

Vol. IX
No. 8August,
1929

FREE TRADE—CONDITIONALLY

The program for the Philippines under the leadership of State Secretary Stimson, who was governor here for a while last year and still keeps a hand upon insular affairs, seems to be this: Sugar until it rouses the cupidity of homeland sugar interests, then no more sugar; copra until it runs counter to homeland cotton interests, then no more copra; Manila hemp until frowned upon by sisal growers and their New York bankers, then no more hemp; tobacco and cigars only on the most modest scale, not to antagonize Havana, Tampa and Key West; but camphor, rubber and coffee as makeshifts, since we can grow them and no competing homeland interests are to take into account.

But there are surely powerful American financial interests behind Brazilian coffee, now bursting bodegas in San Paulo, by the way; maybe we could not go far in coffee either without giving offense. The primary purpose of having a little rubber here is to stabilize the market with it; and the islands might well grow a good deal of rubber, but even to grow a large portion of all the world requires would not effect the islands' economic salvation. Similarly, we surmise that camphor in redemption of the *cañingins* in Mindanao—those burnt-over areas now devoured by cogon and scrub timber—would not furnish homesteads to the millions of young peasants who need them, nor provide the augmented revenues the government wants for schools, hospitals, roads, bridges and ports.

Ours is the problem of tilling ten acres where we now till one, which means we must grow everything for which there is demand, and as much of everything as we can grow.

Stimson led in defeating for the time being the move to levy duties upon Philippine products entering the United States. His work to this end is appreciated widely in the islands. But we cannot permanently prosper upon palliations and postponements.

For instance, there could be no surer way of getting ourselves deprived of free trade with the homeland than to restrict opportunities in any field the privilege opens; to create, as this would do, a monopoly, as in the sugar industry were restriction practiced, or monopolies in which a few people in the islands, and by no means all, should benefit directly from the privilege. There could be no surer way of forfeiting the privilege, that is to say, than to abuse it on the one hand and to act as if we really are not entitled to it on the other. A principle underlies free trade within all the territory over which the flag is sovereign. Folly alone would compromise that principle in the homeland by making deals, agreements and concessions effecting its limited application—in lieu of its natural and unrestricted encouragement to all alike. Free trade with America portends that we shall have in the Philippines that share of the national commerce and industry invited by natural advantages, if such exist—no more, no less. The alternative is not restriction of production, a blushing way of saying we profit from a privilege to which we are not entitled, that really we are filching from America's pocket; the alternative to free trade is one, one only—political separation of the islands from America.

We have heretofore remarked the fact that advantage in free trade with the Philippines lies with America, that it is vital to her merchant marine on the Pacific, that it enables her to exchange goods fully manufactured for raw and semi-raw products affording her additional profits and employment of labor in their elaboration. It is for us to remain frank and unmoved in our position, and for America to decide. The consequences of deceiving her would be disastrous.

RESOCIALIZATION OF CURED LEPERS

For the laudable purpose of ascertaining where some two thousand cured lepers discharged during the past three or four years from Culion are living and how they are faring, the anti-leprosy society is trying to raise ₱20,000 in contributions from the public. This preliminary step toward resocialization of cured lepers may well be undertaken by the society, and aided by the public; it has received commendation in our pages.

But actual resocialization of the cured leper is a problem obviously to be undertaken by the government. Two paramount obstacles exclude from this work all other entities; no other entity has the resources, no other entity could find its way safely through the mazes of the law. Inducing a

changed viewpoint on the part of the public respecting cured lepers is an educational process dependent to a vital degree upon additional scientific information concerning the persons affected. Many doors are rightly closed to anyone who has ever had leprosy even in the mildest form, since it is not known with scientific accuracy that the malady will not reappear in any individual once its victim. Until more reliable data on this point are available, reluctance to associate with cured lepers or to employ them either as domestics or in industries and the professions is not prejudice only, it is rather due precaution. But whatever it is, it is and will not be readily overcome.

The debility from which cured lepers suffer is still another bar to their direct resocialization immediately upon discharge from observation, and the desirability of maintaining immunity from relapse by periodical recourse to the specific is another.

The place to begin the resocialization of cured lepers is upon government reservations which ought to be established at advantageous points. No stigma would attach to them; they would, on the contrary, attract the world's favorable attention. Leaving Culion, the cured leper should bear credentials to the Constabulary, who should thenceforth keep in touch with him. If he makes out well, then well and good. But if—as will be the general experience—he finds no welcome nor anything to do, his establishment upon a reservation should be facilitated. There he might wish to live out his days, and there could be no objection. This phase of leper work should be diligently taken up by the government, in the hope, if not the fully justified expectation, that leprosy may be eradicated from the Philippines within two or three generations; or that it may at least be greatly minimized and controlled, and the cured may be resocialized and made reasonably happy without any material drain upon the treasury. Toward defraying the staff expense of the reservations, the charitable could contribute. But soon, with the products of field and industry, the reservations would perhaps all be self-sustaining communities. As communities, indeed, they should be organized and encouraged to carry on in their own behalf.

WRIGHTLY SPEAKING

Ben F. Wright, insular auditor, is vacating the office November 1 and turning it over to Creed Hammond of Oregon, whom Hoover appointed (the Senate not having to confirm the nomination) soon after Wright, on July 6, submitted his resignation for the purpose of having it accepted or obtaining a direct expression of presidential support. A bizarre procedure? Perhaps, but there had been departure from the policy to which Wright adhered—the Wood policy—and it had been a perpetual open season for getting the auditor's goat ever since this fact penetrated the consciousness of officials who either have cause to wish for more lenient scrutiny of their accounts or who have other reasons for wanting a new man with whom to deal.

Hammond has been heading a bureau of the war department from which the rule of quadrennial rotation retired him. He has enjoyed banking experience in Oregon. Governor Davis recalls him as one who did his Washington work well.

Manila generally regrets Wright's resignation, without much blaming him for submitting it. Editorial comment indicates the appreciation of his qualities that is felt even among men who seldom stood with him in the controversies to which many of his actions led. *El Debate*, among others, came out with a commendable expression along this line. All seem ready to admit that, whatever fancied or real faults they found in the man, he has been a capital auditor of the accounts of the Philippine government and an unceasing influence for rectitude in office. It is he of course who drove the government to undertake the probes that may result in good; during six years rascals have had cause to dread his inquiries.

The public has enjoyed the spectacular in his administration, and the reflection which this notoriety has provoked in the minds of thousands of readers may have had sound moral influence. Is the public works bureau right, or Wright? Is the posts director right, or Wright? People ponder these questions seriously, and seem to hold with Wright. It was his effort to compel the public works bureau to obtain certificates from the auditor as to the availability of funds in the treasury before essaying to enter into contracts (the code so providing in plain language), that told most on his energies and culminated in his resignation at a time he seeks a hearing in the Federal supreme court at Washington. He doesn't abandon positions readily; he almost never does abandon them. Holding this particular one, he opposed the governor general, the secretary of war (now the governor general), the commerce department, the public works bureau and the decision of the Philippine supreme court. The decision got confused in one quarter with the court itself, and Wright endured a fine of ₱500, summary arrest and threat of imprisonment.

Corcking news, all of this, making the people talk and some of them think. It followed closely, too, that dramatic midnight at the piers, when