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*The Jungle*

*The Jungle* is a novel written by Upton Sinclair. He worked several weeks undercover in Chicago's meatpacking plants in order to get firsthand experience. Sinclair wrote this novel with the intention of exposing the harsh conditions immigrants were forced to endure. However, the novel’s popularity came from his description of the meatpacking industry. People were horrified when they read of how unsanitary the industry’s practices were. As a result of this exposure, food protection laws were put in place.

Indiana Senator Albert Beveridge gave *The Jungle* to Roosevelt. After reading, he realized he had not been giving enough attention or support to the Pure Food and Drug initiative. He then ordered the Department of Agriculture to conduct an investigation. After the investigation, Roosevelt was ready to take action, but Congress stalled. Roosevelt released part of the Department of Agriculture’s report to the public, exposing the conditions further. As people continued to show their concern, Congress was forced to follow through and pass a law that pleased the people. Finally, President Roosevelt was able to sign the Pure Food and Drug Act into law (1906).

Many unsafe practices were prohibited with this law. Diseased food was not allowed, spoiled products were illegal, ingredients could not be substituted, and statements of ingredients could not be misleading. Anyone violating these laws could be jailed and fined.

Because of Sinclair and his book, Roosevelt coined the term “muckraking”, but Sinclair was not done with politics just yet. He later ran for Congress out of Mercer County on the Socialist ticket. He finished third, but after moving to California, he ran for governor.

Blackwell Jon, “1906: Rumble over ‘The Jungle’,” The Trentonian, accessed September 6, 2012, <http://www.capitalcentury.com/1906.html>

Theodore Roosevelt Association, “Pure Food and Drug Act,” accessed September 6, 2012, http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/purefooddrug.htm