

continuous obligation to be looking into the affairs of other nations to see if there are not wrongs that ought to be righted, oppressed that should be delivered and struggling people to be set free. The good Samaritan did not go down on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho hunting a job, but as he journeyed on his own business came where the robbed and beaten sufferer lay. It is not mere selfishness which declares that the primary duty of a nation is to its own people and that their interests and well-being are not to be neglected under the illusive notion that it has a duty to pose as a great national rectifier of wrongs done by other nations. It is a wise man that successfully manages his own household, that has primary regard for the well-being of its inmates, and, although he may not selfishly ignore the condition of affairs of other households, yet he ought always to remember his primary duty and be cautious about interfering in the affairs of others. Everyone knows that a man who is a busybody in other people's affairs, although animated by the best of motives, is as apt to do harm as good. He often fails to appreciate the real situation, interferes in behalf of the wrong party, or interferes when interference is a curse; and the same is true of nations.

Neither is there anything in the so-called "Monroe doctrine" which makes us sponsor for this continent. We have no supervision or control over the internal affairs of other states; we are not their guardians. Each of them has the same right to interfere in the affairs of the United States that we have to interfere in its. That doctrine finds its expression in the message of President Monroe to congress on December 2, 1823, which, after referring to the difference between the political system which obtains across the waters and that of this country, states the right which we claim in these words:

"We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion 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. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States."

This means only that we are unwilling that the political system of Europe shall be extended in America.

We pledge non-interference with existing colonies of European governments; we simply state that their ideas of government and colonial expansion must not be worked out on this hemisphere.

Whether this doctrine has been so far approved as to become a rule of international law is one thing; it may simply have been acquiesced in because of no suitable occasion for challenge. At best it is but an expression, not of authority over this continent, but simply of protection and defense. It is a declaration of a purpose to stand by our weaker neighbors in case of attack and in no sense an assumption of a control over their affairs. Neither have we since that message enlarged its scope. When Great Britain demanded reparation from Nicaragua and threatened force to compel compliance, we did not interfere. In the controversy between Venezuela and Great Britain we took no new position. The former government claimed that the latter was trying to enlarge its territory wrongfully and forcibly by taking possession of that which rightfully belonged to Venezuela. We interfered only so far as to say that Great Britain should not forcibly extend its colonial possessions; and the outcome has been an arbitration between the two nations for the purpose of settling the question of right.

American Humanity.

But the second question is of more importance, for I think it may be safely assumed that there is in the American people such a spirit of humanity and sense of responsibility that whenever there shall arise a real emergency for interference in the name of humanity in the affairs of another nation we shall respond with alacrity, and there is also such a general prudence and caution as will keep us from unwarranted and needless interference. And this second question is one whose solution will materially affect our destiny. Happily, the war with Spain is ended, and the results of the war determined. Grim-visaged war has smoothed its wrinkled front. As there were some who doubted in the beginning its wisdom or necessity, so there are some who doubt whether the results will be beneficial, and whether it was wise to take the territory which the nation has taken. But the thing is accomplished, and it is no part of a patriot to stand aloof and simply denounce. Rather let him accept that which has been accomplished and apply himself as best he may to make the things accomplished fruitful of the least injury and productive of the most blessing. Yet, while so doing, it is right and wise to consider what shall be the future and whether that which has been done shall become the fixed habit and settled policy of the nation. What has been done is one thing. What shall be is another. We have taken islands separated from us by the waters of the

ocean. Are we thus to continually expand? Is such a policy of expansion wise?

The Philippines.

In criticising this policy I shall consider only the Philippines. I take them as illustrations, because the truth is better seen by its connection with a concrete fact than through any mere general statement. And if I refer only to the arguments against the appropriation of those islands, and fail to notice the many reasons or the peculiar circumstances which induced the action of our government, it is not because I do not appreciate the force of those reasons and circumstances, but because, as I said, I am not here to complain of that which has been done. I despise a man who simply sulks and swears. My thought is: accepting that which has been done as having been the best under the circumstances, is that to become the future policy of the nation? Is it a prophecy or an exception?

One thing which seemed to attract much attention, and was claimed to justify the taking possession of distant islands, is the need of coaling stations. When the question of annexing Hawaii was pending, distinguished officers of both the army and navy appeared before committees of congress, urging the necessity of securing a coaling station on those islands, and argued that we had better take the entire territory, which was small, and thus avoid the possibility of any other nation securing a post and base of operations contiguous to our own. Now, I do not propose to question the wisdom from a military standpoint of the advice given by those officers. I am ready to accept their statement that in case of war a coaling station there, or at the Philippine islands, or elsewhere, is of value. I have had no military education; I do not know how to conduct a war; I do not edit a "yellow" journal; and so I yield unquestioning assent to the claims made by these army and navy gentlemen that, in case of war, coaling stations in different parts of the globe are desirable. And yet, with the incredulity and questioning spirit of a Yankee, I cannot but notice that we have gotten along safely for an hundred years without any coaling stations outside of our own territory, and I want to ask how much greater victory Dewey would have won if we had had a dozen coaling stations in the far Pacific? And, further, it is clear that for a coaling station territory as large as New England is not essential. I know of but one place that needs such a large coaling station, and that is a place we all hope to eternally avoid. But, beyond that, is there not such a thing as overdoing this getting ready for war? I have noticed that a man who goes about with a chip on his shoulder is very apt to have many quarrels, but the gentleman who minds his own business is