

Secretary Taft's Mission To The Philippines.

His Visit to Manila is Officially One of Ceremony, the Occasion Being the Opening of the Assembly, the First Beginnings in Actual Parliamentary Government in the Islands—The Great Central Issue of Politics in the Islands is Independence—The Politicians Simply Agitators.

(Special Service.)
WASHINGTON, D. C., Oct. 16.—Years must run beyond a half-dozen in any city before reconstruction or new construction makes radical changes. Except in new settlements, created out of nothing by a rush of population, as in Oklahoma nearly 20 years ago and in Nevada and Idaho lately, this is true the world over. It is true of Manila, naturally. Secretary Taft is not seeing much in the Philippines which is new, but he did find there seven years ago.

Manila is still the fashionable boulevard and residence district. The government buildings are still the broad and spacious but not luxurious Spanish. Manila is still the section preferred by American residents. They value its climate, its location, and its still avoided by the wealthier residents.

Torido retains its crowds of plain, common people. Santa Cruz has not lost its Spanish individuality. Rizal and San Nicolas are thick with Chinese. Luneta is the driveway along the beach where all classes who can muster courage to be seen, and where those who cannot afford carriages flock to look on and take part in social recreation.

THE SUMMER CAPITAL.

Baguio—the name means "bird"—is situated in the mountains north of Manila, and is new. It was selected in Taft's time for the government's summer headquarters. Government must proceed, even if the air does blow and the sun does shine. People connected with the government must work at what a tropical resort calls unnatural work. So, it seemed economically better to have a working headquarters in the hills.

But all hill roads in the Philippines were appalling when the Americans made their acquaintance. The highway government at work during the hot months a road must be built. It was built. The money was well invested.

Public buildings in the islands need not be Spanish capitals. Shade, air and space are the chief specifications. There will be no magnificence for Secretary Taft at Baguio. He will see big rooms and verandas, close to the ground and not heavy with stone, brick or plaster. The government likes to stay at the mountain headquarters. The secretary did see and do a great deal more actual business there than at Manila.

WHAT AMERICANS ARE DOING.

Americanization of the Philippines does not exploit itself in decorating Manila. It is operating chiefly in building railroads and extending public works over the islands. It is found in the construction of docks and buildings for the naval depot at Olongapo. It is most strikingly shown in the groups of low structures which mark the great military post at Fort McKinley, outside of Manila, the most extensive army station owned by the United States.

There are three causes of slow pace in the outward civic betterment of Manila. One is that, at first, available money is far better expended in other directions. Another is that the Philippines, including Manila, are a country of general poverty. A third is twofold—the trouble does not call for sturdy edifices, and Manila is in the earthquake zone which belies the Pacific.

Once the story goes, the rich people of Manila had a bad time of it. The earthquake and business properties. An earthquake shook them up, and the bad was laid aside—forever, as far as native aspirations were concerned. The easily discouraged Filipinos forget that a typhoon may happen along the next day.

Anything resembling American city building must be sought in railroad stations, powerhouses, ice-making plants and warehouses. Nor are they of the extraordinary. They were the immediate demands of American occupation and American industrial beginnings required.

If there could be a theater, calculated for a three-ring monster attraction of cockfights, the capitalists interested might afford a splendid building. At that, it might be discovered that the Filipinos must prefer eternally to carry their birds around under their arms and get their sport with more intimate and friendly chance to follow.

For architecture the visitor must ask for the cathedral and some of the churches and convents. The hotels are as far from being skyscrapers—space and air are the objects—as their kitchens are from affording other plenitude of variety or enthusiasm of preparation. Manila is still Manila and the Filipinos are waiting for Americans to do things.

Secretary Taft's party should be having good weather. It is the pleasant season—something like our middle state September. The hot months come later, and the rainy season when we have summer.

IS ONE OF CEREMONY.

Secretary Taft's mission to the Philippines is officially one of ceremony. The occasion is the opening of the assembly, the first beginnings in actual parliamentary government in the islands.

There is also an element of demonstration, because it is the return of a big man of democratic training, who was compelled to be the center of a paternal government during the years when he was the head of United States authority, and has been in touch, while he has been the real supervisor of insular affairs in Washington, a republic with comrades, pupils and admirers, for the whole population regard "Gato Taft" as their patron and sympathetic friend.

This assembly constitutes a limited representative government, with such authority over local affairs as Mr. Taft and the government of the United States under his advice regard as practicable at this period.

The great central issue of politics in the Philippines is independence. The politicians are really agitators. Few of them have any experience even in the sort of direction of affairs which call for government. They are talkers. All of them are patriots of one variety or another.

It has been aptly said in the Philippines that patriotism under different names and of different degrees of sincerity, all comes under the formula, "Just add hot air and noise." It is uniform, cheap and plentiful. Give a Filipino statesman a specific matter of taxation or administration, and he will waste it as a small detail, proceeding at once to brilliant fluent dissertation on the great principles of government.

How this parliamentary body will act into the actual business of government is a matter which is regarded by most American residents with amusement, with serious expectation only by those who believe in the personal influence of Governor Taft and the duration of the session which his short visit may enable him to impart.

LIBERTY AT ONCE.

Overwhelmingly the majority of the assembly consists of Nationalists. This group is composed of several others which have sprung up from time to time, but all animated by the principle of freedom from the control of the United States at the earliest possible moment.

The principal element of the minority is composed of Progressives. This may be called the moderate and moderate body. Its members profess the Taft idea of gradual approach to independence through a course of training in citizenship and industrial development.

There are a few Independents. These are not organized into a party, but hold themselves as free lancers, ready to take any position that seems good to them on such questions as arise.

Some of the members of the assembly have had experience as provincial governors or provincial heads, but most of them have no practical knowledge of affairs beyond wide practice in the Philippine takes as a duck to water. One of the prominent candidates for the presidency, which is the collected speaker, is Pedro Paterno, probably the most distinguished and popular assemblyman.

At the time when Senator Paterno of the educated class believed they were going to quickly have a republic of their own, Paterno was prominently discussed as the most suitable man for the presidency. It is believed, however, that his moderation and willingness to consider a somewhat more cautious progress will not recommend him to the enthusiastic Nationalists, who will have things in their own hands if they stick together.

Two other candidates for speaker are Colonel Benigno Sison, a Filipino, and Vicente Singar, a Spaniard. A prominent Progressive is Felipe Agoncillo. At a former period he was the "savior of the Philippine republic" to America, a titular and empty title. He is now a member of the assembly, but only because it indicates his prominence and suggests that he has made some study of island needs. Another candidate for the position of delegate is Leon Guerrero. These leaders will undoubtedly divide among themselves the greater part of the debates and other activities of the assembly.

A striking figure in the assembly will probably be Celestino Rodriguez, assemblyman from Cebu. He has recently formulated and given out for circulation a platform of principles which has been accepted quite generally as the feasible program of the Nationalist majority. It follows:

NATIONALIST PROGRAM.

1. Secure from the government of the United States a definite promise of independence at a time to be stated and this time to be immediately, if possible.
2. Increase the autonomy of the provincial and municipal governments.
3. Increase the powers of the provincial governments.
4. Allow the provincial government to participate directly in the customs receipts by appropriating these receipts, or a part of them, among the provinces.
5. Allow the governor-general more authority, so that he will not be controlled in his executive function by the commission, thereby making him personally responsible for his acts.
6. Create a department of state with an executive secretary at its head, the executive secretary to be a member of the commission.
7. Adopt laws to improve the present unsatisfactory economic conditions of the country.
8. Amend the code of civil procedure, so that business men and property owners will have more protection against fraud.
9. Adopt bankruptcy laws to check unmanageable trade in the islands.
10. Adopt a law to regulate mercantile registers and business methods in order to avoid fraudulent securing of property to the injury of creditors.
11. Abolish the death penalty.
12. Repeal the internal revenue laws.
13. Repeal all land taxes.
14. Enforce greater economy in the administration of all departments of the government.

Senator Rodriguez shows the Filipino instinct of being in the procession by adding a plank calling for the election of his associate, Senator Omena, to be the presiding officer of the assembly.

NATIVE INTUITION.

The skepticism of American residents does not permit them to believe that even Secretary Taft's influence could make of this gathering anything more than a decorative time-wasting, impracticable body of orators and office-seekers. The Filipino has the genius of eloquence. Almost any one of them is a more captivating, if not more solid, speaker than almost any American.

As for political intrigue, the Filipino is the master and the American a stupid pupil. The energies of those who have been elected to office will be devoted to getting money and to "knocking" most of those who hold office, either under the United States or the local government. They will proceed with all the inclination and masterful prevarication of the island character.

It is probably not within the limitations of Filipino character to tell the truth. The very children are taught from their babyhood to be secretive and deceptive; especially to treat a stranger as a person to be misled and held outside of any information.

Still, the Filipino has his good traits, and the rapid progress made under Mr. Taft when he was the governor-general is a record of which the island races living on the islands are susceptible of a more or less rapid rate of improvement. If they do not tell the truth themselves, they can expect it in others. If they are not fair and cordial in their mental relations to life's activities, they can expect that quality, too, in others.

Taft gained part of his influence over them by being fair and truthful, but he is not the Filipino most of all by his habit of deliberately turning his back on the easy thing of life to take up those that were difficult and unpleasant, even when it was apparent that he realized fully the extent of his handicap, and put away his hands to him in order to ruin a duty to other people, hopeless of reward. To the Filipino he first seemed foolish, and then a being of almost sacred and supernatural attributes.

EARLY PROBLEMS.

As the Nationalist platform indicates, the assembly will be enthusiastic and volatile over the broad and attractive principles of freedom from interference and increase of the native authority in government. The direct administration of administration they pass over rapidly and lightly. They do not realize to some extent the necessity of adjusting commercial relations, affecting both foreign trade and private business, in such a way as to make it reasonably safe for men who have money to invest it.

They must learn to inspire absolute confidence in the equality of all men before the law and in the ultimate justice of governmental processes. These lessons they never learned under Spanish rule. Even after nearly a decade of American control the average Filipino only dimly perceives the possibility of a square deal under a government official or in a court of law.

The great work must be to learn vigorous and impartial administration, and the learning of experience in statutory enactment must be regarded as a practice period rather than a result to lead immediately to practical results.

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CROCODILE FIGHTS A TIGER.

The crocodile had drawn nearer till his head had passed within a couple of yards of the tiger, says Lionel Smith, in Macmillan's Magazine. Why had he not seized him? Had he thought better of it, and sheered off? Not he! For a moment he lay still; then the surface of the water was violently broken, and the powerful tail struck the tiger a tremendous blow on the head and shoulders. With a roar that shook the woods, the tiger threw up his head; but before he could leap back, two great gaping jaws were thrust above the water, and clashed together where the tiger's nose had been a moment before. The crocodile had seized his aim, but his great teeth closed upon the tiger's left cheek and on the tough hide of his neck and held him as in a vise. Then followed a terrible struggle, the crocodile trying to drag the tiger into the river, and the tiger, with his claws thrust deep into the sandy bank, resisting with all his might. With all his weight, and with forward sweep of his powerful tail, the crocodile dragged at the agonized brute, whose roars of rage and pain were terrible to hear. My nerves quivered and my rifle slipped from my hand, though my experience with big game had not been devoid of thrilling moments, but the battle was so near, and so terrific.

The unequal struggle had moved me, and I found myself eagerly watching to give aid; but a shot to be effective must be planted behind the shoulder, and that was under water. I could only hide my time and watch the tug-of-war. Sometimes one beast, sometimes the other, flagged in his efforts. Slowly, inch by inch, the tiger was dragged from his haunches, then, realizing his danger a Herculean effort would throw him back in his former position. Then the crocodile would drag and tear and sweep his great tail and unlucky victim, torn and mutilated, would growl his agony with terrifying intensity. Several of these bouts came, and still the tiger held his ground. But now his foe impatient for the end, changed his tactics, and to secure a better hold he for a moment relaxed his grip. In one instant the tiger had reached his torn condition from the loosened jaws, and in another his fangs crunched with maddened force through the bony jaw and outspurred the white of his eyeballs, whose swirling tail told its own tale. The tiger was bit and the struggle was now more equal. The tiger could drag at the enemy without being flayed alive, and drag he did. Despite his loss of blood, at one tremendous lift he gained a foot, then, drawing back first one paw and then the other he repeated the process, and by foot the struggling animal was drawn over the edge of the slope. Now my chance came. As he thrust forward his short forelegs in quick succession I fired twice at the unguarded spot. The effect was instantaneous; the tail whirled in the air, the front paws were hoisted and the brute lay on its back, which the tiger dragged still further up the slope. Then he stopped and relaxed his hold, and the crocodile, having gained his right and ready, then he dropped his muzzle down to that of his prostrate foe, snuffed at him once, twice, and then with a low growl—perhaps of wonder, perhaps of defiance—he turned and snatched a shadow into the jungle again. I willingly let him go.

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ROMANTIC, FUNNY AND DRAMATIC NEWS STORIES

HUNDRETH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR WEDDING DAY.

(Special Correspondence.)
VENNA, Oct. 2.—Diamond wedding days are rare indeed, yet there has just been celebrated in the little village of Isenbourg the anniversary of a wedding which, it is declared, occurred just 100 years ago. All Hungary is intensely interested and the emperor has asked the authorities to forward to him official particulars so that he can personally congratulate the couple.

The extraordinary couple are named Rasmann. The husband is 120 years old and the wife 116. He was a farmer and was married at the age of 20. They have hundreds of descendants in and around the village. A score of years ago there was a celebration in honor of the man's hundredth birthday and application was made to the Hungarian government for a pension. It was granted after the records of the village had been examined and the man's age verified. Four years later the woman was also granted a pension.

The old couple live in a modest cottage and are well looked after by relatives. They are nearly blind and very deaf and sleep nearly all the time. The man, however, still enjoys his pipe and a glass of wine and neither is bedridden.

It is a strange fact that in all their years they have never left the village and know nothing of the great world outside of Isenbourg. They were both born there and have lived continuously in a quiet and peaceful life.

The recent celebration of their hundredth wedding day was participated in by the entire village which is very proud of having established, without any doubt, a world's record.

PARIS SCAVENGERS ARE NOW PUBLIC OFFICIALS.

(Special Correspondence.)
PARIS, Oct. 2.—Newspapers are just now indulging in an ebullition of ridicule at officialdom. By a recent decision of the prefect of the Seine department, in which Paris is situated, the city scavengers have been raised from the lowest possible position of public functionaries of the city.

It appears that the scavengers, including the men who look after and clean the sewers, wanted to form a labor union and become affiliated with the General Labor Federation. But the Seine prefect, head of the movement and stopped it.

He issued a proclamation that the scavengers were constituted by an official at the city hall, that their pay came from the city treasury, and that, therefore, they were city officials. And under the laws of France neither city officials nor state officials can form themselves into a labor union or indulge in strikes.

The situation created by this decision is peculiar. City officials in general object to having the scavengers classed with them. They declare that a scavenger is a mere daily, haphazard sort of common laborer. They can be hired or discharged on the spot and are not even named on the city payroll but have each man a number.

The prefect, M. de Seives, is being assailed on all sides and the scavengers advise him to reconsider his decision, discharge the scavengers as black and hire a new lot who will not want to be public functionaries and who will be too busy looking after their jobs to think about forming a union. This will probably be the outcome.

REAL MELODRAMA ENACTED IN RUSSIA.

(Special Correspondence.)
ST. PETERSBURG, Oct. 1.—Remarkable indeed is the melodrama of revolutionary crime and rebellion which has been occupying attention in the Russian press. Two men have lost their lives and a third is in hiding.

Paul Fedoroff, a young man of good family, joined a year ago the Revolutionary party. One day there came to him a man named Kazantseff, a revolutionary who posed as a reform leader. Fedoroff, under his wing, Kazantseff, in March last it was shown Fedoroff secret instructions purporting to come from the head section of the party. He ordered the two men to journey to Moscow and there assassinate a man to be indicated by Kazantseff. Fedoroff was to do the deed. The man was pointed out and the youth killed him and then fled.

The victim was M. Yellos, a rising deputy of the Cadet party. But Fedoroff did not know the victim's name or anything about him. The affair having blown over it was considered safe, a short time ago, for Fedoroff to appear in public. Then for the first time he learned the identity of his victim, and that M. Yellos had been in entire sympathy with himself and his colleagues. Furthermore he learned that Yellos had in some way incurred the enmity of Kazantseff, and that the latter had merely used Fedoroff as his tool in a dastardly plot of revenge. The instructions from the head section of the party had been forged by Kazantseff.

The latter soon learned that the truth was out and fled. But his whereabouts were discovered and Fedoroff met him face to face. In his fury Fedoroff hacked the man literally to pieces. He then went to the headquarters of the Cadet party and delivered himself up, confessing all that he had done. The Cadets have hidden him until such time as it shall be determined what action to take.

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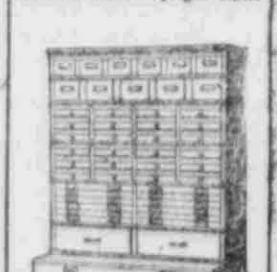
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