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Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
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Baum Henry Kipling Doyle Henry Willis
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Homer Tolstoy Whitman Gogol Busch
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**Problems of Expansion As
Considered In Papers and
Addresses**

Whitelaw Reid

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PROBLEMS OF EXPANSION

AS CONSIDERED IN PAPERS AND ADDRESSES

BY

WHITELAW REID

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PREFATORY NOTE

So general have been the expressions as to the value of these scattered papers and addresses that I have thought it a useful service to gather them together from the authorized publications at the time, or, in some cases, from newspaper reports, and (with the consent of the Century Co. and of Mr. John Lane for the copyrighted articles) to embody them consecutively, in the order of their several dates, in this volume.

The article entitled "The Territory with which We are Threatened" was prepared before the appointment of its author as a member of the Commission to negotiate terms of peace with Spain, and published only a few days afterward. This circumstance attracted unusual attention to its views about retaining the territory the country had taken.

As to the attitude of every one else connected officially with the determination of that question there has been, naturally, more or less diplomatic reserve; but the position of Mr. Reid before he was appointed was thus clearly revealed. When the storm of opposition was apparently reaching its height, in June, 1899, he took occasion to avow explicitly the course it was obvious he must have recommended. In his address at the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Miami University, referring to some apparently authorized despatches on the subject from Washington, he said: "I readily take the time which hostile critics consider unfavorable, for accepting my own share of responsibility, and for avowing for myself that I declared my belief in the duty and policy of holding the whole Philippine Archipelago in the very first conference of the Commissioners in the President's room at the White House, in advance of any instructions of any sort. If vindication for it be needed, I confidently await the future."

This measure of responsibility for the expansion policy upon which the country is launched has necessarily given special interest to Mr. Reid's subsequent discussions of the various problems it has raised. They have been called for on important occasions both abroad and in all parts of our own country. They have covered many phases of the subject, but have preserved a singular uniformity of purpose and consistency of ideas throughout. They appeared at times when public men often seemed to be groping in the dark on

an unknown road, but it is now evident that the road which has been taken is substantially the road they marked out. As a foreign critic said in comment on one of the addresses: "The author is one man who knows what he thinks about the new policy required by the new situation in which his country is placed, and has the courage and candor to say it."

It has seemed desirable with each paper and address to prefix a brief record of the circumstances under which it was made. A few memoranda which Mr. Reid had prepared to elucidate the text are added, in foot-notes and in the Appendices which include the Resolutions of Congress as to Cuba, the Protocol of Washington, and the text of the Peace of Paris.

C. C. Buel.

New Rochelle, New York,

May 25, 1900.

I

THE TERRITORY WITH WHICH WE ARE THREATENED

This paper first appeared in "The Century Magazine" for September, 1898, for which it was written some time before the author's appointment as a member of the Paris Commission to negotiate the terms of peace with Spain, and, in fact, before hostilities had been suspended or the peace protocol agreed upon in Washington.

THE TERRITORY WITH WHICH WE ARE THREATENED

Men are everywhere asking what should be our course about the territory conquered in this war. Some inquire merely if it is good policy for the United States to abandon its continental limitations, and extend its rule over semi-tropical countries with mixed populations. Others ask if it would not be the wisest policy to give them away after conquering them, or abandon them. They say it would be ruinous to admit them as States to equal rights with ourselves, and contrary to the Constitution to hold them permanently as Territories. It would be bad policy, they argue, to lower the standard of our population by taking in hordes of West Indians and Asiatics; bad policy to run any chance of allowing these people to become some day joint arbiters with ourselves of the national destinies; bad policy to abandon the principles of Washington's Farewell Address, to which we have adhered for a century, and involve ourselves in the Eastern question, or in the entanglements of European politics.

The men who raise these questions are sincere and patriotic. They are now all loyally supporting the Government in the prosecution of the war which some of them were active in bringing on, and others to the last deprecated and resisted. Their doubts and difficulties deserve the fairest consideration, and are of pressing importance.

Duty First, not Policy.

But is there not another question, more important, which first demands consideration? Have we the right to decide whether we shall hold or abandon the conquered territory, solely, or even mainly as a matter of national policy? Are we not bound by our own acts, and by the responsibility we have voluntarily assumed before Spain, before Europe, and before the civilized world, to consider it first in the light of national duty?

For that consideration it is not needful now to raise the question whether we were in every particular justifiable for our share in the transactions leading to the war. However men's opinions on that point may differ, the Nation is now at war for a good cause, and has in a vigorous prosecution of it the loyal and zealous support of all good citizens.

The President intervened, with our Army and Navy, under the direct command of Congress, to put down Spanish rule in Cuba, on the distinct ground that it was a rule too bad to be longer endured. Are we not, then, bound in honor and morals to see to it that the government which replaces Spanish rule is better? Are we not morally culpable and disgraced before the civilized world if we leave it as bad or worse? Can any consideration of mere policy, of our own interests, or our own ease and comfort, free us from that solemn responsibility which we have voluntarily assumed, and for which we have lavishly spilled American and Spanish blood?

Most people now realize from what a mistake Congress was kept by the firm attitude of the President in opposing a recognition of the so-called Cuban Republic of Cubitas. It is now generally understood that virtually there was no Cuban Republic, or any Cuban government save that of wandering bands of guerrilla insurgents, probably less numerous and influential than had been represented. There seems reason to believe that however bad Spanish government may have been, the rule of these people, where they had the power, was as bad; and still greater reason to apprehend that if they had full power, their sense of past wrongs and their unrestrained tropical thirst for vengeance might lead to something worse. Is it for that pitiful result that a civilized and Christian people is giving up its sons and pouring out blood and treasure in Cuba?

In commanding the war, Congress pledged us to continue our action until the pacification of the island should be secured. When that happy time has arrived, if it shall then be found that the Cuban insurgents and their late enemies are able to unite in maintaining a settled and peaceable government in Cuba, distinctly free from the faults which now lead the United States to destroy the old one, we shall have discharged our responsibility, and will be at liberty to end our interference. But if not, the responsibility of the United

States continues. It is morally bound to secure to Cuba such a government, even if forced by circumstances to furnish it itself.

The Pledge of Congress.

At this point, however, we are checked by a reminder of the further action of Congress, "asserting its determination, when the pacification of Cuba has been accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people."

Now, the secondary provisions of any great measure must be construed in the light of its main purpose; and where they conflict, we are led to presume that they would not have been adopted but for ignorance of the actual conditions. Is it not evident that such was the case here? We now know how far Congress was misled as to the organization and power of the alleged Cuban government, the strength of the revolt, and the character of the war the insurgents were waging. We have seen how little dependence could be placed upon the lavish promises of support from great armies of insurgents in the war we have undertaken; and we are beginning to realize the difference between our idea of a humane and civilized "pacification" and that apparently entertained up to this time by the insurgents. It is certainly true that when the war began neither Congress nor the people of the United States cherished an intention to hold Cuba permanently, or had any further thought than to pacify it and turn it over to its own people. But they must pacify it before they turn it over; and, from present indications, to do that thoroughly may be the work of years. Even then they are still responsible to the world for the establishment of a better government than the one they destroy. If the last state of that island should be worse than the first, the fault and the crime must be solely that of the United States. We were not actually forced to involve ourselves; we might have passed by on the other side. When, instead, we insisted on interfering, we made ourselves responsible for improving the situation; and, no matter what Congress "disclaimed," or what intention it "asserted," we cannot leave Cuba till that is done without national dishonor and blood-guiltiness.

Egypt and Cuba.

The situation is curiously like that of England in Egypt. She intervened too, under far less provocation, it must be admitted, and for a

cause rather more commercial than humanitarian. But when some thought that her work was ended and that it was time for her to go, Lord Granville, on behalf of Mr. Gladstone's government, addressed the other great European Powers in a note on the outcome of which Congress might have reflected with profit before framing its resolutions. "Although for the present," he said, "a British force remains in Egypt for the preservation of public tranquillity, Her Majesty's government are desirous of withdrawing it as soon as the state of the country and the organization of proper means for the maintenance of the Khedive's authority will admit of it. In the meantime the position in which Her Majesty's government are placed towards His Highness imposes upon them the duty of giving advice, with the object of securing that the order of things to be established shall be of a satisfactory character and possess the elements of stability and progress." As time went on this declaration did not seem quite explicit enough; and accordingly, just a year later, Lord Granville instructed the present Lord Cromer, then Sir Evelyn Baring, that it should be made clear to the Egyptian ministers and governors of provinces that "the responsibility which for the time rests on England obliges Her Majesty's government to insist on the adoption of the policy which they recommend, and that it will be necessary that those ministers and governors who do not follow this course should cease to hold their offices."

That was in 1884—a year after the defeat of Arabi, and the "pacification." It is now fourteen years later. The English are still there, and the Egyptian ministers and governors now understand quite well that they must cease to hold their offices if they do not adopt the policy recommended by the British diplomatic agent. If it should be found that we cannot with honor and self-respect begin to abandon our self-imposed task of Cuban "pacification" with any greater speed, the impetuous congressmen, as they read over their own inconsiderate resolutions fourteen years hence, can hide their blushes behind a copy of Lord Granville's letter. They may explain, if they like, with the classical excuse of Benedick, "When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married." Or if this seems too frivolous for their serious plight, let them recall the position of Mr. Jefferson, who originally declared that the purchase of foreign territory would make waste paper of the Consti-

tution, and subsequently appealed to Congress for the money to pay for his purchase of Louisiana. When he held such an acquisition unconstitutional, he had not thought he would live to want Louisiana.

As to Cuba, it may be fairly concluded that only these points are actually clear: (1) We had made ourselves in a sense responsible for Spain's rule in that island by our consistent declaration, through three quarters of a century, that no other European nation should replace her—Daniel Webster, as Secretary of State, even seeking to guard her hold as against Great Britain. (2) We are now at war because we say Spanish rule is intolerable; and we cannot withdraw our hand till it is replaced by a rule for which we are willing to be responsible. (3) We are also pledged to remain till the pacification is complete.

The Conquered Territories.

In the other territories in question the conditions are different. We are not taking possession of them, as we are of Cuba, with the avowed purpose of giving them a better government. We are conquering them because we are at war with Spain, which has been holding and governing them very much as she has Cuba; and we must strike Spain wherever and as hard as we can. But it must at once be recognized that as to Porto Rico at least, to hold it would be the natural course and what all the world would expect. Both Cuba and Porto Rico, like Hawaii, are within the acknowledged sphere of our influence, and ours must necessarily be the first voice in deciding their destiny. Our national position with regard to them is historic. It has been officially declared and known to every civilized nation for three quarters of a century. To abandon it now, that we may refuse greatness through a sudden craven fear of being great, would be so astonishing a reversal of a policy steadfastly maintained by the whole line of our responsible statesmen since 1823 as to be grotesque.

John Quincy Adams, writing in April of that year, as Secretary of State, to our Minister to Spain, pointed out that the dominion of Spain upon the American continents, North and South, was irrevocably gone, but warned him that Cuba and Porto Rico still remained nominally dependent upon her, and that she might attempt to trans-

fer them. That could not be permitted, as they were "natural appendages to the North American continent." Subsequent statements turned more upon what Mr. Adams called "the transcendent importance of Cuba to the United States"; but from that day to this I do not recall a line in our state papers to show that the claim of the United States to control the future of Porto Rico as well as of Cuba was ever waived. As to Cuba, Mr. Adams predicted that within half a century its annexation would be indispensable. "There are laws of political as well as of physical gravitation," he said; and "Cuba, forcibly disjoined from its own unnatural connection with Spain, and incapable of self-support, can gravitate only towards the North American Union, which, by the same law of nature, cannot cast her off from its bosom." If Cuba is incapable of self-support, and could not therefore be left, in the cheerful language of Congress, to her own people, how much less could little Porto Rico stand alone?

There remains the alternative of giving Porto Rico back to Spain at the end of the war. But if we are warranted now in making war because the character of Spanish rule in Cuba was intolerable, how could we justify ourselves in handing back Porto Rico to the same rule, after having once emancipated her from it? The subject need not be pursued. To return Porto Rico to Spain, after she is once in our possession, is as much beyond the power of the President and of Congress as it was to preserve the peace with Spain after the destruction of the *Maine* in the harbor of Havana. From that moment the American people resolved that the flag under which this calamity was possible should disappear forever from the Western hemisphere, and they will sanction no peace that permits it to remain.

The question of the Philippines is different and more difficult. They are not within what the diplomatists of the world would recognize as the legitimate sphere of American influence. Our relation to them is purely the accident of recent war. We are not in honor bound to hold them, if we can honorably dispose of them. But we know that their grievances differ only in kind, not in degree, from those of Cuba; and having once freed them from the Spanish yoke, we cannot honorably require them to go back under it again. That would be to put us in an attitude of nauseating national hypocrisy; to give the lie to all our professions of humanity in our interference

in Cuba, if not also to prove that our real motive was conquest. What humanity forbade us to tolerate in the West Indies, it would not justify us in reëstablishing in the Philippines.

What, then, can we do with them? Shall we trade them for something nearer home? Doubtless that would be permissible, if we were sure of thus securing them a better government than that of Spain, and if it could be done without precipitating fresh international difficulties. But we cannot give them to our friend and their neighbor Japan without instantly provoking the hostility of Russia, which recently interfered to prevent a far smaller Japanese aggrandizement. We cannot give them to Russia without a greater injustice to Japan; or to Germany or to France or to England without raising far more trouble than we allay. England would like us to keep them; the Continental nations would like that better than any other control excepting Spain's or their own; and the Philippines would prefer it to anything save the absolute independence which they are incapable of maintaining. Having been led into their possession by the course of a war undertaken for the sake of humanity, shall we draw a geographical limit to our humanity, and say we cannot continue to be governed by it in Asiatic waters because it is too much trouble and is too disagreeable—and, besides, there may be no profit in it?

Both war and diplomacy have many surprises; and it is quite possible that some way out of our embarrassing possession may yet be found. The fact is clear that many of our people do not much want it; but if a way of relinquishing it is proposed, the one thing we are bound to insist on is that it shall be consistent with our attitude in the war, and with our honorable obligations to the islands we have conquered and to civilization.

Fear of them as States.

The chief aversion to the vast accessions of territory with which we are threatened springs from the fear that ultimately they must be admitted into the Union as States. No public duty is more urgent at this moment than to resist from the very outset the concession of such a possibility. In no circumstances likely to exist within a century should they be admitted as States of the Union. The loose, disunited, and unrelated federation of independent States to which this would inevitably lead, stretching from the Indian Archipelago to

the Caribbean Sea, embracing all climes, all religions, all races,—black, yellow, white, and their mixtures,—all conditions, from pagan ignorance and the verge of cannibalism to the best product of centuries of civilization, education, and self-government, all with equal rights in our Senate and representation according to population in our House, with an equal voice in shaping our national destinies—that would, at least in this stage of the world, be humanitarianism run mad, a degeneration and degradation of the homogeneous, continental Republic of our pride too preposterous for the contemplation of serious and intelligent men. Quite as well might Great Britain now invite the swarming millions of India to send rajas and members of the lower House, in proportion to population, to swamp the Lords and Commons and rule the English people. If it had been supposed that even Hawaii, with its overwhelming preponderance of Kanakas and Asiatics, would become a State, she could not have been annexed. If the territories we are conquering must become States, we might better renounce them at once and place them under the protectorate of some humane and friendly European Power with less nonsense in its blood.

This is not to deny them the freest and most liberal institutions they are capable of sustaining. The people of Sitka and the Aleutian Islands enjoy the blessings of ordered liberty and free institutions, but nobody dreams of admitting them to Statehood. New Mexico has belonged to us for half a century, not only without oppression, but with all the local self-government for which she was prepared; yet, though an integral part of our continent, surrounded by States, and with an adequate population, she is still not admitted to Statehood. Why should not the people on the island of Porto Rico, or even of Cuba, prosper and be happy for the next century under a rule similar in the main to that under which their kinsmen of New Mexico have prospered for the last half-century?

With some necessary modifications, the territorial form of government which we have tried so successfully from the beginning of the Union is well adapted to the best of such communities. It secures local self-government, equality before the law, upright courts, ample power for order and defense, and such control by Congress as gives security against the mistakes or excesses of people new to the exercise of these rights.

Will the Constitution Permit Withholding Statehood?

But such a system, we are told, is contrary to our Constitution and to the spirit of our institutions. Why? We have had just that system ever since the Constitution was framed. It is true that a large part of the territory thus governed has now been admitted into the Union in the form of new States. But it is not true that this was recognized at the beginning as a right, or even generally contemplated as a probability; nor is it true that it has been the purpose or expectation of those who annexed foreign territory to the United States, like the Louisiana or the Gadsden Purchase, that it would all be carved into States. That feature of the marvelous development of the continent has come as a surprise to this generation and the last, and would have been absolutely incredible to the men of Thomas Jefferson's time. Obviously, then, it could not have been the purpose for which, before that date, our territorial system was devised. It is not clear that the founders of the Government expected even all the territory we possessed at the outset to be made into States. Much of it was supposed to be worthless and uninhabitable. But it is certain that they planned for outside accessions. Even in the Articles of Confederation they provided for the admission of Canada and of British colonies which included Jamaica as well as Nova Scotia. Madison, in referring to this, construes it as meaning that they contemplated only the admission of these colonies as colonies, not the eventual establishment of new States ("Federalist," No. 43). About the same time Hamilton was dwelling on the alarms of those who thought the country already too large, and arguing that great size was a safeguard against ambitious rulers.

Nevertheless, the objectors still argue, the Constitution gives no positive warrant for a permanent territorial policy. But it does! Ordinarily it may be assumed that what the framers of the Constitution immediately proceeded to do under it was intended by them to be warranted by it; and we have seen that they immediately devised and maintained a territorial system for the government of territory which they had no expectation of ever converting into States. The case, however, is even plainer than that. The sole reference in the Constitution to the territories of the United States is in Article IV, Section 3: "The Congress shall have power to dispose of and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other

property belonging to the United States." Jefferson revised his first views far enough to find warrant for acquiring territory; but here is explicit, unmistakable authority conferred for dealing with it, and with other "property," precisely as Congress chooses. The territory was not a present or prospective party in interest in the Union created under this organic act. It was "property," to be disposed of or ruled and regulated as Congress might determine. The inhabitants of the territory were not consulted; there was no provision that they should even be guaranteed a republican form of government like the States; they were secured no right of representation and given no vote. So, too, when it came to acquiring new territory, there was no thought of consulting the inhabitants. Mr. Jefferson did not ask the citizens of Louisiana to consent to their annexation, nor did Mr. Monroe submit such a question to the Spaniards of Florida, nor Mr. Polk to the Mexicans of California, nor Mr. Pierce to the New Mexicans, nor Mr. Johnson to the Russians and Aleuts of Alaska. The power of the Government to deal with territory, foreign or domestic, precisely as it chooses was understood from the beginning to be absolute; and at no stage in our whole history have we hesitated to exercise it. The question of permanently holding the Philippines or any other conquered territory as territory is not, and cannot be made, one of constitutional right; it is one solely of national duty and of national policy.

Does the Monroe Doctrine Interfere?

As a last resort, it is maintained that even if the Constitution does not forbid, the Monroe Doctrine does. But the famous declaration of Mr. Monroe on which reliance is placed does not warrant this conclusion. After holding that "the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European Power," Mr. Monroe continued: "We should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any part of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere." The context makes it clear that this assurance applies solely to the existing colonies and dependencies they still had in this hemisphere; and that even this was qualified by the previous warning that while we took no part

"in the wars of European Powers, in matters relating to themselves," we resented injuries and defended our rights. It will thus be seen that Mr. Monroe gave no pledge that we would never interfere with any dependency or colony of European Powers anywhere. He simply declared our general policy not to interfere with existing colonies still remaining to them on our coast, so long as they left the countries alone which had already gained their independence, and so long as they did not injure us or invade our rights. And even this statement of the scope of Mr. Monroe's declaration must be construed in the light of the fact that the same Administration which promulgated the Monroe Doctrine had already issued from the State Department Mr. Adams's prediction, above referred to, that "the annexation of Cuba will yet be found indispensable." Perhaps Mr. Monroe's language might have been properly understood as a general assurance that we would not meddle in Europe so long as they gave us no further trouble in America; but certainly it did not also abandon to their exclusive jurisdiction Asia and Africa and the islands of the sea.

The Necessary Outcome.

The candid conclusions seem inevitable that, not as a matter of policy, but as a necessity of the position in which we find ourselves and as a matter of national duty, we must hold Cuba, at least for a time and till a permanent government is well established for which we can afford to be responsible; we must hold Porto Rico; and we may have to hold the Philippines.

The war is a great sorrow, and to many these results of it will seem still more mournful. They cannot be contemplated with unmixed confidence by any; and to all who think, they must be a source of some grave apprehensions. Plainly, this unwelcome war is leading us by ways we have not trod to an end we cannot surely forecast. On the other hand, there are some good things coming from it that we can already see. It will make an end forever of Spain in this hemisphere. It will certainly secure to Cuba and Porto Rico better government. It will furnish an enormous outlet for the energy of our citizens, and give another example of the rapid development to which our system leads. It has already brought North and South together as nothing could but a foreign war in which both offered

their blood for the cause of their reunited country — a result of incalculable advantage both at home and abroad. It has brought England and the United States together — another result of momentous importance in the progress of civilization and Christianity. Europe will know us better henceforth; even Spain will know us better; and this knowledge should tend powerfully hereafter to keep the peace of the world. The war should abate the swaggering, swash-buckler tendency of many of our public men, since it has shown our incredible unreadiness at the outset for meeting even a third-rate Power; and it must secure us henceforth an army and navy less ridiculously inadequate to our exposure. It insures us a mercantile marine. It insures the Nicaragua Canal, a Pacific cable, great development on our Pacific coast, and the mercantile control of the Pacific Ocean. It imposes new and very serious business on our public men, which ought to dignify and elevate the public service. Finally, it has shown such splendid courage and skill in the Army and Navy, such sympathy at home for our men at the front, and such devoted eagerness, especially among women, to alleviate suffering and humanize the struggle, as to thrill every patriotic heart and make us all prouder than ever of our country and its matchless people.