

TOPICS OF THE TIME

National Disinterestedness.

THERE are certain phases of the "Cuban question" that cannot be too constantly insisted upon. One of these is the absence of interested motives on the part of the American people, as a whole. The average European has been apt to have in his mind, when thinking of this nation, the typical figure of the Yankee, and to him has attributed all manner of "smartness." England at the time of the Civil War thought, or a good portion of England thought, that on the part of the North the war was a fight for territory. England understands America better now, and in the present crisis it appreciates the dignity of the position maintained by our government, and recognizes, to some extent at least, the fact that our people in general are dominated in this matter by sentiment and a sense of justice, and not by covetousness.

Again, our foreign critics have seen, notwithstanding the ease with which the natural, inherited "instinct for war" can be aroused in our people (a part, indeed, of our national exuberance), that there is a sober second thought which is likely to make itself felt at decisive moments.

We asked a distinguished psychologist, the other day, whether he thought that evolution would ever ultimately extinguish this sentiment in mankind. He said he thought not, but that as among what are called "gentlemen" the individual instinct to appeal to arms had been generally put in abeyance in favor of litigation in the courts, so the national instinct for fight would one of these days be put in abeyance by the habit of negotiation and arbitration.

The calmness and right feeling of our officials, and of the true molders of public opinion, in recent emergencies, show that America is destined to be a leader in the more humane methods of international controversy, and that in all cases the sword will be resorted to only as a last stern resort.

It is not unfortunate that a country should be swayed by sentiment, if it has also in its temperament the power of reserve and reason. It has been said concerning art,—and it applies as well to statesmanship,—that there is nothing like "a warm heart and a cool head."

What Bad Appointments Mean.

NOTORIOUSLY bad and unfit appointments to office by local or national executives, under a system of government supposedly democratic, are not merely in themselves wrong and injurious; not only has the executive, in such cases, avoided his evident duty and violated his oath of office in making such appointment; not only are the people betrayed by having incompetent servants foisted upon them; not only has a bad example been given to all citizens, and especially to young men, who should be taught that public advancement is the reward of virtue and not of vice: but, in addition to all

this, such appointments advertise a deeper evil; they are evidences of an attack upon the very foundations of political liberty.

Governmental powers are obtained possession of either through force or suasion. Under a despotic and unloved government there is nothing but force. But it cannot be said that under a free government there is nothing but suasion, because under a free government corruption may to some extent usurp the place of suasion, and exercise a sort of force. Bad appointments are evidences of corruption; they show that previous to the election there were alliances and implied promises which affected corruptly what should be a pure and untrammelled exercise of the right of suffrage.

Even when an element of corruption is eliminated, there are now and again enough evident injustices in the administration of governmental functions. That in a community containing, say, ten thousand voters the executive government should pass entirely into the hands of those who can muster five thousand and one votes, and contain no representative whatever of the other half of the community, only shows what a clumsy device even our boasted majority rule must be. Or take the situation in New York to-day, where the executive government, put in place by a minority, rules the city with a high hand, to say nothing of the notorious fact that the functions of government are only vicariously exercised by the technical chief executive of the city, at the bidding of a single individual who holds no public office at all.

It will be seen, then, that a democratic system does not absolutely insure a consistently democratic governmental administration. We do not in America, as a people, understand fully the meaning and the justice of minority representation. We are, however, beginning to understand the inconsistency of the spoils system with a system of free government, and we are properly sensitive when a mayor, a governor, or a president makes a notoriously bad appointment.

Nor can we be too sensitive on the subject, because such appointments are not only intrinsically outrageous, but they are unintentional signals of danger. For every such appointment shows that a transaction has taken place which strikes at the foundation of democratic institutions. A corrupt combination has been made to obtain or to hold the powers of government, whereas such powers should be conveyed by the suffrage of the people freely and purely.

We may be sure, when a thoroughly bad appointment is announced, that to a certain extent the democratic system has been negated. We may, in certain communities, be led even to suspect that some one has been able, by a sort of conspiracy, to obtain and exercise the powers of government who no more represents the untrammelled popular will than does some Old-World despot who got his throne by force of arms.

The Fortissimo of American Cities.

PERHAPS nowhere so much as in an American city is one made aware of the machinery of life. The child in Habberton's story who wanted to see the wheels go round, represents the restless, though superb and vital, activity of our people, which at once gives us an accelerated propulsion along certain paths of progress, and at the same time impairs our power of assimilating the elemental joys of life as we go. Comparing American and foreign cities, and leaving out of account the periodical excitement of political affairs, there appears to be a distressing balance of noise and tumult on our side.

It is worth the cost of a trip to Europe to learn what a vast storehouse of repose the older countries have to draw upon in the struggle for life. Swarming London never makes upon the visitor the impression of individual intensity which one finds in a New York street. In Paris one perceives on the part of all classes a contented enjoyment of the ends of life rather than a feverish absorption in its means. The temperate attitude of the Parisian toward art, music, literature, the theater, and outdoor recreations has a self-respecting dignity which the vulgar vices of his race cannot obliterate. More charming and devoted family life is nowhere to be found. In Holland a blessed torpor of the blood gives one time to thank Heaven for the breath he draws. The homes of Germany have become traditional for ease and happiness. In Italy an atmosphere of noble scenery, beautiful art, and romantic history invests existence with a charm which has been the theme of literature for centuries. In such regions the overwrought temperament of the American finds so much repose that he falls to wondering why that quality is not to be found in the life and character of his countrymen.

Returning home, the contrast strikes him more forcibly than during his absence. The fortissimo is incessant. Not a moment of life is unoccupied. Every coign of vantage is taken by the vulgar loud. One seems to be ever running for a street-car, and to be continually admonished to "step lively." He must shout to make himself heard. Everybody is struggling for the ear of the public, and nobody is listening. The age of reflection seems to have passed, and to have been succeeded by the age of agitation. Except through superior noise, there appears to be little chance for any man or any cause. More and more, as the men of the race-course phrase it, it is the field against the favorite; or, as they say in Congress, every bill must fight the calendar. Even sensation-mongers have little show against one another's drums and trumpets. But the resultant din raises appreciably the average of discord, and adds a new terror to cities. And not to the large cities only, for the fast train and the cheap price of printing-paper are extending city limits far beyond the dreams of legislators.

What makes this all seem more perilous is the fact that certain forces that ought to be on the conservative side are now involved in the general mêlée. While it

is true that it is an age of advancement chiefly by coöperation, and that much wise and noble effort is being expended in charitable and reformatory work, it is worth considering whether each particular public movement is worth the strength that goes into it. The best factors of our social life—more regrettably the women—are so over-occupied with clubs, societies, benevolent and remedial associations, etc., that life seems to go in public efforts to make life possible for others. The man who said that "in New York there is a club for every emotion" might well have added "and an association for every conviction." As the proportion of the rich increases, what is called "society" becomes more complex, artificial, and competitive. The toilsomeness of a New York season finds its counterpart in Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, and Chicago, and in the endless iteration of smaller cities. One inclines to agree with the former American minister to Italy who defined man as "a card-leaving biped." One wonders how all this agitation in the mothers is going to affect the nerves of the next generation, and remembers Matthew Arnold's stanza:

But we, brought forth and reared in hours
Of change, alarm, surprise—
What shelter to grow ripe is ours?
What leisure to grow wise?

It is this state of affairs which gives basis to the reply of a cultivated and experienced Englishman who, when asked recently what was his dominant impression of the United States, replied, "The absence of quiet family life." Americans of large observation have remarked a regrettable change in this respect, and have attributed it to the passionate pursuit of worldly success. But such generalizations are useful chiefly as marking tendencies in the larger cities. Life in our villages is probably richer, healthier, and more interesting than it was a generation ago, and a reaction from this *living in the street*, as it were, toward the simpler joys of home is sure to come. Moreover, in the heart of every great city there are men and women who, by sheer force of character, are realizing an ideal of repose, holding their thresholds against the engulfing storms of the outer world. The sensational newspaper comes not near them, and the society reporter does not wait at the door for the names of their dinner guests. They bear a share in the good works of the day, but they do it only by withdrawing from the senseless demands of a fashionable life. And they are all the better prepared for public and family duties by rigidly guarding for themselves a little domain of leisure. It is in such secluded hours, rescued from the clash of the world, that life grows deep and strong, in moments of meditation, or in communion with loyal friends, good literature, and inspiring music. We are so accustomed to the agitation for necessary reforms and to the multiplicity of remedial charities that we are in danger of forgetting that the most effective way of advancing mankind is by the cultivation of serene and noble types of individual character.

For he that feeds men serveth few;
He serves all who dares be true.



OPEN LETTERS

Railroad Employee Relief Associations.

A NEW movement in the industrial world, fraught with great consequences, is the establishing of associations for the relief of employees when unable to work, or of their families after death, sustained by the joint contributions of employed and employer.

Workingmen, while admitting that they ought to make some provision for the day of misfortune, are too often unwilling to deprive themselves of present enjoyments. So their earnings are spent as soon as they are received, in many cases in advance; and when they are incapacitated by sickness or accident from work they must rely upon the generosity of their fellow-workers or employers for support. So long as they believe that aid will be thus rendered whenever overtaken by misfortune, there is no inducement to mend their ways. Again, those who are inclined to save have a weaker inducement to follow their inclination if a considerable portion of their savings is likely to be drawn from them, through sympathy, to support others who have an equal opportunity to save with themselves.

The creation of railroad relief associations radically changes the conditions of the provident and the improvident. The latter class can no longer expect aid from their employers and fellow-workers. The company has clearly made known in advance the terms on which it will grant aid when it is needed; and if a workman is unwilling to comply, he cannot expect to receive assistance. Thus the system tends strongly to promote the habit of saving, with all that this term implies—temperance, better health, greater capacity for work, and larger independence. As for the provident, this system protects their savings from the demands of other workmen.

Another reason for establishing these associations is that relief administered systematically, as it is by them, is usually much more effective than when administered in other ways. Again, such organizations are an answer to the accusation often made that railroad companies take no interest in their employees. Those who are most familiar with the conditions of employment in this country know that the charge that the largest employers of labor care the least about their men is not true. Regard for employees generally springs from a different condition—the prosperity of the employer. The most prosperous are generally the strongest inclined to alleviate distress, to build hospitals, to pension old and deserving workmen, to contribute money and medical attendance and the like. And it may also be said that the larger companies are more prosperous than the small ones. Many have feared that the supplanting of the small employer of labor, and consequently the sundering of the union which existed between him and his employees, would result disastrously to society.

Whatever may be the evils resulting from the change, it must be admitted that the largest and most prosperous employers of labor are doing the most to render the lot of their employees comfortable and happy.

The most important difference between the plans of railroad relief associations is the requirement or non-requirement of membership as a condition of employment by the railroad company. The Pennsylvania Company, for example, does not require its employees to join the association, while the employees of the Baltimore and Ohio Company must become members of the relief association established by that company. Some workingmen object strenuously to this feature of the Baltimore and Ohio organization, regarding it as an abridgment of their freedom; but the briefest analysis of the requirement shows that it does not. Has not every employer of labor a right to prescribe terms or conditions of employment? Has he not a right to refrain from employing persons under twenty years of age, or Americans, or Italians, or colored persons, or members of labor organizations? And has he not also the right to prescribe that a person must join a relief association and fulfil its requirements or contribute to a hospital fund? If an applicant for work dislikes the terms, he need not accept them; and if he does not his condition is not rendered worse; nor is his freedom in the least impaired by accepting or declining them. His conduct is purely voluntary. The case, perhaps, is somewhat different when a person already in the employ of a company is required to join as a condition of continuing. It is true that if the requirement to join is not enforced until the term of service has expired, whether it be weekly, monthly, or annually, the company cannot be accused of acting unjustly.

On the other hand, there are very strong reasons why membership should be regarded as a condition of employment. It should be done to protect those who wish to save, but who cannot save so easily or so much whenever a relief association does not exist.

Furthermore, a company may insist on such a condition in its own interest. All employees who are members of such an association must save enough to pay their dues, and to do this a company may properly assume that they will deny themselves the least necessary things, and by so doing will improve in efficiency of service. Surely a company has the right to select skilled workmen, or to reject those who become inefficient through any cause. The man who saves is, generally speaking, the superior man everywhere. In most cases he is to be found in the sober and industrious class, and possesses a stronger arm and a clearer head than the improvident, irregular workman. So, without considering the question of one's duty to prevent improvidence and its consequent results, there is ample justification for requiring all employees to become members

of relief associations whenever they have been established.

The contributions of the employees, by the terms of membership, are deducted from their wages, so that no inconvenience or loss is experienced in collecting them. From the fund thus collected the members are entitled to receive definite amounts, in proportion to their contributions, when disabled by accident or sickness; and in the event of their death definite amounts are payable to their relatives or designated beneficiaries. The employees are divided into classes determined by their earnings per month. Thus, in the Pennsylvania relief association there are five classes:

- 1st Class—Those at any rate of pay.
- 2d Class—Those receiving thirty-five dollars or more.
- 3d Class—Those receiving fifty-five dollars or more.
- 4th Class—Those receiving seventy-five dollars or more.
- 5th Class—Those receiving ninety-five dollars or more.

The members of the several classes contribute monthly the following sums:

First class, \$0.75 per month; second, \$1.50 per month; third, \$2.25 per month; fourth, \$3.00 per month; fifth, \$3.75 per month.

We may next inquire into the benefits to which the members are entitled.

1. Payments for each day while disabled by accident in the company's service:

	For 52 weeks.	After 52 weeks and until recovery.
1st class	\$0.50	\$0.25
2d "	1.00	0.50
3d "	1.50	0.75
4th "	2.00	1.00
5th "	2.50	1.25

2. Surgical attendance during disability from accident in the company's service.

3. Payments while disabled by sickness, or by injury other than accident in the company's service, for each day after the first three days' disablement:

	For 52 weeks.
1st class	\$0.40
2d "	0.80
3d "	1.20
4th "	1.60
5th "	2.00

4. Payments in the event of death:

1st class	\$250.00
2d "	500.00
3d "	750.00
4th "	1000.00
5th "	1250.00

In addition to the death benefits mentioned, an additional death benefit may be taken after passing a satisfactory medical examination. The following table shows the entire benefit which it is possible for a member in any class to create for his family or other beneficiaries:

	Death benefit of class.	Additional death benefit.	Total death benefit.
1st class	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$500.00
2d "	500.00	500.00	1000.00
3d "	750.00	750.00	1500.00
4th "	1000.00	1000.00	2000.00
5th "	1250.00	1250.00	2500.00

For the "additional death benefit" of the first class the rates are: for a member not over 45 years of age, 30 cents per month; for a member over 45 years of age and not over 60 years, 45 cents per month; for a member over 60 years, 60 cents per month. These rates apply to each single death benefit of \$250.00.

It may be inquired, What does the railroad company do toward sustaining the association? It manages the

business, guarantees the fulfilment of its obligations, becomes responsible for its funds, pays all the operating expenses, including the salaries of the officials, medical examiners, and clerical force, pays interest on the monthly balances in its hands, and approves the securities in which investments are made. Furthermore, if in a period of three years there is a deficiency, this is paid by the company; if there is a surplus, this is appropriated to a fund for the benefit of superannuated members, or in some other manner for the sole benefit of members.

The details of these associations differ, but their principal features are the same. The regulations of the associations can be easily obtained by those who desire to know what they are. Perhaps a few statistics of the associations which have been longest in operation may be profitably added. The following is the record of deaths, disabilities, and payments of the Pennsylvania association since it was established:

Years.	Number of deaths from accident.	Number of deaths from natural causes.	Number disabled by accident.	Number disabled by sickness.	Number of payments for disablements and deaths.	Amount of payments for disablements and deaths.
1886	32	116	1744	3653	5545	\$151,147.87
1887	49	198	3186	7186	10,619	264,605.78
1888	53	197	3849	7815	11,914	283,512.10
1889	64	219	4915	10,834	16,032	343,569.36
1890	81	260	6512	17,673	24,526	466,294.11
1891	79	291	7255	18,334	25,959	530,182.82
1892	109	327	9184	21,829	31,449	615,271.99
1893	136	316	9060	23,411	32,923	642,395.18
1894	79	304	7725	19,878	27,986	546,791.22
1895	99	343	8765	23,112	32,319	591,495.97
1896	92	331	8774	23,417	32,614	610,119.20
	873	2902	70,969	177,142	251,886	\$5,045,385.00

The total amount paid for all benefits for the eleven years is:

		No.	Average per man.
Accidents	\$ 954,360.90	70,969	\$ 13.45
Sickness	1,879,518.58	177,142	10.61
Deaths from accident	543,444.45	873	622.50
" " natural causes	1,668,061.67	2902	574.80
	\$5,045,385.00		

At the close of 1896, after eleven years of operation, the membership of the association numbered 40,852—more than half of the entire number of employees, and a much larger proportion of those who by reason of age and physical condition are eligible. During this period the total revenue from all sources was \$5,707,885.19, and the disbursements were \$5,045,385.60.

Soon after establishing the association it was discovered that many members remained disabled and without means of support in consequence of having exhausted their right to benefits on account of sickness. To relieve the distress of deserving members of this class, the railroad company, on proper representations concerning their necessities and length of service, has given during eleven years \$213,491.35. The company has also granted the use of the necessary offices, and paid all the expenses of operation, including the salaries of officers, medical examiners, and others employed in conducting the association, amounting to \$838,961.44.

The following table represents the benefits paid by the Baltimore and Ohio association since its establishment, May 1, 1880, to May 31, 1895:

RELIEF FEATURE.

	Number.	Cost.	Average per case.
Deaths from accident	1010	\$1,068,544.22	\$1053.94
Deaths from other causes	1983	903,940.50	455.84
Disabilities from accidental injuries received in discharge of duty	55,816	716,110.58	12.83
Disabilities from sickness and other causes than as above	79,614	1,172,358.45	14.72
Surgical expenses	32,411	157,310.76	4.85
Aggregate	370,834	\$4,018,264.51	\$23.52
Add disbursements for expenses, etc., during same period		570,585.74	
Total disbursements for all purposes		\$4,588,850.25	

PENSION FEATURE.

Total number pensioned since October 1, 1884	394
Number deceased since October 1, 1884	174
Total number on list May 31, 1895	220
Payments to pensioners last fiscal year	\$34,457.70
Total payments to May 31, 1895	270,310.37

The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company led in this movement seventeen years ago (May, 1880). The Pennsylvania Railroad followed in 1886, and the lines west of Pittsburg belonging to the company formed such an association in 1888, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company the same year, and the Cumberland Valley Railroad Company in 1889. The Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad Company's association was established in 1890. The center of this movement, therefore, is in Pennsylvania, as associations already exist among all the principal railroad companies of the State. But the Baltimore and Ohio can rightfully claim to be the pioneer in this country, though similar associations have long existed in Great Britain and on the Continent.

Albert S. Bolles.

Arnold Toynbee and Ruskin's Road-Making Experiment.

A CORRESPONDENT having called our attention to the reference, in Mr. Bruce's article in the February CENTURY on "Ruskin as an Oxford Lecturer," to Mr. Ruskin's enterprise of enlisting his pupils in manual labor on the roads in the vicinity of Oxford, the inquiry has brought to us the following comment from Mrs. Arnold Toynbee, which will be of interest to many an admirer of her lamented husband, so well known in America as the pioneer in the work of college settlements among the poor. Mrs. Toynbee, replying to a query concerning his relations to the scheme, says in part:

"It is, I believe, quite correct to say that he acted as foreman over the work of Ruskin's road-making; he told me so himself; but I cannot inform you whether he was foreman for the whole time or only for a part. He mentioned to me that it was very nice to be foreman, because he went, in consequence, every time to breakfast with Ruskin, when the workers were invited, and not only in turn, as the others did. He was appointed foreman, I believe, because he was scarcely strong enough to do much of the hard work himself, and also because he was always good at leading men. His own opinion about the road-making was that, though of course it was impossible not to smile at it, yet it was not a bad thing altogether. The idea was to do a piece of work that was useful to the working-people

living in houses near the bit of road, and a piece of work that was *not* being taken up by any one else, either public or private; also, that it might give the *idea* of athletes using their muscles for some useful purpose. Of course the thing after a time became a joke. You are quite right: it was a road, not a ditch, which was worked at. I do not myself know which piece of road it is at Hinksey, though I dare say I have often walked by it.

"As for the influence of this intercourse with Ruskin on my husband himself, the writer of the letter you inclose rather exaggerates it. My husband came from an artistic family, and had been brought up to understand and care for art, so that he thought of Ruskin first as an art master. He was, of course, much interested in Ruskin's writings on social questions as well, especially in 'Unto this Task,' to which he often referred. But I should not say that on social questions he was very much influenced by Ruskin; he did not think Ruskin enough of an economist. I mean that he was not much influenced *himself*. He fully recognized the influence Ruskin had exercised over others on social questions, and thought the influence had been of great good, even if the economic theories were false.

"Quite a smaller point: I am always sorry that there is often exaggeration as to my husband's collapse after the lectures on 'Henry George.' 'Carried off more dead than alive' is scarcely accurate. I was there myself, and my husband came away with me in the ordinary way, though, of course, his fatal illness set in immediately, and those lectures were his last bit of work."

Notes on Burns's Manuscript and Portrait.

IN the article on "The Manuscript of 'Auld Lang Syne,'" by Cuyler Reynolds, in THE CENTURY for February, 1898, occur two misreadings of Burns's manuscript. In the note in Burns's handwriting, "O there is more of the fire of native genius in it" (p. 587), the "O" should be omitted, as it proves, on comparison, to be merely the flourish of the capital T. (See the facsimile itself.) On page 586, in referring to the letter addressed to Burns's friend, Mr. Reynolds was misled by Mr. Henry Stevens's misreading (p. 588) of the abbreviation "Dr.," which proves to have been intended for "Dear Richmond," and not "Dr. Richmond." The superscription of the letter reads: "Mr. John Richmond, writer, Mauchline."

A more serious error occurs in the statement by George M. Diven, Jr., concerning the portrait of Burns (p. 585). This statement, which came to us some years ago, was printed by inadvertence, a revised account of the family tradition having been sent to us, through Mr. Diven, by a granddaughter of the painter of the portrait, Mrs. Mary B. McQuhae Falck of Elmira, New York. This statement, made on November 14, 1896, which was mislaid at the time of going to press, includes interesting information. Mrs. Falck writes:

"The portrait of Robert Burns is now in my possession, and was bequeathed to me by my mother, who died last year. . . . With reference to your inquiries about my grandfather, who certainly painted the portrait, I can give you only such information as has come to my knowledge. William McQuhae, son of David and Jane McQuhae, was born in the parish of Balmaghie, Scotland,

on May 10, 1779. In an old diary of his in my possession I find frequent references to painting; but I do not think that he was an artist in the sense you mean, but simply an amateur who painted from love of the art. There are now a number of family portraits in existence painted by my grandfather. . . . My grandfather was a close neighbor of Burns when the latter resided at Dumfries, living at Lochmaben and at Dumfries, and he doubtless knew the poet well. From a memorandum in this same diary I infer that he attended Burns's funeral, July 25, 1796. My impression is that he painted the portrait a year or two before the poet's death. Mr. McQuhae

left Scotland August 24, 1796, about a month after the poet's death, and arrived in America on October 10 of the same year. . . . As to my grandfather's rooming with Burns at Edinburgh, it seems unlikely on the face of it, as the artist would have been only about seven years of age. It is more likely that my grandfather met and painted the poet at Dumfries, near which place he lived."

It should be noted that at the time of Burns's death McQuhae was only seventeen years old. It has been suggested that the portrait might have been made up from the well-known one by Nasmyth, though some of the details and the angle of the face are not the same.



The Return of Mabel.

SPREAD the news, ye kettledrums;
Let the town applaud.
Home the conquering Mabel comes
From a trip abroad.

Gay frou-frou of Paris gowns
Sounds upon the stairs;
Hats from Virot's are the crowns
Which she proudly wears.
Such a swirl of perfumed lace,
Glint of jeweled gaud—
These proclaim in every place
Mabel's been abroad.

Tales of foreign triumphs come:
Dukes thrilled at her nod;
Earls before her charms were dumb;
Flower-strewn paths she trod;
Bent were many titled knees;
Every tongue did laud.
'T was to win such joys as these
Mabel went abroad.

Says she thought the Louvre a bore;
Liked the Bon Marché.
Fontainebleau? How it did pour!
Spoiled her hat that day.
Art? So stupid! Nice cafés.
Never heard of Claude.
Not in study were the days
Mabel spent abroad.

So she's won her coronet.
Little do I care;
Naught have I of vain regret;
'T is n't my affair.
There's no happier man than I:
I'm to marry Maud,
Mabel's sister. What care I
That Mabel's been abroad!

Beatrice Hanscom.

Ghosts of the Pen.

In "De Finibus," Thackeray tells us what a queer shock he had one day when Philip Firmin walked in and sat down on a chair opposite him. A still queerer experience was his meeting with Costigan, whom he had invented out of "scraps, heel-taps, etc." "Nothing shall convince me," says he, "that I have not seen those men in the world of spirits." How else could he so accurately have pictured them?

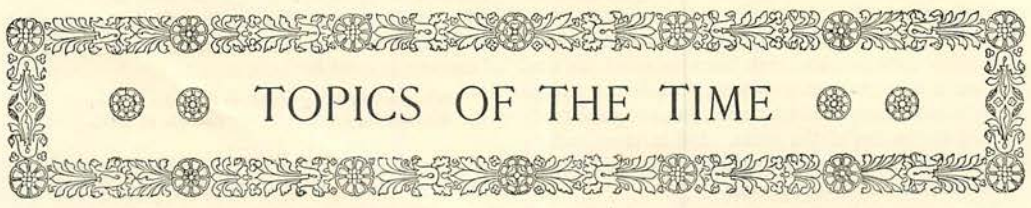
Then he goes on to say how delightful it would be if novelists could write with such divine power as to call into actual life the beings they invent, so that they might walk in at our doors and talk with us by our firesides.

And do they not—the true creators, I mean? Have I not with these mortal eyes looked upon Becky Sharp the immortal? Have I not talked with Miss Austen's Mr. Collins and Mrs. Bennett; with the incomparable Mrs. Nickleby, whom I love, and Peg Sliderskew, whom I don't; and many, many others of the select host?

I came suddenly upon Peg one morning as I entered my sitting-room at an earlier hour than was my custom. She was bending over the grate, and turned her bleared countenance upon me with exactly the action of her famous portrait by "Phiz," in which she turns upon Squeers just as Newman Noggs's bellows is about to descend upon his devoted head.

I remember that I beat a hasty retreat, with the feeling that I had seen something uncanny. For many weeks Peg had masqueraded as my landlady, disguised under a housemaid's jaunty cap and apron. But now had her dishabille—her nightcap of ancient pattern, her faded red shawl drawn tightly around her skinny neck—betrayed her. Henceforth I no longer saw in her the respectable Mrs. Smith, but Peg Sliderskew, the immortal creation of Dickens's pen.

My meeting with John Peerybingle I have chronicled elsewhere. It was while he was packing his carrier's cart, in the twilight, in old Warwick town:



TOPICS OF THE TIME

In Relation to Heroism.

THE series of papers appearing in THE CENTURY on the "Heroes of Peace" has been successful not only in finding many readers, but in attracting warm appreciation. It seemed particularly appropriate that a magazine which so often had proclaimed the martial virtues should conspicuously chronicle also those heroes whom we have with us always. So Mr. Riis was asked to tell about the "heroes who fight fire," and Mr. Roosevelt to tell about the heroisms that constantly illustrate the dangers and the bravery of the civic police; Mr. Kobbé has set forth the heroisms of the lighthouse service and of the life-saving service, and has called attention to the innumerable acts of unusual courage shown by men engaged in hazardous occupations, as well as by men whose occupations are the farthest removed from danger—like, for instance, the artist Hovenden, who perished in the endeavor to save the life of a child. Articles are in preparation for this series narrating the adventures of various other heroes of peace on land and sea.

No one who reads such records can fail to be convinced that every-day acts of genuine valor are being performed, not only by those peaceful armies and navies whose business it is to save human lives, such as the life-saving corps along our coasts, and our fire departments, but in unexpected emergencies by unlooked-for heroes. In fact, almost every serious accident, where numbers are imperiled, develops or betrays at least one hero. The heroism that crops out where there is no organization to keep up the *esprit de corps*, where there is no prospect of promotion or other reward—this amateur heroism is particularly significant and creditable to human nature. It is not impossible for individual cowardice to show itself in battle, or in a fire company, or under a police uniform; but it may be said to imply something like courage for a soldier, policeman, or fireman to show himself a coward before his comrades. Where a man, therefore, has nothing but his conscience and his own heroic instincts to urge him along the path of peril, he deserves, of course, all the more credit.

In all our glorification of the hero, both in war and in peace, it ought to be borne in mind that a large part of the world's finest heroism necessarily escapes notice. Picturesqueness, a good setting, has much to do with popular recognition of the heroic. Violent contrasts; and if there is squalidness, then extreme and peculiar squalor—elements like these concern the repute of a hero. If we cannot have him leading the ranks, sword and flag in hand, we want to see him ministering not to any ordinary sick, but to the very lepers.

The kind of heroism with which we have been deal-

ing is the heroism of physical action. If an enormous quantity of such heroism escapes not only the chronicler, but is scarcely heard of, and is, indeed, not recognized as such even by the hero himself, how much more there is of moral heroism in the world that will never get into the newspapers or magazines! It would be interesting to gather together conspicuous instances of moral heroism in modern life, though it might sometimes be found difficult to draw the line between physical and moral heroism. Young Shaw, leading the desperate assault of the colored troops at Fort Wagner, is a splendid figure of physical courage, but he is quite as much a moral hero. The young student of medicine who acquires, along with his profession, nearly all the contagious diseases, is he physically or morally brave? And yet we generally mean by moral bravery acts which do not endanger the body, or, if so, only remotely. Another difficulty would meet the chronicler of moral bravery. There is no greater opportunity for the display of moral heroism than in the domain of politics and statesmanship; and yet there is an extraordinary difference of opinion as to the moral quality of political decisions and acts. Those very acts of a statesman which are acclaimed by his admirers most loudly as admirable and heroic may be the actions that his detractors declare to be most unenlightened and pusillanimous. The chronicler, however, could make a long and generally accepted list of shining examples of moral heroism; and yet, still more than in the case of acts of physical heroism, the great mass of examples would remain outside of the power of observation.

It is, in fact, the unnumbered and ever-occurring acts of moral heroism that indicate the character of individuals and of nations. If any heroic action of this kind becomes known and attracts applause, the hero himself often is well aware in his heart that the deed for which he is praised required far less bravery than did those secret decisions of the spirit concerning which no whisper will reach a living soul.

Force.

If two men should get into a quarrel when dining at the house of a friend, and should take off their coats, pull out knives, and begin to gash and cut each other till one dropped dead on the floor, the other guests at the table would not think they had been well treated. In some parts of some civilized countries people do kill each other on questions of so-called honor, but the custom is being gradually abandoned; the duel is resorted to with comparative rareness, and legal measures are taken, instead, for the settlement of disputes. Fighting, stabbing, and shooting in the private walks of life are not looked upon as matters of course; nor do individuals,

as a rule, live in a constant state of preparedness for mortal combat.

And yet nations that call themselves most civilized and most Christian, and even those in which the duel has sunk into greatest disrepute, still devote a large proportion of their wealth to armament, and stand ready to kill at the tap of the drum. And in these nations even the most humane may be among the most strenuous in favor of some particular war.

There seems to be inconsistency here, and it is worth while to try to get at the reason of the difference in the attitude of men toward individual murder, or arranged combat between two, on the one hand, and wholesale slaughter, on the other. Some moralists assert that there is no difference, except that the "great general" is the great murderer. But there are few who hold that view, except in regard to ruthless conquerors, the "butchers" of war.

Those who deprecate unnecessary war, but who do not oppose war as a last resort, might formulate their view somewhat in this way: Men have gradually agreed to give up physical contest as a means of deciding individual or corporate differences. They "go to law" instead of fighting. They agree to be content with peaceful methods for the clearing up of their controversies. But this does not mean that force is altogether eliminated from the contest. Force is not applied by the individual in his own behalf (except in case of attack), because he has delegated to the common government the right to employ force. His foe is "arrested," not by himself, but by his "servant," the public official designated and set apart for the purpose of arresting. He does not lock his dangerous enemy up in a dungeon; the state does that for him. The state "executes" instead of the next of kin. So in civil proceedings, where there is no question of bodily harm, the element of force is still imminent; for beyond the judgment of the court stands the officer, ready to carry that judgment forcibly into effect.

Force is, indeed, behind all the forms of civil government now existing. In the United States the city has its police, the county its sheriffs, the state its court officers and militia, the general government its marshals and its army and navy. Thus is order maintained at home, and thus is the national will exercised upon other nations.

So much of human nature being vicious and depraved, so much of it irrational, emotional, and violent, the best of human nature being what it is, the time when force may be dispensed with, either in home or international regulation, does, indeed, seem very distant. But those do not err who would hasten the time when, as in individual controversies there is a trial or arbitration before force is called upon to do its full work, so in international disputes the high court of arbitration shall in all possible cases avert or precede the employment of arms.

But above the question as to the conditions in which

force shall be brought to bear as between nations is the higher consideration of the justice and righteousness of the cause in which it may be employed. May the guns of our own beloved Republic ever be

Stern toward the cruel, potent for the weak, . . .
And shotted with the arguments of God.

A Service of England to America.

It is a circumstance of no little importance that the Cuban difficulty has afforded a new exhibition of British friendliness toward America, the sincerity of which it is impossible to doubt. Nor, as in our Civil War, is this sentiment confined to the common people; what is significant is the almost official character of this sympathy,—shown in the warmth of the greeting to our ambassador by members of the royal family at a moment of great tension; in the ill-restrained outburst of cordiality toward us in Parliament; in the well-timed call of the British ambassador upon the captain of the *Maine*, and in Sir Julian's discreetly worded address to the President on behalf of the powers; and, in general, in the friendly tone of the prominent newspapers of London, representing various shades of political opinion, culminating in this sentence from the "Times": "Our sympathies, so far as the Cuban question is concerned, are with the American people, as against Spanish misgovernment and inhumanity." If these, and many similar individual expressions, could ever be forgotten by us, then should we indeed deserve to be classed among those republics which are ungrateful.

What is chiefly welcome in these utterances is the evidence that England does not fail to understand American motives in entering, as the country did in Mr. Cleveland's administration, upon the embarrassing task of protesting against the prolongation of the Cuban war. England, at least, knows that America is actuated by no spirit of aggression and by no desire for territory, and that only after long forbearance has been reluctantly spoken, for the entire civilized world, the word which, in the opinion of the government, the accident of propinquity has made it our special duty to speak. America's very abhorrence of war is a measure of the solemn and conscientious conviction with which that desperate issue has been faced, in the hope of accomplishing a great good for mankind at large. Such aspirations we have learned largely at the feet of England's poets, statesmen, and jurists, and the best return we can make to her for her chivalrous and generous grasp of the hand is to make her feel that it is not unexpected. This new interchange of sympathy realizes the statesman's noble vision of race patriotism, and signifies the extinction in America of the anti-British "jingo."

In this crisis no one should doubt the purity of motive on the part of the mass of our people, nor fail to recognize the great benefit to civilization in the better understanding of the two great English-speaking nations.

April 21, 1898.



OPEN LETTERS

The Terrible Upheaval in the Straits of Sunda.

WHILE glancing over the series of questions in the prize competition relating to The Century Dictionary, I noticed the query as to which was the more destructive, the volcanic outbreak in the Straits of Sunda, in 1883, or that at Pompeii, in the year 79.

As I passed through the Straits of Sunda a few days after that terrible catastrophe, I was a witness of some of the after-effects of that gigantic upheaval.

It was early in August, 1883. The good ship *Santa Clara* of New York city, after a three months' stay in the Bay of Manila, weighed anchor, and filled away for "home," laden with sugar and hemp. She had sailed from New York eight months previous, with a cargo of oil for Yokohama. She had been chartered to run down from Yokohama to Manila in ballast, and load sugar for New York. The period of what, in nautical parlance, is called "lay days" ran out, and our sugar cargo was not complete. According to the terms of the charter, this subjected the shippers to a heavy demurrage. But our "hustling" Yankee captain compromised with the shippers by filling out with hemp at a very high rate.

So here we were at last, "homeward bound," our captain ambitious to make the round voyage inside of a year, the rest of us eager to get back and enjoy the fruits of our labor, sailor fashion, which would probably be getting rid, in three days, of the money it had taken us twelve hard months to earn. My back aches now, and my hands get sore, when I think of the weary "boxhauling," anchoring at night, and heaving up anchor at the first glint of dawn; the setting of every rag that would draw in the light winds prevailing, when we could get a favorable "slant" down through some narrow strait; the constant drudgery necessary in navigating through the Philippine Islands, the Celebes Sea, Macassar Strait, and the Java Sea.

Twenty-eight days out from Manila we were off Batavia, when a German man-of-war spoke us, notifying the captain that a few days before there had been a volcanic eruption on the island of Krakatoa ("old Thwart-the-way," the sailors called it), in the Straits of Sunda, between Java and Sumatra, accompanied by an earthquake and a tidal wave that sent up a wall of water ninety feet high, wiping the town of Anjer completely off the map, breaking the island of Krakatoa into two parts, and causing a loss of life then estimated at about ninety thousand; but later estimates, I believe, placed the loss between thirty and forty thousand. The captain further said there had been no time to survey the Straits of Sunda, and he advised great caution in working through them, as there was no knowing what new reefs might have been thrown up. Thanking the German captain, we dipped our colors and squared away. The next forenoon we reached the entrance to the straits.

We had a light working breeze, and the wind was fair. Captain Rivers ordered sail shortened until we could just about carry steerageway. Off Anjer Point we hove to. What a change in that place since I had last seen it! Then the ship had been surrounded by the natives in boats loaded with fruits, sweet potatoes, yams, monkeys, parrots, Javanese ornaments, tobacco, and everything that would appeal to "poor Jack's" fancy; and now there was—one solitary boatman with sweet potatoes and yams; where the town had been not a house was to be seen; not another thing to indicate human life!

On questioning the native boatman, we learned that his life had been saved by the accident of his having gone into the interior on some errand. The poor fellow's family had perished with the rest. The captain bought the boat-load of vegetables, and after it was aboard we felt our way cautiously along, keeping a sharp lookout for broken water.

When off Java Head the captain concluded that we were out of danger, and ordered all sail made. With the water perfectly smooth, and a strong, fair wind, we were soon bowling along at the rate of twelve good knots an hour.

We had been working all hands; but now, with the long stretch across the Indian Ocean to the Cape of Good Hope before us, we started the regular "watch and watch."

At four bells in the middle watch (2 A. M.) I was roused by the cry of "All hands on deck!" to shorten sail. I tumbled on deck, rubbing the sleep out of my eyes. The next order was, "Keep the men standing by." Sailor-like, we all growled, and wondered what the "old man" meant by rousing us out when we had a fair wind, a smooth sea, and everything, as we supposed, to his liking. Then a turn across the deck to the weather side brought my heart into my mouth; for there on our weather bow ahead (as I could see under the foot of the foresail), and to leeward, as far as the eye could reach, were apparently "breakers." Still we stood on, the long lines of foam coming nearer and nearer with frightful rapidity. Murmurs of fear were heard from some, but most of us braced ourselves for the shock, and were momentarily expecting to feel the keel grinding on the rocks, and see the spars come tumbling down about us. A moment more, and we were in the white water; but we felt no shock, and did not hear the grinding noise we dreaded. Our way was slowly checked, but not entirely stopped. A little shower of spray, and some of the white water, breaking over the weather-rail by the forebraces, soon explained the mystery. The white water was pumice-stone, and the sea was covered with it for miles and miles. When we ran into these dead ashes of the volcano the ship was going at least eleven knots an hour. For the rest of the night we did not make over four, and the wind had not diminished in any

degree. It was a bright moonlight night, and the scene was indescribably beautiful. We seemed to be sailing through glistening white snow, the intense phosphorescence in these waters giving the same diamond rays from the particles of pumice-stone, as they turned and rolled in our wake, as are thrown from clear snow on a still, cold, frosty night.

The daylight brought unpleasant sights. Here and there a dead body would be seen floating along, with trunks of trees, pieces of boats, and other reminders of the awful calamity. We ran out of this pumice-stone sea that day, but from there down to the cape we would see occasional patches of it. Our thrifty captain took advantage of the circumstance to lay in enough pumice-stone to smooth paint and scrub bright-work for the next ten years. Eleven months and twenty days from the time we passed Sandy Hook, bound out, we were again anchored in New York Bay.

E. J. Henry.

Should Higher Education be Provided for the Negro?

THE most ardent advocates of the interests of our colored Americans are puzzled as to what is the best practical education for this particular people. The question used to be a local one, growing out of Southern opinion and prejudice. Happily, the question has become national. Philanthropists at the North, who have been generous in gifts for the educational advancement of the colored people, have become skeptical when the subject of higher education for this people is suggested. It is an open secret that those who magnify industrial training for the colored people receive the most munificent gifts to foster their work, both North and South. That the North has experienced a change of heart respecting this problem of educating the colored people goes without saying. No one can be censured for this, for the scare of the times is, for all people, "over-education." The cause of apprehension on the subject mentioned may be in what a writer stated in an open letter in THE CENTURY some time ago: "If the negroes are made scientists rather than classical scholars, it may avoid to some extent the prejudice against whatever tends to put a colored man on a level with whites. They might come to look upon a scientific negro as they would upon an improved cotton-gin—that is, a promising addition to the resources of the country." From such reasoning one readily sees that it is not the highest good sought from a practicable standpoint, but the best policy in view of "existing conditions." Whenever the education of a people is based upon policy at the expense of the perfect development of the race, that system of education is a failure. It is far from our thought, however, to advocate a classical education for the masses of the colored people—or of any people, for that matter. We do claim stoutly, however, that for specialists, as "teachers," "model pastors," and "leaders," to use another's terms, a thorough education is as essential for colored people as for white people. It is an exceed-

ingly novel idea of education which abridges its breadth and scope to local environment. No man is properly educated unless his capacities are ranged in the fullest line of the service for which he is fitted.

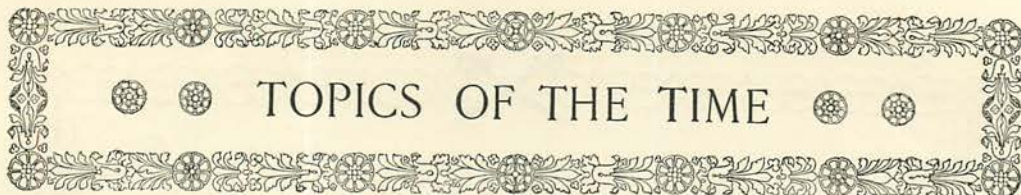
The colored man is too shrewd not to believe that what is good enough for a white man's son is just good enough for his own son. The example of Talladega College, in Alabama, and other institutions in the South, is commended by some for "dispensing entirely with Greek and altogether with Hebrew. Students, instead, are given a thorough acquaintance with the English Bible, with an abridged but very exacting drill in church history, systematic theology, etc." Such a curriculum is a maker of "the model pastor," "the negro's greatest need." We would add that "model pastors" are somewhat scarce in the churches, and our white churches should profit by the curriculum mentioned.

The only manly and practical way to face this question is to settle the point whether thoroughness in biblical study is as essential to the leadership of colored clergymen as it is to white clergymen. Is a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew necessary for the average biblical student? There is a good deal of blind reasoning in the trite phrase, "thorough acquaintance with the English Bible," with no discriminate knowledge of what really constitutes the English Bible. We admit in all candor that "knowledge puffeth up," model pastors and leaders not excepted; and we are forced to the conclusion that one seldom finds a colored man with a classical training who does not betray in some way a consciousness of his high attainments; and there are preachers who read the Bible in the original tongues who instinctively feel that they are caught up to a high state above their fellows. But this lofty-mindedness proves nothing in respect to race; for consciousness of superior attainments is not always absent from white preachers, though it may not be so frankly shown as by the colored students.

If the institutions which educate the colored people *en masse* even modify their curriculums on the theory that the colored race should have a special education, their usefulness will be virtually at an end.

We doubt seriously whether a scientifically educated negro will satisfy the country in contradistinction to her classically educated whites. The "improved cotton-gin" would certainly put a high premium upon itself; and in the South especially the racial status of wealth would doubtless be reversed. The country is no more willing to receive the "scientific negro" than it is willing to acknowledge the social status of the negro. Classified education will not settle the race problem as such, but an all-round practical training will; and those institutions educating the colored people as *people*, and not as a *race*, in lines developing their special and varied gifts and callings, are giving birth to a new race and hastening the dawn of a new civilization in America.

Robert A. McGuinn.



TOPICS OF THE TIME

Reflections Appropriate to "The Fourth."

THE significance of Independence Day this year is greatly enlarged by reason of the war with Spain. The temptation of the Fourth-of-July orator will be to lose sight, in the brilliance of martial events, of the steady white light of national aspiration so clearly reflected in one of the noblest of our patriotic hymns, "America." The publication of this lofty hymn, in the author's autograph, in the preceding pages of THE CENTURY may help to remind us that not in victory alone,—certainly not in extension of territory,—but in a steadfast dedication to the principles of liberty and justice, lies the true greatness of a nation. The hymn contains no line of boasting or self-glorification, and the contemplation of its pure sentiment will be useful at this time, "lest we forget" in the allurements of martial success that war is only a means to an honorable peace.

The President struck the key-note of the spirit in which the war should be celebrated, as well as carried on, in his message to Congress announcing Dewey's victory at Manila, saying: "At this unsurpassed achievement the great heart of our Nation throbs, not with boasting or with greed of conquest, but with deep gratitude that this triumph has come in a just cause, and that by the grace of God an effective step has thus been taken toward the attainment of the wished-for peace." The endeavor to convert the conflict into a species of vendetta—a war of revenge for the destruction of the *Maine*—happily has failed. The spirit in which America has so long abstained from war has affected the spirit in which she now undertakes it. We may accept the theory of Spain's culpability or negligence in the destruction of our warship in her harbor in time of peace without allowing it to divert us from the chief purpose of the war: the rescue of an oppressed people from an incompetent and medieval rule. In the one case Spain's responsibility is a matter of inference from circumstantial evidence, however strong; in the other the facts were only too clear. The recent statement of Don Carlos is a virtual confession of the helplessness and corruption of this "dying nation" in the government of her colonies. If precedents for our interference were needed, enough have already been cited in the report of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary; but a time comes in the growth of tyranny and barbarity when no precedent for such interference is needed. It is enough that every sentiment of humanity was outraged by Spanish rule in Cuba. The situation became intolerable and obnoxious to the American people, and our indignation might well have overleaped the limits of

precedent, had that been necessary. If it be said that our protest was in defense of "a lot of ignorant Cubans," that is only a shifting of the issue: in these days of responsibility of governments to the governed it is part of the grievance of the civilized world that a large population should have been left in ignorance, untutored in the rights and privileges of the human race. The time is rapidly coming when this will be more clearly perceived in every land, and fortunate will be those nations which anticipate the blind demand of a neglected populace for a fuller measure of consideration. Humanity is greater than any dynasty or form of government, and sooner or later its demands are imperative. It will be well if our orators keep this aspect of the struggle in the foreground.

It is something gained for this spirit of humanity as against the spirit of revenge that Admiral Dewey's incomparable work in Manila Bay was executed without any of the unnecessary harshness which was expected and prophesied by the enemy. When it was seen that to return the fire of the city's batteries was to endanger the city itself, our commander gave orders to withhold the guns. He chivalrously congratulated his opponent on the courageous defense, and took care of his wounded. These softer phases of the heroic achievement may well receive remembrance on our annual celebration.

The day will be distinguished by the omission of the occasional tirades against England. There is no progress of the world that is not marked by somebody's change of mind, and in the last three months even the most violent prejudices among our people against our English kinsmen have disappeared in the face of unmistakable evidences of her sympathy with America in the irrepressible conflict between the ideas of the sixteenth century and those of the nineteenth. When on one side certain prominent Americans completely change their unfriendly attitude toward England, and on the other side Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain make most plain their appreciation of our purposes (friendship even going to the length of a suggestion of an Anglo-American alliance), the traditional railer against British institutions must find his occupation gone. Instead, he may well descant on the practical evidence that not only are the two great divisions of the Anglo-Saxon race in closer sympathy than ever before, but that in our own country the lines between the North and the South and between the East and the West are now obliterated—for the time, we are sure; let us hope, for all time.

Patriotic Americans may well consider thoughtfully one aspect of Dewey's victory to which Mr.

Schurz has called attention. "The battle that has just been won off Manila," he says, "was a battle between a 'civil-service reform' navy and a 'spoils' navy." Nothing could be truer or more significant, or at this time more important. The navy has always been the ideal of those who contend for the merit system. It has never been within the power of politicians to pay their political debts out of this part of the nation's service. To have permitted them to do so, it is now seen in our hour of stress, would have been madness. It can easily be imagined what would happen to our war-ships in the hands of political hacks selected by favoritism from the ranks of the incompetent. On the other hand, our tardy and inadequate preparation for national defense is more than made up by the superb morale and ability of the officers of the service. Under this régime of common sense and self-respect the navy has always been proverbial for ability and trustworthiness, and at every opportunity has vindicated the wisdom of selecting public servants by fitness, and of retaining them permanently during good behavior. What is now needed is that this system shall be extended to every branch of the public service. Now is the time especially for the reform of the consular service in this regard. How long will our merchants consent to a system of political consuls which compels us to compete for foreign trade at a serious disadvantage against the trained agents of other countries? And how long in States and cities shall the public safety be exposed to the insidious enmity of the spoils system, led by bosses and executed by the venal and ignorant?

What boots it at one gate to make defense,
And at another to let in the foe?

National Tests.

THE precision and effectiveness with which a nation enters upon the complex and scientific activities of modern warfare are important evidences of that nation's advance in civilization. If its regular army and navy are ably and honestly officered; if its soldiers and sailors are well selected, well cared for, and well conditioned; if the equipment and armament of the army and navy are not injured by corruption and incompetency on the part of its officials; if the military and naval services are carried on with intelligence and vigor—the people behind this organized force may surely be counted intelligent and vigorous.

America has given proof to the world of the intelligence and vigor of its people by means of the condition and action of its armed forces. But there must be now a tremendous test of the right feeling of its people and the wisdom and ability of their present rulers and representatives. This test will be furnished by the decision of the national authorities in regard to questions arising from the war with Spain. Never was greater statesmanship required in any national crisis. The country has been pushed forward by rapidly occurring events along new lines of international responsibility; how far we are to go in this di-

rection must be decided, as well as how we are to escape gravely threatening difficulties, and how we are to fulfil new and unexpected duties. A crucial test of American statesmanship and of our system of government is now to be made.

The question was asked the other day, "What will become of local reforms while war issues are upon us?" The answer must be that in times of war that bogus patriot, the political spoilsman, is apt to put in his most subtle work. He will pick the public pocket while leading the cheers for the old flag. A great many good people are at this moment looking about them and noting with renewed alarm the dominion of demagogues and corruptionists in many of our cities and States; and the horrors of war seem in their eyes all the more lamentable because of the diversion of the public mind from evils of our own government, from our own social and political faults.

It is easy to fall into a condition of gloom and inefficiency through meditations such as these. On the other hand, is it not possible that just such a crisis may, as it certainly ought to, actually help on the cause of political reform? This nation is now destined to a new career on one path or another. It can never be just the same in its policies and action. In its new career it will be more than ever imperative that virtue and ability shall characterize its legislation and its administration. Obviously its diplomatic and consular service must be conducted on much the same principle as its naval and military service. Its laws must have relation not only directly to its own people, but they must, if need be, also indirectly benefit its own people by their favorable effect upon certain other nations. In other words, large and statesmanlike and world-embracing views will be needed at Washington, instead of those parochial and demagogic policies which so often shame the more serious and well-informed representatives of the people.

The great test now upon us arrives at a period in our history when the higher branch of our national legislature, while still containing good and able statesmen, is on the whole, by common consent of thoughtful men, at a low ebb as to character and caliber. This is a portentous fact for us to be aware of at such a time. But it is so gigantic an object-lesson that the country is likely to profit from its regard. And does not this new realization of the dangers to be feared from such a Senate bring the nation to a keener sense of all those political evils which good men have long pointed out and strenuously endeavored to reform?

The Back-yard.

MANY of our American villages and towns began many years ago to take special interest in the matter of appearance. Village improvement societies, with Stockbridge, Massachusetts, as the leader and example, and with the late Mr. Northrup as the leading spirit of the reform, have sprung up in the smaller communities, and in the larger ones much has been done in the way of ornament by the introduction of parks, prome-

nades, monuments, and handsome public buildings. The community's front yard is being quite well cared for. But how about the back yard? In many cases where a village's front yard, so to speak, is not badly cared for, the same village's back-yard is shamefully neglected—especially that part of the village visible from the railroad.

Has not the time come when these communities are prepared to take up the problem of making a better presentation of themselves than that which some of them now make to the traveling public of the railroads? The very shrewdness of our people in advertising might be expected to have a salutary influence here. The same town that is evidently sensitive as to its appearance in the eyes of the casual visitor who passes through its main thoroughfares seems to be not at all sensitive to the shabby spectacle it makes of itself to those who approach it, or pass by it, on the railroad.

It is true that this shabbiness is often the result of a reckless use of back-yards by private owners. But there may generally be found some legal means of suppressing nuisances; and if not, the town could often purchase cheaply, and easily

make more respectable to the eye, the ungainly territory. Sometimes the object may be accomplished by moral suasion, by awakening the spirit of emulation, by cultivating local pride, by arousing a proper public spirit.

The trouble now is that holders of real estate along the railroads are apt to make the side of their property next to the tracks a mere dumping-ground. All the waste product of the community is here put out of sight by being thrown *into* the sight of the railroad traveler. It is the region of Carlyle's "shot rubbish." How many little towns turn a dirty face to the stranger, who may never know that they are double-faced and that the one looking on the village green is as clean and pretty as may be!

There is generally some place in every community where the old boot, the rusted stove-pipe, and all other mere relics of past utilities, may serve a useful function; but this place is not the back-yard of the village, which is in reality the front yard of the passenger-car. How many of THE CENTURY'S readers will make a beginning of reform in their own community, and let us know something of the results?



OPEN LETTERS

A Controversy of the Mexican War.

IN that part of General Grant's "Personal Memoirs" which treats of the Mexican War of 1846-48 he declares that it was forced upon Mexico in a manner wholly unjustifiable—that it was a political war, out of which the administration desired to make political capital, but desired at the same time to avoid giving the generals conducting it, who were Whigs, the opportunity of winning fame, which would render them formidable rivals for popular favor. And in his ninth chapter, headed "Political Intrigue," Grant asserts that this purpose was to be effected by exposing both their armies to defeat. Accordingly, he says, when General Taylor, by his early victories, had attracted the attention of the people, and "something had to be done to neutralize his growing popularity," General Scott was sent to take command of the forces in Mexico. And, says General Grant, "it was no doubt supposed that Scott's ambition would lead him to slaughter Taylor, or destroy his chances for the Presidency, and yet it was hoped that he would not make sufficient capital himself to secure the prize." But, lest he should make capital, the following scheme was devised: "Scott," continues General Grant, "had estimated the men and material that would be required to capture Vera Cruz and to march on the capital of the country, two

hundred and sixty miles in the interior. He was promised all he asked, and seemed to have not only the confidence of the President, but his sincere good wishes. The promises were all broken. Only about half the troops were furnished that had been pledged, other war material was withheld, and Scott had scarcely started for Mexico before the President undertook to supersede him," etc. "General Scott had less than twelve thousand men at Vera Cruz. He had been promised by the administration a very much larger force—or claimed that he had, and he was a man of veracity."

A much more extended quotation would be necessary to exhibit the detail and particularity with which General Grant dresses up the charge. And it is one which requires some management to give it any degree of plausibility; for to conquer Mexico (which had to be done, "or the political object would be unachieved"), and at the same time bring disgrace on the generals who did the work, was indeed, as General Grant says, "a most embarrassing problem to solve." When General Scott, after the campaign, complained that the department had not properly supported him, Governor Marcy replied in a few contemptuous sentences which should have set the slander at rest forever. "You seek," said he to Scott, "to create the belief . . . that the government, after preferring you to any other of the gallant generals within the range of its choice, had labored to

frustrate its own plans, to bring defeat on its own armies, and to involve itself in ruin and disgrace, for an object so unimportant in its bearing upon public affairs. A charge so entirely preposterous, so utterly repugnant to all the probabilities of human conduct, calls for no refutation."

General Grant, however, thinks that Scott was expected to expose Taylor to defeat by taking away half his army for the expedition to the City of Mexico, while, by withholding the reinforcements necessary to raise his own force to an effective strength, the administration was to expose Scott to a similar fate.

I was in the War Department with Governor Marcy during his whole term, and was in close relations with him. I held the same position with the secretaries under the next two administrations. I had, therefore, opportunities of knowing facts when they occurred, and of hearing them discussed afterward; but I do not pretend to any knowledge that is not open to all, for everything that was written about the Mexican War by the department or its generals has been printed by Congress. The only advantage I have over the general public is in knowing where, in the hundreds of unindexed volumes, the facts are stated. And I will undertake to establish these propositions:

1. The administration took pains to spread and enhance the fame of all Taylor's victories.

2. If Taylor had chosen, he could have commanded the expedition against the City of Mexico. But he did not approve of it. He advised that we take and hold the line we were going to claim as the boundary. Moreover, General Grant says Taylor "looked upon the enemy as the aggrieved party."

3. The expedition against the City of Mexico was not General Scott's original plan.

He did not approve it until after it had been determined on, and preparations for it were in progress.

4. No promises were ever made to General Scott of any number of men or any quantity of material. Nor did he ever say, unless he whispered it in General Grant's ear, that any such promises were made. All that he wrote has been printed; and though he made many and bitter complaints, he never said that any promises were made or any promises broken. Some of his complaints were shown by Governor Marcy to be void of truth. He surely would not have resorted to fiction, and have omitted facts that would have served his purpose better.

5. The largest force ever named by General Scott for the expedition to the City of Mexico was 20,000 men. General Taylor thought 25,000 would be required. At the close of his victorious campaign, General Scott had under his command 32,156 men. He had discharged nearly 4000 volunteers whose time had expired, and had lost many in the battles around the Mexican capital. He must have had, from first to last, at least 37,000 men—nearly double the number he had named.

6. General Scott was not promised, and did not expect or count upon, any larger force than he had at Vera Cruz. When General Scott was

sent to Mexico, he was not ordered to lead or send an expedition against Vera Cruz and the City of Mexico. He was to do so only if, "on arriving at the theater of action, you shall deem it to be practicable." And that depended upon the amount of force he could take from Taylor's army, which he was expected and told to determine on the spot. If these, added to the regulars which Congress had been requested to authorize, and the volunteers called out under existing laws, would make up a sufficient force to warrant him in undertaking the expedition, it was to go forward; otherwise, not. And of its sufficiency he was to be the judge. When he went to Vera Cruz he took all the troops he could gather for that purpose. He had all Taylor's army under his command, and he did not want more than he took. General Taylor thought Vera Cruz might be taken with 4000 men. General Scott thought, at times, 8000, 10,000, 12,000, 15,000 desirable, because he expected to have to encounter, in landing, a covering army of 20,000 or 30,000 Mexicans on the beach. But in December he wrote Taylor that he would proceed if he could get together 8000. In fact, he took 12,000; and when he landed there was not a Mexican soldier within eighty miles, except the small garrison of Vera Cruz, who wisely kept within their walls, and he lost not a man by any casualty in landing.

7. General Scott made no estimates whatever for the President and the Secretary of the war material he required. He was commanding general, and made his requisitions upon the proper bureaus for what he required, without submitting them to any one. All that he asked was sent him, except shells, and of these many times as many were sent as he had use for. For he made requisition for 80,000 shells; 69,000 were shipped, 40,000 reached him, and he used not 1200. He asked for 50 mortars; all were shipped; 23 reached him; he used 10. He asked for 44 heavy guns; all were shipped; I do not find how many reached him; he used 6. In fact, Vera Cruz did not make the resistance he expected. It fell before all his material reached him.

8. General Scott, in depleting Taylor's army, made ample provision for his safety. This was urged upon him by the War Department, and he did it. Taylor was far in the interior, one hundred and fifty miles beyond the Rio Grande. Scott recommended that he fall back on Monterey till he should be reinforced; but that course did not suit the old hero's notions. He wrote the department that he was still strong enough to hold his own, and proved it by beating Santa Anna in the open field. Scott needs no other evidence that his ambition did not lead him to slaughter Taylor.

All the foregoing facts are stated in official papers, printed in documents 8 and 60 of the House of Representatives, 30th Congress, 1st session.

John D. McPherson.

"An Effort to Rescue Jefferson Davis."

A CORRECTION BY GENERAL WHEELER.

MAJOR H. B. McCLELLAN has sent us a letter, addressed to General Joseph Wheeler, in correction of the statements in his article, "An Effort to

Rescue Jefferson Davis," in the May CENTURY, relating to Major McClellan's separation from General Hampton (page 86). Major McClellan writes:

So far as my name is connected with it, this narrative is in error.

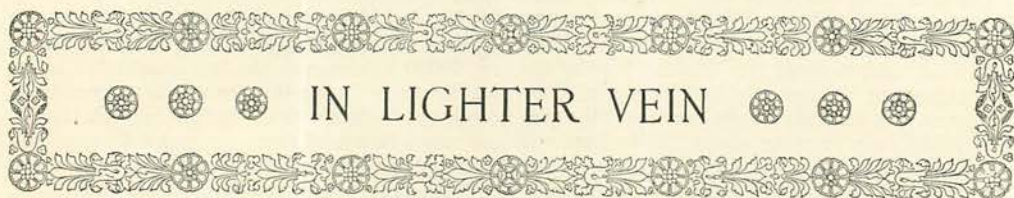
When General Hampton announced his intention not to be included in the surrender of General Johnston's army, I immediately offered to join my fortunes to those of my general, and to accompany him wherever he might go. Kindly, but very positively, General Hampton declined my offer. He said that he was uncertain what course of action he would adopt; that he wished to be accompanied only by men without family ties; that Lowndes and Taylor, his aides, were with him, and would render all the service that might be desirable. Moreover, he thought it necessary for me to remain at Greensboro', as his representative, to secure the proper paroles for the officers and men at cavalry headquarters,

and for the troops of Butler's cavalry division who might wish to accept the terms of Johnston's surrender. Receiving this as an order from my general, I performed the duty indicated, and then made my way to my home in Virginia, in company with a small party of officers and men from my State.

At that time, my dear general, I also was "a young man" of somewhat "energetic disposition," in whom the four years of the war "had developed a certain enjoyment of adventure"; and I believe that neither the Peedee River, nor the thought of the young wife and babe at home, nor both together, would have separated me from my chief, had he needed and accepted my services.

SAYRE INSTITUTE,
LEXINGTON, KY., May 3, 1898.

General Wheeler adds to his regret that the error should have been published, his wish that this correction be made.—EDITOR.



A Helping Hand.

By the Author of "Two Runaways."

THE success of William Hunter as a teller of stories was largely due to his long, grizzly, unsmiling face and his melancholy, drawling voice. Perhaps he owed something, too, to the contrast presented by a pair of laughing blue eyes, which gleamed far back under shaggy brows. Whatever was the main cause, the main fact is that William was a success, and gathered a crowd about him whenever he came to town.

Sparta had not fallen into the hands of the Prohibitionists, and her Saturdays were yet full of life,—for it is upon the last day of the week that one may expect to find the county assembled within the corporate limits of the county-seat,—when William was seen upon the street, relating his experiences, in his sad way, to a sympathizing group. A climax had just been reached, and he was carelessly measuring with his eye the distance to the nearest grocery, when a negro accosted him:

"Mornin', Marse William. How you do dis mornin', sah?" The speaker was a nervous, smiling little fellow of about fifty years, with that peculiar tone in his voice which is instantly recognized, through all the South, as evidence of insincerity. William, after a deliberate but good-natured survey of him, responded lazily:

"How are you, Cousin Anthony? Hope you are well, Cousin Anthony." He always insisted that, since he had been taught to call every old negro woman "aunty," the next generation were necessarily his cousins; and he so addressed them.

"Des toler'ble, Marse William; des toler'ble." And then, with a rush of good-fellowship: "Marse William, I wanter come out an' farm wid you nex'

year, if you please, sah. I'm des natchully tired movin' roun' f'om place ter place,—plumb wore out,—an' I knows you got plenty good lan' out on de ribber."

"All right, Cousin Anthony; come out—come right out. I can let you have all the land you want—an' a mule; an' thar 's lots of corn in the cribs, an' meat sp'ilin' in the smoke-house. We want good, hard-working men, Cousin Anthony, an' everybody knows you are that sort." (Everybody, on the contrary, knew that Anthony was about as lazy, shiftless, and unreliable as a negro gets to be.) Anthony's eyes danced with delight.

"Yes, sah; I'm never gwine back on my word. An' when I works, I *works*. I'll be dere, an' you can des 'pend—"

"Sometimes," continued William, taking up the thread of his remarks where it had been broken, "we get men who are not good at first—men who have been neglected, an' never had a helpin' hand; an' we try 'em awhile, Cousin Anthony, an' if we can't make nothin' out of 'em, why, we *have* to let 'em go. We are plain, homely folks out my way, but we try to do our duty, accordin' to our lights, by everybody. They tell us we are behind the times, an' I reckon we are; for if strangers did n't now an' then drop in an' talk about the war, we'd forget it had ever been fought, an' niggers were free."

"In-d-e-e-d? Oomhoo!"

Now "indeed" is a tentative word once much affected in the South. The High-church Episcopalian was fond of it; the lawyer, the doctor, the orator, carried it as part of their stock in trade; and all superior persons were entitled to use it. One should see a gray-haired woman of the old régime lift her gold-rimmed glasses to her aquiline nose, and utter it, to hear it in all its perfection. Indeed (there it goes!), a skilful elocutionist might



TOPICS OF THE TIME

National Good Neighborship.

IT is an ill war that blows nobody good. Americans under forty are just beginning to realize that the evils of war are not alone in the death and destruction which are incurred—and willingly incurred—in a cause in which the country has embarked. One cannot long disguise with heroism and glory the terrible ugliness of war—the fact that, necessary though it may be, it is not necessarily a short cut to justice, but often a very expensive and toilsome way around. Yet it would be rampant sentimentalism not to recognize certain obvious good results which have already resulted from the war with Spain. History alone can determine the relative good and evil of it, and Time has a provoking way of going ahead in despite of History.

We have already referred with gratification to the *entente* between Great Britain and the United States, and it is a pleasure to note the statesmanlike and practical direction which it has assumed in the determination of the two governments to make a speedy end of existing questions of difference, most of which relate to our neighbor to the northward. For thirty years Canada and the United States have been treating each other like spiteful townfolk of adjoining properties. A reciprocity of annoyance has been in full play. Questions of boundary, commerce, transportation, labor, fisheries, mining, and copyright have been the source—have, indeed, it would almost seem, been intentionally *made* the source—of irritating reprisals, until on both sides the duties of neighborship have been lost sight of in a vulgar squabble for advantage. The principle of enlightened self-interest has failed to operate, and the principle of *noblesse oblige* is the only rescue from such a situation: magnanimity begets magnanimity, making one ashamed of being outdone in high conduct. England did not wait for assurances and engagements on our part before giving us her sympathy in our contest with Spain: her understanding of the issue was instinctive. She has found that the emergency has quickened our sense of justice and friendliness. The Bering Sea award was promptly voted; the tonnage dues have been abandoned; and now it is announced that, better than an arbitration treaty (but we hope preliminary to one), the two governments have determined to clear the docket between them once and for all. The inception of such a policy on our side, we happen to know, antedates the beginning of the war by several months. It is in keeping with the best traditions of our best diplomacy, which was founded in frankness and in regard for the rights of other nations, rather than in the evasion, pro-

crastination, and doggedness which pass for diplomacy in certain quarters.

In the execution of this policy of good neighborship it will be fortunate—indeed, essential—that the contracting parties should supplement their initial desire for agreement by recognizing that their work is largely a matter of compromise, of give and take. In such affairs somebody's private interests must always be sacrificed to the greater good. As in the recent and timely reciprocity arrangement with France, we must yield a point to gain a point. There is no real principle involved in the Alaska boundary question, and everything is to be gained by hitting upon a natural delimitation of the frontier. The egregious folly of placing a heavy duty on Canadian lumber, inducing the wholesale destruction of our depleted forests, ought to be abandoned. It would seem that freer play between the laboring communities might safely be established. But whatever is done ought to be done, if necessary, in firm defiance of petty local and personal interests.

It is a curious comment on the lack of imagination in most men that a personal sacrifice which would readily be made in the dangers of war will by the same persons be resisted to the utmost in the perils of peace. The imposition of taxes for an external conflict is cheerfully borne. It is often as important in internal affairs that private and sectional interests should be sacrificed for the public good. The curse of our legislation is provincialism, and whatever may become of the Spanish islands at the close of the war, something will be gained to our people if their imagination shall have been impressed with the conviction that no country liveth to itself alone. There should be an end of the provincialism that, for instance, in the Senate makes it possible that our national forest policy, instead of being based on the science and experience of the world, should be dictated by a few mining companies, by reason of the support of Southerners who have been affiliated with Northwestern senators on financial issues. The South and the West have both had too much of this sort of solidarity of provincialism, and the sooner their representatives rise into a broader atmosphere and do their own thinking on such questions, the more of a national spirit we shall have. In the Canadian matter, if representatives, personally or by section, insist upon this deference to local interests, the benefits of the British and American *rapprochement* may easily be thrown away.

It has been claimed that we have not acted the part of good neighbors in encouraging, as it is assumed, the filibustering invasions of Cuba. It is possible that certain officers of the law may have winked at the violation of our friendly relations.

with Spain. But if she, with her large military and naval forces, could not prevent the landing of such expeditions, is it strange that we, with our then inferior forces, should not have been able to detect and detain them all? The weakness of her rule has been a standing menace to our welfare, and in nothing more than in the fact that she has permitted her cities to be a breeding-ground for yellow fever. The paper in the present number by the Surgeon-General of the army sets forth with authority the enormity of this peril.

We are much mistaken if, in general, the present war does not have the effect of making a new record in the matter of international responsibilities. Whether the European concert shall reckon with a new world-power, it at least must reckon with a new world-standard. It does not imply that the United States are to accept an imaginary commission from the Lord,

And deal damnation round the land[s]
On each we deem His foe,

to say that by reason of our championship of Spain's neglected and oppressed at our door the obligations of national good-neighborship hereafter will be greater than ever before. It will be well for us, in the final issue of the war, if nothing that we do shall diminish, in our own eyes as well as in the eyes of the world, the sincerity of our motives or the wisdom of our national conduct.

Concerning Empire.

THERE is difference of opinion among good men as to whether America should go, over night, into the business of annexing an island "empire." An Assistant Secretary of the Treasury gives some of the pros and cons in the present number of THE CENTURY. There are those who think that it is our duty to hoist the flag of America and keep it, for all time, over every obtainable inch of land hitherto displaying the standard of Spain, even if the usual moral laws would seem to require a less wholesale proceeding; even if there appear to be unknown as well as obvious dangers, as well as great allurements, in that direction; even if an apparently immoral action on the part of a nation, supposing such action to be immoral, might react unfavorably upon the morality of every citizen of that nation; even if—

But at this present writing the facts and figures are not before the country in sufficient quantities to justify a final debate. If honor, duty, and humanity compel the nation to assume unexpected and unwonted responsibilities in any part of the world, let us not believe it impossible for us to accomplish this new work. Meantime, however, what about the American empire that no one denies America should possess—the magnificent empire of these United States and allied territories, with their seventy millions or more of inhabitants? Has that empire suddenly diminished to something less imperial? Has the American empire of 1898,

with all that is noble in its history, enormous in its extent, and powerful in its people—has that empire lost its appeal to the imagination of its citizens? Will that empire with all its sacred traditions, all its possibilities, all its need of devoted service, with all its capacity for improvement, with all its internal and external problems—will that empire no longer stir the blood of its citizens to patriotic admiration, and patriotic sacrifice?

Whatever may be thought just and wise for us finally to do in regard to the new relations with mankind which the Spanish war has brought about, at least let us not forget that we already have an empire to guard,—and let good men and women see to it that what is done by our government shall be right and noble, and in the truest interest of that empire which none can dispute is forever ours.

An Attack All Along the Line.

If it is not only necessary and justifiable, but honest and right to make governmental appointments solely in the interest of political "organizations," as some strenuously maintain; if it is impracticable and absurd, hypocritical and loathsome, to take the opposite course, and to make political appointments, outside the classified service, for the sole reason of fitness, why is it that the best organs of public opinion, and disinterested people generally, feel such relief and express such satisfaction when the opposite policy is acted upon, and appointments to responsible positions are made solely for fitness and in the obvious interest of the entire community?

Why is it that recent unfit appointments of civilians to military office are criticized from one end of the country to the other, and such appointments as that of Mr. John B. Moore to be Assistant Secretary of State, and Mr. Oscar S. Straus, formerly minister to Turkey under President Cleveland, to his former position at Constantinople, and Mr. Gifford Pinchot as Chief of the Division of Forestry in the Department of Agriculture, are greeted with hearty and wide-spread applause?

The fact is that our citizens are beginning to recognize the fact that when offices are used as the natural spoils of machines, they soon become the personal perquisites of machine leaders; and that this private exploitation of the offices negatives any possible benefits to the organization, and sows broadcast the seeds of corruption, dissension, and political failure.

The friends of reform should lose as little time as possible in apologizing for the merit system. As President McKinley said long before he was President, it "has come to stay." The attack upon the infamous spoils system should be all along the line! The American navy and regular army are the models for our whole public service. Let us admit no lower standards of efficiency in any public department.

lic service. Finally, it has shown such splendid courage and skill in the army and navy, such sympathy at home for our men at the front, and such devoted eagerness, especially among women, to alleviate suffering and humanize the struggle, as to thrill every patriotic heart and make us all prouder than ever of our country and its matchless people.

TOPICS OF THE TIME

The Nobler Side of War.

WHEN the convinced lover and advocate of peace finds his heart "burning within him" at the call to battle; when he reads with quickening pulse the record of deeds of martial valor and endurance performed by his countrymen on sea or land, not in distant history, but last evening or this very morning; and when he longs himself to take part in the charge or sea-fight, it is natural that he should search his consciousness for reasons for this seeming inconsistency. Is it the "battle instinct" of his race asserting itself—that instinct which Professor William James says "centuries of peaceful history could not breed out of us"? Is it solely the survival of the "fighting animal" in man that makes a man of peace instinctively prone to war?

It would seem more natural to suppose that the apparently inconsistent passion for war on the part of peace-loving natures—natures surely in which there is left no preponderance of the original savage—is not a mere rudimentary savagery, is not a mere evidence of reversion (though that, doubtless, has a good deal to do with it), but because we think of war, nowadays, not so much as being a means of making others suffer as an occasion of giving ourselves up to suffering. Surely in the war against Spain it was the idea not of inflicting injury upon an enemy so much as the idea of sacrificing one's self for a cause—for the cause of country and humanity—that drew gentle souls into the dangers of war and of tropical pestilence.

In the thick of battle, doubtless, on the part of some there is the old desire to strike for revenge; there is something of pure hatred, and love of violent conflict. But in battle even the hardest hitters doubtless are dominated largely by the determination to crush the enemy in self-defense, knowing that one's own guns, used with accuracy and rapidity, are one's best protection; or there may be aroused the instinct of sport—the devouring wish to "bag the game." Even the fighters who are represented as talking most picturesquely of making the enemy's tongue the court language of the infernal regions—even they will be found at the end to be as courteous and considerate as the types of ancient knight-hood.

And in these new days of war the incidents that cut to the quick not only in the consciousness of the great population of non-combatants, but of

the soldiers and sailors themselves, are many of them deeds of thrilling courtesy; the notes that sound deepest of all are the notes of self-sacrificing bravery, and those of human brotherhood. The matchless coolness of Dewey; Bagley's and Bernadou's courage at Cardenas; Winslow's stanchness under hours of fire in the cable-cutting at Cienfuegos; the calculating and superb recklessness of Hobson; the quick and unsparing force of the ships of Sampson and Schley; the impetuous charge of the soldiers at Santiago, and their unflinching demeanor under frightful conditions—these fill the soul with "noble rage." But even events like these do not touch the hearts of the people more profoundly than acts of consideration and humanity such as Admiral Cervera's chivalrous message concerning Hobson; the burial by our own sailors, with all the honors of war, of the brave Spanish sailors who died on our ships; the refusal of Captain Evans to take the proffered sword of the captain of the *Vizcaya*; gallant Wainwright's manly greeting to the chief captive; and, later, Schley's generous words to him, that made the Spanish admiral throw his arms around the neck of the American commodore; the saving of the enemy's surprised and grateful survivors after the destruction of their fleets at Manila and Santiago; and Captain Philip's words, to be remembered as long as noble deeds are told: "Don't cheer, boys; the poor fellows are dying."

After all, does not the popular recognition of the generous acts that accompany the inevitable cruelties of war indicate that mankind is growing more and more sensitive to these cruelties, and determined more and more to find other and less barbarous means of settling international controversies?

A Step Toward Universal Peace.

THE remarkable utterances of M. Ollivier in his article printed in the present number of THE CENTURY, along with similar expressions, public and private, of friendship for America by representative Frenchmen and Frenchwomen, are welcome evidence that our great sister republic is not unmindful of the ties that have long bound together the lovers of free government in the two countries. That the better opinion of France has been grossly misrepresented by the Parisian organs of selfish interests is now well understood;

and generous-minded Americans have at the same time been willing to allow for a natural sympathy on the part of Frenchmen with a neighboring and kindred country suffering the calamities of a losing war.

But the quick understanding of and sympathy with the American position on the part of the people of the British Empire is naturally to Americans a matter of paramount importance. Aside from those actions, or refusals to act, of the British government which have, as supposed, made impossible certain possible combinations not in our interest, the spontaneous and widely extended demonstrations of regard for America throughout Great Britain and her sister states have revealed a fellowship which it is not too much to say marks an era in the history of humanity. For these expressions of regard and confidence have not been without the most cordial reciprocation in all parts of America. Seldom in the history of the human mind has so quick a change of sentiment come over large numbers of people; for in some quarters there was much of prejudice to unlearn in little time. It has come now to be thoroughly understood that notwithstanding the fact that American blood is very far from being all British, and although the short story of our own country has been marked by fierce wars with England and by misunderstandings as bitter as any that actual war between the two nations could create,—still, as the Stafford House resolution declared on the 13th of July, the two peoples are not only closely allied by blood, but “inherit the same literature and laws, hold the same principles of self-government, recognize the same ideals of freedom and humanity in the guidance of their national policy, and are drawn together by strong common interests in many parts of the world.”

It is not necessary, and it is far from desirable, that the union should be one leading to aggression against other powers. It must not be an alliance of selfish forces, but of noble and kindred aims. It must not be in the interest of war, but in the interest of international arbitration and of that era of universal peace which is the steadfast hope of good men throughout the earth.

As an evidence of the feeling in Great Britain toward the United States, we print in full the remarkable list of the General Committee of the Anglo-American League, under the auspices of which the recent meeting at Stafford House was held.

President: Rt. Hon. James Bryce, M. P.

Archbishop of Canterbury; Archbishop of York.

Duke of Westminster, K. G.; Duke of Sutherland; Duke of Fife, K. T.; Duke of Marlborough; Duke of Newcastle.

Cardinal Vaughan; Archbishop of Armagh; Archbishop of Dublin.

Marquis of Ripon, K. G., G. C. S. I., C. I. E.; Marquis of Breadalbane, K. G.; Marquis of Northampton.

Earl of Derby, K. G., G. C. B.; Earl of Jersey, G. C. M. G.; Earl Northbrook, G. C. S. I.; Earl of Clarendon; Earl of Crewe; Earl Grey; Earl of Meath; Earl Russell; Earl of Shaftesbury.

Field-Marshal Viscount Wolseley, K. P., G. C. B., G. C. M. G.; Viscount Peel; Viscount Powerscourt, K. P.; Viscount Halifax.

The Bishops of London, Durham, Winchester, Chester, Hereford, Liverpool, Manchester, Worcester, Ripon, Peterborough, Bath and Wells, Lincoln, Chichester, Lichfield, Exeter, Llandaff, Rochester, St. Asaph, St. David's, Sodor and Man, Menavia.

Lord Brassey, K. C. B.; Lord Coleridge, Q. C., Lord Farrer; Lord Kinnaird; Lord Lister, P. R. S.; Lord Welby, G. C. B.; Lord Loch, G. C. B., G. C. M. G.; Lord Tennyson; Lord Llangattock; Lord Davey; Lord Thring, K. C. B.; Lord Rayleigh, F. R. S.; Lord Monkswell.

Members of Parliament:

Marquis of Lorne, K. T., G. C. M. G.; Viscount Valentia; Rear-Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, C. B.; Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith, Q. C.; Rt. Hon. Sir H. H. Fowler, G. C. S. I.; Rt. Hon. Sir U. J. Kay-Shuttleworth, Bart.; Rt. Hon. Sir J. H. Kennaway, Bart.; Rt. Hon. Sir John Lubbock, Bart.; Rt. Hon. Sir J. R. Mowbray, Bart.; Rt. Hon. J. W. Mellor, Q. C.; Rt. Hon. Horace C. Plunkett; Rt. Hon. C. Seale Hayne; Hon. Sir Stafford Northcote, Bart., C. B.; Sir Lewis McIver, Bart.; Sir John Dorington, Bart.; Sir James Kitson, Bart.; Sir Joseph W. Pease, Bart.; Sir Powlett Milbank, Bart.; Sir Saml. Montagu, Bart.; Sir W. H. Wills, Bart.; Sir Robert Reid, Q. C.; Sir Alfred Hickman; Sir Walter Foster, M. D.; William Allan, Esq.; Thos. G. Ashton, Esq.; Col. A. H. Brown; Hy. Broadhurst, Esq.; Thos. Burt, Esq.; J. G. Butcher, Esq., Q. C.; Sydney Buxton, Esq.; F. A. Channing, Esq.; Robt. Cox, Esq.; John Ed. Ellis, Esq.; D. Lloyd George, Esq.; Fortescue Flannery, Esq.; Walter Hazell, Esq.; Brynmôr Jones, Esq., Q. C.; Sir John Leng; Hon. Alf Lyttelton; E. J. C. Morton, Esq.; S. F. Mendl, Esq.; A. D. Provand, Esq.; H. M. Stanley, Esq.; James Stuart, Esq.; John Wilson, Esq. (Durham); R. A. Yerburch, Esq.

Rt. Hon. Sir George Trevelyan, Bart.; Rt. Hon. Sir Richard Temple, Bart., G. C. S. I.; Rt. Hon. Sir Bernhard Samuelson, Bart.; Rt. Hon. Sir Algernon West, K. C. B.; Rt. Hon. Jacob Bright; Rt. Hon. Evelyn Ashley; Hon. T. A. Brassey.

The Lord Mayors of Belfast, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, York.

The Lord Provost of Aberdeen; the Lord Provost of Dundee; the Lord Provost of Edinburgh; the Lord Provost of Glasgow.

T. McKinnon Wood, Esq., J. P. (Chairman of London County Council).

Baron Halkett; W. R. M. Wynne, Esq., J. P. (Lord Lieutenant of Merioneth); Major James Rose (Lord Lieutenant of Nairn); J. E. Greaves, Esq., J. P. (Lord Lieutenant of Carnarvon); Sir Edgar Vincent, K. C. M. G.; Sir Sydney G. A. Shippard, K. C. M. G., D. C. L.; Sir H. S. Cunningham, K. C. I. E.; Sir John Evans, K. C. B., F. R. S.; Sir Norman Lockyer, K. C. B., F. R. S.; Sir David Salomons, Bart.; Sir Alex. Moncrieff, K. C. B., F. R. S.; Sir Arthur F. T. Clay, Bart.; Sir David Dale, Bart.; Sir Robert G. Head, Bart.; Sir Hickman B. Bacon, Bart.; Sir W. H. Broadbent, Bart.; Sir Lewis Molesworth, Bart.; General Sir William Gordon Cameron, K. C. B.; Rear-Admiral T. S. Brand; Hon. Sir John Robinson, K. C. M. G.; Colonel Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff, K. C. M. G., C. S. I.; Sir Geo. Robertson, K. C. S. I.; Sir Cecil C. Smith, G. C. M. G.; Sir Myles Fenton; Sir J. H. Puleston; Sir Fred. Howard; Lieutenant-General Hon. Sir Andrew Clarke, G. C. M. G. (Agent-General for Victoria); Sir Walter Peace, K. C. M. G. (Agent-General for Natal); Hon. W. P. Reeves (Agent-General for New Zealand); C. A. Duff-Miller, Esq. (Agent-General New Brunswick); H. C. Beeton, Esq. (late Agent-General for British Columbia); Hugh C. Smith, Esq. (Governor of Bank of England); Thos. H. Ismay, Esq., J. P.; Lieutenant-Colonel Eustace Balfour.

The Deans of Windsor, Wells, St. Paul's, Rochester, Westminster, Canterbury, Durham, Winchester, Hereford, Lincoln.

Archdeacon of London.

Canon Eyton; Canon Gore; Canon Barnett; Canon Scott-Holland; Canon Duckworth.

Very Rev. Father Cook; Rev. Professor Shuttleworth; Rev. W. L. Watkinson, D. D. (President of Wesleyan Methodist Conference); Rev. A. Rowland, LL. B. (Chairman of Congregational Union); Rev. Samuel Vincent (Chairman Baptist Union); Rev. J. H. Rigg, D. D.; Rev. F. W. McDonald, D. D.; Rev. Joseph Parker, D. D.; Rev. Newman Hall, D. D.

Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University; Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University; Master of Balliol College (Oxon.); Hon. the Warden of Merton College (Oxon.); Warden of Keble College (Oxon.); President of Magdalen College (Oxon.); Master of Trinity College, Cambridge; Master of St. John's College, Cambridge; Master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

Herbert Spencer, Esq.; Algernon C. Swinburne, Esq.

Professor G. W. Prothero, Litt. D.; Professor F. W. H. Myers, M. A.; Professor C. V. Stanford, D. C. L.; Professor A. V. Dicey, Q. C.; Professor J. Westlake, Q. C.; Professor T. E. Holland, D. C. L.; Professor C. Waldstein Litt. D.; Professor Edward Hull, LL. D., F. R. S.; Professor J. W. Hales, M. A.; Professor J. Agar Beet, D. D.; Leslie Stephen, Esq.

The Head Masters of Eton, Rugby, Harrow, Charterhouse, Winchester, St. Paul's, Dulwich, Marlborough, Sherborne, Cheltenham, Bedford (Grammar), Bedford (Modern).

The Reverends J. Clifford, D. D.; C. A. Berry, D. D.; J. Brown, D. D.; J. Guinness Rogers, D. D.; Hugh Price Hughes, M. A.; T. B. Stevenson, D. D.; R. F. Horton, D. D.; Monro Gibson, D. D.; Dr. Fry; H. R. Hawsis, M. A.; H. W. Tucker, M. A.; Hy. V. Le Bas, M. A.; Russell Wakefield, M. A.; Alfred J. Sharp; W. Boswell Lowther.

Fred. Jas. Furnivall, Esq., M. A.; Sir Dyce Duckworth, M. D., LL. D.; Sir Henry Thompson; Lawson Tait, Esq., M. D., LL. D.; Sir Joshua G. Fitch, LL. D.; Sir Lewis Morris; Sir Walter Besant; Sir Edwin Arnold, K. C. I. E.; Sir Arthur Arnold, LL. D.; Sir John Robinson; Sir Edward Russell; Sir H. Gilzean-Reid; C. F. Moberly Bell, Esq.; W. L. Courtney, Esq., LL. D.; E. T. Cook, Esq.; H. W. Massingham, Esq.; W. T. Stead, Esq.; Alfred Harmsworth, Esq.; Sidney Low, Esq.; Sidney Lee, Esq.; P. W. Clayden, Esq.; Percy Bunting, Esq.; "Ian Maclaren"; Anthony H. Hawkins, Esq.; I. Zangwill, Esq.; Dr. Conan Doyle; Max Pemberton, Esq.; W. R. Washington Sullivan, Esq.; Rev. Dr. Douglas Morrison; Fisher Unwin, Esq.; W. H. Wilkins, Esq.; Rudyard Kipling, Esq.; J. St. Loe Strachey, Esq.; J. A. Spender, Esq.; Clement K. Shorter, Esq.; H. Rider Haggard, Esq.; Archibald Grove, Esq.; Jerome K. Jerome, Esq.; A. W. à Beckett, Esq.; W. M. Crook, Esq.; Richard Garnett, Esq., C. B., LL. D.; Samuel Pope, Esq., Q. C.; Montague Crackanorpe, Esq., Q. C., D. C. L.; Cyril Dodd, Esq., Q. C.; Reader Harris, Esq., Q. C.; Sir W. B. Richmond, R. A.; G. F. Watts, Esq.; Alfred Gilbert, Esq., R. A.; Briton Rivière, Esq., R. A.; F. Moscheles, Esq.; W. H. Preece, Esq., C. B., F. R. S. (President of Institute of Civil Engineers); Sir Douglas Fox, C. E.; F. W. Fox, Esq., C. E.; Warington Smyth, Esq.

The Mayors of Ashton-under-Lyne, Barrow-in-Furness, Bath, Bolton, Canterbury, Crewe, Derby, Doncaster, Gateshead, Gravesend, Jarrow-on-Tyne, Leicester, Leamington, Lowestoft, Middlesbrough, Monmouth, Montgomery, Neath, Newport (Mon.), Stockport, Stockton-on-Tees, Stoke-on-Trent, Sunderland, Tewkesbury, Torquay, Truro, Walsall, Warrington, West Bromwich, Winchester.

Alderman Dickinson, L. C. C.; H. L. W. Lawson, Esq., L. C. C.; E. A. Cornwall, Esq., L. C. C.; Ed. Browne, Esq., L. C. C.; Arthur G. Symonds, Esq., M. A.; D. W. Fresh-

field, Esq., M. A.; Hugh M. Williams, Esq.; George Howell, Esq.; Sydney Robjohns, Esq.; Fred. Pennington, Esq., J. P.; John S. Thomasson, Esq., J. P.; Ed. K. Muspratt, Esq., J. P.; Ed. R. Spiers, Esq.; J. W. Martin, Esq., B. Sc.; B. W. Ginsberg, Esq., LL. D.; H. Winterbottom, Esq.; B. F. Hawksley, Esq.; Arthur Sidgwick, Esq.; W. Randal Cremer, Esq.; H. J. Torr, Esq., J. P.; Fred. Ward, Esq., J. P.; Dr. Fletcher Little; Frank Wright, Esq., J. P.; Thos. Graham, Esq., J. P.; Corrie Grant, Esq.; R. Crawford Hawkin, Esq.; J. A. Murray McDonald, Esq., M. L. S. B.; B. F. C. Costelloe, Esq., M. L. S. B.; Richd. Gowing, Esq. (Secretary of Cobden Club); Richard C. Maxwell, Esq., LL. D.; James Rowlands, Esq.; Henry Willett, Esq.; A. C. Foster Boulton, Esq.; Dr. J. H. C. Dalton; A. J. David, Esq., F. R. G. S.; Allen Grant, Esq.; A. Maconachie, Esq.; D. G. Shipman, Esq., LL. D.; Arthur J. Wright, Esq.; Mark Judge, Esq.; R. Applegarth, Esq.; Chas. H. Radford, Esq.; J. W. Willans, Esq.; Saml. Williams, Esq., J. P.; Fredk. Sykes, Esq.; J. E. Carver, Esq.; Fredk. C. Finch, Esq.; Hodgson Pratt, Esq.; J. Fredk. Green, Esq.; Wm. Mather, Esq.; E. C. Haynes, Esq., M. A.; L. F. Austin, Esq.; Thos. J. Barnardo, Esq., F. R. C. S.; John Hulme, Esq.; Wm. McKenzie, Esq. (Dundee).

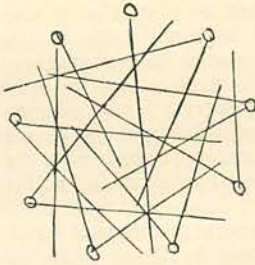
Honorary Secretaries: Sir Fredk. Pollock, Bart.; T. Lee Roberts, Esq.

It should be said that in America the responsive note of good will is very seldom marred. If a jarring sound is heard at all, it is soon lost in the general chorus of fraternity. An interesting feature of the expressions of kindly sentiment on the American side is the fact that some of the warmest of these expressions come from American citizens who have in their veins not a single drop of British blood.

Problems.

THE August and September numbers of THE CENTURY contain articles, from various hands, which should be of material use in the solution of the difficult problems with which our people have been suddenly confronted. In the current CENTURY, besides the descriptive and historical papers, two competent publicists, in articles written before the peace overtures in July, address themselves specifically to the immediate questions as to the retention and administration of island territory. The essays by Mr. Schurz and Mr. Reid are interesting both in their variance and in their agreement. It is a matter of importance that two writers, having such different points of view, are one in the conclusion that it would be disastrous to the Republic if rights of statehood should be given to any of the tropical communities now ours, or which the fortunes of war may leave upon our hands.

THE CENTURY readers were promised authoritative descriptions of the "problems" as well as the "places" and "battles" of the Spanish-American war; and certainly the problems are in their character as unusual and as unforeseen as the battles have proved to be, and as strange as some of the places. In the October CENTURY Professor Worcester will write again of the Philippines, from his abundant knowledge throwing additional light upon the extraordinary conditions there existing.

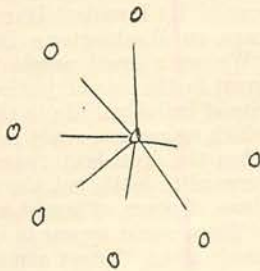


proper order. Lines cross at swords' points, but fail to reach any destination, because no one is willing to give a courteous reception to the line of thought presented by another; every one is occupied in the aggressive effort to project his own views.

This group will be most effectually instructed by an object-lesson. Let the leader set an example of suavity and tolerance. By bringing them one by one into harmony with himself, he may bring about a truce of hostilities and, let us hope, the negotiation of a lasting peace.

CIRCLE J.

THE circle at the mercy of a homilist. He steps out of the circumference and occupies the center. If he succeeds in holding his audience, the radii reach to the other dots. But the diagram illustrates the usual case, when the homilist is merely a monopolist in the midst of a disintegrated circle.



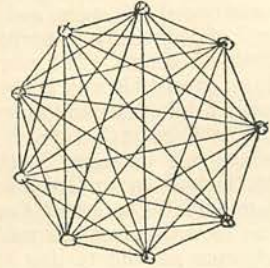
One of the circumference dots should assume the leadership

and break up the monopoly by drawing others into the discussion. He may be obliged to allow his purpose to be somewhat transparent; but the life of the circle is at stake. As one would shoot a burglar in defense of his home, so a conversational leader may be compelled to draw the trigger on a homilist. If it becomes necessary to use some sharp measures, it seems to be one of the cases where the end fully justifies the means.

CIRCLE K.

THE ideal circle, in which the atmosphere is thrilled by an unbroken magnetic circuit.

Whoever may have been chiefly influential in the development of this ideal relation, he has not made himself conspicuous; in the end every one in the circle is as much a leader as he; every one is willing and ready not only to send out his own line of sympathy, but also to receive the line sent out by every one else. The dual character of talker and listener is sustained by everybody; and whatever excellence and grace there may be, in purpose, choice, and method, is shown at its best in this ideal circle.



TOPICS OF THE TIME

A New Alexander the Great.

SEVERAL causes make a new life of the greatest world-hero timely in interest, and important in the large sense of conveying a political lesson to the modern world. Alexander of Macedon transformed the civilized world of his time from a medley of jarring states into an empire with a higher zenith, and with a horizon extended to take in the vast barbaric power of western Asia. Old worn-out fabrics of military and state-craft crumbled under his strokes, which were incomparable as regards the titanic forces of intelligence and will.

Under the eyes of the world to-day, not one but several Alexanders of the West are carving up barbaric empires into new realms of a grander civilization. It conforms to the genius of the time that the modern Alexander is not a personal hero, blazing with his own sword-arm his path to glory. In this superorganized age, that which stands for him is the disciplined and coordinated intelligence and force of a progressive people; a larger Europe,

a larger Asia, a larger Africa, and the added half-world America are now the arena of these prodigious factors in world-politics. But while the scenes and the instruments have increased and changed in confusing and magnifying splendor, the soul of events and the source of mastery remain what they were to Alexander.

The new life of the Macedonian hero which THE CENTURY is to print will appeal with special timeliness to the American people, on account of a correspondence of conditions and results which the recent war helps to enforce. In the same way Macedonia was despised by her enemies older in the practice of nationality, for her newness was taken as the sign of semibarbarism, and her aptitude for material progress was looked at askance, as implying coarseness and greed. But wherever she met her enemies in the clash of brain and brawn, the victory was so complete, and on her side so bloodless, that a miracle seemed to have been wrought—the miracle of courage, intelligence, and discipline.

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

of mortgages, trade to all the world, country house, and cottage by the waterside, all for a little conversation." And what one finds satisfactory in a friendly talk of two or three, with the give and take of repartee, and the kindling of latent power under the inspiration of sympathy or wit, one likes to imagine in a wider circle of social companionship such as was found in the famous salons of France, or the less pretentious meetings of English and American literary men and women of the past. It is a question perpetually propounded, why, with all the social tact and grace of our women, the salon has not taken root in our society. Various responses might be made—one, that we have the equivalent. Wherever anything approaching such an institution has been found in this country, it has been based primarily, not upon dancing, or food, or servants' livery, or upholstery, or even upon music, but upon conversation; and conversation will be the chief constituent of any larger and more formal organization. At the same time it is to be doubted whether the American spirit and character, even at their best, will naturally express themselves in salon form. But between such a dress-parade and the pleasures of a tête-à-tête there is a large field of social activity, which, already worthily cultivated in this country, may yet engage consideration.

The article by Miss Agnes H. Morton, in the present number of *THE CENTURY*, presents in a novel way some of the many obstacles in the way of a successful dinner-table conversation, laying stress upon the obligations of the hostess. Heine's saying, "Every country has the Jews it deserves," may be paraphrased to read: "Every hostess has the conversation she deserves." The delight and, at the same time, the despair of social intercourse is individuality, and it is in the measure of her power to control the individuality of her guests that a hostess's success largely consists. The whole must be kept greater than any of its parts. This Miss Morton has graphically set forth. Given a small dinner-company, say of eight or ten, and the secret of entertainment lies to a great extent in the tact of the hostess in *keeping the conversation general*. How many a promising party of the sort has been spoiled by a monologist, or a too happy couple, or a dull listener, or by criss-cross chat, all because the elements were not kindly mixed, or, being congruous as a whole, were left to chance for their affinities! The compliment to the guest of honor has been lost, the others invited to meet him have little more acquaintance than before, while the separate pairings-off might as well have taken place on Broadway as far as they were related to a so-

cial event. Even on an intellectual plane not the highest, the hostess may usually provide against such a catastrophe by thoughtfulness, kindness, and tact. But little can be accomplished unless the company recognize that conversation is an art not wholly to be come at—like Dogberry's "reading and writing"—by nature, and that, under cultivation, it is capable of producing the highest and most lasting pleasure.

"The Island of Porto Rico": Note.

IN reviewing the article which I wrote for the August CENTURY, I note several errors which, I fear, may be charged to inadvertence on my part. In the first place, the tables from which I took my statement of exports and imports seem to have been incorrect, for I am made to say (probably did say) that for the year 1895 they aggregated some sixty million dollars. The paragraph should read: "The commerce of the island is mainly with Spain and the United States, and with a total value—exports and imports combined—of over \$36,000,000 for the year 1896, nearly \$10,000,000 was with Spain, not quite \$7,000,000 with this country."

Spanish statistics are notoriously inexact, but in my translation I seem to have imbibed some of the faults of the statisticians, for I passed the error over, both in manuscript and in the printed proof. When my article was written, the statistical tables of trade with Puerto Rico had not appeared, and I based my data upon Spanish sources. For general information on the island I relied upon a very creditable publication, "Estudio Historico, Geografico y Estadistico de la Isla de Puerto Rico," supplemented by my own observations, and it should be very nearly accurate.

But again; for "the principal harbors on the north coast," read, "the principal ports," and make Arecibo the "roadstead," instead of Ponce, which really has an excellent harbor, though several miles distant from the city.

In my description of the fortifications, instead of "the sea-wall to the north is pierced by the gateway of San Juan," read, "the sea-wall to the west," etc.

Exception may be taken to my statement that "San Juan is frequently scourged with yellow fever," etc.; so a milder term may be used, such, for instance, as "sometimes scourged"; but it is endemic there, just the same, and before these lines reach the readers of *THE CENTURY* there may be convincing proof of the truth of my assertion.

The latest returns place the population of the island at 813,000; but we have no means of knowing at present whether this estimate is any nearer the truth than other reports.

Finally, I have a grievance of my own: I note that my article is entitled "The Island of Porto Rico," when, in point of fact, it should be "Puerto Rico." There is no such word as "porto" in any language with which I am acquainted—at least, not in the English or the Spanish.

Frederick A. Ober.