The Sun.

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1905.

The New Year opens with war raging in one continent and threatened in another and with a cloud darkening the prospects of more than one Latin-American republic as regards the continuance of the license which has been so long abused. Even some of those relatively fortunate and highly enlightened countries which have no cause to apprehend a serious disturbance of their foreign relations are certain in the twelvemonth that begins to-day to find themselves upon the threshold, if they do not actually cross it, of important political or economic change.

The American people, without regard to social, sectional or industrial divisions, are deeply interested in learning what in the quadrennium now unfolding will be done by the Republican party and the Republican Chief Magistrate with the responsibilities and powers that have been confided to their hands by a vast majority of the electors. By the self-denying ordinance issued as soon as the outcome of the contest at the ballot box was known, the promise not to become a candidate or to accept a nomination for the Presidency in 1908, Mr. ROOSEVELT offered an unexpected but most acceptable guarantee that in all his official words and deeds he would be swayed neither by personal motives nor by partisan interests, but by a high minded and single hearted purpose to subserve the welfare and promote the progress of the nation considered as a whole. So long as that guarantee is fulfilled it is wellnigh certain that the President at the end of his second term, even though some of his plans should be obstructed and some of his accomplished purposes should disappoint his hopes, will be followed to private life by honor, esteem and confidence and by a well founded assurance that he will, at some later and critical conjuncture, be recalled as a good and faithful servant to the White House by his compatriots. That would be a unique and magnificent tribute to the public virtue of a man who already has the distinction of having broken political records. It will not prove easy, but singularly difficult, for one of impulsive and ardent temperament to keep his eyes fixed upon a goal never yet reached by a Chief Magistrate, because the attainment of it exacts the unwavering exhibition of absolute justice and impartiality toward every section, every class and every interest in the American community.

Not a few recent incidents have contributed to the belief that experience in high office has brought to Mr. ROOSEVELT the discipline of self-control, and that, if he ever could, he can no longer be led astray by the vanity of wilfulness or blind consistency, but that he has learned the superlative wisdom of hearing argument and stifling prepossessions, of reconsidering intentions, recasting plans and revising judgments. We have often pointed out, in view of the elastic and tremendous powers of a President for good or evil, that he needs for their right exercise not only the expertness and the energy of a great administrator, but also some of the qualities that would equip him to fill worthily a place upon the highest judicial tribunal. It is not enough for the ship of state to have an executive officer—she wants a pilot as well. Pilots, like Presidents, are made, not born, and the mistakes which they are bound to commit in their first essays at pilotage serve but as beacons to point the way to ultimate efficiency and triumph. That the three or more years of practice in Presidential functions which Mr. ROOSEVELT has enjoyed have been turned to much account is patent, though it remains to be seen, of course, whether when his second term shall have closed, he will take a place of eminence beside his most illustrious forerunners. This, at least, is sure, that he is to-day a larger, graver, better poised and further sighted man than he was when he took MCKINLEY'S seat.

Those who honestly wish Mr. ROOSEVELT well and who feel that the fulfilment of their wishes for his personal renown would inure to the good of the republic have marked with lively satisfaction the serious and cautious temper in which, during the last six or seven weeks the President has approached certain momentous economic problems. Soon after the November elections we were told by some persons, who were supposed to be intimate at the White House, that the President was inclined to send a special message to the present Congress, informing it that in his opinion the tariff should receive revision at the earliest practicable moment, and that to this end he purposed early in the spring to convoke the Fifty-ninth Congress in extra session. Since then, however, Mr. ROOSEVELT, instead of being rendered headstrong by opposition, has hearkened to argument and seems to have recognized the expediency of postponing a readjustment of the customs duties until the first regular session of the Fifty-ninth Congress begins in December next, in order that in the interim legislators who have been reelected, and who are peculiarly qualified for the task, may agree upon a list of changes, which, on the one hand, might be made without unfair discrimination against any industrial interest, and which, on the other hand, would have a reasonable prospect of being placed promptly on the statute book.

Then, again, in Mr. ROOSEVELT'S last annual message occurred some passages that would justify widespread concern, if not consternation, had they been believed to embody deliberate resolves upon the writer's part. For instance, the President expressed a hope that the insurance business might be brought under the laws relating to interstate commerce; he evinced, too, an inclination to see given by Congress to the Interstate Commerce Commission a power of fixing railway rates, at least temporarily, and he also bespoke careful attention for a forthcoming report by Commissioner GARFIELD, a report with which Mr. ROOSEVELT must have been acquainted beforehand, and which was to submit a proposal nothing short of revolutionary, from political and economic viewpoints, the proposal, namely, that corporations should be required to procure Federal licenses, as a *sine qua non* condition of engaging in interstate commerce.

As to the first of these three suggestions, that favoring the subjection of insurance business to interstate commerce legislation, it is pretty evident that the President is not disposed to press it, inasmuch as he must have seen, and tacitly or explicitly approved, that part of Commissioner GARFIELD'S report which points out that the Federal courts have insisted upon drawing a distinction between interstate business and interstate commerce and have classed insurance in the former category. As for clothing the present Interstate Commerce Commission with authority to fix railway rates, subject to review, as Mr. ROOSEVELT in his message seemed to recommend, or conferring such authority upon a new court created for the purpose, as Senator ELKINS has advised, it is plain that the Administration has no intention of dictating to Congress on the subject by propounding any measure of its own. It takes for granted that the Federal legislature is amply qualified to deal with the subject. With regard to Mr. GARFIELD'S startling project for compelling State corporations doing interstate business to take out Federal licenses we may say that as yet the President has not given the faintest indication of a belief in the constitutionality of the plan, but has rigorously confined himself to impressing upon Congress the intense, wide stretching, epoch making seriousness of the proposal.

The President's approaching visit to Texas for the purpose of attending a reunion of his "Rough Rider" regiment may be expected to elicit the cordial expressions of welcome characteristic of our Southern brethren. In spite of the resentment provoked by some of Mr. ROOSEVELT'S acts, such as the hospitality casually offered to BOOKER WASHINGTON at the White House and the persistent appointment of the negro CRUM to the Collectorship of Customs at Charleston, it is now beginning to be recognized that they were prompted, the former by a generous impulse and the latter by a conscientious recognition of the fact that a Chief Magistrate cannot refuse systematically to acknowledge the equality conferred by the Constitution on our colored citizens. Upon individual Southerners who, like Mr. THOMAS NELSON PAGE, have been brought into personal contact with Mr. ROOSEVELT, he has made a most favorable impression, and they are unanimous in averring that the South will revise its opinion of the President when the breadth of his sympathies shall be better understood. It is the truth that no Republican Executive, not even GRANT, whose chivalrous conduct toward LEE is likely long to be remembered, has treated Confederates and their descendants with more respect and consideration than has the present tenant of the White House.

To mention only three examples, to which he himself has felt at liberty to direct attention, we may point out that he has bestowed the Governorship of the Philippines on a Confederate soldier, LUKE WRIGHT, who married a daughter of Admiral SEMMES of the Alabama; that he has offered a cadetship at West Point to a son of "Stonewall" JACKSON, and that he has made a son of Gen. STUART, the distinguished Confederate cavalry commander, the United States Marshal of the District of Virginia. Such proofs of an enlightened patriotism, comprehensive enough to embrace all sections of the country, and to condone differences of opinion, although these may have led to civil war, will not be undervalued, we think, by clear sighted and fair minded men in Texas or in any Southern community. Nor will such men fail to observe that from the Executive Mansion has come not the faintest sign of approval of the movement started by Mr. CRUMPACKER in the House of Representatives to enforce the Fourteenth Amendment. These are some of our reasons for believing that the coming twelvemonth may witness a profound transformation of the sentiment with which Mr. ROOSEVELT personally is regarded at the South, and we should not be surprised if such a transformation should eventually be followed by a revival of the inclination to organize a white Republican party in some of the Southern States. That which MCKINLEY achieved in Maryland, West Virginia and Kentucky and what Mr. ROOSEVELT has accomplished in West Virginia and Missouri may not hereafter be beyond the range of attainability in Virginia, in Tennessee, in Louisiana and in Arkansas.

During the twelvemonth now begun the United States Senate will be asked to ratify the various treaties of arbitration which afford conclusive evidence that the President's foreign policy means peace and not a sword. If the Senate shall mirror faithfully, as generally it does, the feelings and convictions of the nation at large, it will not withhold its sanction from conventions which, although not decisive, are important steps toward a repudiation of the organized and wholesale savagery which disgraces civilized mankind. These treaties of course will not avail to silence the war drum at once and forever, for they leave it optional with the Executive of either party to decide whether a given question affects a country's honor or vital interests; but there is no doubt that the existence of such compacts would dispose Governments to shun provocations and to practise conciliation and forbearance. All of these arbitration agreements are inspired by the same exemplary motives that led our State Department to propose the meeting of a second conference at The Hague. It is a mistake to suppose that the invitation has met with a rebuff that savors of humiliation, because both of the belligerents consider it inopportune for them to take part in such a conference while the present war is pending. The truth is that both Japan and Russia have assented to the proposal in principle and have promised to send delegates to The Hague after the conclusion of a peace. It follows, inasmuch as all the other invited Powers have shown themselves cordially acquiescent, a second peace conference will assemble, so to speak, automatically, at no distant date. The first conference, it will be remembered, was called by the Czar NICHOLAS II., who lost no time in disclosing how much genuineness there was in his professed devotion to peace. We have faith that Mr. ROOSEVELT will furnish better proofs of sincerity.

If, as we hope, the Senate shall promptly ratify these arbitration treaties, which culminate in an agreement with Great Britain that is a substitute for the abortive convention negotiated by Mr. OLNEY and Lord PAUNCEFOTE, we shall look forward to seeing during the year that begins to-day a good deal of attention given on both sides of the Atlantic to the question whether it might not conduce to the interests of both parties for the United States to enter into a combination with Great Britain strictly limited to defensive purposes and modelled upon the species of alliance that now connects that country with Japan. The fundamental principle of that carefully restricted compact is well known: it binds each of the signatories to assist the other, but only when that other is attacked by more than one great Power. How Great Britain would profit from such an understanding is plain; her navy, instead of requiring incessantly progressive expansion and threatening to impose an intolerable burden on her taxpayers, would need only to be kept on an equality with the combined naval force of France and Russia, for she could always rely upon us to neutralize the German fleet. That to us such a defensive alliance would mean a commensurate economy is no less obvious—we should need thereafter only to maintain our navy on a footing with Germany's, because if confronted with more than a single maritime Power we should have England's cooperation. Without such an agreement with Great Britain it will not be safe for us merely to keep pace with the German Empire, for the latter Power would be well nigh assured of assistance from Austria and Italy, whose united naval force would be by no means insignificant. Besides, a coalition of Germany and Russia against the United States is at least as conceivable as was the joint ultimatum submitted to Japan by Russia, Germany and France.

If we are to go on forever eschewing foreign alliances and adhering stiffly to a policy of international aloofness which has no longer a reason for existence since our acquisition of the Philippines, we require a sea power equal, we will not say to Germany's, or even to that of France, but to that of Germany and Russia combined. Even then we should be at the mercy of a triple coalition like that to which Japan succumbed. We repeat that we can imagine no international agreement more useful to both of the parties and better calculated to assure universal peace upon the ocean than a defensive alliance between the United States and England, for which reason it would not surprise us if the expediency of such a league should come into the foreground of discussion during the coming twelvemonth.

So far as exterior troubles are concerned the year 1905 opens auspiciously for Great Britain. Since the conclusion of a treaty with France, by which a controversy that has made bad blood for many a generation, the dispute about the "French shore" of Newfoundland, was definitely settled the British Empire has been practically impregnable, except on its Indian frontier, and there, for a twelvemonth at all events, it will have nothing to dread from its one great neighbor, Russia, which will be preoccupied or exhausted. The apprehension that the United Kingdom might possibly become embroiled in the Far Eastern conflict has passed away, for no one now believes that either France or Germany will array itself on the Czar's side, and in the absence of such a demonstration Japan cannot call for British aid. While, however, the horizon seems to be free from clouds, there is quite enough in the internal condition of Great Britain to compel anxious attention on the part of those who are alive to the gravity of her fiscal problem, a gravity to which the ruling price of consols bears admonitory witness. The staggering cost of the Boer War, coupled with the tremendous burden imposed by the obligations assumed in the Land Purchase act—to which must be added the onerous necessity of spending more and more upon the navy if England is to remain without any ally except Japan—have rendered it increasingly difficult for Chancellors of the Exchequer to make both ends meet without exciting wide discontent.

The British Exchequer has well nigh reached the end of its tether so far as direct taxation is concerned, for the well-to-do classes will scarcely endure in time of peace a distention of the income tax that they would tolerate in time of war. It is the fear that the hour is close at hand when the necessities of the British Treasury can only be supplied by a return to indirect taxation that really accounts for the fact, otherwise amazing, that so many men reputed well informed and able have shown themselves willing to support Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S proposal to levy an import tax, not only on foreign manufactures competing with native products in the British market, but also on all foodstuffs not of colonial origin. As we have often pointed out, the remedy advocated by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN would be worse than the disease. His project is not a veritable lantern, lighting up the path to relief and safety, but simply a will-o'-the-wisp, certain to plunge the pursuer in a bog, for Great Britain has little or nothing to fear in her home market from foreign manufactures; it is only in neutral markets that she has growing cause to dread competitors—and thence, of course, she can raise no revenue. As for the income derivable from a duty on foodstuffs, it would either, as we have often said, prove negligible, so far as the needs of the Treasury are concerned, or, if large enough to be of any substantial aid, it would render an increase in the price of bread unavoidable, and then scenes of tumult and disorder such as England has not witnessed since the Chartist riots would inevitably follow. That is a distressing dilemma from which Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S ingenuity will never find a loophole of escape.

The member from West Birmingham has several times acknowledged that he expected his proposal to be rejected on the first appeal to the constituencies. But when will that appeal take place? The statutory septennial term of the Parliament, the House of Commons in which was chosen in 1900, has yet some two years to run, and until lately it seemed probable that Mr. CHAMBERLAIN would wish to postpone as long as possible the next general election, in order to give himself time to impress his ideas upon the voters. A recent incident has disclosed, however, that his health is seriously impaired and that he has no time to spare if with his own eyes he would witness the triumph of his preferential policy. There is no doubt that through his large following in the House of Commons and through his capture of the Liberal-Unionist organization he could at any time exert such pressure upon the wavering Premier, BALFOUR, as would necessitate an early dissolution of Parliament. He will probably use his power, and in that event we may look forward to a defeat of the present Government at the ballot box, although it had four years ago the phenomenal majority of about 150 over all opponents combined. As to the defeat, the political prophets are agreed, but as to its proportions they are widely at variance. Can the Liberals hope to secure a working majority over Unionists and Home Rulers combined, or will they be forced to depend upon the cooperation of the Irish Nationalists, as Mr. GLADSTONE was in January, 1886?

We need not say that the question may be fraught with momentous consequences to the future of Ireland. Now that the Nationalists have obtained a land purchase act of adequate dimensions, and also the concession of local self-government, so far as counties and municipalities are concerned, there is not much left for them to ask for except the boon of a Dublin legislature. It would formerly have been assumed that a promise on the part of British Liberals to give Ireland Home Rule would rekindle the animosities of nineteen years ago and reconsolidate the Unionist party. The attempt, however, of Lord DUNRAVEN and other Unionist ex-landlords to gain Government sanction for a partially elective council, equivalent to the germ of a Dublin legislature, has indicated that Irish landowners, now that they have been enabled to sell their estates at fair prices, no longer view with passionate aversion the idea of Ireland's legislative autonomy. At all events, Irish patriots have learned that only by fishing in troubled waters can they hope to land anything of value, and Americans who wish them well will, therefore, hope that in the twelvemonth now beginning they will once more hold the balance of power in the lower house of Parliament, as they did in January, 1886, and again in 1892-95.

As to France, there are but few observers of the political situation who believe that the Combes Ministry will manage to live out the year. It is true enough that according to all surface indications the bill for the abolition of the Concordat seems likely to prove a sheet anchor rather than a cause of shipwreck. No tie so firmly unites the Socialists and the Radical Republicans, who between them constitute a majority of the Chamber of Deputies, as their vehement desire for an absolute divorce of religion from the civil power in France. No doubt, if the State is to refuse to pay any longer the stipends of the Catholic clergy, consistency will require a similar withholding of salaries from Protestant pastors and Jewish rabbis, but the failure of Jews and Protestants to make common cause with the Catholics is ascribed to a secret understanding that the two former constituents of the French population will ultimately be taken care of. It is well known that by the Masonic lodges, which are just now so powerful in France, Protestants and Jews have long been welcomed well nigh as heartily as Freethinkers themselves. If during 1905 there were to be no strenuous struggle in the two houses of the French Parliament except that between the Catholic Church and her implacable opponents the stability of the present Cabinet would not be open to dispute.

There are two side issues, however, on which it might at any hour be shattered. It is certain that many members of the normal majority regard with disgust and indignation the spy system which the Combes Ministry inherited from its predecessors, but which at one time it applied with peculiarly offensive zeal. Under this odious system army officers have been trained to spy upon each other, Judges upon their colleagues on the bench, Prefects and Sub-Prefects on their fellow administrators. More than once already an exposure of the lengths to which inquisitorial practices are carried has infuriated legislators and brought the Government within a hair's breadth of collapse. There, again, is the income tax, which M. ROUVIER, the Finance Minister, is understood to have brought in against his will and which he has striven to make as unobjectionable as possible. The French people have shown repeatedly that they will not tolerate an income tax, and it will seem strange if Premier COMBES can force them to swallow a measure which proved fatal to LÉON BOURGEOIS, a much stronger Minister. As for the foreign policy of France, the New Year may see her confronted by a Jehad, or Holy War, in Tunis and Algeria should exasperation lead her to essay the systematic coercion of Morocco.

We pass over Germany and Italy because no general election will take place in either of those countries during the coming twelvemonth, and because their foreign relations seem unlikely to be disordered, unless the death of Kaiser FRANCIS JOSEPH should split the Hapsburg realm asunder, or unless a violent commotion in the Balkan Peninsula should so inflame the territorial greed of Austrians and Italians as to prompt them to attempt—and Germany to resist—the forcible partition of the Sultan's European inheritance. We take for granted, however, that if Russian diplomacy retains any influence at Berlin, Vienna, Stamboul and Bucharest, we shall see no veritable war enkindled from the smouldering embers in Macedonia. As for the internal condition of the dual Hapsburg dominions, confusion has of late been worse confounded by the resignation of Dr. VON KOERBER, the Cisleithan Premier, and by the determination of Count TISZA, the Liberal Prime Minister, to dissolve the Hungarian Parliament. The party intrigues, vicissitudes, tergiversations, obstructionist tactics and riotous outbreaks that have long characterized both Legislatures have ceased to excite any feeling in sober minded onlookers except bewilderment and contempt.

The country on the European Continent which is most likely to rivet the world's attention in the coming year is that colossal empire of the north which, politically, has advanced not a step beyond the eighteenth century, and which, as regards the social organization of the bulk of its peasantry, belongs to a far distant age. The Western observer rubs his eyes to learn if he can be awake, when he sees 40,000,000 of Muscovite agriculturists still dwelling under the ancient system of communal property; eight or ten million Jews still languishing in the ghettos of mediæval times; and some of the most distinguished scientists, scholars, jurisconsults, artists and men of letters upon earth bowing their necks beneath the galling yokes of an absolute autocracy. It is a spectacle that would seem incredible were it not attested by such overwhelming and painful evidence. There have been of late rumblings and heavings, as if the leviathan were stirring in its sleep. Is the Slav of to-day more hopelessly lethargic than was the Frank of a hundred years ago; or are we destined to witness, before another year is over—what MILTON prayed to see in England—a noble and puissant nation mewing its mighty youth, upleaping from a slumber of centuries, and shaking its invincible locks? At the hour when we write it looks as if Czardom had turned a deaf ear to the despairing outcry of reformers and doomed itself to the dreadful task of dealing with revolution. If the report be well founded that Prince SVIATOPOLK-MIRSKY, Minister of the Interior, and Mr. GLASOFF, Minister of Education, have decided to retire from office, and that Prince GALITZIN, Mayor of Moscow, has been handed over to justice for his too liberal speech before the municipal council, the Emperor NICHOLAS is to be pitied rather than denounced, for he has lost sagacious and devoted servants, whose sole fault was a wish to save his dynasty.

On Russia's part and, to a minor extent, on the part also of her Japanese opponent, the war in the Far East is now sustained by means of foreign loans; and, should the contest be protracted for another year, both combatants are likely to be stricken with financial impotence. For nearly eleven months the Japanese and Russian treasuries have been subjected to the tremendous drainage inseparable from placing and keeping in the field armies which in the aggregate cannot fall short of three-quarters of a million of men. Already, as regards duration, the pending trial of strength has surpassed considerably the Franco-German War, the parties to which were incomparably superior, in respect of fiscal resources, to the present belligerents. No doubt it would cost Japan materially less to prolong the fighting throughout 1905, because she controls the sea, and the armies under Marshal OYAMA are very near their base of supplies. It should be borne in mind, however, that Japan is by far the poorest of the great Powers, and that the outlay required of her up to the present time has so much exceeded her taxable capacity that it seems likely to paralyze her internal development for some time to come. A people that cannot secure two loans, relatively small, from foreign countries without mortgaging their customs revenue must soon reach the limit of their credit. In a word, the actual game of war, if continued for a twelvemonth, may end in a stalemate.

It is because the dread of impending bankruptcy ought to prove a dominant factor in the councils both of the Czar and the Mikado, that we are prepared to hear at any moment that an offer of mediation would be welcomed. There is no doubt that equitable terms of accommodation might be arranged by France and England, acting respectively as the next friends of the antagonists. After the fall of Port Arthur and the recall or destruction of Russia's Baltic fleet, of both which events we expect to hear early in the New Year, the psychological moment for an earnest attempt to stop a foolish and futile contest will have arisen. There is no real reason why Russia should shrink from confessing herself defeated, for no military commander can hope to operate successfully many thousands of miles from his base. Russia is justified in feeling chagrin, but not humiliation, in view of the tactical sagacity displayed by Gen. KUROPATKIN and of the splendid valor and endurance exhibited by the Port Arthur garrison. She has done enough for honor, and would have but little or nothing to gain by a further waste of blood and treasure. We not only hope but believe that, before the year now opening has closed, the peace of the Far East will be assured for a considerable period by a treaty which shall give to Japan permanent control of Corea and restore to China the whole or the greater part of Manchuria. Baffled in their effort to secure an ice-free port upon the Yellow Sea, as they have been thwarted in their age-long craving for Constantinople, the Russian people will be driven thenceforward to follow the line of least resistance, which debouches on the Persian Gulf.

We can see no ground for the misgivings of those who profess to be haunted by a "Yellow Peril" in the fact that in a contest wherein ascendency at sea was the essential condition of victory, the Japanese should have proved able to beat a European country which, since PETER the Great built its first warships, has shown itself egregiously incompetent in naval warfare. A corrupt bureaucracy, like Russia's, is of all governments the least qualified to maintain a large maritime force in a state of high efficiency. In the record of Admiral TOGO'S operations we find no basis for the assumption that he could have coped successfully with a French or German, much less with an English or American fleet. Japan will always be powerless in the face of enemies that command the sea, and, therefore until she can challenge the combined warships of the Western Powers, it is preposterous to talk of her ability to start an avalanche of the yellow race against the white. Such a challenge will never be offered, for while Japan is building a single battleship the Western Powers can construct a hundred. For these and other reasons we do not expect to witness a reawakening of the Chinese, due to the self-confidence inspired by the triumph of their Mongolian kinsmen. When the descendants of GENGHIS Khan subjugated Russia and pushed their hordes into Central Europe, the Chinese evinced not a trace of elation or sympathy, but on the contrary opposed a stolid and dogged resistance to incorporation in the Mongol Empire.

There is some foundation for the prediction that 1905 will be remembered as the initial year of a new epoch in the history of the Latin-American States. The Dominican Republic, of which Santo Domingo is the capital, has long ceased to pay interest on its foreign debts, and the patience of its creditors is now utterly exhausted. The agreement extorted from Venezuela by the blockading Powers—the agreement by which the Caracas Government pledged itself to set apart for the payment of foreign creditors about a third of the customs receipts of La Guayra and Puerto Cabello—has been evaded by President CASTRO, either through a falsification of accounts or through a diversion of imports to other Venezuelan harbors. It is not to be supposed that Germany and Great Britain would tolerate a wanton violation of their treaty rights, and a second naval demonstration on their part would now be imminent but for the novel construction put upon the Monroe Doctrine by Mr. ROOSEVELT in the letter read at the Cuban dinner, and recently expounded at considerable length by ex-Secretary ROOT. What is described as a "corollary" has plainly been formulated for the purpose of shielding Latin-American Commonwealths, which have failed, or may fail, to comply with their pecuniary obligations, from undergoing the fate of Egypt. It is evident that if a creditor Power is at liberty to sequestrate a third of the customs revenues of a defaulting American republic, the principle may be carried further, and if the debt were large enough, the creditors could confiscate the whole of the income accruing from duties upon imports, although hitherto the debtor State may have relied almost exclusively upon such income to defray the expenses of its internal administration. But if a creditor can satisfy his claim by seizing indirect taxes, would he not be authorized by a parity of reasoning to levy direct taxes also? How, in a word, is it possible to reconcile the sequestration of revenues, partial or entire, with the declaration made by President MONROE that the United States could not permit a European Power, under any pretext, to mutilate the territory, or in any way control the destiny of an American republic?

From the dilemma on the horns of which he was threatened with impalement by the recent Venezuela precedent, President ROOSEVELT has saved himself by proclaiming the "corollary" to which we have referred. He reaffirmed the principle on which he acted when he countenanced the blockading of Venezuelan seaports by creditor Powers, the principle, namely, that a Latin-American Commonwealth must not make make merchandise of its weakness, but, like all honest States, must pay its debts, including those arising out of contract. With the view, however, of preventing a Latin-American debtor State from sinking into the condition of Egypt, and also of upholding our traditional determination never to permit European Powers to acquire new footholds on this Continent, Mr. ROOSEVELT practically said that if, through any default of the Santo Domingo or Caracas Government or of any other Latin-American party to a foreign loan—there are, we scarcely need recall, unsatisfied claims against Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and other South or Central American commonwealths—there should be in the future any debt collecting and revenue distributing work to do, he will do it himself. We are not surprised that the announcement should have been heard with considerable concern in Argentina, which, although solvent to-day, was but a little while ago within a hair's breadth of bankruptcy, and the concern may extend to such Latin-American capitals as Bogota, Quito and Lima. There is really no ground for trepidation, seeing that we should prove faithful stewards, and should go home when our work was done; but we do not wonder that our intentions are looked upon with suspicion, and we expect to see the new "corollary" of the Monroe Doctrine made a topic of lively discussion, during the twelvemonth now beginning, in both the New and the Old Worlds.

America Behindhand in Motor Fire Engines.

From Cassier's Magazine.

Steam motor fire engines, petrol, or what in America would be called gasoline, motor fire engines, and even electrically operated fire pump equipments, are currently advertised specialties of British make which ought to be worthy object lessons to American municipalities and fire engine builders.

At least half a dozen British towns, if not more, have motor driven fire engines, either steam or petrol, while Cape Town, in South Africa, and Valparaiso, in Chile, and even Mauritius, are equipped with petrol motor hose carts and tenders, if not pumps. Whatever the power system, animal traction for fire engines should not be permitted to survive much longer; it should have disappeared with the horse car on city streets.

INDEPENDENCE FOR IRELAND.

An Interesting Discussion of the Question From Different Points of View.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* As to England's allowing Ireland to go, while it sounds very nice it is illogical and unreasonable. That England has never treated Ireland as she should have done, no one disputes; yet there were and there are faults, and serious faults, on the part of Ireland. Sentimentality, gush and buncombe have too often taken the place of good horse sense. Old sores have been continually exposed—moaning and groaning have taken the place of action, until all who would have an interest in that country are disgusted.

Japan in fifty years has done something to be proud of; Ireland in hundreds of years has literally done nothing to put herself to the front. Civilization and Christianity, as far as they are stepping stones to progress, have availed Ireland but little. Ireland should learn from Japan, do as Japan has done—stop talking and begging, and act. Then Ireland will have not only the sympathy, but also the help of all practical, fair play loving people.

NEW YORK, Dec. 31. JAPAN.

The Belfast View Denounced.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* One of your correspondents, signing himself "Anglo-Ulster," asks: "What would you do with the contented, prosperous and progressive section at the northeast of the unhappy land?"

It may be necessary to explain that this alleged prosperity is the result of special legislation in favor of that alien colony. The linen and shipbuilding industries have been fostered by bounties and subsidies from the British treasury for the purpose of giving employment to the population which has its focus in Belfast, while there have always been special agrarian laws for their benefit. In spite of all the privileges accorded them I am unable to see where their vaunted prosperity and contentment come in. If Northeast Ulster is so happy and contented, why did not "Anglo-Ulster" remain there? Men who are prosperous don't usually emigrate. Philadelphia has long been the mecca of emigrants from happy and contented Ulster, but I fail to see that they are more progressive than their fellow countrymen who call themselves Irish without any qualification.

I believe that a free Ireland has room and a welcome for all her children regardless of race or religion. There would be plenty of work for all in building up and rehabilitating their beautiful native land; but if they should still persist in regarding themselves as Englishmen or Scotchmen—why, they could go home if they didn't choose to live in Ireland; there should certainly be no strings on them.

During the progress of the Cuban insurrection we heard threats of the Spanish colony to withdraw their business and capital from the island in case it succeeded in casting off the yoke of Spain; but it has been demonstrated that a free Cuba has given them increased prosperity, and we hear no more of their migration to the Iberian Peninsula.

The letter to-day signed "Anglo-Celt" is too contemptible for serious notice. It could only emanate from one of those hybrids who are neither English, Irish nor Scotch, but who are despised by all three. J. F. MCCARTHY.

BROOKLYN, Dec. 31.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In the event of Ireland's being granted its independence by England, as suggested in your splendid editorial of last Sunday, it would be a fitting thing to take those persons who are at present worrying about the future of the contented folks of the north of Ireland and hammer it into their heads that once upon a time a Man, Jesus Christ, came upon earth to create happiness for all.

This suggestion is made in reply to "Anglo-Ulster's" query in THE SUN of yesterday, a query that to me seems as narrow minded as an onion skin is thick. He apparently worries about even the possibility of happiness in Ireland in any place but Ulster.

In reference to his statement concerning that "prosperous, contented section," perhaps "Anglo-Ulster" has overlooked a recently published foreign note in THE SUN, in which it was stated that just now 5,000 persons are being fed daily in Belfast by the Salvation Army. But who has ever heard of an "Anglo-Ulsterman"? It is a tough proposition to put such a bastard corruption of names on a communication. SON OF AN IRISHMAN.

NEWARK, Dec. 30.

The Success of Such a Project Not Hopeful.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The answer to "Why Not Let Ireland Go?" is that England never lets anything go of her own volition.

Ireland's hope for liberty depends, not on England's good will, but on the inherent determination and power of Irishmen to obtain it. Those who have followed the drift of Irish thought and action in the last ten years have abundant reason to hope for Ireland's ultimate freedom. The strong adjective policy is being discarded, and the people are taught to look to themselves and to seek within themselves for the power, as well as for the remedy, to redress the wrongs from which they suffer.

When we consider the might of England on the one hand and the long series of disasters which have befallen Ireland on the other, we may well say that they are optimists indeed who believe in Ireland's ultimate freedom. C. N.

NEW YORK, Dec. 30.

Favorable Opinions Expressed by Newspapers.

From the Boston Herald.

THE SUN says to England: "Why not let Ireland go?" This looks like a good thing, both for England and Ireland. Both would be better friends.

From the Binghamton Press.

The finest thing that our esteemed and brilliant contemporary, THE SUN, has said for many a long year—and it has said many a fine thing—was to suggest in its issue of Christmas Day that England should strike the shackles from Ireland, not in part, but absolutely and forever. Allow her to become an independent nation. A little one she would be in numbers and in territorial area, but in spirit and capacity to govern herself and in ability to hold her own she would be entirely self-sufficient. Ireland can never be subjugated and she can never be domesticated, can never be made a part of the British Kingdom except in vain and barren formality. That independent Ireland would be a peril to England THE SUN does not believe, and neither does the *Binghamton Press*.

From the Rochester Post Express.

The leading article in the Christmas number of THE SUN put forward a simple but startling proposition for the settlement of the Irish question—that England should grant out of the fulness of her bounty and benificence what the majority of the Irish people desire, nationality and absolute independence. It is urged that the attempt to govern Ireland even in modern times has been a failure, and that there is no immediate prospect of success.

This would be a wise and noble thing to do; but the connection between England and Ireland has endured so long that a severance can hardly come so easily. Nothing more hapless than that connection has ever come to pass, perhaps, in history; but it has influenced Ireland strongly, changed the whole course of its development, introduced new elements into its people and complicated the life of the country with many controversies. The vital question is: Can England now say, "Go in peace"?

In the meanwhile it is clear that the national spirit is advancing in Ireland and asserting itself in a peculiar way, not in politics, but in the revival of Celtic literature. And, as usual, those who misrepresent England have set themselves against the movement.

Permanent Diplomatic Residences in Europe.

Mrs. Van Rensselaer Cruger in the North American Review.

What the United States requires in European capitals is permanent and official diplomatic residences, in which all envoys, whether rich or poor, shall be expected to reside in a condition of quiet and unostentatious elegance consistent with republican institutions. Palaces are neither necessary nor desirable. The need is for elegant residences provided by this Government, and furnished by it in such a style as to enable its representative to maintain its dignity without meanness or ostentation.

If, in each capital, every American envoy were required to live in the house provided by the Government, there would be produced at once an external uniformity in the outward life of each which would conceal the difference between the rich merchant diplomat and the brilliant, yet poor, scholar diplomat. It is true that the former could give more dinners and pour out more champagne and serve more truffles than the latter; but otherwise their general mode of life would be equal.

To provide such houses it is not at all necessary or desirable that we should purchase them. Property owners in Europe are only too willing to make long leases, with the right of renewal, to a Government as a tenant; while the cost of furnishing would not be very considerable. When a careful calculation is made, it will be found that adequate unfurnished residences can be leased in all the European capitals at an annual cost of less than $100,000 for all.

Suburban Country Life presents an unusual and attractive color photograph for its January cover. The leading article, by Winthrop Packard, tells interestingly how a Boston librarian made a suburban colony out of an abandoned farm district. It is illustrated with photographs showing just how it was all done. The half tone photographic illustrations all through the number are especially good.