

THE SINGING RIVER.

Sweet melodies are echoing
Through mists of joy and tears,
They come again, again repeat
The songs that time endears,
That sound through distant years.

And ever with their voices dim
One song rings o'er and o'er,
The song the little river sang
To homes beside its shore,
In days that are no more.

The winding, curving river's flow
That came from out the west
With roselit waves and golden tinge
Of sunset on its breast,
And sang in twilight's rest.

It parted where an island stood
With somber fringe of pine
And toward the north and toward the south
It sang at day's decline.
With singing ran each line

To join in rippling near the wall
Where stood the convent gray,
And mingle with the quiet tones
Of nuns who knelt to pray
To God at close of day,

Below the bridges in the town
It softly murmured by
And joined the mothers' evening song
Of tender lullaby,
While darker grew the sky,

Beneath the stars reflected light
Its voice grew bold at night.
The fishermen sang o'er their nets
And toiled in changeful light
Where flamelit shores were bright.

And with them sang the river low
Above its bed of stone,
Then swept between the vineyards dark
With gentle, plaintive tone,
And, shadowed, sang alone.

Now evermore the river flows
From westward to the sea,
The rippling, singing river calls
With sighing or with glee
From out the years to me.

—MARY FRENCH MORTON.

JUDGE HARMON'S SPEECH.

We present to our readers herewith the text of the remarkable speech delivered by Ex-United States Attorney-general Judson Harmon at the first dinner given in honor of Hon. William H. Taft, in Cincinnati, March 5th:

"If you had met to approve the general course of the government with respect to the Philippines, I should not be here. For a hundred years we had to content ourselves with words of sympathy for peoples struggling, as we once struggled, for freedom and independence. Here for the first time an opportunity came to help in such a struggle without breaking our settled policy. We joined ranks with the native patriots against a common enemy. Whether any one made, or was authorized to make, promises to them is of no consequence. Our history and principles are a perpetual promise; and no one will deny that when the Filipinos joined forces with us they believed, and we

knew they believed, that success would mean the fulfilment of their hopes. We should have resented a request for a promise that we would not do beyond the seas what we had pledged ourselves not to do at our own shores. No American can truly say that during the struggle he had any other idea. If anybody then assumed to sit in judgment on the fitness of others to have rights which we hold to be inalienable, nobody dreamed of questioning the fitness for freedom and independence of men who, to gain them, had risked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

"When we came to terms of peace, it was our duty to put an end to the claims of the King of Spain. As to all the territory except a few square miles, these were the barest of pretensions, but his need and others' greed might make a speculative asset of them to the injury of our allies. This was the only possible justification for the direction to our commissioners to purchase those claims, and we naturally expected some declaration of trust. So did our allies. But it soon turned out that instead of buying off the King of Spain, the government had bought him out and proposed to realize on the investment, treating our late comrades in arms to a mere change of masters.

"Our only real war followed—a war which a word would have avoided, if our government had been willing to say it, and whose victories roused no gladness in our people, like those over Spain. The government got absolutely nothing by the treaty with Spain except color of title to a small part of the territory, and consequent color of right to make war on the inhabitants without action by congress. Whatever it now holds (save what it got by treaty with the Sultan of Sulu) it has acquired by conquest from them, and not otherwise, and it is still engaged in perfecting and extending such conquest.

"We now hear the usual plea of the doers of doubtful things—the deed is done, it is too late to discuss it. True, we are responsible for what the government has done. It has committed us to present ownership of what lawyers call legal title to the Philippines, and no citizen has a right to shirk his share of the responsibility for whatever such ownership involves. But the people have not spoken on the great questions which lie behind this. They have authorized no one to speak for them. Are we to keep and rule as our own lands which plainly can never be taken into our Union of American states, or shall we declare and perform the trust for the inhabitants of those lands which is implied by every consideration of principle and good faith? Nothing the government has done or may do can foreclose that issue. No consideration which bears on it can be brushed aside.

"It is never too late to retrace a misstep, to right or undo a wrong. This is

not the time or place to discuss this issue. But if the people shall decide that no nation is good enough to rule another nation without that other's consent; if they shall remember what it cost us to cast out the heresy that the great principles of liberty did not apply to black men and shall refuse to re-embrace it as to brown ones; if they shall conclude that this country can not long exist part vassal and part free, as they found it could not part slave and part free—then there will be no difficulty in doing what we ought to have done in the beginning: leave the Filipinos to manage their own affairs and serve notice on the world that they are under our protection. That issue may be settled soon. It may take long. As it involves right and wrong, it will never be settled until it is settled right. In the meantime there are certain duties for which we have been made responsible. One is to provide a government for the people of those islands. However strongly he may disapprove the course which has led to this necessity, no citizen has a right to withhold his aid and support.

"The situation is very peculiar. On the ratification of the treaty, whatever territory in fact belonged to Spain became territory of the United States. The military authority of the president ceased. Our constitution and laws extended there, and it became his duty to enforce them. As to the territory conquered from the natives, there has been no treaty because the government has refused to recognize their dominion. The president's military authority, therefore, strictly speaking, still prevails, and under it he might make regulations having the present force of law. But as the government has chosen to refer the title to all the territory it holds to the treaty with Spain, the president must treat it all alike as part of our national domain and none of it as enemy's country.

"Congress has failed to act in the matter, so the president is compelled to continue as a *de facto* government that which he had established under his military power. It is either that or anarchy. His right to make regulations in the nature of laws is subject to grave doubt, but his right and duty to provide agencies for enforcing the laws are clear.

"He has decided to act through a civil commission. He has chosen our friend and neighbor as the head of that commission, and I am here to join you in approving that decision and that choice, and in wishing Judge Taft God speed on his journey by land and by sea, and success in the most novel and important work that has fallen to any man of his generation.

"If these people had come under our rule of their own free will, we might well leave them to take their chances as we do ourselves. But we have cast out