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The Daily Record

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and THE DRESDEN DAILY.

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AMERICAN IMPERIALISM.

A REPLY TO PROFESSOR WHEELER.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY RECORD.

When reading your interesting account of the Berlin Thanksgiving Day celebration in the *Record* of Nov. 28th, I was struck by certain remarks attributed to Professor Benjamin Ide Wheeler in regard to the Imperial obligations of the United States. The learned gentleman is reported to have said: "And one thing it becomes us to remember, if we would abide by the maxims of Thanksgiving Day. If America is true to itself the foreign policy that we adopt must never be Imperialistic, such as has characterised England. It must be one in character and spirit with our internal democracy; helping the feebler nation to realise itself; encouraging it to govern itself. I think our government of the Philippines represents the finest example of democracy in foreign policy..." Now, if it is possible, I would like through your columns to draw Professor Wheeler's attention to a few facts of which, according to his remarks quoted above, he cannot well be cognisant. I shall not attempt to discuss the appositeness or otherwise of his speech, delivered on such an occasion, or to ask whether an attitude strongly tinged with the feeling of thankfulness "that we are not as others are" is consistent with the spirit of true Thanksgiving; but I am concerned to enquire of Prof. Wheeler whether he truly believes that America's foreign policy is not Imperialistic. As you, Sir, stated in a recent article, the first gun fired in the war with Spain severed the hawser that shackled the American Ship of State to the parish pump. That war was unavoidable, but it had the inevitable effect of launching us on an Imperial policy. It is useless to try and distinguish between colonisation and Imperialism; the terms are synonymous. Just as soon as a nation acquires over-sea territories, that nation has created the nucleus of Empire and automatically becomes Imperialistic. Whether you are Imperialistic in a material or an ideal sense, does not affect the main fact. With the annexation of the Philippines America voluntarily assumed her share of the white man's burden, and is bearing it worthily, as we believe. But what American who knows the facts can deliberately affirm that our government of the Philippines represents "the finest example of democracy in foreign policy"? Only a complete lack of acquaintance with the situation in those islands would justify such an amazing statement.

Let us assume that the American Government entered upon a policy of Imperialism actuated by practically no selfish motives,—an assumption that few will deny. Let us remember that this policy was utterly new to us; that we had absolutely no experience in colonial administration or in the management of a subject race. I ignore our treatment of the Red Indians,—a page in our history which every patriotic American would like to see erased. Considering, there-

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fore, the disability under which we laboured at the outset, our administration in the Philippines certainly deserves praise; but do not let us talk about "finest examples." An instructive article on the Philippine question appeared in your contemporary the *Dresdner Anzeiger* last Saturday, in which the passage occurred: "The conquest of the Spaniards did not bring much joy to the Americans, but it proved very costly; and as matters stand today Americans have no grounds at all for regarding themselves superior to the Spaniards as colonisers, legislators, or business men." That is what intelligent foreigners think of our "finest example." As regards democracy in foreign policy, let us see what excessive idealism has done in the Philippines. The result of the parliamentary election of 1908 was as follows: 16 Progressives (Government), 20 Independents, and 44 Government opponents. These figures are more eloquent than pages of discourse. They prove: either that the Filipinos are discontented with the American administration, or that they are not sufficiently civilised to discern the benefits of the white man's rule. In any case, the figures are a crushing indictment of our colonial policy. It is quite as unfair to impose the burden of self-government on an immature race as to oppress them with an iron hand. It may be good idealism, but it is wretchedly bad judgment. President Taft—than whom there is no greater authority on the question—not long ago said that at least a generation must elapse before the native Filipino would be competent to govern himself. Presumably, however, the dreamy idealists at Washington have prevailed, and their Pyrrhic victory may well prove disastrous for the Philippines. If, as appears inevitable, the malcontents and anti-Americans in the Philippine legislature get all the power into their own fists, Washington will sooner or later have to interfere forcibly, and then what a scream will go up from our kid-glove and lavender water idealists! And in face of all this we find a speaker on a public platform at Washington denouncing as "hateful" British policy in India, and an American university professor in Berlin pointing to our government of the Philippines as "the finest example of democracy in foreign policy"!

If we talked less about personal freedom and the rights of man, and busied ourselves with fortifying

Cavite, constructing a Pacific squadron, and training the young Filipino in the way he should go, instead of making him drunk with the new wine of power, we should have better cause to admire our colonial policy than at present exists. You cannot civilise a whole race in one decade, and to grant self-government to the Filipinos at this stage was as unwise as dosing a young boy with rye whisky.

American Colonist.

NEWS OF THE WORLD.

LONDON, Tuesday.—Two new additions to the fleet of Britain's leviathans were officially commenced yesterday. The first was the battleship Orion, one of the four improved Dreadnoughts allowed for under the current year's Navy Estimates. The keel-plate was laid at Portsmouth Dockyard, and the vessel is to be completed for sea within two years. The displacement is to be 23,000 tons, or 5,000 tons more than the Dreadnought, and a speed of 21 knots is expected. The other new vessel, the super-Invincible cruiser Lion, was on the same day laid down at Devonport Dockyard. The Lion represents an entirely new type of warship, and promises to dwarf her predecessors of the Invincible class. She is to be 100 feet longer than the Indefatigable, herself a giant craft, and will have a speed of 28 knots. Strict secrecy is being maintained in regard to the armament and armour protection. It is officially announced that the destroyer Swift has attained a speed of 38 knots, and even touched 39 over a measured course. This speed is greater than that of many express trains.

LONDON, Tuesday.—The Finance Bill debate was resumed yesterday afternoon in the House of Lords by Lord Morley, a Liberal peer who spoke on behalf of the Government. The acceptance by the House of Lord Lansdowne's resolution, he asserted, would give the Lords complete control over the taxation system and a prerogative to forcibly dissolve the Commons whenever they saw fit. According to the terms of the resolution, a new parliament would have to be elected whenever the House of Commons was unfortunate enough to displease their lordships in the Upper House. The resolution would, moreover, cause the whole financial machinery of the present fiscal year to collapse in irretrievable ruin. He (Lord Morley) did not believe that a rejection of the Budget would signify that the House of Lords was looking after the popular interest. He asked, how could the Peers claim that an acceptance of the Lansdowne resolution would represent a rebuff to Socialism, when such an acceptance would stigmatise the Peers as the champions of the rich against the poor and convict them of exercising pressure on the Constitution? England for many generations had been held up as

(Continued on page 2.)

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