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THE NEW AMERICA.

[This oration by H. R. Tucker was awarded first place on manuscript in the recent local oratorical contest.]

The Spanish American war is a thing of yesterday. Its causes, just or unjust, are now problems of history. Human activities are endeavoring to determine its effects on future generations. What must we behold as we turn our eyes toward coming events? Shall we welcome or shall we oppose these revelations?

This war has been waged by the nation, not for political freedom, not for the redemption of our Union, but in behalf of an alien race—a circumstance unparalleled in the history of our country and in the history of the world. In past wars we battled for our own existence. In this war we gladly laid upon ourselves heavier burdens, and sent troops to save a nation other than our own. Dare we ask, are these peoples worth saving? Since Christ, himself, has set the example there is no man not worth dying for, and no man deserves to live who will not die for others. We entered into this war with little spirit of conquest and no thought of expansion. Our main purpose was to secure for others that liberty, that humane spirit, and that civilization which our flag symbolizes. Now that the victory is ours, will we, the American people, be indifferent to the opportunities which it presents? The question of the hour is not what we intended to do; but rather, what we must now do, if we are to meet our obligations to the cause of humanity, civilization, and our own welfare.

We have advanced to a new ideal; an altruistic policy is now ours. Heretofore the cry has been to consider our own interests, not those of others. Washington's position at the end of the eighteenth century has become our principle now in the nineteenth. But the present, in the shadow of the twentieth century with its new opportunities, and its new duties, demands a broader policy. Internal questions cannot exhaust our energies; for the strong American character is not only a centripetal but also a centrifugal force. Let our choice be made with open eyes, with calm confidence, secure in the might of the nation and the justness of its power.

What! Shall we not remain true to the traditions of our fathers? Ah! No; there is no reason to believe that Washington intended that our nation, then one of the smallest of nations, should always continue its policy of isolation. Since the days of Washington the United States has grown from six million to seventy million people. Steam, electricity, and the

printing press have drawn all nations together. A people that, in its colonial state, waged war for eight long years against the mightiest power of Europe and secured its independence; a people that persistently and successfully maintained its right against the claims of all nations to the entire territory west and northwest to the Mississippi river; a people that purchased the immense territory of Louisiana; a people that vindicated its right to the Oregon Territory; that took Florida from the grasp of Spain; that purchased ice-bound Alaska from Russia at the close of an exhausting and costly civil war—this people that has done all this within a century is unjustly accused of departing from her traditional policy, if she should conclude once more to extend a helping hand to other peoples.

Every extension of territory has been preceded by prophecies of evil. It has been followed by increased power and prosperity. Daniel Webster predicted dire disaster upon the acquisition of the Oregon Territory. History bears different testimony. Can we now say that the acquisition of new territory is contrary to our policy in the past? True, the conditions which made expansion expedient and necessary in the earlier years of the Republic are not now operative; but the spirit which then prompted the men who directed the Nation's destiny, to meet new conditions with new and sometimes hazardous measures, is still the spirit by which we must be governed.

We are to honor traditions only so long as traditions serve the real needs of the present; for what may be wise for one generation another finds injudicious. The policy of our government must be changed for our changing needs. Shall the Nation press forward along the paths which open alluringly into a field of wider power, or shall it deliberately remain bound in the swaddling clothes of eternal infancy?

Here is the parting of the ways. To stand still is the Chinese policy. Rather let us go on, and on. Let us extend the highways of American supremacy. The words of the poet shall be the motto of our advancing civilization:

"In the beauty of the lilies
Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom
That transfigures you and me;
As He died to make men holy,
Let us die to make men free."

Yes, the blood shed at Manila, and at Santiago was American blood, blood shed for humanity, blood that will inspire us to carry world-wide the principles of peace and justice, liberty and law. Every grave of an American made there will