

As depicted by the new scientific method, without imaginative gloss, Alexander is a modern carried back to a world of primitive passions and resources. But even there Alexander's meteoric career was the result of his power to project himself beyond his age. While others waited for the orderly course of the dread oracle, Alexander dragged the Delphian priestess to the shrine; while dull understandings puzzled over the Gordian knot, he cut it with a stroke of his sword; while the proud seaport, surrounded by water, boasted of never having been reduced by arms, he reached it by building a mole across the bay, and toppled its walls; while the city set on a pinnacle was laughing him to scorn, he raised a giant mound beside it, and it perished. In resource he outstripped the ages, and his audacity was the will of judgment, the purpose of courage, and the flash of genius. The power to see and to do in an irresistible way is always modern, and is always helping humanity forward.

THE CENTURY'S Life of Alexander the Great, which will be begun in the November issue, is by the well-known Greek scholar, Professor Benjamin Ide Wheeler of Cornell University, who has recently given our readers a foretaste of his vigorous and interesting style in his essays on "The Seven Wonders of the World." It will be the aim of the magazine to supplement the text with pictures which will prove a contribution to the pictorial side of the subject.

A Saying of Ex-President Harrison's.

THE conviction seems to be growing that the new, peculiar, and very heavy administrative duties now forced upon the American government are destined to hasten the disappearance of the spoils system. That system, or administrative custom, is constantly being curtailed by laws and regulations supported by the better public opinion of the country. But the political habits of an enormous community cannot be changed in a day; so good men are constantly alarmed by attempts on the part of small-brained and small-conscienced spoilsmen to break down the merit system, which is gradually taking the place of the old-fashioned way of "looting" the offices.

But the new and highly difficult problems of administration resulting from the war are furnishing striking object-lessons as to the necessity of government by business methods rather than by spoils methods. Furthermore, the "average American citizen" does not like the idea of going to war partly for the purpose of ridding communities of Spanish methods of administration as conducted by Spanish officials in order to introduce in the same territory so-called Spanish methods conducted by American officials. Already there is a demand that the new problems of administration in the islands shall be met in as non-partizan a spirit as have been the naval and military problems.

One danger of foreign wars, and foreign complications generally, lies in the distraction of the public mind from the cure of political evils at home.

The Spanish war has been so short that it may be hoped that no great harm will come in this way. Indeed, the war should have a precisely contrary effect; for it is evident that we need higher statesmanship in Congress to cope successfully with our new responsibilities, and a better and firmer consular and diplomatic system to meet the stress of new international relations. And for very shame we should be determined to blot out those evils of local or general government which have an ominous likeness to those faults of Spanish administration that we are fond of calling indications of decadence. There are, at this moment, flagrant scandals of administration in the largest two of our Eastern States which it would be insulting to our late enemy to call "Spanish." If such outrages as the canal scandal in the State of New York and the water-supply scandal in the city of Philadelphia are not rebuked and corrected, it will be in the power of our late enemy to call them characteristically "American." Ex-President Harrison well said in Chicago, on Washington's Birthday of this year: "We are a great people in power. Let us be great in the love of justice, great in that integrity of individual life, in that unselfish patriotism which makes men ready not only in time of war, when the drum-beat rouses our hearts, to rush forward to death, but also steadfast defenders, in times of peace, of honest administration."

There would appear to be nothing particularly heroic about "honest administration"; but unless devotion to country takes the form of insistence upon precisely this, in peace as in war, the "American empire" will not be worth the blood of a single hero.

Our heroic soldiers and sailors should be among those who will most strenuously insist upon that "honest administration" which Mr. Harrison regards as of such paramount importance. They are, by experience, keenly aware of the harm that may come through any failure of administration of any kind. They know that those branches of the public service least tinctured by the system of spoils and small politics are the branches most successful, and most creditable to the country; and they ought to help to keep our government to the highest standards, both as to our outlying dependencies and in all matters of home administration whatever.

A Suggestion about the Company Dinner.

THE distinguishing mark of good society may be said to be its conversation, for in a large sense the word includes also manners, which are merely another form of talk, a subtler exchange of personal credentials, an expression of the relative values of certain things. And while good manners are in no wise dependent on intellectuality, and intellectual men have not always been noted for the finesse of their manners, the highest goal of social life is reached in the combination of the two elements. "This palace of brick and stone," says Emerson, "these servants, this kitchen, these stables, horses, and equipage, this bank-stock and file