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THE GOD OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.



HIS office is in receipt of the following rather interesting communication, says Rev. Thomas B. Gregory in the New York American.

"Dear Sir—The enclosed is an extract from a letter sent to India by a native of that country now living in America.

"How much of it is false, and how much of it is true? From what angle of observation has this person been viewing the American people? I would like to see these questions answered in an editorial in the American." "A HUMAN BEING."

The enclosed extract referred to reads as follows:

"I am sending you a couple of daily Boston newspapers to-day. They reveal what a great and still what a terrible, country this is. Human beings, how they fight and slaughter for power, place and pelf! Do you see this sign (\$)—it is the sign of the dollar. That's the god of this country. It is first in the worship of every American. All deities in the universe take a back seat for this (\$) god. It is hard to say such a thing, but the hardest part of it all is that it is only too true. Don't laugh at me when I say that this is the worst kind of god that was ever worshipped—it kills the heart. America claims to have a large heart—yes, a gigantic slab of marble with this inscription (\$)."

I am ashamed to have to admit that the ugly charge is unanswerable.

It is true, and humiliating as it may be, there is nothing for us to do but face the fact as gracefully as we can.

The native goes too far in saying that "every American" is a worshipper of the Dollar—there being here and there an American who has a soul and some reverence for life's spiritual values—but in the main he is quite right.

The American people—as a people—are thoroughly commercialized. The only values they seem to care anything for are of the material order.

"What are you worth?" And that means, "How many dollars do you own, or control?"

"Are you succeeding?" And that means, "Are you getting rich? Are you wearing fine clothes, are you living in a fine house, do you live on the fat of the land, do you go with the crowd that ride in the big autos and appear in costly attire at society's big functions?"

That a man may be "worth" something and still be poor in dollars and cents and houses and lands, is, to the average American of to-day a preposterous idea.

That there may be a wealth that shall be quite aside from bank accounts, stocks and bonds is a thought too utterly ridiculous for the average man in this country to take with any degree of seriousness.

To have a "heathen" make a mark like this (\$) and tell us it is our god may strike us as being rather "sassy," but "What are you going to do about it?"

What is God, anyway? I can only answer that God is the Highest, the very top notch of one's aspiration; the idea, or thing, that is Supreme in one's thought and life.

This being so, there is no dodging the fact that the God of the American people is the Dollar—and the things that the dollar will buy.

For money, and the things that money will buy, we sell our sons and daughters, our peace of mind and truth and self-respect.

For money will jeopardize our very lives and daily sacrifice the lives of our fellows.

For money and for the material goods that money commands we cheerfully barter the honor of man and the virtue of woman.

For money we stultify ourselves—at the marriage altar, at the bar of justice, around the domestic hearth, and in the very sanctuary of religion!

What, then, is our Highest—our God—if it be not the cold, metallic, mercenary thing that bears the image and superscription of Caesar!

Blasphemy as we may, cannot deny that the native of India saw us from the true angle when he said that our God is the Dollar—the "worst kind of God that was ever worshipped"—the God that "kills the heart."

THE PERILS OF PROGRESS.



WHEN Dante tried to describe the horrors of the infernal regions he did not know about the new horrors with which modern progress and scientific invention have enmeshed the ordinary and even the pious citizen of a Twentieth Century American town, says the New York American.

That is why Dante's "Inferno" falls so far short of the possibilities of the subject—except to the minds of college professors and other persons of defective imagination.

When another Dante, say of this century, wants to describe a Hell he might recount the emotions of several hundred persons, most of them starting forth for a day's pleasure—suddenly steeped in cimmerian darkness thirty feet under ground. They are locked in cells, forty perhaps in each. Silent and early guards lock the doors lest any victim should escape, and bolt down the windows lest any pure air should enter. What their fate is to be they know not, nor will any in authority tell them. About the wheeled cells in which they sit roars an

inexplicable torrent. In appearance it is water, but now and then it roars into explosive and dazzling flame. Where it touches wood, the wood is burned. Iron is warped and calcined by this water, yet the water itself is cool. To touch it is death. The hapless prisoners, guilty of no offense and who even paid for admission to this Inferno, sit in impenetrable blackness, not knowing how long they may be imprisoned, but slowly becoming aware that if the infernal water rises into their places of imprisonment they will meet swift death.

A pleasant picture, is it not? Yet it does not exaggerate the situation in which—through the intelligent co-operation of the city authorities and the Subway management—some hundreds of New Yorkers found themselves last Sunday.

Progress bring its perils. The live wire, the third rail, the water charged with death-dealing electricity, the runaway motor car, the load of dynamite on a railroad track, the flimsy theatre with locked exits, the firetrap boat with cast iron life preservers, have all come with advancing civilization.

When that famous political economist, Malthus, proved to his own satisfaction that population in this world was increasing more rapidly than the means of supplying food to the people, he was unable to look into the future.

Had he waited until today he would have seen that the eagerness of some men to make money, at whatever cost, will help to keep down any surplus population there may be.

Taft for Chief Justice.



ANNOUNCEMENT comes from Washington that the President will shortly appoint Secretary of War Taft to the position of Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. The dispatches state, however, that this is a rumor founded on authority, and the evidence submitted apparently sustains the assertion. It appears to be the present plan for Mr. Chief Justice Fuller to resign and accept an appointment on the International Board of Arbitration. It is said these changes will be made in the next few weeks. For some time, the article says, it has been known that Mr. Taft desired to serve on the Supreme Court bench, preferring this to the uncertainty of a presidential contest three years from this date.

During the past several months the newspapers published to the world that the Secretary of War was a candidate for presidential honors, and he was referred to with a degree of favor by the Republicans. When the State Republican convention was held a short time ago in Ohio Mr. Taft presided and made the leading speech of the occasion. It was said then that he had launched his presidential boom. This impression became accentuated when, during the absence of the President on his bear-hunting expedition in the West, Mr. Taft practically acted as President, Secretary of War and almost assumed charge of one or two other cabinet portfolios. On account of this prominence the public concluded that Mr. Taft was squarely in the race. But now comes the word he is to serve in the highest court of the land as its head and chief. This news will be a great surprise probably even to those high in the councils of the present dominant party. That Mr. Taft is an able statesman and learned lawyer, no one familiar with his biography will deny; but it is a matter of some doubt whether he can measure up to the high requirements of the chief justice of the United States Supreme Court. Mr. Fuller is regarded as one of the ablest lawyers and learned judges in this or any other country, and his successor will undertake a herculean task to grace the judicial ermine as he has done and to illustrate such consummate ability. Judge Fuller is mentally and otherwise capable of filling any position in the gift of either the President, legislative and judicial departments or at the hands of the people. His brilliant mind, ripened in the school of experience, and his legal acumen and wide knowledge will be greatly missed in the Supreme Court at Washington. If this programme is carried out to completion it will effectually do away with all talk to Mr. Taft as a presidential candidate, and probably the party may look to Ohio in the person of Mr. Foraker as the most available candidate for the White House three years hence.

Mayor McClellan, of New York, has leased for a term of four years the house he now occupies on Washington square. Four years is the term office for the mayor of New York under the new law. A day or two a citizen of New York was expressing wonder why the mayor did not buy a home instead of renting. "Because he can't afford it," said an intimate friend of Mr. McClellan. "He could have been rich years ago but for the fact that he happens to be an honest man."

It is said that Ambassador Reid and King Alfonso had a long talk in London. At least the latter was under the impression that he was talking though he may not have said anything.

What would happen, asks an esteemed contemporary, if every one told the truth for twenty-four hours? One of the things that would happen would probably be the suspension of some esteemed contemporaries.

THAT WAR INDEMNITY.



OW that the place of meeting of the plenipotentiaries has been determined interest very properly centers on the probable indemnity Japan will exact of Russia as one of the conditions of the cessation of hostilities. It is to be supposed that the Tokio government will expect the St. Petersburg autocracy to cede to Japan several ports and some territory in addition to the payment of a cash indemnity. But just how much this will be is one guess or another. There has been absolutely no hint from the Mikado as to the nature of the terms of the settlement, much less the cash aggregate of the indemnity. There have been rumors to the effect that President Roosevelt, President Lubet, King Edward and Emperor William have made it known indirectly to the Japan government that it would be too exacting in her demands for a large indemnity. It is said the point was made that a large cash payment might demoralize the finances of Europe and the entire world, and besides this it would embarrass Russia and prove disastrous to the cause of peace. A report has gained currency that Tokio would demand \$1,000,000,000, as an indemnity, but this report lacks official confirmation and it is not at all probable any one outside of Japan has any idea what demands that country will make. President Roosevelt is probably the best informed personage on this point, other than the high Japanese officials. It would perhaps be interesting to refer to the various indemnities paid in recent times by European countries, and to cite them as precedents. The largest cash payment ever made was by France to Germany in 1871, aggregating \$1,000,000,000 in addition to ceding the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. Never before or since has any country paid so dearly for peace as did the war of 1878 Russia made Turkey pay \$165,000,000, rather this amount was exacted and subsequently reduced a few millions. Japan demanded of China a payment of \$175,000,000 at the conclusion of the farcical war in 1895. As a sequel to the Boxer rebellion China had to pay the allied powers \$333,000,000 in gold installments, some of this amount being still unpaid. The United States in all of its wars with other countries has invariably paid them large amounts on the most liberal terms. We gave Spain \$20,000,000 for so-called improvements in the Philippines, which in reality never had any existence. We got the Philippines and Porto Rico, which have cost us more than we will get from them in the next ten hundred years. In '48 we paid Mexico \$18,250,000 for the privilege of giving her a thrashing, forgetting the expense of the equipping, etc., of our armies to the country. This amount—a stupendous sum in those days—was paid for the possession of some territory to the United States which we had already won by conquest. We took fever-stricken and filth-ridden Cuba and installed excellent drainage and sewerage systems in its principal cities, besides employing other sanitary means and devices, and Cuba did not say "Thank you, Uncle Sam," much less offer to reimburse the Treasury in Washington. We sent soldiers and ships to her coasts and gave the people the "Cuba Libre" they were so lustily shouting for and which most of them were too cowardly to fight for. After our forces had routed the Spaniards a regiment or so of puny soldiers armed with machetes came up and were "anxious to get at the enemy, while some of their bummers sneaked in the rear and stole quantities of rations and haversacks of our troops who were on the firing line.

It is reported that congress at its coming session in December will be asked to return to China the amount that country paid to us as part of the indemnity given to the allied nations. It would not be surprising if this country granted the request and even throw in a few millions in the way of accumulated interest. No country in the world has been even approximately as generous as the United States in its treatment of nations which it has vanquished on the battlefields. It seems entirely beyond the comprehension of England, Germany, France, Russia and the rest how it is we can best another nation and spend millions in the accomplishment and then at its conclusion hand over several millions to the conquered. Perhaps it is strange, but it is our way and we think it should be the way of all who sympathize with the defeated and poor in purse. It is not improbable we carry this policy a little too far in regard to the Philippines. The precedents cited may be taken into consideration by Japan when it considers the size of the indemnity Russia shall pay if the Czar wants peace now.

JUSTICE FOR THE CHINESE.



HE original intent of our Chinese exclusion laws was to preserve the integrity and high standard of American labor and prevent unintelligent competition on the part of the Celestials. Such an intent was well enough, for the hordes of Chinese cheap laborers that were flocking to our shores would soon have demoralized and ruined the condition of our own working people if the influx had not been checked. But there is such a thing as carrying even a good movement too far.

We have witnessed disgraceful treatment of refined and educated Chinese who have come to this

country to study our methods and to learn our commercial system. These men are not poor or debased. They are not even here to compete with our laborers. They are guests whose coming should be welcomed, for they help to expand our markets and expanded markets mean greater activity in our manufacturing and therefore better demand for labor. But our agents at ports of entry have not exercised intelligent discrimination in the treatment of the better class of Chinese. These travelers, who are given cordial greeting in all European countries are here subjected to a humiliation and indignity that speaks ill for our boasted enlightenment and progress.

As a matter of fact the average Chinese resident of this country, while not especially desirable, is essentially less harmful than a great mass of the outcroppings that are dumped upon our shores every day from lower Europe. The Chinese resident does not happen to be subservient to unionism, he is industrious and as a rule attends strictly to his own business. The Chinese are non-anarchistic, respect government and are tractable. Such cannot be said for many of the low-browed, ignorant and vicious comers from some parts of Europe.

Only a few days ago a deputation of business men called upon the president to register a protest against the treatment of many Chinese visitors who had come here to transact commercial dealings. On the principle that the Chinaman's money is as good as any one's, these business men asked that simple justice be done them. The president was quick to see the reason and good sense in this protest and he instructed Secretary McCall to see that immigration officers exercise discretion in the enforcement of the law. There is no reason why an exclusion law should not be enforced against the undesirable immigrants of all nations, instead of merely selecting the Chinese as the special object of insults and indignities.

HOW TO IMPROVE OUR JURIES.



HERE has been much discussion of recent years as to the best remedy for improving the jury system or, rather, the growing difficulty of selecting "twelve good men and true." Our whole system of jurisprudence must stand or fall on the worth of the petit jury, and the matter being so vital, suggested reforms are well worthy of consideration, says the Atlanta Constitution.

In a recent speech before the graduating class of the Boston Young Men's Christian Association law school, Judge James B. Richardson, of the Massachusetts superior court, voiced the central truth in the whole proposition when he said:

"The trouble is not so much with trial by jury as an institution, as with the composition of it—the men on the panel. The cases which at the present time come on for trial before a jury involve questions infinitely more intricate, complicated and difficult, and of much greater magnitude, than those which usually came before a jury 100 or even fifty years ago, while it seems to me that in judgment, discernment and other qualifications the average jury at the present time is not so good as it was then. As to the selection of jurors, let me say that the difficulty is not so much in the law, as in the administration of it. What chance is there of good judgment, when ignorance, inebriety, stupidity, race and class prejudices and affiliations with law-defying organizations are on the panel?"

It is difficult to see how in this country we can expect that the character of an institution, whether it be a political party or the court, or the church, or a jury, can be any better, or its efficiency can be any greater than is the aggregate character and efficiency of the individuals who compose such institution; and efforts made with much hope of success to improve any of them must begin, I think, with improving the individuals of which it is composed.

This is the opinion of many thoughtful citizens who are concerned for the present status of judicial procedure in the United States. The question is simply one of the individual worth of the juror—his intelligence, his honesty and general character as known to the community. The democracy of the jury system can easily prove a menace to the right administration of justice if the individual element is not carefully weighed in the selection of talent. It requires a layman of keen mentality to decide a case on the law and evidence, unswayed by extraneous and, often, unworthy influences, and that he should be a man of probity goes without saying.

This gives the strongest kind of emphasis to the necessity of good citizens serving as jurors, and to secure that kind of juror it is apparent that every good citizen must hold it a duty of his citizenship to sit upon a jury when called upon to do so. This is a duty that too many shirk.

When there is a more conscientious regard for the responsibilities of good citizenship on the part of those who are best qualified to fill a jury panel, we shall hear less complaint about the quality of our juries, and respect for the courts will be decidedly increased by the resultant improvement in judicial administration.

An Oklahoma woman wants a divorce because her husband has been reading the Bible to a charming little widow. Some women just can't think of having their sisters saved.