

ANNEXATION OF THE PHILIPPINES.

[By John J. Valentine, President of Wells, Fargo & Co., San Francisco, California.]

It is the fad of the hour to condemn Spain and everything Spanish in season and out of season. Before Peter was summoned to Joppa to minister to the Centurion Cornelius, an object lesson was presented to him out of Heaven in order to overcome certain of his race prejudices—he saw a vision, the moral of which, as told by a supernatural voice, was sufficient intimation to him that such discrimination was reprehensible. Shakespeare, in "As You Like It," makes Orlando say that he will chide no breather in the world, save himself, of whom he knew most faults. I have journeyed much and in many lands, and can truthfully say that, so far as I have met them, I have never known more worthy gentlemen or more admirable women than the Spaniards, Mexicans, and descendants of those who originally colonized California, and I am proud to believe that I can number amongst those good people hosts of whole-hearted, chivalrous friends. As to the place of the Spanish-American people in the history of America, I am in accord Mr. Chas. F. Lummis' views as expressed in his charming book, "The awakening of a Nation"—Mexico. Mr. Lummis says:

"The seal of Spain is upon all things that she has ever touched. To the thoughtful, few side-lights in history are more striking than this vital individuality of the Spaniard. Whatever page he opened in the New World, he wrote across it his racial autograph in a hand so virile and so characteristic that neither time nor change can efface it. Three centuries and a half of continuous evolution have not availed to make that rubric illegible or mistakable. He mastered every country between us and Patagonia; and there is no land in which he ever sat down which does not to this last day bear in its very marrow the heritage of his religion, his language and his social creed. His *Marca* is upon the faces, the laws, the very landscapes.

"How significant this is we may better judge when we remember that the Saxon, masterful though he is, has never anywhere achieved these results. He has filled new lands with his speech and his faith (or his lack of it), but only by filling them with his own blood—(or that of his victims) never by changing the native. The United States, for instance, is of his speech; but what Indian tribe ever spoke English? In the vastly greater area of Spanish-America every Indian tribe speaks Spanish, and has done so for centuries. The Saxon has never impressed his language or his religion upon the people he has overrun. Something of his face goes to the half-breeds he begets and will not father; but even this physical impress is less

marked than in the case of his Latin predecessor; for he himself, of course, is a less fixed type."

Of the 14 million of population in Mexico, the masses to the number of 10 million are chiefly Indian, and the presence in their daily life of the most attractive qualities of human kind are notable. Let me here apply some words of Mr. Hopkinson Smith, in the "White Umbrella in Mexico:"

"A distinct and peculiar people. An unselfish, patient, tender-hearted people, of great personal beauty, courage, and refinement. A people offering instantly to the stranger and wayfarer on the very threshold of their homes a hospitality so generous, accompanied by a courtesy so exquisite, that one stops at the next doorway to re-enjoy the luxury."

"My memory went back to my three friends of the morning, standing in the sunlight, their sombreros in the dust; to the garrulous old gardener bending over his flowers; to the girl selling pottery; to the tender courtesy and gentleness of these people, their unchanging serenity of temper, their marvelous patience, their innate taste, skill," etc.

At the beginning of the war craze in the United States, Professor Morse of Massachusetts, one of the most distinguished evolutionists among American scientific men, made the following observation upon the midsummer madness of the American people:

"It has taken our race a million years to climb up from the beast to the man; it takes just fifteen minutes for a man to go back to the beast again."

On my return trip in June last from the Orient, whither I had gone before war was declared, I wrote from on board the steamer Coptic as follows:

"Tuesday, June 23.—Last night at 1:30 a. m., I was awakened by three sharp blasts of our ship's whistle saluting the passing transports to Manila. Alas! alas! and alas!—enthusiasm now, but later on sickness, suffering, misery, squalid death under the pitiless sun of a tropical sky in an alien land. And later on for those who remain at home, taxes! taxes! taxes! Such is the glory and cost of war. When all the burdens of it are settled on the backs of the people, then look out for political and social revolutions at home. As the war has been repeatedly referred to by my correspondents, I will say I'm no jingo; don't believe in the doctrines of island expansion, annexation or conquest, but fear that the American people are lending a willing ear to the suggestions of pride, ambition and avarice, rather than to the sober and wholesome dictates of wisdom, prudence and justice. Spain's colonies have ruined her."

The events affecting this question have confirmed and intensified my opposition to the policy pursued by the

United States government during the past twelve months. I have never believed that the war was necessary, and my convictions have been strengthened by the averment of Mr. John Sherman, secretary of state up to less than a year ago, who is responsible for the disclosure, since his retirement, that the state department had, prior to the declaration of war, reached a point in diplomatic regulations with Spain at which the latter expressed a readiness to part with Cuba for 200 million dollars. I am further confirmed therein by the statement of General Woodford, the then minister to Spain, who is credited with saying substantially as follows:

That when in Madrid conducting negotiations he had progressed to a point at which Spain conceded every demand we made, and that when the government of Spain drafted the scheme of autonomy to be put in force in Cuba, it comprehended all that we had demanded; and that if the congress of the United States had let the question alone, he believed would have established a stable government in the isle of Cuba, and that within three to six months thereafter the flag of Spain would have peaceably come down.

Thus verifying the saying of Euripides, that—

* * * "the force of words
Can do what'er is done by conquering swords."

This however, seems like generalizing; therefore let me be specific:

First—Spain had never infringed or encroached upon any American rights. On the contrary, she had at all times exhibited the utmost deference and courtesy toward the United States; she had yielded to our every demand.

Second—The Spanish government had released all Americans caught in the act of aiding the Cuban insurgents, though under the operation of martial law such persons were punishable by death.

Third—The cruel Weyler had been recalled, and in his stead the merciful Blanco had been made governor-general.

Fourth—Autonomy, or home rule—self-government—had been granted to Cuba, and a Cuban legislature had been elected.

Fifth—The Spanish government had stopped the war by the declaration of an armistice in accordance with the request of President McKinley.

Sixth—The reconcentrados had received permission to return to their homes.

Seventh—The Spanish government had appropriated funds for the relief of the reconcentrados.

Eighth—Permission had been given to the Americans to feed the reconcentrados.

It was said we could no more have averted the war than we could stay the progress of Muir Glacier. That is the unspeakably sad part of it. Marcus Aurelius saw the decadence of Rome, but was powerless to prevent it. New York harbor has Bartholdi's statue