The Sun.

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Tempting the Democracy.

After Mr. BAILEY's famous victory in Texas some of his enthusiastic admirers nominated him for Vice-President. Why not? Nothing could be more logical and consistent. In the days of his success and his undisputed ascendency he was opposed to BRYAN's leadership. Whether he thought himself a better man we have no means of knowing. At all events, he disapproved of BRYAN. Recently, dismounted from his high horse, beset by enemies, fighting the battle of his life with his back against the wall, he found it necessary to court the Bryan following, especially in the western part of the State and in the depths of the chaparral, and he won out by a very narrow margin. He won because the cowboys did not understand and could not be made to understand the issue. Further east, where the population was thick, the appliances of civilization fixed and the diffusion of knowledge general, the majorities against him were both intelligent and conspicuous. He prevailed, it would seem, by a species of default. The cowboys hadn't heard anything of consequence for two or three years, so BAILEY throve upon their good natured ignorance.

And now his fervent henchmen pretend to think and possibly do think that he ought to be nominated for Vice-President on the ticket with his new found chief, and we make bold to join our small and distant voice with theirs. Where could the Democracy—as it seems to be constituted to-day—find a more felicitous and appropriate conjunction? If it is proposed to nominate BRYAN for the first place, by all means let us have BAILEY for the second. The question after the initial plunge will not be that of practical success; it will be one of the fantastic and the picturesque. We ransack the Democratic situation in vain quest of a more appropriate apotheosis.

How different it might be were the old party animated by courage and spirit and intelligence we do not like to think. They have reached a point at which victory fairly beckons them if only they could see it. A return to the principles of THURMAN and TILDEN, a leader animated by the ideals of CLEVELAND, and a proclamation to the harassed, discouraged and alienated people—these are what they need to win with and to restore the republic to its ancient moorings. It would not be necessary to consider present alignments. There would be no occasion for anxiety as regards the Populistic contingent. The right sort of candidate on the right kind of platform would summon from their now forgotten refuges every old fashioned Democrat and latter day independent in the land, and to such a nucleus would rally—for this once if never again—the countless thousands of all parties or of no party who seek peace, security, protection, the promise of deliverance from unrest and fear, the guarantee of restoration to vanished but still remembered paths.

But the Democrats who cry the loudest are all for BRYAN, and from their stupid uproar it is difficult to redeem a really intelligible note of hope. The ferment of opposition is at work and much may come of it. Dissent manifests itself with increasing frequency and emphasis. "Instructions," such as those in South Carolina, are languid and perfunctory, often enigmatic. The original superstition has weakened visibly, and out of all these processes of disintegration something tangible may yet come.

The suggestion of BAILEY, however, as a second to BRYAN on the Denver ticket is so apt, so fitting, so thoroughly in keeping with the party's general history for the last fifty years, that it disheartens and abashes us. It suggests such a triumph of futility and infatuation that we can hardly believe the Democratic party will reject it.

Shall Washington Be Dry?

During the debate in the House of Representatives upon the Tirrell amendment to exclude canteens from national soldiers' homes, which resulted in the adoption of the amendment by a vote of 167 to 46, in spite of the protests of governors of homes in all parts of the country, Mr. CHARLES B. LANDIS of Indiana uttered a terrible threat:

"Mr. Chairman, I see in the daily print that a grant has been secured to establish a bar in the new Union Station, that splendid edifice which would never have been erected but for the assistance voted by the American Congress. This exemplifies the shortsightedness of these gentlemen who call themselves friends of personal liberty. They should be wise enough to know that that grant will be of short duration. No District appropriation bill will ever again pass this House that does not carry a provision sounding the death knell to that bar that is to be established at the gateway to this splendid capital city. I would utter a word of warning to these friends of personal liberty. I would warn them that that very grant is likely to precipitate a contest on this floor, under this dome, that will not only prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquors in the new Union Station but close forever every saloon within the confines of the District of Columbia."

The new Union Station at Washington is in truth a thing of beauty and a joy forever, a marvel of spaciousness, symmetry and elegance, but it happens to be in a part of the city remote from hotels and their creature comforts; nor is there a bar in the vicinity where a glass of wine, beer or spirits may be obtained. It is therefore highly desirable and certainly not inimical to morals or dangerous to the peace in such a well policed railroad station that a bar should be opened for the accommodation of travellers marooned in the great edifice by a failure to make connections.

No one but a politician nervous about the temperance vote at home would impute to travellers a design to drink themselves into a state of violent or helpless intoxication at the Union Station bar. Perhaps it was well for the despatch of business in Congress to banish the sale of liquors from the Capitol, but why interfere with the comfort and needs of strangers passing through the sequestered Union Station? We cannot think that the threat of Mr. LANDIS was taken seriously by his brother Congressmen on the eve of a national election, nor do we believe that the irrepressible contest to close "forever every saloon within the confines of the District of Columbia" will ever begin as long as Congressmen consume beer, wine and spirits themselves.

The "Commodity Clause."

On May 6 Senator FORAKER submitted a resolution directing the Interstate Commerce Commission to inform the Senate whether the railroads of the country have duly complied with the so-called "commodity clause" (Section 1, paragraph 5) of the railway rate law, "and if there has not been such compliance the commission is hereby directed to inform the Senate whether such non-compliance is due to any agreement, arrangement or understanding of which it has knowledge between the railroad companies and the authorities charged with the duty of enforcing said provision."

Thereupon Senator BACON declared that he was "startled by the suggestion even that there was any power in this country outside of the lawmaking power by which the operation of a law could be suspended." The Foraker resolution was agreed to by the Senate. The reply of the commission, which on Senator MONEY's amendment is to be made "forthwith," may be more startling than the resolution calling for it. The matter to which attention is thus called is not new. We assume that Senator BACON reads the local papers, as most Congressmen do. Had he read the Washington *Post* of March 31 with reasonable care he would have seen on its front page a column headed "Relief for Roads." Perusal of the article would have made known to him that "the *Post* is able to state on the best of authority that President ROOSEVELT has carefully considered the disastrous effects that might follow the unreasoning obedience to the letter of this law without considering its spirit." A little further down the column he would have found the statement that "the Government will not prosecute the railroads for a failure to comply with the terms of this act pending a decision of the Supreme Court. This statement is made on the best of authority." Others of similar tenor appeared in many papers throughout the country at about that time.

It is somewhat late in the day for legislators to awaken to the fact that there has been for some time a disposition on the part of the executive branch of the Government to regard the enforcement of law as optional rather than obligatory. It is even probable that there would have been no clamor for the Hepburn rate law if the Elkins law had been enforced. No subsoil plough would be needed to turn up sundry other instances.

The "commodity clause" of the rate bill is one of the fruits of the hysteria which attended the passage of that measure. The White House led the scream for legislation which would tie the hands of railroad managers and bring transportation service under closely restrictive laws and regulations. Rebates and discriminations have practically disappeared, but their suppression is not due to the operation of the Hepburn law. The enforcement of the "commodity clause" threatens the ruin of some of our most important lines, but the law is the law and the Senate is right in asking for information regarding its enforcement.

Britain's Peril a Weak Navy.

The May number of the London *National Review* contains a remarkable article entitled "Admiralty and Empire," signed "St. Barbara," evidently by the writer of the striking series of articles which recently appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* and which brought a formidable indictment against England's present naval administration, an indictment by the way which neither the official spokesmen nor the self-constituted apologists of the Admiralty in Parliament have undertaken to refute. In view of the fact we may fairly hold that the indictment stands which arraigns England's present naval administration for culpable neglect of the fighting preparation of the British fleet. The author of the *National Review* article turns from the more technical subjects which in *Blackwood's* he has treated with conspicuous ability to expound the larger issues of British naval administration and their relation to imperial policy.

"St. Barbara" warns his fellow countrymen that the British Empire is held together by two strong cables, namely naval supremacy and sea borne commerce. The existence of the British Isles depends upon oversea supplies, and their due arrival depends upon the protection of the trade routes by the British navy. The wealth of England depends upon the combined action of naval power and commercial power. Regarded from another point of view, the situation is thus defined: The colonies might conceivably exist apart from England, but under no circumstances could the England we now know exist apart from the colonies.

Put in a sentence, the question for the British people to answer is simply, according to the *National Review*, Do you want an empire or do you not? If some readers do not, the subsequent remarks in the little essay by "St. Barbara" are not for them. If they consider that "the colonies are getting above their business and it would do them good to get it in the neck," why, then, one had better talk about something else. "St. Barbara" says that he has encountered the get it in the neck attitude of mind even among deans of colleges, though by them, of course, it is expressed with refinement and dignity. In the House of Commons it is like a disease. With the Liberal party the dislike to colonies is an article of faith. It is admitted that Conservatives often entertain the same sentiment, though privately. Indeed the Conservatives were in office in 1904 when the delusive motto "Economy with Efficiency" was adopted and when 155 warships were stricken off the active list by what Mr. BALFOUR called a "courageous stroke of the pen." Cruisers, sloops and gunboats, the peace patrol of the empire, were swept from all seas. The Reserve Fleet was put into commission with only nucleus crews, and commissions were reduced from three to two years. The whole active navy was redistributed in accordance with a foolish scheme which need not be described, as it has since been altered entirely.

What was the result of these performances as regards the defence of the British Empire? Of the cruisers and patrol ships discarded some were sold for the price of scrap iron. In a little time the British flag practically disappeared from distant stations. The peace patrol was not even considered. Commerce was left to take care of itself. The public became partially conscious of the full extent of the disaster at the time of the earthquake in Jamaica, when the American navy intervened in the absence of British ships. Again, when the Sultan of Zanzibar was forced to ask for British protection it was Germany that sent a cruiser. The unforeseen consequences of the changes introduced by the Admiralty in 1904 were even more serious. The reduction of a ship's commission from three to two years resulted in the total dispersion of a ship's company as soon as it had become properly trained and accustomed to its vessel. The concurrent introduction of short service further weakened the adequacy of the personnel. The sea training of the men has been reduced. The Coast Guard, hitherto accounted the invaluable guardian of Britain's shores, has been cut down, and is threatened with abolition. The marines have been reduced in number. The whole training of the officers is being risked upon what Admiral of the Fleet Sir FREDERICK RICHARDS has called a "hazardous experiment." Finally, discipline has been impaired by bureaucratic action.

Returning to his original thesis "St. Barbara" says: "Either the British people want an empire or they do not want it." If they do not want it they only have to let things go in the navy as they are going now, and, as Lord ELLENBOROUGH said the other day in the House of Lords, within a few years Germany will command the North Sea without having to fire a shot. If on the other hand the British people do want an empire it is clear to the writer in the *National Review* that the whole system of cutting down estimates, parliamentary evasions and subordination of everything in heaven and earth to the pettifogging of parties must be brought summarily to an end.

Campaign Fund Publicity.

No humane man can withhold his sympathy from those unhappy statesmen who long to take the public into their confidence with respect of the details of their campaign funds but who are restrained from so doing by a mysterious, highly potent influence against which they struggle in vain.

The great and thoughtful PAYNE burns to lay bare the immaculate record of the Republicans; the poetical and rasping WILLIAMS weeps because of his inability to acquaint all the voters with the inspiring secrets of the Democratic ledgers. They are one in demanding publicity, but each is bound to silence, as are all his brothers.

To what end is the sound and fury among the beneficiaries and controllers of those receptacles commonly called "dough bags"? If they wanted to do it, if they were not mutually afraid to do it, they could open their books in a moment, without law, rule or regulation. Do they believe their lamentations over the absence of an act to enforce honesty on party treasurers and political organizations deceive any sane person? It is possible they do. A man who makes a virtue of his incapacity for right doing without statutory enactment is gifted enough to believe anything.

In his decision in the "celebrated case" of Miss MARY ELIZABETH LEWIS, who possesses $500,000 in her own right, Justice MAREAN of the Supreme Court says:

"While I believe Miss LEWIS in some respects departs from an absolute standard of sanity, I am not so well convinced that she is incapable of taking charge of herself or of her affairs that I am willing to set aside the second verdict of a jury declaring her to be competent."

What is an absolute standard of sanity, and how many conform to it? These questions it would puzzle even an alienist to answer. Most of us believe that some harmless people we know are not entirely rational or they would not hold the singular opinions we condemn or do the remarkable things of which we disapprove. A man may tap with his stick every tree he comes to, as was Dr. JOHNSON's practice, refuse to sit down at a table with twelve others, regulate his conduct by omens, talk to himself on the street, or be queer and flighty in the opinion of his wiser friends, and yet he may be an able man of business and a useful citizen.

Probably no two alienists could agree upon what is an absolute standard of sanity, and if the specialists differ about the matter it is idle for plain folk to set up a standard. Sanity after all is a comparative term and there is no exact definition of it.

Mr. JOHN R. DOS PASSOS, speaking of the constitutional amendment that prohibits bookmaking and other forms of gambling, says that it was adopted by the convention "as a mere piece of partisan bluff, each political side represented in the convention seeking to outdo its rival by a show of excessive virtue." Mr. DOS PASSOS adds that the amendment was adopted with no expectation that the people would indorse it. We venture to say that the great majority of the voters did not know they were voting on a question that was properly the business of the Legislature and which should never have been embodied in the organic law to plague future generations. The fact is the people are too prone to leave constitutional amendments to the superior wisdom of the convention that proposes them, and this is peculiarly true as to so-called moral questions. It is the politicians of the constitutional convention of 1894 who were really responsible for tying the hands of the Legislature with regard to the regulation of the ineradicable passion for betting.

If the night riders have any judicious friends there will be no raids of Indiana or Ohio, unless the regulators of the tobacco market are prepared to lose the number of their mess.

Governor HARRIS of Ohio is an old soldier and Governor HANLY of Indiana is a resolute and inflexible person. Neither of them would have any compunction about employing the militia to shoot down rioters.

Mr. CANNON is seventy two years old, a lean, wiry, Lincoln like man.—*The Fortnightly Review.*

That is, he tries to look like LINCOLN. To look like LINCOLN is to have the most valuable political asset known in the Middle West.

THE AFGHAN WAR.

Apparently a Conflict Between Militia Levies and Not Serious.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* To any one as familiar with the geography of the Khyber as he is with that of Broadway the sensational account of the threatened invasion of India by the Afghans is not only absurd in detail but bears evident traces of having originated with that enterprising bureau of Oriental news which only a few years ago manufactured for the press a massacre at Pekin.

The precise situation is this: When the British retired from Afghanistan a militia force of local levies under the Indian Government was placed in charge of the Khyber Pass from Jumrood to Lundi Kotal. Another militia of local levies under the Ameer was put in charge of that section of the Khyber which extends from Lundi Kotal to Dakka. Lundi Kotal, which in my day during the Afghan war was a British cantonment, is in the centre of the Khyber and at the frontier limit of the British empire in India, although the military base of operations is at Peshawur. It now appears that the local levies of the Ameer have attacked the local levies of the Indian Government, and General Willcocks has promptly chastised the tribes which supply these levies, because it is now understood that the Ameer is not expected to keep in order the independent Afghan tribes on the British border.

In the meantime the enemies of the Ameer have circulated the report that he is at the bottom of the whole business. I have from time to time pointed out that no treaty can possibly satisfy the Ameer which does not restore to him the Afghan speaking tribes extending to the River Indus. This of course is impossible, although it was actually proposed by Sir John Lawrence at the time of the Indian mutiny. The Ameer has much to fear from these reports, because he has not only a division in his own household, but Sirdar Ayub Khan, who defeated the British at Maiwand and who was in turn defeated by General Roberts, is at any moment ready to step into the breach. The treachery of the Afghan is inexplicable. An invasion of India by the Afghans would only be possible under Russian command, and it was this possibility that brought about the Afghan war. The Ameer has an organized army of at least 150,000 men and there are at the very least 200,000 Afghan fighting men among the semi-independent tribes on the northwest frontier of India.

With Lord Kitchener at the helm there is not much to fear. These frontier wars are constantly taking place. The most serious of them was the Umbeyla war in the year 1863, when sixty British officers were killed in action. The report that Lord Kitchener will be blown up with dynamite fired by a Bengalee is almost amusing. Did any one ever see a Bengalee fire a gun? He can wield the pen, which is sometimes mightier than the sword, and he can talk; but that is all.

NEW YORK, May 8. ANGLO-AFGHAN.

STEEL BEER TANKS.

Origin and Effect of One Instrument of Modern Brewing.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The letter about the effect of steel tanks on the quality of beer fails to show the secret of the matter. I can throw a ray of light on this subject. In 1887 Mr. Page of the Detroit Safe Company came to see me about making an enormous spinning lathe for the manufacture of these steel tanks or vats, which are built of rings placed one on the other and riveted together by outside flanges. He told me that he had enamelled these rings successfully on a reduced scale; that he intended to use the vats for beer brewing. It was his plan to enclose the vat with a metal cover and by a suction pump to exhaust the gases of fermentation as rapidly as they formed. The gases by the old process discharged at air pressure into the cellar, while Mr. Page proposed to draw them out of the fermenting mass by keeping a vacuum over the liquid. This method would hasten the fermentation so greatly that he expected to brew beer and have it ready for consumption in a few days, which would save an enormous sum for the brewer.

A year or so afterward I met Mr. Page, who was a gentleman of rare intelligence and of the highest character, and I asked him about my lathe and his plan. In reply he said that it had been a complete success and a rank failure. The beer made in the steel vats was delightful to taste, but no human insides could stand a second glass of it, for reasons which may be left to the imagination. That was twenty years ago. Since then chemistry has busied itself with the problem, stimulated by the great gain in view, and to-day all the breweries are equipped with Mr. Page's steel vats. Why the drinkers of this beer do not explode is a riddle which the chemist can answer, undoubtedly.

American beers are poisonous for the same reason as our wines and liquors, because we do not give them time enough to ferment or age properly. We drink crude raw spirits, wines and beers which would turn our stomachs were they not sophisticated. It is a common saying that we can make as good beer or wine as they do in Europe. While this is perfectly true, the exact truth is that we do not want to make good beer or good wine. We want to make money, and there is more money in rank stuff. H. B. B.

NEWARK, May 8.

Praise for the Men in Blue and Brass.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Permit me to emphasize the observations of J. T. Hubberd relative to the civility of the New York police. I have lived in and about New York for some years, and time and again have had occasion to request information of the police relative to situation of streets and buildings. Never have I been treated otherwise than with the utmost courtesy, and indeed often have officers done far more than duty required in their efforts to be polite and civil. "R. S." has evidently not cultivated the art of so framing questions as to develop a civil answer.

The assertion that the New York police are a lot of "overpaid blackguards" is simply an asinine statement of one who is not qualified to judge. In the army regulations there is a paragraph which states that "courtesy among military men is indispensable to discipline." That this fact has been thoroughly instilled into the minds of the New York police is a matter of common comment among officers of both army and navy—men whose training eminently fits them to judge.

RETIRED ARMY OFFICER.

NORTH ADAMS, Mass., May 8.

Health Examinations in a Public Library.

From the Morning Call.

The public library trustees adopted a rule providing that in the future every young woman who passes the written examination for a position in the library must also before admission to the library service secure a certificate of good health from a physician. This certificate must be renewed at least once a year while the person remains connected with the library. It is hoped by this means to protect the women assistants from breakdowns of health and at the same time to increase the efficiency of the staff.

Britons Exposed.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Britons haven't any prejudice against Washington pie. On the contrary, the plagiaristic aliens used to have it on the Cunarders thirty and forty years ago under the futile name of "Victoria sandwich." It had three layers instead of two. EXPOSER.

NEW YORK, May 9.

A Rare Pose.

Knicker—So you want a photograph of the President.

Bocker—Yes, one showing him in the act of not being photographed.

THE ENGLISHMAN'S DISCOVERIES

The Southern Drummer, the Abysm of Time and the Vim Elizabethan.

WASHINGTON, May 3.—A horrid but efficient shock flung us from our seats. Formerly I should have inferred that we were the victims of a collision. Now I knew better. It was merely the engine giving proof of the omnipotent youthful buoyancy as it added itself to the cars. The man sitting opposite to me in the green velvet of the Pullman section scattered leaves of manuscript broadcast from his lap as he lunged forward with an ejaculation to check my hurtling body. We met and parted. Then I helped him to pick up his MS.

"Certainly," I reflected, after some little conversation with my collidee, "the American imagination of the past is peculiar. But what it loses in intension it seems to gain in extension."

My companion was, as it happened, a genealogist. He was also, more normally, a commercial traveller. No feature of Southern travel has more surprised me than the innumerable host of drummers therein unavoidable. I have made some impulsive attempts to get "out of the way" of the varnished world, but I could never get out of the way of the drummer. Late one dreary night I entered an inn which offered not so much as the welcome of a desk clerk. The register lay open of its own accord; an oil lamp burned beside it, and not far off stood several unlit candles. Across the register a loose sheet of paper displayed this scribbled notice, "Rooms 28, 31 and 40 (single), and 43, 44 (double) vacant. Put lamp out after lighting candles." Not alone did I face this legend. Two drummers, sprucely dressed, helped to find a vacant single room, and next morning at breakfast appeared five more, as sprucely dressed. Most of them had headquarters in Baltimore, but one came from New York and one from Philadelphia, and all were so conspicuously well groomed and blithe and gentlemanly in this deplorable place, where it seemed impossible there should be any business worth their attention, that I was utterly amazed. All of them were young, and I have since heard that youths of the very best Southern families nowadays "take the road." Without doubt they were of better families than country drummers usually are in Europe. They laughed at my supposition that the neighborhood must afford poor fishing and told me astounding things about the solid wealth of the rural South—which things their own numbers and high spirits went far to confirm.

I met the brotherhood elsewhere, of course, than in pre-Adamite holes, and in some of the palatial hotels which are beginning to make habitable the Southern soil their luxurious ways set me meditating as hard as their complacency under hardships. For instance, they never wrote a letter if there was any one to take it down and "type it" for them. Writing myself one morning at a desk in the office I overheard a drummer dictating three business letters to the young woman provided by the hotel. Then he got up and strolled about finishing his after breakfast cigar till she had done. The three letters cost him 60 cents and he could easily have written them out with his own hand in less time than the dictation and typing consumed. The outlay seemed to me another proof of Southern prosperity. It is certain at least that European prosperity would not have stood it, for after all he was an ordinary country drummer in a country town of 30,000 inhabitants or so. To be sure the European drummer would hardly be exposed to the same temptation in the same circumstances, for he would not have the young woman typist at his call.

The unparalleled achievement of unifying and standardizing every hole and corner of the United States after one or two patterns decreed in the great centres is chiefly carried out, I gather, by these alert agents, an unrivalled body who study at dawn, noon and eventide as they pursue their ways some section of *Bradstreet* or *Dun* with a devotion unsurpassed by that of a priest to his breviary.

My literary companion was older than most of his order in these parts, and he certainly came of an ancient family. The diffused leaves were, it seemed, parts of its history, which he had been writing for many years and for which he was just now gathering some needed data in the South, *par dessus le marché*. He hoped to publish the entire work before long in a fine volume to cost $10 and was already appealing to members of the stock scattered all over the Continent for subscriptions.

The record of the family in America was all plain sailing, and he knew all about the seventeenth century immigrant—an Episcopalian vicar from an eastern county of England who had been dispossessed of his living for unorthodox doctrines. From his pocket he produced a far reaching tree, whose roots were not in English soil, and what impressed me most and almost hurt me was the purely episodic value, so to speak, which he attached to the English period of his ancestry. *En passant*, he linked himself to English kings, but his vaulting ambition would not rest on any such bauble. From Britain lightly did he leap across to France, and after talking with him for some while I should not have been in the least surprised to find him landed on the dim plateau which cradled the Aryan race. Even so I read in the newspapers the other day that Gen. Washington had professed himself a Dane, of a family called Wass emigrated from Denmark to England in a period to be called recent compared with glacial epochs, and so on. My railroad companion had a perspective of the past not less inclusive. His family was not English, it appeared, though it had sojourned there for a few centuries. He esteemed it I know not what—Aryan or perhaps purely cosmic. The logic of his point of view was as undeniable as to me it was novel, and I had to admit that most Englishmen are contented with a much briefer record than this supposedly mushroom American was. An Englishman is satisfied if he can trace his ancestry for three or four centuries on English soil. He does not care to go beyond. He might even be annoyed by the suggestion that he had some even very remote connection with French froggies. For him the English sojourn is as final as the Book of Genesis. It is so crammed with detail to his mind as to be quite absorbing. The further abyss of centuries concerns him personally no more than the Garden of Eden does. But to my American interlocutor the Garden of Eden was, I imagine, within hand's reach.

The first time I stumbled across the superior American purview of chronology was in some of Emerson's poems, when as a child I was taken aback by a grouping in a few curt lines of luminaries of all sorts of ages with a pell mell audacity which I have since thought suggestive of the mediæval bards. The American purview maybe is sketchier, but also more extensive. Nothing is fixed here; this nation of *déracinés* understands as no other can that

> The hills are shadows, and they flow
> From form to form, and nothing stand.

For them all is in the crucible of time, and nothing, I must believe, is more truly shocking to a prejudiced English traveller on this side like myself than the episodical estimate of an English origin professed by Americans of English name such as my genealogical companion in the Pullman.

This archaic conversation occurred while we were bumping over the spreading roots of the Appalachian system as it affects the western parts of the Carolinas. When it ceased I began studying the social characteristics of the passing neighborhood in the medium of the local press, where all I read fully confirmed the little I had experienced at first hand.

Throughout the South, with the exception of some aged, dignified, reserved cities on the seaboard, I have been delighted by an Elizabethan buoyancy and zest in the life social. The most trifling of its entertainments are charged, as I have thought, with an electric vitality, and its inhabitants, especially in the Piedmont region of Georgia and the Carolinas, seem philosophically aware that the small local event is equal, *sub specie eternitatis*, to the elaborate city fête and to act accordingly. R. L. Stevenson has celebrated the keen pleasure of Pepys in the best circumstance of the daily round, but could Pepys himself surpass these Piedmontese? I would submit some confirmatory extracts from a column of a local newspaper headed "In the realm of North Carolina society," confining myself to a single number, or else the quotations would certainly become unmanageable.

But where begin and where end in those overflowing three pages of close print? I cannot hope to convey all of that joyous exuberance in a few extracts, but "for Achilles' image stand his spear!"

> Last Saturday night the young ladies boarding at Matron's Hall, Catawba College, gave a leap year party in the parlors of their home which proved to be one of those occasions that linger in memory during life.
>
> The young gentleman students had been requested to assemble promptly in the college chapel at 7:45, when the ladies would meet them and escort them to the hall. It is useless to say that the members of this sex were promptly on hand, but alas! for the vanity of the fairer sex, so anxious were they to appear at their best that the appointed hour found them still consulting their mirrors. The young men tried to seem indifferent to the lapse of time, and college songs (in the chapel) helped them while away the waiting moments, but many were the eager glances cast toward the door in anxious expectancy. Finally their patience was rewarded, and as the doors rolled back the young men were compensated by a vision of loveliness as fluttering through the doors came a many colored cloud of feminine beauty.

The rest may be left to the imagination. Enough for an Englishman to say that such idyls are quite unknown to Oxford.

Or take this piece of pure delight:

> Wednesday afternoon the New Era Book Club met with Mrs. Grissom, who entertained in a most royal manner. Punch was served by Mrs. Ellett. Master John Morehead acted as postmaster, to whom each guest applied for mail and immediately received a beautiful Valentine postcard. Then the small son of the hostess dressed as a jockey came loping in on a wooden steed and sang "The Next Horse I Ride On," much to the entertainment of the guests. Members responded to rollcall with quotations from "Peace and War." Mrs. Beam read a very fine paper on "Problems Bequeathed by the Civil War." This was followed by a spirited discussion of "Southern Indignation Over 'Uncle Tom's Cabin.'" Mrs. Goode read an extract from that pathetic story of Everett Hale's "A Man Without a Country."
>
> "Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself has said,
> This is my own, my native land?"
>
> He would no longer remain unpatriotic after the delightful reading of this cutting so beautifully rendered by Mrs. Goode. Then Miss Lottie King read that gem of poetry "The Blue and the Gray." Neapolitan cream, cakes, bonbons and coffee were daintily served. The Victor machine favored the audience with a few selections of Mme. Tetrazzini, the greatest singer since Patti, and the pianola manipulated by Master John Morehead also delighted the guests with several selections.

What pure ease of social entertainment breathes again from this extract, alas! all too unrepresentative:

> With characteristic grace that charming chatelaine, Mrs. George Richmond, most delightfully entertained the Sans Souci Club, for her friend from the North, Miss Grace Selby, the honoree of this marked occasion, the parlor and dining room of her delightful home being thrown into one and made especially attractive with decorations of La France roses, asparagus ferns and pink azaleas. The centre piece was especially attractive, a low mass of feathery pink begonias, surrounded by their own beautiful leaves. This composite bit of pink and green was further rendered attractive by another effective study in pink—the Colonial cut glass candlesticks being enhanced by dainty pink tapers surmounted with shades of the same roseate hue. Six tables were arranged for the games of nations and dominoes, and there was much merriment among the guests as they progressed from one table to another. Mrs. Richard Steam was winner of the first prize and was presented with a handsome cracker jar, and the consolation, a bunch of La France roses and asparagus ferns tied with pink ribbon, fell to Mrs. Sinch. An elegant two course collation was served, after which the guests departed, congratulating themselves that they had been so fortunate as to be there.

Might not any one congratulate himself on such good fortune? Who would not have liked to be there? Do not these entertainments breathe a *joie de vivre*, which is the secret after all of the conquest of the American Venus over the Paris of a faded Europe? Can you find this *joie de vivre* to-day so manifest in the West as in the South?

California's Welcome of the Fleet.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* It is to be regretted that your correspondent on board the Louisiana from too close a study of the cynicism of life in the lobster palaces of the Great White Way, and blasé from so many receptions of our peace fleet, has become cynical in writing of the enthusiasm of the Californians. He does not realize the longing of those who arrived there in the early days nor of their children. Those people have been cut off for more than a generation by three mountain ranges and mighty stretches of plains from the home folks. Of course the railroads and telegraph have reduced this distance to those who can afford them, but to the vast majority those barriers have become symbolic of death itself, and are expressed in such terms as "Over the Range," "The Great Divide."

This feeling of isolation, together with the dread of being swamped by the descent upon their coast of a horde of Asiatics, has been relieved by the advent of the fleet. I wonder that Joaquin Miller or some other rhyming sharp has not seized the idea that the children of the Argonauts, left upon the strands of the Pacific, gaze into the dazzling rays of the setting sun and imagine that they can discern an invasion of yellow strangers who are coming to possess their land and submerge them. At the most anxious moment they see instead a mighty fleet of battleships coming from their home folks 14,000 miles away.

The situation is so dramatic that it should, and no doubt does, appeal to the poetic temperament, and is the secret, though perhaps unconsciously, of the great and, to the cynical, extravagant enthusiasm of the Californians. It has made them feel that they also are Americans. W. J. DONNE.

BROOKLYN, May 8.

Question of a Gentleman.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* May I diverge from the subject of oysters to ask a pertinent question of "The Critic"? Is a man of unquestioned breeding and assured social position apt to be sensitive concerning the "presentability" of his guest at luncheon in his club? O. K. MACPERRY.

NEW YORK, May 9.

P. S.—Possibly "The Critic" knows more about lobsters.

Ornithological.

> Now you are entering on a brief career,
> I pray you, little bird, lend me your ear.
> Be circumspect—the risks you run are great—
> Or you will meet a most untimely fate.
> I needn't tell you where to build your nest,
> Although I think a tree should suit you best,
> A tallish tree, with branches rather frail,
> So that, if thieves your sanctuary assail
> (And sure as "eggs is eggs" they'll make a try),
> To reach it they will have, like you, to fly!
> The early worm is best—be up at dawn
> And thoroughly investigate each lawn;
> A model mother you are sure to be,
> Teaching your young, "Birds in their nests agree!"
> While, as for singing, warble from your chest,
> A rich contralto trill will suit you best!
> Work hard, and for a true perfection search
> So in your art you'll take the highest perch!
> Think over what I've told you—verbum sat!
> That's Latin for—Look out! Here comes the cat!

LA TOUCHE HANCOCK.

GOVERNMENT BY THE PEOPLE.

Recent Political Developments Illustrate How Meaningless the Phrase Is.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The officeholders and politicians are now saying much of "government of the people and by the people." People are mentioned eight or ten times in the Federal Constitution as having a great deal to do with government. Their rights are often referred to as things safe from violation. Who are the people? Not all of them—not even a sixth of the people—can vote. The United States has no voters. All voters belong to the several States, which can decide who can vote excepting as restrained by the Fourteenth Amendment. Not all—indeed comparatively few—of the voters take part in nominating candidates of office, either State, or Federal. In the recent Democratic State convention for the State of Massachusetts only 632 of 1,027 entitled delegates were present, and 356, or less than a third of a full delegation, committed the Bay State Democracy to Bryan. Only a small fraction of the voters in any party participate in the nomination of candidates. In November much is heard of voters going home to vote, but little is heard of voters going home to select candidates of their party. That selection is left for the officeholders and party workers on the spot.

The Republican party is in that matter unblushingly offending against the Federal Constitution, but yet "what is it among friends"? The command is peremptory that "no Senator, or Representative, or person holding an office of trust, or profit, under the United States, shall be appointed an elector of President, or Vice-President." The reason is obvious when the President is as now bent on naming his successor, but Senators and Congressmen and Federal executive officials are to-day uppermost in Republican conventions to select the successor to Roosevelt. The spirit of the Constitution is violated as it would be if the prohibited officeholders excluded all others besides themselves from the list of delegates. The people play an insignificant part in naming the candidates of either of the political parties in a government of and by the people.

The recent Massachusetts Democratic convention was amusingly typical of party conventions this year. The chairman, Professor Stimson, spoke as became a teacher in the law school of the chief university in the Commonwealth, but the divergence of opinions between him and the 356 who stood by Bryan seems to have been something like the diversity between, for example, Mr. Gray of Delaware and Mr. Jefferson Davis of Arkansas.

The platform quite ignored the line of separation defined by Professor Stimson between State and Federal functions. It did not clearly identify the things to be done by Massachusetts as outside those to be done by Congress, and vice versa. Some of the things mentioned were exclusively for Congress, as, for example, the tariff, which was to be "for revenue only," and yet not for revenue only when foreign articles like our trust controlled products were to be properly made exempt from duties. And so, too, when Bryan's foreign policy of ratifying the Spanish treaty is rebuked by advocating independence of the Philippines, an acquisition with which one would say his partisans in the West, who wish the public money expended there to be used for good roads at home and other aids to Western farmers, must by this time be rather sick. And so, too, of much else evidently Federal and not State. But which government is to grapple with "predatory wealth," railroads, monopolies and invasions of State rights? Perhaps both governments, at one and the same time, are to imprison Boston and Maine railway officials.

How will State rights be vindicated if Congress, by prescribing the borrowing and expenditure of money, increase of capitalization, issuing shares and bonds, declaration of dividends, buying shares in other railways and such like things, is thus to regulate Massachusetts corporations sometimes doing an interstate business? Who is to control Massachusetts corporations on the basis of the recent Democratic platform—Congress, or the State? HARVARD.

CAMBRIDGE, Mass., May 9.

GERMAN PATENTS.

Their Issue Strictly Regulated and They Are Said to Be Amply Protected.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* I have to take issue with Mr. Nikola Tesla regarding his remarks on German patents in THE SUN of May 6. It cannot be denied that the German Patent Office has now and then revoked a patent for the reason that the invention protected thereby was not carried out in Germany in accordance with the requirements of the law within the prescribed time. I beg to say, however, that the German Patent Office does not revoke a patent for that reason in all cases, but only if the petitioner can furnish sufficient proof and show reason why the patent should be revoked. If the patentee can bring evidence of the fact that he has taken steps to have the invention patented to him carried out in Germany, but has been prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond his control, the Patent Office will give him additional time within which to carry out his invention. I beg to add that not only foreigners who have obtained a patent in Germany, but also Germans themselves, are subject to the requirements of working their inventions referred to. There is therefore no discrimination between Germans and citizens of other countries.

When Mr. Tesla further avers that leading lawyers in this country dissuade their clients from taking out patents in Germany for the reason that they can receive no profit from their patents, I believe that this statement is based entirely upon prejudice, which could be easily overcome if the real facts were known.

I have been practising in this country for nearly ten years as attorney for foreign patents and have applied for and obtained in Germany many hundred patents. Being also sufficiently familiar with the United States patent practice to be enabled to form an opinion, I can say, and I think that I will be supported in this statement by a good many attorneys, that a German patent as a rule affords a far greater protection than a United States patent, and that good claims obtained in Germany afford the patentee a much greater scope of his invention than he could obtain in this country.

One of the reasons why a German patent is of much more value than a United States patent is the fact that any one who infringes a German patent knowingly, or through gross carelessness, is liable to be punished by imprisonment and a very heavy fine.

If inventors in this country fail to obtain good protection in Germany for their inventions it is to a great extent due to the fact that the patents are not properly applied for, or that the applications filed before the office are not prosecuted with the care and diligence whereby alone success can be looked for before the German Patent Office.

I have found, too, in my own practice, that after a patent has been obtained in Germany by an inventor in this country, in most cases he does not take the necessary steps to have his invention put in practice in Germany, either because he is too busy with his domestic patent, or because he has lost interest in his German patent.

As to the protection that is afforded by United States patents I only beg to refer Mr. Tesla to the letters which have recently appeared in the *Electrical World*, a publication which Mr. Tesla no doubt is familiar with. Dr. ALFRED MULLER.

NEW YORK, May 8.

Women in Scottish Universities.

From the London Globe.

The ladies have done well at Glasgow at the last graduation ceremony, fifty women being admitted to the degree of M. A. and fifty-nine men. Twenty years ago women in the class room were a rara avis, and we have some recollection of their first appearance at Edinburgh late in the '80s. There were eight young ladies in Professor Tait's class of natural philosophy. He was explaining the octahedron, parenthetically remarking that it had eight plain faces. One of the sporting contingent in the back row interjected the remark, "Front bench," the ungallant reference being to the eight stalwart young ladies—the pioneers of the woman graduate—who occupied seats in the front row.

English Observe Easter of Greek Church.

From the Westminster Gazette.

The Archdeacon of Birmingham, who has gone on a mission tour to the Anglican churches in Russia, will have the unique experience of keeping two Easters. For obvious reasons of convenience the English colonies in Russia observe this festival on the same date as the Greek Church, which is, of course, that of the unreformed calendar.

Pessimism.

Knicker—Man is born to trouble.

Bocker—Yes, if you try to picnic it rains, and if you eat indoors the cook leaves.