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TODAY'S WEATHER—Cloudy and unsettled, with occasional rain; brisk and possibly high, equally northerly, shifting to southerly, winds.

YESTERDAY'S WEATHER—Maximum temperature, 51; minimum temperature, 39; precipitation, 0.07 inch.

PORTLAND, SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 1902.

LITERATURE ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

America had not done much in literature 100 years ago. Sydney Smith's sneer, "In the four quarters of the world, who reads an American book?" was much later than the beginning of the nineteenth century. But American books, during fifty years past, have been read all over the world. In historical literature American authorship, during the past fifty or sixty years, stands for high achievement. In prose fiction it presents many important names; in poetry several of good repute, though perhaps none up to the highest mark of contemporary effort in Europe. It is the exact truth that down to a period considerably later than 100 years ago no great or conspicuous author of prose or verse had appeared in the United States.

Before the close of the eighteenth century a vigorous press had been developed in the United States; but it was of the order of political pamphleteering, the scurrility of which has never been exceeded, if equaled, since. There is almost nothing of that time to which our literary students can point with pride. American patriots did, however, go at an early day into the production of school books, which had great moral value and did much for the formation of the mind of the country. Noah Webster, who made the spelling book—thin, blue and immortal—had served in the Revolution. It was just 100 years ago that he began a literary career, which, if not remarkable for brilliancy, was one of exceptional usefulness. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to find in history an instance in which any other one man has done so much for the education and formation of the mind of a country. Our school books of the early day all ran up the flag. They contained what was best in the sketchy literature of their time. Most of their pieces presented serious moral lessons. There was a great deal, too, from English classics, and much from the Bible, in the familiar version.

In the opening years of the nineteenth century we were getting the earlier productions of that rare galaxy of poets in England—Coleridge, Wordsworth and Scott. The century was young when the first American schoolboy sang out, "Charge, Chester, charge!" and American patriotism found a voice in the lines beginning, "Lives there a man with soul so dead." We were just beginning to have an "own, a native land," then. Fourteen years of the nineteenth century had run along before we began to read the great romances in prose—for it was in 1814 that "Waverley" was published. A little before this some copies of Jane Austen's "Sense and Sensibility"—a novel that still has multitudes of readers—had come over. So it was that our foreign friends, Walter Scott and Jane Austen, were introduced to us during the miseries of our last war with England. The young American of today has the consolation of knowing that his grandparents read "Waverley" while it was a new story, and "Marmion" before it had become worn. But we had developed a prose writer of our own even before this—Washington Irving, who in his small boyhood had been patted on the head by Washington, for whom he was named. He published in 1809 his "Knickerbocker," and in 1819 the "Sketch Book," containing the legend of Rip Van Winkle, which in its dramatic form still makes its rounds of the country. With Irving, America began to furnish reading for our country, and also for the rest of the world. In the year 1821 appeared "The Spy," the first of the numerous American stories by James Fenimore Cooper, which secured at once a wide reading, both at home and abroad. Bryant gave us "Thanatopsis" when himself a boy, in 1817, and fixed in history and literature the name of our State of Oregon.

From this point it would be easy to proceed to a list of American authors whose works have reflected credit upon literature and honor upon their country. But the present thought has been to offer only a few notes of the early time.

An individual who finds himself beaten in any public competition rarely gains anything by making a fuss about it; and we suspect it is the same with a community. Portland has lost the business of repairing the Seward, and she doesn't like it, not because the amount of money involved is serious, but because it is in a sense a reflection upon her facilities for such work. But it does no good to cry out in anger and resentment. A more dignified course, and one quite as effective, would be to make no exhibition of pique, to waste no energy in wailing, and to take care that the injustice be not repeated. And possibly it would help, in respect of the future, if we would employ our energies to the end of making a drydock here; for until we have a drydock it will not be easy to convince the authorities at Washington, or anybody else, that our facilities are equal to heavy work in the way of marine construction.

ANOTHER QUESTION OUTDATED.

From the number of Eastern commercial houses establishing branches on the Pacific Coast, particularly in Portland, it may be assumed that the Middle West jobbers are about to abandon their fight for graded transcontinental freight rates. This fight began at the Milwaukie meeting of the Transcontinental Freight Bureau in May, 1898, and it has been kept up until recently. The Middle West jobbers lost whenever they carried the case before the traffic men. Then they took the matter up with the Interstate Commerce Commission, which body spent several weeks examining witnesses and hearing arguments but has not yet reached a conclusion, and which would be powerless to enforce its judgment, anyway.

The fight against graded rates may be said to have been won by the Pacific Coast jobbers. They have lately been extending their trade field in the intermountain region, and the Eastern jobbers recognize the superiority of discretion over valor when they make a virtue of necessity and establish business houses here. The Pacific Coast will not surrender the advantage which water competition in freights gives it. Graded rates would ignore the strength of this position, and the transportation companies cannot ignore that.

It is a fact, also, that since prospects of trade beyond the Pacific became so alluring the large commercial houses of the Middle West have grown less intolerant of the Pacific Coast jobbers. They have grown out of the idea that they must push the Coast jobbers out of the Rocky Mountain region back to a thin fringe of country bordering the ocean. The wholesalers of the Mississippi Valley can now see beyond that narrow field. Blanket rates to the Coast may now serve them as well as they serve the Coast merchants, by giving them a footing for the Pacific trade. The Orient is the growing trade field, and Mississippi Valley manufacturers and jobbers can reach that market by way of Pacific ports better than by way of the Atlantic.

Expansion has enlarged the horizon of most Americans. The wide world is not so far away as it once was. It is of more importance to get the trade of the Orient than to crowd a neighbor out of its mining camps. We shall hear less of graded rates and the small policies of rival tradesmen in our home field hereafter. And the Pacific Coast maintains its advantage in trade as well as in most things else.

IN THE INTEREST OF HYGIENE AND DECENCY.

Health Boards, urged on by physicians who paint in startling colors the dangers resulting from the characteristically American habit of spitting in public places, are busy in various cities devising ways and means whereby this nauseating practice may be abated. Thus the Board of Health of Grand Rapids, Mich., recently authorized signs reading, "No spitting on the sidewalk," to be placed in conspicuous places throughout the city, while Dr. T. J. McCoy, of Los Angeles, is reported as favoring the placing of cuspidors on street corners and in office buildings, with sewer connections, and constantly flushed with running water. This latter suggestion, says the American Magazine, may appear at first glance as an encouraging rather than a repressive measure, and therefore ill-advised. But when we reflect that Los Angeles is a consumptives' retreat, the necessity of resorting to protection that protects in dealing with this habit becomes apparent. There is, unfortunately, a considerable number in all of our large cities afflicted with tuberculosis and catarrhal diseases, and while by some of these the "don't spit" signs may be taken seriously, to many they are utterly meaningless. Therefore, while decency may protest against a concession to a disgusting habit, the fact that expectorating in public places is also a dangerous habit makes such concession in a degree tolerable.

Indeed, American modesty cannot well draw the line at cuspidors placed for the convenience of a tobacco-chewing and catarrhal multitude, as long as American women continue to make germ-disseminators of their skirts by mopping up the sidewalks with them. Of late the rainy-day skirt has had vogue with sensible women, but it is still impossible to walk half a dozen blocks in any city without hearing the swish of the petticoat mop, and witnessing its efficacy as a filth-gatherer. It has been suggested in several towns that ordinances be enacted making it a legal offense to wear a trailing skirt on the street, but here, again, it is said, such a regulation cannot be enforced, and, coming back to first principles, we are fain to proclaim that the remedy for street expectoration and its baleful results lies in keeping the thoroughfares clean and in teaching the younger generation to abstain from disgusting habits.

The public spittoon, as now supplied, is justly characterized by the journal above quoted as a loathsome example of hygienic and anesthetic incompetence. In this view, if we must accept as a fact the statement that a community is powerless to enforce rules and regulations against spitting in public places, the suggestion of Dr. McCoy that this receptacle be replaced by some arrangement that can be constantly flushed is an excellent one. Since it does not suffice to call the attention of men to the disgusting features of the habit, and it seems to be useless to call the attention of women to the dangers that arise from taking up in their skirts whatever comes in the way on sidewalks, the plan of Dr. McCoy for rendering the vice of public expectoration innocuous is worthy of consideration. If we cannot do the best, let us do the best we can.

The principal value of our late purchase, the Danish West Indies, seems to consist in the harbor of Charlotte Amelia, on the Island of St. Thomas, which lies nearest to Porto Rico. This harbor has been for more than a century recognized as one of the best, if not the best, natural harbor in the entire West Indian group. It has been during all that time a central point as a harbor of refuge, point of exchange for merchandise and a coaling station for vessels from all parts of the world. It is an acquisition which the United States needs, or is at any time likely to need in its business, and in its strategic value is deemed worth the price paid for the islands.

SOME EFFECTS OF FRATERNALISM.

There is an aspect of the fraternal insurance business—and an important one, too—not touched by the letter dealing with this matter in yesterday's Oregonian. It relates to the curious and very damaging effect of the insurance clubs or lodges upon social life, especially in small towns. So great and constant are the demands of the insurance fraternities upon the time and means of those who make up their membership that small time and little means are left for those reciprocal duties and attentions which go so far to promote friendship and courtesy and to sweeten neighborhood life. For the natural selection of temperament and taste the fraternity substitutes the chances of lodge association; for the real fraternity of friendship it substitutes a bogus fraternity of formal obligations. The waste of time involved in lodge attendance and in lodge duties is great, and the cost of it in one way or another is oftentimes far out of proportion to even such benefits as it promises. Furthermore, the spirit created by the fraternal societies gives to small communities a distinctly unsocial and inhospitable character from the standpoint of the man who has no lodge affiliation, for it tends to limit the sense of social obligation in general, to ostracise in a sense the non-joining element in the community. It makes a distinctly chilly social atmosphere for the newcomer who bears no fraternity credentials, and it is not too much to say that through its effects it is the fact which causes many an intending settler to pass on.

NOT THE GREATEST ART.

The famous English actor, Sir Henry Irving, in a recent speech before the Liberal Club, of Buffalo, N. Y., claimed for the art of acting too high a place. To the view that the efforts of the actor are but mimetic and ephemeral and pass away as a tale that is told, Mr. Irving replies that all art is mimetic. This is not true. The art of the poet, the painter and the sculptor is not seldom more than mimetic. Compared with the art of the actor, it is creative, while the art of the actor is always mimetic, or at best does not rise above the intellectual quality of a sound and appreciative critic. The great Athenian artist who made the statues for the Parthenon had no copy for his Athene or his Jove. The great Athenian dramatists who sketched the figures of gods and godlike heroes of a mythologic age had no copy; they were creative artists, and their work is immortal. But the names of the great actors whose mimetic talent was exhibited in the personation of the characters of the Greek drama were writ in water. The great poet, painter or sculptor must be a man of ideas, a creative thinker; but a man may become an excellent actor and not be at all a man of ideas. To be a great actor a man needs the intellectual quality of a great critic, the capacity to understand the spirit of the character he essays to personate, but great actors are very few, and at their best they do not rise higher than the level of high critical as distinguished from creative genius.

Fine acting is the highest kind of intellectual entertainment, but it is not high art in the sense that fine poetry, painting and sculpture are high art; for it is not creative, but mimetic, work. A great poet, painter or sculptor is a great creative artist, but a great photographer is nothing of the sort. An actor is a photographer of the creative art of the poet, painter or sculptor rather than a great artist. He is the efficient servant, the interpreter, of creative artists, rather than a great artist himself. Shakespeare was more than a respectable actor himself. His advice to the players in "Hamlet" proves that. There were actors in his day of a very high quality of histrionic talent, like Richard Burbage. But if Shakespeare had been as full of histrionic genius as Edmund Kean, the greatest name in the annals of the English-speaking stage, his fame would be faint and fleeting compared with that obtained by even second-rate creative artists in painting, sculpture, poetry or architecture. If a skillful photographer of a great painting is a great artist; if an eloquent elocutionist is a creative artist because he recites effectively the lines and impersonates powerfully the creations of a great poet; if a great critic is on a level with the author of an immortal book, then Mr. Irving is right. But he has claimed altogether too much for his calling.

So, too, in the same address, Mr. Irving seems to us to claim too much for the theater when he claims for it high and superior moral power and influence, when as a matter of fact it is merely mimetic and dramatic art, which may or may not be instinct with a high moral purpose and effect. To claim for the stage, as some do, a moral influence superior to that of the pulpit is pure extravagance, for the motive of the highest and lowest theater is merely to amuse, to entertain. A high theater demands decent intellectual entertainment, while a low theater may drop to the obscene; but the purpose in both is to entertain. The stage is not the stern, unexaggerated voice of moral principle and purpose, like the pulpit, when it is true to its flag. The pulpit, when true to itself, deals with the substance of things, while the stage is but their shadow dance. The purpose of the preacher is not to amuse or entertain, but to instruct, exhort, inspire, rebuke. But the primary purpose of the stage, from a business point of view, is successful entertainment. Of course, it is true that when the art of the stage is subordinated to high and humane representations of both the weakness and strength of human nature, it is the very highest form of entertainment. The world has a right to be entertained, but Mr. Irving knows that people do not go to the theater with the hope or desire of being reformed by the sound of fiddles in the orchestra.

When the stage decently holds the mirror up to human nature it exercises a large influence for good, but quite as much might be said for the art of war. When it brings victory to Washington or Lincoln it serves humanity well, but the art of war is not always dedicated to noble ends, and neither is the mimetic art of the modern stage. In fact, to be successful as a matter of business the dramatic art is obliged to be demagogic in spirit, to feed popular prejudice, to echo the "common cry of curs," to play to the pit and the galleries, to extort the plaudits of the ill-informed, narrow-minded and passionate, who are always in the majority in any theatrical audience. The theater is a good thing; it holds a high place and exercises an important and useful influence, but it is no substitute for a great pulpit, and never will be, if the pulpit is true to its mission.

OLD AGE WHAT WE MAKE IT.

William C. Whitney, who recently passed his 60th birthday, is about to retire from business, despite the fact that he is still in good health. This early retirement of Mr. Whitney has renewed the discussion as to what age should mark the boundary line of work. The answer to be made will be determined by the kind of man who contemplates retirement. If he has been purely a man of business, who has no taste for reading, small relish for foreign travel—a man, for example, like the great Commodore Vanderbilt—he ought not to retire from active business until he is obliged to by bodily or mental infirmity. Vanderbilt was fond of fine horses, enjoyed the turf, and was fond of whist, but he cared nothing for books, or art, or science, or travel, or philanthropic work. Such a man was wise not to retire from business until he was obliged to at 77 by declining health. But Mr. Whitney has a taste for books, for the turf, for travel, for society and for a great many forms of intellectual recreation to which Commodore Vanderbilt was a stranger, so Mr. Whitney is wise to choose an earlier period for retirement from active business. He knows what to do with his time, because in youth he had an opportunity to acquire a variety of knowledge and tastes that make him, compared with Vanderbilt, a many-sided man. Mr. Whitney has cultivated the faculties that are necessary to the enjoyment of life as age advances.

It is common with moralists in prose and poetry to speak of youth as abounding in joy, and old age as saturated with gloom and sorrow. If old age is associated with painful disease or mental infirmity, it is not a pleasant spectacle for contemplation; neither, for that matter, is youth in like circumstances. But assuming that old age is not associated with painful disease or depressing mental infirmity, old age is like the rest of our life—about what we choose to make it. There are, of course, youthful recreations for which old age has no use, and, on the other hand, there is a good deal of moral and intellectual enjoyment that can be obtained by a many-sided man in the years of old age. Old Adam, in "As You Like It," says that because in his youth he was not dissolute, his age is "like a lusty Winter—frosty, but kindly." There are many such old men, whose old age is what their youth made it.

To work as a mere contemplative thinker does not kill, hence literary men, or professional men, subject to no bitter business anxieties in their battle for bread, and no large, varied or complex executive responsibilities, live long in the land. Authors, clergymen, Judges, scientists, are generally long-lived. The men who die of overwork are men who work under fire every hour—work under the lash, discharging duties that cannot be put off; that are always pushing the weary man from behind and filling his ears with the battle-cry of "Forward! Forward! Forward!" It is this relentless pressure of varied, perplexing, vexing responsibility that never relaxes its push, that never gives a man time to catch his breath, that kills, because it wears out the nervous system prematurely. Indigestion and insomnia become the victim's twin demons of unrest; increasing excitement and anxiety accelerate the circulation, and heart failure at last claims the exhausted executive for its own. Men whose duties are always kicking the doer from behind and spurring the tired steed to a fresh burst of speed; workers whose work permits no halt, whose pace is always the double-quick or the forced march, die of sheer exhaustion on the field of battle. No man's work can be measured in its severity by the number of hours he nominally labors; it is the taxing nature and perplexing, exhausting variety of a man's work and its daily and hourly ceaseless stress that is the test of its killing quality.

The strongest brain and body will yield under the stress of anxiety, sorrow, trouble and relentless responsibility that never lets up an hour or a day in the life of the man whose business it is to bear a shiftless load of burdens; whose cares perplex and vex his soul; whose anxieties infest both his days and his nights, at home and abroad. That such workers should die prematurely is not remarkable, for they are always in battle or organizing for battle, always under fire or expecting to be shot at, always spending their nervous power from dawn to dark, and not seldom from dark to dawn. It is the daily pace that tells; it is the failure to halt betimes that makes the finest warhorse at last fall with his rider.

Of course, such men do not reach old age, or, if they do, they reach it in a condition of chronic invalidism of mind and body. Few men can endure such a pace as this and reach old age, and yet there are many such men, and their premature deaths from heart failure startle us every day in the ranks of railway officials and men of kindred callings that involve important and unceasing responsibility. Many-sided men, who let up on their labor when Nature cries "Halt!" ought to reach old age in a comfortable, if not happy, state of body and mind. Of course, there are sensitive natures who say, "Let me not live after my flame lacks oil, to be the snuff of younger spirits," but no sane old man ever said that unless he was also a sick old man. A sensible, stalwart old man, who has kept his mind young and his humane sympathies alive, is always welcome among younger men, who treat him as respectfully as Shakespeare makes Hector of Troy when he says to the venerable Nestor: "Let me embrace thee, good old chronicle." John of Gaunt, Mortimer, Sir Thomas Erpingham, are among Shakespeare's venerable figures who command reverence; they obtain honor, love, obedience, that should accompany old age, while Lear's misfortunes are largely due to the fact that his old age is about what his passionate, tempestuous youth and manhood made it. Regan tells but the truth when she contemptuously says of Lear's brutal disinheritance of Cordelia, "He hath ever but slenderly known himself"; that is, his capricious, inconstant manhood was but the father of his foolish old age. Lear's miserable old age was due largely to his own folly, vanity and passionate, despotic temper. Had he possessed the worldly wisdom and good sense that belonged to his years, he would have escaped his melancholy fate. Other things being equal, our old age is, like our youth, what we choose to make it.

Hon. W. J. McConnell, ex-Governor of Idaho, and late inspector in the Indian service, is the instigator, it is said, of the investigation called for by a resolution recently passed by the United States Senate, in regard to the management of some of the Northwestern agencies. Mr. McConnell was for many years a resident of Oregon, and is not unknown in our political and legislative annals. He is said to have severed his connection with the Indian service last Summer on account of differences between himself and Secretary Hitchcock. He asserts, so runs the story, that he repeatedly called the attention of the Secretary to existing evils of one character or another, and recommended radical changes. For the most part these suggestions were ignored, and the damaging reports were suppressed. Finally, in behalf of the morality of a certain school, McConnell ordered the transfer of unfit Indian officials without the approval of the Secretary, and as a consequence his official head rolled quietly into the basket. The truth of the matter probably is that the whole Indian agency and school system is honeycombed with rottenness. And though an investigation was ordered and sensational evidence of the truth of some charges, appalling to decency, was promised, with McConnell as star witness, it is not probable that anything unusual will come of it.

Oregon and Washington have every reason to be gratified at the consideration given to their interests in the makeup of the rivers and harbors appropriation bill as it was reported to the House yesterday. We would have liked another hundred thousand for the Columbia River bar, and would have been pleased if some of the other items had been made larger, but there is no reason to complain with the schedule as it stands. The attitude of the committee toward The Dalles and Celilo improvement is particularly gratifying, and if the bill shall go through as planned, there will be available an amount sufficient to make a good beginning in the work of breaking the barriers in the upper river. Of course, the bill as yet is only in its earlier stages; and it must make its way through both House and Senate. But there is, so far as our interests are concerned, the advantage of a good start, and there is now every reason to hope that the outcome will be satisfactory. All that is needed is persistent attention on the part of our Representatives at Washington.

Two vacancies are likely to occur on the Supreme Bench during President Roosevelt's term. Justice Gray, now nearly 74 years old, lately suffered a stroke of paralysis, which, though it may not soon prove fatal, will in all probability incapacitate him from further service and lead to his retirement. Justice Shiras has just celebrated his 70th birthday, and according to reports he is tired and longs for rest. He was appointed to the Supreme Bench October 10, 1892, so that he will be eligible for retirement after having served ten years and being 70 years old. There is no doubt that the service, based upon actual working ability, of the Supreme Court will be greatly benefited by the retirement of these aged jurists, and their succession by men of suitable judicial character anad experience in the prime of life.

It is stated on good authority that the fund of $112,000 recently given to Columbia University to found a chair in Chinese language, history and customs has been increased by an additional gift of $100,000. It is believed by many that the donor is General H. W. Carpentier, who, when he gave the first $100,000, let it be known that it was his idea that America's destiny lay largely in the East, and that it was necessary that one of the large universities should be able to prepare young men to take up the work there. It is necessary, no doubt, as a means of enabling nations of the modern world to deal with the Chinese, and yet there is nothing in Chinese culture that the world will be the better for preserving. Nothing can be done for the Chinese themselves but by lifting them out of it.

The executive committee of the Buffalo (N. Y.) Anti-Saloon League has issued a statement in which it is conceded that it is impossible to stamp out the social evil in the city. This executive committee, which includes three of the leading ministers of the city, proposes that all thoroughfares shall be free from this element, and that it shall be confined to a certain limited area, and that it shall be confined to a definite and limited area not traveled by the general public.

Major Micah J. Jenkins, of Trenton, S. C., who declines to accept a sword at the hands of subscribers who have undertaken to insult the President by asking him to withdraw acceptance of an invitation to present the same, is the son of a very gallant Confederate Brigadier-General, Micah Jenkins, a graduate of West Point, who was killed at the second day's battle in the Wilderness, May 6, 1864, by the accidental fire of his own men.

It is said that the Democrats are not yet registering fully, since they are not taking so much interest in the primary elections as Republicans are. This is probable. There is a Republican contest, but no Democratic contest, in the primaries. The general registration will be kept open till May 15. But those who want to vote in the primaries must register before March 15.

It is just possible that Seattle's "pull" would not have been strong enough to get the Seward away from Portland if the time and energies of our senior Senator had been given to his public duties at Washington instead of to his private political interests in Oregon.

It is evident from recent operations in South Africa that the forces of the Boers tend toward exhaustion. The British are wearing them out, and resistance has clearly passed the stage where it can have the support of hope or reason.

Senators for Oregon have sometimes come from their duties at Washington when contest for their re-election was pending in the Legislature; but no Senator hitherto has come from his post of duty to "work" a primary.

ROOM AT THE BOTTOM.

"There's room at the top," learns the school boy, whose soul is above buttons. "The orchards of success are burdened with golden fruit, and he who can climb the ladder above the common press will reach the prizes." "There's room at the top."

This doctrine contains wholesome truth. It also contains unwholesome error. In the first place, success is not gained alone by plucking fruit. Somebody must plant and cultivate the trees. It just so happens in human experience that that somebody oftenest plucks the fruit. In the second place, even if a person plants his own trees, he may be largely deprived of his fruit by an inequitable system of rights and benefits. Its beneficiaries are the ones who find room at the top. They find it by birth or by chance. Against them, thrift and industry have constantly decreasing power of achievement.

All this is not said in a spirit of pessimism. There is reason to believe that the problem offered by vast aggregations of wealth can be solved by the American people in their own way. "Room at the top" is used merely to exemplify a tendency. Greed always has engendered evil and will always do so. There will always be plenty of men who would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven. Their instrument of power now is legal privilege.

The expression "unequal privilege" is, of course, inconsistent with itself, but it is handy to designate a common notion. No privilege can be shared equally by all citizens; if it could, it would not be a privilege. Inequality is implied in the very term privilege, for when a legal privilege is granted it is understood to be a limitation of common rights, in favor of one citizen or a few. Such privileges are created by protective tariffs, corporate franchises, and the grant to a corporation of the power of eminent domain, whereby a special class may take forcible possession of land owned by common citizens.

When this Government was formed, class distinctions, according to present-day standards, were unknown in America. Now we are formidably confronted with the evil of legal privilege. This evil has produced, after its kind, inequality of wealth. By means of unfair legal privilege, mighty forces have concentrated in single individuals. Those individuals have followed the letter of the law and cannot be reached by judicial means. But that they have violated the conscience of the law, inequality of social privilege and wealth is ample proof. It never was the intention of the framers of our Government that this should be. Nor does it comport with justice that this should continue. But as respect for vested rights is deeply rooted in the American mind, the remedies will be slow-working and not revolutionary.

What the remedies shall be is the problem of all problems for political ingenuity. No thoughtful person believes it will be solved soon, or in his lifetime, or perhaps even in the time of his grandchildren. Nature works slowly, even in man's artificial systems. To preserve her equilibrium she creates deliberately, testing every new balance with selective judgment.

The Constitution declares: "No title of nobility shall be granted by the United States." In giving legal privilege the United States sets up a nobility of wealth, which may be a greater evil than the nobility of royalty, since the latter is only nominal and titular, whereas the other dominates the industrial forces of the Nation. It may seriously be doubted if the colossal fortunes of present-day millionaires could have been accumulated without special legislation. It does not appear true that opportunity is more equal in America than in the Old World. Indeed, it looks as if equality has been growing in Europe while it has been atrophing in America.

Government is organized to compensate for natural inequalities of men. Its aim is to distribute the powers of citizens, so that the stronger may aid the weaker. Hence, we have the doctrine, "All men are created equal." This doctrine, though a sophism, has served its purpose. But since we have taken to distribute privileges by law, we have partly frustrated the purpose of government and have abetted vast accumulations of wealth.

Privilege in itself would not be a serious evil if it were not for the combination of privilege by trusts. It is not the intention of the people that corporate powers, monopoly rights and privileges of eminent domain granted to individual persons or groups shall be gathered to the control of one body. Such an aggregation of power is against the instincts of democracy. The men who dominate American industry and finance can be numbered on one's fingers. These men have gained their power by legal privilege.

A new status before the law is needed for the trusts. Their present individual character contraverts the public interest. Common citizens base their enjoyments in common rights, and each citizen is an end for which those enjoyments are means. The trusts are not ends in themselves. Their defense is the manner in which they serve the public. The citizen who is solicitous about the future needs to ask himself the following questions: Should trusts keep on accumulating privileges? Can a limit be put to corporate greed unless a means is evolved to curtail the individual privilege of corporations? When a legal privilege is granted ought there not to be a way to withhold it to the function for which it is intended? Ought there to be a property right in it whereby it may be consolidated into a great power to invalidate the interests of the public?

The many gifts of rich men are a poor argument for legal privilege. Although millionaires last year gave away over $167,000,000, this hardly defends them from criticism. Gifts do not conduce to public thrift, but cultivate a spirit of dependence. It cannot be doubted that if the vast fortunes of millionaires were distributed by natural process among thousands of citizens they would be wisely used.

Legal privilege, being artificial, makes selection of men for high places in industry and finance also artificial. Birth, favoritism and chance tend to supplant merit that comes of industry and thrift, as fitness for the world's work. "There's room at the top," to be sure, but there is more room at the bottom. There once was a time when men could mark their spheres of action, subject only to physiological limits. Now we have artificial limits added to the physiological.

But It Is a Fact.

Louisville Courier-Journal, Dem.

That the United States is a world power may be the occasion of both lamentation and offense to those Americans who cling to the traditions of other times; who would maintain an isolation procured for us rather by our unimportance than by our principles, or our virtues; and who dream of the republic of Washington and Franklin and Jefferson as exiled shepherds might dream of Arcadia. But it is a fact.

SLINGS AND ARROWS.

To a Tom-Cat.

Creature of night; bold, brazenly immoral,
Responsible to neither gods nor men;
From out the dark thy irreligious choral
Jars on my nerves and angers me again.
When dogs and other honest brutes are sleeping,
And not a cur awakes to bay the moon,
With low companions thou thy watch art keeping
And giving tongue to thy unlovely tune.

What demon, deep within thy black heart hidden,
What base promoter of foul deeds and strife,
Malignity and hate and war has bidden
Thee lead that dissolute and vicious life?
Art thou provoked by influence infernal
To levy war on all thy wretched kind,
Profane the air with revelry nocturnal,
To gratify thy dark and bloody mind?

Thy fur, once thick, is largely dissipated,
Thy ears are notched, thy lips are gashed and torn,
Six inches of thy tail has been abated,
Thou art a thing to look upon with scorn,
Yet why waste hard-wrought verses in denouncing
Thy manifold transgressions, callous cat?
The word for you I'll lose no time pronouncing,
Take good care that you heed it, Thomas: Scat!

Overheard in the Theater Lobby.

"Why didn't you ask the soubrette to go to dinner last night?"

"Because she had a bad cold."

"What did that have to do with it?"

"She was a little hoarse, and I was afraid she would say neigh."

Hard Job.

The sun has scattered mist and rain,
The robins blithely sing;
And hard-worked poets strive in vain
To make new rhymes of Spring.

Political Notes.

Mr. Terence McGovern has announced himself as a candidate for United States Senator. He has established training quarters at Jersey City.

Mr. John Lawrence Sullivan will represent Massachusetts in the next House of Representatives if he can get down to weight.

Mr. Benjamin R. Tillman, the champion welter-weight debater of America, has hung up a purse and a challenge to all comers. Fouls not barred.

The decision of Referee Frye in the Tillman-McLaurin match has been called in question by Mr. Tillman's backers, who declare that their man was only out nine seconds. Mr. Frye says that, owing to the confusion, he was unable to hear the time-keepers perfectly, but that he feels sure that he made no error which would affect the decision. In justice to Mr. Tillman he reconsidered his determination to disqualify him, and he may therefore fight again before the club as soon as he can arrange another match.

The Grievance of the Soprano.

There won't be nary singin' in the meetin'-house today,
Which come about, from what I hear, in somethin' this here way:
James Hopkins, who's the tenor, sung a solo Sunday night,
Which them as heard him sing it says was just about all right.
Of course, Miss Smith, sopranner, heard 'em sounding James'es praise,
An' practiced up a solo for the next succeedin' days.
She says: "This tenor singin' may be fine, but I'd admire
To have the congregation know who's star of this here choir."

Now Hopkins, he gits skeery of the fair sopranner's song,
Fearin' fur his reputation if Miss Smith's should git too strong.
So he gits the bass an' alto, an' he says to 'em, says he:
"If she's the hull ding choir, what, I says, is, who be we?"
Then they all go in together, an' consider this an' that,
An' fin'ly tell the parson that Miss Smith is singin' flat.
"As long 'a she sings with us," they say, "it won't be gen'ly known,
But in the church's int'rest, please don't let her sing alone."

The parson, he loves music, an' not wantin' nothin' wrong,
He fixes up the programme so's to leave out Miss Smith's song.
And then there starts a rumpus like a person never sees,
Exceptin' in a choir on occasions such as these.
Miss Smith, she says the tenor's got a voice that's like a file,
An' the alto's style o' singin' would convulse a crockodile,
An' the bass is mighty lucky, so she tells 'em all, if he
Manages by feelin' 'round him, once a week to hit the key.

'Course that kind o' conversation sort o' mixes matters some.
Hopkins says that Miss Smith's singin's suited fur the deef an' dumb.
Then she claims that just exceptin' her and p'r'aps the organist,
All the choir could quit singin' without ever bein' missed.
Well, the upshot is the parson tries to set the matter right,
An' gits all the congregation mixed up in a gen'ral fight.
Which becomes so comprehensive that along the last the week
There ain't left in the whole bilin' no two members that will speak.

What the Bloodhound Escaped.

"Look at here," said the Tom show bloodhound, as he entered the dramatic editor's office and ground his teeth suggestively, "I've come to have a little chat about that notice."

"Why," said the dramatic editor, turning pale, "I don't think it was so bad."

"Bad!" growled the bloodhound. "Didn't you say that I was not convincing, and that I let Eliza get a three-lap lead on me before I let out a yap?"

"Yes," admitted the dramatic editor, "I did. But all things go by comparison. You know I might have said that you were painstaking and conscientious."

The bloodhound staggered backward. "My God!" he exclaimed, "that's so. Old man, you have saved me from being utterly lost to professional fame." And with big tears of gratitude welling from his cavernous eyes, he staggered out of the office.

The Shortest Road to Fame.

I could write a lay of love and war,
And a song of the restless sea,
A dainty poem of fairy lore,
And a ballad of boundless glee.
I could write them all in an afternoon,
And never lay by my pen,
And every thought would awake a tune
In the listening hearts of men.

I could fashion a sonnet with wondrous art,
And tell in a stirring rhyme
A story to rouse the heaviest heart,
And endure till the end of time.
I could picture in verse the twilight's glow,
When the hills by the sun are kissed,
I could write like Shelley, or Keats, or Poe,"
If I were a plagiarist.

—J. J. MONTAGUE.

New Conditions and Issues.

Cleveland Plain Dealer.

New conditions occasion new duties. That is a maxim all political parties should bear in mind and act upon. It is especially applicable in Democratic conditions just now. The issues of the past are not those of today or the immediate future. The underlying principles may be the same, but the conditions of their application have changed. It is to those new conditions the Democratic party must address itself if it will succeed. Democrats who have been divided on issues now dead should let the dead rest and press on with united purpose to meet the new issues that are rising to confront them.