

SENATOR HOAR ON EXPANSION.

Principles of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence Violated by Taking the Philippines.

[Address of Senator Hoar (Republican) of Massachusetts, in the senate in opposition to the expansion policy, upon the resolution of Senator Vest of Missouri, which asserts that the federal government has no power to acquire territory to be held and governed permanently as colonies, devoting himself chiefly to answering the expansion argument of Senator Platt (Republican) of Connecticut, which was delivered some days ago upon the same resolution.]

I am quite sure that no man who will hear or who will read what I say today will doubt that nothing could induce me to say it but a commanding sense of public duty. I think I dislike more than most men to differ from men with whom I have so long and so constantly agreed. I dislike to differ from the president, whose election I hailed with such personal satisfaction and such exulting anticipations for the republic. I dislike to differ from so many of my party associates in this chamber, with whom I have for so many years trod the same path and sought the same goal. I am one of those men who believe that little that is great or good or permanent for a free people can be accomplished without the instrumentality of party. And I have believed religiously, and from my soul, for half a century, in the great doctrines and principles of the republican party. I stood in a humble capacity by its cradle. I do not mean, if I can help it, to follow its hearse. I am sure I render it a service; I am sure I help to protect and to prolong the life of that great organization, if I can say or do anything to keep it from forsaking the great principles and doctrines in which alone it must live or bear no life. I must in this great crisis, discharge the trust my beloved commonwealth has committed to me, according to my sense of duty as I see it. However unpleasant may be that duty, as Martin Luther said, "God help me. I can do no other wise."

I am to speak for my country, for its whole past and for its whole future. I am to speak to a people whose fate is bound up in the preservation of our great doctrine of constitutional liberty. I am to speak for the dead soldier who gave his life for liberty that his death might set a seal upon his country's historic glory. I am to speak for the republican party, all of whose great traditions are at stake, and all of whose great achievements are in peril.

Certainly, Mr. President, no man can ever justly charge me with a lack of faith in my countrymen, or a lack of faith in the principles on which the republic is founded. If during thirty years' service within these walls, or during fifty years of constant, active, and absorbed interest in public affairs, there has ever come from my lips an utterance showing lack of faith in the peo-

ple, in the republic, in country, in liberty, or in the future, let them be silent now. I thank God that if I have no other Christian virtue, I have at least in the fullest measure that which stands as the central figure in the mighty group which the apostle says is forever to abide—hope. I thank God that as my eyes grow dim they look out on a fairer country, a better people, a brighter future.

I have in my humble way, poor enough I know, but it was my best, defended the character of the American people, their capacity for self-government, the character of the great legislative bodies through which that government is exercised, whenever and by whomsoever assailed. I do not distrust them now. But the strongest frame may get mortal sickness from one exposure, the most vigorous health or life may be destroyed by a single drop of poison, and what poison is to the human frame the abandonment of our great doctrine of liberty will be to the republic.

After all, I am old-fashioned enough to think that our fathers who won the revolution, and who framed the constitution, were the wisest builders of states the world has yet seen. I think that they knew where to seek for the best lessons of experience and they knew how to lay down the rules which should be the best guides for their descendants. They did not disdain to study ancient history. They knew what caused the downfall of the mighty Roman republic. They read, as Chatham said he did, the history of the freedom, of the decay, and the enslavement of Greece. They knew to what she owed her glory and to what she owed her ruin. They learned from her the doctrine that while there is little else that a democracy cannot accomplish it cannot rule over vassal states or subject-peoples without bringing in the elements of death into its own constitution. The Americans have been aptly called the Greeks of modern times. The versatile, enterprising, adventurous Yankee has been likened to the people of Athens, who were of the Ionian race, and the brave, constant, inflexible men of the south to the brave, constant, and inflexible Sparta, whose people were Dorians.

There are two lessons our fathers learned from the history of Greece which they hoped their children would remember—the danger of disunion and domestic strife and an indulgence in the greed and lust of empire. The Greeks stood together against the power of Persia as the American states stood together against the tyranny of England. For us the danger of disunion has happily passed by. Our Athenians and our Spartans are bound and welded together again, each lending to the other the strength of their steel and the sharpness of their tempered blade in an indissoluble union. Our danger today is from the lust of

empire. It is a little remarkable that the temptation that besets us now lured and brought to ruin the Athenian people in ancient times. I hope that we may be able to resist and avert that danger as we resisted and averted the peril of disunion.

This is the greatest question, this question of the power and authority of our constitution in this matter, I had almost said, that had been discussed among mankind from the beginning of time. Certainly it is the greatest question ever discussed in this chamber from the beginning of the government. The question is this: Have we the right, as doubtless we have the physical power, to enter upon the government of ten or twelve million subject-people without constitutional restraint? Of that question the senator from Connecticut takes the affirmative. And upon that question I desire to join issue.

Mr. President, I am no strict constructionist. I am no alarmist. I believe this country to be a nation, a sovereign nation. I affirm that every constitutional power, whether it be called a power of sovereignty or of nationality—neither of which phrases is found in terms in the constitution—or whether it be a power expressly declared and named therein, is limited to the one supreme and controlling purpose declared as that for which the constitution itself was framed: "In order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and to our posterity." But when the senator from Connecticut undertakes to declare that we may do such things not for the perfect union, the common defence, the general welfare of the people of the United States, or the securing of liberty to ourselves and our children, but for any fancied or real obligation to take care of distant peoples beyond our boundaries, not people of the United States, then I deny his proposition and tell him he can find nothing either in the text of the constitution, or the exposition of the fathers, or the judgments of courts from that day to this, to warrant or support his doctrine.

The senator then reviewed in detail the constitutional argument of Senator Platte. Continuing:

The constitutional argument for slavery was ten times as strong as the argument of the senator from Connecticut. The slave master said he owned men for their good. The senator from Connecticut proposes to own nations for their good. But the slave property had come down to the slave-owner from his fathers.

To the constitutional doctrine of the senator from Connecticut I desire to oppose mine. It is the doctrine on which I have acted and on which the party to