

public calamity richly deserves the punishment of a public enemy or traitor. But we are bound to say that if a strike among public servants could ever be justifiable, it would be among the railway postal clerks. They have been badly treated, and in treating them badly Mr. Vilas has shown an indifference to the public interests which has sorely disappointed his best friends. We can hardly expect, and he can hardly expect, the Postal Clerks' Union or "Brotherhood" to consider the loss and inconvenience they will inflict on the public by striking, when he has considered them so little as to let politicians get into the mail cars. It is high time for this wretched scandal to cease, and we trust that if Mr. Vilas does not feel equal to cope with it, the President will take it in hand and make an end of it.

#### RICH COLLEGIANS.

THE very burning question of the influence of rich young men in college came up once more at the commencement dinner at Harvard the other day. The Chairman, Mr. Leverett Saltonstall, started the subject in his address by saying:

"With this great growth and these improvements have followed other changes, which I regret to say are of a nature to fill us with anxiety. I refer especially to the growth of luxury and extravagance among the students.

"This is doubtless the natural result of the enormous increase of wealth and the rapid accumulation of vast fortunes. Not only has the old simplicity of life vanished, and habits of economy, so important to the sons of the rich, as well as to those of moderate means, been destroyed, but much of that kindly feeling which used to exist between members of a class has been lost.

"Brothers, I speak plainly on this subject because I consider it an evil which cannot be remedied by faculty or overseers, but only by the good sense and united action of those who send their sons hither. It is, I know, impossible to return to the simplicity and cordial feeling of former college days, for it must be within the college walls much as it is outside of them. The number of students is four or fivefold greater than in my day. The college is rapidly growing into a great university. Still, it is to be hoped that some strong effort may be made to remedy this great evil by all who care for the college."

President Eliot sought to break the force of this criticism by remarking on the other side:

"It is true that there has been a deplorable increase of luxury among a small fraction of the students of the university. No one can deplore it more than the college faculty; nevertheless, let me point out that it is an exceedingly small fraction of the college against whom this charge can be made. In the first place, not more than 10 per cent. of the college students can on any principle be called rich. A great many people have a totally erroneous impression about the average character of the Harvard students in this regard. They think that all the students are rich men's sons. Nothing could be further from the truth. Among those students who may fairly be called rich there is also a large percentage of the sons of families who know how to use riches—who have been accustomed to them; and the evil of which the president of the day justly complained arises from a small fraction even of those who are rich, who are generally the sons of people who have had no experience in the possession of riches. [Applause.]

"Now, the great bulk of the students of Harvard College are the sons of people in moderate circumstances. But, going beyond them, I find that nearly one in five of all the students of the college has been aided from scholarship, beneficiary, or loan funds—nearly one in five of the entire number of students. They have been aided because neither they nor their families can afford to support them here completely, and meet all the expenses of their education."

Mr. Saltonstall's statement of the case would not have been complete without President Eliot's. People undoubtedly do exaggerate

very much the numbers and activity of the undergraduates at Harvard who spend large allowances extravagantly. Many parents of modest means hesitate much about sending a boy there, in the belief that he will be surrounded by the sons of millionaires living like Sybarites, and looking down on poor scholars. The truth is that not only, as President Eliot points out, is the number of rich men's sons small, but the number of the sons of vulgar rich men—that is, of men who have recently acquired money, and do not know how to spend it—is still smaller. The great bulk of the students are men of small means striving to get an education through great self-denial either on their own part or that of their friends. One-fifth of them, or nearly a whole class, are actually helped through college by the aid of some sort of gift or endowment.

This is all true, but it is also true that college extravagance is not only an evil, but a growing evil, and it ought somehow to be checked or abated. The number of men who are acquiring great fortunes in all parts of the country without possessing any of the traditions of refined or dignified living, is larger and larger every day. After they have got over the effects of the first sweets of wealth, the fine houses, the numerous horses and vehicles, and the yachts, and the diamonds for the wives, they turn their attention to "social position" for the "boys," and if possible—that is, if the boys are not too old or too spoiled to submit to preparation for college—they send them to Harvard. It is only very rarely that the sons of such men have the habits, or aims, or the kind of ambition necessary to make successful students; so, in order to enable them to make a figure of some kind, the father loads them with money. He gives them sometimes larger incomes than the President or any of the professors—larger than 90 per cent. of professional men make by hard labor. He gives it to them, too, with the intention that they shall make a show with it. Thence come the luxurious clubs, the rooms furnished like boudoirs, the horses, the dog-carts, the thousand little ways of spending money easily and carelessly, which now are characteristic of "the Harvard man" of a certain type. The example of all this does not touch the poor fellows who are holding on to college by the skin of their teeth, and, scorning delights and living laborious days as the only means of avoiding instant ruin. They see all this splendor afar off, and spend few thoughts on it. But it does greatly increase the difficulty which the very large class of young men of more moderate means, who come more or less in contact with the gilded youth, without actually belonging to the same set, and who may be extravagant now and again without perishing, experience in living within their incomes, and in buckling down to their work on fine days. It makes the college clubs, which are now nearly as luxurious as the Somersets or the Knickerbocker, more and more attractive, and the study and the library less and less so. It greatly increases the importance of knowledge of wines, and cigars, and liqueurs; and, worse than all, it breeds a certain very thinly veiled con-

tempt for the man who "grinds" over the college curriculum, as compared to "the man of the world," who knows what is going on in "society." How far this influence goes in college, it is of course impossible to say. But no one who knows college life well will deny that it is wide-reaching, and that the number of those who are not in some degree touched by it, and find their lives made harder by it, is small.

It also undoubtedly has much to do with the extraordinary interest in the athletic sports. These sports are actually carried on in every college by a very small number of men. All that the others have to do with them is to contribute money towards the expenses, and travel long distances to act as "shouters" at the various inter-collegiate contests. Indeed, the extent to which participation in what is called "college life" is now confined to subscribing money to clubs, societies, and crews, and teams of various sorts, is something startling. Of course the rich men are more active in getting up things to subscribe to, and subscribe more than anybody else. Consequently the more the glory of the college becomes dependent on subscriptions, the more does wealth aid a man in becoming a college model and champion.

What the Faculty can do to remedy this state of things it is hard to say. But it undoubtedly can do something. We doubt if an appeal to rich parents on the subject of allowances would be thrown away, except in the case of the coarsest and most ignorant. All wealthy fathers who had ever tasted mental cultivation themselves—and they now furnish a large body of undergraduates—would certainly respond to it. The clubs surely, too, could be subjected without difficulty to some kind of sumptuary regulation, which would prevent their being close copies of the clubs in all the great cities. Moreover, what is there to prevent the Faculty requesting a young man who is distinguishing himself by his extravagant expenditure, to withdraw, just as if he drank too much or was licentious, on the simple ground that his example was pernicious? We believe it would be easy for any college in the country to be made so unpleasant for the luxurious idlers that they would keep clear of it, without instituting a very rigid censorship of anybody's personal tastes or habits. And it would do a world of good to many a groping millionaire to be taught sharply that in the new world which he had entered, money was not the supreme good.

#### THE METAPHYSICS OF CHAUVINISM.

AN anonymous writer in the Berlin *Gegenwart* has lately been giving to the world some very curious literature. He writes under the heading, "If so, so be it," and takes the field ostensibly for the purpose of discussing the ability of Germany to meet France in another war. Upon taking up an essay so labelled, one who is familiar with the traditions of this sort of writing thinks at once that he knows what is awaiting him. He expects an array of facts and figures, with perhaps such an expression of defiance or of solicitude as these facts and figures seem to call for. He expects an estimate of each party's strength in men and munitions of war; a comparative statement concerning infantry and cavalry, concerning guns small and great, and concerning ironclads and torpedoes. He ex-

pects, also, that the relative quality of these destructive appliances, and that questions of organization, discipline, and generalship, will be duly taken into consideration. Finally, he will be on the lookout for some confident remarks regarding the relative bravery of each party's men. Such are commonly thought to be, though the list makes no pretence to being exhaustive, the main sources of an army's strength. Now these, with the exception of the last, are all, so to speak, physical factors. The strength of an army is supposed to have as its basis the physical force represented by the men who compose it and the tools they use. What military science does is partly in the way of increasing the amount of force that can be wielded by a given number of men, and partly in the way of teaching them how to use this force more effectively than they otherwise would. The science is still chiefly a matter of skill in the manipulation of physical forces.

That the moral quality of the individual soldier is likewise a factor in the strength of an army, is of course no secret, and there are many historical instances in which this seems to have been the great and decisive factor. But, with all deference for the lessons of history, there would appear to be no need of any confusion of mind as to what is meant when the phrase "moral quality" is used in such a connection. It means little more than willingness to face death under orders, and this is a quality dependent almost entirely upon previous discipline. It has little to do with character in the higher import of that word; little to do, that is, with the general condition of the soldier's ethical, aesthetic, and scientific faculties. It has also less to do than we are prone to imagine with the soldier's deliberate, reasoned conviction regarding the value of that for which he supposes himself to be fighting. It may be agreeable to polite vanity to think that a company of gentlemen can whip a regiment of clowns, just because the gentlemen are gentlemen and the clowns are clowns. It is, however, not true, especially if the clowns have the better tools and are themselves officered by gentlemen. The familiar generalization that France was beaten in 1870 by the German universities, has undoubtedly some truth in it; only we must beware of concluding that the decisive fact in the war was in the relative culture of the private soldiers engaged on either side. Culture goes down before superior shooting.

These remarks are not put forward as anything revolutionary; on the contrary, they are supposed to reflect the general opinion of the time in matters military. We were therefore surprised and straightway interested when we found a countryman of Bismarck apparently arguing that the most important factor in successful war is the moral character of the soldier. We say "apparently," since we are constrained to gather the writer's meaning from out the sinuosities, obscurities, and general splay-footedness of the most atrocious style it has ever been our lot to encounter even in a German periodical. Divested (in part at least) of its vagueness and of its metaphysical subtleties, the author's drift is something like this: War is a mode of national self-affirmation, and as such is not an evil but a blessing. It contributes to the national welfare in the same measure that an equal putting forth of strength in peaceful ways would contribute. Self-affirmation, or struggle for existence, being the law of the world, one nation has a right to make war upon and conquer another simply to assert its own superior title to leadership in the world's affairs. Victory goes to the worthiest, and is, in fact, nature's certificate of a people's fitness to live. It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that worthiness or fitness to live is identical with physical strength. It is rather a

compound of physical strength and of various moral and intellectual qualities, the sum total of which our philosopher calls virility of culture (*Männlichkeit der Kultur*). Virility of culture is really the great desideratum if a nation is to "overcome the obstacles which hinder its free development," or, in other words, if it is to conquer its enemies in war. And this desideratum, so far as masses of men are concerned, must be secured by an educational process. The individual must be taught patriotism by being taught the value of his country's culture and the grandeur of his country's mission to the world. When he is so taught he will not only wish to see his fatherland prevailing among the nations of the earth, but he will be ready to contribute his own life to this end when need arises. The writer concludes in a hortatory strain:

"Let us nourish the soldier with all the true, the beautiful, and the good in our culture, so that he may know of it and may carry it against the enemy on the battle-field. Let him be given, not narcotic drinks, but enduring strength to meet death. There need be no fear of his becoming imbued with an excess of romantic idealism. It is an old experience that, in order to hit the good, we must aim at the best; and that which is best in man and best worth preserving springs from his idealism. . . . All work for civilization is of the nature of battle against that which is of inferior value. Let us do each his own part that the virility of German culture may surpass that of France, and we shall beat France in battle. *In hoc signo vinces.*"

This manner of talking would have, perhaps, but little interest were it simply an isolated expression of patriotic ardor. But it is more than that. It shows us the mental condition to which large numbers of intelligent Germans—men, too, of naturally humane instincts—are being brought by the brutal logic of contemporary European politics. These men are coming to look upon the present policy of blood, and iron, and defiance, not as a reproach to humanity, to be defended at best only on grounds of temporary necessity, but as really the last and highest word of civilization concerning the way in which the nations of the earth should dwell together. And so they talk to us, not of the hideousness and brutality of war, but of its dignity, majesty, and momentous bearing upon the self-consciousness of a people. We hear learned professors, who would certainly prefer to be gentle with a kitten, discoursing upon the ethico-social value of military discipline, and upon the beautiful upbuilding in manliness which comes of having gone through a course of training the ultimate purpose of which is to enable a people to slaughter its neighbors in as large numbers and with as much despatch as possible, whenever diplomatic lubricity shall give the signal. It is painful indeed to find men of culture, who have inherited the humanistic traditions of the great era of German letters, engaging in the abominable work of gilding with the language of poetry and philosophy that which is nothing more than the morality of the prize-ring (or say, rather, of a herd of swine) exalted into a canon of international politics. Especially painful is it, at least to the scholar, to find these men perverting the lessons of history, and misusing the inferences of natural science, in the interest of a national ideal which is radically false, and false because it is brutal instead of human. In ethics what is inhuman is wrong. It makes no difference what view one may take with regard to the ultimate nature of ethical sanctions; settle that question as we will, there is still a difference between a man and a hog, and that difference is as well worth accenting in the national as in the individual life.

From the poet we naturally expect poetry. Readers of that amiable dreamer, Novalis, will perhaps recall this deliverance: "War in general seems to me a poetic transaction. The people

think they must fight on account of some paltry possession or other, and they do not know that the Genius of Romance is driving them on to bring about a mutual destruction of ineptitudes. They do but bear arms in the cause of poetry, and both armies follow an invisible banner." To the purely historical vision there seems a measure of truth in what Novalis says. At least we can affirm that what he says is *sometimes* so. Often in the history of humanity has some bloody battle been the starting-point and apparently the indispensable preliminary condition of a glorious career of national achievement. Who can estimate the value of Marathon and Salamis in the national life of Greece? And, we must admit, it is not alone from the great battles in behalf of life or liberty, not alone from those defensive struggles which the moral sense of men instantly approves, that good has come in the process of the years. Wanton wars have also brought blessings in their train, and in such cases posterity is wont to deal more and more gently with the wantonness. Looking back to the greatness of the foundations that were laid by the Seven Years' War, history judges more and more leniently the morality of Frederick's first invasion of Silesia. One may even see reason to think that the Franco-German war of 1870 has proved of prodigious benefit to both the parties concerned. In these cases, perhaps, and in many others that might be named, the soldiers who fought, followed indeed an invisible banner, and wrought better than they knew. But can we affirm that this is always so? How about the Thirty Years' War, the Succession Wars, the Crimean War? How about the greater part of the fighting that men have been doing ever since we know anything about their history? Does any sane man, surveying the whole field of history as thoroughly as one man can, find there reason to conclude that the cultivation of the military spirit has been for the good of mankind? That we can see how the Power that rules the world occasionally transmutes the poison of human brutality into food for humanity, is no reason why we should systematically expect this result, and so put our faith altogether in poison.

Let the deep and sagacious German mind not be deceived by its own historical learning. If there be apparently some truth in Bulwer's saying that the "frenzy of the nations is the statesmanship of fate," that is only because fate has had so much of frenzy and so little of anything else to work with. It is the business of nations, as of individuals, to be ruled less and less by frenzy and more and more by reason and humanity; and as they advance in this direction the "statesmanship of fate" can be trusted to take on a fairer aspect than it has hitherto assumed. In the other direction, the direction of fighting, nothing is to be hoped for. We began with that ages ago, and the naked fact may as well be recognized that the propensity for fighting is a relic of animalism. What we need is to get rid of this propensity as rapidly as possible, and to put it behind us forever; not to call it by fine names and to incorporate it with our highest ideal of human perfection. No; neither Germany nor any other country has a valuable legacy for posterity which needs to make its way by the aid of gunpowder and dynamite.

#### THE YALE-HARVARD UNIVERSITY RACE.

NEW LONDON, Conn, July 2.

WHEN Mr. Rives, the referee, called the eight into line at six o'clock this evening, the sight of the two shells lying at the very foot of the grand stand on Winthrop's Point must have suggested