OUR WORK AS A CIVILIZER.

I REMEMBER hearing an astute observer, who had made a lifelong study of American politics and character, say, after the ratification of the Treaty of Paris, "Well, that starts us as a nation on a new and disastrous career. We are to go into the business of colonization, and no people were ever more utterly unfit for such work than we are. Our colonial administration will be saturated with spoils politics and be directed by spoils politicians. We shall make a dreadful mess of it, disgracing ourselves in the eyes of the civilized world." Never did prediction fail more completely of fulfillment than this has failed. Precisely the opposite has happened. We have shown that we are exceptionally fit for the work of colonization, we have kept spoils politics and spoils politicians out of the work entirely, and we have honored ourselves in the eyes of the world by the way in which we have performed it. For this highly creditable achievement the nation is indebted primarily to President McKinley. He made it not only possible but certain when he selected as pioneers in this new field of American endeavor such men as Generals Ludlow and Wood for Cuba, Judge Taft for the Philippines, and Mr. Allen for Porto Rico. Of each of these men it can be said, as President Roosevelt said so finely of General Wood in his Harvard commencement address in 1902, "credit to him! Yes, in a way. In another no particular credit, because he was built so that he could do nothing else." If President McKinley had done his country no other service than to select these men for this new task he would have earned the lasting gratitude of the American people, for it was a service that not only brought honor to his country, but advanced the cause of civilization throughout the world. This is not panegyric, but the simple language of fact, as a plain statement of what these men have done within three years will demonstrate.

THE NEW REPUBLIC OF CUBA.

The story of what was done in Cuba, before it was turned over to its people for self-government, reads like a romance. General Wood, in his admirable account of his work in the island,

which he gave before the Williams College alumni in 1902, said that the only instructions which President McKinley gave him when he asked him to go to Cuba were: "I want you to go down there to get the people ready for a republican form of government, I leave the details of procedure to you. Give them a good school system; try to straighten out their courts, and put them on their feet as best you can. We want to do all we can for them, and we want to get ready to get out of the island as soon as we can safely do so." Could the work of helping a people, just relieved from centuries of oppression, to start forward in the path of civilization have been outlined more simply or more wisely or more magnanimously than that? General Wood carried out his instructions in the spirit in which they were given, and the bare account of what he succeeded in doing reads like a tale from the "Arabian Nights"; like a summary of results achieved through the use of an Aladdin's lamp or of a magic wand He found the island without a government, without either a school or a court system worthy of the name, and in a condition of filth which made the cities of Havana and Santiago the most unhealthy in the world. Within less than four years later, he left the island with an established form of republican government, under a constitution modeled closely upon that of the United States, with a comprehensive, intelligent, and upright court system, with a public school system that extended through all the provinces, and with a system of sanitation that had made the cities as healthy as any in the world, and had freed the island from contagious diseases, including yellow fever, for the first time in its history. When Santiago surrendered, its condition from a sanitary point of view was beyond description. Its death-rate was 300 a day in a population of 40,000. In one province there were 3,000 cases of smallpox, and in one hospital 1,200 victims. When General Wood left Cuba, less than four years later, the death-rate was on a line with that of New England, and the cities of Havana and Santiago had a cleaner bill of health than the city of Washington. Millions of dollars had been spent in the work of sanitation, and the incalculably valuable discovery had been made of the variety of mosquito that transmitted the germs of yellow fever. As far back as 1881 an old Cuban physician, Dr. Finlay, advanced the theory that yellow fever is transmitted by mosquitoes, but never found the particular variety of mosquito that produced the infection. After the American government began the reconstruction of Cuba, different methods were tried for the extermination of yellow fever. First came

the experiments with corrosive sublimate, then the successful campaigns against the mosquito. The yellow fever commission was formed, which made heroes of its three members and a martyr of one. The discovery that yellow fever cannot be transmitted by contact, but by the sting of a mosquito, General Wood says, was worth the whole cost of the war, and is the most important discovery in medical science since that of vaccination.

In his work of establishing a school system General Wood proceeded with equal energy and good judgment. He found almost enough prisons, military hospitals, and barracks in Cuba to make schoolhouses for the people. He found only one university on the island, and in each province a single institute or high school having many professors and few students. The public school was unknown. When he left Cuba there were 3,786 schools, with 4,000 teachers, and the yearly enrolment of pupils was 252,000, with a daily attendance of 140,000. Of the total revenue $4,200,000, or twenty-five per cent., was spent for educational purposes. General Wood believes in the large school, and what he says of the one which he established in the old and indescribably filthy military barracks in Havana, shows what a genuine missionary spirit animated him in this field of his colonizing work: "We spent a great deal of money on this building in the plumbing and in all kinds of up-to-date sanitary arrangements. We spent it because I believe that a big school like that, in the center of a city of 300,000 people, most of whom are ignorant of the very principles of sanitation, with every sanitary improvement put into the building, will be much more valuable than any books we can give to the children. For this is an object lesson, and in going back to their homes the children will make demands for improved sanitary conditions." The Ohio school law was put into Spanish and adopted, and has been very successful, and to-day there is a uniform school system throughout the island of Cuba.

When, on May 20, 1902, General Wood turned the island over to President Palma and the new government, Cuba was free from debt and had a more promising political future than was enjoyed by any other Latin-American community. The people had received during these few years of American control an object lesson in government that was of the highest value. They had seen the transformation made from mediæval barbarism to modern civilization, and had acquired an elementary knowledge at least of the fundamental principles and methods of civilized government. They had seen that government established first

in the municipalities, then extended to the provinces, then embodied and formulated in a constitution for a republic. Many of them as members of municipal bodies, or as municipal officials, had acquired practical knowledge of the operation of government. We had, in short, done our full duty in starting them on the road that President McKinley marked out in his instructions to General Wood.

PEACE AND PROGRESS IN THE PHILIPPINES.

What has been accomplished in the Philippines is, when the immensely greater obstacles encountered are considered, fully as notable as the result achieved in Cuba. There was no insurrection in Cuba, no opposition to American control, and the work of amelioration began immediately upon American possession. In the Philippines an organized insurrection began with the first moment of American possession and continued with varying degrees of activity for more than three years During most of that time the islands were under military rule, and whatever civil government there was was merely a branch of the military. The military government called into requisition the services of military officers by detailing them to civil duties. Till July, 1901, the commanding general of the army in the islands was civil executive as well. Under his direction, and working in harmony with him, the Taft Commission began to lay the foundations of civil rule, seeking to place them firm and enduring in the principles of popular government. Slow but sure progress was made in this work, one province after another passing under control of civil rule, with a government in which their own leading men took a greater or less part according to varying local conditions, until in July of the present year the entire archipelago passed under civil rule, with Judge Taft as governor, and military rule was withdrawn. The islands were then at peace with the United States throughout their entire extent, and have remained so since. In a communication which he sent to the Senate at that time, Secretary Root gave the total amount expended by the American government in the islands as about $170,000,000, and said of the military forces: "In the middle of the fiscal year ending June 20, 1901, there were about 70,000 American soldiers in the island. That number is now reduced to about 23,000. Orders have now been issued for the return of the Eighth, Fifteenth, Twenty-fourth, and Twenty-fifth Infantry and a squadron of the Tenth Cavalry, and when these orders have been executed the

number of American troops in the Philippines will have been reduced to 18,000."

The bare recital of the results achieved by the Taft Commission up to the time of the establishment of supreme civil government is a really marvellous story. Provincial governments had been established in nearly all the provinces and municipal governments in nearly all the larger towns. A civil service law had been enacted, and for several years had been working admirably, which is a stricter application of the merit system than any similar law in the United States. Four million dollars had been appropriated for harbor and road improvements. A public school system, with 1,000 American teachers and 2,500 Filipino teachers, had been established and schools had been opened in 500 of the 900 towns in the island. In addition normal and manual training schools had been organized. There had been established a judiciary system, with a supreme court made up of three American and four Filipino judges, with appellate jurisdiction, and fifteen judicial district courts with general, civil, and criminal jurisdiction. A local police and insular constabulary force had been organized with 5,000 men, about 150 in each province, under inspectors partly American and partly Filipino, of which Governor Taft said in May last: "I am glad to say that thus far the operation of the constabulary system has been most satisfactory, and ladronism (brigandage) is rapidly disappearing. The selection of men for its ranks has been very carefully made. The system of selecting only residents of the province for service in the province avoids the danger of abuse and looting by the members of the constabulary themselves. In a force of some 5,000 men there have been reported but few desertions. The constabulary costs the Philippine government $250 a man yearly, on the average." There had also been established a Health Department, cooperating with local health officials in all parts of the island, an Agricultural Bureau, Bureau of Mining, Bureau of Ethnology, a Bureau of Forestry, and a Postal System. Thus far the government had been self-supporting, its income being mostly from customs receipts. Surely this is a record of progress in less than two years which is a striking tribute to Governor Taft's ability as an administrator and to American capacity in the work of civilization and colonization. When it is added that on July 4, 1903, a proclamation was issued granting amnesty to all Filipino prisoners, including Aguinaldo, and that no outbreak of any kind has followed to disturb the peace of the islands, the record of pacification is seen to be complete, thus

opening the way to a rapid continuance of the civilizing work already so well begun.

In this genuine service to civilization Governor Taft was the leading force, the dominating influence, as distinctly as was General Wood in Cuba. President Roosevelt's estimate of his character and work, in his speech at Harvard, was as just as it was eloquent and generous. It has been my inestimable privilege to enjoy intimate personal friendship with Governor Taft since his appointment to the Philippines by President McKinley in the spring of 1900. I had many long talks with him on the eve of his departure to the islands, and there was perceptible in him then the awakening of that genuine missionary spirit which afterwards took complete possession of him. He told me then that he had been against the war with Spain, had believed it to be an unnecessary war, and regretted that it had left us with the Philippines on our hands. But the Treaty of Paris closed that part of the case. All there was for every American to do after that was to help his country to solve the new problems which the war had left on its hands. When President McKinley asked him to aid in this task, he felt that he had no right to refuse. He resigned his seat on the bench of the United States Circuit Court, although his tastes and ambition impelled him to a judicial career, and accepted the call of his country. I talked with him freely about his plans, and as I look back over his work in the islands I can see few or no really important particulars in which he has departed from them. His intellectual grasp of the problem had been so strong, his foresight so clear, that he was able to map out his work in all its largest details before he had started for the scene. This was especially the case in regard to the lands held by the friars, for the solution which he had in mind then is the one which he has brought to success now, and which he presented with such ability and tact at Rome as to command both the confidence and win the approval of the Pope and the authorities of the Catholic Church.

What the President said of him was based on personal knowledge of all this and of much more of the same character. He said he had, during Governor Taft's visit to this country, said to him that he was aware of his ambition to become a justice of the Supreme Court, but that if a vacancy were to occur then he did not see how he could possibly give it to him because the country needed him where he was; and that to this Governor Taft replied: "Mr. President, it has always been my dream to be in the Supreme Court; but if you should offer me a justiceship now

and at the same time Congress should take off entirely my salary as governor, I should go straight back to the Philippines nevertheless; for these people need me and expect me back and believe I won't desert them." Every one who met Governor Taft during that visit found him imbued with this spirit and concurred heartily with the estimate which the President made of him after his return: "He has gone back, gone as a strong friend among weaker friends to help them upward along the stony and difficult path of self-government; to do his part, and a great part, in making the American name a symbol of honor and of good faith in the Philippine Islands; to govern with justice and with that firmness, that absence of weakness, which is only another side of justice. He has gone back to do all that because it is his duty as he sees it. We are to be congratulated, we Americans, that we have a fellow American like Taft."

THE FRIARS' LANDS.

In no part of his great task in the Philippines has Governor Taft displayed higher ability than in that relating to the disposition of the lands held by the friars. He realized at the start that this was the crucial element in the problem, for unless the friars could be banished permanently from the islands there could be little real progress made in the direction of pacification and improvement. The one subject upon which all the Filipinos were united was that of hostility to the friars. This was based upon the political power which the friars exercised for fifty years previous to the battle of Manila Bay. As Governor Taft put it: "The friars were the policemen of Spain. They exercised absolute power in every municipality within their respective parishes, and they were made responsible by the people for every act of oppression, individual or general, which might be charged to the Spanish government." While the Filipinos of these parishes were Catholics and devoted to their Church, they would not tolerate these representatives of the Church any longer among them. The last insurrection against Spain, shortly before the battle of Manila, was caused largely by hatred of the friars, 50 of whom were killed in it, and 300 of whom were prisoners when the Americans took possession of Manila and released them. They owned in various provinces about 420,000 acres of land, some of which they had greatly improved by irrigation and other processes. After the insurrection, or for four years or more, the friars were unable to

collect any rents from the people occupying the lands, but under the Treaty of Paris they were lawful owners of the lands, were entitled to the use of them and the fruits of them, and if they were allowed to return and seek to enforce the rights of ownership the certain result would be riot and insurrection. What Governor Taft proposed was the purchase of the lands from them by the United States government and their sale in small holdings to the present tenants, on long and easy payments, the government to issue bonds in an amount sufficient for the purchase, and the proceeds of sales to go into a sinking fund for the redemption of the bonds. Congress authorized this proceeding, and in December, 1903, all the lands were bought for $7,239,000, with the exception of about 10,000 acres that had been sold to a railway company. About three-fifths of the lands purchased are highly cultivated and thickly inhabited by thousands of tenants. In his final report as Civil Governor, previous to leaving the islands to assume the duties of Secretary of War at Washington, Mr. Taft said, in speaking of this transaction: "It is not thought that the income from the islands for several years will be enough to meet the actual outgo, but with a restoration of normal conditions—speaking for myself alone—I hope that the lands will sell for as much as we have paid for them. Other members of the Commission do not think so. It is to be noted, however, that the insular government has not entered upon the purchase of these lands with a view to a profitable investment, but that it is knowingly paying a considerable sum of money merely for the purpose of ridding the administration of the government in the islands of an issue dangerous to the peace and prosperity of the people of the islands.

"Following the policy which it was announced by the Vatican would be pursued, the bishops who were Spanish friars in all the dioceses of the islands have been allowed to resign and their places have been filled by American Catholic bishops. I cannot state with too much emphasis the satisfaction I feel in this change. It means, in my judgment, the beginning of a new era in the islands. It is to be expected that a large part of the people of the islands will continue to be communicants of the Roman Catholic Church, and it cannot but have a liberalizing effect upon them that their bishops shall be Americans with American ideas of a separation of church and state, and with the American respect for individual rights and individual liberties."

It may be well, in order to complete the record, to cite what President McKinley said to Judge Taft, when he selected him

to go to the Philippines. It is very like in tone and temper to what he said to General Wood. In his speech at a banquet which was given in his honor by his fellow citizens of Cincinnati, after his appointment, Judge Taft said: "The high and patriotic purpose of the President in the present juncture is to give to the people of the Philippine Islands the best civil government which he can provide, with the largest measure of self-government consistent with stability. He seeks only the welfare of the Filipino and the betterment of his condition." Speaking for him at the same time, Judge Taft said: "The problems seem certainly formidable enough. It will take patience, persistence, and tact to work them out. Doubtless we shall make mistakes which will deserve criticism, but if we maintain our purpose steadfast, to do nothing save for the good of the Filipino people, we hope, in spite of their formidable character, to surmount the obstacles and win success. If we can thus relieve a hitherto unfortunate and oppressed people from the evil of three centuries of misgovernment the end will be worth the struggle." In his formal instructions to the Taft Commission, President McKinley said: "A high and sacred obligation rests upon the government of the United States to give protection for property and life, civil and religious freedom, and wise, firm, and unselfish guidance in the paths of peace and prosperity to all the people of the Philippine Islands. I charge this commission to labor for the full performance of this obligation, which concerns the honor and conscience of their country."

A few months later, in his letter accepting a renomination, President McKinley said: "It is our purpose to establish in the Philippines a government suitable to the wants and conditions of the inhabitants, and to prepare them for self-government, and to give them self-government when they are ready for it, and as rapidly as they are ready for it." It is because these instructions have been carried forward in letter and in spirit that the work which we are doing in the Philippines is a great service to the civilization of the world.