

getting office. In the great contest of '40 he was not seen or heard of; but when the victory came, three or four old drones, including him, got all the valuable offices, through what influence no one has yet been able to tell. I believe the only time he has been very active was last spring a year, in opposition to General Taylor's nomination.

Now cannot you get the ear of General Taylor? Ewing is for B., and therefore he must be avoided. Preston I think will favor you. Mr. Edwards has written me offering to decline, but I advised him not to do so. Some kind friends think I ought to be an applicant; but I am for Mr. Edwards. Try to defeat B., and in doing so use Mr. Edwards, J. L. D. Morrison, or myself, whichever you can to best advantage. Write me, and let this be confidential.

Yours truly,
A. LINCOLN.

Mr. Buchanan knew of these friendly relations, and therefore chose General Green as his "envoy." When the proposition was submitted to Mr. Lincoln, he not only expressed his willingness to accept it, but manifested an eagerness to start at once for Washington. He regretted being detained by an appointment with Senator Ben. Wade, whom he was expecting by every train, and said that he would start for Washington as soon as he had met that appointment. Senator Wade came and opposed the proposition successfully. Mr. Lincoln changed his mind and declined Mr. Buchanan's invitation.

Failing in this, General Green then sought to obtain from Mr. Lincoln a letter which could be used at the South as an antidote to his Cooper Institute speech and his speech of the 16th of June, 1858, before the State convention at Springfield, Illinois (see *THE CENTURY* for July, 1887, p. 386), in which he took the ground that "this Government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free," and which had led the South to believe that he and his party would be satisfied with nothing short of the "extinction" of slavery. So far from his "whole aim" being to throw on Mr. Lincoln the "responsibility for the Southern revolt," General Green's only aim was to relieve him of that responsibility by satisfying the South that they had no reason to fear that he would make or countenance in others any attempt to emancipate their slaves. In this he also failed. The letter sent by Mr. Lincoln to Senator Trumbull, to be delivered "if, on consultation, our friends, including yourself, think it can do no harm," never reached General Green.

General Green's own account of his mission to Springfield and of his interview with Mr. Lincoln in Richmond after its occupation by the Federal troops may be found in "Facts and Suggestions," by Duff Green, published in 1866 by Richardson & Co., New York, and Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia.

At Richmond, Mr. Lincoln told General Green that Mr. Corwin's resolution, prohibiting Congress from any interference with slavery in the slaveholding States, was passed on the last night of the session at his (Lincoln's) request. Commenting on this, General Green wrote as follows:

This resolution was unanimously adopted on the 3d March, 1861, by both houses of Congress, and, as it now appears, upon the recommendation of Mr. Lincoln, as a means of arresting the secession movement. Who can doubt that, if he had come to Washington in December, 1860, as I urged him to do, and had then exerted a like influence, it . . . would have prevented the war.

DALTON, GEORGIA.

Ben. E. Green.

Sea-Coast and Lake Defenses.

GLANCING through the great four-volume report of the Chief of Engineers, United States Army, with which I have just been favored through the courtesy of that officer, I find *one page*, out of its three thousand pages, of business-like statements of work done during the year reported upon, which, if none other, ought to interest and impress every patriotic citizen.

Describing the condition of our so-called "sea-coast and lake frontier defenses," this officer remarks, "The wisdom of providing for the public defense in time of peace and while the Government is in a condition of financial prosperity would appear to be too evident to need further demonstration." The matter has been repeatedly reported upon, and the result has been the annual expenditure, years ago, of about \$100,000 per annum, until 1885; since which date absolutely nothing has been done. The consequence of this miserable state of affairs is thus graphically stated by the Chief of Engineers; and could anything be more pitiful?

Neglect of any structure, however massive or well built, results in more or less rapid deterioration, and we find to-day everything connected with our permanent defenses, which are dependent upon annual appropriations for the maintenance and repair, going to rack and ruin: slopes overgrown with grass and weeds and gullied by the rain; walks and roads ragged and untrimmed and full of holes and breaks; ditches and drains filled up or fallen in, and pools of stagnant water on the parades and in the casemates; the sewers in bad order with the consequent evils; mortar and cement fall from the joints of masonry for the want of repointing; timber gun and ammunition platforms rotten or decayed; and permanent concrete or masonry platforms settling or out of plumb, thus preventing the proper service of the guns; casemates and quarters leaky, unhealthy, and uninhabitable; magazines damp and useless; revetment walls and water fronts falling down, and waves making serious and rapid encroachments on valuable land, thus impairing eligible sites for future works; and generally about the ungarrisoned forts an appearance of total abandonment and decay; and from the commanders of garrisoned forts continued and urgent appeals to keep the works in order for the comfort and convenience of the garrison and the efficient use of the armaments.

Was there ever a more extraordinary picture of the inefficiency of our legislative body or of the shiftlessness that may sometimes characterize the administration of such trusts? What facts or what circumstances could give the enemies of the republican system of government a better argument against government by representatives chosen by the people? A great nation like ours permits every material guarantee of the permanence of its institutions to be absolutely neglected; pays not the slightest attention to its most important defensive armaments; allows its army and navy to become weakened, demoralized, and incapable of doing the work assigned, and placidly sees the smallest of those nations with which it is liable at any time, through the fault of the stranger or the incapacity of its own administrations, to be forced into conflict, providing itself with fleets and armies such as give the enemy the power to inflict incalculable and irremediable damage on our coasts before we can even make a fair beginning in the work of rehabilitating our defenses. Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, even the smallest of the South American republics, in case of the sudden outbreak of such hostilities as may result from any folly of the least among our foreign representatives, of the pettiest consul, could to-day bombard New York

City more easily than Gillmore bombarded Charleston during our own civil war, and would do more injury in six months than could be repaired in years.

The work now in progress on our navy is a mere drop in the bucket in comparison with that constantly in progress in the dock-yards of every respectable naval power in the world. But this neglect of duty and common prudence on the part of a great nation is hardly greater as a crime than is its folly in turning a deaf ear to its own monitors, the older and wiser officers of its army and its navy,—those who know best what are the dangers of the situation,—and in plodding on after the mighty dollar while risking national life.

R. H. Thurston.

SIBLEY COLLEGE, CORNELL UNIVERSITY.

"The Place Called Calvary."

IT has come to my knowledge that surprise has been expressed in some quarters that Mr. Fisher Howe did not know what the German author Otto Thenius had once said concerning the place of our Lord's crucifixion. I suppose my own words, in the article "Where was 'the Place called Calvary'?" published in THE CENTURY for November, 1888, may have given such an intimation. I said that Mr. Howe "did not know that any one had ever spoken even casually about such a thing." This occurs in the midst of my reference to the conversation between Dr. Rufus Anderson and Dr. Eli Smith. A part of this conversation

as I quoted it was necessarily left out in the article, and so the point of my remark was lost. On page 34 of Mr. Howe's "True Site of Calvary" he has given a long paragraph concerning Thenius's testimony to the correctness of the theory which he was advocating. His language is: "While preparing this paper, we have been much interested in finding that a German author, Otto Thenius, arrived, several years ago, at the same conclusion in regard to the place of crucifixion which we are aiming to establish." Thence he hastens to couple with this the indorsement of Ritter, whose volume was evidently before him at the moment. Ritter's language is: "Thenius has endeavored to show, and has displayed great learning and acuteness in the effort, that the situation of Golgotha was separated some distance from the burial-place, and that it was in front of the Damascus Gate upon the skull-shaped hill alluded to in which the Cave of Jeremiah is found." Mr. Howe was apparently delighted to discover a hint of corroboration anywhere, for his heart was in the work he was trying then to accomplish; because he soon remarks, as if in disappointment at not finding some valuable help, "It is to be regretted that the views expressed by Thenius on this interesting topic have not been reproduced by Ritter, or his translator." It is plain that Mr. Howe had constructed his entire argument, and was already putting it into readiness for printing, with no aid from anything which Ritter had thought it worth while to quote.

Charles S. Robinson.

BRIC-À-BRAC.

A Villanelle.

(With a copy of Jean Passerat's
"J'ay perdu ma tourterelle; . . .
Je veux aller après elle.")

JEAN PASSERAT, thy tourterelle,
The dove that from thy bosom flew,
Does not with any mortal dwell:

And with it went the villanelle—
The art is, like thy dove, "perdu!"
Jean Passerat, thy tourterelle

Eludes the modern poet's spell;
To reproduce thy ring-dove's coo
Does not with any mortal dwell.

Once from the skies a clear note fell,
A purple pinion cleft the blue:
Jean Passerat, thy tourterelle

It was not, though it mocked thee well—
But thy sweet song to wake anew
Does not with any mortal dwell:

And since thyself went "après elle"—
Went after her the white gates through—
Jean Passerat, thy tourterelle
Does not with any mortal dwell!

Charles Henry Webb.

Reflections.

STILTS are no better in conversation than in a foot-race.

FOLLY must hold its tongue while wearing the wig of wisdom.

IT is the foolish aim of the atheist to scan infinitude with a microscope.

WHEN poverty comes in at the cottage door, true love goes at it with an ax.

A VEIN of humor should be made visible without the help of a reduction mill.

THE reformer becomes a fanatic when he begins to use his emotions as a substitute for his reasoning faculty.

MANY an object in life must be attained by flank movements; it is the zigzag road that leads to the mountain-top.

ALL the paths of life lead to the grave, and the utmost that we can do is to avoid the short cuts.

THE office should seek the man, but it should inspect him thoroughly before taking him.

HUMILITY is most serviceable as an undergarment, and should never be worn as an overcoat.

THE Good Samaritan helps the unfortunate wayfarer without asking how he intends to vote.

J. A. Macon.