

# EDITORIAL

## THE PANAMA-PACIFIC SHOW

THE rest of the world isn't showing much zest for our Panama-Pacific Exposition in jollification over the opening of the canal—perhaps because it dislikes our arrangements for managing the isthmian waterway, but more probably because it is tired of spending money on expositions, and doesn't see much prospect of profit from this one. Anyhow, it isn't San Francisco's fault that the nations are not all coming to her party. The Golden Gate City, rising from disaster by earthquake and fire, is giving an exhibition of courage and steadfastness such as the world has not often seen. If Chicago had put on the Columbian Exposition five years after her great fire it would be a comparable case.

Wherefore it behooves Americans the more to patronize San Francisco liberally. Don't worry about the show; it will be worth while. Let our own country stand by San Francisco, and incidentally do a lot of "seeing America first"—or last—which has been neglected.

Why not a Seeing America League of States and cities for the purpose of attracting, entertaining, and instructing our own people by getting them to look around at home for a single season instead of going to Europe? Provide them with rates, routes, and facilities for seeing what they want, whether it's the stock-yards district at Kansas City, the smelters at Pueblo, the Yellowstone Park, the big trees of California, or the exposition.

Colorado's Alps and California's Riviera ask no odds of the imported goods. Isn't it possible to organize, around the boycott of our canal show, a counter boycott with the aim of keeping our tourists at home and showing them our own great country for one season?

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## THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS

CONGRESS didn't wish to pass the kind of a tariff bill President Wilson desired. The President convinced it, and will, in effect, have his way. Congress didn't fancy passing currency legislation at this session. The President labored with it and won it over. Congress wanted to take a recess, and then come back a few weeks ahead of the regular session to finish its work. The President didn't agree, and again he got his way.

Executive domination, executive usurpation, executive tyranny, patronage bossism—these are various names by which such White House influence is denominated. Some people worry over it, but the public seems to like it, whether a Wilson or a Roosevelt is the vigorous chief magistrate. There are expressions of horrified concern about the legislative branch being submerged; fears that one of the three sacred "coordinates" in our distribution of governmental powers will be made a subordinate. But if that is to happen, it will be chiefly the fault of Congress, not of the insistent Presidents who have demanded that Congress should do its work.

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NOTE—All editorials in this department were written before the end of August.

So long as Congress has such poor success in governing itself, the country is likely to insist on having it bossed by somebody, and the President is the obvious person for the task. He speaks for the nation, not for the conflicting concerns of districts. He is elected by the whole people, not by a restricted constituency.

Congress can't—at least, it doesn't—even make rules under which it can effectively perform its assigned task. The House is so huge in membership that well-ordered consideration of legislation is impossible; yet at every census it increases its own membership, and correspondingly reduces its efficiency, merely to avoid the possibility of lopping off a few of its members from their jobs and perquisites. The Senate has its unlimited discussion and other equally impossible rules that work to prevention, rather than accomplishment.

A Legislature that ties its own hands in such fashion is certain to be pushed around more or less ungraciously by somebody; and if occasionally that somebody takes a contemptuous kick at it, who is going to wonder, or very vigorously protest?

## WAR UNDER THE PEACE MICROSCOPE

THE isolation of the “war bacillus” under scientific investigation would add a new record to the research accomplishments of the century. It might also furnish a basis for useful preventive work by means of the international court of arbitration at The Hague. For this reason the task undertaken by a commission appointed by the Carnegie Peace Foundation, which is to investigate the recent hostilities between Bulgaria and her former allies, has unique interest.

The object of the inquiry, as announced, is to influence the public opinion of the world. The scope of the hunt is wide enough to bring the investigators close to some very delicate diplomatic situations. The peace scientists are asked to determine and report on the cause of the quarrel that arose among the Balkan states after they had joined in attacking the Turk for the sake of reform and for the protection of the Christian sufferers in his European vilayets. They are particularly charged to discover the truth or falsity of the wide-spread charges of inhuman outrages committed during the fighting. Finally, they are expected to tabulate the cost of the struggle, and the economic waste to which it led.

The members of the commission have been chosen by Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, from the most active of the adherents of the cause of international peace. The list includes an American college professor; the editor of the London *Economist*; Professor Zorn, of Bonn University; Milukoff, the leader of the constitutional democrats in the Russian Duma; and Professor Lammasch, the eminent jurist and lecturer at the University of Vienna.

The principal basis of the charges on which they will proceed is the protest against the conduct of the Bulgarian army published to the world by King Constantine of Greece. Under the skilful and zealous study of such experienced publicists, the investigation may yield a graphic exposition of a modern war and its inside manipulation. The coroner's jury part of the work should be the least difficult. The ample funds provided by the Carnegie Endowment will enable the commission to get plenty of first-hand evidence as to the real or alleged massacres and atrocities.

The more delicate and exacting portion of the inquirers' task will be to frame a just and impartial presentment of the causes of the outbreak, to

apportion the responsibility for it, and to show the disastrous losses that it has caused. What the world wants is a classified exhibit of a present-day war as a "horrible example," and those who could testify most significantly will not care to bear witness to their own disadvantage. Yet it is only by a convincing showing of the interior machinery of the conflict, and of the vicious motives behind it, that the sentiment of the world will be affected.

The horrors of battle and siege need no further debate, in these days. It is by giving us a flash-light view behind the scenes of war that the scientists bound for the Bulgarian frontier will do real service to the cause of peace and civilization.

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## THE DELUSION OF THE CLASS VOTE

SOME of the ladies attending the recent national suffrage conference boldly announced that ten States now have woman suffrage in Presidential elections, with electoral votes sufficient to control an election; and that the women voters in these States are to be banded together to throw the Presidency to that party which will pledge itself to national woman suffrage.

When the lady politicians have learned as much as some wise but wicked men politicians already know about "delivering" the "labor vote," the "Irish vote," the "German vote," the "Jewish vote," the "farmer vote," and the like, they will know better. For three hundred and sixty-four days annually the "labor vote," the "farmer vote," and the rest of them are fine material for the manufacture of statistics; but on the three hundred and sixty-fifth, which is Election Day, the statistics go lame. The various "votes" don't deliver. The classifications just melt away into the mass of patriotic citizenry that votes for what it guesses would be good for the country, and not for any factional or localized benefit. The women voters will do the very same thing.

Senator Depew, pointing out the buncombe of the "class vote" theory, used to tell about a county convention where a German was named for treasurer, to "hold the German vote"; an Irishman was selected for auditor, to "keep the great Irish element in line"; a Swede was presented for sheriff, because "our splendid Scandinavian-American citizenry must have recognition"; and so on through the ticket.

Arrived at coroner, a meek man named Smith rose and nominated Thomas Jones.

"What's his nationality?" demanded a stentorian voice.

"He's just a plain American, I admit," replied Smith.

"Thin t'row the dirty Know-nothing out!" came from the Fifth Ward delegation.

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## AT THE BOTTOM IN MEXICO

PRESIDENT WILSON and his diplomatic agents have been trying hard to save Mexico from itself, and also from intervention by somebody else. Perhaps, by the time this is in print, they will have succeeded in their main purpose; but even so, there will remain the basic fact about Mexico's troubles. They are economic first, political afterward.

Ownership of land and other natural resources by a few great holders has reduced the common people to peonage. They ought to be self-respecting, literate, hard-working people. They tend to become brigands simply because, unable to get a decent living by industry, they find that brigandage pays better.

Almost any people would be brigands, just as an experiment, before they would meekly starve. As between starving and getting shot at, there isn't much choice in favor of starving.

Ireland's lands were owned by alien landlords, and half its population was driven out before those who ruled it recognized the true difficulty and gave it new land laws. Mexico's situation is comparable to that of England in the time of John, when the Great Charter was wrested from the sovereign. France's peasantry under the later Bourbons were in the same position as the Mexican peons; and hence the Revolution.

The civilization that leaves its masses struggling without opportunity for respectable existence, while a little oligarchy of privilege controls everything, is not worthy the name. Mexico is in the early, ruder stages of the world's struggle for better distribution of the products of nature and of toil. Phases of that same struggle are seen in German socialism, French *sabotage*, Italian general strikes, British labor movements; in the I. W. W. in the United States, and in brigandage in Mexico.

To get out of feudalism's bonds Europe went through a struggle comparable to the present upheaval in Mexico. Europe struggled out, and the Mexicans will struggle out if they get a fair chance. It will not do to say that they are not the stuff of which a nation can be made. Nations have been made of just as unpromising material, and we are the descendants of that material.

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## AN APARTMENT-HOUSE OF 1950

THE architects are to be taken into counsel on the subject of reducing the cost of living—not to build cheaper houses for us, but for the extremely practical business of developing ways to equip city homes with storage facilities.

Cellars, it appears, are needed under the city piles of pigeonhole flats. Apartment dwellers cannot buy flour by the barrel, potatoes by the cart-load, and the rest of the necessities in self-respecting quantities as grandfather used to do, because there is no place to put them. Why not, then, have the landlord of the big apartment-house furnish cold as well as heat? Why not a refrigerated zone in the sub-basement, with compartments assigned to the uses of the respective leaseholders in the upper regions? Why not provide refrigeration for a whole battery of such establishments, just as heat is now supplied?

Anyhow, the economists of the government, studying the cost-of-living problem, are asking these questions, and they propose to interest the architects and landlords in some experiments to try out the project. If the city dwellers should prove willing to avail themselves of such facilities, they ought to go far toward reducing the cost of service, containers, delivery, and the like, which seems to be one of the biggest items.

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## THE CONQUEST OF FAMINE

THE literature of the ancient world is full of records of famine and pestilence, the latter having, as we now know, an intimate relation to the causes that produce the former. To-day, famine and pestilence are known almost exclusively in regions that have not been modernized.

The balance between what a community produces and what it consumes is so close that it doesn't need anything like a total crop failure to make a

famine, if the afflicted community is compelled to depend entirely on its own resources. This summer the hot winds from the southwest parched a great section of the prairie States and lopped off an appalling fraction of the year's yields; but there will be no famine. The worst stricken communities will record a "bad year," but people will not starve, there will be no plague, and society will not have its foundations shaken by economic chills.

This twentieth-century world is a huge economic cooperative organization. Kansas helps feed New York, Argentina and Australia provide meat and wheat for London, India ships grain to Europe, and so on. Famine as the ancient world knew it isn't possible, because the world's stock is getatable for the uses of the world. If Kansas and Oklahoma are short in their surplus for New York, Canada will make it good. Crops don't fail everywhere at once; the yearly averages for the whole world are wonderfully uniform in volume and in the gradual increase that meets the needs of growing population.

If the Mississippi basin of this dry year 1913 were the Mesopotamia of two thousand years ago, there would be famine, because surpluses on the other side of the world couldn't be shifted to the point of stress. As it is, the farmers of our Mesopotamia will cuss the weather rather less genially than usual, conserve their gasoline a bit, wear their tires a little longer, and wait till next year's big crop, with a possible shortage in other regions, gives them a chance to get even.

Not a wholly bad century, this twentieth!

## BASEBALLESE AND ENGLISH

THE linguistic purists, also some millions of people who would like to learn from the newspapers what happened at the games they missed, are discussing a campaign to get baseball reports written in English instead of the strange and wondrous jargon of baseballese. Not a reckless idea, though the literary quality of the chronicles of the games suggests that prodigious optimism must bolster the hope of ever making them into English.

Being the national game, surely, ought to satisfy baseball; it hardly needs a new language invented for its exclusive use. Tennis, boxing, racing, and even golf, outside of an imported glossary of technical terms, are all written in understandable language. Moreover, the overreachings into the realm of slang in baseball description are not really popular, as may be noted by listening to the crowd on the street-car leaving the game. It doesn't talk the exaggerated sophistication in which the game will be reported next morning.

There was a school of humorous baseball writers some fifteen or twenty years ago who did the thing better. Leonard Washburne, of Chicago, was its premier. They wrote real descriptions, couched in humor, parable, and the beginnings of that system of slang which has latterly been distorted and perverted beyond meaning.

Haven't the bright young men of the sporting page fallen upon the notion that their own smartness is more interesting to the reader than the facts about the game? If they have, it undoubtedly is a very real error.

One suggestion to the slang-slingers may help. The real aristocracy of the art, the men who write baseball fiction and descriptions for the periodicals and the book-publishers, commonly write rather conventional English. They describe plays with a view to making the plays understood, not to having the description admired as a mystery. Perhaps that is why they sell their product by the word instead of the ream.





# THE IDYL OF CONCORD

THE OLD MASSACHUSETTS TOWN WHICH HAS  
BECOME THE GREATEST CENTER OF LIT-  
ERARY PILGRIMAGE IN AMERICA

BY LILIAN WHITING

AUTHOR OF "BOSTON DAYS," "THE FLORENCE OF LANDOR," ETC.

**N**O less than thirty thousand people make pilgrimage, every summer, to visit the homes and haunts of Emerson, Hawthorne, Thoreau, Bronson Alcott, and his still more famous daughter Louisa, the author of "Little Women"; and to meet, if possible, the last survivor of the famous group, Frank Benjamin Sanborn.

With the exception of Louisa Alcott, who was one year his junior, Mr. Sanborn is

the youngest of that remarkable galaxy of whom the eldest was Bronson Alcott, born November 29, 1799. Mr. Sanborn was born in December of 1831; and during the thirty-two years comprised between these two dates, a marvelous group of poets and prophets entered on the earthly life which by their character and achievements came a little nearer to being made the heavenly life. Largely, and more or less unconsciously, these noble men and women fulfilled the ideal that was to be given to the



THE ORCHARD HOUSE, HOME OF THE ALCOTTS—AT THE LEFT IS THE FAMOUS LITTLE "CHAPEL" OF THE CONCORD SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY