

AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES.

Historical Record from the Time of the Capitulation of Manila to Admiral Dewey and the United States Navy.

War with the Filipinos Has Been Fostered by the Democratic Allies of Aguinaldo—How the Enemies of Our Country Have Toasted William Jennings Bryan.

The "Fire in the Rear" Prevents a Peaceful Administration of the Affairs of the Islands—Lawton's Letter and Dewey's Denial.

MANILA capitulated to the United States forces, commanded by Admiral Dewey, on May 1, 1898.

In order to become informed upon the condition of affairs in the Philippines, President McKinley, on Jan. 23, 1898, appointed a commission composed of President J. G. Schurman, of Cornell University; Professor Dean Worcester; Charles Denby, late Minister to China; Admiral Dewey and General Otis. The commission made its report to President McKinley Nov. 2, 1898, and the same was transmitted to Congress by the President, Feb. 2, 1899. It reads in part as follows:

"The undersigned commissioners appointed by you to investigate affairs in the Philippine Islands and to report the result of their investigations, together with such recommendations as might in their judgment be called for by the conditions which should be found to exist in these islands, have the honor to submit the following preliminary statement in compliance with your request."

The commission next tells briefly how it conducted the task entrusted to it, hearing statements from all classes of people in Manila as to the capabilities of the Filipinos for self-government, the habits and customs of the people, and also the establishment of municipal governments in many towns.

History of Islands.
Turning to the history of the islands, the commission attaches little importance to the divers rebellions which had preceded that of 1896. As to this movement the commissioners declare that it was in no sense an attempt to win independence, but solely to obtain relief from intolerable abuses.

To sustain this statement they quote from an insurgent proclamation, showing that what was demanded was the expulsion of the friars and the restitution to the people of their lands, with a division of the episcopal sees between Spanish and native priests. It was also demanded that the Filipinos have parliamentary representation, freedom of the press, religious toleration, economic autonomy, and laws similar to those of Spain. The abolition of the power of banishment was demanded, with a legal equality for all persons in law and equality in pay between Spanish and native civil servants.

Treaty with Spanish.
The commission declares that these demands had good ground; that on paper the Spanish system of government was tolerable, but in practice every Spanish governor did what he saw fit, and the evil deeds of men in the government were hidden from Spain by strict press censorship. Allusion is made to the powerful Katipunan Society, patterned on the Masonic order, and mainly made up of Tagalogs, as a powerful revolutionary force. The war begun in 1896 was terminated by the treaty of Biac-na-Bato. The Filipinos were numerous, but possessed only about 800 small arms. The Spanish felt that it would require 100,000 men to capture their stronghold, and concluded to resort to the use of money. Certain concessions were also decided upon, including representation of the Filipinos in the Cortes, the deportation of the friars, which was the principal question; the grant of the right of association and of a free press.

Promises Not Kept.
Governor General Rivera was willing to pay \$2,000,000 in Mexican money when Aguinaldo and his cabinet and leading officers arrived in Hong Kong. It appears, however, that Paterno offered the latter only \$400,000, \$200,000 to be paid when Aguinaldo arrived at Hong Kong and the balance when the Filipinos had delivered up their arms. The arrangement was not acceptable to the people. The promises were never carried out. Spanish abuses began afresh, in Manila alone more than 200 men being executed. Hence sporadic risings occurred, though they possessed nothing like the strength of the original movement. The insurgents lacked arms, ammunition and leaders.

The treaty had ended the war, which, with the exception of an unimportant outbreak in Cebu, had been confined to Luzon, Spain's sovereignty in the other islands never having been questioned, and the thought of independence never having been entertained.

Dewey and Aguinaldo.
The report then tells how Gen. Augustino came to Manila as governor general at this juncture and war broke out between Spain and the United States. Augustino sought to secure the support of the Filipinos to defend Spain against America, promising them autonomy, but the Filipinos did not trust him.

Then came the 1st of May and the destruction of the Spanish fleet by Dewey, with the resulting loss of prestige to Spain. Then in June Aguinaldo came. On this point the commission says:

"The following memorandum on this subject has been furnished the commission by Admiral Dewey:

"On April 24, 1898, the following cipher dispatch was received at Hong Kong from E. Spencer Pratt, United States consul general at Singapore:

"Aguinaldo, insurgent leader, here, will come Hong Kong, arrange with you for general co-operation in the Philippines if desired. Telegraph."

"On the same day Commodore Dewey telegraphed Mr. Pratt, 'Tell Aguinaldo come soon as possible, the necessity for haste being due to the fact that the squadron had been notified by the Hong Kong Government to leave those waters by the following day. The squadron left Hong Kong on the morning of the 25th, and Mirs Bay on the 27th. Aguinaldo did not leave Singapore until the 26th, and so did not arrive in Hong Kong in time to have a conference with the admiral."

"It had been reported to the commodore as early as March 1, by the United States consul at Manila and others that the Filipinos had broken out into insurrection against the Spanish authority in the vicinity of Manila, and on March 30 Mr. Williams had telegraphed: 'Five thousand rebels armed in camp near city. Loyal to us in case of war.'

No Alliance Made.
"Upon the arrival of the squadron at Manila it was found that there was no insurrection to speak of, and it was accordingly decided to allow Aguinaldo to come to Cavite on board the McCulloch. He arrived with thirteen of his staff on May 13, and immediately came on board the Olympia to call on the commander-in-chief, after which he was allowed to land at Cavite and organize an army."

"This was done with the purpose of strengthening the United States forces and weakening those of the enemy. No alliance of any kind was entered into with Aguinaldo, nor was any promise of independence made to him, then or at any other time."

The commission's report then rapidly sketches events now historical. It tells in substance how the Filipinos attacked the Spanish and how Gen. Anderson arrived, and Aguinaldo, at his request, removed from Cavite to Bacoor. Says the commission:

"Now for the first time rose the idea of national independence. Aguinaldo issued a proclamation in which he took the responsibility of promising it to his people on behalf of the American Government, although he admitted freely in private conversation with members of his cabinet that neither Admiral Dewey nor any other American had made him any such promise."

Growth of Friction.
The report states that Aguinaldo wished to attack the Americans when they landed at Paranaque, but was deterred by lack of arms and ammunition. From that point on there was a growing friction between the Filipinos and the American troops.

"There were no conferences," says the report, "between the officers of the Filipinos and our officers with a view to operating against the Spaniards, nor was there co-operation of any kind. * * * There never was any preconcerted operation or any combined movement by the United States and Filipinos against the Spaniards."

Reference is made to Aguinaldo's demand that he be allowed to loot Manila and take the arms of the Spaniards. The latter demand is said to confirm the statement that he intended to get possession of the arms to attack the Americans.

Waiting for Pretext.
Further evidence of the hostile intentions of the Filipinos was found in the organization of "popular clubs," which later on furnished a local militia to attack the Americans. The decrees of the Filipino congress are also cited, as well as the making of bolos (knives) in every shop in Manila.

It is shown that a considerable element in the Filipino congress wished to address to President McKinley a request not to abandon the Filipinos. (At this stage the Paris conference was discussing the future of the Philippines.) The President was also to be asked his desire as to the form of government he wished to establish. But all this time Aguinaldo was preparing for war and delaying these messages, and it was understood that the attack would come upon the first act by the American forces, which would afford a pretext.

Filipinos Begin War.
A brief chapter then tells of the lack of success attending the effort made at this time by Gen. Merritt, through a commission, to arrive at a mutual understanding with Aguinaldo as to the intentions, purposes and desires of the Filipino people. This brings the story up to the outbreak on the evening of the 4th of February, with the attack upon the American troops, following the action of the Nebraska sentinel. The commission, in concluding this chapter, says:

"After the landing of our troops Aguil-

aldo made up his mind that it would be necessary to fight the Americans, and after the making of the treaty of peace at Paris this determination was strengthened. He did not openly declare that he intended to fight the Americans, but he excited everybody, and especially the military men, by claiming independence, and it is doubtful whether he had the power to check or control the army at the time hostilities broke out.

No Alternative Left.
"Deplorable as war is, the one in which we are now engaged was unavoidable by us. We were attacked by a bold, adventurous and enthusiastic army. No alternative was left to us, except ignominious retreat. It is not to be conceived of that any American would have sanctioned the surrender of Manila to the insurgents. Our obligations to other nations, to the friendly Filipinos and to ourselves and our flag demanded that force should be met by force."

"Whatever the future of the Philippines may be, there is no course open to us now except the prosecution of the war until the insurgents are reduced to submission. The commission is of the opinion that there has been no time since the destruction of the Spanish squadron by Admiral Dewey when it was possible to withdraw our forces from the islands either with honor to ourselves or with safety to the inhabitants."

Relief of Terror.
The commissioners then take up the condition of the country at the time of their arrival, comparing it with conditions existing when they left a short time ago. A vivid picture is given of the anarchy existing among the inhabitants in and about Manila during the early spring.

"The situation in the city," says the commission, "was bad. Incendiary fires occurred daily. The streets were almost deserted. Half of the native population had fled and most of the remainder were shut in their houses. Business was at a standstill. Insurgent troops everywhere faced our lines, and the sound of rifle fire was frequently audible in our house. A reign of terror prevailed. Filipinos who had favored Americans feared assassination, and few had the courage to come out openly for us. Fortunately there were among this number some of the best men of the city."

Restoring Public Confidence.
The report then speaks of the issuance of the commission's proclamation and the good effects it had on public sentiment. The natives, accustomed to Spanish promises, urged upon the commission that acts instead of promises should be given them. As a result native law courts were established and this greatly aided in the restoration of public confidence. The flow of population soon began to set toward the city. Natives who had fled from their homes returned.

As showing the limited scope of the rebellion the commission states:

"We learned that the strong anti-American feeling was confined to the Tagalog provinces, namely, Manila, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Morong, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Principe, Infanta and Zambales. It was strongest in the first six named, and hardly existed in the last four."

Revolt Not Popular.
"The population of these provinces is estimated to be about 1,500,000, but it should not be supposed that even in the six provinces immediately adjacent to Manila the people were united in their opposition to us. Even here there was a strong conservative element, consisting of people of wealth and intelligence, opposed to the war."

Under the head, "The Rebellion not a National Movement," the report treats of the rebellion outside of the provinces of Luzon, where, it is stated, the uprising was viewed at first with indifference and later with fear. Throughout the archipelago at large there was trouble only at those points to which armed Tagalogs had been sent in considerable numbers.

Ask American Help.
The machinery of insurgent "government" served only for plundering the people under the pretext of levying "war contributions, while many of the insurgent officials were rapidly accumulating wealth." It is stated that the insurgent administration throughout the interior was worse than in the days of Spanish misrule. In many provinces there was absolute anarchy, and from all sides came petitions for protection and help.

In speaking of Gen. MacArthur's movement northward the report tells of the insurgent method of intimidating the natives by telling them fearful tales concerning the American soldiers. This method of procedure, eminently successful at first, in the end recoiled on its authors.

Troops Bring Peace.
As to the state of affairs when the commission left the report says:

"Before the commission left the Philippines nearly all the inhabitants had returned to those ruined villages. Many of the houses had been rebuilt. Fields that had lain fallow for three years were green with growing crops. Municipal governments were established, and the people, protected by our troops, were enjoying peace, security and a degree of participation in their own government previously unknown in the history of the Philippines. Attempts of the insurgents to raise recruits and money in the province of Bulacan were proving abortive, except when backed by bayonets and bullets, and even in such cases the natives were applying to us for help to resist them."

The chapter devoted to "Establishment of Municipal Governments" gives in detail the efforts in that direction. There were many difficulties encountered. The condition of the people was found to be most pitiable. They had been plundered by the insurgent troops, who had robbed them of jewels, money, clothing and even food, so that they were literally starving. Peaceful citizens had been fired on. Women had been maltreated.

There was general satisfaction that the Americans had come at last, and conditions seemed favorable for an American propaganda. The towns of Bacoor and Imus were selected for the purpose of experiment, and after talks with the local "head men" a local form of government was established. Encouraged by the result, the work was continued at Paranaque and Las Pinas, with similar good results.

At the request of Gen. Lawton, who had been assigned to this work by Gen. Otis, the commission prepared a simple scheme of municipal government, similar enough to the old system to be readily comprehensible to the natives, but giving

them liberties which they had never before enjoyed. This scheme was adopted and gave general satisfaction.

In every instance enthusiasm ran high before the commissioners took their departure, and cheers were raised for Gen. Lawton and for the country which he represented.

Secure Good Results.
With a single exception the officials elected proved worthy of the trust imposed in them, and conditions very rapidly improved in the newly organized towns. Governments were organized with more satisfactory results in Pandacan, Santa Ana, San Felipe, Meri, San Pedro and Machei, while a slightly different system was put into effect in Malabon, Polo, Obando, Meycuya, Yang and Malolos.

The commission states that a large amount of supervision over the affairs of our new municipalities proved necessary, as the officials were timid and slow to comprehend their new duties. At many of the elections the voters went about "asking who they were expected to vote for," and it was only with great difficulty that they were persuaded to exercise the right of free suffrage.

Schools for Manila.
The commissioners sum up the situation at the time of their departure as follows:

"When we left Manila a large volume of business was being done, and the streets were so crowded as to be hardly safe. The native population was quiet and orderly and all fear of an uprising had long since passed. An efficient corps of native policemen was on duty. A system of public schools in which English was taught had been advocated by the commission and established by Gen. Otis. Some 6,000 scholars were in attendance."

"In the Tagalog provinces of Luzon, where the anti-American feeling had been strongest, public sentiment had greatly changed, as evidenced by the fact that the military governor of Batangas had offered to surrender his troops and his province if we would only send a small force there. The Bicolis, in southern Luzon, had risen against their Tagalo masters. The Macabebes were clamoring for an opportunity to fight in our ranks, and native soldiers and scouts were already serving under Gen. Lawton."

Rebellion Lying Out.
"Stories of the corruption of insurgent officers were becoming daily more common, and the disintegration of the enemy's forces was steadily progressing. The hope of assistance from outside sources seemed to be all that held them together."

Having given so much attention to the island of Luzon, the commission then takes up in detail the conditions in the other islands. On this point it is stated that the rebellion is essentially Tagalo, and when it ends in Luzon it must end throughout the archipelago. The situation elsewhere than in Luzon is summed up as follows:

"The only island, apart from Luzon, where serious trouble threatens, is Panay, to which a considerable force of Tagalo soldiers was sent before the outbreak of hostilities. Many of the Visayanos of this island are opposed to the Tagalogs, however, and it is not believed that the latter can make a formidable resistance."

Oppose the Tagalogs.
"In Samar, Leyte and Masbate the Tagalo invaders are numerically few and are disliked by the natives of these islands, whom they have oppressed. We were assured that 200 men would suffice to restore order in Mindoro. Bobol was asking for troops. The Calamianes islands had sent word that they would welcome us. There can be no resistance in Palawan. Satisfactory relations had already been established with the warlike Moros, whose sultan had previously been conciliated by a member of the commission, and in Mindanao this tribe had even taken up our cause and attacked the insurgents, of whom there are very few in the island."

"In Cebu we have only to reckon with the lawless element, which has never been very formidable there."

Special attention is given to the Island of Negros, as this seemed a field well adapted to the extension of an American system. Here the natives have adopted a local form of government, including a congress, and had raised the American flag. They believed themselves capable of managing their own affairs and asked for a battalion of troops to hold in check a mountainous band of fanatics. The battalion was furnished, but the people proved unable to carry out their program owing to ill feeling among their own officials. The Americans remained popular.

Need of Education.
"That intelligent public opinion on which popular government rests does not exist in the Philippines. And it cannot exist until education has elevated the masses, broadened their intellectual horizon and disciplined their faculty of judgment. And even then the power of self-government cannot be assumed without considerable previous training and experience under the guidance and tutelage of an enlightened and liberal foreign power. For the bald fact is that the Filipinos have never had any experience in governing themselves."

The report shows that this inability for self-government is due to the old Spanish regime, which gave the Filipinos little or no part in governing themselves. After reviewing this Spanish system the commission sums up on this point:

"This is all the training in self-government which the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands have enjoyed. Their lack of education and political experience, combined with their racial and linguistic diversities, disqualify them, in spite of their mental gifts and domestic virtues, to undertake the task of governing the archipelago at the present time. The most that can be expected of them is to co-operate with the Americans in the administration of general affairs, from Manila as a center, and to undertake, subject to American control or guidance (as may be found necessary), the administration of provincial and municipal affairs."

Must Retain Rule.
"Fortunately, there are educated Filipinos, though they do not constitute a large proportion of the entire population, and their support and services will be of incalculable value in inaugurating and maintaining the new government. As education advances and experience ripens, the natives may be entrusted with a larger and more independent share of government, self-government, as the American ideal, being constantly kept in view as the goal. In this way American sovereignty over the archipelago will prove a great political boon to the people."

"Should our power by any fatality be withdrawn the commission believes that the government of the Philippines would speedily lapse into anarchy, which would excuse, if it did not necessitate, the intervention of other powers and the eventual division of the islands among them."

"Only through American occupation, therefore, is the idea of a free, self-governing and united Philippine Commonwealth at all conceivable. And the indispensable need from the Filipino point of view of maintaining American sovereignty over the archipelago is recognized by all intelligent Filipinos and even by those insurgents who desire an American protectorate. The latter, it is true, would take the revenues and leave us the responsibilities. Nevertheless they recognize the inalienable fact that the Filipinos cannot stand alone."

"Thus the welfare of the Philippines coincides with the dictates of national honor or in forbidding our abandonment of the archipelago. We cannot from any point of view escape the responsibilities of government which our sovereignty entails, and the commission is strongly persuaded that the performance of our national duty will prove the greatest blessing to the peoples of the Philippine Islands."

Praise for Troops.
One of the closing chapters of the report is devoted to a tribute to "our soldiers and sailors in the war." The commission says that the presence of Admiral Dewey as a member of this body makes it unfitting to dwell on his personal achievements, but he joins in the eulogy of his comrades. The commissioners witnessed some of the many brave deeds of our soldiers, and they declare that all that skill, courage and a patient endurance can do has been done in the Philippines."

They dismiss the reports of the deserting of churches, the murdering of prisoners and the committing of unmentionable crimes, and say they are glad to express the belief that a war was never more humanely conducted, adding:

"If churches were occupied it was only as a military necessity, and frequently their use as forts by the insurgents had made it necessary to train our artillery upon them."

Bright Trade Future.
"Prisoners were taken whenever opportunity offered, often only to be set at liberty after being disarmed and fed. Up to the time of our departure, although numerous spies had been captured, not a single Filipino had been executed. Such wrongs as were casually committed against the natives were likely to be brought to our attention, and in every case that we investigated we found a willingness on the part of those in authority to administer prompt justice."

The commissioners give a general view of the value of the islands, their richness in agricultural and forest products, their mineral wealth and their commanding geographical position. They state that the Philippine Islands should soon become one of the great trade centers of the East. Manila is already connected by new steamship lines with Australia, India and Japan, and she will become the mutual terminus of many other lines when a ship canal connects the Atlantic

with the Pacific. It cannot be doubted that commerce will greatly increase, and the United States will obtain a large share in this treatment.

Benefit to Islands.
Manila, with the immunity which it has thus far enjoyed from that terrible pest, the bubonic plague, should become a distributing center for China, Siam, the Straits Settlements, Tonquin, Annam and Australia.

The report concludes:

"Our control means to the inhabitants of the Philippines internal peace and order, a guarantee against foreign aggression and against the dismemberment of their country, commercial and industrial prosperity and as large a share of the affairs of government as they shall prove fit to take. When peace and prosperity shall have been established throughout the archipelago, when education shall have become general, then, in the language of a leading Filipino, his people will, under our guidance, become more American than the Americans themselves."

Dewey Heard From.
On May 20, 1898, Admiral Dewey called to the Navy Department:

"Aguinaldo, the rebel commander-in-chief, was brought down by the McCulloch. Organizing forces near Cavite, and may render assistance which will be valuable."

On May 20 the Secretary of the Navy telegraphed to Admiral Dewey as follows:

"It is desirable, as far as possible, and consistent for your success and safety, not to have political alliances with the insurgents or any faction in the islands that would incur liability to maintain their cause in the future."

To this telegram Dewey replied:

"Receipt of telegram of May 26 is acknowledged, and I thank the department for the expression of confidence. Have acted according to the spirit of department's instructions therein from the beginning, and I have entered into no alliance with the insurgents or with any faction. This squadron can reduce the defenses of Manila at any moment, but it is considered useless until the arrival of sufficient United States forces to retain possession."

Aguinaldo Conspires.
As soon as Aguinaldo discovered he was to have no assistance from the United States he commenced to conspire against our forces there, intending to overthrow the authority of this Government in the islands.

Dewey's Strong Denial.
In a pamphlet afterwards published by Aguinaldo, entitled "The True Version of the Philippine Revolution," he charged that Admiral Dewey had assured him that the United States would recognize the independence of the Filipinos. When this was published, the admiral wrote the following letter to Senator Lodge:

"Dear Senator Lodge: The statement of Emilio Aguinaldo, recently published in the Springfield Republican, so far as it relates to me is a tissue of falsehood. I never promised him, directly or indirectly, independence for the Filipinos. I never treated him as an ally, except so far as to make use of him and his soldiers to assist me in my operations against the Spaniards. He never uttered the word 'independence' in any conversation with me or my officers. The statement that I received him with military honors, or saluted the Filipino flag, is absolutely false. Sincerely yours,

"GEORGE DEWEY."

Aguinaldo Organizes Revolution.
On May 24 Aguinaldo issued three proclamations, one containing decrees as to the treatment of the Spanish enemy, another announcing the establishment of a dictatorial government with himself as dictator, and the third containing further decrees concerning military operations.

In the following July he organized a revolutionary government with himself as President. During that month the several detachments of the United States army arrived at Manila, and on July 25 Gen. Merritt took command, and Admiral Dewey sent the following dispatch:

"Merritt arrived yesterday in the Newport. The remainder of the expedition is expected within the next few days. Situation is most critical at Manila. The Spanish may surrender at any moment. Merritt's most difficult problem will be how to deal with insurgents under Aguinaldo, who has become aggressive and even threatening toward our army."

Hostilities Begun by Aguinaldo.
On Aug. 13 Manila was captured, and of this and subsequent events the Philippine commission, composed of Admiral Dewey, Gen. Otis, President Schurman, Prof. Worcester and Gen. Denby, says:

"When the city of Manila was taken on Aug. 13, the Filipinos took no part in the attack, but came following in with a view of looting the city and were only prevented from doing so by our forces preventing them from entering. Aguinaldo claimed that he had the right to occupy the city; he demanded of Gen. Merritt the palace of Malacanang for himself and the cession of all the churches of Manila, also that a part of the money taken from the Spaniards as spoils of war should be given up, and above all that he should be given the arms of the Spanish prisoners. This confirms the statement already made that he intended to get possession of these arms for the purpose of attacking us. All these demands were refused. After the taking of Manila the feeling between the Americans and the insurgents grew worse day by day. * * * Aguinaldo removed his seat of government to Malolos, where the so-called Filipino congress assembled.

Filipinos Prepared for War.
On the 21st of September a significant decree passed the Filipino congress imposing a military service on every male over 15 years of age, except those holding government positions. In every carriage factory and blacksmith shop in Manila bolos (knives) were being made. * * * Danger signals now multiplied. Aguinaldo endeavored to get the war making power transferred from congress to himself, and also urged a heavy bond issue to secure one million dollars for the purchase of arms and ammunition. * * * It is now known that elaborate plans had been perfected for a simultaneous attack by the force within and without Manila. * * * Persistent attacks were made to provoke our soldiers to fire. The insurgents were insolent to our guards and made persistent and continuous efforts to push them back and advance the insurgent lines further into the city of Manila.

To Attack Americans.
Early in January, 1899, Aguinaldo had his plans perfected so as to be ready to commence hostilities against the American forces.

The following order, which has never