

## FRIENDS OR SLAVES.

AN APPEAL TO CONGRESS.<sup>1</sup>

BY THE EDITOR.

THERE is a great difference in the method of managing a concern of any kind, be it the government of a country, the administration of colonies, the running of a factory, or the working of farms and plantations. A manager may sway the men subject to his control either by force of arms, by the whip, by threats, or by the intrinsic worth of his returns for their services so as to secure their assistance on the basis of a treaty or contract in which both parties remain free.

The king of England has more power than a savage chief; yet the rights of the former over his subjects are extremely limited while the latter is the absolute master of his people.

Formerly the plantations in the South were worked with slaves, and the slave owners thought that the abolition of slavery would ruin the country. Now the plantations are worked by free labor, and the institution of free labor is not only more humane but also cheaper. There is no one now who would advocate a return to the old slave system.

Progress in social as well as political conditions consists in a gradual replacement of the rule by force through a management of affairs by treaty, and the latter implies an increase of power undreamt of by the petty tyrants of the ages of savagery and barbarism.

When the thirteen colonies of North-America had gained their

<sup>1</sup>In connection with this article, I briefly repeat another appeal to Congress made some time ago through the columns of *The Open Court*, "Duplicate the Naval Academy." The expense is small in comparison to the benefits to be derived therefrom both in peace and in war. We should thus educate a number of well-trained professional sailors to serve as officers and captains in our mercantile fleet, but in the emergency of war the strength of our navy might be considerably and quickly increased through their services. It would almost duplicate our fighting capacity without at the same time duplicating the expense of keeping twice as many warships.

independence, England had learned a valuable lesson which taught her to adopt a policy of freedom in her colonial management and it resulted, not only in a flourishing condition in all her colonies, but also in an enormous increase of her own power.

The present premier, Lord Salisbury, influenced by Cecil Rhodes and Lord Chamberlain, failed to apply the lesson so dearly paid for in America to the Dutch-speaking population of South Africa, and this apparently insignificant mistake may cost England her leading position in the control of the affairs of the world. Although the English arms may claim to be victorious, the unsettled state of things forces them to keep an army almost as large as the entire Boer population, and the drain on the state treasury is enormous, even for the rich resources of Great Britain. It is not that the Boers are angels, or that they are absolutely in the right. They too showed a disregard of the rights of others and blundered in diplomacy, but they had no means of knowing better, while there is no such excuse for Salisbury.

But there is no need of our speaking about England and her troubles while we continue to make the same mistake in the Philippine Islands. It is done on a smaller scale, but it is done; and the results are analogous. The expenses for the Philippine war amount now nearly to one hundred million dollars, not to mention the loss of lives and the host of other evils incidental upon an unsettled state of things.

The writer of this article does not believe in surrendering our control over points of strategic and commercial importance, for the time will come when their possession may be of great value to us; but he believes that we should adopt the principle of pursuing and holding our advantages, not through subduing the inhabitants of the conquered islands, but by making them free and granting them the self-government which we regard as the inalienable right of our own citizens.

We could most easily and without expense to ourselves control the Philippine Islands by making them allied republics as we have done with Cuba. We ought to divide the country according to geographical and ethnological conditions, making Manila with its great contingent of foreign residents a Free City (after the pattern of the Hanseatic towns of Germany), the Philippine municipalities independent republics, leaving the Mohammedans as they are now, and allowing the chiefs of uncivilised tribes the right of administering their own affairs, provided they preserve peace and are responsible for maintaining order in their districts. The

United States have all they want if they keep Cavite and the small strip of land, as well as the islands that have the strategic command of Manila Bay. They may make commercial and political treaties with Manila and the Philippine republics that will prove of mutual benefit, but to subdue the inhabitants is a useless, unnecessary, expensive, and morally wrong undertaking.

If we had at once voluntarily given to the Filipinos their freedom, we could have retained Cavite, the forts, and other property of the Spanish government without difficulty and should have peacefully established our control over the islands forever, which would have been a control by treaty, by moral influence, and through the advantages we can offer them. We have lost a golden opportunity. But it may not yet be too late, provided our policy of changing our conquered territories into allied republics is not forced upon the party in power, but is done voluntarily as an act of generosity and justice.

We have expressed our views on the subject in former articles and have received the private endorsement of some of our congressmen; but neither the President nor Congress has taken any action! We have purposely abstained from making any propaganda for our views that would force the affair upon the notice of our legislators and the government. For unless the government and Congress take this step *voluntarily*, it will be without any avail, and the Filipinos will continue to distrust us. There ought to be no division of parties on the subject, and the party in power should advocate the measure.

There is no need of abandoning the advantages we have gained by right of conquest. On the contrary: we should render them enduring and beneficial, which can be done to the promotion of the interests of all concerned, ourselves and the inhabitants of the conquered districts. But we ought to know that we can accomplish more by treaties and alliances than by bloodshed and violence. Our power will be greater by making the Filipinos independent and having them as friends than by keeping them in bondage.