

Germany.—Chancellor von Caprivi is reported to be desirous of resigning his office.



The Nation's Test

We publish on another page a series of interviews with experts on the situation of the unemployed in our great cities. The men and women who give our readers these views are not sentimentalists; they are not persons to be carried away by a sudden flood-tide of public feeling; and they are all so situated as to be personally familiar with the facts.

In two respects they are entirely agreed: First, that there are great multitudes of men who are willing to work and who are thrown out of employment by the present industrial crisis. Secondly, that nothing will be done to alleviate the real distress, and much to dishonor the honest and honorable unemployed, by public and indiscriminate charity—either by gifts of money to street-beggars, or by soup-kitchens where food is given away to any who ask for it. This easy and thoughtless giving is a poor substitute for real charity.

Real charity involves, on the part of the giver, consideration, reflection, study, care; it involves, on the part of the recipient, the preservation of his self-respect. It is easier to raise a million dollars to distribute among the poor than to distribute it wisely—so to distribute it that no man or woman shall be left the worse for having received that which is generously given.

The general principle is this: Never give something for nothing. To this principle there are exceptions; but the duty of the philanthropist is to make the exceptions as few as possible.

The individual who can afford to do so should continue the employment of all the labor for which he can pay. Avoid those economies which involve the discharge of willing workers. Every such discharge aggravates the present distress.

The money raised by subscription in our towns and cities should be expended, as far as possible, in paying for useful work. Street-cleaning offers one easy method of employment. Needed public improvements would afford another.

Never was there a better time to test co-operation. We have been protesting against sweat-shops. Let generosity do what employed capital so constantly refuses to do. Hire well lighted and ventilated rooms, and pay wages that are honest; then let the American consumer buy the product of the skilled labor employed. For this year finds skilled labor unemployed. Bakeries, laundries, dressmaking establishments, as well as tailoring, can be and should be maintained, not to make profits, but to give wages, this winter. If the condition of the working people is understood as it should be, the products will be sold, and the workrooms will be self-sustaining, if not profitable. This will necessarily employ capital under abnormal conditions, but we face abnormal conditions. To employ capital to give wages, instead of employing it to make profits, is dangerous, but we should take the risk, for it is far less dangerous than paying out the same capital in alms.

Loan companies should be established where people properly vouched for could obtain loans covering a specified time. This last is an absolute necessity if homes are to be maintained. Rent is the burden of the poor man in his time of idleness; he should be able to secure his rent, or a part of it, that he may keep his family together.

As a Nation, we have never been put to a more severe

test than we are forced to endure this winter. All over the country, thousands of families are threatened by hunger, cold, and even homelessness, if not enduring them at the present moment—families who have never known the pinch of poverty, who have never imagined that they could not secure shelter, fuel, food, and clothes, by their combined efforts. This winter they find themselves equipped with the same pride and self-respect, the same strength and skill, but there is no work to employ the one, that they may maintain and support the other. Whatever the cause of the financial depression, the result is that the future of thousands of families is threatened. The first touch of charity so often means the total loss of self-respect and self-endeavor! Work is not always, and to all men, an inspiration, but it is a necessity of character-building. Supplies without work should be given only when it is impossible to devise useful work by which they can be earned.

Slavery, when it became an issue, had that in it which appealed to the imagination. He who sought to wipe out what he believed was a blot on our National honor departed amid flying banners, beating of drums, tears, and benedictions; he was a hero ready to sacrifice life in a great cause. Those who believe that to have men and women and little children starving and freezing in a land of plenty is a blot on our National honor, and who seek to equalize the conditions, at least enough to prevent the scattering of families, and the physical suffering inseparable from hunger and cold, have as true a love of home and country as the men who marched to battle; but they fight without the support of military enthusiasm. We stand before the world still as an experimental government, testing the truth of the declaration that all men have a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. If we do not rise to the present test, giving to every man the opportunity to earn his daily bread, by creating the conditions that make this possible, we must bear the ignominy of failure in achieving that which is the end of all government. If democracy fails to provide the means of honest and honorable livelihood for all willing workers, it fails in the most vital point; and its failure is not counterbalanced by largesses of the rich to support in enforced idleness the poor.



The Pope and the Bible

The Pope's Encyclical on the Study of the Bible, briefly epitomized in another column, is not a startling document to Protestants; but it marks a decided advance as coming from the Pope. Protestants base the Church on the Bible; Romanists base the Bible on the Church. As a consequence, Protestants have sometimes put the Church under ban and exalted the Book, and Romanists have sometimes put the Book under ban and exalted the Church. From the Protestant point of view we may welcome, therefore, an encyclical which exalts the Bible and urges its study in the light and by the methods of the best scholarship.

It is true that, in the Pope's estimate, the Vulgate is given a higher place than is awarded to it by the best scholars; but it is also true that he exhorts the scholars of the Church to compare the Vulgate with the best Greek and Hebrew originals. And it is clear that the latter rather than the former are the standard. The original is not to be measured by a translation, however excellent, but the translation by the original. It is also true that the Pope affirms that the Church is the appointed and infallible interpreter of Scripture; and implies, if he does not assert, that no interpretations are admissible which contradict those

which the Church has afforded. But in this respect the Pope occupies precisely the ground occupied by the Presbyterian General Assembly, which allows its ministers to study the Bible only in case they will pledge themselves beforehand to accept the views which the Church of the sixteenth century entertained, before the present facilities for Bible study were possessed by Christian scholars. Indeed, it may fairly be questioned whether the Pope does not occupy the better position of the two, since the Roman Church has a living and authoritative Head, who, if he cannot directly correct the mistakes of previous interpreters, can interpret them authoritatively so as to make them agree with modern scholarship; while the Presbyterian General Assembly, by declaring that it is heresy to recognize authority in the living Church, effectually deprives itself of this convenient resource for reconciling progress in the future with reverence for the past.

All Bible students will cordially welcome the Papal encyclical, not for any flood of light it throws on disputed questions in Biblical science, but for the impulse it will give to Bible study.



The Secret of Peace

At no time since the close of the Civil War have so many lives been so tossed by tumultuous cares. At no time has peace seemed so remote, so impossible. At no time have so many hours of sleep been lost, and so many hearts been heavy, not only, not chiefly, with present distress, but with forebodings of impending calamity. And probably never before did so many bear a living testimony to the power of the soul to be untroubled in the midst of trouble; never before, probably, was there witnessed in so many lives the fulfillment of the prophet's assurance, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee. What is the secret of their peace?

Peace is a gift. He who pursues it loses it. He who battles for it defeats his desire by his endeavor. "The peace of God keep your hearts and minds" is the Apostle's prayer. When we stir up our hearts and minds to find or keep that peace, we reverse the right relation. It is God's peace, sent to find us, provided to keep us. Like a river, rising among the distant mountains, fed by the clouds, environing the city and guarding it from danger, God's peace flows down from him to us, and keeps the mind that is stayed on him.

Not trust but consecration is the secret of peace; or, rather, the trust that is the child of consecration. No man has a right to trust that God will keep him from all trouble. God keeps his child in trouble, and this is a better keeping. He who imagines that the universe centers about himself is strangely egotistical; but the supreme egotist is the man who imagines that God administers the universe for his particular benefit, and who fancies that this egotism is piety. The secret of peace is not in imagining that God will do all that we desire, but in making all our desires find their fulfillment in what God does. He only has God's peace who begins all his prayers with "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done," and ends them all with "Thine be the kingdom and the power and the glory." Such an one carries no burdens, for all his burdens are God's, and he and God can carry them with ease. Such an one knows no fears for the future. The future is as sure to God as is the past, and God's assurance makes God's child calm. If God gives him wealth, he takes the trust and administers it for God. If God takes away wealth, and calls him to walk down into bankruptcy, he goes, glad to show how

God's child endures misfortune. If God lays him on a bed of sickness, he reflects that God needs invalids. If death summons him, he hears the voice as that of One who would wake him from life's troubled dream, and rises to greet the eternal sunshine.

I have no cares, O blessed Will,
For all my cares are thine;
I live in triumph, Lord, for thou
Hast made thy triumph mine.



The Next Reform

The reign of machines and bosses, the low level to which public action often sinks, and the extraordinary difficulty of arousing citizens to an energetic exercise of their public duties, beget at times a profound sense of discouragement, and men seriously ask themselves whether the ideal of democracy can ever be realized in a dignified, elevated, and inspiring public life. While it is true that great things have been done on this continent, and that great advances are recorded in our political development, it is also true that our failures have so far been as conspicuous as our successes. Some one has recently said that the problem of our great cities, before it is finally settled, will subject our institutions to a greater strain than did the slavery question; and the persistence with which the machine element governs both cities and parties in various parts of the country sometimes seems to promise the permanency of a kind of political management which is both disgraceful and disheartening. We must do very much better things politically than we have already done if we are to demonstrate the absolute superiority of the democratic system over the other systems of government. America is still a great opportunity rather than a great achievement.

From this point of view the most hopeful feature of the recent elections is not the actual overturning of rings and bosses, but the apparently serious determination to extirpate rings and bosses by concerted and sustained action. Heretofore these obnoxious persons and elements in our political situation have been dethroned from time to time, by what may be called spurts of political energy; but with the subsidence of the interest and the return of the voter to his usual occupations the machine and boss have quietly resumed control. There are many indications that the voters have learned a lesson, and have discovered that the only way to meet and destroy a well-organized political machine is to match it with another machine equally well equipped and quite as capable of persistent effort. No amount of mere declamation and denunciation would have defeated the race-track gambling in New Jersey. That result was due to the sagacity of men like Mr. Lindabury, who saw that in order to defeat the gamblers the opposing political forces in the State must be quite as thoroughly organized. Such an organization was effected—an organization so perfect that not only were voters personally urged to cast their ballots in the right way, but that at any moment the whole State could be flooded with anti-race-track literature. At every point the political machine in the hands of the race-track gamblers found itself confronted by an equally well-organized machine in the hands of independent citizens, and the election was a Waterloo for the race-track gamblers.

In this State attempts are being made to free both the Republican and the Democratic parties from the exclusive control of machine elements. Leagues of voters are being formed, in the hope of banding together the best men in a party, for the purpose of controlling the machine element