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## OUR TWO CHIEF AMBASSADORS.

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WASHINGTON, March 17th, 1897.

**I** WANT to tell you something about our two leading ambassadors. Colonel John Hay is to be ambassador to Great Britain, and General Horace Porter is to be our ambassador to France. The ambassadors rank far above the ministers. At McKinley's inauguration the four ambassadors came into the Senate first. Then ministers followed. The ambassadors sat side by side with Presidents Cleveland and McKinley when Vice President Hobart was sworn in. It will be the same way at London and Paris. Ambassadors Hay and Porter will take precedence of the ministers from other countries, and they will, in fact, command as much respect, as though President McKinley himself was in their places. They go abroad as the representatives of the President himself, and they can confer directly with Queen Victoria or President Faure. The English and French secretaries of state will make the first calls upon them, and their influence will be such that they can do much for our country. I understand that they both go abroad with the intention of accomplishing more than our ministers have in the past. They realize that this is a business administration, and they intend to do everything they can to push American business to the front. Both Hay and Porter are practical business men. They are both of a singularly diplomatic turn, and both have had lives which fit them for the places which they are now about to fill.

I have seen a good deal of General Horace Porter during the past three weeks. He has been here in charge of the inaugural parade, and has been a part of nearly all the ceremonies connected with the introducing of President McKinley to the White House. General Porter is perhaps the finest looking man of the new administration. He stands fully six feet in his stockings, and he is as erect today as he was thirty-seven years ago when he graduated from West Point, one of the highest men in his class. He is broad shouldered and deep-chested, and is so straight that a line dropped from the back of his well-brushed head would just touch the heels of his polished boots. His face is a very handsome one. The forehead is

high and broad, the eyes are bright and cheerful and the nose is just a little inclined to the Roman. Above all things, he impresses you as being a gentleman. He keeps himself well groomed. He wears the best of clothes of the latest cut, and he has the quiet air of the New York club man. He is now sixty years of age, but he does not look to be more than fifty. I am told that he never worries, and that he has accustomed himself to take things as they come, and do them. He says himself that he never goes in a spasm over anything, and you can see by talking with him that he has himself well in hand.

Some of Horace Porter's experiences with General Grant will stand him in good stead at the court of Paris. Every one knows that he was with Grant during the war, but few appreciate that he was to a large extent the confidential adviser of Grant while he was President of the United States. Grant did not at first take to the idea of being President. When his name was proposed by his friends he hung back, and when he went into the White House he felt afraid of the change of life and duties. As soon as he was elected, however, he sent for General Porter and told him that he must come with him into the White House, and that he needed his assistance. "In what capacity," said General Porter.

"I want you to come and take charge of things," replied President Grant. "I have a set of clerks and secretaries here, but I don't know them. They are not used to me. I need some one about me whom I can trust and who will see that no mistakes are made in the carrying out of my orders. I want you to be my military secretary, and I will have the War Department assign you to the White House."

To this General Porter assented, and became a sort of confidential adviser to General Grant. He was not a private secretary nor secretary to the President, but he was associated with him in many important matters of his administration. He had a great deal to do with the fisheries commission of Grant's first term and also with the settlement of the Alabama claims, by which we got from Great Britain \$15,500,000.

In this work General Porter was able to be of the more advantage to General Grant on account of his thorough knowledge of the French language. He is a natural linguist and he can speak French and Spanish quite as fluently as English. He can make an after dinner speech in French, and he is noted as being one of the best after dinner speakers of the United States, being ranked by many higher in this regard than Chauncey Depew. He is also a man of literary note. He has the degree of L. L. D.,

and has written a number of books. This fact will add to his standing at Paris, for the French have a high respect for literary characters. His position as an army officer will also help him, and the fact that he is a rich man is another important item. The ambassadors from other countries will spend all the way from \$30,000 and upward a year in entertaining. General Porter will probably do the same, although his salary is \$17,500. He has made a fortune, you know, in railroads and other investments. He was for years manager of the Pullman Palace Car Company and he has been the president and director of a number of the largest business enterprises of the United States. He has made some inventions which have brought him in money, and he understands our business relations in their broadest sense.

Gen. Porter's business experience will at the start make him especially valuable as ambassador to France. I happen to know something about how he feels as to our business situation. He believes that an enormous increase can be made in our foreign commerce, and that the reciprocity feature may be so developed in connection with certain products as will be of vast advantage to this country. Both he and the President think that the national exposition at Paris in 1900 can be used to great advantage to us by proper American exhibits, and Gen. Porter goes abroad with the idea of pushing American industries at that exposition.

He believes also that the consular service can be very much improved, and that our consuls should be to a large extent the advance agents of American business men. They should devote their time to studying the foreign market where they are located and to finding every loop hole possible for American manufacturers to come in.

Just one word about Gen. Porter's family. You can tell a good deal about a man from his ancestors. Horace Porter has no reason to be ashamed of his. His genealogical tree is a big one. One of its roots is found in John Porter, who won his spurs as a soldier at the battle of Warwick under William the Conqueror. The first Porter of this branch who came to this country was an Irishman. His name was Robert, and he had enough money to be able to buy some land in Pennsylvania shortly after he landed. This man was the great-grandfather of our new ambassador. His son was Andrew Porter, one of the most distinguished characters of the revolution. Andrew Porter was a teacher of mathematics in Philadelphia in 1776. Congress made him the captain of the marines on one of the frigates, but he soon left the navy for