

## CORRESPONDENCE

## A Promise of Independence?

**SIR:** Apropos of your paragraph on Philippine Independence in your issue of July 20th, I am astonished that the New Republic, which usually so carefully analyses the utterances of "leaders," was so gullible as to give credence to such a statement as that of the arch-professional politician Quezon. Do you not know that which is now common knowledge that Quezon on the eve of the arrival of the Wood-Forbes mission in Manila asked for a passport enabling him to travel in Spain which was peremptorily refused by the government? Did he wish to go the way of the ex-president of the Philippine National Bank, who is now quietly visiting China?

I have lived in the Philippines for some years and am in no ways to be classed as an imperialist—in fact I have always considered myself the contrary. But I ask in perfect candor:

1. In what way does the present form of government which the Filipinos now enjoy (or do not enjoy) hinder the full development of any national aspirations which the natives may have?

2. Just when and how did the United States Government "promise" independence to the Philippine Islands?

3. Are the Philippine Islands of any benefit financially to the United States Government or any individual of this nation any more so or to any greater extent than that which any other foreign country would be?

4. If Quezon's admission that the Filipinos have "made a mess" of things is correct how can we give them absolute independence and still retain American supervision over their economic and financial affairs?

Washington.

ANONYMOUS.

1. That the "full development of any national aspirations" and foreign supervision typified by the choice of General Wood as governor cannot live side by side in the same island we hold to be self-evident.

2. The most explicit promise is in these words of the Jones Act (passed August 29, 1916): "... it is, as it has always been, the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognize their independence as soon as a stable government can be established therein..." which last condition Governor-General Harrison, and President Wilson (in his message of December 7, 1920) considered had already been fulfilled.

3. Yes. Because the United States enjoys, over all other countries, a majority of the Philippine import trade. In 1899 American imports into the Islands were 7 per cent of the total imports, but this ratio has been growing ever since, until in 1920 it was 62 per cent.

4. "Making a mess of things" is a relative term. Nobody is going to take away the independence of the United States on account of the Shipping Board. Between American "help" and "supervision" in Philippine departments there is a difference, and this kind of help and independence—absolute, 100 per cent, legal independence, are not incompatible. A former colonel of engineers in the United States army, lent by our government, is largely responsible for what order there exists in the railways of Poland today. And anyhow, our point was that the candor of Mr. Quezon was remarkable, and entitled to respect.

—THE EDITORS.

## Fusion—In Name Only

**SIR:** Your editorial The Obstacle to Fusion Success is based on the same fallacy that so often leads reformers to the rocks. It assumes that the "super-class" is alone interested in clean and efficient government.

Your statement that the opponents of Mayor Hylan "include practically all New Yorkers who are interested in a clean, efficient government and who are intelligently devoted to the social welfare of the people of New York or to the honest and businesslike administration of their public affairs" is the typical reform insincerity that gets plain people mad and eggs them on to vote anti-highbrow—sometimes against their own interests.

Fusion has little chance this year—not because the people don't care what kind of government they have—but because it is a fusion in name only. The quest was not for the best "avail-

able" man. "Available" meant satisfactory to the Republican leaders. There was never any serious effort made to draft such a man as Alfred E. Smith or Frank L. Polk (I fully realize how difficult it is to get such men to make the run).

You say that if the fusion ticket is not elected "the fair inference will be not that this particular ticket was weak, but that no Fusion candidates could have succeeded." Fusion defeat will mean nothing of the kind. Henry Curran is a splendid fellow and sincerely devoted to the interests of the city, but he is a second rater. He is not in the same class as Smith, Polk or Cropsey, or Mitchel or Gaynor. If only second raters are "available" then the choice is an excellent one. But why a second rater for the position next in importance to the Presidency of the United States?

Cropsey is sufficiently orthodox to satisfy the blackest of Republicans, but too independent to suit the leaders. He is able, courageous, gets at once to the meat of things and is no respecter of persons—there lies the rub. The independence that bars his candidacy is the very thing that would get the votes.

Cropsey would have an issue—the same issue that Mitchel had in 1913—clean, able, fearless administration of the city government. Curran has no issue. He stands with the Mayor on transit and in opposition to the domination of the Legislature. Can you blame the people for preferring the uncouth man who has stood staunch for the fundamentals, to the cultured man who is in many respects affiliated with the Albany regime?

You are mistaken in thinking that the "better elements" elected Mitchel. The bankers and big business men were opposed. He was too radical. They preferred McCall. The Republican machine would have thrown him over had it dared. Had Gaynor lived it might have done so.

Labor, the mechanic, the small business man, the progressive, the "man in the street" elected Mitchel. And they elected him because he did represent clean, able and progressive government. When you say "The mass of the voters in New York City neither understood nor sympathized with the ideals which Mr. Mitchel embodied" you are getting into deep water. It was because they sympathized with his ideals that they gave so tremendous a majority and, rightly or wrongly (wrongly most of us think) it was because they felt that he did not live up to those ideals that they turned him out.

John Mitchel was, in every way, a big man. Had he lived he would have "come back" a great national leader. The Presidency itself was not out of question. His drubbing at the hands of Mayor Hylan was not wholly undeserved. It would have brought him back to where he started in 1913 as the champion of the plain people and of progressive ideals. It was the "better element" that killed, for the time being, the political chances of John Mitchel.

Fusion will not go to defeat because the plain people lack either ideals or intelligence but because they hate sham, and like the "better element" and all the rest of us, dislike being preached at.

Brooklyn.

LOUIS H. PINK.

P. S. I was a member of the Executive Committee of the Committee of 107 that nominated Mitchel in 1913.

## The German Students' Peace League

**SIR:** I learn from Alfred Schneyder, president of the German Students' Peace League (Deutscher Pazifistischer Studentenbund) that the various student groups devoted to opposition to militarism and centralization in Germany are now consolidated in one.

These devoted young men are much in need of financial help for lectures and publications and like-minded people in the United States ought to aid them. Conferences and pamphlets are cheaper than battleships and more effective. A few thousand dollars spent on strengthening similar organizations from 1908 to 1914, might have saved civilization from wreckage. If Europe is yet to be rescued young men of abiding principles must do the work and the rest of us should help.

Before there is a real league of nations there must be in all countries thousands of men and women in dead earnest in support of the basis on which all durable peace must stand.

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

Stamford University, California.

## The Confederate Constitution

**S**IR: A few weeks ago we noticed favorable comment by one of your editors on the suggestion that cabinet members be allowed to appear on the floor of Congress for the purpose of explaining matters connected with their various departments.

It may be interesting to some of your readers to have their attention called to the constitution of the Confederate States of America. Article I, section 6, provided that "Congress may by law grant to the principal officer in each of the executive departments a seat upon the floor of either house with the privilege of discussing any measures appertaining to his department." Such an amendment to our own constitution would put the executive departments and the legislative members of our government into closer touch.

Another provision of the Confederate constitution which would be well worth our consideration is section 7 of the same Article, which reads: "The President may approve any appropriation in the same bill," the items to be properly designated and in regard to those disapproved the "same proceeding shall then be had as in case of other bills disapproved by the President." This is quite different from the provisions of our constitution which places the President in the dilemma of accepting or rejecting the entire appropriation bill, good or bad.

A third provision of the Confederate constitution, aimed to protect the treasury against political raids, is contained in section 8 of the same Article, which says "Congress shall appropriate no money from the treasury except by a vote of two-thirds of both houses, taken by yeas and neas, unless it be asked and estimated for by some one of the heads of departments and submitted to Congress by the President." The expenses of Congress and claims proven before a court of claims were excepted from this provision.

Yet another interesting provision of the Confederate constitution was that it provided that the President could not put into office by a "recess appointment" the same man whom the Senate had refused to confirm when in session. As we all know, our presidents have used the "recess appointment" time and again.

The Confederate constitution was very similar to that adopted by the original states. The differences which were made were either to clear up disputed points which had arisen during the administration of the government, to make clear the rights of slave owners, or to introduce innovations which the experience at that time had showed to be needful and beneficial. The provisions cited above all come under the last class.

Orangeburg, South Carolina.

HENRY R. SIMS.

## Agenda for the Conference

**S**IR: The Disarmament Conference on November 11th has been convened for the avowed purpose of discussing outstanding international issues, relating to the Pacific, and within the jurisdiction of the United States of America, Great Britain, France, Japan, and China: upon the basis of which discussion it is proposed to secure a concerted reduction of military and of naval armament on the part of the nations participating.

A few considerations—such as the following—are evidently pertinent.

I. That the Conference be confined to securing a satisfactory program of armament reduction, arranging to cover the ground of preparation for the forming of an Association of Nations, at another Conference following it, to which all accredited nations shall be invited to send representatives. Nothing will be gained by attempting to cover too much ground at the initial Conference. Anything like a partisan attempt to secure advantage for a group of nations must give way to a statesmanlike inclusion of all the nations, (following reduction by the five) that there may be union in disarmament, and in efforts to secure a guarantee of world peace. A few nations cannot speak for all. Any attempt to set up the judgment of a part of the world against another part of it, will introduce elements irrelevant to the situation, and produce results unfavorable to a world program of disarmament and world order.

II. Provision for at least a fifty per cent reduction in existing armament, and in that in preparation, after elimination by agreement of types in use clearly of doubtful value, should be made, to be carried to completion within two years.

III. Provision for learning the condition of public opinion, should be made by informal exchanges, by submitting tentative programs to the Press, in the nations concerned, in time for intelligent conclusions to be arrived at. Any attempt to monopolize the Conference for group, or for party ends, thus will be guarded against. These steps should be taken promptly, to enable the representatives of the peoples concerned to act intelligently, in consonance with the public sentiment of their nations, at the Conference.

IV. Provision for a second Conference on Disarmament, to continue the work of the first, need not be arranged separately from the one for securing an Association of Nations, but such continuous effort toward disarmament among the nations concerned in the forthcoming Conference, at Washington, D. C., should be regarded as necessary, and should become an integral part of the work of the second one.

Grand Blanc, Michigan.

CASSEN E. PARSONS.

## A Missouri Kaiser in Porto Rico

**S**IR: Has the attention of the lovers of liberty in this country been called to the recent inaugural address of the Hon. E. Mont Reilly of Kansas City, Missouri, as governor of Porto Rico? Had Kaiser Wilhelm delivered himself of such sentiments to some freshly conquered province, no incongruity could be found in the tone of the announcement. This modern Emperor, in his salutatory, indicated his pleasure in no uncertain terms. "Give up all thought of ever being independent," he bluntly proclaimed, "so long as Old Glory waves over the United States, it will wave over Porto Rico." In these few words our Missouri Kaiser stamped a rude and heavy foot upon any pretty words that his flock might have heard about self-determination and government by the consent of the governed. In due time they will learn that we reserve these democratic maxims for patriotic orations and for peoples beyond our jurisdiction, like Egypt or Ireland.

Further pronouncements were made by this All Highest: for example, that no agitator against the form of government he represented would be permitted to remain in Porto Rico—which means that the inhabitants may make no effort towards greater or complete independence, such as the Filipinos are agitating for; and deportation was intimated as the penalty of disobedience. Moreover these former subjects of Spain were warned that they must make no attempt to adopt a flag to mark their nationality. What punishment would be visited upon some gray-haired Barbara Fritchie who dared wave a native flag from her window when our Missouri Emperor came riding by at the head of his guards, we do not like to contemplate.

"You shall have but one language," spake furthermore the new Lord of the Isle. "There shall be no language but English taught in the primary schools." Thus was the ancestral Spanish tongue of this former Spanish colony summarily disposed of, just as Kaiser Wilhelm proclaimed that he would stamp out the Polish provinces. Whether our Missouri Kaiser will resort to the punishments that Wilhelm adopted against the Poles, of whipping children and imprisoning parents who dared to disobey, we do not yet know, but we do know that the timid Porto Ricans have heard the voice of one apparently appointed by the Lord as the imperial master of their destinies and that they listened to his irrevocable commandments.

Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

L. R. JOHNSON.

## Did John Burroughs Write to You?

**S**IR: Dr. Clara Barrus, literary executor and authoritative biographer of the late John Burroughs, asks that all persons owning interesting letters from Mr. Burroughs will communicate with her at Woodchuck Lodge, Roxbury, N. Y. All letters sent will be promptly copied, or extracted from, and returned to the owners.

Roxbury, New York.

## After the Play

IT would be a little feeble, intellectually, to say that I like most of all the tone, the atmosphere, of Dulcy, the three-act comedy by George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly, now playing at the Frazee Theatre in New York. What is tone, or atmosphere, after all? I should like to say: Tone, Sir (or Madam), is the medium of personality in which a particular scene or object is bathed. It is not the plot, or even the idea behind the plot. It is the light that pours around the picture and gives the picture its values and accents. I should like to say this, and pass rapidly on. But words like "personality," "medium," "object," "value," are rather in the nature of hoax. And as for "atmosphere," the word is as hollow as the credit system and as capricious as the antics of exchange. If something in an article that appears in, say, the New Age jars, baffles, harasses, confuses, inflames or affronts you, and yet you cannot objectify your irritation, it is very serviceable to be able to say, "Well, I don't like the *tone*. Don't think the tone is quite right." The word seems expressive but it isn't really expressive. The man who is guilty of murder (a dentist, say) usually finds something in the tone of the District Attorney that seems to him curiously unsympathic, even hostile. Why can't District Attornies cultivate a less aggressive and obnoxious tone. Is it a question of the ordinary noisiness that goes with oratorical effort? No, alas, because if the District Attorney has a soft method, then he is suave, sibillant, insinuating and slimy—a man with a sinister tone. The word tone is, in short, a wrapper for your propaganda. If you dislike the other fellow's "tone" it is because you dislike the force, the jab, of his arguments. The light that bathes a picture isn't an impalpable, it is a palpable object. To take refuge in impalpable "tone" is to shirk the gay labor of discrimination.

So, discarding tone and atmosphere as mere disguises for my propaganda in favor of Dulcy, let me attempt to indicate why I like this comedy. I confess that I think the plot has no slavish relation to life. The idea of a jewelry combine is all right, and it is all right that Dulcy should ask to her house C. Roger Forbes, Mrs. Forbes and Angela Forbes, the combine-maker and his family. A New York wife would be exceedingly likely to ask a capitalist on a week-end party to her little \$1000 a month shack, if she thought the capitalist were necessary to her husband. How many parties like that haven't we seen, with the economically inferior young things sitting on the edges of their chairs, while the armor-plated, gold-plated guests (or hosts) yawned, or looked snuffy, or brooded, or growled. It always surprises me at such parties that Dun and Bradstreet is not open on a side-table with the guests served according to their rating. But, while this Dulcy party is real enough, the device of Schuyler Van Dyck, the rival jewelry-combine man who "happens in"—that is cottonseed oil in the dramatic salad. It is invention on the cheap. Of course, it isn't serious. Of that excuse I am already aware, but even the fact that Schuyler Van Dyck turns out to be a lunatic doesn't make the plot itself particularly interesting. The real wittiness of the situation, that a lunatic conveys just as much sense of responsibility and business acumen as a great capitalist and is quite indistinguishable from a great capitalist and in fact is never accepted as a lunatic by the other capitalist (who ought to know)—this wittiness is only faintly promoted by the authors themselves. So it isn't their standard-make,

fashion-fit plot that makes Dulcy so charming.

Nor is it, altogether, the fact that Dulcy is the queen of platitude, F. P. A's Dulcinea, the girl with the humanoid mind. That was a pungent element in one's pleasure, the lick of garlic, but Messrs. Kaufman and Connelly very wisely converted Dulcy from the world's most perfect exponent of familiar quotation, the Bartlett of Suburbia, to a kind of Mrs. Malaprop whose "I always think" went in with some enormous fatuity in action. In their management of this fatuity, connected for the most part with her efforts to cultivate her husband's prospects, the authors happily though barely avoided the pitfall of satire and landed Dulcy into the exquisitely narrow but fully delightful role of comedy.

The satire was there. It was devoted to walloping two of America's most awful spiritual afflictions—the advertising "engineer" (ad. man) and the "scenarist" (moving picture productionist). The zest with which the audience enjoyed the exposure of these two specimens of current Americana made me wonder when we'd see the American Legion in comedy, and the editors of the Casket, and the publishers of Vogue, and the humanitarian Americans in countries without publicity, engaged in prophylaxis. But these last would only do for burlesque.

Dulcy as a person to laugh at and yet to like—that was Miss Lynn Fontanne's aim, and she hit it. She was helped greatly by Mr. Gregory Kelly as her laconic young brother. She was deftly aided by Mr. Gilbert Douglas as the bland Schuyler Van Dyck and vigorously supported by Mr. Wallis Clark as the grouchy capitalist. She was seconded by Mr. John Westley as her restrained, distracted, loyal husband, and liberally relieved by Mr. Howard Lindsay as the awful movie man and by Mr. Elliott Nugent as the snappy young ad. man. But all this remarkable combination would have been no good if Miss Fontanne had not talked, walked, laughed and hushed her part as the compleat feminine idiot, with the able connivance of her authors. Her laugh, the only thing about her likely to become stagey, suggested Miss Laurette Taylor. But the rest, so piquant, so needfully attractive, so well spaced, was her definitely intelligent self. It is, perhaps, a slight performance, a performance on a reed-pipe. But Miss Fontanne's reed is the right instrument here, and to master the perfect instrument is—well, perfection.

The authors' engaging "tone," it seems to me, consisted in just the degree of friendly superiority which they gave to their audience in revealing to them Dulcy's hopeless predicaments. Could we help being superior to her when she tackled Mr. Forbes so outrageously about the sixteen and two-third per cent, or when she silenced everybody during the music and then handed around a box of candy, or when she manipulated the hapless elopement of the capitalist's daughter, or made Mr. Forbes play bridge and promised him golf to torture his lumbago? These ineptitudes piled up, almost too high, our consciousness of the authors' pleasant understanding of things. And then, with beautiful management on the part of this very natural and unforced actress, the balance was gently won over to her side. This change was needed and it came in time. The authors conveyed a feeling of blitheness and leniency, which Miss Fontanne never imperilled. Hence Dulcy glowed to a pretty end.

A great comedy? Not precisely. But a very skilful and charming arrangement to meet the harmless sense of being "on" which we, who read F. P. A., bring to the comedic theatre.

FRANCIS HACKETT.