

TERRITORIAL EXPANSION

Thomas G. Shearman and Ex-Senator Edmunds Against Imperialism.

Before the Contemporary Club of Philadelphia, November 8, there was an interesting discussion on "Territorial Expansion," in which Professor John Bach McMaster, Thomas G. Shearman and ex-Senator Edmunds participated. Professor McMaster was for expansion. Referring to the Declaration of Independence and the rights of the governed, he said these principles had never been literally incorporated into the governmental system of the United States or of any State; that Jefferson himself had negotiated the purchase of Louisiana, and that the same objections that are made now were made against crossing the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains.

Thomas G. Shearman said he was more concerned about what would be the result of our acquiring distant territories than in what had already been absorbed. What kind of government would these territories be likely to get at the hands of such Congressmen as we now have and are likely to have in the future?

Referring, then, to the government of colonies, all nations, not excepting Great Britain, which had been looked upon as a model, governed their colonies with an iron hand. He cited some of the atrocities committed by the French upon the natives of Africa in Marchand's march upon Fashoda. No nation has considered the prosperity or happiness of the people. "What do we do?" he asked, "Every day we read of the lynching of negroes, and this atrocity is not confined to the South, but it is done in the North as well. Whenever a question comes up one race will stand up against the other.

Let a negro anywhere demand the same rights as a white man, and you would do exactly the same."

He said we had civilized the Indians by exterminating them. We had always had trouble with them, and it had in most cases been caused by our cruel treatment, or by the scandalous frauds practiced upon them. Even the Friends, who had always been considered the protectors of the Indians, were unanimously in favor of abrogating every treaty and promise made to them, and compelling them to take lands in severalty, and give up their tribal right to the territory in Georgia, which has been solemnly granted to them sixty years ago.

If we treat the negroes and Indians living within our borders in this way, how would we be likely to treat the negroes of Porto Rico, the Cubans and mixed races of Cuba, and the Togals of the Philippines? "We do not begin to have an elements of capacity to deal with the few thousand Indians of the 7,000,000 negroes."

Ex-Senator Edmunds said, in part:

"Why is it we are so anxious to get the Philippines?

"We told Spain and told the world by a solemn declaration of our Congress, when we began this war against Spain, that we rejected the idea of territorial aggrandizement; that we had no object or purpose as regards Cuba, a sub-tropical country, only a hundred miles from Florida, to gain by driving the Spanish out; that the people of Cuba had the right to become free and independent, but that we only stepped in to give them a fair chance to do it, and then we would retire. Was it a lie, a sham, a mere pretense? And now must we stand up before the world and say, 'Yes, we have been lying and cheating, but we are so very humane that we stayed and kept the world off. It is only a war for humanity that we are carrying on?'"