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EDITORIAL OFFICES

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WE GOT THEM—MANY THANKS

The Chamber of Commerce acknowledges with thanks the receipt over the holidays of many greeting cards and calendars, seasonal remembrances thoroughly appreciated.

NOT SO BIZARRE NOW

When the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce was cabled to Washington a little more than a year ago, that Congress cannot legally alienate from territory over which it has been established the sovereignty of the people of the United States, it caused echoes of merriment down the corridors of one of the most presumptuous legislative bodies in the world—a legislature seemingly grown mad with the use and abuse of power. A good cartoonist drawing a comment on the scene would have had the lace-wristed hand of Louis XVI pointing from a rosebush in the gardens of Versailles a warning finger at the mirthful statesmen, their ribaldry despising the voice of the people.

The last laugh is best. The voice of the people may now be heard even above congressional guffaws. Judge D. R. Williams' brief sustaining our opinion is out in the *Virginia Law Review*, and in reprint form it has reached a wide distribution in congressional districts. Where men think, and think of the sometimes grave consequences of public acts, it has made a deep impression. The impression is exactly that of the Chamber of Commerce and well nigh universal. In a single batch of clippings from the United States were 31 editorials, 29 from country papers. Only two of these 31 editorials failed of taking the attitude of the Chamber of Commerce; and one of the two was lukewarm, that of the *Boston Herald*, against which may be safely pitted the *Herald-Tribune* of New York, with greater circulation and a wider vogue among editors. The 29 favorable editorials were from papers reaching a circulation estimated at nearly one million. They were from western, middle west and eastern papers. A million voters in congressional districts have read the news that they alone are the ones to say what may be done with sovereignty over territory. All these have a new sense of ownership of something well worth owning, the Philippines, this territory.

The last laugh is best.

AN EPIC IN PIONEERING—AMERICANS IN DAVAO

This issue of the *Journal* is devoted to the port and province of Davao, because a new law makes Davao the seventh ocean port of the Philippines, which hinges upon the epic in pioneering that is the achievement of a handful of Americans throughout the province who came to the islands as regular or volunteer soldiers, and, after taking their discharges when the campaigning was over, settled on the unsurveyed, raw United States public domain to do what seemed practical but had never been done before—to grow Manila hemp, coconuts and rubber.

Though they got the wrong kind of rubber, castilloa, they are exporting rubber today; they were more fortunate with hemp and coconuts, which have proved their real fortune and are adding millions gold to the wealth of the archipelago annually.

Brief stories of a number of those planters are published elsewhere in this *Journal*. They show what the men have done,

what other men may do—if they are the same kind of men. Present arrangements do not bring the same kind from the United States, while certain absurd arrangements of the past have sent thousands of them home that might today be factors in furnishing America from the Philippines a billion in trade a year. The civil service of the Philippine government was stripped clean of Americans as fast as it could be, but began with a goodly number who were well disposed toward the islands and inclined to make their future here. They would have invested in agriculture, but an executive order prohibited their doing so, save with the formal knowledge and consent of the government. Consent was charily given, and often upon slight pretext was early withdrawn; so the game, which men were willing to play fairly, was made impossible.

To such absurdities the Federal government in the Philippines has been addicted from the day it founded an administration here. Why, no one precisely knows. A more costly regulation would be hard to conceive—costly to the islands, primarily, for the men would have been good citizens and wealth producers; and costly to the men, who grew old as mere salary dependents; and costly to America, reducing to the extreme the blood loyal element and at the same time limiting her trade.

It is suspected the regulation may be in effect yet. But it makes no difference, now; the men are gone.

A few, however, would not conform. Their souls rebelled and they tweaked the government's inquisitive nose. To the personal dignity and courage of one of these men in particular is due the fact that this issue of the *Journal* is printed, and that Davao is an ocean port of the Philippines. He is now dead, Malita plantation is his monument.

He was O. V. Wood of California, who came to the islands as a school teacher, with the first group, those who came on the Army Transport *Thomas* in 1901—whose energies and young years were wrought into the studings and joistings and dimensions generally of the school system of these islands. Wood was one, as we say, assigned to station in Davao.

The natural resources of that province are fabulous; it would perhaps be no exaggeration to fix its normal population, if developed, at ten million or more, though now it is only 100,000. Wood saw these unutilized resources and proposed to use them. He took up land at Malita and began planting it. As we recall, he was bothered a lot by Manila, though never, we believe, by Dr. David P. Barrows, when he was director of education, for they remained warm friends. But in one way and another things were made hot for Wood, who finally left the service at a time when he still greatly needed the savings from his salary to develop his place and keep labor employed. However, he could get along without the government if the government could get along without him. So he ended his career as a teacher and began in earnest as a planter.

As with other planters, there was a time when he could not spend anything on personal comforts and little on necessities. He walked barefoot to his fields to supervise his workmen. Come what would he extended his plantings, learned the ways of the natives and gave them profitable employment. By 1914 he was well to do; he treated himself that year to a trip back to California and a visit to the Panama Exposition. Then he came back, to build Malita bigger and solve still pending problems. One was transportation. Interisland steamships kept the planters bled white by high rates. "By God!" swore Wood, "you fellows don't seem to realize the American flag is back on the Pacific. It is, and our market is the United States. We'll have a ship in here and load her at our own wharves. To hell with you and your dinky steamships and your high rates and rebates!"

This was of course years after the Exposition. It was after America had gone into the war and the emergency fleet had been built, and after the war was over, after Wood had married and brought his lovely young wife back from California. He and other planters meantime had put in wireless stations and could communicate with one another and with Manila. Wood was ill, flat on his back a great deal of the time with pernicious anemia, from which he finally died. But his fighting blood was up, he was making his last stand against oriental inertia. Leonard Wood was in Manila as governor general and could be reached

by wireless. So he was. So was the Chamber of Commerce. So was the Shipping Board, with J. V. Marias at the helm. "We want the Dewey to come to the gulf for a homeward hemp cargo!" the wireless called, with pledges of several thousand bales concentrated at Malita and one or two other accessible points.

The whole story is too long to recount, but the Dewey went to Davao gulf to pick up a homeward bound hemp cargo in September, 1922, and O. V. Wood thereby won his last fight as a pioneer American planter in the Philippines. He won it almost single-handed, but he won it for all Davao, and for the Philippines, and for America. It is true the Dewey made no money on the venture, such pilot trips are too costly for that. It is true Malita could not furnish all the hemp that was expected: at the time the bargain was driven Wood was too far gone to be a thoroughly rational man—for so it goes in pernicious anemia cases. But it is also true that the Dewey did get a big cargo and that from that time on Davao plantation cargoes of hemp and copra have been regularly lifted by ocean steamers conveying them directly to the United States, Japan and other customer countries.

A few Americans are direct beneficiaries. Thousands of Filipinos are direct beneficiaries. Would there not have been wisdom in a policy, on the part of the United States, that would have encouraged thousands of men like O. V. Wood who first and last have come out to the Philippines in one capacity or another, to settle upon the public domain here and assist in its development into plantations of products acutely demanded in America? For imbecility of policy, we commend that of the United States in respect to the Philippines. That policy is the fundamental reason the United States pays such fancy take-it-or-leave-it prices today for crude rubber, foreign colony coffees and the like tropical necessities. It isn't the Stevenson Restriction Plan at all, at bottom; it is the Washington Restriction Plan and its deadly provisos—"The Philippines for the Filipinos! . . . If you don't like it, get out! . . . No backward step!"—these damnable sputterings it is that rise in the path of every man's endeavor and leave the vast bulk of the public domain of the Philippines a no-man's-land for white man and brown man alike.

Such things have wrenched Americans away from their holdings in nearly every province of the archipelago: in Davao and one or two other southern provinces they could never get quite so thorough a hold, and the Americans were therefore able to retain their rights as citizens. But in the beginning the same type of veteran volunteers were everywhere; one found from ten to fifty in every town. Some were mining, most were farming homestead claims and small lease holdings. They are gone now, not a few to soldiers' homes. They are beaten men, and fundamentally it is the policy of their own government that defeated them.

When will such nonsense cease? It never was a virtue. Its gravest fault is that it never attended to the survey, delimitation and division of the public domain. The native widow of a former American farmer has just been in our office with her children, being cared for as orphans. She has left 4-1/2 hectares from her husband's original claim of 16 hectares, and she is about to lose the 4-1/2 hectares; the courts are proceeding to deprive her of it and make her too an object of public charity. Her case is typical. Native homesteaders fare no better. We observed only recently Moros in the land office at Davao going through the gestures of oath-taking—being read documents, being asked if they understood what was read, being sworn on the Koran. God knows what it was all about: the Moros certainly didn't seem to, and yet they had the right, and some one responsible to America should have conscientiously exercised it for them.

ANOTHER DAVAO AMERICAN

Wary of expostulations—they will bear no fruit, be sure—we turn momentarily to the career of another American in Davao, Wm. H. Gohn, owner of two hemp and coconut plantations and a stock ranch. His early struggles were like the rest, just plain hard times on the border. He came to the islands as a sergeant in the 17th Infantry, did his first soldiering on Luzon, where it was good tough campaigning for the old 17th, and then went with his battalion to Cotabato as commissary sergeant. This was in

1901. He went home with his regiment in 1902, came back with it in 1903 and took his discharge in 1904, to settle on a holding he had selected at Santa Cruz, Davao. It is there his present properties are, all going concerns and all profitable. B. F. Crumb, another veteran who was treasurer of Lanao along in 1903 and 1904, left the government service, went planting in Davao and became one of Gohn's neighbors. Crumb died quite recently, leaving a large estate and a large family, the estate somewhat encumbered and the children small. Gohn is administrator of the estate, now almost clear of debt and a good legacy for the children. Thus the old veterans help one another and pay attention to memories of old times.

But what of their government? Will it one day place the redeemed estate of these children of a veteran in pawn in an oriental scheme of things? Will its absurdities continue forever, and wax the more ridiculous as the memory of gallant times fades into remote history?

We leave the digression unanswered, since none can answer it. What will get votes at home will be done, this is the only certainty.

VETERAN MAKES A STRIPPING MACHINE

P. H. Frank of the Universal Hemp Machine Company is another veteran and Davao man. He and his partner took their plantation at the head of the gulf upon the advice of Governor Bolton, and when Bolton had gone over the land with them he went south on an inspection trip and met his death at the hand of tribal outlaws. Frank sold to his partner finally and went into other activities. But he kept his interest in the problem of devising a simple machine for stripping hemp, which is one of the most exacting hand jobs in the realm of industry and ruptures many men every year. In 1922 Frank finally hit upon the machine his company has patented and is now manufacturing in quantity. An exhibit will be at the Carnival, with the general exhibit of the non-Christian tribes bureau. Gohn and Frank are both interested in the company; they are the first men who have been able to convince Luzon hemp growers that machines can clean hemp satisfactorily and economically.

Other machines are likely to follow, particularly the one that has been successfully put through its paces on the Burchfield plantation in Davao. That pioneering is about over; it eliminates hand methods centuries old.

JAPANESE PLAY BIG HAND IN DAVAO

The initiative of Japanese companies and workmen in Davao is largely contributory to the success of the stripping machines, simply because the Japanese see at once the great advantage of them and will learn how to operate them. They hitch batteries of them to waterwheels where streams are accessible, and where water is wanting they use oil engines.

The 10,000 Japanese in Davao play a big hand there. Their big corporations are well financed and well conducted and their gangs of workmen undertake all manner of contracts, which they faithfully fulfill. The Americans of Davao give excellent reports of the Japanese. It will be observed (from Mr. Duckworth's article) that the whole job of getting out hemp on many plantations is turned over to Japanese tenants, the McFie and Burchfield plantations being notable examples. At weekly auctions, the stripped hemp is sold, the planter taking it if his bid is highest; and if not, then lumping his share, ten to 15 per cent of the gross, in with that of the tenants.

In fact it may be said that the best conditions prevailing in any province of the islands, prevail in Davao, where Americans have most to say and where government hampers least the objects and conduct of men, of whatever nationality, engaged in the honest purpose of developing agricultural resources. It is a truth to be deplored that the very remoteness of Davao has been its salvation. It has not been convenient to initiate interference. When the Secretary of War comes to the islands, we recommend him to make a study of what has been done in Davao and might have been done in 48 other provinces, the total number of such divisions in this archipelago being 49.