ARGUMENTS AGAINST PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE AND THEIR ANSWERS

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With an Introduction by

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INTRODUCTION

It has been the privilege of the undersigned to have read almost all of the editorials and newspaper articles about the Philippines published in the United States since the arrival of the Philippine mission last March, and, as a part of the work in the Philippine Press Bureau, it has been his duty to write to those editors whose views were clearly based on misinformation. There were, however, so many of this type of editors that it became well-nigh impossible to write to them all, and to send them the same kind of data which had been already sent to many others. Hence, the necessity of gathering and classifying the arguments advanced, and answering them wholesale in one single publication. This Mr. Jose P. Melencio, graduate of the University of the Philippines, and member of the Philippine bar, has successfully done.

With the publication of our weekly printed press bulletin, sent to all the important newspapers of the United States, and the Philippines, we are now enabled to challenge the truth of many gratuitous assumptions concerning the Filipinos—statements which heretofore had not been questioned because of the absence of Philippine publicity agencies in this country. But our press bulletin reach only newspaper men. On the other hand, the newly awakened interest in the Philippines, and in the Far East generally, has created a big demand for Philippine materials on the part of libraries, colleges, and schools. Already several state departments of education, and colleges have adopted the Philippine problem as a topic for debate. Other institutions, both religious and educational, keep asking for important data. To meet this demand, the Philippine Press Bureau is now in a position to furnish the minimum amount of information which an American citizen should possess before he can intelligently pass judgment upon a vital American problem: the redemption of America's pledge to the Filipino people.

Washington, D. C.,
September 29, 1919.

Conrado Benitez.
"The destiny of the Philippine Islands is not to be a state or territory of the United States of America, but a daughter republic of ours—a new birth of liberty on the other side of the Pacific, which shall animate and energize those lovely islands of the tropical seas, and, rearing its head aloft, stand as a monument of progress and a beacon of hope to all the oppressed and benighted millions of the Asiatic continent."—Jacob Gould Schurman.

"We ought to give the Filipinos their independence, even if we have to guarantee it to them. But, by neutralization treaties with the other great powers similar to those which safeguard the integrity and independence of Switzerland today, whereby the other powers would agree not to seize the islands after we give them their independence, the Philippines can be made as permanently neutral territory in Asiatic politics as Switzerland is today in European politics."—James H. Blount.

"Once the United States decide to give the Filipinos their freedom, the Japanese government will be the first to sign an agreement for their neutralization."—Premier Hara of Japan.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE AND THEIR ANSWERS

The Arguments Stated

First. That the Filipinos, if not actually semi-savages, are still fresh from that stage of human development denominated "savagery," and that, therefore, they are not fit to paddle their cause of state.

Second. That the Filipinos are a heterogeneous conglomeration of tribal groups, hopelessly differing from one another not only in language but also in customs and aspirations; and that, if given independence, they will be "cutting each other's throats."

Third. That the bulk of the inhabitants do not desire independence.

Fourth. That at the portals of those beautiful isles, there stands the frightful figure of Japan ready at the first opportunity to seize the archipelago in its iron claw.

Fifth. The promise to haul down the American flag from the Philippines must be withdrawn—the American Republic must be preserved.

Seasoned now and then with caustic and insulting phrases, there are five arguments against Philippine independence that are habitually adduced in this country whenever the question crops up for discussion. These arguments are:

The following answers are submitted for the unbiased consideration of this commonwealth:
I.

THE FILIPINOS ARE NEITHER SAVAGES NOR SEMI-SAVAGES.

It is not true that the Filipino people are savages. Neither is it true that they are semi-savages. It is admitted that there are about 500,000 non-Christian peoples in the archipelago, who used to be in a stage of savagery, dressed in scanty garments, indulging in head-hunting at times, and dwelling in the mountains with only the bow and arrow as their venerable companions. But the days of head-hunting are gone. The mountain tribes as well as the Moros of Mindanao are fast being won over to the ways of civilization and of Americanism. Schools, hospitals and religious centers have been instituted among them. Many of them have been Christianized. They actually enter into trade transactions with the rest of the natives.

But the significant fact is, that they constitute but a small fraction of the entire population of the islands, which is 10,000,000. There are ten million Christian Filipinos. They have been Christians for 333 years. Forty-five per cent of the entire population of ten years of age and over were literate before the Americans came. They have been educated in the schools which Spain had the kindness to establish among them. The foremost Spanish University in Manila is a quarter of a century older than Harvard. The founders of the short-lived Philippine Republic were, and many of the leaders of today are, products of Spanish schools. The system of teaching pursued was medieval to be sure. But the Filipinos made the best of it, and we were fairly well transformed into Medieval Europeans long before the implantation of America's sovereignty. The percentage of literacy now is 70 per cent. It is higher than the percentage in Italy, Greece, Roumania; higher than in most countries whose independence has recently been recognized by the associated powers.

The non-Christian peoples of the Philippines have always been accorded just treatment by the Christian population. Now they have representatives in each of the Houses of the Philippine Legislature. There is a Moro Senator, two Moro Representatives, and one Igorot. The Mohammedan religion is respected by the rest of the archipelago, resulting in a closer relation between the Moros of Mindanao and the Christians of Luzon and the Visayas. The following passage in a speech of a Moslem third member of the sub-province of Zamboanga is significant:

"He who thinks that it is impossible for the Moslem and the Filipino to live together in peace and participate together in the government is foolish and lacks wisdom."

The summer capital of the Philippine Islands (Baguio) is located in the heart of the mountains of Northern Luzon where Igorots abounded. Daily, multitudes of them can be seen coming down from their homes among the pine trees, bringing the products of their plantations to the market, buying of the Christian Filipinos whatever objects attract their taste, and otherwise mingling peacefully with the visitors from the lowlands. Daily, they can be seen serving as waiters in hotels, employed as messengers and salesmen in stores, or acting as guides through the fastnesses of the mountains. In recognition of their virtuous life, the charter of the city provides that there shall be an advisory council to be composed of Igorots. Igorots play baseball and tennis; they send their children to school. Many of them are intermediate graduates, and many more are in the high schools. One Igorot is about to receive his degree of Doctor of Medicine in the University of the Philippines. Those who are Christians bear American names (such as Clapp, Irving, etc.), and are proud of it.

It will surely be a question of only a decade or so when the non-Christian peoples of the Philippines will be completely won over to the ways and manners of civilized races. Being immuned from Mediaveal influences, and being reared exclusively under the ambient air of Americanism, they are destined to be a vigorous element in the ensuing processes of Philippine nationalism.

There is one thing that the Filipino people have regretted ever since their association with America began. It is, that Americans, the great bulk of them, have always thought that twenty years ago the people of the islands were still in the
Pre-Spanish Civilization of the Filipinos

The pre-Spanish civilization of the Filipinos, as stated by civil self-education, it is the opinion of foreign writers, who, unbiased, have delved into the records of the centuries and have reproduced their discoveries in print. The following quotations are submitted:

"The inhabitants of the Philippines possessed a culture of their own prior to the coming of the Spaniards to the islands. Those living on the coast were the most advanced in civilization. Their material wealth was considerable. The chief occupations were agriculture, fishing, weaving, some manufacturing, and trade both inter-island and with the mainland, generally in the form of barter. They were expert navigators. They used standard weights and measures. The year was divided into twelve lunar months. They had a peculiar phonetic alphabet, wrote upon leaves, and had a primitive literature. The majority of the people are said to have been able to read and write." (Justice George A. Malcolm, "The Government of the Philippine Islands," pp. 27 and 28.)

"The inhabitants of these islands were by no means savages, entirely unacquainted with civilization, before the Spanish advent in the sixteenth century. They had a culture of their own." (John Foreman, an English scholar.)

"They had already reached a considerable degree of civilization at the time of the Spanish conquest." (Ferdinand Blumentritt, an Austrian professor.)

"Upon the arrival of the Spaniards, they found the ancestors of the present-day Filipinos in possession of considerable culture which is somewhat comparable to that of some of the mountain peoples of today." (Dr. James A. Robertson, an American scholar.)

Advancement During the Spanish Regime

Three centuries of Spanish domination, despite its vices and liberilities, had improved the condition and extended the attainment and culture of the inhabitants of the Philippines. Let foreign writers again speak:

"Three million people inhabit these different islands, and that of Luzon only two-thirds of them. Those people seemed to me no way inferior to those of Europe; they are carpenters, cabinet-makers, smiths, jewelers, weavers, masons, etc. I have gone through their villages and I have found them kind, hospitable, and affable." ("Foyers de la Provence, under the sun," Paris, 1857, p. 47.)

"If the general condition of the civilization of the Tagalos, Pampangos, Bicolanos, Bisayans, Ilocanos, Cagayanos, and Samalos is compared to the European constitutional countries of Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece, the Spanish-Filipino civilization of the said Indian districts is greater and of larger extent than those countries." (Ferdinand Blumentritt, in "La Solidaridad" of October 15, 1899.)

"* * * the Spanish rule was generally a mild one, partaking of a patriarchal character. * * * the governors and the government married, mingled socially and worshipped together. * * * Latin civilization was implanted. This found its principal avenues through the results of Christianity; the unifying influences of a central administration; modern laws; education, although not universal; freedom for women far in advance of other Oriental countries; the introduction of other staple products; and contact with the outer world." (Justice George A. Malcolm, "The Government of the Philippine Islands," pp. 102-103.)

THE FILIPINOS ARE READY FOR INDEPENDENCE.

But, then, it is said that, despite their own civilization, despite the progress they have accumulated through the years, despite their magnificent response to America's approach—despite all this, it is said that the Filipinos are not fit to be the directors of their own affairs. America has preferred to give credence to the haphazard statements of travelers and to the sweeping assertions of multicolored interests. The opinions of her own governmental representatives—that of Admiral Dewey, those of the governors that were, and that of the actual incumbent—opinions expressed in their official capacity and under their official responsibility attesting to the capacity of the Filipino people to set up an independent nation—have all been discounted. It is easy to understand, however, why advocates of retention should harp upon, and ever and anon blazon out to the world, the untimeliness of the Filipinos for self-government. We say it is easy to understand, because it is the only ground on which prolonged sovereignty over the Philippines can possibly be justified. In the words of Mr. Blount, "ever since Mr. McKinley took the Philippines, it has been the awkward but inescapable duty of the defenders of
that good man's fame to deprecate Filipino capacity for self
government.

The Filipinos submit that, tested by their showing of the
last twenty years, their capacity for an independent national
status cannot be challenged. All of the provincial governors
who are the chief executives of the provinces, are now Filipinos,
except the governors of the provinces of
Corabato, Lanao and Sulu, in the department
of Mindanao and Sulu. Of the forty-six
provincial treasurers, who are the chief
financial officers, only seven are Americans.
There are thirty Filipino district engineers and thirteen Amer­
icans. There are about 1,000 municipalities in the Philippines
all of which are governed by elective Filipino officials. There.
are about forty-five provinces likewise governed by Filipinos.
There are two elective houses of the legislature composed
entirely of Filipinos and elected by direct popular suffrage.
Out of seven members in the Cabinet six are Filipinos, and
most of the heads of the executive departments of the govern­
ment are Filipinos. The Insular Treasurer is a Filipino. Al­
most all of the teachers of the primary schools are Filipinos.
Ninety-eight per cent of the teachers in the intermediate
schools are Filipinos. And of the teaching force in the sec­
ondary schools, 94 per cent are Filipinos. Of the 530 supervi­sing teachers 86 per cent are Filipinos and the majority of
the academic and industrial supervisors are also Filipinos.
There are six Filipino division superintendents of schools, and
both the assistant director of education and the undersecretary
of public instruction are Filipinos. About 30 per cent of the
instructors and professors in the University of the Philippines
are Filipinos. The local administration of justice is entirely
in the hands of Filipinos, with the exception of sixteen Amer­
ican ex-officio justices of the peace. Of the twenty-six District
Judges of First Instance, nineteen are Filipinos and seven are
Americans. There are four Filipinos and five American Justi­
ces in the Supreme Court. The Chief Justice has always been
a Filipino.

That is how autonomous our institutions are. And that is the
autonomy which the Filipinos want converted into genuine sov­
ereignty. We desire an international personality. We can never

IV.

THE JAPANESE BUGABOO.

Statements that Japan covets the Philippines are based on
sheer surmise. No facts have been cited to support them. The
papers would have it understood that Japan will just lay its claws
on the Philippines, reason or no reason. By some such statements
the American people were scarecrowed a few years
ago not with respect to the Philippines but with
respect to America herself. It was said that Japan
desired to invade America; that America, unpro­
tected as she was, was an easy prey. Years have passed since
then, and the prophecy was not fulfilled. Will the prophecy be
fulfilled in the case of the Philippines? The Filipinos think other­
wise, and their opinion is based on the considerations that follow:

The flow of Japanese immigrants into the Philippines is negligible
as compared with the flow into the United States, California and
Hawaii specially. Today, there are only about 10,000 Japanese
in the Philippines. If it was the intention of Japan's diplomacy
to absorb the islands through pacific methods, an unlimited num­
ber of her subjects would have been sent to the country year in
and year out. Be that as it may, the United States today is not
giving the Philippines protection against that system of conquest.
The Philippine Legislature, for example, enacted a law limiting
the ownership of Philippine lands to Americans and Filipinos, but
that law required the approval of the President, and the State
Department decided to recommend that it be vetoed; so the law
had to be withdrawn.

Japan has repeatedly belied her intention to colonize the islands.
Count Okuma, while premier of Japan, has explicitly said: "Japan
has no ulterior motive, no desire to secure more territory, no
thought of depriving China or any other people of anything they
now possess." Dr. T. Masuzo, the President of
Assurances
From Japan
Manila, has assured the islands thus: "Japan
and the Philippines are the best of friends. There
is no ground, no basis, no foundation for quarrel and suspicion.
You are rich in natural resources. Your country is immensely
wealthy in raw products. Japan is eminently a manufacturing
country. We are rich in finished products. There is every reason

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to be gained by mutual friendly and peaceful co-operation.” The present Premier of Japan has likewise stated in his official capacity that Japan has no intention to take over the Philippines for colonial purposes, and that the Japanese government will be the first to sign an agreement for the neutralization of the archipelago. To the same effect was Baron Uchida’s assurance.

The Filipinos see no reason why these utterances should be distrusted. On the contrary, we are aware that the spirit of Bushido is inerceded in the consciousness of Japan—she respects her given word. And at times we are even led to think that if at all Japan poses as the champion of the Orient, with now and then an outpouring of hostility against the Occident, it is because all East has ever painfully suffered from the racial prejudice of the West.

Then there is the general attitude of Oriental peoples towards the Japanese to be considered. Japan’s designs on China have been exposed before the powers in the peace conference. The Chinese, as a bulk, have never liked the Japanese by reason of the many concessions that have been wrung from China by the Japanese government, under the guise of “spheres of influence.” These spheres of influence are in fact and import a shattering of Chinese territorial integrity, an absorption of China’s most fertile spots, such as her regions of coal supply, her iron mines, and the like. The more Japan encroaches upon the mainland of China, the more will the Chinese feel that their destiny as a nation is doomed and the more they will dislike the Japanese as a people. The case of Shantung has intensified that dislike. And if ever China awakes from her lethargy, Japan will have to account for all the alleged affronts.

Korea is actually in revolution against her Japanese rulers. The spirit of nationalism is surging in this land of 18,000,000 people. Hatred against the Japanese is manifested on every side. Actual force has been necessary to quell disturbances. Freedom is the cry there.

Russia, which is a country of astounding magnitude, lies in the north of Japan. The results of the Russo-Japanese war are still painfully fresh in the minds of the Russians. The day may yet come when the Russians will attempt to wrench from the Japanese that part of Russian territory known as Manchuria which might and the tide of battle have thrown into the hands of the Japanese.

Japan, therefore, is surrounded by peoples not bound to her by ties of blood or national interests, peoples who look upon her international acts with open fear and suspicion, peoples who have never been willing to be subject peoples, peoples who are averse to the modern principles of government and of international relations.

To add to that array of unwilling nationalities another unwilling nationality like the Filipinos would be to throw the whole East into a camp always antagonistic to pretensions of domination on the part of Japan. In the course of time, the potency of the antagonism will be irresistible.

The Filipinos will never condescend to look up to the Japanese as their rulers. The reason is plain: Their custom and manners, their religion and their ideals are glaringly different from, if not antagonistic to, those of the Japanese.

Japan, of course, might indulge in the hazardous act of killing every Filipino—of wiping the entire race out of the globe, a cold-blooded deed. But would she in the light of Germany’s experience?

Strategically also, it would be unwise for Japan to add to her already scattered territory a group of islands numbering about 3,000, because all of these must needs be protected and fortified if Japan is to remain secure in her foothold.

Viewed from all these aspects, the sanest course for Japan to take with regard to the East is to court the friendship of all Oriental peoples. This is the sanest course notwithstanding the Ishii-Lansing agreement or any other gentlemen’s agreement that might exist or be negotiated. To pose as the Master of the Orient will be hazardous for Japan in the extreme. The staunchest opposition will come from the Philippines. Other nationalities of the Far East will follow suit, for the nations there are attuned to the new era of progressive humanity. The Filipinos would be glad to be a friend to Japan
commercially and internationally. They would contribute their mite in the regeneration of the East. But they will never countenance Japanese domination over them; they will never consent to be a footstool of the Nipponese Empire.

But all these considerations aside, it would seem that all hobgoblins concerning the Japanese menace should vanish in the face of the new order of things in the world. Reference is made to the new international instrumentality which has just been instituted by the powers and designated the League of Nations. This is the most promising creation of the age. The old order of perpetual conquest and dominion-seeking has been blotted out. The peoples of the world are war-weary. “Never again!” is their plaintive cry. That might is right is a discarded pet phrase of the militant world. The rights of small nationalities have been vindicated and safeguarded. The Parliament of Man and the Federation of the World of which Tennyson had sung is well-nigh a reality.

We Filipinos are not pinning our faith, however, on the machinery or efficacy of the League of Nations. If the world is to remain donoried in armors of steel and iron, we, too, could equip land and naval forces. We confidently believe we could turn out fighters that can approximate, if not equal, other soldiers of the world in valor and skill. We, too, can fortify our islands. We are aware that despite their numinosity, they have a unique military advantage—a physical strategic unity. In the words of Messrs. Davis, Frye and Reid, “there is hardly a single island in the group from which you cannot shoot across to one or more of the others—scarcely another archipelago in the world in which the islands are crowded as closely together and so interdependent.” (Cited in Blount, “The American Occupation of the Philippines,” p. 133.)

V. WILL AMERICA BE IMPERIALISTIC?

The traditional policy of America is against colonial expansion. From the foundation of this Republic to the present day, the American people have adhered to that policy. When, therefore, we hear American statesmen today crying in vigorous language that the promise of independence to the Philippines should be withdrawn lest the American republic disintegrate, we are tempted to suspect that some Americans are resolved to override their country’s traditions.

The Philippines fell under America’s domination by the stroke of chance. The taking of the islands was not an inevitable result of the war to liberate Cuba. America herself was startled when Dewey cabled the unexpected news that the American flag had been hoisted on Philippine soil. That America had no right to take the Philippines may be proved beyond question. Mr. James H. Blount has done that admirably in his book, “American Occupation of the Philippines.” We shall not rehearse the circumstances here, because it will only be reviving the gloomy discord of the past.

The people of this country know that the Filipinos have always been desirous of being free. The resistance to America’s coming is the eloquent proof of the sentiment in the Philippines with regard to freedom. Ever since the implantation of American sovereignty the spirit of nationalism has been vigorously asserting itself in the archipelago. The clamor for independence has been insistent. It became acute somewhere in 1916, and the Jones Bill was passed by the United States Congress, which announced in unequivocal terms that America will not revet the shackles of political bondage and give the long-awaited independence as soon as a stable government is established by the Filipinos. The Filipino people firmly believe that this declaration by the duly constituted representatives of the American nation will not be a mere scrap of paper, to be shrivelled to ashes at the whim of imperialistic souls. It will not do to contend, as one writer has contended, that the preamble of the Jones Law of August 29, 1916, containing that declaration, is not an integral part of the law itself and that, therefore, it may be flung aside by succeeding Congresses if they so choose. Despite that fact, if fact it be fairly and logically, the promise to grant independence is there, clear and unmistakable. It is in black and white. It is a ratification of the policies enunciated by the Presidents of America, from McKinley down. To repudiate the promise, as was ponderously trumpeted some time ago, is the most gross injustice that can be perpetrated by America upon a people whose only national fault, in the words of Andrew Car-
The Philippines have never been an integral part of the American republic. America's Constitution did not follow her flag in the islands. The Filipinos have never been American citizens as the Porto Ricans have been. The twenty million dollars paid Spain by the United States was not a purchase price of the islands and their people. The amount was paid: First, as a salve to Spain's feelings; second, as an assumption of Spain's debt for Pacific improvements, existing then in the form of bonds bearing 6 per cent interest; and third, because America preferred to pay the sum rather than indulge anew in the costly luxury of war. (Vide, "The Americans in the Philippines," by Le Roy, p. 124, note; also pp. 360-370; "The Government of the Philippine Islands," by Geo. A. Malcolm, pp. 178 and 179; pp. 193-194, note.) If the Filipinos are not, thus, an integral part of America, it is not seen how it can be averred that if the islands be given their status as a sovereign nation, the American republic would disintegrate.

One thing should not be overlooked: the sooner independence is granted to the Filipinos the stronger will be the ties that bind them to the American commonwealth and to the American people; the more the granting is delayed the more will the Filipinos suspect that America is bent on the perpetual retention of the archipelago and the denial of the rightful claims of Philippine nationalism. That would be astonishingly disappointing to the Filipinos whose love for freedom is inborn. Admiration for America might dwindle as a consequence, and trade relations between America and the Philippines might suffer impairment.

The granting of independence to the islands should not necessarily jeopardize America's interests in the Eastern Hemisphere. The attitude of the Filipino people with regard to the matter seems to be this: If America desires coaling stations in the Philippines, she may have them as well under a Philippine republic. If America desires to make Manila her threshold to the trade of the rapidly unfolding East, she shall have the privilege under a government by the Filipinos. If America must have military and naval bases in the archipelago—if she must have an "easternmost frontier," as one American editor has expressed it—she will also have that. The proposition of the Filipinos today is to have America recognize now the independence of the Filipinos, under terms to be negotiated upon by duly appointed representatives of the Americans on one part and of the Filipinos on the other. The Filipinos owe to America much of what they and their country are today, and it is not selfish—much less, unreasonable—for Americans to insist that any political arrangement affecting the status of the islands shall definitely and adequately safeguard the needs of America's commerce.

THERE IS A STABLE GOVERNMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES TODAY.

There is only one condition precedent to the granting of Philippine independence. And that is, that as soon as a stable government has been established in the islands, independence will be granted. There is today a stable government in the Philippines.

It is a government elected by the peaceful suffrages of the people, supported by the people, capable of maintaining order and of fulfilling its international obligations. It is patterned after republican institutions. It has the necessary checks and balances. It is run on the party system. We have a legislature which is composed entirely of Filipinos, and elected by direct popular suffrage. We have a Council of State which is an advisory body to the governor general. It determines the policy of the different departments of the government and recommends measures to the Legislature. We are more progressive than many countries of the world in fiscal legislation; we have adopted the budget system of government appropriation and expenditures, and this has systematized our finances.

Our government is divided into several departments, much in the same way that the United States Government is divided. At the head of each department is a Secretary. And the department secretaries constitute the Cabinet, the members of which might appear or might
be summoned before the legislature to account for their acts. They are thus directly responsible not only to the chief executive of the islands, but also to the representatives of the people.

The whole archipelago is divided into provinces; they correspond to the states of the American Union. Each province is divided into municipalities; these correspond to the counties of the United States. At the head of each province is a governor; the legislative body is Provincial Board. The executive of each municipality is a president; the legislative body is a municipal council. The governors, the presidents and the members of the local legislative bodies are all elected by direct popular suffrage.

Such in skeleton is our system of government. It has been functioning without a hitch ever since its adoption. It combines the fine traits of American institutions and the virile attribute of the English system of governmental finance. Above all, it has been honest. And it is self-supporting. It has established peace and order throughout the archipelago. It has undertaken numerous public works. It has made education universal and free. It has improved the sanitation of the islands. It has encouraged agricultural and industrial enterprises. It has extended credit.

It is not a fact, as many Americans assert, that the islands are a financial burden to the United States. The Insular Treasury has always had sufficient funds with which to meet all the expenses of the Insular Government, and a surplus besides. No United States dollar has ever been expended in the sanitation, education, and public works of the archipelago. What America has done was to furnish the brains, the enterprise, and the example with which to hasten the material and intellectual development of the Filipino nation. The financial part of the undertaking was borne by the Filipinos through a representative system of taxation.

America, it is true, has a standing army in the Philippines which is paid from the United States Treasury. But the existence and maintenance of that standing army are incident upon the taking over and retention of the islands. Clearly, if America must continue holding a territorial possession, she necessarily must have forces and fortifications with which to challenge aggressive designs on the part of any other power.

### Let Us Have Fair Play

We protest against the insidious tactics of some American writers who, in the haste to cripple the Filipino plea for independence, invariably decorate their magazine and newspaper articles with pictures of the backward, scantily dressed, peoples of the Philippines. We call that foul play. For those people are by no means representative of the bulk of Filipinos. They constitute the decided minority—one-twentieth of the total population of the archipelago. They inhabit the mountains and do not meddle with the affairs below. It is not fair to predicate Filipino capacity for self-government on the looks, attire and backwardness of those mountain people. They are to the Filipinos what the Indians are to America—no more, no less. The 10,000,000 Christian Filipinos are doing their best to educate, Christianize and otherwise bring them within the fold of modern civilization. We do not seek to exterminate or exploit them. We do not confine them in reservations. We are approaching them in the most friendly way. And they are responding eagerly.

Islands Have Been Misrepresented

So, too, by press materials cunningly arrayed and cunningly written, actual conditions in the Philippines have been twisted. Our manners and mode of living have been ridiculed. We have been misrepresented beyond forgetting. Our defects have been exaggerated. And our virtues and attainments have been misanthropically brushed aside.

We would request the writers who are antagonistic to the Philippine ideal to once in a while favor our cause with pictures and descriptions of the conditions of today—not of the conditions of two decades ago—in the regions where modernity has had its touch.

To American eyes, it may be true that we are crude in unnumbered ways, that our proletariat are oftentimes destitute of the means by which they could enjoy the modern comforts of life, that our standard of living is very far behind that of America, that we have traits that are not very Occidental. But these are no arguments against our ability to govern ourselves. Neither should they be made a deterrent to the granting of our complete independence. For we are advanced in thought and ideas; we realize the advantages and, unabashed, we practice the ways of
modern republicanism; we hope the praise, the intelligence and the
adornments that are essential in a democracy.

"Let him who scoffs at the impossibility of Philippine progress
without even awaiting events make a comparison between the
United States when she adopted her Constitution, and the Phi-
lippines if she be permitted to ratify hers. In 1790 the number
of inhabitants in the United States was under
four million. The Philippines have double
this. Of the American inhabitants, nearly one-
fifth were negroes. The Philippines have nowhere near this proportion of non-Chris-
tians. Of the American inhabitants, the
ancestors of eight-tenths were probably English and a homoge-
neous part of the community. Of the Filipinos, at least as large
a percentage are of one race. Of the Americans, the intellect of
the people was little developed. The graduating classes of all the
colleges in 1790 counted up to about 170. The graduating classes
of one university in the Philippines exceed this number. In
economic conditions the United States were little advanced,
although the country abounded in natural resources. The same
statement can be written for the Philippines." (Justice Geo. A.
Malcolm: "Government of the Philippine Islands," p. 250.)

CONCLUSION

We wish to write across the consciousness of America that the
Filipinos are a nation moved by an intense desire to be free; that
we are a people with a feeling and a sense of dignity, and as such
resent the numerous insults repeatedly hurled against us; that it
is not fair that we be invariably and indiscriminately pictured as
savages, neither is it just that our defects should be exaggerated
and our virtues ignored, whenever we press our claims to
sovereignty.

The burning desire of the Filipinos is to have an international
personality. They long for a more dignified place in the sister-
hood of the nations. They believe that too long a dependence on

America would only stultify their initiative and their latent
energies as a people. Clearly, they cannot hope
to be a strong nation or race unless left alone to
face the vicissitudes of time. They are perfectly
willing to take a chance. It is a manly attitude
and should not be discouraged. It should com-
mand instead the admiration of this stalwart republic. Certainly
it deserves the encouragement and support of true Americans.

Signs of impatience for the long-awaited freedom are already
visible in the Philippines. The people feel that justice delayed
is justice denied. America, indeed, has been generous but
unseeing. She has chosen to listen—unconsciously, let us hope—
to the incantations of bigoted interests with

America Generous regard to the capacity and attainment of the
But Unseeing Filipinos, and not to the testimony of her
duly appointed representatives. And the
Filipinos properly inquire: Of what use are America's official
representatives in the Philippines if their opinions and recom-
mandations are to be discarded as soon as uttered? There is
Governor General Harrison, for example, and there is Vice
Governor Yeater. They have repeatedly made statements sub-
stantiating the claims of the Filipinos that they are ready for
their badge of sovereignty. Governor General Harrison perso-
nally appeared before Congress the other day. Under his respon-
sibility as representative of the American people in the Philippines
he stated that the Filipino people are ready for an independent
status as a nation. What was the result? A portion of America
smiled. A portion said that the official did not know what he was
talking about. A portion stated that the Governor was playing
politics and riding for a fall. A portion is asking: "Is it possible
that the Filipinos have advanced so far?" The limit of jaunty
indifference was reached when the joint committee which heard
the presentation of the Philippine case pigeonholed the plea for
independence, to be resurrected time alone knows when! We
repeat our query: Of what use are America's official representa-
tives in the Philippines if they are not to be believed?

Retention of the islands is sought to be justified on many
grounds. Fear of aggression on the part of Japan is one of them.
Magnified with a thousand doleful phrases, this is the ground that
has been repeatedly pushed to the forefront to scare the Filipino—

But in thus hesitating to turn the islands loose, because Japan might gobble them up, does not America, to quote the Charleston (S. C.) American, "openly confess that she has failed to make the world safe for democracy?" Is the world to understand, then, that America dares not challenge the power that dares lift its finger to daile the magnificent colonial handwork that is the Philippines? Shall democracy be ever ceased in front of dynastic imperialism?

Then, it is said that the Philippines are being held as a trust to civilization; that the trust is a sacred trust; that it must be fulfilled before the islands could be allowed to go to shift for themselves. Pray, tell us who shall decide whether the sacred trust has been executed or not? Will it be the imperialists who would cling to their outworn creed even though the heavens fall? Will it be the commercial interests of the land whose deity is the Dollar? Will it be the exigencies of politics? If any of these be the case, then Philippine independence will never come to pass. For plead for it as best we can, any of those as the judge will just be standing by "as unheedingly as the Nile."

Finally, we are told that this is not the time for talking independence, that the world is in a state of flux, that it is unsafe to let us embark in the turbulent tides of international affairs. And yet other small nationalities of the world were given their freedom even before the smoke of battle had died away. They are nations, too, that are sandwiched between dynasties and peoples born and reared beneath the dogmas of haughty militarism. And America, in all her present greatness, rejoices to behold the scene, because it was her job! Shall there be exceptions, then, in international justice? Must America sympathize only with the cause of Ireland or only with the cause of Poland, or of the Czecho-Slovaks? How long will the shot heard round the world be turning back against the principle which propelled it?

*The Filipinos cannot but wonder!*