

**THE OUTLOOK: UNCLE
SAM'S PLACE AND
PROSPECTS IN
INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

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The Outlook: Uncle Sam's Place and Prospects in International Politics by Newton Macmillan

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A Paper

READ BEFORE THE FORTNIGHTLY CLUB, OSWEGO, N. Y.,
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BY

NEWTON MACMILLAN.

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PRESS OF R. J. OLIPHANT,
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THE OUTLOOK:

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IT is exactly a year and a day since Oswego, responding to the President's call, sent away her modest quota of citizen-soldiery to the war with Spain. A novel and inspiring scene, whose meaning, perhaps, we did not wholly take in at the time: the flag of the Republic borne away from the precincts of the city at the head of a body of men of peaceful pursuits, destined, as we supposed, to invade the soil of an alien foe.

The event proved otherwise. Our neighbors were not to pass the boundaries of their native land, but with equal gallantry they were to perform the part of those who "also serve," although they "only stand and wait." Their part was not to scale the awful hill at San Juan, to give their bodies to the noisome vermin of the Cuban chaparral, or to lie down in death upon the fever-stricken rice-fields of Luzon. Nevertheless they partook in the glory of those victories won by their more fortunate comrades, to the honor and credit of the entire army of the United States. Theirs also is an equal part in the renown which all the world now accords to that new and formidable factor in warfare—the American Volunteer.

Truly a May day long to be remembered. Even as we followed the flag to the confines of the town news came from a distant land where that same beloved standard had been carried to victory and undying glory. In the far-away harbor of Manila a gallant officer had awaked that morning unknown to fame, but before he slept he had written the name of George Dewey upon the imperishable scroll with that of Drake, and Nelson, and Perry, and Farragut; destroyed the

power and prestige of Spain in the East—a fabric four centuries in building, but toppled over in as many hours; annexed a new and splendid territory to our domain, and—most important of all—launched the Republic upon a new and greater career.

A wonderful day indeed, and the first of many that were to make the twelvemonth just concluded one of the most, if not the most important in our history. He is a dull citizen of the Republic, indeed, who does not see in this swift succession of events a significance wide and deep. An ancient regime has been swept from our hemisphere and relegated to the rubbish heap of nations. Our flag flies not only in the Antilles but in mid-Pacific, by token that that illimitable ocean is now to us an inland lake. Our army and navy, posted at China's doorway to uphold our place in the perennial struggle for mastery in the East, is a notification to the great powers that henceforth they have to reckon with another as formidable—perhaps, also, as rapacious—as themselves. "You must understand," said Mr. Speaker Reed the other day to a distinguished British visitor, "that we have burst our swaddling-clothes." And in that jocular epigram lies a meaning almost beyond words to express.

If we ourselves fail to take in the full significance of these recent events—and it would appear that some of us do—our neighbors in Europe and Asia are not so dull. Five and twenty years ago Von Moltke turned away from our civil war as unworthy the study of a soldier. It was, he said contemptuously, "a conflict of armed mobs."

But mark the instructive power of our recent victories. A surviving countryman and colleague of Von Moltke, discussing the progress of our arms in Manila, the courage, intelligence and perfect discipline of our "raw militia," uttered recently this truly significant warning: "Here is a new power with which we all must reckon—a new giant, as yet ignorant of his strength. He can, if need be, muster ten millions of men, who in three months will be veteran soldiers,

the equals if not the superiors of the best troops in Europe. It is a menace to the world's peace."

And, "It would be absurd," writes an English military officer who looked on as a critic and student of war at the charge up San Juan hill, "to compare with those men the finest soldiers in Germany, France, Russia or England. Their equals do not exist."

Are we indeed a "menace to the world's peace," or only to those who would disturb that peace? The Europeans speak from their own point of view as jealous rivals, set to watch each other and match force with force, controlment with controlment. It is a saying of diplomacy that in the division of labor between the powers of Europe, Russia is to watch Northern Asia, England to guard India, and Germany to preserve the balance of power on the continent of Europe.

Are we to have part or lot in this complex assignment of duties? That is but one of many questions that rise before us as we contemplate the events of the past year. No other year in our history, perhaps, has been so rich in performance, so crowded with great and significant events. What of the year to come? What of the years that stretch out before us as we approach the threshold of the new century? Are we entered in the international handicap for the grand prize of empire and world-wide ascendancy? Or have we but made a dash out of our safe retreat, only to return to our historic isolation as a second-class power—one of the little, not of the great of earth?

Behind a wall of our own building we have in recent years waxed fat and rich, not to say sordid and corrupt. As we have been, shall we so continue?

It is a trite saying that no war leaves a nation where it finds it. A little more than a year ago our Uncle Samuel shouldered his musket and set forth to rid his southern doorway of a certain yellow, yelping cur which for years had been a nuisance if not a menace to his peace. The dog is dead and its carcass kicked out of sight. But is that all? We

learn — some of us with surprise or even consternation — that certain responsibilities attach to the use of firearms on the high seas and in the international preserves. Can we dodge those responsibilities? Ought we to do so if we can? Will it even pay?

We have discovered — once more with something like surprise — that war, even if undertaken in the "sacred cause of humanity," is something more than mere burning of powder. Whatever our original purpose, we have new territory on our hands. We cannot kick Spain out of Cuba, even in the cause of philanthropy, and leave the island to Cuban savagery, for that is no better than the savagery of Spain.

Similarly in the Philippines. If Admiral Dewey, after sinking Montojo's fleet a year and a day ago, had sailed away, as some Americans seem to think he ought to have done, he would have merited court-martial for himself and the world's scorn, contempt and execration for his country. He had no license to burn American powder and pour out American blood to further the ambitions of Aguinaldo, or win colonies in the far East for Germany. Dewey's real victory was won, not on that spectacular first of May, but in the weary, dreary months following, when, with infinite patience, unsleeping watchfulness and the tact of true genius, he kept the peace in the waters that rolled above the sunken Spanish fleet; whispered words of friendly warning in the ear of the amiable German, Von Diederichs, and — greatest of all — captured Manila without bloodshed. Let us never cease to thank the God of Battles that in the Admiral of our Asiatic fleet we have had a man as well as a fighter — a modest, earnest, fearless man, who could not only conquer an enemy but, greater still, conquer himself, control his natural resentments and bring his passions in subjection to his conscience. What might have befallen us before now without such a guardian of our interests on the scene, it is neither pleasant nor profitable to speculate.

But the conflict is not yet over — perhaps it has not yet even

fairly begun. Assuming, as I suppose we may, that Aguinaldo is ready to treat for peace, there still remain the allies of that patriot—in Asia and Europe, even here in America. The Philippine chieftain has fought hard and with splendid prodigality of patriot blood—not, however, his own. But three months' experience with the "white devils" who fight without resting, and especially with "devils" like Funston and his wild westerners, who "eat bullets" and swim turgid rivers under fire—three months of such experience has caused the Filipinos to revise the estimate of white man's warfare formed upon their acquaintance with Spain.

Still remain, however, the watchful Europeans in the East, who, despite the diplomatic protestations of their respective governments, would be only too ready to take advantage of our first misstep or sign of weakness.

Remain also those peculiar patriots here at home who have found interest or duty in affording aid and comfort at long range to their country's foes. Of these American Filipinos there are several breeds. First, there is the political breed, who, under the leadership of a distinguished westerner, are gallantly fighting the administration with a view to the possibilities of 1900. Of these patriots it is to be observed that their political instincts have already taught them much. Not for the first time, they realize that they have misjudged the public temper. Treachery, in whatever guise, has never been lovely to the American eye, and I think we may assume that the Bryan Filipinos will presently discover that they are on the wrong tack. They will not figure largely in the events of the future.

A more troublesome, insistent factor is the Atkinson breed of Filipinos. This will do as a generic name for a species of patriots that has never been entirely wanting at any stage of our national progress. They were called Tories when they first appeared, to oppose the patriot revolt from Great Britain. During the War of the Rebellion they earned the name of Copperheads, from the similarity of their tactics to those of