
Americanism versus Imperialism: II

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AMERICANISM *VERSUS* IMPERIALISM—II.

BY ANDREW CARNEGIE.

IN the January number of the *REVIEW*, I dealt with the danger of foreign wars and entanglements, as one of several brave reasons against departing from the past policy of the Republic, which has kept it solid and compact upon its own continent, to undertake the subjection and government of subject races in the tropics. I now propose to consider one of the reasons given for such departure—the only one remaining which retains much vitality, for the two other reasons once so prominent have already faded away and now are scarcely ever urged. These were “commercial expansion” in peace and “increased power” in war. The President killed the first when compelled by Great Britain to give the “open door” as the price for her support; for to give the “open door” to the nearer foreigner meant the “closed door” to the products of the soil and mines of his own country. There never was and never can be any trade worth quarrelling about in the Philippines; but what little there is or can be he has given away. When the country saw Dewey’s fleet provisioned from Australia, instead of from our own agricultural land, the claim of possible expansion of American commerce there fell to the ground.

The second claim, that the Republic as a war power would be strengthened, held the field even for a shorter period than that of commercial expansion, for it was obvious that distant possessions would only give to our enemies, during war, vulnerable points of attack which had hitherto been wanting. As one solid mass, without outlying possessions, the Republic is practically unassailable. Should she keep the Philippines, any one of the great naval powers has her at its mercy. Hence Admiral Sampson warned us but a few days ago that “our risks of and dangers from war had

already increased a hundred per cent. and that we needed to double our navy." The President has just asked that our army also be doubled.

Thus the claims of "Commercial Expansion" in peace and of "Greater Power" in war have bled to death of themselves.

There remains to-day, as the one vital element of imperialism, the contention that Providence has opened for the American people a new and larger destiny, which imposes heavy burdens indeed upon them, but from which they cannot shrink without evading holy duty; that it has become their sacred task to undertake the civilization of a backward people committed to their charge. A foundling has been left at their door, which it is their duty to adopt, educate and govern. In a word, it is "Humanity," "Duty," "Destiny," which call upon us again for sacrifice. These potent cries which brought us to the drawing of the sword for oppressed Cuba, are now calling us to a more difficult task, and hence to a greater "duty."

It is encouraging to those who hold to Americanism that the chief strength of the imperialistic movement calling upon us to depart from our republican ideals, rests upon no ignoble foundation to-day. It is not the desire of gain, as our European critics assert, nor the desire of military glory, which gives vitality to the strange outburst for expansion and the proposed holding of alien races in subjection for their good. The average American, especially in the West, really believes that his country can govern these tropical people, and benefit them by so doing; he considers it a duty not to evade a task which, as he sees it, Providence has clearly imposed upon his country. The writer knows that the cynics, both at home and abroad, but especially the latter, will smile at this statement; but the extent of the ignorance of the American people in general, except in the South, about subject races and tropical conditions, cannot be realized by Europeans. This ignorance is truly as great as their belief implies. Their lack of knowledge is at fault, but the greater this lack the clearer is it that they can be credited with absolute sincerity, and with those very dangerous things when possessed without knowledge, "good intentions." The people of the South, who have knowledge of the problems of race, are with rare unanimity opposed to further accretions, and see it to be a "holy duty" to keep our Republic from further dangers arising from racial differences.

Our national history has not been such as to give our people experience in dealing with this new and essentially foreign question, but the American democracy has displayed in all national crises a highly creditable sensitiveness to the moral features of every issue presented. The deciding voice has been that of those who stood for what was made toward its abolition until the issue was placed upon high moral grounds. In the issue of secession, patriotism played the first part, but the enthusiasm of the nation was greatly quickened the moment it became a question of the emancipation of the slaves. Even in the recent issue, when the debasement of the standard of value was proposed, those who stood for the maintenance of the high standard found their strongest weapon when they placed before the people the moral side of the question, and argued that debts contracted in gold should be paid in gold; that the savings of the people deposited in banks in gold should be so repaid, and that the soldiers' pensions should be paid in money equal to any. The justice of the matter, what was right, what was fair, in other words, the moral side of the question, was potent in determining the decision.

We hear much of the decline of the pulpit in our day, and upon theological questions and dogmas its influence cannot be what it once was. Yet, as far as our country is concerned, I should say that the power of the pulpit upon all moral questions has gained as much as it has lost upon theological issues. It is not less powerful to-day in this domain in the Republic than in Scotland, and far more so than in any other English-speaking country. In such questions its voice has been potent when decisively pronounced upon one side or the other, as it generally has been; but in regard to Imperialism it has been divided. Bishop Potter, Dr. Van Dyke, Dr. Cuyler, Dr. Parkhurst, Dr. Eaton and others equally prominent stand firmly against it. On the other hand, Bishop Doane, Dr. Lyman Abbott and others have taken the opposite view, but solely from the standpoint of the good of the subject races, not in the slightest degree for our own advantage. This view, and this alone, is what gives Imperialism most of its remaining vitality.

Here is the essence of the whole matter given by Prof. Alden, of the University of Pennsylvania:

"Apropos of the missionary argument for expansion, the clergyman under whose ministry I sat last Sunday offered the following petition on behalf of the Filipinos.

“We pray Thee that those who prefer to remain in darkness, and are even willing to fight in order to do so, may, whether willingly or unwillingly, be brought into the light.”

“Instantly there came to my mind the naïve remark of the pious author of the ‘Chanson de Roland,’ in describing one of the victories of Charlemagne over the Mussulmans:

‘En la citet nen at remes paien
Ne seit ocis, o devient crestiens.’

—that is to say: ‘There was not a pagan left in the city who was not either killed or made a Christian.’ So may it be in Manila, when a similar dilemma is prepared for its inhabitants.”

Bishop Doane is the most prominent representative of the religious world who upholds the missionary view, and he would probably hesitate to push it to its logical conclusion, as his less known ministerial adherent does. The Bishop gives the argument of “Duty” in the following:

“Bishop Doane says that precedent seems to indicate that both by the inherent national right of sovereignty and under the existing constitution we can provide for the government of the people whom we have rescued, but that if this supposition shall be found untrue, ‘then we must remember that, in the emergency, national life and duty are more important than the letter of a document, and that the Constitution, not being, as some people seem to think it, a close and final revelation of God, can be amended. . . . No difficulties and no anxieties can alter the facts or change the situation or put back the advancing movement of God’s will, which tends to the final substitution of the civilization, the liberty, and the religion of English-speaking people for the lost domination of the Latin races and the Latin religion. God has called the people in America to be His instruments in a movement perhaps even greater in its consequence than the Reformation in England or the liberation of Italy or the unification of Germany, and in the spirit of dependence on Him, with the quiet courage of patient faith, we must rise to the duty of the hour.’”

It is with the view Bishop Doane presents that we anti-Imperialists have to deal, not with spouting party politicians waving the flag, and descending to clap-trap phrases to “split the ears of the groundlings.” In the Bishop’s words, we see some reason for the charge sometimes made against ecclesiastics, viz., that, their attention being chiefly fixed upon the other world, they seldom shine as advisers upon affairs pertaining to this. The Bishop’s remedy for overcoming constitutional obstacles, for instance, is easily suggested; but such an amendment to the constitution is impossible, since upon this question all the Southern states are attached to its present provisions, and against “rescuing” and governing subject races by force. Having in their own land some experience of race problems of which the North and West are ignorant, they stand for the old Americanism. Then,

again, the Bishop reveals to us "God's will," which, he informs us, "tends to the final substitution of the civilization, the liberty and the religion of English-speaking people, for the lost dominion of the Latin races and the Latin (Catholic) religion." It may be open even for a layman who cannot pretend to know the designs of the Creator to observe that, in the case of the tropics, the Unknown Power seems to have placed an insurmountable barrier against the English-speaking race. Professor Worcester, who knows most about the Philippines, tells us that our race cannot settle there and make permanent homes, neither can it in other parts of the tropics, nor has it ever done so. It has tried to do so in India, but failed. If a British child be born there, it must be sent home. In the Philippines it is even worse. Can Bishop Doane point to any considerable or successful settlement of our race in the tropics? He cannot do so, and this fact would seem to imply that perhaps the Bishop may have misinterpreted God's will. It would seem that, perhaps, in His own way He intends the people He has placed in the tropics to develop a civilization for themselves, and is keeping His loving, fatherly eye upon His children there just as tenderly as upon the Bishop. In my travels, I have found the universal laws everywhere working to higher and higher standards of national life. All the world steadily improves. Only impatient men, destitute of genuine faith in the divine government throughout all the world, doubt that all goes well. The Bishop's eminent colleague, Bishop Potter, sees "God's will," our "holy duty," so differently from Bishop Doane. When Bishops in the same church disagree, it is difficult to decide.

Perhaps we are not justified in quoting Dr. Abbott as still an Imperialist, since his latest article in the "Outlook" is entitled "An Official Disclaimer of Imperialism." After quoting the Cuban Resolution passed by Congress, he asks:

"Why should not Congress at the present juncture pass a similar Resolution respecting the Philippines? . . . When pacification is secured, our mission is at an end. . . . The above resolution respecting Cuba was simply an affirmation of the principles of this government wrought into its constitution, vital to its life, affirmed and reaffirmed at many periods of its history. It denies that we wish either to hold people in subjection or to possess their territory as our own. Under no circumstances do the American people desire to hold under military government against their will a discontented and resisting people."

These sentiments justify the title. They are indeed a disclaimer of Imperialism, but it seems that, like Bishop Potter, Dr.

Abbott has not been favored with the revelation of God's will made to Bishop Doane, for, according to him, "whenever the subject races are pacified our mission ends;" while it is only after pacification that the Bishop's "Holy Mission" can begin to enforce "God's will" by the crusade against the Catholic (Latin) form of religion, for the introduction of "the religion of English-speaking people," of which we have in our land more than two hundred and fifty different forms, all used and loved by those who speak the English tongue. Even our valued Catholic friends are often "English-speaking people."

Nevertheless, we must recognize that, diametrically opposed as Bishop Doane and his school, and Dr. Abbott and his school are in their conclusions, they both have as their aim what they believe to be the good of the poor backward races, and neither pecuniary gain nor military glory for their own country. None of these earnest, good men have anything in common with the ranting political school. They see only serious and unsought "Duty" where the other finds "Gain," or "Glory," if not for the nation, at least for themselves as politicians.

Imperialism can become a "holy duty" only if we can by forcible interference confer blessings upon the subject races, otherwise it remains what the President once said it was, "criminal aggression." Let us see, therefore, whether good or evil flows from such interference. This is easily ascertained, for there are many dependencies of European powers throughout the world, and many races held in subjection. Has the influence of the superior race upon the inferior ever proved beneficial to either? I know of no case in which it has been or is, and I have visited many of the dependencies. Where is there anything to show that it has been? On the contrary, the mass of authority declares that the influence of a superior race upon an inferior in the tropics is not elevating, but demoralizing. It is not difficult to understand why. Take the Philippines, for instance. The prevailing religion is our own Christian religion, Catholic of course, but Christian, as in France or Belgium. In the interior, there are Mohammedans, next in importance. Mr. Bray, the resident English consul, gives in the "Independent" a picture of happy life in Manila, which reminded me of what I had found in the East.

One of the great satisfactions in traveling around the world

is in learning that God has made all peoples happy in their own homes. We find no people in any part of the world desirous of exchanging their lot with any other. My own experience has impressed this truth very strongly upon me. Upon our journey to the North Cape, we stopped in the Arctic Circle to visit a camp of Laplanders in the interior. A guide is provided with instructions to keep in the rear of the hindmost of the party going and returning, to guard against any being left behind. Returning from the camp, I walked with this guide, who spoke English and had traveled the world round in his earlier years as a sailor, and was proud to speak of his knowing New York, Boston, New Orleans and other ports of ours. Reaching the edge of the fjord, and looking down upon it, we saw a hamlet upon the opposite side, and one two-story house under construction, with a grass plot surrounding it, a house so much larger than any of the adjacent huts that it betokened great wealth. Our guide explained that a man had made a great fortune. He was their multi-millionaire, and his fortune was reported to reach no less a figure than 30,000 kroner (\$7,500), and he had returned to his native place of Tromso to build this "palace" and spend his days there. Strange preference for a night six months long! But it was home. I asked the guide which place in all the world he would select if ever he made such a fortune—with a lingering hope that he would name some place in our own favored land. How could he help it? But his face beamed with pleasure at the idea of ever being rich, and he said finally: "Ah, there is no place like Tromso!"

Traveling in Southern India one day, I was taken into the country to see tapioca roots gathered and ground for use. The adults working in the grove, men and women, had each a rag around the loins, but the boys and girls, with their black, glossy skins, were free of all encumbrance. Our guide explained to these people that we were from a country so far away, and so different from theirs, that the waters were sometimes made solid by the extreme cold and we could walk upon them; that sometimes it was so intensely cold that the rain was frozen into particles, and lay on the earth so deep that people could not walk through it, and that three and four layers of heavy clothes had to be worn. This happy people, as our guide told us, wondered why we stayed there, why we did not come and enjoy life in their favored clime.

It is just so with the Philippines to-day, as one can see from

Mr. Bray's account of them. It is astonishing how much all human beings the world round are alike in their essentials. These peoples love their homes and their country, their wives and children, as we do, and they have their pleasures. If, in our humanitarian efforts and longing to benefit them, under the call of Duty or Destiny, we should bring a hundred to New York, give them fine residences on Fifth Avenue, a fortune conditioned upon their remaining, and try to "civilize" them, as we should say, they would all run away if not watched, and risk their lives in an attempt to get back to their own civilization, which God has thought best to provide for them in the Philippines. They have just the same feelings as we have, not excluding love of country, for which, like ourselves, as we see, they are willing to die. Oh, the pity of it! the pity of it! that Filipino mothers with American mothers equally mourn their lost sons—one fallen, defender of his country; the other, the invader. Yet the invader was ordered by those who see it their "duty" to invade the land of the Filipinos for their civilization. Duty, stern goddess, what strange things men sometimes mistakenly do in thy name!

Another reason which, we submit, renders it beyond our power to benefit these people is that, with the exception of a few men seeking their own gain, the only Americans whom the Filipinos can ever know must be our soldiers, for American women and children cannot make their homes there. No holy influence flowing from American homes, no Christian women, no sweet children, nothing there but men and soldiers, the former only a few adventurers who, failing to succeed at home, thought they could make money there. Now every writer upon the subject tells that the presence of soldiers in any town in the tropics is disastrous to both native and foreigner; that the contact of the superior race with the inferior demoralizes both, for reasons well understood. Forty-six per cent. of the British army in India is at all times diseased. What Imperialistic clergyman or intelligent man but knows that soldiers in foreign camps, so far from being missionaries for good, require missionaries themselves more than the natives. It would all be so different if Americans could settle and establish their homes in the Philippines and merge with the people, making a colony. It is in Colonies, not in Dependencies, that Britain has done good work. Soldiers will not benefit the inferior race in the Philippines. Men there for gain will not. Missionaries there

are already, in abundance. Beyond a few of a different sect of Christianity, we have nothing more we can send, and these will find welcome there if we cease warfare upon the people, while to-day they would be regarded as enemies. It is not civilization, not improvement, therefore, that Imperialism can give to the Philippines, should we hold permanent possession. It is serious injury both to the Filipinos and to our soldiers, and to the American citizens who go there. It is a bad day for either soldier or business man when, in a foreign land, he is bereft of the elevating influences which centre in the home.

The religious school of Imperialists intend doing for the Filipinos what is best for them, no doubt ; but, when we crush in any people its longing for independence, we take away with one hand a more powerful means of civilization than all which it is possible for us to bestow with the other. There is implanted in the breast of every human community the sacred germ of self-government, as the most potent means of Providence for raising them in the scale of being. Any ruler, be he President or Czar, who attempts to suppress the growth of this sacred spark is guilty of the greatest of public crimes. There is no people or tribe, however low in the scale, that does not have self-government in a greater or less degree. The Haitians and the San Domingans do not require our interference. Why is it not seen to be our duty to force our ideas upon these, our neighbors? The Filipinos are not inferior to these people. On the contrary, we have Admiral Dewey and General Merritt both stating that the Filipinos are more capable of self-government than the Cubans. It may be taken as a truism that a people which is willing to fight and to die for the independence of their country, is at least worthy of a trial of the self-government it seeks. The Filipinos have done this. Even if they had not, it is better for the development of a people that they should attempt to govern themselves, this being the only school in which they can ever learn to do so. No matter through what years of failure they have to struggle, the end is certain, the successful development of the faculty of government. Through this stern but salutary school our own race traveled for centuries in Britain with varying fortunes, but the end was that constitutional government was evolved. The cost is great, but the result is beyond price. No superior race ever gave it to an inferior without settling and merging in that race—the two becoming one.

In the Philippines, and in the tropics generally, this is impossible. The intruding race cannot be grown there, and where we cannot grow our own race we cannot evolve civilization for the other. We can only retard, not hasten, their development.

India has been subject to British rule for nearly two hundred years, and yet not one piece of artillery can yet be entrusted to native troops. The people have still to be held down as in the beginning. It is so in every dependency in which the superior power assumes the right to govern the inferior, without being able to settle there and merge into it. We challenge the Imperialist to give one instance to the contrary in all Britain's possessions.

The impulse which carried many clergymen and other good people away at first was creditable to their hearts and emotions. But Dr. Abbott's remarkable article just quoted may be taken as evidence that the reason is now demanding audience, and not what we should like to do, but what conditions render it possible for us to do, or wisely undertake, is now to be soberly considered.

The Press also, like the pulpit, has done its part to stir the impulse to meet the demands of the "New Destiny," but one of the most prominent organs of all in this work, and the leading government organ in the West, the "Times-Herald" of Chicago,—to judge from its recent editorial—is also finding its hot passion chilled at the throne of reason, as it confronts and examines the conditions of the situation. It says:

"The conscience of the American people will not tolerate the slaughter of Filipinos in a war of conquest. We do not seek their land, we do not wish to replace the yoke of Spain with one bearing the more merciful and just label of the United States. Let the President announce that we have no intention to annex Asiatic territory, and that the pledge of Congress as to Cuban independence will be the pledge of the American nation to the Philippines."

If the President had said this in his message to the Filipinos there could not to-day rise before him the spectre of nearly five thousand human beings "mowed down like grass," as the cable describes, and sixty of our own fellow-citizens sacrificed and several hundreds wounded. This is the effect of his failure to say to the one people what he said to the other. His responsibility is great.

I write upon the eve of the birthday of the greatest public man of the century, perhaps of all the centuries if his strange history be considered—Abraham Lincoln. Washington, Franklin and Jefferson may have become back numbers, as we have been

often told, for, as men of the past century, they could not know our destiny; but here is the man of our own time, whom many of us were privileged to know. Are his teachings to be discarded for those of any now living who were his contemporaries?

Listen to him :

"No man is good enough to govern another without that man's consent. I say this is the leading principle, the sheet anchor of American republicanism."

It is not fashionable for the hour to urge that the "consent of the governed" is all-important; but it will be fashionable again one of these days.

It seems as if Lincoln were inspired to say the needful word for this hour of strange subversion of all we have hitherto held dear in our political life. Our "duty" to bear the "White Man's Burden" is to-day's refrain, but Lincoln tells us:

"When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government, that is despotism."

Lincoln knew nothing of the new "Duty" and new "Destiny," or whether it is "Duty which makes Destiny" or "Destiny which makes Duty"; but he knew the old doctrines of Republicanism well.

One other lesson from the Great American :

"Our reliance is in the love of liberty which God has planted in us. Our defence is in the spirit which prizes *liberty as the heritage of all men in all lands everywhere*. Those who deny *freedom to others* deserve *it not for themselves* and under a just God cannot long retain it."

Are these broad, liberty-loving and noble liberty-giving principles of Americanism, as proclaimed by President Lincoln, to be discarded for the narrow liberty-denying, race-subjecting, Imperialism of President McKinley when the next appeal is made to the American people? We have never for one moment doubted the answer; for they have never yet failed to decide great issues wisely nor to uphold American ideals.

Never had this nation greater cause to extol Abraham Lincoln than upon this the ninetieth anniversary of his birth, and never till to-day had it cause to lament that a successor in the Presidential chair should attempt to subvert his teachings.

ANDREW CARNEGIE.