The History of the Twentieth Century
Episode 42
“A Square Deal for Every Man”
Transcript

[music: fanfare]

“It is not enough to be well-meaning and kindly, but weak; neither is it enough to be strong, unless morality and decency go hand in hand with strength. We must possess the qualities which make us do our duty in our homes and among our neighbors, and in addition we must possess the qualities which are indispensable to the make-up of every great and masterful nation—the qualities of courage and hardihood, of individual initiative and yet of power to combine for a common end, and above all, the resolute determination to permit no man and no set of men to sunder us one from the other by lines of caste or creed or section. We must act upon the motto of all for each and each for all. There must be ever present in our minds the fundamental truth that in a republic such as ours the only safety is to stand neither for nor against any man because he is rich or because he is poor, because he is engaged in one occupation or another, because he works with his brains or because he works with his hands. We must treat each man on his worth and merits as a man. We must see that each is given a square deal, because he is entitled to no more and should receive no less.”

Theodore Roosevelt.

Welcome to *The History of the Twentieth Century.*

[music: opening theme]

Episode 42. A Square Deal for Every Man.

In November 1904, Theodore Roosevelt broke the vice-presidents’ curse by becoming the first vice-president to take office through the death of his predecessor, and then get elected in his own right afterward. And he did it convincingly, winning the election with an historic margin.

In 1904, there was no legal or constitutional impediment to a President pursuing a third term. What there was, was the Washington precedent. George Washington, the first President of the

United States, had served only two terms. A third term would have been his for the asking, but Washington declined. He was 65 years old by then, with a long and distinguished career of public service, and no doubt had had enough, not to mention that he had less than four years of life left to him, and would have died in office had he been re-elected.

The second President of the United States, John Adams, only got one term. The third President, Thomas Jefferson, also retired after two terms, as did the fourth and then the fifth, and after that, it got to be a norm. The claim is sometimes made that Washington laid it down as a general principle that two terms should be enough for any President, but this is a myth.

But how does this unwritten rule apply to Theodore Roosevelt? Since Roosevelt is now going to be the first person to serve a full four-year term plus a fraction of another one, how do we count his terms? If he runs again in 1908, does that violate the norm?

Well, it never came up before, so I guess it's up to Roosevelt to set the precedent himself. The nation didn't have long to wait. Shortly after his re-election, Roosevelt made a pledge that this term would be his last. The announcement was popular. We've already seen how much concern there was at this time with the influence of large corporations. Roosevelt and the Republicans had received many large corporate campaign contributions, in spite of Roosevelt's aggressive anti-trust policies, and some of his progressive supporters had begun to wonder if their hero had sold out. They welcomed his pledge, because it insured Roosevelt would be his own man for the remainder of his presidency. Although, as 1908 approached, Roosevelt would come to regret his promise, remarking that in order to be released from it, he would gladly cut off his right hand at the wrist.

During Roosevelt's first term, his secretary of war was Elihu Root, whom I have mentioned in a few podcasts now. Unfortunately, I've been mispronouncing his name. It is ELL-eye-who Root, not ell-LIE-who Root. But anyway, Root had been appointed secretary of war in 1899, shortly after the end of the Spanish-American War, and Root's War Department was in charge of managing America's new colonial possessions: Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines, through what was called the "Office of Insular Affairs." Because, you see, colonial powers, like Britain, have "Colonial" offices. But the United States isn't a colonial power and therefore doesn't have an office anywhere in Washington with the word "colonial" as part of its name. It's the Office of Insular Affairs. Got it? *Insular* Affairs. That's why Root was the person that William Howard Taft, the governor of the Philippines, reported to in Washington.

Anyway, Root was interested in returning to private life, telling Roosevelt that he would stay on as War Secretary until the situations in the Philippines and Cuba were stabilized. At the beginning of 1904, with Cuba now independent and the Philippine war winding down, he felt the time was right.

To succeed Root as Secretary of War, Roosevelt appointed William Howard Taft. Now, as you know from episode 24, it had only been a few months earlier that Taft had reluctantly turned down an appointment to the Supreme Court, his life's ambition, because he felt he was still needed in Manila. But when the President came back to him, just a few months later, and asked him to be Secretary of War, he accepted. This appointment would not mean Taft was abandoning the Filipinos, Roosevelt pointed out, since as Secretary of War, he would still be responsible for overseeing the situation in the islands. Additionally, Taft's health had deteriorated again upon his return to the Philippines, and his children were getting old enough that the family wanted to see them further educated at home. And then there was Mrs. Taft, who was opposed to the Supreme Court appointment because she saw the court as a dead end, but favored the idea of her husband joining the Cabinet, because that could be a stepping stone to a still higher office, if you know what I mean, and I think you do.

Taft knew better than most people what the position of Secretary of War entailed. His father, Alphonso Taft, had been Secretary of War under President Grant. Taft knew that cabinet secretaries were expected to do a lot of entertaining, but the salary wasn't great—in fact, it was less than he was making as governor of the Philippines. But his family stepped in and offered to supplement his salary.

The Tafts proved popular in Washington. Mr. Taft's 320-pound frame meant whenever he entered a room, he commanded attention, and he was by all accounts kind and charming and easy to like. He had charmed them in Manila; now he was winning them over in Washington.

And speaking of Washington society, the President's eldest, and only child of his first marriage, Alice Roosevelt, now 19 years old, was also making an impression in Washington social circles, and not in a good way. She drank whiskey, smoked cigarettes, played poker with the men and partied long into the night, which was scandalous by the standards of the time. I daresay it would be pretty scandalous even today. All Theodore Roosevelt could do was shrug and say, "I can do one of two things. I can be President of the United States, or I can control Alice. I cannot possibly do both!"

The Supreme Court handed down its decision on the *Northern Securities* case in March, 1904. I discussed this case in episode 17, where I already gave away the result: the government won its case by a 5-4 margin. The only disappointment for Roosevelt was the vote of Oliver Wendell Holmes, whom Roosevelt himself had appointed to the Court partly with the thought of insuring a favorable ruling in the *Northern Securities* case. Roosevelt had gotten his favorable ruling in spite of, not because of, Mr. Justice Holmes, who was one of the four dissenters.

The following year, the Supreme Court would issue another ruling regarding the Beef Trust, another Sherman Act prosecution by Roosevelt's Attorney General, Philander Knox. Meat packing was another example of an industry that had once been very small and local, by its very nature, since raw meat doesn't keep very long and doesn't travel very well. But in the nineteenth century, the inventions of first, canning, then refrigeration, then the refrigerated railroad car, meant that it was now possible to operate huge, sprawling slaughterhouses that covered hundreds of acres, most notably in Chicago. By the early twentieth century, the so-called “Big Six” meat packing companies controlled 75% of the US market for meat and meat products. And when you’re talking about “meat products,” during this period, you’re talking about everything from fresh meat and canned meat to lard and margarine and soap to fertilizer and glue to paintbrushes and buttons.

These companies had been colluding with each other and with the railroads to fix prices and squeeze out competition. In court, one of their defenses was that the operation of a slaughterhouse is all within the borders of one state, and therefore outside the reach of Federal regulation. A unanimous Supreme Court dismissed that idea, holding that since the economic effect of the Big Six’s price fixing was felt all across the country, that made it the business of the national government. It may have given President Roosevelt some satisfaction that the author of the opinion was Oliver Wendell Holmes.

As for Taft, his role in the Roosevelt administration was much more important than just Secretary of War. You won’t be surprised if I tell you that Taft kept a watchful eye on the situation in the Philippines, maintaining close contact with the new governor general there, a man named Luke Wright, a right-handed English cricketer best known…oh, wait. Wrong Wikipedia page…give me a second, here…I meant to say Luke Wright, a Tennessee attorney who had been a member of Taft’s Philippine Commission, and who had succeeded Taft as governor general there. Wright would later become US Ambassador to Japan, and in 1908, would succeed Taft as Secretary of War. Wright saw eye to eye with Taft on matters of Philippine governance, and served as governor general to Taft’s satisfaction.

Congress had passed legislation in 1902, the Philippine Organic Act, which provided for the election of a Philippine Assembly, which was elected in 1907, and which would serve as the lower house of a bicameral legislature, the upper house to consist of the Philippine Commission, appointed by the US President, initially with five US and three Filipino members. The Philippines were also granted two non-voting commissioners who were seated in the US House of Representatives.

Roosevelt also tapped Taft to supervise the Panama Canal Commission, to act as the administration’s liaison to Congress, and consulted with him frequently on many policy issues. Roosevelt grew to trust Taft and his advice, although some close to the President and the Secretary worried that Taft was too much of a yes-man, and that Roosevelt was coming to trust and rely upon Taft’s advice so heavily precisely because Taft was telling Roosevelt what he wanted to hear.

The Republican Party convention that had re-nominated Roosevelt in 1904 had done this with a notable lack of enthusiasm. The Party regulars still didn’t like or trust Roosevelt very much, although his enormous popularity made it unwise to try to replace him, even if anyone else had stepped forward, which, no one had shown any interest in doing, other than Mark Hanna, who had passed away a few months too soon. The convention nominated a Senator from Indiana, Charles Fairbanks, as its vice-presidential candidate. Fairbanks was an attorney who had gotten rich representing railroad interests and was very much an old guard, pro-business Republican in the mold of Mark Hanna. Roosevelt was not at all happy with Fairbanks, and would have much preferred a more progressive running-mate, but deemed the issue not worth the fight, and accepted Fairbanks as a sop to the conservative wing of the party.

Remember how I said it wasn't yet considered appropriate for a presidential candidate, especially an incumbent, to go out and actually campaign? Well, that was still the case and Roosevelt, despite his popularity and his skill as a public speaker, did little actual campaigning. With the relationship between Roosevelt and Fairbanks strained, it fell to William Howard Taft to barnstorm the country, making the case for the President's re-election. Unlike Roosevelt, Taft did not enjoy the political fray and was uncomfortable with public speaking, but he did his job well enough, and Roosevelt was pleased with the results. I mean, really, how can you argue with a landslide?

And so, Roosevelt and Fairbanks were sworn in on March 4, 1905. Since Roosevelt had already promised not to run again, speculation as to who might become his successor was already rampant. When asked himself, Roosevelt began to suggest Taft as the man he would most like to see succeed him.

Back in episode 26, when we talked about the St. Louis World's Fair, I mentioned that Scott Joplin composed a piano piece called "The Cascades," inspired by the grand array of fountains and artificial waterfalls that flowed down along the sides of the stair to the Festival Hall. I would have played that piece in that episode, but I didn't have a recording of it. I have one now, and since we're only a few months after the close of the Fair, let's take a break and have a listen.

This is a period recording, and by "period recording," I don't mean the scratchy phonograph records of the period, which have poor sound quality by today's standards, and which the recording industry is doing its best to muddy the copyright status of. This is from a player piano roll. Player pianos were just coming into their own in 1905. They are mechanized pianos that can play music from a paper roll. Holes in the paper signal the machine which notes to play and when. The cool thing is, here in the 21st century, we can scan these old piano rolls, digitize the data, and use it to make synthesized music. Which is what this is:

[music: "The Cascades"]

I've already mentioned the Standard Oil Company, the most egregious of the so-called trusts that were a major concern at this time. The newly created Federal Bureau of Corporations, under its commissioner, James Garfield, son of the assassinated President, began to investigate the operations of this company, and muckraking journalist Ida Tarbell was continuing to publish exposes of the company, even after the publication of her most famous work, The *History of the Standard Oil Company*, in 1904.

Now, the first commercial oil well in the United States was drilled in 1859, in Titusville, Pennsylvania. Over the remainder of the 19th century, US oil production expanded outward from this location, across western Pennsylvania, western New York, and down the Ohio River valley into West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky. Oil was also being extracted in and around Los Angeles, California by the late 19th century, but the oil there was thicker and had less commercial value than Pennsylvania oil.

But in 1892, commercial oil drilling began in Kansas. In 1894, the first oil well was drilled in Texas. And in 1897, oil was discovered in the Indian Territory. By 1905, it had become clear that there were more petroleum reserves in this part of the country than there were in the East. The Indian Territory was a region that had been set aside for Native American tribes from the eastern United States, tribes that had been forcibly relocated there in the nineteenth century. The Indian Territory had had a native majority for most of its existence, but many European-American settlers began moving there after the Civil War, and by the beginning of the twentieth century, the territory was only about 10% Native American. In 1905, a Native American-led movement held a constitutional convention and a referendum, and applied for admission to the Union as the State of Sequoia.

The Eastern Republican establishment was leery of this idea, as the oil boom would surely mean that the neighboring Oklahoma Territory would also be applying for statehood. Now, back in 1888, eastern Republicans had had no problem dividing the Dakota territory into two states, North and South Dakota, for the purpose of giving the US Senate four new safe Republican seats, instead of just two. But the Oklahoma and Indian Territories looked alarmingly like places that might send Democrats to the Senate if given the opportunity, and so the eastern Republicans, including Theodore Roosevelt and his administration, insisted that the two territories would only be admitted to the Union as a single state. And so it was back to square one, and a new constitution drafted jointly by the two territories, which were finally admitted to the union together as the State of Oklahoma, the forty-sixth state of the United States. Now the only US territories left that had not received statehood were Arizona and New Mexico, along the Mexican border, between Texas and California. Oh, yeah, and Alaska and Hawaii, if you want to count *them*.

But as oil drilling was booming in Texas and in Kansas and in the future State of Oklahoma, Standard Oil moved in, and soon controlled the means of refining and shipping petroleum in the region. A barrel of oil in Kansas sold for $1.18 in 1904. In 1905, the same barrel of oil only got you 37 cents. That was because there was no one left to sell to except Standard Oil. In 1905, the newly elected governor of Kansas proposed that the state build its own oil refinery, to offer competition to Standard Oil. Ida Tarbell moved there to cover the story, and the Federal government added the shenanigans in Kansas to its investigation of the company.

Key to Standard Oil's clout was that it controlled the pipelines and worked hand-in-glove with the railroads, meaning there was no way to move either crude oil or refined petroleum products out of Kansas without the blessing of Standard Oil. So it was either accept their offer, or let the oil sit.

We've already talked about how the railroads gained control of coal mines this way. It was clear to reformers that the power of the railroads needed to be reined in. In 1906, after intense lobbying from Theodore Roosevelt, new legislation passed Congress, the Hepburn Act, to more closely regulate the railroads.

Railroad regulation was a major issue, something that progressives had been chasing after for some time, and Roosevelt brought it home. The new law gave extensive powers to the Interstate Commerce Commission to regulate railroad freight rates, with an eye toward insuring that all shippers would henceforth have equal access to the rail lines. No more discounts or freebies to preferred customers; no more insanely high rates to punish businesses who don't play ball with the railroad. Another provision designated pipelines as another form of common carrier, and similarly regulated their pricing.

1906 would develop into a banner year for Theodore Roosevelt, in terms of legislative accomplishments. Besides the Hepburn Act, two more major pieces of commercial regulation, the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act, became law that same year.

But Theodore Roosevelt has to share the credit for these last two accomplishments with a 27-year old socialist poet, a young man from Baltimore named Upton Sinclair. Now living in Chicago, Sinclair set out to write a novel about the appalling working conditions and exploitation at Packingtown, the Chicago stockyard district. For weeks, Sinclair would wander the packing plants by day, and visit with workers in their homes at night, listening to their stories. Since he was a young man of limited means himself, Sinclair discovered that if he carried a lunch box around with him, he could wander the stockyards at will all day, and no one asked him any questions.

The product of all this research became a novel, *The Jungle*, about the lives of Lithuanian immigrants to the meatpacking industry in Chicago. It was published as a serial in the socialist newspaper *Appeal to Reason* in 1905, and was published in book form in 1906.

This book caused a sensation, but not in the way Sinclair had intended. He had meant to produce an exposé of labor exploitation, but what captured the public's attention were his first-hand depictions of unsanitary conditions in the meatpacking industry. Actually, unsanitary is too mild a word. "Disgusting" might be a more appropriate word. Sinclair described meat houses reeking with the smells of spoiled beef, of cuts of meat reclaimed for human consumption after rats had been at them, of spoiled hams treated with chemicals to hide the smell, of moldy meats ground into sausage.

The public was in an uproar. The industry's reputation had already suffered when its backroom price fixing was exposed. Now Americans were learning that the meat products they had been paying top dollar for weren't even fit to eat. Sales of meat in the US declined by nearly half, and there were calls for a system of government inspection of meatpacking operations. These calls were dismissed by the industry and its supporters in the Republican Party, who scoffed at the notion of the contents of a work of fiction being used as the basis for formulating government policy.

James Garfield, the Commissioner of Corporations, read the book and recommended it to the President. Roosevelt was reluctant at first, dismissing Sinclair as a "crackpot socialist," but he eventually read it and was as appalled as everyone else. He ordered inspectors to Packingtown. It was supposed to be a surprise inspection, but the meat packing companies were tipped off, and did their best to clean up for the inspections. Crews worked around the clock for weeks, but even so, the cleaned-up slaughterhouses were so awful that the inspectors wrote up a report confirming everything Sinclair had written in his novel.

But Sinclair was beginning to notice that his book was drawing public attention to the poor quality of the meats, but not to the plight of the workers, as he had intended. He complained to Roosevelt, who responded, "I have the power to deal with the one, and not with the other." And indeed, the plight of the workers never did get the attention Sinclair was hoping for. Later that year, he would say to *Cosmopolitan* magazine, "I aimed at the public's heart, and by accident I hit it in the stomach."

By May of 1906, progressives in the Senate had introduced the Meat Inspection Act, a law authorizing the Department of Agriculture to inspect meat animals and meat products, and condemn those deemed unfit for human consumption. Of course, as we have seen, the Senate of this era is packed with men of business, and the Beef Trust had a lot of friends there. What are the odds that these guys will vote to approve government inspections of their buddies' plants? Well, Roosevelt overcame their opposition easily, by showing them his inspectors' report and threatening to release it to the newspapers if they did not act. The bill passed the Senate in three days.

The House of Representatives turned out to be the greater challenge. The powerful chair of the House Agriculture Committee, James Wadsworth of New York, was a cattle man himself, and a close ally of the Beef Trust. His committee held hearings, inviting a parade of industry experts who swore back and forth that the stockyards are just as clean and wholesome as the average American kitchen.

At this point, an impatient Upton Sinclair leaked some of the details of the Federal report to *The New York Times* in an effort to unblock the bill in the House. An irritated Theodore Roosevelt wrote to Sinclair's publisher, "Tell Sinclair to go home and let *me* run the country for awhile."

But a few weeks later, with no progress having been made, Roosevelt himself did release a summary of the report, which led to another furor. *The New York Post* printed a satirical little ditty that went like this:

Mary had a little lamb,
And when she saw it sicken,
She shipped it off to Packingtown,
And now it's labeled "chicken."

This final burst of outrage did the trick, and the Meat Inspection Act became law.

And there was more to follow. The chief chemist of the US Department of Agriculture, Harvey Washington Wiley, a man who had held that position for 24 years, had been doing research into the effects of chemicals used as preservatives in foods on human health and was a vocal advocate of Federal legislation, the proposed Food and Drug Act, to regulate chemical additives in foods and cosmetics.

This proposed bill was never popular with the pro-business conservatives in the Republican Party, of course. Nelson Aldrich, Senator from Rhode Island and one of the staunchest pro-business and anti-Roosevelt members of the Senate, spoke scathingly of the bill, raising the specter of the Federal government regulating what every individual American ate and drank. What next, Aldrich would ask, are we going to be sending our citizens to jail for the crime of eating something that the chemists at the Department of Agriculture have decided they shouldn't be eating?

And then there was the patent medicine industry. You know, in our day, calling something a "patent medicine" is pretty much dismissing it as worthless at best, harmful or fraudulent at worst, and that was exactly the problem with the industry. *Collier's* magazine had been publishing groundbreaking investigative pieces analyzing the patent medicine business. For example, the Lydia Pinkham Company of Lynn, Massachusetts advertised heavily in newspapers across America, offering medicines for women. The advertisements included a picture of kindly Mrs. Pinkham and the promise that she would personally answer questions and offer advice on women's health issues to anyone who wrote to her. *Collier's* printed a photograph of Mrs. Pinkham's grave. She had died in 1883, over 20 years ago.

Collier's also exposed the fact that the patent medicine companies, which were major advertisers in the newspapers of the day, had clauses in their contracts with the newspapers that the papers could not publish news articles that put the industry in a bad light, nor could they editorialize for government regulation of patent medicines. *Collier's* hired experts to test hundreds of patent medicines, and revealed that many were made of meaningless ingredients, like spring water, starch, sugar, and glycerin, and were being marketed as cures for everything from coughs to cancer.

But worse than that, many patent medicines contained alcohol or cocaine or marijuana, or opium derivatives like morphine and heroin. With no labeling, parents were unwittingly giving potentially dangerous drugs to children, even to infants.

An overlooked aspect of this story is the role of women. You know, all the way back in episode 6, I described how by the latter part of the nineteenth century, shopping was increasingly becoming women's domain. Obviously, cosmetics were always a commodity marketed largely to women. Women bought most of the food, and did most of the cooking for their families. And many of these patent medicines were either marketed for women, or for infants and children, which meant they were usually purchased and administered by mothers. It's not hard to imagine the reaction of the average middle-class American mother to the news that the cosmetics she's been using contain poisonous chemicals, or that the sausage she's been cooking up for her family contains moldy meat, or that the cough syrup she's been giving little Mildred contains heroin.

So the purity of food, drugs, and cosmetics was very much a women's issue, although we don't usually think of it that way anymore. In 1891, the National Consumers League was organized by women activists like Jane Addams and Florence Kelley. It's still in business today. Women's groups regularly invited experts like Harvey Wiley to come and give lectures on food and drug safety. In 1905, several of these activists met with President Roosevelt to ask for legislative action. Roosevelt advised them to petition Congress, and by the summer of 1906, members of Congress had received over a million letters from women calling for passage of the Food and Drug Act.

No doubt the revelations in the meat packing industry helped raise awareness. It also helped beat down Congressional resistance, and the Food and Drug Act would be passed by Congress and signed by the President. Among its requirements was that patent medicines list their ingredients on the label. Once that went into effect, ingredients like cocaine and heroin began to disappear from the medicines, even before they were eventually outlawed altogether.

The Antiquities Act became law the same month. This law entitles the President of the United States, by proclamation, to create national monuments on any public land. It's important because declaring a piece of territory a national monument gives the President the power to protect places with archaeological or historic or scientific interest from commercial exploitation.

Theodore Roosevelt would declare many national monuments during the remainder of his Presidency, putting into effect his call for preservation of the natural beauty of the West that he first made back in 1903. The first was Devil's Tower, Wyoming, which became a national monument just three months after the law was enacted. Roosevelt would declare the Grand Canyon a national monument in 1908, fulfilling his promise to preserve it.

All in all, 1906 was a remarkable year for legislative reform. Even Progressive Democrats found themselves grudgingly admitting that the Roosevelt Administration and the Republican Congress were boldly tackling the major domestic issues of the day. *The New York Times* editorialized that "during no session of Congress since the foundation of the Government has there been so much done, first, to extend the Federal power of regulation and control over the business of the country, and second, to cure and prevent abuses of corporation privileges."

It may be hard to understand how the Republican Theodore Roosevelt came to this place. Roosevelt most certainly came of age politically in a party that held to the traditional Republican view that it is the role of government to create an economic environment in which men of business could thrive. But Roosevelt did not so much repudiate this idea as extend it: why single out businessmen? Why shouldn't the government shoulder the responsibility of creating an environment in which all its citizens can prosper? This, I think, is the underlying meaning of Roosevelt's oft-repeated slogan of "a square deal for every man." And perhaps the reason that even the more traditional Republicans in the Congress were persuaded to go along with him—aside from his staggering personal popularity, of course—was that as a Republican, Roosevelt was well-positioned to make the argument to other Republicans that this style of progressive politics was the next logical step for a Republican Party entering into the twentieth century.

Theodore Roosevelt was astute enough to know that circumstances had made 1906 his best chance, and probably his last chance, for big legislative accomplishments, and so he took full advantage of it. At the end of the year, he wrote to his son Kermit that "I do not expect to accomplish very much in the way of legislation after this Congress…By next winter, people will begin to think more about the next man who is to be President; and then, too, by that time it is almost inevitable that the revulsion of feeling against me should have come. It is bound to come some time, and it is extraordinary that it has not come yet."

We'll have to stop there for today, but I hope you'll join me next week, on *The History of the Twentieth Century,* as we close out Theodore Roosevelt's presidency with an examination of his last days in office. An economic downturn in 1907 will end the Republican administrations of McKinley and Roosevelt's ten-year run of good economic news and take some of the shine off of Theodore Roosevelt's reputation, as he himself predicted, although you could hardly call it "revulsion." More like, "the bloom is off the rose." That's next week, on *The History of the Twentieth Century.*

Oh, and one more thing. I want to say a few words about Coca-Cola, because any time you start talking about patent medicines and how they used to have cocaine in them and such, many people's minds leap immediately to the stories that we've all been told about the history of Coca-Cola. Everyone sort of knows that Coca-Cola used to contain cocaine, but there's a lot of rumor and misinformation about this, so let's set the record straight. In the late 19^{th} century, a Corsican named Angelo Mariani began marketing a wine in France that had had coca leaves steeped in it. It was touted for its health benefits, and soon it was being exported. Its customers included such illustrious names as Ulysses Grant and Pope Leo XIII.

In Atlanta, Georgia, a druggist named John Pemberton created a product he called Pemberton's French Wine Coca Tonic to compete with the popular import. In 1886, though, Fulton County, Georgia, became a "dry" county and Pemberton's product suddenly was illegal in his home town. So, he created a new wine-free product to replace it. He kept the coca extract and the kola nut extract, but he replaced the wine with sugar and carbonated water. It was sold at drugstore fountains under the name Coca-Cola, probably a reference to the coca leaves and kola nuts that were two of its ingredients. Pemberton touted this concoction as a patent medicine that cured a variety of disorders, including impotence. Cola syrup was also being sold as a medicine to cure stomach disorders, although I'm not sure that *that* syrup was the same recipe as the stuff that was being sold at the soda fountain.

Anyway, Pemberton died in 1888. There was much quarrelling and litigation over who owned the recipe and who owned the trademark name "Coca-Cola," but I won't trouble you with all that. The important thing is that the product itself remained a big seller. The Coca-Cola Company began giving out tickets good for one free Coca-Cola at any drugstore fountain, because they found that once people started drinking the stuff, they kept drinking it. (Ha, I'm sure they did!)

In 1899, the company began selling Coca-Cola in bottles for five cents each. This opened up a whole new market: African-Americans, people who could not drink Coca-Cola at Atlanta's whites-only drugstore fountains, but could and did buy the bottled product.

In no time, white Southerners began freaking out. Within a couple of years, newspapers across the South were publishing articles, with very little in the way of facts to back them up, about how Coca-Cola was turning African-American men into cocaine fiends who went around uncontrollably raping white women, which is ironic, when you consider that the stuff used to be touted as a cure for impotence. But as we've already seen, this fear of African-American men and white women touches something very deep in the American psyche. Anyway, faced with threats of legislative banning in a number of Southern states, the Coca-Cola Company took out the cocaine in 1903. They replaced it with caffeine and more sugar. Bear in mind here that cocaine was still a legal product in 1903, and would remain so until 1914.

In 1909, the United States government took legal action against the Coca-Cola Company under the Food and Drug Act. Not because they were adding cocaine—that was already gone—but because they were adding caffeine. After years of litigation and threats of new legislation, a settlement was reached between the government and the company, under which the US government would set a legal limit on the amount of caffeine permitted to be added into soft drinks. Today, that limit is 72 milligrams for a 12-ounce serving. Today's Coca-Cola contains about 45 milligrams per 12-ounce serving, well below the legal maximum.

[music: closing theme]