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# Political and Social Progress in Latin-America



## THE ANNALS

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## INDIVIDUAL EFFORT IN TRADE EXPANSION<sup>1</sup>

BY HON. ELIHU ROOT,  
United States Senator from New York.

Governments may hold doors open all over the world, but if there is no one to go through them it is an empty form, and people get tired of holding doors open as an empty form. The claims of a government to consideration soon come to be regarded as pretentious unless there are really substantial interests behind the claims. No government, and least of all our government, least of all a democratic republic, can make commerce to go through open doors, to avail itself of fair and equal treatment, and to give substance and reality to the theoretical increase of amity and friendship between nations. The people of the country must do it themselves, and they must do it by individual enterprise; they must do it by turning their attention toward the opportunities that are afforded by friendly governments, by availing themselves of those opportunities, and by carrying on their business through availing themselves of them. But while it is a matter of individual enterprise, while that must be the basis of all development and progress, all advance, all extension, nevertheless, there must be something besides the individual enterprise. The great principle of organization which is revolutionizing the business and the social enterprise of the world, applies here as it applies elsewhere. No single business can make very much advance except as all other business of the country makes advance. No one can go into a new field very far in advance of others; and the way for each man to make his business successful in a new field is to do his share as a member of the community, as a citizen of his country, as one of the great business organizations of his country, to advance the trade, the commerce, the influence of his country as a whole in the field into which he wishes to enter. A recognition of the dependence of each man's business for its prosperity and progress upon the prosperity and progress of the business of all is necessary in order that

<sup>1</sup>Address delivered at the Pan-American Commercial Conference, Washington, D. C., February, 17, 1911.