

parture when compared with anything which has happened among Asiatic powers which are their own masters. We have given the Filipinos constitutional government, a government based upon justice, and we have shown that we have governed them for their good and not for our aggrandizement.

At the present time, as during the past ten years, the inexorable logic of facts shows that this government must be supplied by us and not by them. We must be wise and generous. We must help the Filipinos to master the difficult art of self control, which is simply another name for self government. But we cannot give them self government save in the sense of governing them so that gradually they may, if they are able, learn to govern themselves. No one can prophesy the exact date when it will be wise to consider independence as a fixed and definite policy.

Porto Rico.

I again recommend that American citizenship be conferred upon the people of Porto Rico.

Cuba.

In Cuba our occupancy will cease in about two months' time. The Cubans have in orderly manner elected their own governmental authorities, and the island will be turned over to them. Our occupation on this occasion has lasted a little over two years, and Cuba has thrived and prospered under it. Our earnest hope and one desire is that the people of the island shall now govern themselves with justice, so that peace and order may be secure.

The Fleet's Reception.

I take this opportunity publicly to state my appreciation of the way in which in Japan, in Australia, in New Zealand and in all the states of South America the battle fleet has been received on its practice voyage around the world. The American government cannot too strongly express its appreciation of the abounding and generous hospitality shown our ships in every port they visited.

The Army.

As regards the army, I call attention to the fact that, while our junior officers and enlisted men stand very high, the present system of promotion by seniority results in bringing into the higher grades many men of mediocre capacity who have but a short time to serve. No man should regard it as his vested right to rise to the highest rank in the army any more than in any other profession.

The scope of retiring boards should be extended so that they could consider general unfitness to command for any cause in order to secure a far more rigid enforcement than at present in the elimination of officers for mental, physical or temperamental disabilities. But this plan is recommended only if the congress does not see fit to provide what in my judgment is far better—that is, for selection in promotion and for elimination for age.

Now that the organized militia, the national guard, has been incorporated with the army as a part of the national forces it behooves the government to do every reasonable thing in its power to perfect its efficiency.

A bill is now pending before the congress creating a number of extra officers in the army, which, if passed, as it ought to be, will enable more officers to be trained as instructors of national guard and assigned to that duty.

There should be legislation to provide a complete plan for organizing the great body of volunteers behind the regular army and national guard when war has come. While teams representing the United States won the rifle and revolver championships of the world against all comers in England this year, it is unfortunately true that the great body of our citizens shoot less and less as time goes on.

To meet this we should encourage rifle practice among schoolboys and indeed among all classes, as well as in the military services, by every means in our power.

The Navy.

I approve the recommendations of the general board for the increase of the navy, calling especial attention to the need of additional destroyers and colliers and, above all, of the four battleships. It is desirable to complete as soon as possible a squadron of eight battleships of the best existing type. The North Dakota, Delaware, Florida and Utah will form the first division of this squadron.

I most earnestly recommend that the general board be by law turned into a general staff. There is literally no excuse whatever for continuing the present bureau organization of the navy. The navy should be treated as a purely military organization, and everything should be subordinated to the one object of securing military efficiency. A system of promotion by merit, either by selection or by exclusion or by both processes, should be introduced.

Nothing better for the navy from every standpoint has ever occurred than the cruise of the battle fleet around the world. The improvement of the ships in every way has been extraordinary, and they have gained far more experience in battle tactics than they would have gained if they had stayed in the Atlantic waters. I do not believe that there is any other service in the world in which the average of character and efficiency in the enlisted men is as high as is now the case in our own. I believe that the same statement can be made as to our officers, taken as a whole, but there must be a reservation made in regard to those in the highest ranks and in regard to those who have just entered the service, because we do not now get full benefit from our excellent naval school at Annapolis.



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