

Philippine Comment in American Press

Persistent News That Wood Will Retire Denied



General Wood

the Philippines but in Guam and Honolulu too, and have the report ready for the opening of Congress in December. President Coolidge seems definitely inclined to formulate a policy of his own toward the Philippines. Congress, however, has no attitude other than that of drifting with the tide. The bill to increase the pay and power of the auditor fluttered with faint life in committee for a time, then gave up the ghost; and now it has been resuscitated by favorable committee reports.

Both Thompson and General Wood scout the conjecture that the former is to succeed the latter. Wood doesn't plan a trip home until 1928; Thompson says he wasn't offered the post and wouldn't have accepted the offer if made.

Correspondents in Washington of metropolitan newspapers predict that Thompson is being groomed for the governor general's post at Manila and that General Wood will retire. On the other hand, General Wood has stated he has no intention of going home soon; he is not thinking of resigning. He has been governor general since October, 1921, nearly five years. Only Harrison held the office longer, and General Wood has had no vacation and is 66 years old.

These are some of the things the Washington wisacres cite. They are the keenest news men as a group in the United States. For example, the Philadelphia Ledger and New York Post man is the author of "Mirrors of Washington," Clinton W. Gilbert. When he prowls through the departments on a sleuthing trip he finds out things. He went prowling around on the Thompson story, and then said:

"The prediction is made that Mr. Thompson will be the next governor general of the Philippines. This guesswork is based on certain known facts with regard to General Wood. The Philippine governor is 65 and his health is not good. The climate at Manila is trying. General Wood has had a great many personal worries since going to his post in the islands. And the situation in the Philippines is disheartening. No one here criticizes General Wood and there is no doubt that he can stay at Manila as long as he likes, but it is not believed he will care to stay there many months longer."

This is probably the most accurate information available. Thompson may be the prospective governor general, but Wood's further tenure of the office depends upon himself.

Thompson has had a political and business career in Ohio. He was once secretary to Taft, who is believed to have recommended his appointment. From the iron and steel business he has accumulated a private fortune; in this respect he is a man like Forbes. He has been interested in educational problems and is a close personal friend of President Thompson of the Uni-

versity of Ohio, though no relation. Richard V. Oulahan is in charge of the Washington bureau of the New York Times, which sends the paper this comment in its dispatch on the Thompson interview with Coolidge:

"The report of Colonel Thompson is expected to give the President material on which to base consideration of a plan to consolidate control of all the insular possessions under one head. Their administration is now divided among several government departments. The Philippines and the Canal Zone are under the war department, Guam and Samoa under the navy department, Hawaii under the interior department and Porto Rico under the state department. The political and industrial situation in the Philippines are closely interwoven. This is well understood by the Coolidge administration. A set policy of the politico element is to prevent American capital from being utilized in the economic development of the islands.

"Every effort of the politico to force General Wood out of office has been resisted by President Coolidge, who has given the general his confidence and support, but the President's course has not helped along the desire of the administration to develop the great natural resources of that vast territory. The development of rubber growing in the southern Philippines is desired by the government, but the attitude of the native controlling politico element offers no opportunity for employment of large American capital in that direction. . . . The President has set his face against the Filipino demand for complete independence, qualified by a willingness to change that position whenever there is evidence that the native population is competent to exercise self-government. There appears to be little prospect that any move in the direction of independence will result from Colonel Thompson's visit, although what he said at the Whitehouse today indicates that he will devote part of his report to that question."

Oulahan is no less a figure in the newspaper world than Gilbert is. He was out to Manila two years ago, to break the story of Osborne Wood's wall street operations, and at that time wrote a series of articles on the Philippines in general for the Times.

COTTABATO PROGRESSING FAST

Everyone returning to Manila from Cottabato reports rapid development of agriculture in that province, particularly in the Sarangani bay district. Five years ago there were no rice mills, now there are twelve or more. During the first five months of this year some 60,000 cavans of corn were exported to provincial points; and this would have been more if adequate transportation had been available. The cattle industry prospers, and breeders are developing good grade Indian stock little susceptible to disease. Another cross is Indian and Hereford bloods, which is said to be the best both for work animals and beef. Broken steers sell into the Negro sugar fields at good round prices; even at Cottabato an animal brings P150 or more. The several American plantations are in productive condition and Christian immigration is considerable. Peace prevails. The Philippine Packers' Association has begun activities in an experimental way that may lead to an important pineapple canning industry.



Carmi A. Thompson

The conviction that an undeveloped Philippines is unsatisfactory from every viewpoint and unprofitable to the nation is taking hold widely in America, to judge from comment not alone in the press of the big cities, where the industrial point of view is natural and the importance of overseas trade evident, but in the rural press too.

To illustrate, take the following from the Hill City Republican, a Kansas town:

"There has been coming to this office a series of publications relating to the progress of the Philippine Islands and we have taken considerable interest in the information given out. The articles do not deal so much with the problem of government as they do with the natural resources and business progress. It is pointed out that the islands can be made to supply many of the tropical products used in this country that are now being covered by huge syndicates. For instance, both coffee and rubber have taken untold millions from this country in the way of extortionate prices. Both of these products can be grown in the Philippines and a fair trade exchange of prices can be arranged. These are only two of the thousands of tropical products that can be produced in the islands that will find a ready market in this country and which must be had from some source. From a business standpoint these islands are essential to our prosperity and we are necessary to the Philippines whether the natives realize it or not. If the Philippine people do not realize the great advantage that would come to them by remaining under the American flag and to be satisfied with the political opportunities for self determination as subjects to our sovereignty then they are not yet capable of independence. The advantages of remaining a part of the United States are mutual. If there is any doubt about it we are inclined to think it is ours, and it is becoming a pretty well settled fact that the islands can get their independence only by an action of the people of this country. Congress does not have the power to alienate any part of our sovereign territory. The Philippines were purchased and added to our country's domain and it is a notorious fact in history that since the inception of our government there has never been one inch of soil disposed of, we have repeatedly added to our territory. By remaining under our flag the Philippine Islands would have just as much independence and political freedom as Kansas and the maudlin talk about giving them their freedom is political bunk."

The Hill City Republican is Republican in politics. It no doubt is partisan toward the Coolidge administration. But the New York Times is Independent-Democrat, and quite independently of their home political leanings the editors are forming personal opinions on the Philippines—which they express with vigor. A grand old fellow is rolling up, out in the rural congressional districts. Rubber has a great deal to do with it, of course, but not all; and the information about other resources than rubber lands, the basis of which are the many articles which have appeared in this Journal, is convincing the country that the Philippines are potentially a land of opportunity and that potentialities should be converted into realities.