

Literary News and Criticism

A Study of the Causes of Our War with Spain.

THE RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES AND SPAIN. By French Historian and Diplomat. By French Historian and Diplomat. By French Historian and Diplomat.

The man of action as historian and philosopher has not hitherto been unknown to our literature or to that of other lands, and more than once his personality has been that of a naval officer, in fine fulfillment of the ideal which was set for members of that service by the founder of the American navy. The present incursion of a veteran sea fighter into the field of letters is peculiarly appropriate, and its result is more than ordinarily gratifying. There is probably no naval officer now living who is more familiar with the circumstances and conditions of our war with Spain from personal observation and participation than Rear Admiral Chadwick, and it is therefore fitting that he should be the author of a detailed review of the diplomatic relations of our country with Spain of which the war of 1898 was the logical and, humanly speaking, all but inevitable culmination. For that is the argument of the book before us, which the author maintains with a wealth of cited facts and with a cogency of deduction which will scarcely be challenged and which certainly will not be successfully controverted. The folly, in which some have indulged, of attributing that war to the destruction of the Maine or to other purely ephemeral incidents is authoritatively dismissed. The seeds of the conflict were planted in 1763; they germinated just twenty years later and the bitter harvest was finally garnered only twelve years ago.

It was on February 10, 1763, that France, beaten in the war which is here called the "French and Indian" and in Europe the "Seven Years," ceded to England the territory between the Alleghenies and the Mississippi, and by the treaty of cession declared the Mississippi from source to mouth free to the British for navigation on equal terms with the French. It was on the same day, too, that France ceded to Spain the territory between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains, known in history as the Louisiana Territory. Thus the Spanish dominions and the British American colonies were brought into a contact productive of more or less incessant friction and irritation until 1823, when that contact was finally ended. Logically and naturally Spain succeeded to the obligations as well as to the authority of the French in Louisiana, and in 1782 the United States succeeded to the privileges of Great Britain in the Northwest and Southwest territories. That is to say, the United States had a right to navigate the Mississippi freely from source to mouth on equal terms with Spain. But there is nothing more familiar in the history of those times than the tortuous efforts of Spain to deny and to nullify that right and to forbid its exercise. To that end her policy was directed during the Revolution. On April 29, 1778, she secretly allied herself with France against England, and six days later offered England her alliance against France, which latter being refused, she declared war against England and in aid of France but not in behalf of America. Again, on May 10, 1780, she offered to ally herself with the United States if this country would renounce its rights on the Mississippi, the remembrance of which probably inspired Jay to his superb disregard of Congressional orders in making the treaty of peace of 1783.

In our assertion in 1783 of our rights as the successor of Great Britain on the eastern shore of the Mississippi was the germination of the seeds of trouble between the United States and Spain. There followed Spain's persistent efforts to exclude us from that river and to incite secession and secession in the Western territories; the scoundrelism of Wilkinson, the strenuous diplomacy of Pinckney, and finally the secret treaty of San Ildefonso as a counsel of Spain's despair. In the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of that treaty Spain was ill used by France, for the purchase price for Louisiana was never paid and the solemn obligation of France not to rescind the territory was soon repudiated. Moreover, our purchase of Louisiana, while it ended the Mississippi controversy, led to still further complications and controversies with Spain, in which the United States did not always show to advantage. The Yazoo business was bad enough in 1783. But that of West Florida was worse, and it is gratifying to see that Admiral Chadwick clearly recognizes and frankly confesses the fact. The United States was "greatly in the wrong" he tells us. One of Madison's dispatches, which was equally Jefferson's, was "a piece of pitifully unworthy of high-minded statesmen." The President and his Secretary of State and all the Cabinet were equally wrong "in the face of seemingly patent facts." It is true that the Spanish minister replied with notes of "a rudeness which no government could tolerate," but his tone was justified by the gross indignities which Spain had suffered at our hands. The result was that he was changed from a friend to an enemy of the United States, and relations between the two countries were deeply embittered.

Not the least deplorable feature of those doings was that Texas was for the time lost to us, the United States was diplomatically humiliated, and a legacy of woe was left to succeeding years. The Galveston and Amelia Island incidents followed, and then the negotiations with De Onis and Vives, which were conducted on our part by the man whom Admiral Chadwick regards as, on the whole, the greatest of American secretaries of State, and the acquisition of East Florida was finally effected in circumstances which increased the already intense animosity between the two nations. Meantime another cause of offence arose in South America. In 1818 Adams proposed to France the recognition of South American independence, and thereby started a government which as that very time was planning to seat a Bourbon prince on the throne of the Argentine. The Holy Alliance was asked by Spain to intervene for the restoration to her of her South American provinces, and it agreed to do so on condition that the United States should join in the act. The United States promptly and positively refused, and in so refusing Adams, in July, 1820, unmistakably forewarned the Monroe Doctrine. Then, in 1823, came Adams's often quoted observations concerning our policy toward Cuba and Porto Rico, again forecasting not only the Monroe Doctrine but also what has appropriately been called the Polk Doctrine, following this with his memorable warning to Baron Tupper, which, it is interesting to recall, the President and all the rest of the Cabinet regarded as needlessly offensive and dangerous, and last of all the Monroe Doctrine. Thus, in half a dozen years the antagonism between Spain and America was developed in all directions to what seemed the utmost degree compatible with the maintenance of peace.

Then a change occurred. The "peculiar institution" was at that time dominant in American politics. The revolted provinces of Spain, on establishing their independence, had abolished slavery, while Spain still retained it in Cuba and Porto Rico. The sympathies of pro-slavery America, therefore, were transferred from the new republics to their former lord, and became for many years the bulwark of Spain's power in the remaining remnant of her American empire. There can be no doubt that it was on that ground that Congress practically nullified Adams's policy in the matter of the Panama Congress, and thus began that course of aloofness, from and disregard for the Central American states which has been discreditable and unprofitable to us and almost infinitely mischievous for them. When Polk and Buchanan sought the acquisition of Cuba they did so largely through apprehension lest Great Britain or France would get that island and abolish slavery there. The American guarantee of Spanish possession of Cuba, which probably saved that island to Spain and which invested this country with a peculiar privilege of remonstrance and advice to Spain thereafter, was doubtless in part inspired by the same motive. And so to the end of the rule of the pro-slavery faction at Washington the hostility between America and Spain was held in abeyance.

Promptly thereafter it again became acute. Our author reviews in detail and with judicial fairness the attitude of this country toward the various Cuban insurrections, and especially commends that of the Grant administration during the Ten Years' War. Beyond doubt the United States was used as a source of supplies and as a base of operations, but our government was never voluntarily or consciously a party to violations of neutrality. Spain had no more cause for complaint against us than she had for identical reasons against France and England during the Carlist war. The Cuban Junta in New York had its close parallel in the Carlist Committee in London. Moreover, for such success as the Junta and the filibusters and the supply expeditions had Spain was herself chiefly to blame. Of seventy-seven expeditions from the United States in the last Cuban revolution Spain stopped only five, while the United States stopped thirty-five. Had the Spanish patrol of the Cuban coast been as efficient as our guardianship of ours, the insurgents would have got no supplies from the United States. Yet Spain bitterly blamed this country, and in her resentment of what she erroneously imagined to be our breach of neutrality she exercised extreme severity toward American citizens in Cuba, especially those of Cuban birth or parentage, and thus, of course, provoked answering resentment on our side.

The crisis came in 1896. Mr. Olney's note to Mr. De Lome was, in Admiral Chadwick's estimation, not only very important but also "temperate, wise and abounding in good counsel." It was intended for the good of both Spain and Cuba and contemplated the maintenance of Spanish sovereignty in the island under conditions of good government which would be acceptable to the Cuban people and also to the legitimate international interests of the United States. The aim was to avert the menace of needed intervention, which was then looming ominously upon the horizon, and the warning was frankly given that the United States could not with complacency contemplate another ten years' war, with all its injurious and disturbing incidents. The Spanish answer ceremoniously acknowledged the good spirit of the American note, but insisted that Spain must be permitted to fight the matter out in her own way. That, says Admiral Chadwick, was the turning point of the affairs of Spain. Traditional Spanish pride would not brook interference, particularly by that nation which since 1783 had been Spain's favorite antipathy. But intervention was bound to come, either friendly or unfriendly. Mr. Olney's offer of friendship was rejected. In the fall of that same year President Cleveland's annual message distinctly foreshadowed impending intervention, forcible and unfriendly.

There fore to be realized for that intervention to be realized. President McKinley succeeded President Cleveland and succeeded to his Cuban policy. There was need that he should do the latter, for under the concentration system, with its appalling results, the condition of Cuba was becoming worse and was verging upon the intolerable. In his message to Congress President McKinley characterized the concentration system as an abuse of the rights of war. In that it may be conceded that he erred through the revolt of his humane disposition against the horrors which concentration involved. There are American and British examples of similar practices, and an American commission a few years after the war declared that General Weyler's policy had been legally justifiable. The charge that the Spanish violated the laws of nations was no more to be sustained than was Spain's definition of piracy as applied to the Cuban supply expeditions. Moreover, the insurgents were pursuing a policy of devastation which was less easy of justification than the Spanish concentration. But the supreme condemnation of both was that which was expressed in President McKinley's message of 1897—namely, that such methods had not the virtue or the vindication of effectiveness. By concentration the Spanish could not quell the insurrection; by devastation the insurgents could not expel the Spanish.

Then came the tragic incident of the Maine, which Admiral Chadwick, who was a member of the court of inquiry into that disaster, dismisses with brief treatment, as it is fitting; for that incident, dreadful as it was, was really of minor diplomatic importance in the more than century long train of causes and effects which this book relates. A few American newspapers acted scandalously over it, but on the whole the American government, press and public displayed an admirable temper. The report of the court of inquiry declared that the ship had been destroyed by two explosions, the first external and the second, consequent upon the first, internal. Admiral Chadwick is strongly convinced of the correctness of this theory. At first he thought the explosion had been entirely internal, due to some fault or mischief in the magazine, but examination re-

sued him otherwise against his possessions, and he would now welcome a complete exposure of the wreck as it lies as certain to result in vindication of the findings of the court. All that, however, by the way. The great tragedy did not materially affect the remorseless progress of affairs. It was only "a patent and impressive proof of a state of affairs in Cuba which was intolerable." Without it, as the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States Senate declared, our government would still have pressed and would have had to press for an immediate solution of the Cuban problem. But Spain would assent to no acceptable solution, and so the end came. In the act of intervention and in America's expulsion of Spain from contact with or proximity to the United States in 1898 was the logical sequel to, and culmination of Spain's efforts to exclude the United States from contact or proximity to her possessions in 1783.

Admiral Chadwick has told this story with painstaking elaboration of detail, with admirable discretion and taste and with a judicial impartiality worthy of the highest commendation. As an exhaustive and philosophical history of the causes which led to the ultimate extinction of the Spanish empire in the Western Hemisphere, and as a large and authoritative contribution to the diplomatic history of the United States, his work is invaluable. Nor should we overlook the fact that an ample analytical index makes all the contents of the volume readily accessible for reference.

OLD HOSTILITIES.

A Book on the Drinking Customs of England.

INNS, ALES AND DRINKING CUSTOMS OF OLD ENGLAND. By Frederick W. Hackwood. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. 222. Sturgis & Walton Company.

There is exceeding good entertainment in Mr. Hackwood's study of old English inns, and of the ways of their keepers and customers. Their history runs back to the "Taberna" of Roman days, when along the splendid roads made by the conquerors rose the comfortable dwellings wherein the traveller might find food and lodging. In the centuries that followed a store of quaint anecdote and strange instances has gathered about the British inn—the author has certainly not lacked material. Among the illustrations are many delightful pictures of ancient hostleries, houses of a wondrously charming architecture. The oldest of all the English inns, they say, is the "Seven Stars," in White Green, Manchester; there are documents which show that it was in existence before 1356. The "Old Plough," in Northamptonshire, was used as an inn, it is asserted, in 1042, but there is probably truth in the author's suggestion that the actual building stands on the site of an older hostelry. There is no doubt at all that the "Saracen's Head" at Newark was entertaining travellers in 1341, for it can be traced by its title deeds to that date. The "George," the beautiful Gothic inn at Glastonbury, was built in the fifteenth century and was then called the "Old Pilgrim" inn. When Henry VIII came to Glastonbury to visit the Abbey, he slept at this inn, and his bed was long preserved there. Another "George" at Salisbury—is thought to have been erected about 1320. It is still used as an esteemed private hotel, and those sojourners who look out upon its courtyard of a morning may delight themselves with a not ill grounded belief that, like many other strolling players, Shakespeare once acted therein.

That is said to be the oldest inhabited house in England is the Fighting Cocks Inn, at St. Albans, a queer little octagonal building, which was erected as a bathhouse for the monastery founded by King Offa, about the year 785. "A subterranean passage, now blocked up, runs from the basement to the ruins of the monastery, a distance of about two hundred yards. It was used also as a storage for the fishing tackle of the monks. There is a shed at the back of the house where, it is said, Oliver Cromwell stabled his horse, himself once sleeping under its roof during the Civil War." Of comparatively modern English inns one of the oddest is the "Crooked House," at Hilmey, on the Earl of Dudley's estate. As a result of mining operations—the whole district is honeycombed with coal pits—it had fallen out of the perpendicular to such an extent that it is impossible to walk through the doorway as to pace the deck of a vessel in a rolling sea, the warped floor and the leaning walls make it difficult to maintain a vertical position, the windows of the top story lie apparently and present a remarkable optical illusion. The clock on the walls, although absolutely true, has the effect of being tilted at a very pronounced angle. A shelf which is level and square and set on a level one end than the other, if marbles be placed on what appears to be the lower end of the top story, the top story will roll uphill and fall over with a bump!

Among the stories associated with existing inns is that of "Dirty Dick," who, when a spruce and prosperous young landowner on the point of giving a great wedding feast, heard of the sudden death of his betrothed. He turned the key in the door of the room where the wedding supper was spread, and for fifty years no one entered it. Ruin, rust, dirt and dilapidation seized the whole house and its owner as well. The author suggests that it was upon this actual happening that Dickens founded the Havisham episode in "Great Expectations." We must not forget, by the way, that one inn and one inn keeper of the past, and one inn keeper of the present, a genial, comfortable sort that Dickens loved still exist in England, and Mr. Hackwood tells us where to find them. There is a good deal of interesting history in the chapter on inn signs. Why, for example, should the sign of a hostelry be simply "Now Thus"? In the time of the Civil War there lived near the site of the present inn a wealthy Royalist squire who had cause to fear the coming of the Parliamentary troops. He sent away his servants and his livestock, buried all his money, plate and jewels under the floor of a barn, and, habited as a farm laborer, thrashed corn directly above his treasure. He was swinging his fall when the Roundheads came in upon him, exclaiming with each stroke, "Now Thus!" Nothing more could their questions extract from the apparently witless worker, and they departed with nothing to show for their trouble. The two words which saved him appear not only on the inn sign—they are carved on an old gravestone in Leek churchyard, presumably the gravestone of the clever Royalist himself.

Mr. Hackwood furnishes countless details of the growth of the drinking habit in England, of the beverages adjusted to the popular thirst and their origins. There is much that is unpleasant in the story, and he does not blink the fact. But pleasant or not, the book is readable from end to end.

"Central America and Its Problems" is the title of a volume by Mr. Frederick Palmer which is to be brought out immediately by Moffat, Yard & Co. The

author, who has lately returned from that region, has dealt carefully with Nicaragua, Guatemala, Panama, Honduras, Costa Rica and San Salvador, and has included in his volume three chapters on Mexico.

BOOKS IN PARIS.

A Blow at the French Suffragette.

Paris, January 8.

M. Theodore Joran has had the courage to open a vigorous campaign against "feminism" in France. In "La Femme Féministe," published by the Librairie Savatier, he attacks Mlle. Hubertine Auliert and Mlle. Pelletier, and nearly succeeds in burning those energetic young women with their own fuel, as it were, for he cites passages from the writings of both which make them cruel and stupid each other. The cruel analysis to which the most prominent two leaders of the feminist movement in France are subjected causes hesitation among their followers. M. Joran seems to be supported by facts in his assertion that in France only one woman in three thousand is a "suffragette."

Prince Elim Demidoff's poems, under the modest title of "Egarements," issued by the Librairie Plon, consist mostly of finely turned sonnets and short verses inspired by symbolism, and dealing with topics of actuality. They are beautifully illustrated by M. Georges Rochegrosse in delicate colored arabesques.

"La Fille de la Sirène," a novel by Mme. Mathilde Alanc, issued by Calmann-Lévy, deals with a young girl whose mother is a prima donna and whose father is an eminent surgeon. The prima donna, who is of irreproachable character, had abandoned the stage after her marriage. On one occasion, with her husband's consent, she sings for a charitable performance at the opera. The magic attraction of the "cancer" is too strong for her, and she becomes again a professional singer. The father steals away their daughter. The struggle over this daughter, who is beloved by both her parents, provides material for a clever tale, the upshot of which is that her mother finds her at last. The girl marries, and the father and mother meet at the wedding, and a year later, when their grandson is born, they become reconciled.

The problem presented by a young Alsatian artist called upon to choose between French and German nationality is forcibly and picturesquely treated by Mme. Jeanne Edgemaier in her novel, "Jeune Alsace," just published by the Nouvelle Librairie. Paris appeals to the instincts of the artist, while the hills and dales of his native Vosges claim his heart. The artist says: "I look east and west upon two rival civilizations, which draw me in opposite directions. I remain in my village. I find a new moral evolution that daily assumes more definite shape and which makes my countrymen and myself neither French nor German, but, more than ever before, out-and-out Alsations, and nothing else." C. I. B.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Talk of Things Present and to Come.

One of the cleverest American novels of the last decade was Mrs. Helen B. Martin's "Tillie," a 32-volume novel. Therein she revealed a fresh background and characters but little known. On those pages did actually live and move a group of the Pennsylvania Dutch. She has again gone to that region for the characters of a new novel which the Century Company will publish next month. Its title is "The Crossways." "Tillie," we are told, has been reprinted eleven times.

Dr. David Starr Jordan's new little book, "The Story of Matka," was written on the island of St. Paul, in the Pribyloff group, while, as president of the Bering Sea Commission, he was investigating the habits of the fur seal. A sprained ankle restricted his movements, and he sought amusement in writing out the story of the mother seal, "Matka."

Mr. Stanley J. Weyman, writing in the jubilee number of "The Cornhill" of that notable editor of the past, James Payn, quotes the advice which Payn gave him, a beginner in authorship. "You cannot live by short stories," he said to the young man; "at any rate, you cannot live well. To every short story a plot—and a plot is most precious thing. A good plot is the greater part of a good book. A really novel plot is a perfect treasure. When you are as old as I am I have written as many stories for you will know its value. No, give up short stories and write a long one—write a novel."

I told him that I did not think I could; that the length frightened me, that I had never thought of it.

"I believe you can," he answered. "Try, at any rate." And, turning to a tall desk without a window, he explained frankly and without reserve his own method of working. He showed me the large card on which he wrote, and a second card on which he wrote, and a third card on which he wrote, and a fourth card on which he wrote, and a fifth card on which he wrote, and a sixth card on which he wrote, and a seventh card on which he wrote, and an eighth card on which he wrote, and a ninth card on which he wrote, and a tenth card on which he wrote, and an eleventh card on which he wrote, and a twelfth card on which he wrote, and a thirteenth card on which he wrote, and a fourteenth card on which he wrote, and a fifteenth card on which he wrote, and a sixteenth card on which he wrote, and a seventeenth card on which he wrote, and an eighteenth card on which he wrote, and a nineteenth card on which he wrote, and a twentieth card on which he wrote, and a twenty-first card on which he wrote, and a twenty-second card on which he wrote, and a twenty-third card on which he wrote, and a twenty-fourth card on which he wrote, and a twenty-fifth card on which he wrote, 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