers as a farewell for her European trip.

On April 1, Roosevelt helps conduct the first elections in the Dakota Territory. The day goes smoothly, with only a few brawls occurring among the voters. He also organizes and leads a stockman's association, to control the business of raising and selling beef cattle.

Throughout the territory, Roosevelt enjoys celebrity status for his capture of Finnegan. Out of propriety and dreams of higher office, perhaps, Roosevelt insists that only those very familiar with him may address him informally. Due partly to his acclaim, he accepts an invitation to speak at a political celebration in the town of Dickinson on July 4. Roosevelt begins to speak with eloquence and passion about his dreams of Manifest Destiny for the United States.

Back at his ranch, and desperate to finish the biography, Roosevelt employs Lodge to do fact checking back east. Roosevelt also writes to military acquaintances, pleading for a position, should the United States go to war with Mexico over recent border disputes.

When gossip of his engagement breaks out in the eastern newspapers, Roosevelt rushes home. He comforts Bamie, who mourns the inevitable loss of her young charge. The trip allows Roosevelt time to reflect on his cattle business, which proves unprofitable. He begins to contemplate getting out of ranching.

Chapter 14, The Next Mayor of New York

Chapter 14, The Next Mayor of New York Summary and Analysis

At the Republican convention in New York City, party leaders implore Roosevelt to run for mayor. Though the timing of the elections nearly coincides with his planned departure for Europe, to rendezvous with Edith, he consents. As the city watches the construction of the new Statue of Liberty, Roosevelt rushes around, campaigning with all his strength.

At first, Roosevelt admits he fears he is doomed to lose. However, as the race progresses, he gains momentum on the other candidates. Days before the election, Roosevelt feels certain of victory. However, fearing that voting for Roosevelt throws away their votes, his supporters defect and Roosevelt suffers an embarrassing loss. He rejoices, however, in Lodge's win of a seat in Congress.

Four days after the election, Roosevelt and Bamie board a ship, listed as Mr. And Mrs. Merrifield, bound for England. Soon after leaving port, one Cecil Arthur Spring-Rice recognizes Roosevelt and the two become fast friends. In England, Spring-Rice introduces Roosevelt to many English dignitaries.

In a quiet and foggy London, after weeks of social calls, Roosevelt weds Edith Carow.

Interlude

Interlude Summary and Analysis

In the summer of 1886-1887, a record-breaking blizzard hits the Dakota Territory. Snow buries animals, ranches and any plant life on the plains. Many animals, both wild and domestic, die from exposure. Others perish from starvation, and farmers kill still others when the animals become mad. Hungry cattle tear up even the roots of the grass, so the next spring, only barren dirt remains. Everyone suffers immeasurable losses.

Chapter 15, The LIterary Feller

Chapter 15, The LIterary Feller Summary and Analysis

Before Roosevelt returns, his marriage makes the papers in New York City. Reporters await him as he disembarks in the harbor. News precedes him as well, that a baby is already on the way. Back home, he tells his peers in politics that he dislikes the English system and finds the American political schema superior.

Edith insists upon taking over the raising of Alice Lee, but the family arranges for a gradual switch that takes months. Edith also takes control of Roosevelt's finances, an area in which he shows a rare weakness.

To gain a proper estimate of his financial status, Roosevelt travels west, to see for himself the devastation of the blizzard. He sees a ruined landscape, with cattle carcasses hanging from trees where they previously stood on top of the snow. In lieu of a roundup, a small search party returns from the south with two steer. The author estimates Roosevelt's ranch losses at sixty-five percent. Frenchman de Mores leaves the area for mining opportunities further west. Others pack up and eventually Medora becomes a ghost town. Yet, Roosevelt, in his autobiography, credits his time in Dakota with his eventual success in gaining the presidency.

In New York, the Democrats hold all offices, including mayor, governor and president. Such a situation leaves no chance for an appointment for the young Republican. Yet, after a harsh political speech at a gathering at Delmonico's in New York City, reporters throughout the country begin to talk of Roosevelt's chances for president. However, at twenty-eight, the young man has many years before he can dream of achieving such feats.

That summer, the family opens Sagamore Hill once again. There, Roosevelt begins another biography, that of early American politician Gouverneur Morris. The book receives mediocre reviews. Other than writing, the Roosevelt's enjoy a calm summer, mostly because of their financial cutbacks. They entertain friends such as Spring-Rice and Lodge.

On September 13, Roosevelt celebrates the birth of his son Theodore, Junior. Then, in October, he returns west for a season of hunting. Regretfully, he finds little and the animal lover returns to New York to begin conservation efforts. He gathers other concerned men to form the Boone and Crockett Club, which endeavors to preserve both forest and fauna. They prove instrumental in projects such as the National Zoo, Yellowstone Park and Sequoia National Park.

To his literary peers, Roosevelt confesses that he desires to write a first class book. Combining his love for the west with his desire to write, he enters a contract to publish a monumental The Winning of the West. It progresses slowly at first.

Roosevelt takes on other, smaller writing projects as well. He publishes several articles, to satisfy the family's financial needs. In addition to such concerns, he begins to worry about the healthy of his brother, Elliot, who suffers from alcoholism. Such worries prove to be a foreshadowing of dark days ahead.

In the winter, Roosevelt enjoys more time for writing. He adds public speaking to his duties, and receives monetary compensation for these efforts.

Just as Roosevelt admits to Lodge that his political aspirations survive, he receives an invitation from President Harrison to act as Civil Service Commissioner. Though the job offers a pittance of a salary, Roosevelt accepts. The year is 1876, America's centennial.

Chapter 16, The Silver Plated Reform Commissioner

Chapter 16, The Silver Plated Reform Commissioner Summary and Analysis

The author describes the Washington, D.C. of the late 1800s as a beautiful and idyllic place, where people seemed unbothered by work. However, the city proves to be an expensive place to live, due to its high turnover rate: with each new administration comes an almost entirely new population.

Into such an environment bursts Roosevelt. He accepts the oath of Commissioner with his trademark gusto. The other Commissioners, Lyman and Thompson, Roosevelt thinks, work sluggishly.

Civil Service refers to any federal jobs. Prior to reform, the jobs are assigned by the spoils system, in which the reigning political party awards jobs largely on favoritism, with little regard to qualifications. Also, employees of the former administration lose their jobs with no considerations for performance. Roosevelt seeks immediately to rectify such abuses of power.

Soon after arriving in Washington, Roosevelt meets with the President. As are many people, the younger man is unimpressed by the cold persona of President Harrison.

To tackle injustice in civil service, Roosevelt goes on the offensive. When he hears of an abuse of power, he rushes in, using any means possible, especially the power of the press. His first victory in reform, in the president's own state of Indiana, gains Roosevelt some acclaim.

From Indianapolis, Roosevelt rushes to Milwaukee, to confront a potentially crooked Postmaster General there, Mr. Paul. Roosevelt relies largely on an assistant to Paul, one Mr. Shidy. Based on Shidy's testimony of unlawful actions he did at Paul's insistence, Roosevelt submits a damning report. Paul fires Shidy for his testimony, and Roosevelt, true to his promise of protection, finds Shidy a new post.

Work in Washington slows for the summer. Roosevelt fears such work will allow for weight gain, and he devises a regimen to prevent such consequences. Shortly, though, news of his report on Milwaukee surfaces. The Washington Post writer, Frank Hatton, an opponent to reform, calls Roosevelt a hypocrite for finding work for Shidy—dishonest work by his own admissions.

In the ensuing investigations, Roosevelt stands by all of his decisions. Months later, the author notes the obvious frustration of Roosevelt at the fact that Paul remains in office. To work off the irritation, Roosevelt goes hunting in Montana.

Roosevelt enjoys his most dangerous hunt to date, facing a large grizzly up close. Of course, he wins the contest, bringing the pelt home as a trophy to his wife. He also submits the first edition of The Winning of the West. It enjoys instant success. The critics that Roosevelt enjoy most, however, are those who doubt that he can accomplish such a feat in so little time.

Back in Washington, Roosevelt continues to argue for reform. He becomes associated with another future president, William McKinley. Edith and the children also join him in Washington and the family enjoys a modest social season there after the first of the year.

When opponents to civil service reform demand an investigation into Roosevelt's office for various, exaggerated accusations, Roosevelt immediately goes on the offensive. He makes his detractors look foolish to the point that the congressional committee dismisses the case. With this win behind him, Roosevelt admits in private that his gaze often wanders to the White House.

Outside of politics, Roosevelt reads a recently acclaimed book about current naval strategies. He also writes a history of New York City that proves to be only average. Finally, he travels west, this time with his extended family. They visit many natural wonders, namely Yellowstone.

Chapter 17, The Dear Old Beloved Brother

Chapter 17, The Dear Old Beloved Brother Summary and Analysis

As Roosevelt fears, his brother Elliot begins to suffer from alcoholism, starting in his late teens. When Elliot begins to suffer from seizures, he turns to alcohol. In his early twenties, following a sports injury, he also discovers painkillers. The result is a heavily addicted man that worries his wife and brother.

To attempt to heal himself, Elliot takes his family to Europe. Shortly after their arrival, he writes that his wife is expecting. They settle in, for her health becomes quite delicate. At the same time, Roosevelt learns that another woman in New York City claims to be carrying Elliot's child. The woman demands hush money from the family.

Roosevelt sees alcoholism as a sickness. Therefore, he feels his brother was insane when he slept with the woman, Katy Mann. At first, Elliot denies knowing the woman, and then changes his story. To add support to the family and advise Anna to leave her adulterous husband, Bamie travels to France.

Bad luck occurs elsewhere in Roosevelt's' life as well. He receives much criticism for the sensational way he handles civil service reform in Baltimore, showing up on Election Day and observing the offenses first hand. Opponents claim the testimonies made at the time were untrustworthy. Furthermore, the Native Americans of the Dakota Territory, and others, suffer horrible humanitarian and financial problems, to which the President's office turns a blind eye.

For a time, Elliot shows improvement upon the arrival of Bamie and some time spent in an institution. However, he relapses and takes up with a mistress in Paris. Back in New York City, Katy Mann demands a staggering $10,000 for her silence. Roosevelt admittedly lacks such funds. The author guesses that some family member pays her, after an expert in resemblances confirms the paternity of the baby. No mention of her or her baby appears in Roosevelt's records or the papers of the time.

As a last resort to help his brother, Roosevelt goes to court to declare Elliot insane. Such an action makes headlines, causing a grievous shame to the family. Unrest occurs on multiple fronts, with cries for civil service reform in New York City and rumors of military unrest in Chile, where mobs kill two Americans.

Finally, in desperation, Roosevelt travels to France. He brings Elliot home, after a compromise. Roosevelt drops the suit for insanity after Elliot promises to enter a rehabilitation hospital in Illinois. Back in the US, Roosevelt travels to Kentucky to investigate possible civil service abuses.

Following this, he briefly enjoys a hunting trip in Texas. Back in the Dakota Territory, Roosevelt continues to enjoy celebrity status due to his capture of Finnegan. He tours reservations there, confirming his fears as to their conditions. That fall, Anna, Elliot's wife dies. Elliot, returned to his destructive ways, is told to stay away.

Politically, Roosevelt admits that even those in his own party dislike him for his views on reform. After the presidential election, Grover Cleveland returns to office. He invites Roosevelt to stay on as Civil Service Commissioner, and Roosevelt accepts. One final act by President Harrison is to recognize Hawaii as a sovereign nation.

Chapter 18, The Universe Spinner

Chapter 18, The Universe Spinner Summary and Analysis

Chapter 18 opens with vivid description of the World's Fair in Chicago. The fair stands as a testimony to the expansion of America. Roosevelt appears there in only a minor role for the Boone and Crockett Club. However, the author describes, in detail, ways in which Roosevelt ascribes to the philosophies of Manifest Destiny and expansion.

Roosevelt holds few prejudices. He believes it to be right to conquer and educate weaker people. However, should those people take the education and surpass their teachers, he feels that to be their right. Such evolutionary ideas as survival of the fittest appeal to Roosevelt's global outlook. He sees bright days ahead for his beloved country. In fact, with friendly dealings with Hawaii, Roosevelt hopes to see an established US Naval base in that area of the Pacific, to rival that of Japan.

Personally, however, Roosevelt continues to suffer, financially. He sells acres of land at Sagamore Hill to make up the difference. He also publishes further successful volumes of The Winning of the West. In August, Elliot dies in a final fit of delirium. Roosevelt remarks in his diary that Elliot's mistress seems to genuinely grieve.

Briefly, as election time nears, Roosevelt expresses interest in the mayoralty of New York City. He desires to win the seat that previously eluded him. However, in deference to their finances, Edith says no; they cannot afford to invest the money and not win. That set aside, Roosevelt once again offers his military services, should unrest in Cuba turn serious.

In Washington, D.C., Roosevelt keeps the company of many famous and important men. One of those, a young Rudyard Kipling, takes some time warming up to the bombastic personality of Roosevelt. However, in later years, Kipling recalls fondly his times with the future president. He observes that Roosevelt appears to have the energy to keep the universe spinning. Roosevelt's time in DC ends when he asks for and receives an appointment to Police Commissioner in New York City.

Chapter 19, The Biggest Man in New York

Chapter 19, The Biggest Man in New York Summary and Analysis

At the beginning of his career as Police Commissioner, Roosevelt barrels into police headquarters on Mulberry Street in typical Roosevelt fashion. Curious onlookers watch from press headquarters across the street.

Before Roosevelt, the New York Police Department operates in a mob-like fashion. Officers pay for position and promotion. Furthermore, the Police Department accepts grafts from local business for overlooking lawbreakers. Such grafts are a matter of boasting in city publications.

Roosevelt immediately enlists the aid of reporters at the New York Times. They warn him to move slowly in his reform policies. As usual, such advice goes unheeded. Three other men also serve as Commissioners, one other Republican and two Democrats. One Democrat, Parker takes offense immediately at Roosevelt, resenting being kept waiting for an appointment while Roosevelt talks with the press. From the start, Roosevelt takes charge; formally, they appoint him President of the Commission.

Using the press, Roosevelt exposes corruption. His reforms make for sensational headlines. As a rule, he keeps no secrets from the reporters, inviting them to every appointment. At thirty-six, Roosevelt maintains control of all around him. An energetic routine emerges, in which he works with increasingly ferocity. Though the current chief forewarns that Roosevelt will give in, it is the chief who quits after only nine days. Other corrupt officers also take early retirement.

One of Roosevelt's most effective means of rooting out corruption proves to be his own night patrols. The first night, he warns six delinquent officers of repercussions. The press and public react to such action with praise. During these walks, Roosevelt also notices the poor conditions of the city's slums.

As Roosevelt become more popular around the city, caricatures and editorials abound. One panhandler even markets souvenir false teeth, fitted with a police whistle, meant to resemble the night-patrolling commissioner. After only a few nights, the patrols seem to be making a difference in the visibility of the police presence in the city.

The second campaign Roosevelt undertakes is that of the Sunday Liquor Law, which prohibits the sale of liquor on Sundays. Major mob boss, Callahan, is among the first arrested. Roosevelt continues the campaign, amid persecution, because he views the city's bars as a basis for corruption. Quickly, however, bar owners develop loopholes. When the city's economy begins to slag, many blame Roosevelt. However, Roosevelt

responds by tightening laws. He speaks to a group of German immigrants, pointing out that the best way to fight corruption is to enforce the unfair laws they use. The speech proves to be a success and appears across the country report Roosevelt's tactics.

Many New Yorkers respond by leaving town on Sundays. Roosevelt remains determined to finish his job, amid much criticism and even letter bombs. He gives more speeches and finds some support among temperance groups, such as staunch Catholics. His speeches gain the attention of the public due to their simple but passionate vocabulary. Even the liquor sellers come out in support of enforcement of the law, hoping that such inconvenience will bring about the law's repeal.

Given his skills and national recognition, one reporter asks Roosevelt to comment on rumors of his future presidency. Roosevelt responds with offense, stating that such talk could ruin his career. He vows that his only allegiance lies with the department. As of the elections in November, the Republican's popularity sags. However, Roosevelt refuses to bend the rule, despite pressure from within the party. He begins to lose friends. Political losses affect his authority in the department. In the closing of the chapter, however, author Bram Stoker predicts that the man, Roosevelt, will one day be president.

Chapter 20, The Snake in the Grass

Chapter 20, The Snake in the Grass Summary and Analysis

The state head of the Republican Party at this time is unmistakably Thomas Collier Platt, nicknamed "Easy Boss." When Platt emerges as an opponent of Roosevelt's commissionership, Roosevelt takes the rumors public at a speech given to Methodist ministers in New York.

Opposition rises from within the commissioner's office as well. Parker, long called a "snake in the grass," begins opposing Roosevelt's promotions within the department. He also tries to separate Roosevelt from his press ties by spreading rumors of deceit. For weeks, the Democrat commissioners block Roosevelt's proposed promotions. Roosevelt takes the matter to the state legislature, where he and Parker argue on the floor of the assembly. Following this, Parker sends Roosevelt another letter bomb, which another employee intercepts. The Mayor asks Parker to step down, but he refuses. Amidst the turmoil, Roosevelt refuses to use testimony of Parker's visits to a prostitution house as evidence against his character. Roosevelt maintains intentions to play fair. When Parker goes to trial before the Major of New York, Roosevelt begins to dislike his job as commissioner.

At the trial, he publically comes out in support of William McKinley for the presidential election. He begins to look elsewhere for a sphere of influence. Desiring a war with Spain, to liberate Cuba, Roosevelt expresses interest in working for the department of the Navy, should McKinley win.

Chapter 21, The Glorious Retreat

Chapter 21, The Glorious Retreat Summary and Analysis

Roosevelt entertains one Mrs. Storer on the matter of obtaining an appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Mrs. Storer, a generous donor of McKinley's, holds much sway over the president. Separately, Roosevelt also visits Marcus Alonzo Hanna, McKinley's campaign manger. Roosevelt offers to help and becomes spokesman for the campaign. He travels nationwide, making speeches for industrial revolution and against opposition William Jennings Bryan and his silver standard for currency. With an ailing wife, McKinley remains at home in Canton, Ohio. Trainloads of voters come to hear his speeches from his porch.

At police headquarters, Parker continues to abstain from voting. The mayor delays his ruling on Parker's trial.

McKinley wins the election and Bryan bows out graciously. Henry Cabot Lodge travels to Ohio to plead Roosevelt's case for a job at the Navy. Mrs. Storer also upholds her promise to put in a good word. Though Roosevelt refuses to beg at first, he eventually writes a humble letter to Platt, hoping for Platt's support of his appointment. In New York for Christmas, Roosevelt celebrates with his wife and children and continues to fight with Parker at the Commissioner's office. In his "free time," he revises his book on the Naval war of 1812.

In the new year, the Mayor finds Parker guilty, but the Police Department lies in shambles. In April, Roosevelt receives his desired appointment and departs the New York Police Department with a clean but unpopular record. The new commissioner attempts to carry on with Roosevelt's reforms, but politics in the city soon return to the state they were in before Roosevelt's arrival.

Chapter 22, The Hot Weather Secretary

Chapter 22, The Hot Weather Secretary Summary and Analysis

Returning to his boyhood dreams of naval war and ships, Roosevelt moves to Washington for his new job as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Secretary Long feels Roosevelt is right for the job. For his part, Long works in a lazy and slow manner. Roosevelt assures Long of his dedication and support. He hopes that Long will feel good enough about Roosevelt to take a long, summer vacation, effectively leaving Roosevelt in charge.

Amid rumors of future war with Spain, Roosevelt vows to remain calm. However, he quickly gains support in Washington for Cuba's independence. Despite his promises for peace, however, Roosevelt issues a call to arms in a speech at the Naval War College in Rhode Island. He points out that shipbuilding takes two years and wartime is too late to begin planning a naval strategy. The speech appears, in full, in newspapers cross the nation. When Long takes two week off to prepare for his summer vacation, Roosevelt works to gain support for his naval plans.

Personally, Roosevelt's family continues to expand and Edith delivers their sixth child. Roosevelt worries that the lessening birthrate in America hinders their presence on the world stage. Roosevelt's young nephew, Franklin visits and vows to pattern his own career after his influential uncle.

On the political side, though, Roosevelt apologizes for his inciting speech at the Naval War College. Yet, he delivers yet another inciting speech in Sandusky, speaking against Japan's presence in the pacific. Yet, Long leaves Roosevelt in charge for six weeks while the secretary enjoys a vacation in New England. Roosevelt writes encouraging letters to Long, advising him to stay longer, if necessary. In a matter of historical foreshadowing, Roosevelt writes about his concerns for the Russian Revolution.

As acting secretary, Roosevelt tours a new ship, Iowa, and hears the cannons fire for the first time. Roosevelt continues to gain support for his divisive military strategies.

Expressing mild concern for affairs at the department, Long returns in late September. Roosevelt has already met with President McKinley three times. He tells McKinley that, should war break out, he will enlist without the advice of either Lodge or Edith.

Looking ahead to a possible war, Roosevelt pushes for the appointment of Commodore Dewey in the Pacific. Further, Roosevelt asks for new warships and gains approval for one battleship. Not letting any of his career paths slack, Roosevelt continues writing volumes of The Winning of the West. He receives news that scientist have named a new species of elk Cerus Roosevelti, in honor of his conservation efforts. At the end of

his first year as assistant secretary, Roosevelt enjoys much influence in Washington; he hopes for soon war with Spain in Cuba and the Philippines.

Chapter 23, The Lieutenant Colonel

Chapter 23, The Lieutenant Colonel Summary and Analysis

After news arrives that Spanish occupation in Cuba destroys the presses, the Maine sails for the island. Roosevelt fights battles personally and professionally. At home, Edith fights typhoid and Roosevelt responds with his usual remedy of courage and exercise. He also battles financial problems, due to his taxes, which prove higher than he hoped after declaring himself a resident at Oyster Bay. In Washington, he urges action in Cuba. Surprisingly, Secretary Long seconds Roosevelt's warnings and sends the Maine directly to Havana.

The President issues warnings to the Spanish minister in Washington, who assures McKinley of his country's cooperation. However, the minster writes a scathing letter about McKinley to the rulers in Spain. The letter, intercepted by the press, makes headlines and the minister leaves in disgrace. On February 15, the Maine sinks in Havana harbor.

Public opinion splits on the cause of the explosion. Some blame internal accident and others point accusing fingers at the Spaniards. McKinley, a veteran of the Civil War, rues further bloodshed. Evidence emerges slowly.

In the Roosevelt household, Edith's health continues to fail and little Teddy also falls ill. After a few close calls, Theodore Roosevelt vows never to push his young son. Edith undergoes an abdominal operation and makes a full recovery.

At this time, Long leaves for a brief health retreat. In a few hours, Roosevelt sends messages readying ships in the Pacific for an attack. McKinley, however, maintains a desire for peace. He submits to Congress plans to buy Cuba from Spain. The resolution fails and evidence emerges that the Maine indeed sank because of an attack. McKinley demands an unprecedented $50 million for a war budget, which Congress grants. Roosevelt scours the globe, buying any available ship. Just as Roosevelt leaves to enlist in the army, he sends a memo that the navy should look into development of a new "flying machine" enjoying some success.

McKinley's offers of a peace treaty with Spain meets with decline. Roosevelt promises that he possesses no desire annex Cuba to the United States. On April 15, the United State army mobilizes and on April 19, Congress declares the independence of Cuba. This is one year after Roosevelt takes office with the Navy.

Roosevelt receives an offer, based on his popularity, of commander of the first regiment in the cavalry. He declines, offering instead Leonard Wood, former assistant attending surgeon to the president, who has more experience in training troops for battle. Roosevelt believes time is paramount, if the regiment hopes to see action. After a letter

to Long, thanking him for the opportunity in the naval office, Roosevelt and Wood travel to San Antonio for training.

In the Philippines, Commodore Dewey soundly defeats the Spaniards. He the victory to Roosevelt's early warnings

Chapter 24, The Rough Rider

Chapter 24, The Rough Rider Summary and Analysis

Roosevelt's regiment, nicknamed the Rough Riders, consists of both men from Ivy League schools and cowboys from the western states. He quickly learns all their names and, despite their early reservations, gains their respect. They train hard and leave San Antonio on May 30. Roosevelt observes that many of the men riding with him fought for the confederacy just a few decades prior.

When the train arrives in Tampa, Edith visits for three days. There, Brigadier General William Rufus Shafter commands the army bound for Cuba. When Shafter tells the Rough Riders that there is no room for all their horses, more than half of them agree to go on foot. On June 7, the troops receive the call to deploy immediately. However, delays hold the troops, packed into transport vessels, for seven days. Roosevelt agrees to take two videographers with his regiment, though their "moving picture" offers an unfamiliar phenomenon to the American people.

Chapter 25, The Wolf Rising in the Heart

Chapter 25, The Wolf Rising in the Heart Summary and Analysis

Roosevelt reacts to the deployment with excitement. He admonishes the troops harshly when one of his horses drowns as they disembark. However, he demands speed when they slowly unload Roosevelt's second mount. American troops take the town of Daiquiri without gunfire. Once on land, however, the commanders fail to agree on strategy. Roosevelt's cavalry joins an excruciating seven-mile hike to the town of Siboney. Despite a nearly silent advice, they fall prey to sniper fire at Las Guasimas. Though they suffer many casualties, Roosevelt fights fearlessly and emerges victorious and unscathed.

The troops gather in Siboney to recuperate. Roosevelt observes all manner of scavengers, from crabs to vultures to natives, who steal anything worthwhile from the bodies. Roosevelt demands beans for his ailing troops. Amid threats to take the cost from his pay, he acquires the food and refreshes the hungry men. For the rest of June, the rough riders "relax." Due to illness and injury within the upper ranks, Roosevelt receives a colonelcy.

On July 1, 1898, Roosevelt joins the march for San Juan Hill, a valuable vantage point on the island. Early, they take cover from repeated bombing, but by later morning, the bombing ceases and they resume the march.

When he reaches a smaller hill in front of San Juan, Kettle Hill, Roosevelt inspires his troops by staying on horseback amid sniper fire. When the regiment refuses to charge, Roosevelt admonishes them to step aside and he leads his men in the charge. Amid heavy losses, they take the hill.

With strong occupation, Shafter warns the Spanish still in Havana of shelling and to evacuate the civilians from the city. Though few leave, the shelling commences.

Roosevelt works to recuperate his regiment, for whom he feels personally responsible. He also swims off the shore amid schools of sharks. When others warn him of the danger, Roosevelt remarks that, due to his studies in nature, he knows such sharks pose no threat. On August 8, the troops return to New York. Roosevelt rejoices in the opportunity to fight for his country. However, he disembarks in New York as a man of peace.

Chapter 26, The Most Famous Man in America

Chapter 26, The Most Famous Man in America Summary and Analysis

In New York harbor, cheering crowds greet Roosevelt and the other rough riders. He talks only of the war, neither confirming nor denying rumors of his political ambitions. Within the Republican Party, Platt fears nominating Roosevelt for governor paves the way for him as future president. Meanwhile, Roosevelt relaxes at home, telling stories of his experiences in battle. He promises a book about the war. Responsibility for "his boys," the rough riders, weighs on Roosevelt. In all, the rough riders last 13 days before they are dismantled as one of the last cavalry units in the United States army. Before they leave, they present Roosevelt with a bronco statue.

On September 17, those within the party nominate Roosevelt for governor of New York. The opposition within the Republican Party points out that, after the last tax filing, Roosevelt holds no property in New York. Friend and legal advisor Elihu Root comes to the rescue, citing bad advice and assuring the public of no fault on Roosevelt's part. The nomination passes on the twenty-fifth and McKinley sends Roosevelt his congratulations.

Roosevelt, as always, campaigns with gusto. He tells war stories and takes fellow rough riders to speak on his behalf. Just before the election, Roosevelt turns forty. He enjoys a narrow victory and publishes the promised war memorial.

Chapter 27, The Boy Governor

Chapter 27, The Boy Governor Summary and Analysis

On January 1 of 1899, Roosevelt breaks into the executive mansion in Albany rather than wake his family, already asleep inside. Such actions symbolize the fears of many that, as governor, Roosevelt acts as a "bull in a china shop." He approaches matters of corruption with openness and honesty. As for Platt, he deals with the influential machine boss with uncharacteristic diplomacy, sending a list of preapproved candidates for appointments and allowing Platt to choose the right one. However, twice daily, the governor opens his office to the press.

Items of approval for Roosevelt include the Ford bill, a measure to return money to the neediest workers in the state. The bill taxes the rising industries, which Roosevelt views with caution. When the bill stalls, Roosevelt uses his power as governor to force it to the floor, where it passes just before a recess. Upon review, however, Roosevelt notices alarming loopholes and calls for a special session to amend the bill before signing it.

Other occurrences during his first years as governor include the first execution of a woman in the state's history and a good record on labor. The Erie Canal issue, long a stigma for the governor's office, lies thankfully dormant.

At the end of the summer, Roosevelt travels west for a reunion of the rough riders. When he returns, Mrs. Storer writes him, begging for intercession on her behalf, first to the president, then to the Pope, for the advancement of her favorite archbishop. Though Roosevelt desires to stay out of such matters involving church and state, he eventually writes to McKinley, and McKinley turns him down, as expected. Thus, he loses the confidence of Mrs. Storer.

Roosevelt proves as controversial as governor as he was as commissioner. Due to his volatile reputation, he receives no medal of honor for his fighting in Cuba. When men begin to campaign for his nomination at the next presidential primary, Roosevelt stamps them out. Instead, he encourages people to vote for the re-election of McKinley. Rumors then rise of Roosevelt for vice president, which Edith abjectly opposes.

Aside from politics, Roosevelt writes a book of Oliver Cromwell, injecting much of himself into the history. He also consults with McKinley about the situation in the Philippines. The author points out that Roosevelt fails to think of himself as mentally gifted, despite his varied and busy life.

Chapter 28, The Man of Destiny

Chapter 28, The Man of Destiny Summary and Analysis

Immediately, Roosevelt claims to have no desire for the vice presidency. He moves, instead, to introduce ecology to New York politics. A strong opposition and his declining popularity in New York makes the vice presidency look more inviting. He begins to use the proverb "walk softly and carry a big stick." Lodge urges him to seek the office of vice president. When Roosevelt visits Washington in May, the nomination seems inevitable.

Hanna, from within the Republican Party, opposes the nomination. He fears Roosevelt as an eventual president. At the party convention, Roosevelt writes a weak withdrawal statement, citing that he feels more effective as governor. Edith still opposes the move.

Roosevelt resigns himself to the nomination. He campaigns for McKinley as before, again against Bryan. McKinley wins by a landslide. Over the holiday, Roosevelt reads up on congressional procedure and the vice presidency. On May 4, 1901, he swears in as vice president.

Epilogue

Epilogue Summary and Analysis

While Roosevelt travels to an exposition in Buffalo, New York, on September 6, a man shoots President McKinley. By the tenth, however, the president's health seems to improve and Roosevelt travels on a family vacation to the Adirondacks. As he rests during a hike, however, a man approaches with a telegram, informing him of the president's death and his ensuing promotion.

Characters

Theodore Roosevelt

This biography covers Roosevelt's life from birth until he gains the presidency. Early in life young Theodore, Teedie, Roosevelt suffers from a variety of illnesses. His father admonishes him that physical activity serves as the surest cure. Against doctor's orders, Roosevelt embarks on a physical regimen that in fact strengths him, mind and body.

Roosevelt moves on to Harvard, where he meets and marries Alice Lee. He quickly gains access to politics as a young New York state assemblyman. He enjoys moderate success in the assembly, though he suffers, at once, the loss of his wife and mother. His father dies while Roosevelt attends Harvard. Feeling alone, Roosevelt travels west.

Time in the west broadens Roosevelt's desire for expansion, both personal and national. He gains acquaintances that prove valuable later in life.

After the assembly, Roosevelt serves as civil service commissioner, and New York City police commissioner. From there, he serves as assistant secretary of the navy where he nearly single handedly brings about the start and victory of the Spanish American War.

Back home, he gains the governorship in New York and quickly moves to vice president. No matter what position he works in, Roosevelt shows a strict moral character and tireless work ethic.

Anna

Roosevelt's sister and only older sibling, Bamie, serves as surrogate mother even before the death of Mittie Roosevelt. It is Bamie who decorates Roosevelt's room in college. The author cites her as a voice of reason in the household, in contrast with Mittie's carefree spirit.

She also steps in as mother to Alice Lee after the death of Roosevelt's first wife. Though Bamie remains single, she cares for the child like a mother, and a father, due to Roosovelt's frequent and extended absences. Bamie remains close to her brother until his second marriage. In fact, she travels to Europe with Roosvelt, in diguise as his wife. The shift of custody of Alice Lee from Bamie to Edith strains the relationships of all involved. Wisely and necessarily, Roosevelt eases into the transition over several months.

Corinne Roosevelt.

Roosevelt's younger sister Corinne remains close with the family as well. All of the Roosevelts enjoy summering in Oyster Bay. Corinne is the mother of Eleanor Roosevelt.

Elliot Roosevelt

In youth, the younger Elliot seems stronger and more popular than his brother does. However, injury and depression drive Elliot down an endless road of drugs and alcohol. Whn he attempts to leave for France, in an effort to beat his addiction, Elliot leaves a scandal when another woman claims to carry his child. Roosevelt goes as far as attempting to declare his brother insane, to gain access to his estate. Eventually, Roosevelt advises Elliot's wife to leave him and, always a woman of poor health, she soon dies. Roosevelt advises his brother to avoid the funeral. In fit of alcohol-induced mania, Elliot dies at an early age.

Mittie Roosevelt

Roosevelt's mother exhibits all the characteristics of a southern belle. This is because Mittie hails from Georgia. Even young Roosevelt senses the tension in the divided family during the civil war. During the family's first tour of Europe, Mittie enjoys a reunion with family members exiled after the defeat of the south.

Though always a genteel lady, Mittie enjoys good health. The author also points out her good-natured spirit. Yet, she falls ill just before the birth of Alice Lee. Mittie and Alice within hours of one another, causing Elliot to proclaim a curse rests upon the house.

Edith Carow

Edith appears to be Roosevelt's first sweetheart, before he leaves for Harvard. However, his romance with Alice Lee quickly overshadows this original relationship.

Yet, about 22 moths after the death of Alice Lee, she once again appears in Roosevelt's life. This time, they enjoy a more mature romance. Edith brings sensibility to Roosevelt's impassioned life. She gains control of his precarious finances. Even Roosevelt admits to McKinley that he makes few decisions without the blessing of his second wife. After Alice's death, and increasingly after his remarriage, mentions of Alice disappear. Both Edith and Theodore work to erase references to her from family correspondence.

Edith gives birth to six more Roosevelts, besides gaining custody of Alice Lee. Though she discourages Roosevelt from becoming vice president, she maintains her support of her husband.

Alice Lee

At Harvard, a mutual friend introduces young Theodore Roosevelt to his neighbor's daughter, Alice Lee. Roosevelt immediately falls in love and puts all of his usual passion into gaining her hand in marriage. Though she initially plays coy, they marry soon after Roosevelt gradates from Harvard.

Alice Lee resembles, the author says, a child bride. Beautiful and popular, she and Theodore enjoy a thriving social life. After three years, she becomes pregnant with their first child. Unexpectedly, she falls ill after the girl's birth and never recovers. Her death deals a harsh blow to Roosevelt, who retreats into his work. Eventually, he seeks solace in a solo hunting trip in the west. In accord, apparently, with Theodore Roosevelt's wishes, little evidence survives of Alice Roosevelt.

Grover Cleveland

When young Theodore Roosevelt arrives in Albany as an assemblyman, he meets the then governor, democrat Grover Cleveland. The immense governor, though not of Roosevelt's party, shares many of his ideas. They enjoy a strong working relationship.

William McKinley

At the end of his career as police commissioner, Roosevelt campaigns heavily for William McKinley, who fails to campaign himself due to the ill health of his wife. Roosevelt supports McKinley for president, hoping for an appointment in the department of the navy after his election. Roosevelt gains the appointment after some opposition.

Upon returning from the Spanish American War, people talk of Roosevelt for president. Instead, Roosevelt seeks the governorship of New York and endorses McKinley for reelection. After the unexpected death of McKinley's vice president, Roosevelt becomes McKinley's second vice president. Due to McKinley's assassination, Roosevelt gains the highest seat in the country.

Baby Alice Lee

Roosevelt feels much grief in the presence of his daughter, Alice Lee, at first, because she resembles her mother. However, the youngster brings much delight into Roosevelt's life as well. When he marries Edith, the couple takes custody of Alice Lee from Bamie

Henry Cabot Lodge

As a young man, Roosevelt meets Lodge when they travel from New York as representatives for the Republican National Convention. The candidate they both

support receives little recognition nationally and they both give in and vote for Blaine as president. Lodge suffers some political disfavor asa result. Roosevelt, however, fails to care, as this occurs soon after the death of Alice; he retreats to the west.

Lodge remains a staunch supporter of Roosevelt and proves instrumental in Roosevelt's appointment in the navy and to the vice presidency.

Benjamin Harrison

When elected president in 1888, Harrison appoints Roosevelt to his first national position, as civil service commissioner. Roosevelt holds little respect for the man.

Elihu Root

Root serves as legal council for Roosevelt. He proves most useful when he saves Roosevelt's nomination for governor by blaming questions about Roosevelt's residency on bad advice.

Theodore Roosevelt, Junior

Just months after their marriage, the Roosevelts welcome a honeymoon baby, a son, Theodore. After his son suffers a childhood illness, Roosevelt vows never to push his son physically, to void serious injury or death.

Bill Sewall and Wilmot Dow

In his early adult years, Roosevelt frequently retreats to the backwoods of Maine for times of physical exertion, which prove helpful in calming his health. When he purchases Elkhorn, his second ranch, he employs his former Maine guides, Sewall and Dow, to manage the ranch. At first, they sense success, but failing markets and horrible weather eat up profits. After several years, Roosevelt sells out of the cattle business and Sewall and Dow leave the area.

Antoine Amedee Marie Vincent Amat Manca de Vallombrosa, Marq

In the budding town of Medora, Roosevelt meets a tycoon, de Mores. De Mores is a Frenchman who vows to make a name for himself in the Dakota, only to use his money to help finance France to regain land he believes they rightly should possess. The blizzard, though, finalizes the failure of de Mores' beef shipping business and he moves further west, seeking his fortune in mining.

Cecil Arthur Spring-Rice

When Bamie and Theodore sail to Europe, in disguise, to meet Edith for the wedding, Spring-Rice quickly recognizes the famous politician and writer. The men become friends. "Springy" introduces Roosevelt to dignitaries in England and, later, back in Washington, Roosevelt introduces Spring-Rice to his own influential circle.

Charles Lyman and Hugh S. Thompson

Along with Roosevelt, Lyman and Thompson serve as civil service commissioners under President Harrison. As always, Roosevelt emerges as the obvious leader. Lyman, most notably, does as little in support of Roosevelt's reform as possible.

George Paul

Roosevelt seeks to rid the civil service positions of spoilsmen such as Paul, who appoints based on connection and not merit. Paul, however, fights against Roosevelt and nearly wins. Roosevelt's engaging and honest personality prevails. Yet, Roosevelt fails to enjoy his success, because Paul stays in office as postmaster in Milwaukee.

Frank Hatton

As an enemy of civil service reform in general and Roosevelt in particular, Hatton writes scathing editorials in the Washington Post. Roosevelt revels in the verbal warfare and takes such opposition as a signal that he is making a difference.

Rudyard Kipling

A young Kipling spends time in the company of Roosevelt's inner circle in Washington, D.C. while Roosevelt serves as civil service commissioner. He remarks that Roosevelt appears to spin the universe.

Mrs. Bellamy Storer

When Roosevelt begins to feel discontent with his position in the New York Police Department, he seeks an appointment as assistant secretary of the navy. He seeks to influence the right people around future president McKinley, including one of McKinley's most generous contributors, Mrs. Storer. She upholds her end of the deal, traveling to Canton, Ohio to put a word in for Roosevelt shortly after the voting results come in.

Later, during Roosevelt's governorship, Mrs. Storer pleads with Roosevelt to intercede for the promotion of her favorite cardinal. Though Roosevelt does not desire to interfere

in such a matter, he writes the president, who refuses to help. Consequently, Roosevelt falls out of favor with Mrs. Storer.

Marcus Alonzo Hanna

Roosevelt also seeks the help of McKinley's masterful political advisor, Hanna, concerning his desired appointment. After Roosevelt campaigns tirelessly for McKinley's presidential campaign, Hanna delivers a good word in Roosevelt's favor.

William Jennings Bryan

Twice, William McKinley runs for president against Williams Jennings Bryan, a liberal democrat whose strongest platform is that of a silver standard. He purports that such a monetary standard would give more money to the poor. Roosevelt argues for continuing the gold standard. He demonstrates that money on a silver standard buys less food than money backed by the gold standard. Bryan always gives in to McKinley's victories gracefully, citing that the American people speak on the issue, with their votes.

John D. Long

As assistant secretary of the navy, Roosevelt serves under John D. Long, a career politician in his later years who works as little as possible. He easily gives control over to Roosevelt so he may go on summer vacation. Like President McKinley, Long desires to keep peace at a high cost, a philosophy that Roosevelt hates. However, after the sinking of the Maine, Long supports Roosevelt's suggestion to go to war.

Captain Leonard Wood

Wood receives as appointment in Washington the same time that Roosevelt becomes assistant secretary of the navy. The two young men become close, with their shared philosophies of military strategy.

Wood and Roosevelt enlist in the same cavalry, later known as the rough riders. Superiors in the army offer the colonelship to Roosevelt. Seeing that time is of the essence, Roosevelt suggests Wood instead, serving as the other man's second. Due to Wood's illness in Cuba, however, Roosevelt gains the colonelship after only a few months.

Commodore George Dewey

Shortly after becoming assistant secretary of the navy, Roosevelt endorses Commodore George Dewey as the man in charge of the Pacific naval forces. The appointment

requires some political wrangling, but, in true Roosevelt fashion, he wins the battle in the end.

When Roosevelt begins to sense war is near, he sends telegraphs to Dewey, to prepare for battle in the Philippines. After the victory, Dewey credits Roosevelt's early warning.

Brigadier General William Rufus Shafter

Once the Rough Riders arrives in Tampa, Roosevelt meets the man in charge of the army going to Cuba, William Shafter. Roosevelt fears that Shafter moves too slowly and too cautiously. Roosevelt talks little of the brigadier general's commands, issuing his own instead.

Annie Bullock

Roosevelt's Aunt Annie is his first teacher, in exchange for room and board in the Roosevelt's home. She educates all the children from birth through high school. Her storytelling sparks in young Teedie a love for both reading and writing.

The Minkwitz Family

The three eldest Roosevelt children stay with the Minkwitz family one summer in Germany. Their father hopes they will learn German there. Mrs. Minkwitz claims to be the first to forecast young Theodore as a future president.

Boss Conkling

The younger Theodore Roosevelt credits his father's decline in health and eventual death to his enemy Boss Conkling. Conkling opposes Theodore, Senior's appointment in Washington, leaving him with a stressful job that precipitates his demise. Later in life, Roosevelt seizes the opportunity to strike a blow at Conkling and his mob-like organization.

Objects/Places

White House

The biography opens on New Year's Day at the White House. At this time, the American people enjoy open access to the president on New Year's day. A long line of dignitaries and common people wait to wish Theodore Roosevelt a nappy new year. Twice in Roosevelt's early career, he works in Washington and gazes longingly at the White House. Finally, after an assassin's bullet kills President McKinley, Roosevelt assumes the office and house of the presidency.

Lightfoot

Late in Roosevelt's youth, he receives his own steed, Lightfoot. After he falls in love with Alice Lee, he trains Lightfoot to pull his new dog cart, so that he can escort his lady around town. Though at this point Roosevelt's health often fails, it is often Lightfoot's strength that gives out first.

28 East 20th Street

At this address, in New York City, Roosevelt was born. Though the family enjoys many other residences in the city, bigger and grander than this, Roosevelt remembers the earliest days at number 28 fondly.

6 West 57th Street

Upon returning from Europe, Theodore, Senior presents a new home to his family, bigger and grander than number 28. Roosevelt designs it with room for both Roosevelt's growing natural specimen collection and his personal gym.

Mrs. Richardson's Boarding House

At seventeen, Roosevelt enters Harvard. Fearing the impact of damp, drafty dormitories on his fragile health, he stays, instead, in Mrs. Richardson's boarding house. His older sister, Bamie, decorates the room to his taste. Mrs. Richardson expresses some concern about Roosevelt's fearful collection of taxidermy.

The Summer Birds of the Adirondacks

Roosevelt's first published work offers a thorough, original description of birds of the mountains of New York State, some previously unknown even to locals.

Porcellian club

Though many social clubs exist at Harvard, and Roosevelt receives invitations to a number, he really desires entry into the porcellian club, or the porc. He eventfully gains this access and celebrates his success in high society. Most notably at Harvard, Roosevelt relates only with those of his own wealth and long standing prestige.

Maltese Cross Ranch

When Roosevelt arrives in South Dakota, the Merrifield brothers manage the Maltese Cross. During the course of his stay, Roosevelt buys the rights to the ranch and hires the brothers as mangers under his employ. As a beef cattle ranch, it enjoys initial success. A bitter blizzard, however, hurts all cattle business in the area and forces Roosevelt to give up on a future in agriculture.

Elkhorn Ranch

Seeking opportunity in the newly developed territory, Roosevelt buys more land and hires his friends from Maine, Sewall and Dow, as managers. Roosevelt feels freer on his ranch than anywhere else on earth.

Saga of St. Olaf by Longfellow

This epic poem became a favorite of Theodore Roosevelt in childhood. The author uses excerpts as an introduction to each chapter. The quotes prove an uncanny fit to various stages of Roosevelt's life.

New York City

The place of his birth, New York City holds a special place in Roosevelt's heart. In fact, for generations, the Roosevelt family enjoys prestige among the elite of New York City. Roosevelt eventually serves the city as police commissioner for a brief and controversy-filled time. He makes a dent in the corruption of the department, but eventually leaves to take the position of assistant secretary of the navy in Washington.

Albany

As the seat of New York's government, Albany represents politics in Roosevelt's life. He lives there first as a very young assemblyman, while the multimillion dollar state house is under construction. Later, he sees the finished statehouse in its glory when he serves as governor.

Taxidermy

In his youth, Roosevelt takes up taxidermy as a way of preserving his hunting prizes. The author points out the contradiction in the fact that while Roosevelt loves animals and work for conservation he also is an avid hunter, bagging large quantities of game for sport.

Glasses

Roosevelt's childhood take on new focus when he is fitted for his first pair of eyeglasses. The years without them give him acute hearing. Yet, his newly improved sight opens up new fields for Roosevelt, especially in hunting. Prior to this, he could not see well enough to focus a shot, though he never realized the breadth of his disability until it was corrected.

In the west, the cowboys always dismiss Roosevelt at first, because of his spectacles. He always gains their respect, however, due to his hard work and commanding personality.

Harvard

At seventeen, Roosevelt enrolls in Harvard in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Though he works hard in a variety of subjects, he fails to gain the attention of any professors there. However, he meets Alice Lee and quickly falls for her, marrying his young sweetheart shortly after graduation.

Indianapolis

As civil service commissioner, Roosevelt fights for reform of the spoils system. One of his first battles takes place in the hometown of the president, Indianapolis. Roosevelt enjoys a victory there, despite opposition from his party and the office of the president.

Sagamore Hill

From boyhood, Roosevelt enjoys summers in Oyster Bay, outside of New York City. After marrying Alice Lee, he purchases a larger tract of land to build his own estate, which he names Leeholm. After his wife's death, however, he renames the house Sagamore Hill. Though he eventually sells much of the land because of financial constraints, his family always enjoys some time in the summer in the large manor house.

Cattle

To Roosevelt, cattle represent his freedom and possibilities in the west. Though Roosevelt shows little aptitude in finances, he posses much zeal and courage in business. He buys large stock in cattle, stocking two beef ranches. Even before a crippling blizzard ruins the area, he feels the financial pressure of such risky business. Yet, the author points out that, later in life, Roosevelt credits his experience in the Dakotas with his success as president.

Washington, D.C.

Roosevelt first moves to Washington as civil service commissioner. As with all his career paths, he operates the office with total control and little tolerance for corruption. He festers out corruption in the civil service appointments throughout the country.

For a time, Roosevelt leaves to New York City, but returns within a few yeas as the assistant secretary of the navy. He enjoys this appointment the greatest to date, returning to his boyhood dreams of ships and war. It lasts for the shortest amount of time, however, as the Spanish American war breaks out and Roosevelt leaves to enlist.

Each time Roosevelt lives in Washington, however, he gazes longingly at the White House. The third time he moves to the capital, he moves into the presidential residence.

Buffalo

Governmental campaigns to rid the plains states of Indians by exterminating their food, the buffalo, make the animal scarce. The author explains that, before Roosevelt's arrival in the west, thousands of buffalo were slaughtered and left to rot on the plains. The government paid the Native Americans to do the killing. When Buffalo became scarce, the Indians moved further west. Roosevelt harbors little prejudice against the Native Americans, however. He advocates for better conditions on the reservations and believes any man has the right to rise above his circumstances.

The west first calls Roosevelt via his desire to hunt buffalo, while any remain. In his early twenties, he travels to Medora, South Dakota by train and hires a local guide. At first, Roosevelt relishes the hunt, though he and his guide, Merriweather, pursue only one, lone buffalo. After hard days hunting in perilous weather, he gains the prize. He proudly displays the mount in his home in New York, along with hundreds of other specimens that don the walls of Sagamore Hill.

However, the ailing ecology of the plains eventually moves Roosevelt to start the Boone and Crockett Club, which lobbies to maintain the natural resources of North America. Buffalo represent the irony within Roosevelt. He loves to hunt and feels free and at peace while in pursuit of a quarry. However, he always thinks as a naturalist and does much lobbying to ensure the protection and expansion of national parks.

Thomas Benton

A reference to the book and not the person, Thomas Benton serves as Roosevelt's first commissioned work. He takes on the book nearly completely for monetary reasons. Like all of his biographies, the author describes it as informative but difficult to read. However, each biography sheds light on Roosevelt's character and valuable viewpoints.

Themes

American Dream

Roosevelt believes in the American dream for everyone. This dream allows everyone to rise above the station of his or her birth and become a personal and financial success.

For this reason, he feels any mistreatment of the Native Americans proves the superiority of the settlers and allows the settlers to achieve their dreams. In contrast, Roosevelt supports victories for Indians as well, because these prove their strength and achievement. A viewpoint consonant with the rising ideas of evolution, Roosevelt supports the survival of the strong, at the expense of the weak. The only exception he makes is for the environment, wanting beauty to survive for the generation of his children.

In America, however, achieving one's dream relies equally on who you knows and what one knows. Roosevelt places importance on education, striving to succeed at Harvard and continuing his learning throughout his life. However, he uses his connections in society, especially in New York politics, to gain positions of esteem.

According to Theodore Roosevelt, one cannot begin to develop one's character and reputation too soon, if one wants to acheive for future success. Roosevelt shows leadership qualities early; even in his youth, people predict his eventual presidency. He approaches each step in life with confidence and zeal. Never does he make excuses for age. Likewise, his young nephew, Franklin, admires and copies his attitude, which leads him to become one of the most popular presidents to date, as evidenced by his three-term career in the White House.

Manifest Destiny

At the heart of much of Roosevelt's life and work lies his passion for manifest destiny. According to this tenant, Roosevelt believes that America should continue to expand and claim as much land in North America as possible. He also supports annexation of other territories in Hawaii and the Philippines, to support America's interests abroad.

Though Roosevelt supports expansion from his earliest career, it appears most clearly, when he acquires land in Dakota. He supports local politics there and even entertains fantasizes of one day running for congress from the Dakota Territory, once it achieves statehood.

Roosevelt's feeling about manifest destiny fall dormant during the middle years of his biography. However, they resurge once he acheives the position of assistant secretary of the navy—much of his desire to fight Spain stems form his desire to grow the influence of America, throughout the world, and decrease the power of European nations. Even his own family's size stems from his zeal for a strong American presence.

During the scope of this book, Roosevelt sees the size and scope of the country expand on many fronts. During the course of his presidency, it expands further. In addition, Roosevelt's desires for a stronger navy and better parks serve to improve the country. Lastly, his support of the gold standard for the economy upholds the strength of the dollar against a falling market in Europe.

Personal Responsibility

From childhood, Roosevelt, at the urging of his father, takes control of his life, beginning with his health. Disregarding the advice of doctors, he engages in a life of rigorous exercise. Though his efforts pay off, both short term in strength and long term in longevity and overall health, he decides to forgo such a schedule for his own son. He sees the risk of loss as too great.

Roosevelt also controls his destiny with his strict moral code. He makes decisions with the full knowledge that he must live with the consequences. Therefore, as police commissioner, he enforces laws with which he does not agree. Furthermore, he insists on fighting like a gentleman,

Finally, with the rough riders, he takes full responsibility. He cares more for their welfare than perhaps his own family. He fights with little regard for his own safety, but takes on the authorities for the food his troops need. Throughout life, the author points out, the rough riders enjoy an open door policy with Roosevelt, from Oyster Bay to the White House.

Style

Perspective

The author brings much life to this extensive biography. Though not born in America, his reverence for the subject shows in the writing. Extensive research in reading diaries, letters, interviewing people and studying prior works allows the author to use engaging variety in his telling of Roosevelt's early life. The reader sees the author overlooks nothing of importance.

What is more, the author offers extensive background knowledge on the people, places and events surrounding Roosevelt. He offers brief histories of men such as de Mores and events such as the Chicago World's Fair.

While many readers will enjoy the novel like quality of this biography, the author writes for a student of history. Though he writes knowledgably about much of the historical background, a reader with some prior knowledge of the people and events of this period will perhaps see more clearly the significance of certain events.

Upon reading the book, the reader feels more knowledgeable about history in general, politics, war and society, and Roosevelt in particular. Surely nearly every reader relates to Roosevelt, personally, in some way. His varied life makes him a great person to study in diversity and Americanism.

Tone

The tone of this biography is largely scholarly. The author uses extensive citations and quotations to enrich his writings with the voices of real people. The book may induce feelings of patriotism in an American reader, yet, the reader may be surprised to learn that the author himself was not born in America. Such a realization emphasizes the Americanism of Roosevelt.

The author remains objective, though passionate about his subject. There is no attempt to make Roosevelt into something he was not. Roosevelt's successes and failures receive equal attention, though, in Roosevelt's life, success seemed more common. Yet, the author weaves it all together to show that, as Roosevelt said himself, the failures, as much or more than, the successes, bring about his lifelong success and eventual presidency.

Structure

The author writes the book in a substantial 747 pages of text, with a further 154 pages of sources cited. An introduction shows Roosevelt during his presidency, revealing characteristics, which the author then develops throughout the twenty-eight chapters.

Following the introduction, the author relates the birth and childhood of Roosevelt in chapter one. The action continues through his adolescent and early adulthood. The author briefly pauses after chapter fourteen to relate the story of the worst blizzard in South Dakota's history. Though Roosevelt never visits the Dakotas during this time, the ensuing devastation to the area causes the sure failure of his cattle business. The action of his life continues in chapter fifteen, and the author follows Roosevelt as he moves between Dakota, New York City and Washington, D.C. A brief epilogue tells of Roosevelt's brief vice presidency before McKinley's death and his swearing in.

The form works well for the theme of the biography, though, out of necessity, some chapters contain years of Roosevelt's life, especially in the early years. The reader follows along with interest to see how the title of each chapter fits into Roosevelt's life. Each chapter title shows another facet of the impressive man.

Quotes

"The force of Roosevelt's utterance has the effect of burying his remarks, like shrapnel, in the memory of the listener," p. 22.

"Teedie thus, at a very early age, acquired a love for legend and anecdote, and inherited a nostalgia for a way of life he had never known," p. 43.

"The boy's only sign of physical development, as his twelfth birthday approached, was a rapid increase in height unaccompanied by any muscular filling out. His resemblance to a stork was accentuated by a habit of reading on one leg, while supporting a book on the jibbed thigh of the other," p. 60.

"'Theodore,' the big man said, eschewing boyish nicknames, 'you have the mind but you have not the body, and without the help of the body the mind cannot go as far as it should. You must make your body,'" p. 60.

"'You need not be anxious about him,' replied Faulein Anna. 'He will surely one day be a great professor, or who knows, he may become even President of the United States.'" p. 73.

"'IT seems perfectly wonderful,' he wrote Mittie, 'looking back of my eighteen years of existence, to see how I have literally never spent an unhappy day, unless by my own fault.'" p. 86.

"It must not be assumed that Theodore struck any of the Harvard faculty as intellectually remarkable during this stage of his academic career," p. 89.

"'Years afterward,' wrote Corinne, 'when the college boy of 1878 was entering upon his duties as President of the United States, he told me frequently that he never took any serious step of made any vital decision for his country without thinking first what position his father would have taken on the question,'" p. 96.

"AS her own first "Teddy" lingered softly in his ears, he vowed, with all the strength of his passionate nature, that he would marry her," p. 103.

"'As long as I live,' he wrote afterward, 'I shall never forget how sweetly she looked, and how prettily she greeted me,'" p. 104.

"Now that Alice was his, Theodore's natural exuberance, so long bottled up, burst out like champagne," p. 124.

"Few things disgusted him more than 'Male sexual viciousness,' or the VIctorian conceit that a wife is the servant of her husband's lusts," p. 128.

"'Doctor,' came the reply, 'I'm going to do all the things you tell me not to do. If I've go to live the sort of life you have described, I don't care how short it is,'" p. 129.

"By March he was taking a more active role in party politics, attending a series of primaries in addition to regular meetings, working his way up into the executive committee of the Young Republicans, and presuming to address the association on its new charter," p. 145.

"Theodore himself had no doubt that he would be elected. His campaign circular, dated November 1, 1881, was so brief, and bare of promises as to seem almost arrogant," p. 152.

"'Too true, too true; I have become a political "hack,"' he wrote to an ex-classmate. 'But don't think I am going into politics after this year, for I am not,'" p. 156.

"No future President has made his maiden speech in surroundings as inspiring as those framing Theodore Roosevelt that afternoon," p. 167.

"Not for nothing was he known as 'the Cyclone Assemblyman,' being primarily a destructive force in the House. Indeed he seemed better at scattering the legislation of other men than whipping up any of his own," p. 179.

"It was noted with amusement that, in his theology, God always resided with the Republicans, while the Devil was a Democrat," p. 191.

"As the buckboard rattled away, and Lincoln Lang caught his last flash of teeth and spectacles, he heart his father saying, 'There goes the most remarkable man I ever met. Unless I am badly mistaken, the world is due to hear from him one of these day,'" p. 225.

"'He's a brilliant madman born a century too soon,' Assemblyman Newton M. Curtis complained, escaping from Theodore Roosevelt's suite in the Delavan House, in Albany." p. 227.

"He had just received a telegram from New York, stating that Alice had given birth to a baby girl late the night before," p. 240.

"Several hours later, a second telegram arrived...No word remains as to the text of the telegram, but it undoubtedly contained a gentler version of the news which Elliot had just given to Corinne at the door of 6 West Fifty-seventh Street:'There is a curse on this house. Mother is dying, and Alice is dying too,'" p. 240.

"Roosevelt drew a large cross in his diary for February 14, 1884, and wrote beneath: 'The light has gone out of my life,'" p. 241.

"There were one or two oblique, involuntary references to Alice in conversation during the months immediately following her death, but before the year was out his silence was total," p. 244.

"Saturday June 7. Henry Cabot Lodge heads east to muse on the future; Theodore Roosevelt heads west to forget about the past," p. 268.

"'Well, Bill, what do you think of the country?' asked Roosevelt. It was August 1, 1884, and the two backwoodsmen were spending their first night in the Bad Lands, at the Maltese Cross Ranch. 'I like it well enough,' said Sewall, 'but I don't believe that it's much of a cattle country,'" p. 281.

"How such a lover of animals could kill so many of them (at the time of writing his lifetime tally was already well into the thousands) is a perhaps unanswerable question. But his bloodthirstiness, if it can be called that, was not unusual among men of his class and generation," p. 299.

"The editors of the Sun—Democrats to a man—had been moved to print these prophetic words on the eve of the Cooper Union meeting: Theodore Roosevelt has gone into the fight for the Mayoralty with his accustomed heartiness... He cannot be Mayor this year, but who knows what may happen in some other year? Congressman, Governor, Senator, President?" p. 349.

"He stood there alone with his orange gloves, waiting for Edith to walk out of the mists behind him," p. 360.

"Edith's health was rather more delicate than her husband's. In Paris, about halfway through their trip, she had begun to feel "the reverse of brightly," and Theodore had hinted in his next letter home that a honeymoon baby was on its way," p. 368.

"The message was clear: he must once again forget about politics and seek surcease in literature. For the foreseeable future, he would have to earn a living with his pen," p. 375.

"His acceptance of the Commissionership, therefore, seemed natural and inevitable to his colleagues in the movement, although many believed he had sacrificed his political future by doing so," p. 399.

"Life was the unpacking of an endless Christmas stocking," p. 427.

"Where once Theodore had been sickly and solitary, and Elliott an effulgent Apollo, now it was the elder who glowed, and the younger who was wasting away," p. 429.

"Alcoholism he believed to be a disease that could be treated and cured. But infidelity was a crime, pure and simple;" p. 430.

"When Nine years before, in his Fourth of July oration to the cowboys of Dickinson, he had hoped 'to see the day when not a foot of American soil will beheld by any European power,' and instinct told him that that day was fast approaching... Roosevelt preferred to use the simple and to him beautiful word Americanism," p. 461.

"Any black or red man who could win admission to 'the fellowship of the doers' was superior to the white man who failed," p. 465.

"In later life Rudyard Kipling, looking back on theses 'spacious and friendly days' in Washington, would remember Roosevelt ... 'I curled up in the seat opposite, and listened and wondered, until the universe seemed to be going round, and Theodore was the spinner,'" p. 479.

"I do not deal with public sentiment. I deal with the law," p. 497.

"It soon became clear that Roosevelt's order to close the saloons had very little to do with temperance principles. It was the logical consequence of his mandate—as he saw it—to root out corruption in the police force," p. 499.

"Stoker wrote in his diary: 'Must be President some day. A man you can't cajole, can't frighten, can't buy,'" p. 514.

"Had it not been intercepted and defused by detective, its charge of fine black Chinese gunpowder might have blown his face off," p. 529.

"As his oars spasmodically rise and fall, he tells her, 'I should like to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy,'" p. 540.

"And so, on April 6, 1897, Theodore Roosevelt was nominated as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, at a salary of $4500 a year," p. 560.

"'Best man for the job,' John D. Long wrote in his diary after his first formal meeting with Roosevelt," p. 566.

"And so the year ended with a crescendo of praise for Assistant Secretary Theodore Roosevelt, who was now recognized to be one of the best-informed and most influential men in Washington," p. 589.

"But the Senator, chewing on his cigar, thanked God Roosevelt had not been appointed Assistant Secretary of State. 'We'd be fighting half the world,' he growled," p. 598.

"Having thus, in a single afternoon, placed the Navy in a state of such readiness it had not known since the Civil War, Roosevelt wrote a 'strictly confidential' letter to warn Adjutant-General Tillinghast of the New York National Guard that the world situation was 'sufficiently threatening' to warrant plans for statewide mobilization. 'Pray remember that in some shape I want to go,'" p. 602.

"Within hours a new ominous chant was drowning out call of Cuba Libre: Remember the Maine! to hell with Spain!"

"'The Commander-in-Chief of the American Army,' reported a Madrid newspaper in the early days of the war, 'is one Ted Roosevelt, formerly a New York policeman,'" p. 618.

"Roosevelt, literally jumping up and down with excitement as he awaited Wood's order to deploy, made no effort to run for cover; somehow the bullets missed him, although

one did smack into a tree inches from his cheek, and filled his eyes with splinters of bark," p. 643.

"In his speech to the Naval War College a year before, Roosevelt had urged America to prepare for 'blood, sweat, and tears'" when war came," p. 646.

"It was now well past noon, and the insect-like figures of General Kent's infantry could be seen beginning a slow, toiling ascent of San Juan Hill," p. 654.

"The Rough Riders sailed out of Santiago Harbor on August 8, leaving Leonard Wood behind as military Governor of the city," p. 661.

"The only even odds, as some wag remarked, were that the next Governor would be a Dutchman," p. 680.

"Privately, to his old Assembly colleague Henry L. Sprague, he wrote: 'I have always been fond of the West African proverb: "Speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far,"'" p. 716.

"At last Hanna, losing all self-control, blurted it out: 'Don't any of you realize that there's only one life between this madman and the Presidency?' p. 724"

"McKinley and Roosevelt were nominated by votes of 926 and 925 respectively," p. 729.

"'We're all off to Washington,' said Platt, 'to see Teddy take the veil,'" p. 734.

"McKinley, thinking it a bandage, had reached to shake his left hand, whereupon a revolver concealed in the handkerchief blasted two bullets into the President's breast and belly...'Don't let them hurt him,' McKinley had murmured before lapsing into deep shock," p. 738.

"As he ate his sandwiches he saw below him in the trees a ranger approaching, running, clutching the yellow slip of a telegram. Instinctively, he knew what message the man was bringing," p. 741.

Topics for Discussion

At what point in the narrative do you see Theodore Roosevelt as a possible future president?

Who is most influential in Roosevelt's life? Explain.

What improves Roosevelt's health? What hinders it? Why?

Could Roosevelt achieve so much if he had been born poor? Explain.

How do his trips abroad effect his perception of the U.S.?

Compare and contrast Roosevelt's two wives.

Describe a struggle in his life key to Roosevelt's success.

Describe the role of his mother in the success of Roosevelt.

What is one physical challenge Roosevelt overcomes? How?

How would Roosevelt's life have been different without Alice Lee (his first wife)?

What modern invention would most aid Roosevelt?

What about Roosevelt's education most impresses you? Why?

When does Roosevelt's political career truly begin? Explain.

How would winning the election for Mayor of New York change Roosevelt's life?

Discuss the impact of Roosevelt's personal morals on his various commissionerships.

How does Roosevelt show his concern for his native city?

How does the failure of his ranches impact Roosevelt's future?

What was life like for Roosevelt's children?

Could Roosevelt become president without marrying Edith Carow?

Which qualification is most useful to Roosevelt as Police Commissioner?

Do you agree with Roosevelt's strict application of the laws in New York?

What about his past qualifies Roosevelt to be the Assistant Secretary of the Navy?

Briefly discuss the positive and negative outcomes of the Spanish American war for Roosevelt.

What two acts of fate helped Roosevelt become president?

How does Roosevelt's personal financial situation effect his involvement in politics?

Which proves more important in Roosevelt's career, his qualifications or his acquaintances?

Would Roosevelt's self-assurance make him popular in modern politics? Explain.