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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1901.

NOT A QUESTION OF POLITICS.

Once again appear the petty bickerings of newspapers that always run out of material when they are cut off from expression of partisan views on current happenings. During the past two weeks the American people have revelled in lack of such things, and account it as one of the good results of the sadness of the period when they were mourning the death of a beloved president. But two weeks constitute a long period for the average man to abstain from giving utterance to his narrow views as a partisan, and therefore he must so soon as that after the funeral of Mr. McKinley read comments that indicate minds about as narrow as a Zulu savage.

There is no question of politics connected with the assassination of the late president. This issue partakes not of the nature of a contest over economic theories, and to the broad minded citizen suggests none of the differences that have separated political parties in the past. The killing of the president was by a man affiliated with none of the two great parties, nor any of the minority legitimate organizations that have begun to influence the national policies. His cardinal principles squint not at tariff or monetary standards, or policies of expansion of imperialism, or at any of the "paramount" issues that have furnished material for the voters to debate in the past.

The blow at the president was a blow at the government. It was aimed at the structure of society. Those shots were fired at the heart of the nation. Mr. McKinley embodied in his official nature the American people. And every loyal party man of whatever name or creed instantly closed ranks to show to the world that the detestable school of anarchists of which Czoizogoz was representative is very small here, so small, indeed, that it is as a pin point compared with the broad, deep expanse of national strength of which this people boast.

None of the essential questions were settled by the death of the president, and in acknowledging the good man's virtues and extolling his blameless life writers and speakers were paying tribute to his personality, not yielding opinions upon mooted questions. Had one of different political faith occupied the White House and been struck down by the assassin, all men of patriotism and love of truth would have sprung into their place in the line that was formed, to face a world in confidence that this republic is enduring, and that a well balanced persons are ready at all times to defend it from attack.

But, deplorable as it may be, too many men are of but one idea, look from but one viewpoint, and see everything through colored glasses. Hence, the conclusions always are misrepresentative of the true status of things.

WALLA WALLA'S FRUIT FAIR.

Across the line in Washington the citizens of Walla Walla are now interesting crowds of people who have come to attend the fruit fair. Since 1897 that town has annually exhibited products of the orchard and garden and farm, and each year the display has been better than that of the preceding season. The results have been so markedly beneficial that the association now experiences no difficulty in securing substantial support from the business men, money being subscribed with a minimum of effort on the part of the solicitors. It may be expected that these fairs will be permanent, and that each year the people of the inland empire will see gathered in Walla Walla the wonderful fruits that have made famous the Walla Walla valley.

There is a concrete in such an exhibit that leaves no room for cavil on the part of strangers who view it. Word of mouth or printed matter sent out to advertise a region are accepted "cum grano salis," "with a grain of salt," by people living at a distance. But, when they see before them the very fruits themselves and find that they are unequaled in all the world, as indeed, are some of the fruits raised in the Walla Walla valley, they cannot but concede the superiority of that section in the production from its orchards.

Umatilla county, Oregon, shares with Walla Walla county, Washington, the credit for the fine display now offered at this fruit fair. Fully one

half of the famous valley is within the limits of Umatilla county, and from the Oregon side go just as fine samples as are to be seen in the big building in which the fruit fair is held. There is no jealousy here for the fame that has been acquired there, partly, at least, by reason of the fine fruits coming from the Oregon side. Several Umatilla county men are prominent in the arrangements, notably O. R. Ballou, who from his thorough knowledge and fine orchards has contributed as much as other men to the successes of former years.

The social value of such gatherings is not the least benefit. Indeed, it is to be mooted whether or not it is the principal good arising from fairs and expositions. People meet for the nonce upon a common level, and there is a tendency to eradicate the petty distinctions sometimes engendered from the forming of cliques and social factions.

OFFICIAL LAWLESSNESS.

Anarchy is lawlessness. Therefore whatever encourages lawlessness promotes anarchy. And, in the long run, the most dangerous of all kinds of lawlessness—the kind that most effectively educates the masses into disrespect for the law—is official lawlessness. When the people see the law's officers showing contempt for the law by exercising arbitrary power outside of it, it is inevitable that in times of excitement many of them should manifest the mob spirit rather than the spirit of calmness and self-control becoming to the citizens of a self-governing republic.

Beyond the borders of the south the press and pulpit have had no tolerance for southern mobs that refuse to leave justice to the courts and burn at the stake negro assailants of women. Yet within the week we have seen pulpits and newspapers and public men throughout the whole country displaying a savageness of temper toward the assassin of the president and anarchists, that is a class not to be distinguished from fury which lynches with fire. This temper is natural—everybody shares in the feeling more or less—but then the progress of the world is marked by the space which the civilized man has placed between himself and the natural man. What distinguishes the citizen from the savage is the self-control which renders him capable of relying upon the law when he or the community is injured, instead of taking personal vengeance.

If anarchy is to be put down in the United States it will not be by lawless means, practiced either by mobs or the law's officers. "The only way for the police to deal with these anarchists," a Chicago police captain is quoted as saying, "is to go to their meeting with sawed-off shot guns and shoot the speakers the minute they begin to rant." That police captain is wholly unfit for his position—he is a savage, a lyncher—and any man who approves of his plan is unqualified for citizenship in a civilized state. The police should be compelled to respect the law by obeying it, as well as all other people, anarchists included. If there is not law enough to punish incendiary speech, the remedy is not to countenance police lawlessness, but to clothe the police with the power of more law. The step from ordering an anarchist not to speak, when there is no law to warrant that prohibition, to ordering other citizens to be silent, regardless of their lawful right to express their opinions, is a short one. We had a local instance of this swift advance in lawlessness, when a body of law-abiding citizens were forbidden to discuss the doctrines of the anarchists for the purpose of refusing them.

"Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or of the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition for government for the redress of grievances," is the mandate of the constitution of the United States. The American way to discourage dangerous talk is to hold those who are guilty of it to strict account—to accord freedom to all, under stern responsibility for consequences. The country, shocked, amazed and angered by the deed of the anarchist Czoizogoz, is ready for the passage of laws which shall attach penalties of much greater severity than those now provided for harangues who incite to crime, but only those who are lynchers at heart will approve the assumption by the police, or by

anybody else, of a power which is forbidden to congress itself by the constitution.

The sober second thought of the American people is beginning to make itself heard. Those who are ignorantly, or with ulterior design, clamoring for the virtual repeal of the constitutional guarantee of free speech and a free press, will speedily hear from a highly important element of the population which, even for the sake of having the abhorred anarchist outlawed and hunted, is not willing that American liberty should be placed at the mercy of any thick-headed policeman's club. That element consists of all who make use of their brains, and who have sufficient acquaintance with history to know how hardly won has been the sacred right of free speech, the right of free press, and the right of free assembly of all rights. Such Americans see no wisdom in importing foreign methods of grappling with the problem which foreign methods have lamentably and conspicuously failed to solve. The educated men of the United States and the workmen will be in union in opposing the continuation of despotism for freedom—the former because the experience of mankind teaches the inutility of despotism as well as its hatefulness, and the workmen because none are in greater danger of being denied the rights of peaceable assembly and free speech than they. The workmen understand the importance to themselves of guarding these rights when they are assailed in the persons of holders of unpopular opinions. If that protection be not given the custom of lawless and forcible repression will grow and harden and choke labor itself when wealth and power deem it undesirable that labor should present its grievances to the public.

A universal desire to abate the deadly plague of anarchy is not the equivalent of statesmanship possessing the ability to do it. And frenzied declamations against a class that everybody adores and against an assassin for whom nobody in his senses has the smallest sympathy, are the least useful of counselors. They produce plenty of heat, but no light. Were they to be heeded, the policeman would become the irresponsible censor of opinion in the United States, and the head of every man who uttered an unconventional opinion would be in danger of the club. Should we accept the guidance of the shouters who are filling the land with their well-meant but brainless noise, the man or woman suspected of overshooting his aim in the lawless goal of anarchy would, through official stupidity, presently become the representative of the outraged American right of free speech, and thus the laudable purpose of suppressing anarchy would defeat itself and breed a counter agitation against restriction.

The old maxims are the wise maxims, and none is wiser than the one which warns us that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"—vigilance against external enemies, and vigilance against ourselves, lest we be betrayed in our zeal for what is fervently desired into laying a destroying hand on the very bulwarks of liberty.—Philadelphia North American.

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