

afterward surrendered by the Spanish to him. The fact is that up to last Sunday American authority hardly extended beyond the walls of Manila city, the whole of the rest of Luzon, as well as some of the other islands being in the hands of the native government. This government sent an embassy to the Paris peace conference, setting forth that it embraced fifteen provinces and that in all of them good order and tranquillity prevailed. An acknowledged authority on the Philippines, long a resident there, writes in a recent review that he has before him a list of the township presidents throughout Luzon, many of whom he has personally known for years.* Since the government has obtained possession of Iloilo, law and order have equally prevailed there according to the testimony of our own observers. The Philippine government sent a representative to Washington, whom our government refused to receive, though personally, and as he has conducted himself, no one has taken exception to him.

Vote of Confidence.

But a short time since the congress at Malolos passed a fresh vote of confidence in Aguinaldo and empowered him to declare war on America whenever he should deem it desirable. Grant that this government may not be an ideal government, grant that it may not act wisely, grant that it does not represent the whole people of the Philippines but only the more enterprising and progressive classes, none the less it is something, and I should think any lover of freedom, any old-fashioned American, would welcome it as a beginning and as prophetic of greater things that may some time come.

Desire Liberty.

I started out by saying that the Filipinos wanted freedom and I have stated all these things to show what manner of people they were. And now the question is, Spain having transferred to us whatever title to the islands she possessed (and I am not sorry for it), no other nation having the right to interfere, what shall we do? Shall we proceed to enforce our title after the Spanish fashion, or shall we respect the instincts and aspirations for freedom of those dusky tribes, do all in our power to help perfect the independent political institutions that are already in their infancy, and defend them against any possible assault from without? It will not do to say that the Philippines are ours in the sense in which the territory between the Atlantic and the Pacific is ours. All we have is a quitclaim deed to them from Spain. We have whatever title Spain had. But what in the light of American ideas was that title worth? There is an old notion lying at the foundation of our po-

litical system that government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed. Without insisting on the literal and pedantic interpretation of that notion, its general meaning is plain. It is the charter of our liberty, the spiritual basis of American institutions. In the name of that idea and under its sacred sanction we flung ourselves into the Cuban war. Despite all low motives that intermingled, there was a note of idealism in our first pronouncement. We have not sinned against that idea (unless in the war with Mexico) till now; the constraining motive in our declaration to England about Venezuela was of this character—we will not have political freedom trenched upon on this continent, that was the meaning of it. Are we ready, is the American people ready to forget that idea now? Circumstances do alter cases; does it alter this case, or is it a principle of the national life? The Monroe doctrine may be abandoned, though I think it has been rather extended than abandoned in the recent war (for the root principle of it is nothing else than concern for liberty); the wise counsels of the fathers, of even great Washington, may no longer be applicable; but is the declaration of independence simply a counsel or is it rather America's life blood? For my own part, I am in this case a conservative, for when the past is so fortunate as to have enunciated a principle, I know nothing else than to cling to it. Idealism and conservatism blend in one. Happy is that country that can look back as well as forward to something great. Many countries are glad to cover up their beginnings; thank the blessed fates, we in America are in luckier stead.

Bogus Bill of Sale.

Now, if the Filipinos wished to become a part of us, we should not sin against our great principle in incorporating them, however undesirable and politically inexpedient such a result might be, and the ratified treaty would leave the world nothing to say against it. We might have cherished this idea at the start, we might have thought that any subject people would be glad to come under the protection our flag; but apparently we are mistaken, we are waking up to see that other peoples, even so-called inferior peoples, may have a desire to have their own political existence as truly as we did, now a hundred and more years ago. We are confronted with a situation in which we have a paper title to a people that after all does not wish to belong to us. If they were our own people as the South was, we might hold them even against their consent; but they are foreigners and outsiders to start with. We have absolutely no claim on them at all save the quitclaim title which Spain has given us, and what, after all, does that title amount to in the light of the facts of

the past week, save permission to make a conquest of them? We hear much of expansion, of inevitable expansion, of the instinct to live and grow and expand itself which every great people feels. Americans talk in this way as well as Englishmen and I will not deny that there is some truth in it; all I can say is that according to the American idea there are rightful limitations to the process and these limitations are set in the terms of the declaration of independence, and if we forget those limitations we become no better than the Roman empire of old, and our republic is but a name. These limitations hold against a weak people as truly as against a strong one. The test of justice is in respecting the weak, and if justice is laid low it will lay us low in time. There is only one thing stronger than man or the strongest and most expansive nation, and that is the immortal laws, God.

No New Master Wanted.

This nation has had full warning of the dire events that have happened this past week. Ever since Dewey entered Manila bay we could, if we had our ears to the ground, hear the murmurs and resolves of certain dark-skinned people that they would throw off a hated oppressor's yoke and would not bow meekly to a new master. There has been apparently much holding the ears to the ground to know what our people really wanted, but there has not been apparently much heeding of what even came over the wires from the distant East. We knew or could have known that conditions were ripe for a fresh insurrection, we knew or could have known that after Dewey's victory it began, we ourselves aiding and abetting, and in turn profiting by it. We supplied the insurgents with arms and ammunition; through our agent at Hong Kong we encouraged Aguinaldo to go back to Luzon, we even allowed them to think that we should favor Philippine independence; they innocently believed that we sympathized with them, that having set out to free the Cubans, we could not be indifferent to their own aspirations. They did not wish German aid and refused it when it was offered to them, but they were willing to be beholden to us—we the great liberty-loving power of the West. They would not seriously oppose a temporary American protectorate. All this appeared in their formal statement to the American people, brought to this country by Agoncillo in September. Yes, as late as two months ago they recognized that such a protectorate would be necessary to them, as otherwise they would, with whatever government they might set up for themselves sooner or later become the prey of some greedy power. But gradually they have become skeptical of our intentions. They have been led to suspect that we

*John Foreman, National Review, November 1898, page 398.