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The Direct Primary in Florida.

Among those who advocate direct primaries no argument is more familiar nor more popular than that which is contained in the declaration that the system enlists for public service men of a higher type and greater efficiency than the existing machinery. Interesting as a commentary upon this assertion is the public statement recently issued by the Hon. W. A. BLOUNT of Pensacola explaining his reasons for withdrawing from the contest for United States Senator in Florida. From this document we quote the following extract:

"I believe that no man not heretofore holding public office and thereby largely known to the public has any chance of election without an extended personal canvass of the State, extending as far as possible into each hamlet and village. I have been making such a canvass since the first of October, nearly three months."

At some length Mr. BLOUNT then describes the physical discomfort and actual illness which resulted from the exertions of his canvass. Not only, he concludes, was it apparent that his continuing in this campaign might impair his health permanently, but it was equally evident that it might leave him unfit to perform the duties of the office which he sought.

The second reason for his withdrawal which Mr. BLOUNT gave seems to us even more valuable and pertinent to the present discussion:

"There is another reason, less tangible, but to me no less real: my repugnance to the personal solicitation of votes, either by a direct request of the voter or by an exhibition of myself to him for the sole purpose of a tacit solicitation. I foresaw hesitancy on my part to do this, but I thought that a short practice would make it a thing first endured—and then embraced, but I find the disinclination growing greater day by day. Of course I would have strength enough to endure this during a campaign even though it were much more onerous, but I do not feel that the prize is worth the constant self-humiliation and the total subversion of my habits of life and thought. Besides, even if I am elected, the same course, though to a lesser extent, would have to be continued by me to secure a reelection. While there are other men of a different mould and different modes of thought to whom politics might be a pleasure, to me it would be an unending pain."

Of Mr. BLOUNT's qualifications for the office he sought we know nothing. His reasons for withdrawing, however, strike us as peculiarly unlikely to appeal to a La Follette, a Stubbs, or any other equally characteristic product of the direct primary. Nevertheless we venture to suggest that there still remains a considerable element in the community for which they have some importance. If self-advertisement be the first essential for successful statesmanship Mr. BLOUNT's withdrawal was a thing wholly desirable. If weight at Washington rather than noise in Florida is desirable, however, the incident seems less fortunate.

Supervision of Private Charities by the State.

The New York State Board of Charities in its forthcoming report to the Legislature asks that the existing laws shall be changed so as to make all private charitable institutions and associations subject to visitation and inspection by the board, even if they do not receive any of the public moneys of the State or of its municipalities.

The State Constitution directs the Legislature to provide for a State Board of Charities "which shall visit and inspect all institutions, whether State, county, municipal, incorporated or not incorporated, which are of a charitable, eleemosynary, correctional or reformatory character," excepting only such institutions as are by the Constitution made subject to the visitation and inspection of other commissioners. In 1900 the Court of Appeals was called upon to construe this constitutional provision in a case to which the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, commonly known as the Gerry society, was a party. In that case it was decided that the right of visitation and regulation contemplated by the language which we have quoted applied only to those institutions, public or private, which were maintained in whole or in part by the State or some of its political divisions, and through which charity was dispensed by public authority to those having a claim upon the generosity or bounty of the State. "What may be called Governmental charity," said Judge DENIS O'BRIEN, "or charity based upon public taxation and administered by a system of State law, is a very different thing from the charity that moved the good Samaritan and prompted the widow's mite. The power of visitation and regulation applies to those institutions administering charity of the former kind in whole or in part, but not to those voluntarily engaged in some good work of the latter character."

The State Board of Charities now desires to have its supervisory authority extended to these private charities. The board says that during the ten years since this decision was rendered the number of such societies and institutions has increased from about six hundred to more than seven hundred and fifty, and that their annual expenditures are estimated at more than ten millions of dollars.

We venture to doubt the wisdom or expediency of any compulsory legislation which will thus subject all private charities to State control. There is no valid objection to permitting any private charitable institution which desires to do so voluntarily to submit itself to the jurisdiction of the State Board of Charities; but if the Legislature shall declare that all must do so irrespective of their wishes on the subject, the law will render it practically impossible for any person to establish a private charity in New York which shall be free from the control of the State. Experience has shown that every legislative enactment which hampers in any respect the free exercise of charity tends to prevent the establishment of charitable foundations generally. It is quite conceivable that a benevolent man of wealth who desires to devote his fortune or part of his fortune to charitable purposes may strongly prefer that the management of the property which he wishes to apply to that purpose shall be exclusively in private hands and free from any interference or regulation on the part of Governmental officers. Why should the law refuse to recognize or tolerate his preference in this respect? We can perceive no good reason unless it be that evils have grown up in the administration of private charities which require Governmental interference as a remedy. We are not informed, however, that any such condition of affairs exists; and we believe that the legislation now advocated by the State Board of Charities if enacted will operate directly and extensively to check bountiful giving for the benefit of the poor, the sick and the needy.

The demand for such legislation is only another striking instance of the tendency of public officers to seek an enlargement of their official powers.

Sixty-one Sacks of Seeds.

Representative CHARLES A. KORBLY of the Seventh Indiana Congress district, a candidate for reelection, has contributed sturdily to the post office deficit by sending sixty-one big mail sacks full of seeds to his constituents in Marion county under his frank. Mr. KORBLY's face is new in Congress; indeed, he has never been a legislator before or held any office. We do not condemn him for being alert to his prerogative and taking and despatching through the post office all the seeds he is entitled to. In fact, we are glad to note this example of a brand new lawmaker's enterprise and to give it wide publicity.

If Mr. KORBLY can send sixty-one sacks of seeds through the mails at the expense of the Government, the other 489 members of Congress have a right to do the same thing. If all the Representatives and Senators exhausted their seed prerogative, and by each of them sixty-one sacks were deposited in the post office for transportation to constituents who are flattered by receiving packages of seeds from the seat of Government at Washington, there would be 29,890 sacks to be carried on fast trains at an expense in the gross which we leave to the expert accountants.

The mind staggers at the suggestion of calculating the number of seeds there would be in these 29,890 sacks. Only scientists who count the germs in a drop of water or the microbes in a fly's track would be equal to it. Certainly if all the seeds were planted and germinated into crops there would be potatoes, beets, turnips and squash to make the tables of horticultural constituents groan with plenty, while morning glories would run riot over their porches, and their gardens would blaze with geraniums and smell swooningly of sweet williams, carnations and climbing roses. It would make a remarkable difference in the cost of living to everybody, of course, for not only would the seed growers supply and decorate their own tables, but constituents not favored with seeds would profit by the reduced demand for the stocks of the greengrocer and the florist.

But it is not on this account that we welcome the news of Representative KORBLY's dumping his truckloads of seeds into the humble and accommodating post office. Our hope is that all the other members of Congress will emulate or excel him, so that the country will have a great object lesson in the operation of the Congress frank and there will burst forth a cry of reforming wrath against an abuse which adds yearly an enormous sum to the deficit of the Post Office Department.

A Kentucky Dream of the Panama Canal.

Representative JOHN W. LANGLEY of Kentucky, who has just returned from a visit to the Isthmus of Panama, brings back to us so many prospects of increase and opulence and national exaltation we can hardly look them in the face. He is convinced of the entire success of the lock canal. Everybody is. Even those Congressmen who went there two or three years ago and came back loaded with misgiving are now convinced. No need, therefore, to inquire into the profound conclusions of the buoyant and optimistic LANGLEY. The canal is as good as finished, and already the eye of ordinary prophecy can see the galleons climbing up and down the Panama hills and scattering their hoarded riches over the coasts of two oceans and still more numerous seas.

Mr. LANGLEY does not quite surprise us by predicting that the canal will cost five hundred millions of dollars—as much, in fact, as $5 each for every man, woman and child in the United States. High toll, but we have recently suspected as much and are prepared for it. This, however, is only half of Mr. LANGLEY's revelation. He doesn't object to an expenditure of $500,000,000 for the canal. Why should he? At the worst it will cost him less than $20, and a mighty small price for so much glory. But he proposes that if we are to spend all that money on the Panama Canal we should spend at least as much in home improvements, great domestic enterprises that will enable us to utilize the canal to its full extent. In other words, Mr. LANGLEY brings us neatly around to the great waterways project, and so involves it with the splendor of the canal that only the most churlish and insensate can ever divorce those twin designs upon the Treasury. He wants to gouge out the Tennessee and Cumberland, the Ohio and the Illinois rivers, the Red, the White, the Arkansas, the Missouri, the Platte, the Yazoo, the Ouachita—the whole system of internal watercourses from Pittsburg to Omaha, from Minneapolis to Cairo, from Duck Lake to Possum Fork and from Four Mile Bayou to the Sunflower. Only five hundred millions for this, while we spend as much on the Panama Canal. It won't take long to dispose of the half billion at home. We can do it while the engineers are finishing the canal, and with time to spare, we fancy. And think of the magnificent concurrence that will be set in motion by this comparatively trivial expenditure! We can send a bushel of wheat from Council Bluffs to Ecuador, and we shall forever dominate the trade of Thingumbob and laugh at the futile efforts of all competitors.

What a blessing that LANGLEY returned just when he did. We might not have thought of it otherwise.

Subsidized Ships of the Desert.

To extend to ships of the desert the benevolent system of ship subsidy is a proceeding too logical to be anything but French. Full details of this novel ship subsidy are set forth in the recent report of M. JONNART, Governor-General of Algeria. From this report it appears that no less than $2,000 has been expended annually for several years in encouraging the extension of caravan routes to the French Sudan, and particularly to places east of the Niger and on the frontier of British Nigeria. The camel corps start from Insolah in the Algerian Sahara and make the journey to Agades and Zinder.

Much of the route now traversed by subsidized caravans is still indicated on commercial maps by the long dotted line that marks the route of the future transsaharan railway, which was frequently talked of a decade or two ago. Insolah itself has from a military point of view replaced Biskia and even Ain Sefra as the centre of operations in the French Sahara. In former times Insolah was shown in the maps as the end of the oases and the point from which the transsaharan would plunge into the desert on its journey to Timbuktu.

One little fragment of this great railway has actually been built, a stretch of thirty miles from Blidah on the Algiers-Oran line to Berroughia. South from this town a military road, traversed now by a service of automobiles carrying mails and even a stray tourist, reaches Laghouat, once the limit of French occupation. From Laghouat to Insolah through Ghardaia runs a route protected by French patrol and used for military transport, for Insolah, although seven hundred miles from Algiers, is a garrison town.

Two things are of at least passing interest in connection with the ship subsidy incident. First of all it indicates the great progress that the French have made in restoring order over the whole desert. For many years the Tuareg, the pirate of the Sahara, pillaged and plundered caravans until practically all commerce ceased and the caravan routes, after centuries of use, were abandoned. Only in the last decade, by organizing a corps which, mounted on swift camels, pursued and exterminated the Tuareg, have the French been able to restore the safety of desert navigation.

Not less interesting is the strategical significance of the present venture. The old caravan route from Agades and Zinder runs north through Rhat and Ghadames to Tripoli. To Tripoli, moreover, has belonged the importance and the profit incident to serving as the port of the Sahara. The subsidized caravan service from Insolah to Agades and Zinder taps this trade and brings to Algiers the commerce formerly Tripolitan. Precisely as the French by the railroad from Oran to Colomb-Bechar have intercepted the ancient trade route from the Sudan to Morocco and deflected the commerce to Oran, the Insolah-Agades camel line cuts the Eastern route.

A subsidized camel service, after all, lacks much of the grandiose appeal to the imagination of a transsaharan railway, yet as an aid to commerce its value is not insignificant. It is, moreover, a further indication of the fashion in which French order and French discipline are making themselves felt all over this frontier of Africa. Not the least noteworthy phase of the novel undertaking from the point of view of the Governor-General is the fact that the service has proved a success and deserved the subvention.

Lions and Dragons.

There seems to be a keen desire among Republicans in some parts of the country to throw our innocent young friend from Danville to the lions. In that event we pity the lions. Perhaps the Republican party should have some pity too.

We don't know too well what this horrendous dragon called "Cannonism" is, but it is a Republican worm; has been great and strong under Republicanism; and we should suppose that a good many Republican toes might feel the steel when the St. Georges from Kansas and way stations begin to chop the accursed varmint up.

Lieutenant-Commander JOSEPH M. REEVES, who gave out on the fifty mile walk required by Executive order, has been saved to the navy, of which he is a very capable officer with a good war record, by a retiring board which found that he was sound enough to continue in the service. This result will not surprise those who are familiar with similar breakdowns in competitive athletics. Marathon runners have collapsed on the track, and yet after a period of rest under a physician's care have entered themselves in other races and won them.

Representative HARRY M. COUDREY of Missouri, who has introduced in the House a bill providing for old age pensions on the English plan, is a St. Louis business man and an officer and director in several large companies. When he addresses the House on the subject of his bill, which in effect proposes to take millions out of the treasury, from which $161,973,703.77 was drawn last year to support veterans of the civil war and their widows and children, he might inform the country whether as a business man he advocates pensions for the employees of the companies in which he is a stockholder, payable out of the treasuries of those companies.

It is well that Representative MANN failed to reduce the sum proposed in the army bill for militia encampments from $1,350,000 to $1,000,000. More rather than less money should be spent to promote the efficiency of the National Guard, upon which the country must mainly depend in case of a great war, whether guardsmen volunteer for service abroad or organizations are called upon to resist invasion.

Colonel GORDON brought Mr. TAFT a book of his own production which bears the title "The Old Plantation and Other Poems." The President, Senator GORDON said, was glad to get the book, and although he might not agree with all the sentiments he would know what a Southerner had to say about such things.—*Despatch from Washington.*

Glad to get the book of verse that the Colonel composed "underneath the bough," with a jug of juice beside him on many a jocund day, but gladder to gaze into those smiling eyes and listen to that gentle and mellifluous flow of anecdote of the days "befoh the wah."

A ruling of Judge HEISLEY to-day unseats the present Mayor of Neptune City and gives the office to the candidate who was declared defeated. One vote decides the contest.—*Despatch from Long Branch.*

No doubt the old chap with the trident came ashore and cast it.

MELTING THE CITY'S SNOW.

The Proposal to Eliminate Long Hauls Declared Impracticable.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* The proposal of Mr. John F. Baxter in a letter to THE SUN of January 10 to install melting machines as labor saving devices in place of what he calls the brainless primitive system of carting snow for miles and dumping it overboard is not a new suggestion. It has been proposed from time to time as though it were an obvious expedient, often with a view of obtaining letters patent on the process and on the machine. Before Mr. Gaynor's Street Cleaning Department adopts the proposal as a substitute for the carting system, which Mr. Baxter attributes to Tammany's opposition to the use of labor saving devices, a computation of the cost of the supposed new and improved melting scheme should be made.

Elementary books on physics teach that the melting of snow at 32 degrees Fahrenheit to water at 32 degrees is like heating the same quantity of water from 32 degrees Fahrenheit to 176 degrees, or well toward the boiling point, and that raising a pound of water one degree in temperature requires precisely the same energy as to lift a pound of water or snow 772 feet. A slight calculation shows that to raise a pound of water through this 144 degrees of temperature or to melt a pound of snow at 32 degrees to water at 32 degrees, which is the same thing, would require the same energy as to raise the pound of snow twenty-one miles into the air, a frightful expenditure of energy compared with that required for carting the snow away and dumping it off the dock.

The competition which Mr. Baxter thinks would quickly determine which was the best style of machine for melting snow would face, therefore, a problem in physics which in terms of brute force may be stated thus: Shall we cart the snow off the street or raise it twenty-one miles?

It is true that horse-power derived from horseflesh costs more a unit than horse-power derived from the burning of coal, but after making all proper allowances the proposal to melt the snow away is fantastic and impossible. Compare carting snow a mile on the level with raising its weight even one mile into the air. Nevertheless snow might be disposed of by the sewers through the manholes to the extent that the sewer currents would melt it, but the bulk of it not melted by the sun will be carted away in primitive fashion for some time to come, perhaps until the laws of miscalled latent heat are amended or repealed.

The enormous energy of the sun, so silently and quickly melting away a snowfall, is at first sight apt to blind us to the practical factor in the problem, the heat energy expended in changing snow at the freezing point into water at the freezing point. To work the thing on the streets of New York for a single day would require enough heat to change perceptibly the climate of New York for the same length of time, and all the artificial heat that could be brought to bear on the snowbanks would have about as much effect as a smile on a panic.

JOHN S. SEYMOUR.

NEW YORK, January 11.

Australian Egg Circles.

From Daily Consular and Trade Reports.

A Government poultry expert who has just completed an extensive tour of the several States of the Australian Commonwealth has issued a report containing certain recommendations designed to increase and cheapen the production of eggs.

The expert's idea is, briefly, the creation of "egg circles" in the States which have not yet adopted that plan. One of the States has already twenty-one of these centres, consisting principally of small farmers. The secretary of each centre receives, tests and grades the eggs, pays cash for them at the current market rate, and sends them to the Government cool stores. The Government does the marketing, and at the end of each quarter any profits are divided among the suppliers. The secretary of each centre receives one cent a dozen for the eggs he handles. Under this method there is no middleman's profit. The grading and testing is very strict, and no egg under two ounces in weight is passed.

The expert claims for his scheme that it will increase the production of eggs and table poultry throughout the Commonwealth by 300 per cent.

The Wolf Month.

From the London Daily News.

January in early Britain must have been a month of terror. Richard Verstegan, in his "Restitution of Decayed Intelligence in Antiquities," a work published in 1673, says:

"The month which we now call January our Saxon ancestors called 'wolf monat,' 'wolf month,' because people are wont always in that month to be in more danger to be devoured of wolves than in any season else of the year's for that, through the extremity of cold and snow, those ravenous creatures could not find other beasts sufficient to feed upon."

Keeping the wolf from the door was in those days no mere metaphor.

Without Memory of His African Past.

From the Macon Telegraph.

Whether the American negro has preserved any native African music or not, he has certainly preserved no history, no language, and seemingly has not even retained any traditions of his past in the Dark Continent. This is a curious fact. The negro seems to have brought to this country little more than his skin and his sharply defined racial characteristics. The book of his past is sealed. He is like a sponge that absorbs freely in his new home, but retains nothing except his nature of what belonged to his former resting place. And in this he is curiously unlike all the other races of men of which we have record.

A Brooklyn Restaurant Keeper.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* G. Hunger caters to empty stomachs over in Brooklyn.

WILLIAM SHERER 3d.

NEW YORK, January 11.

NOTES ON THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN IN ENGLAND.

LONDON, Jan. 2.—The excitement of the British voters over the present contest seems to be rather exaggerated by some foreign onlookers. A good many expressions of opinion from abroad similar to the following, which is extracted from a Canadian paper, are being reprinted in the English journals with the satisfaction one feels when one's doings are represented as in some way unusual: "It is doubtful if anything in the history of politics the world over will equal the bitterness with which the present fight in Great Britain will be contested." So far, at least, symptoms of any highly wrought campaign feeling are absent, and two weeks before the polling there is assuredly not so much political emotion as would agitate the same stage of the most torpid Presidential contest in the United States. A really marked feature of the crisis is the prodigious confusion of the issues at stake, and probably this has done something to weaken partisan enthusiasm.

Lord Curzon observed in a recent speech that the public might feel it difficult to know what the issues were on which it had to vote, so many voices assailed it, and at a meeting in Bath the other day the Marquis of Bath illustrated the point rather happily by telling how an Indian town, wishing to give the Viceroy an exceptionally cordial welcome, engaged a number of bands, but forgot to instruct them all to start off with the same tune. They struck up simultaneously, but on different airs, and in likening the babel which occurred to the chaos of appeals now besetting the British elector the Marquis of Bath did not go too far. The masses are in fact thoroughly puzzled, and the natural result of that state of mind is not enthusiasm.

When the elector is asked to decide by his vote upon the probability of a German invasion and the wisest naval policy, on the right of the Lords to veto financial bills, on protection versus free trade, on the best means of unifying the empire, on Home Rule and Welsh disestablishment, on the comparative merits of a one house and a two house Parliament, on a bold new system of taxing land and of restricting the liquor trade and a few other problems his understanding is tried more severely than it has been by most electoral struggles

The educated elector may think he understands these questions, but even so he will perhaps be upset by the way the "planks" are sorted out into the two platforms. More people than is common at an election dislike prominent features of both programmes and feel that accepting either will be a choice of evils. Lord Robert Cecil and the *Spectator*, for instance, support the Conservatives while condemning Mr. Balfour's protectionism; Sir Frederick Pollock, the jurist, sinks his old fear of Home Rule and backs Mr. Asquith from love of free trade and dislike of the Lords' action in rejecting the budget, and so on.

As for the less educated elector, the web of recondite questions hung before him would perhaps paralyze his mind if he paid much attention to it. Besides the distracting profusion of issues, most of them taken singly are beyond his comprehension.

A New Yorker recently communicated to a radical paper in London his joyful satisfaction over the spectacle of the English people at last throwing off "the viselike grip of a feudal aristocracy." This view of the campaign seems to simplify British society into two classes, aristocrats and plebeians; whereas the country has about a dozen classes, of course united in one scale or vertebral column. Not even with this top section of the column are the peers coextensive, since some untitled gentry are held in higher repute and have more weight in the nation by descent and property than some peers; and below comes a series of firmly assured sections, each with a value and rank of its own which would not suffer at all by a modification of the legislative rights of the Lords.

When the Church of the Panthéon in Paris was about to be secularized, and it was proposed to remove the cross from the top of the dome, a clergyman pointed out that this would not rid the building of the Christian emblem; to do that it would be necessary to pull it down, since it was built in the shape of a cross. To draw an analogy from the Panthéon to British society, the curtailment of the political powers of the House of Lords would have little effect on the general caste system; to remove that you would have to pull British society down from top to bottom.

Familiarity with this fact may be one reason why the British public is not really much concerned about the alleged tyranny of the Lords. The Paris *Temps*, expecting apparently to find the country in a state corresponding to that of France before the Revolution of 1789, sent a descriptive writer across the Channel to report upon the seething discontent. The writer was disappointed; he could not discover even in the northern manufacturing cities, whose inhabitants are presumably "déracinés," from the attachment of rural populations to their landlords, any particular animosity against the peers. Apart from the reason already mentioned for this calm, it may be noted that the peers are offering freely to reform themselves. Lord Cawdor, one of the Conservative protagonists in the campaign, said last week that all he wanted was the retention of a second chamber; given that, he did not care how it was made up—by election or otherwise. The Liberal leader has scarcely gone further than this in his demands. And then the immediate crime now charged to the Lords—their reference of the Budget to the decision of the masses—can hardly seem to the referees themselves very heinous. The step has the air of a compliment at least and Radical orators are having hard work to persuade the masses it was an insult.

The campaign is said to be distinctively a "poster" campaign. Large sums are being lavished by both sides on this silent oratory and the display on the hoardings outdoes any seen before. Every village is pasted over with pictures and statistics, and along the city thoroughfares they are more inevitable than any commercial advertisements. They seem to be taking the place somewhat of speeches and meetings as electioneering methods. Speeches might perhaps be expected to have less influence, since so many people have learned to read and the capacity of meetings is limited. Not so! the audience of a poster, and its message is relatively permanent. Now practically all the posters at present stuck about the realm by both parties ignore the constitutional question of the Lords' veto and confine themselves to money matters. Mr. Asquith put the veto at the head of his list, but the posters belie him. They picture starving families or a man out of work with either "Free Trade" or else "Protection" printed beneath, the spectre of unemployment stalking about with a scythe, on the blade of which one or other of the above words is inscribed at choice; or they give figures about the land and liquor taxes or allusions to the old age pensions. As the time approaches it seems clearer that the voting will turn chiefly on these pocket interests.

The peers continue however to enjoy a certain prominence in the struggle. They have done as much as any one to bring humor, and good humor, into it. The Radicals have made much fun of them and they have made some of themselves. Never before have the peers had so much free advertising. All their abilities are being described, to say nothing of their foibles. One comes across many more of such articles as "Peers Who Play Golf," "Peers Who Write Novels," than are ordinarily printed, and if any mystery hedged them about not much of it will remain. Their family histories are being ransacked for plebeian traces or ancestral crimes. The acreage of their estates and the taxes they pay on them, their interests in the liquor traffic and in real estate abroad, the wages they give their servants, their subscriptions to public objects—all such details are being inventoried. The occasion provides some excuse for curiosity about "high life," but the discoveries, many of them long familiar, are not taken much more seriously than are such comic electoral pamphlets as "The Dooks' Doomsday Book," which gives such items as this: "Tootsie Flytoes: Our wedding must remain a secret still. Pater's cut my income down to £15,000 yearly since the budget—Lordy." "Wanted—Very badly, a peer with a little feeling for the sufferings of others." "Why did the Dook of Dashiot object to putting his cottage property into proper sanitary condition? Because it would have meant a drain on his pocket." "Why does the brewing interest seem to have a natural affinity with the heraldry of the Lords? Because it represents the bar sinister," and poems of this sort:

ANY DOOK TO ANY OTHER DOOK.

Those thankless unemployed complain
And ask for more to eat and drink;
They ought to know that grief and pain
Are natural here, and yet they think
They ought to be
Fed up, you see,
Like me and you and you and me.

They go and tramp about the street,
And look forlorn and worn and ill
On purpose, so that if they meet
The likes of us the sight may chill
With shocks undue
The blood that's blue
Of you and me and me and you.

The "wild" peers, "unaccustomed to public speaking," who, as one of them, Lord Willoughby de Broke, said the other day, have "faced the music" of electoral meetings to defend their order, have not perhaps revealed any startling talent, though some of them have risen far above the level of the peer who, according to the Radical papers, professed himself incapable of making a speech but offered to sing a song instead. A hostile critic declares that "pretensions to Second Chamber authority, when expressed in the language of the stable and the heath, are sadly lacking in strength." This may be so, but the geniality of these "backwoods peers" has at any rate done something toward humanizing the contest.

It may perhaps illustrate the not over excited mood of the campaign that within three weeks of the election a truce was declared for the Christmas holidays, and a north country Alderman who expressed his political views on the Christmas cards he sent to his friends and clients was severely rebuked by several newspapers for "unsportsmanlike" conduct. Something of this spirit has appeared in the mildness with which the Radical press has hitherto treated the "letters" from Mr. Joseph Chamberlain's sickroom, but as the "letters" grow more frequent and more influential the spirit of forbearance toward the "wounded lion" shows signs of wearing out, and the *Daily News* remarks: "Chivalry demands that we should not make war on the sick and the maimed, but there must be no firing from under cover of the Red Cross." Another Radical organ declares that the writer of the letters is not Mr. Joseph Chamberlain; "the higher criticism we are sure could easily dispose by internal evidence of any such claim;" and it adds: "Mr. L. J. Maxse, we observe, speaks of his interview with Mr. Chamberlain in the strained language of the devotees of Mrs. Eddy." What is evident at least is the conjuring power which still belongs to Mr. Chamberlain's name.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER.

His Recent Definition of the Political Status of Canada.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* At a banquet given in his honor last week in Toronto the Canadian Premier thus defined the political status of the Canadians:

We are a nation. We feel that we are a nation. We have a population of over seven millions. We have practical control of our foreign relations. We have command of our own forces. We are free. Our country is the finest under the sun. We are under the suzerainty of the King of England. We are his loyal subjects. We bow the knee to him, but the King of England has no more rights over us than are allowed him by our own Canadian Parliament. If this is not a nation, what then constitutes a nation? And if there is a nation under the sun which can say more than this, where is it to be found?"

There is a seeming contradiction in a declaration of freedom coupled with an acknowledgment of subjection, but Sir Wilfrid explains this by saying that the British Empire is unique in the history of the world in that its colonies "have become nations without breaking the tie which binds them to the motherland." In simpler terms, the Premier's opinion evidently is that while the Canadians are fully capable of paddling their own political canoe, it is their pleasure to paint it red and do their paddling under the Union Jack so long as the policies of the mother country do not unduly conflict with the interests of the colony. They "bow the knee to the King of England" as a matter of courtesy, but limit his "rights" over them to those which they themselves see fit to grant him.

In 1763, when England became the sole proprietor of what is now the Dominion of Canada, Voltaire sneeringly referred to Canada as "after all, but a few acres of snow." A century and a half has converted those few acres of snow into a nation of more than seven millions of people, governing in their own interests a land and water area of 3,745,574 square miles, and carrying on a foreign commerce amounting to more than $600,000,000 a year.

As Sir John Macdonald may be regarded as the founder of Canadian nationality, so may Sir Wilfrid Laurier be regarded as its builder.

CANADIAN.

NEW YORK, January 11.

The Contributing Editor Contributes to His Own Disgrace.

From the Hartford Times.

The underweighing of sugar would have been stopped six years ago if Mr. Roosevelt had put capable men in charge of the New York custom house, but he had not been out of the White House two weeks before he was showing Dr. Abbott how to put a few extra dollars into the *Outlook* treasury by exposing—what? Why, the crookedness of his own Administration.

She Knew Sir Walter Scott.

From the Westminster Gazette.

Miss Mackenzie, granddaughter of the "Man of Feeling," whose death at the age of 89 has occurred in Edinburgh, had vivid recollections of Sir Walter Scott, who spoke to her of both her grandparents—Henry Mackenzie as his oldest and dearest friend, and the last Baron Seaforth, whom he immortalized as "High Chief of Kintail." Miss Mackenzie delighted to recall meeting with Campbell the poet, Jeffrey, Erskine of Linlathen, Emerson and Macaulay, as well as memories of the mother of W. E. Gladstone, who, in a letter he wrote to Miss Mackenzie during his Midlothian campaign, recalled the friendly relations of the two families. Among the eighteenth century correspondence of her grandfather in Miss Mackenzie's possession were included letters from William Cowper and Samuel Johnson.

Gladstone and Tobacco.

From the Westminster Gazette.

One of the few accomplishments which Gladstone never acquired was the art of smoking. His few attempts in this direction are reported to have been dismal failures. Only once was he known to try a cigarette, the occasion being one evening when King Edward (then Prince of Wales) was his guest at Downing street. After dinner the Prince desired to smoke, and Gladstone with fine courtesy sought to place his guest at ease by at least lighting a cigarette. In later years the Grand Old Man one day accused his secretary of smelling of the weed. "No wonder," was the reply; "I've been over half an hour with Sir William Harcourt." "What! Does Harcourt smoke?" exclaimed Gladstone. "You must tell him to be careful always to change his clothes before he comes to me."

An Erratic Shell.

From the London Globe.

One of the most remarkable incidents on record of the erratic action of a projectile has just taken place in connection with the battle practice of the Ocean on the Mediterranean station. Firing had taken place with a 6 inch shell at a range of 5,000 yards, and when the umpires made an examination of the target they were surprised to find a shell resting on the wooden base. It is no uncommon occurrence for a shell to become embedded in the structure which carries the target, but in this instance the missile was quite free. The only plausible theory of this is that the shell on being fired fell short, then ricochetted, and finally managed to reach the target before its energy was completely exhausted. Naturally the shell is looked upon as a curiosity, and as such it is proposed to send it to one of the gunnery schools.

FORT FISHER.

General Newton M. Curtis and General Adelbert Ames.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* Inasmuch as the unfortunate speech of General Adelbert Ames falsely charging that General Newton Martin Curtis had no part in the successful attack on Fort Fisher has been mentioned in connection with the announcement of the death of General Curtis, it seems fitting now to call attention to the magnanimous attitude which General Curtis, having utterly disproved the Ames charges, subsequently showed. There lingered in his mind nothing of resentment.

In his account of the first battle of Bull Run, on page 45 of "From Bull Run to Chancellorsville," published in 1906, a few years after the Loyal Legion dinner at which General Ames made his speech, General Curtis says:

Captain Charles Griffin, who rose to the command of a corps, in his report of the operations of his battery at Bull Run refers to a subordinate as follows: "In addition I deem it my duty to add that Lieutenant [Adelbert] Ames was wounded so as to be unable to ride his horse at almost the first fire; yet he sat by his command directing the fire, being helped on and off the caisson during the different changes of front or position, refusing to leave the field until he became too weak to sit up." For this he was given a Congressional medal of honor and later promoted to be a general officer; in the capture of Fort Fisher he was second in command to General Terry.

Another man might have omitted thus to record a fact creditable to a calumniator, but General Curtis, of a stature of six feet six inches, was big of heart as well.

NEW YORK, January 11. W. A. H.

The Navy's Share.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—*Sir:* In yesterday's SUN in referring to General Curtis it is said that Fort Fisher was taken by the army only. This is erroneous, because the navy was there with both feet in both attacks, first under General Butler and secondly under Admiral Porter. I and a few others (almost the whole United States navy) were there; so we ought to know.

NEW YORK, January 10. E. H. J.

SPAIN AND AMERICA.

Renewed Efforts to Enlarge Spanish Trade and Banking.

From Daily Consular and Trade Reports.

Consul-General Frank D. Hill of Barcelona furnishes the following information relative to movements in Spain for the enlargement of its commercial and financial relations with Latin America:

According to advices the Bank of Spain is about to abandon its policy of confining its banking relations to the Spanish Peninsula and contenting itself with the rôle of creditor and banker of the Spanish Government. It is stated that the bank intends to establish branches or at least secure correspondents in the principal Latin American centres. Important sums of money are remitted every year to the Peninsula by the thousands of Spaniards who have emigrated to Latin America, and the Bank of Spain apparently proposes to establish banking operations in Latin America which will facilitate these remittances. The great area over which Spanish is spoken (it is said to be the official language of twenty-two States) should encourage the bank to extend its operations.

The Banco Hispano-Americano and the Banco Español del Rio de la Plata have branches in Spain. Indeed, the Banco Español del Rio de la Plata is constantly extending its business, as is evidenced by the recent establishment of a branch office in Barcelona in addition to the branch already at Madrid.

Three Spanish steamship companies have lines connecting Spanish and Latin American ports and there has recently been talk of a new line from Barcelona to Porto Rico.

There are many Latin Americans resident in Spain, some of whom are here for business reasons, while others have chosen to establish themselves in the Peninsula permanently or for protracted residence. The local press has recently noted a movement to secure some sort of organization for Latin Americans resident at Barcelona. This colony is estimated at about 5,000 persons. A good deal of the building up of the new quarter, the Ensanche, is due to these Latin Americans, who have chosen to make Barcelona their home.

All these facts furnish additional arguments for the prompt establishment of American branch banks in Latin American capitals. Spain, it is plain, has no idea of abandoning her efforts to extend her relations with her old colonies, to which she is united by many ties. There has been manifested practical unanimity in support of the projected Spanish-Cuban treaty.

A BRITISH CITIZEN.

The Experiences of a Hindu Gentleman in South Africa.

From the Saturday Review.

Apparently to the average colonial mind a highly educated Hindu gentleman, a British subject, a barrister of the Inner Temple, is identical with a coolie. He is regarded as a "nigger" is regarded in Carolina, and the British Government is incapable of protecting him against the treatment which in a less civilized place is the natural result of such a view. Mr. Gandhi first went over to South Africa to conduct an important lawsuit in 1893. His earliest experience was to be turned out of a first class railway car and ordered into the "van compartment," and when he took the stage coach he was knocked down by the driver (a Dutchman). He was not admitted to the Grand National Hotel at Johannesburg, and was kicked off the path in front of President Kruger's house by the sentry. In Natal he found the Ministry embarking on a campaign of disabling bills against native Indians, and here he started on what may be called his political career as the leader of the Indian community in South Africa. On his return from India, whither he had proceeded to fetch his wife and children, a mob of three thousand persons prevented the ships for some time from landing their Indian passengers at Durban.

During the war Mr. Gandhi organized the corps of Indian stretcher bearers, which rendered fine service at Spion Kop and elsewhere. This splendid volunteer work might well have been the beginning of better relations between colonists and Indians, but the new English administrators were not sympathetic. The insulting registration law was passed and complied with under protest, and the promise to repeal it was then broken.

During the plague outbreak of 1904 and the Zulu rebellion of 1905 Mr. Gandhi and other Indians were of great assistance, but they did not receive any better treatment in consequence. They have since entered on a campaign of "passive resistance." This has cost Mr. Gandhi two sentences of two months imprisonment among the most ruffianly scoundrels, white and black, which the colony can produce. Some of his experiences in prison will not bear quotation. What must be thought in India of such treatment by a British colony of a refined and well educated man whose father, grandfather and uncle were Prime Ministers at native courts and who is only resisting a law imposed contrary to the solemn promise of the late High Commissioner?

Livery Cloth.

From the London Daily News.

Following an ancient city custom the corporation has recently made presents of what is called "livery cloth" to certain high officers of State and public officials. The custom is thus explained: In the early periods of history the retainers of great lords wearing their liveries were so numerous as to be dangerous both to the King and the laws, and the disorders in which they took part required all the vigor of the King and the Legislature to restrain. Many statutes for that purpose were passed between 1377 and 1504. In these prohibitions and exemptions were made in favor of the members of guilds and fraternities in cities and boroughs. This probably explains the creation of "liverymen" in the various companies, and is supposed to be the origin of this annual gift of "livery cloth."

Heckling in Florida.

From the Lake City Index.

A certain local candidate was addressing a small bunch of farmers at a district school house in the western part of Columbia county a week or so ago. While he was in the midst of telling them how bad he wanted the office, a tall, hungry looking fellow rose up in the back of the house and said: "If you git elected I'll move." "All you'll have to do," returned the quick witted candidate, "is to throw a gourd full of water on the fire and call your dog."