"The March of the Flag"

Albert J. Beveridge

September 16, 1898

By August 12, 1898, the US and Spain signed an armistice ending hostilities. But the Treaty of Paris, officially ending the war, was not signed until December 10, 1898, so the status of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines was still uncertain. That fall 36-year old Albert J. Beveridge ran for Senate in Indiana. He kicked off his campaign with a frequently printed speech arguing that the US had a duty to extend civilization to these insular territories at the same time that they would bolster the wealth of the nation. An advocate of Anglo-American superiority, he called the US a "greater England with a nobler destiny." His speech became the official campaign document for the Republican Party in a number of states. —Brook Thomas

It is a noble land that God has given us; a land that can feed and clothe the world; a land whose coastlines would inclose half the countries of Europe; a land set like a sentinel between the two imperial oceans of the globe, a greater England with a nobler destiny.

It is a mighty people that He has planted on this soil; a people sprung from the most masterful blood of history; a people perpetually revitalized by the virile, man-producing working-folk of all the earth; a people imperial by virtue of their power, by right of their institutions, by authority of their Heaven-directed purposes—the propagandists and not the misers of liberty.

It is a glorious history our God has bestowed upon His chosen people; a history heroic with faith in our mission and our future; a history of statesmen who flung the boundaries of the Republic out into unexplored lands and savage wilderness; a history of soldiers who carried the flag across blazing deserts and through the ranks of hostile mountains, even to the gates of sunset; a history of a multiplying people who overran a continent in half a century; a history of prophets who saw the consequences of evils inherited from the past and of martyrs who died to save us from them; a history divinely logical, in the process of whose tremendous reasoning we find ourselves to-day.

Therefore, in this campaign, the question is larger than a party question. It is an American question. It is a world question. Shall the American people continue their march toward the commercial supremacy of the world? Shall free institutions broaden their blessed reign as the children of liberty wax in strength, until the empire of our principles is established over the hearts of all mankind?

Have we no mission to perform, no duty to discharge to our fellow-man? Has God endowed us with gifts beyond our deserts and marked us as the people of His peculiar favor, merely to rot in our own selfishness, as men and nations must, who take cowardice for their companion and self for their deity—as China has, as India has, as Egypt has?

Shall we be as the man who had one talent and hid it, or as he who had ten talents and used them until they grew to riches? And shall we reap the reward that waits on our discharge of our high duty; shall we occupy new markets for what our farmers raise, our factories make, our merchants sell—aye, and, please God, new markets for what our ships shall carry?

Hawaii is ours; Porto Rico is to be ours; at the prayer of her people Cuba finally will be ours; in the islands of the East, even to the gates of Asia, coaling stations are to be ours at the very least; the flag of a liberal government is to float over the Philippines, and may it be the banner that Taylor unfurled in Texas and Fremont carried to the coast.

The Opposition tells us that we ought not to govern a people without their consent. I answer, The rule of liberty that all just government derives its authority from the consent of the governed, applies only to those who are capable of self-government. We govern the Indians without their consent, we govern our territories without their consent, we govern our children without their consent. How do they know that our government would be without their consent? Would not the people of the Philippines prefer the just, humane, civilizing government of this Republic to the savage, bloody rule of pillage and extortion from which we have rescued them?

And, regardless of this formula of words made only for enlightened, self-governing people, do we owe no duty to the world? Shall we turn these peoples back to the reeking hands from which we have taken them? Shall we abandon them, with Germany, England, Japan, hungering for them? Shall we save them from those nations, to give them a self-rule of tragedy?

They ask us how we shall govern these new possessions. I answer: Out of local conditions and the necessities of the case methods of government will grow. If England can govern foreign lands, so can America. If Germany can govern foreign lands, so can America. If they can supervise protectorates, so can America. Why is it more difficult to administer Hawaii than New Mexico or California? Both had a savage and an alien population; both were more remote from the seat of government when they came under our dominion than the Philippines are to-day.

Will you say by your vote that American ability to govern has decayed; that a century's experience in self-rule has failed of a result? Will you affirm by your vote that you are an infidel to American power and practical sense? Or will you say that ours is the blood of government; ours the heart of dominion; ours the brain and genius of administration? Will you remember that we do but what our fathers did—we but pitch the tents of liberty farther westward, farther southward—we only continue the march of the flag?

The march of the flag! In 1789 the flag of the Republic waved over 4,000,000 souls in thirteen states, and their savage territory which stretched to the Mississippi, to Canada, to the Floridas. The timid minds of that day said that no new territory was needed, and, for the hour, they were right. But Jefferson, through whose intellect the centuries marched; Jefferson, who dreamed of Cuba as an American state; Jefferson, the first Imperialist of the Republic—Jefferson acquired that imperial territory which swept from the Mississippi to the mountains, from Texas to the British possessions, and the march of the flag began!

The infidels to the gospel of liberty raved, but the flag swept on! The title to that noble land out of which Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana have been carved was uncertain; Jefferson, strict constructionist of constitutional power though he was, obeyed the Anglo-Saxon impulse within him, whose watchword then and whose watchword throughout the world to-day is, "Forward!": another empire was added to the Republic, and the march of the flag went on!

Those who deny the power of free institutions to expand urged every argument, and more, that we hear, to-day; but the people's judgment approved the command of their blood, and the march of the flag went on!

A screen of land from New Orleans to Florida shut us from the Gulf, and over this and the Everglade Peninsula waved the saffron flag of Spain; Andrew Jackson seized both, the American people stood at his back, and, under Monroe, the Floridas came under the dominion of the Republic, and the march of the flag went on! The Cassandras prophesied every prophecy of despair we hear, to-day, but the march of the flag went on!

Then Texas responded to the bugle calls of liberty, and the march of the flag went on! And, at last, we waged war with Mexico, and the flag swept over the southwest, over peerless California, past the Gate of Gold to Oregon on the north, and from ocean to ocean its folds of glory blazed.

And, now, obeying the same voice that Jefferson heard and obeyed, that Jackson heard and obeyed, that Monroe heard and obeyed, that Seward heard and obeyed, that Grant heard and obeyed, that Harrison heard and obeyed, our President to-day plants the flag over the islands of the seas, outposts of commerce, citadels of national security, and the march of the flag goes on!

Distance and oceans are no arguments. The fact that all the territory our fathers bought and seized is contiguous, is no argument. In 1819 Florida was farther from New York than Porto Rico is from Chicago to-day; Texas, farther from Washington in 1845 than Hawaii is from Boston in 1898; California, more inaccessible in 1847 than the Philippines are now. Gibraltar is farther from London than Havana is from Washington; Melbourne is farther from Liverpool than Manila is from San Francisco.

The ocean does not separate us from lands of our duty and desire—the oceans join us, rivers never to be dredged, canals never to be repaired. Steam joins us; electricity joins us—the Very elements are in league with our destiny. Cuba not contiguous! Porto Rico not contiguous! Hawaii and the Philippines not contiguous! The oceans make them contiguous. And our navy will make them contiguous.

But the Opposition is right—there is a difference. We did not need the western Mississippi Valley when we acquired it, nor Florida, nor Texas, nor California, nor the royal provinces of the far northwest. We had no emigrants to people this imperial wilderness, no money to develop it, even no highways to cover it. No trade awaited us in its savage fastnesses. Our productions were not greater than our trade. There was not one reason for the land-lust of our statesmen from Jefferson to Grant, other than the prophet and the Saxon within them. But, to-day, we are raising more than we can consume, making more than we can use. Therefore we must find new markets for our produce.

And so, while we did not need the territory taken during the past century at the time it was acquired, we do need what we have taken in 1898, and we need it now. The resources and the commerce of these immensely rich dominions will be increased as much as American energy is greater than Spanish sloth. In Cuba, alone, there are 15,000,000 acres of forest unacquainted with the ax, exhaustless mines of iron, priceless deposits of manganese, millions of dollars' worth of which we must buy, to-day, from the Black Sea districts. There are millions of acres yet unexplored.

The resources of Porto Rico have only been trifled with. The riches of the Philippines have hardly been touched by the fingertips of modern methods. And they produce what we consume, and consume what we produce—the very predestination of reciprocity—a reciprocity "not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." They sell hemp, sugar, cocoanuts, fruits of the tropics, timber of price like

mahogany; they buy flour, clothing, tools, implements, machinery and all that we can raise and make. Their trade will be ours in time. Do you indorse that policy with your vote?

Cuba is as large as Pennsylvania, and is the richest spot on the globe. Hawaii is as large as New Jersey; Porto Rico half as large as Hawaii; the Philippines larger than all New England, New York, New Jersey and Delaware combined. Together they are larger than the British Isles, larger than France, larger than Germany, larger than Japan.

If any man tells you that trade depends on cheapness and not on government influence, ask him why England does not abandon South Africa, Egypt, India. Why does France seize South China, Germany the vast region whose port is Kaouchou?

Our trade with Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines must be as free as between the states of the Union, because they are American territory, while every other nation on earth must pay our tariff before they can compete with us. Until Cuba shall ask for annexation, our trade with her will, at the very least, be like the preferential trade of Canada with England. That, and the excellence of our goods and products; that, and the convenience of traffic; that, and the kinship of interests and destiny, will give the monopoly of these markets to the American people.

The commercial supremacy of the Republic means that this Nation is to be the sovereign factor in the peace of the world. For the conflicts of the future are to be conflicts of trade—struggles for markets—commercial wars for existence. And the golden rule of peace is impregnability of position and invincibility of preparedness. So, we see England, the greatest strategist of history, plant her flag and her cannon on Gibraltar, at Quebec, in the Bermudas, at Vancouver, everywhere.

So Hawaii furnishes us a naval base in the heart of the Pacific; the Ladrones another, a voyage further on; Manila another, at the gates of Asia—Asia, to the trade of whose hundreds of millions American merchants, manufacturers, farmers, have as good right as those of Germany or France or Russia or England; Asia, whose commerce with the United Kingdom alone amounts to hundreds of millions of dollars every year; Asia, to whom Germany looks to take her surplus products; Asia, whose doors must not be shut against American trade. Within five decades the bulk of Oriental commerce will be ours.

No wonder that, in the shadows of coming events so great, free-silver is already a memory. The current of history has swept past that episode. Men understand, to-day, that the greatest commerce of the world must be conducted with the steadiest standard of value and most convenient medium of exchange human ingenuity can devise. Time, that unerring reasoner, has settled the silver question. The American people are tired of talking about money—they want to make it. Why should the farmer get a half-measure dollar of money any more that he should give a half-measure bushel of grain?

Why should not the proposition for the free coinage of silver be as dead as the proposition of irredeemable paper money? It is the same proposition in a different form. If the Government stamp can make a piece of silver, which you can buy for 45 cents, pass for 100 cents, the Government stamp can make a piece of pewter, worth one cent, pass for 100 cents, and a piece of paper, worth a fraction of a cent, pass for 100 cents. Free-silver is the principle of fiat money applied to metal. If you favor fiat silver, you necessarily favor fiat paper.

If the Government can make money with a stamp, why does the Government borrow money? If the Government can create value out of nothing, why not abolish all taxation?

And if it is not the stamp of the Government that raises the value, but the demand which free coinage creates, why has the value of silver gone down at a time when more silver was bought and coined by the Government than ever before? Again, if the people want more silver, why do they refuse what we already have? And if free silver makes money more plentiful, how will you get any of it? Will the silver-mine owner give it to you? Will he loan it to you? Will the Government give or loan it to you?, Where do you or I come in on this free-silver proposition?

The American people want this money question settled for ever. They want a uniform currency, a convenient currency, a currency that grows as business grows, a currency based on science and not on chance.

And now, on the threshold of our new and great career, is the time permanently to adjust our system of finance. The American people have the mightiest commerce of the world to conduct. They can not halt to unsettle their money system every time some ardent imagination sees a vision and dreams a dream. Think of Great Britain becoming the commercial monarch of the world with her financial system periodically assailed! Think of Holland or Germany or France bearing their burdens, and, yet, sending their flag to every sea, with their money at the mercy of politicians-out-of-an-issue. Let us settle the whole financial system on principles so sound that no agitation can shake it. And then, like men and not like children, let us on to our tasks, our mission and our destiny.

There are so many real things to be done—canals to be dug, railways to be laid, forests to be felled, cities to be builded, fields to be tilled, markets to be won, ships to be launched, peoples to be saved, civilization to be proclaimed and the flag of liberty flung to the eager air of every sea. Is this an hour to waste upon triflers with nature's laws? Is this a season to give our destiny over to word-mongers and prosperity-wreckers? No! It is an hour to remember our duty to our homes. It is a moment to realize the opportunities fate has opened to us. And so it is an hour for us to stand by the Government.

Wonderfully has God guided us. Yonder at Bunker Hill and Yorktown His providence was above us. At New Orleans and on ensanguined seas His hand sustained us. Abraham Lincoln was His minister and His was the altar of freedom the Nation's soldiers set up on a hundred battle-fields. His power directed Dewey in the East and delivered the Spanish fleet into our hands, as He delivered the elder Armada into the hands of our English sires two centuries ago. The American people can not use a dishonest medium of exchange; it is ours to set the world its example of right and honor. We can not fly from our world duties; it is ours to execute the purpose of a fate that has driven us to be greater than our small intentions. We can not retreat from any soil where Providence has unfurled our banner; it is ours to save that soil for liberty and civilization.

"The Colonial Expansion of the United States"

Abbott Lawrence Lowell

February 1899

By early 1899 the Treaty of Paris had been signed, and the US had acquired Puerto Rico and the Philippines. But it was not clear what their status would be in terms of the rest of the country. Abbott Lawrence Lowell, a professor of political science who would later become president of Harvard University, wrote an article for the Atlantic Monthly *placing the issue in historical perspective. According to Lowell, there was nothing new about the US possessing colonies. Colonization "has lasted as long as our national existence." Lowell insisted that "We must treat fairly not only each of our possessions as a whole, but also every race that inhabits it." But fair treatment for Lowell did not mean equal treatment. Considering the "theory that all men are created equal politically" an interesting ideal but an untrue practice, he felt that the non-whites of the insular possessions were incapable of self-government and the vote. Thus the new possessions should not be treated like US possessions in the past that had been given the status of "infant states."* —Brook Thomas

The Colonial Expansion of the United States.

Our country has been suddenly placed in the position of a man who, intending to make a small bid at a foreclosure sale to protect the interest of a poor neighbor, finds himself unexpectedly the owner of a large estate subject to a heavy mortgage. If the heritage rent from Spain is princely, the questions it entails are sorely perplexing; and although before we made the bid we talked a great deal about the right of the poor neighbor to manage his own property, we have now discovered that the responsibility rests mainly upon us. In short, we have taken the irrevocable step of extending our possessions beyond the sea, and it is wise to consider soberly, without enthusiasm and without prejudice, the problems which that step involves.

It is commonly said that the recent annexations mark a departure from our traditional policy, in that they present the first attempt the nation has made to acquire colonies. The former half of this statement is substantially correct; for, with the exception of Alaska, the lands we have annexed have bordered upon those we already possessed. Moreover, they have been, for the most part, uninhabited or very thinly peopled. The other half of the statement—that we have entered for the first time in the path of colonization—cannot be accepted without careful examination. The term "colony" is habitually used in a vague sense. It brings to mind European possessions in America, Asia, and Africa, and conjures up recollections of selfish oppression. In fact, for many Americans the word has disagreeable associations with which it has no necessary connection. Properly speaking, a colony is a territory, not forming, for political purposes, an integral part of the mother country, but dependent upon her, and peopled in part, at least, by her emigrants. If this is true, there has never been a time, since the adoption of the first ordinance for the government of the Northwest Territory in 1784, when

the United States has not had colonies. Nor is there anything artificial or strained about this definition. The very essence of a colony lies in the fact that it is a new land, to which citizens can go and carry with them the protection of the parent state; and this has been eminently the case in the territories of the United States. They have been administered, it is true, with a view to their becoming at the earliest possible moment members of the Union, with full equality of rights; but that is not inconsistent with their being colonies in the strictest sense, so long as they remained territories at all. Until admitted as states, their position has not differed in any essential particular from that of the North American colonies of England before the outbreak of the Revolution.

The extension of the boundaries of the United States has been brought about by every kind of process: by purchase, as in the case of Louisiana with the land then belonging to it, which stretched from the Mississippi to the Rocky Mountains, and in the north all the way to the Pacific,—in the case, also, of Florida, of the Gadsden purchase, and of Alaska; by voluntary annexation, in the case of Texas; finally, by conquest, in the case of California, together with the country lying eastward to the Rio Grande: and by far the greater part of these acquisitions were for a time governed as territories or colonies.

The existence of vast regions in North America uninhabited by civilized man enabled our fathers to plant an ever extending series of new communities to which the people of the older settlements could emigrate without becoming foreigners, and the process has added enormously to the prosperity of the nation. Unlimited land, fit for agriculture, and to be had almost for the asking, made it possible for any man, by going West, to earn a living; and this, reacting upon the more thickly settled parts of the country, relieved the pressure of competition for work in spite of the constant stream of immigration, kept up a high standard of material comfort among the working classes, and fostered enterprise, energy, and self-reliance. After the great belt of forest had been cleared and the open prairie was reached, the conditions became even more favorable; for the absence of forests, the fertility of the virgin soil, the advance in the use of agricultural machinery, and the multiplication of railroad lines enabled the Western farmer to raise his crops at a cost that insured him a profitable market in Europe. At the same time the rapid growth of the country stimulated industry in the East, and made it possible to maintain a protective tariff, which was little felt by the farmer, while it built up manufactures. The progress of the people westward at an ever increasing speed thus developed and enriched all parts of the nation, the old as well as the new.

Nor has the process of planting new communities in the West been less successful from a political than from an economic point of view. With the exception of the troubles in Kansas during the contest over slavery, a quarrel imported from the older states, and the disturbances in Utah, where polygamy was a rock of offense, the United States has had scarcely any friction with the territories. The course of their government has run smoothly; and if the conditions have been peculiarly favorable and such as can never occur again, this fact has not been the sole cause of success. That the expansion to the Mississippi and the plains beyond has been a source of strength, that it has promoted the welfare of the nation to an incalculable degree, no man will feel inclined to deny. To realize this, one has only to recall what the position of our country would have been to-day if the ocean or a foreign power had encompassed the boundaries of the original thirteen states; if the Alleghanies had been our western frontier. Since the Revolutionary War the inhabitants of the United States have increased twentyfold; and of the present population one half live in communities that have at some

time been organized as territories,—in other words, that have been founded by the process of colonization. It may safely be asserted, therefore, that the United States has been one of the greatest and most successful colonizing powers the world has ever known.

Like an engine on a down grade, a nation that is bringing fresh fields under cultivation can easily make rapid progress; but a down grade cannot go on forever, and vacant land cannot be of indefinite extent. The conditions that made possible the expansion of our people westward at a furious and constantly accelerated pace are surely, and not very slowly, coming to an end. For some time the Commissioner of Public Lands has been repeating, and since 1890 in almost the same words, "that quite a considerable portion of the vacant land is embraced in the heavily timbered regions of the Southern States, the lake region, the Pacific Coast, and the mountainous and arid regions of the far West, and that the portion of land cultivable without clearing or irrigation is comparatively small. It is a reasonable conclusion, however, that vast bodies of arid lands will in time be reclaimed by irrigation, as the result of the efforts of the government to construct storage basins and ditches for the purpose, seconded, as undoubtedly they will be, by private enterprise; and that, as a consequence, the rain areas of the West will be considerably enlarged." Now, experts are by no means all agreed in thinking that arid lands can be permanently reclaimed by means of irrigation; but even if this is feasible, the total cost to the community of farming on such land is clearly far larger than it is in the well-watered prairies of Iowa. The same thing is true in the states with an abundant rainfall, where the most profitable land has been taken up, and that which is left is less fertile or less well situated. The time has almost come when we shall no longer be able to increase our grain crop by simply running a steam plough through unoccupied square miles of rich virgin soil, but must employ the more expensive processes of higher cultivation or irrigation. Besides, we have reached this point at a moment when the cost of the crop is of vital importance, because our fields are now obliged to compete with foreign lands recently opened to cultivation. Some of these countries are using modern agricultural machinery; they have the advantage of cheaper labor; and in the case of Argentina, where the transportation is all by water, the freight to the markets of Europe is not so high. We have no reason to expect, therefore, that the Western movement will continue much longer at the present rate. The United States as a whole is capable, no doubt, of supporting a far larger population than it contains to-day, but the filling up of country already settled is a much slower process than that of pushing into vacant territories, and hence the rate of expansion must inevitably be checked. One often hears the question asked, "We have been getting along exceedingly well; why cannot we keep on as we have been going?" The answer is that an engine cannot keep on if there is no more track; or to make the simile a little closer, it cannot continue at the old speed when the down grade comes to an end. The expansion into new regions, within the old limits of the United States, must cease, because there will be no new fertile regions there; and we shall be confined to filling up what we have already occupied.

If we look, then, at the past and the future, the question is, not whether we shall enter upon a career of colonization or not, but whether we shall shift into other channels the colonization which has lasted as long as our national existence, or whether we shall abandon it; whether we shall expand in other directions, or cease to expand into new territory at all. Although the acquisition of the Spanish colonies was an accident, in the sense that the war was not waged with any deliberate intention of expansion, yet the question was sure to present itself in some form before long; and there

can be little doubt how it would have been answered. The checking of expansion by the occupation of all the best agricultural land is certain to produce an economic pressure in many ways. In the first place, it must diminish the demand for labor; or rather, check the demand that has hitherto increased with the supply. The Western land will not absorb farm hands at the same rate as in the past; while in the East industry has developed so fast that the home market is already fully stocked with most kinds of manufactured goods, profits have fallen, and there is little inducement for a large increase of factories. In short, the demand for labor must decrease as compared with the supply, and hence wages must fall. Some of our manufactures may, indeed, find a wider foreign market, but this can hardly take place on a large scale without a general decline of wages to a point nearer the European standard.

Moreover,—and this would have still greater weight in determining national action,—the filling up of the vacant land must diminish the chance of employment even faster for men who work with their heads than for those who work with their hands. Our public schools are often criticised on the ground that the kind of instruction they give is ill adapted for training boys to be artisans. It is said that it fills their heads with useless information and gives them a distaste for manual labor. No doubt this charge is not entirely unfounded, but hitherto the constantly swelling stream of immigrants has supplied most of the laborers for the rougher kinds of work, and the young men educated here have found plenty of room higher up the economic ladder. Throughout the North, the nativeborn Americans have filled the professions, have been merchants, shopkeepers, clerks, managers, and foremen. They have been the captains, and, if I may use the term, the non-commissioned officers of labor. Now, as immigration lessens with the filling up of the country, the proportion of men who have obtained a fair education cannot fail to be much larger; and thus the competition for the work they are capable of doing must become exceedingly sharp, as it is to-day in France, for example, or in Germany. That men of this stamp will tend to seek their fortunes in other places where their services are in demand cannot be doubted. It is also clear that, wherever they go, they will claim the protection of our government: and this class in the community is, after all, the main controlling force in politics.

Finally, we must not forget that the Anglo-Saxon race is expansive. While the elaborate administrative systems of Continental Europe tend to make men dependent upon the government, the common law develops self-reliance and fits a man to cope alone with new conditions. A colonist, to succeed, must be allowed to make his own way as best suits his surroundings, untrammeled by administrative regulations; and it is a striking fact that German emigrants do not flock to their own colonies. They prefer to go to America or to an English colony, and thrive better there. The habit of shifting for one's self is not only a natural result of our institutions, but has been deeply ingrained by the Western movement of the population, until the idea of bettering his prospects by emigration comes naturally to every American. That a tendency so firmly rooted should die out as the country fills up, that the custom of pushing into any favorable opening should not operate beyond the present limits of the United States, seems incredible. The rush for the Klondike is enough to dispel such an illusion. Now, if a large number of American citizens were to pour into any country where law and order are not effectually maintained, and where there is no adequate security for the enforcement of contracts, our government would certainly be called upon to interfere, and the appeal would not long be made in vain.

It seems altogether probable, therefore, that if the war with Spain had not broken out, the question of expansion would have arisen in some concrete form before many decades had passed, and

that it would ultimately have been answered in the affirmative. The war has forced the issue, prematurely, perhaps, and rightly or wrongly, for good or for evil, the die is cast. Hence it behooves us to consider the causes of our past success in expansion or colonization, and see how far they are applicable to our new possessions. Of these causes two are preëminent: the territories have been treated as infant states, subject to tutelage only until they came of age; and they have been managed unselfishly. Let us examine each of these principles separately, analyzing the conditions on which it is based, as compared with the state of affairs in the provinces ceded by Spain.

With the exception of Alaska, which can never contain a considerable civilized population, and hence occupies an anomalous position, the territories have been dealt with on the same plan. They have been admitted to the Union as states, on a footing of equality with the original members, as soon as their population was large enough to justify such a step. To this rule there have been only two exceptions. The admission of Utah was delayed for a time by the existence of polygamy, which had to be effectually rooted out before she could be allowed to take her place in the nation; and New Mexico still remains under a territorial government, although her population is already greater than is usually required for statehood, a large part of the inhabitants being of Spanish race, and not sufficiently trained in habits of self-government. Admission as states has been the object constantly in view in dealing with the territories; and while yet too small for that, they have been prepared for it by extensive self-government. During what might be called their babyhood, when first created, or while still little more than scattered clearings in the backwoods, they were indeed governed solely by officers appointed by the President.[1] But this stage was brief, and they were early given an organization modeled on that of the states. The territorial governor had much the same powers as the governor of a state; the legislatures, after some early variations, soon settled down to the fixed type of two houses, both elected by the people on a suffrage that widened contemporaneously with the lowering of the franchise in the older states, until it became universal. These bodies were given general legislative power, subject to restrictions in the main similar to those embodied in the state constitutions. In short, the form of government resembled closely that of a state, save that the United States appointed the governor and higher judges, and reserved the power to annul laws enacted by the territories and to legislate for them in case of necessity. The system of apprenticeship has proved so effective that "of the twenty-six territories that have organized themselves as states, there is not a single instance of one having substantially altered the form of government to which they were accustomed."[2] Now, this policy in dealing with the territories is based upon the belief that their people have equal rights with those of the states, which in turn has its foundation in the theory that all men are created equal; nay, that all men remain equal in spite of every difference in education and environment. This has become a political axiom in America; and an axiom has been defined as a proposition which cannot be proved, but which is universally accepted as true. It may be of service to inquire what the theory in question really signifies.

The doctrine of human equality has two distinct meanings. One of them refers to civil, the other to political rights, and the two have no necessary connection. The equality of all free men as regards civil rights is an essential principle of the common law. Its foundations were laid by the Norman and Angevin kings of England, and found utterance in Magna Charta. It is too deeply imbedded in the law to be shaken, and it is now a part of the creed of every civilized nation. With the abolition of slavery it has become of universal application, and it will, of course, be applied to any people that

come under our control. It is this that the signers of the Declaration of Independence had in mind when they said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." They did not mention the right to vote among the natural rights of man, as in fact at this time, and for half a generation later, by far the greater part of the states limited the suffrage to the owners of a certain amount of property, and all the rest required the payment of a tax.

The theory that all men are equal politically is quite a different matter. There is no use in discussing whether it is strictly true. No one ever thought that. No one ever believed that a worthless street loafer and Abraham Lincoln were equally fit to be intrusted with a share in the direction of public affairs, or that they were political equals in any sense. The question is whether the theory is near enough to the truth to be acted upon. At best it is an approximation, and many approximations are sufficiently accurate for practical purposes within certain limits. In building a house, ploughing a field, laying out the streets of a city, or sailing a few miles along the coast, for example, we take no account of the earth's curvature, but act as if it were flat; and the error is so very small that we are perfectly justified in so doing. But if one were to try to circumnavigate the globe on that hypothesis, he would find himself wrecked far away from his port of destination. In the same way, the theory that all men are equal is accurate enough to be applied where the inequalities are not too great. This is true where the population is tolerably homogeneous and political education is widely diffused, as in the rural districts and smaller cities of the Northern States; but in the large cities, where the inequalities of social condition are enormous, and where there is a huge mass of foreigners untrained in self-government, the Utopia foretold by the prophets of democracy has not been quite fulfilled. Tammany does not altogether realize the dreams of Jefferson.

The practical application of this theory in the United States has had a curious history. It was not acted upon in any state at the beginning of our national existence, or for many years afterward. In fact, the experiment of doing without any tax or property qualification was first tried by Kentucky and Vermont, on their admission to the Union in 1791. Within the next ten years two or three of the old states abolished the property qualification. In 1821 New York and Massachusetts did the same, and the others followed slowly; so that by the time of the civil war only two states required the voters to own property, although half a dozen more retained a provision for the payment of a small tax. But even so there was only a very partial application of the theory, for it was not applied to the Indians; and indeed, to the present day it has been quietly assumed that so long as they remain in the tribal state they are not men, within the meaning of the theory,—one of many illustrations of the political good sense and bad logic of the English-speaking race. The negroes, also, were barred out originally even in many of the free states. The civil war and the emancipation of the slaves aroused a more generous enthusiasm than ever for the equality of all mankind. The negro was made a free citizen, and why should he not enjoy the franchise? It was urged that without the power to vote he would have no means of protecting his rights effectually, and thus the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution was adopted in 1870.

The theory of political equality had now reached its highest point of development. Rhode Island alone clung for a few years more, till 1888, to a property qualification for voting, while a few other states required the payment of a small tax,[3] and two the ability to read and write. Except for the tribal

Indians, manhood suffrage had become almost universal. But the tide had hardly reached its height before it began to ebb.

The equality of all the races of mankind had no sooner been settled forever than it again unsettled. The first people who were found to be without the pale were the Chinese. The writer well remembers how deeply he was shocked at the violation of our fundamental doctrine by the proposal to forbid their immigration. It seemed a mere selfish attempt on the part of one class of immigrants to prevent competition by another; but the argument that the Chinese could never be assimilated, and hence would be an injurious element in the community, was sound, and resulted in the passage of the exclusion act of 1882, which expressly forbade also the naturalization of any members of that race. The courts had already decided that the existing naturalization laws, which spoke only of "white persons" and "Africans," did not include Chinese. Meanwhile, the political position of the negroes had been a constant source of trouble at the South. As fast as the whites obtained control of the states they began to suppress the colored vote, first by violence, and later by the milder process of fraudulent elections. This kindled indignation at the North; but by degrees men came to doubt whether a decisive control of public affairs could be wisely intrusted to people who were not accustomed to self-government, and until recently had not even power to dispose of their own persons. Finally, the states where the negroes are most numerous have taken a more legal way of disfranchising them. In 1890 Mississippi adopted a constitution which provided that after 1892 no one should vote who was not able to read the constitution, or to understand it when read to him, and give a reasonable interpretation thereof. The intent is obvious. It is a simple matter to offer to a white man a clause of the document which any one can understand, and to a negro a clause which only a lawyer can explain; and, in fact, the Supreme Court of the state, in expounding this constitution, remarked that "within the field of permissible action under the limitations imposed by the Federal Constitution, the convention swept the circle of expedients to obstruct the exercise of the franchise by the negro race."[4] The provision was brought before the Supreme Court of the United States, which decided last spring[5] that it did not on its face deny or abridge the right to vote on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude and that the allegations that the law was so administered as to discriminate against the negro were not direct and definite enough to justify holding it unconstitutional. The court had difficulty in distinguishing the case from some of its earlier decisions, but it may be presumed that the validity of the provision is definitely established. The decision has not raised the storm of protest in the North that would have followed it a score of years ago, and this may be taken as an indication that the country at large has made up its mind that the fifteenth amendment cannot be carried out strictly. In 1895 South Carolina adopted a constitution which contained a similar clause, and also a provision that no man can be registered as a voter after January 1, 1898, unless he can read and write, or pays taxes on property assessed at three hundred dollars. In May last Louisiana followed in the same path, but, with a fine sense of humor, added that these educational and property qualifications should not apply to any person entitled to vote in 1867, or to his son or grandson,—a provision, however, that might be set aside as unconstitutional without marring the main end in view. Thus the three states where the negroes outnumber the whites have rid themselves of the fifteenth amendment: and so we have reached the point that the theory of universal political equality does not apply to tribal Indians, to Chinese, or to negroes under all conditions.[6] In short, it seems to apply rigorously only to our own race, and to those people whom we can assimilate rapidly.

An examination of the doctrine of political equality throws light upon our treatment of the territories, because it explains why we have been able to regard them as infant states, and to admit them rapidly as full partners in the Union. The application of the principle that their people had equal political rights with those of the older parts of the country has been justified by the fact that the population of states and territories has been substantially homogeneous. The approximation has been sufficiently close to the fact for practical purposes. The settlers in the West carried with them the laws and customs of the East, and the precious habit of self-government. Mankind is prone to construct absolute theories on limited experience, and this is, no doubt, the source of the widespread popular belief that all men are fitted to govern themselves. But nothing could be further from the truth. The art of self-government is one of the most difficult to learn; for it requires a perpetual self-restraint on the part of the whole people, which is not really attained until it has become unconscious. The Anglo-Saxon race was prepared for it by centuries of discipline under the supremacy of law; and men will always take generations to acquire it, unless they are immersed in, and assimilated by, a mass of others already accustomed to it. The vast numbers of immigrants coming to America might indeed have made the experiment a failure here, had it not been that many of them came from countries where self-government was practiced, and the rest were so distributed throughout the land that, like recruits in a regiment, they quickly learned the drill and took their place in the ranks. Now, these conditions are not true in our new possessions. No one of them has a population homogeneous with our own, or the experience of a long training in self-government. Every unprejudiced observer must recognize that to let the Filipinos rule themselves would be sheer cruelty both to them and to the white men at Manila. It would be nothing less than abandoning the duty that we have undertaken toward them. Even in case of the people of Porto Rico, who stand on an entirely different footing, self-government must be gradual and tentative, if it is to be a success. They must be trained for it, as our forefathers were trained, beginning with local government under a strong judicial system, and the process will necessarily be slow.

The condition of the Sandwich Islands is peculiar; for there a small fraction of the population are Anglo-Saxon, and perfectly familiar with self-government. They form about five per cent of the inhabitants, while of the remainder, fifteen per cent are Portuguese, forty per cent are Japanese or Chinese, nearly thirty per cent are Kanakas, and eight per cent more are partly of Kanaka blood. No one proposes to treat all these as political equals. On the contrary, the Hawaiian commissioners have recommended that the islands be organized with a territorial government, but that the Japanese and Chinese shall not be made citizens at all, and that the Kanakas and Portuguese shall be virtually excluded from the suffrage by making the right to vote depend upon ability to read and write English and the payment of a tax. This is certainly no bigoted application of the doctrine that all men have an inherent right to an equal share in the government of their country, and yet it would be a gross blunder to attempt to extend the franchise to all this motley population. Whether the presence of a governor appointed by the United States, with power to enforce justice between the races, will not be permanently necessary is a question that will be referred to again, but for our present purpose it is enough that universal suffrage ought not to be set up in Hawaii.

One element of our success in the management of the territories—their treatment as infant states, with institutions like our own and prospective equality of rights—cannot therefore be applied to

our new possessions; and this very fact ought to make us the more earnest in using every other means at our disposal.

The second great cause of our success has been that we have treated the territories unselfishly. The primary object in dealing with the Western country has never been the commercial profit of the older states. The territories have been permitted and assisted to develop normally in the way that seemed to be for their own best interests; in the belief, no doubt, that their development would enrich the whole country, but still with their domestic interests as the primary aim. They have always enjoyed perfect commercial equality with the rest of the nation. Whether the protective tariff, for instance, was a benefit to them or not, it was believed to be so by its advocates, and was certainly not imposed with any idea of gain to the states at the expense of the territories. This principle of unselfish management can be applied perfectly to our new possessions, and to any others we may ever acquire. The revolt of North America taught England the lesson that colonies cannot be a permanent source of wealth and strength unless they are managed with a single eye to their own welfare; and the subsequent experience of European nations has confirmed the principle, for it is one that is universally true. We must treat fairly not only each of our possessions as a whole, but also every race that inhabits it. It would be clearly unwise to give over the government absolutely to a small minority of American settlers, and suffer them to deal with the natives as they think best. It is notorious that such a relation is always liable to produce tyrannical abuse. The opinion of the Americans must, of course, be given grave consideration, but the United States ought always to retain, in the Sandwich Islands, for example, a governor who can do justice to all the races.

Moreover, it is not enough that Congress legislate unselfishly. The men sent to conduct the administration must have in view solely the welfare of the colonies committed to their charge, and this cannot be the case if they are appointed for political motives. Political appointments are tolerable where the duties to be performed can be understood by any man of good capacity, and where the people can and will criticise his acts effectively. In such a case the appointing power shrinks from selecting an obviously unfit person, and the official himself is to some extent, at least, constrained by public opinion. But political appointments would be ruinous where the problems are such that only a man thoroughly familiar with the subject can deal with them, and where local criticism can neither be intelligently made nor effectively used. The condition of things that has existed at times in the Indian Bureau and in Alaska furnishes painful examples of this. Now, it will hardly be denied that the Spanish colonies cannot be well administered by us without a full knowledge of their condition, and it is clear how ineffective local criticism is there. Their recent history is sufficient evidence of this; for it is safe to assert that no Anglo-Saxon community could have been treated by any rulers as Spain treated Cuba. If our colonies are to thrive and add to our own prosperity, we must select only thoroughly trained administrators, fit them for their work by long experience, and retain them in office irrespective of party. To do this, it is necessary to create a permanent and highly paid colonial administrative service, which shall offer an honorable and attractive career for young men of ability. It must be organized on the same basis as the army and the navy, and there can be no doubt that the wisest course would be to base it upon an academy like the schools at West Point and Annapolis. Each of these institutions has produced a corps of men admirably qualified for the work they have to do, and the system has proved perfectly in harmony with our form of government. In fact, the rapid growth

in America of schools for educating lawyers, doctors, and engineers shows that experts, with a highly specialized training, are quite as much in demand—and hence quite as much needed—in a democracy as anywhere else.

The task of managing colonies outside the continental limits of the United States is exposed to two dangers of an opposite character. One is that of attempting to apply theories of government where they are not applicable; the other, that of taking a selfish view of the relation. We must reject all *a priori* political dogmas, and avoid premature experiments in democracy; and at the same time we must not allow the colonies to be considered a mere market for our goods, a lucrative opening for a commercial monopoly, or a happy hunting-ground for politicians. The success or failure of our dependencies does not affect them alone, or the Americans who trade or dwell there. It will react powerfully upon us; and that is the reason why colonial expansion fills many people with alarm. Rome appointed her provincial governors for short periods on political grounds, and the result was that they looked upon the office as a means of personal profit. The Republic could not stand the strain. It fell, and the Emperors rose upon its ruins. England governs her colonies by means of a permanent corps of trained administrators, independent of party, and they have contributed to her greatness without endangering her institutions. If home politics do not interfere with the colonies, they will not harm home politics. Our destiny is in our own hands, and our measure of political wisdom and virtue will determine what we shall make of it.

A. Lawrence Lowell.

Notes

1. See the article by Professor Boyd in The Atlantic Monthly for December, 1898.
2. Max Ferrand in The Legislation of Congress for the Government of the Organized Territories of the United States, page 54. Newark, 1896.
3. One of these, Massachusetts, ceased to require the payment of a poll tax in 1891, as it did not act as a real restriction, but had become simply a tax on the political parties.
4. Ratliff *vs*. Beal, 74 Miss. 247, 266.
5. Williams *vs*. State of Mississippi.
6. Florida and Arkansas have recently required payment of a poll tax, no doubt for the same purpose, and in 1897 Delaware required ability to read and write instead of payment of a tax.