

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

and machine nominees, and, if necessary, of combating and defeating both at the polls when nominations are unworthy. It is proposed, in other words, to organize the rank and file of the parties as thoroughly as local management is now organized, and to meet the political boss and his machine with another machine much more flexible, and entirely honorable in its purposes, but equally well organized and equally persistent. No local boss could survive the opposition of an organization in his own party which should be inclusive of the great mass of reputable voters, and which should be independent in its action. Such a boss would soon follow the leadings of such an organization, and would become virtuous, however strong his vicious tendencies might be. Tammany Hall could not exist for any length of time out of power. It is held together by revenues which flow in all kinds of rills from the public treasury. To cut off those rills, and to leave the channel of Tammany beneficence dry and dusty for a season, would be to drive those whose thirst is slaked by this stream to other and purer means of support. Tammany cannot live without money, and it cannot get money except as it holds office. The voters of this city are beginning to believe, not only that they can defeat Tammany, but that they can keep Tammany out of power; and if that belief can be honestly and persistently acted upon, the greatest machine in America can be broken into fragments within the next five years. It is a great satisfaction to record the various indications of a new advance in the serious acceptance of the duties of citizenship, and of a new determination to remedy the evils in our political system inherent in both parties, and destructive of both parties, by patient and steadfast devotion to public interests. This country cannot render any more effective service to the world to-day than by the purification of its politics, which have been for a long time past the synonym in foreign countries for inefficiency and corruption, so that the democratic hope and the democratic ideal have steadily suffered by our own infidelities. To redeem our cities, to drive the sordid element out of our National politics, to destroy the bosses and the machines, and so open the way for the rapid rise of independent men in all parties, would be to give a new lease of life to the democratic principle throughout the world.



## Truth Out of Experience

The value of experience depends entirely on the ability to extract from it that which is vital and significant. A great many men and women pass through all manner of experiences without retaining any trace of what they have gone through, save perhaps an agreeable or a disagreeable recollection. They go through life very much as a bird goes through the air and leaves no trace of its flight and bears no trace with it. As the chief importance of life lies in the educational quality which one gets out of it, and as this quality is secured only by rationalizing our experience and preserving in our own character and our own growth the results of it, the failure to turn experience into truth and character means failure of the most fundamental kind. The power of growth, which is perhaps the greatest and most valuable faculty which any human being possesses, is measured by the capacity for taking out of experience that which aids the unfolding of one's nature, strengthens against temptation, clears one's views of life, and brings all one's faculties into thorough command. There were obvious limitations in Goethe's nature, and there was, to many persons at least, a great limitation in his view of life, but the marvelous fruitfulness of the man

is explained by the fact that he turned all his experience into general truths and made them a part of his own nature, so that almost every great work from his pen can be traced to some actual happening in his life. This is the secret and the source of power in every successful man and woman. Life ought to be cumulative; it ought never to be necessary to go a second time through the same experience in order to learn its lesson. A constant habit of meditation ought to accompany experience, because it is by thinking upon the things that we have gone through that we reach their meaning, and then, by the action of the will, we add the new truth we have found to our capital of knowledge and character. The man or woman who does this becomes a growing force, not drained by the events of life, but rather enriched by them.



## Editorial Notes

—The finding by the New York Grand Jury of about fifty indictments against election inspectors and others for violating the laws at the November election in this city is the strongest possible evidence of the practical work being done by the new-school reformers. Formerly the practice was to objurgate during election week, and then to be too indolent to prosecute.

—The "P. Divver Association," a Tammany organization in the Second Ward of this city, has arranged to give one thousand tons of coal to the deserving poor. In the Twenty-fourth Ward the Tammany Central Association has raised a poor-fund of \$2,600, and enlisted a corps of physicians to furnish free medical attendance to the sick poor. Are the churches equally on the alert?

—A Conference for Good City Government has been called to meet in Philadelphia, January 23 and 24. The call is issued by the Municipal League of Philadelphia, and is addressed to persons throughout the country who are interested in municipal reforms. The questions, though local, are everywhere present and pressing, and therefore are of the first National importance.

—The action of the Board of Health of this city in its determination to prevent the defilement of the atmosphere and the sky of New York by the use of soft coal for factory purposes cannot be too strongly commended and indorsed. After the experience of London, Chicago, and many other cities, it would be absurd to permit the growth here of a nuisance which other cities are striving against with almost desperate energy.

—This year many of the East Side stores in this city sold Christmas presents on the installment plan. A \$1.50 present could thus be paid for in eight monthly installments of 25 cents each. Rate of interest, 100 per cent. per annum! To those who have in mind sermons on the abuse of Christmas, we commend these sentences from Newman's "Lectures on Political Economy:" "Heartily do I wish that shop debts were pronounced after a certain day irrecoverable by law. All prices would sink to the scale of cash prices. Shopkeepers would be rid of a great deal of care which ruins the happiness of thousands."

—The inability of some Government officials to "see things straight" was strikingly illustrated the other day when the Bavarian Minister of War was interpellated in Parliament with regard to the refusal of several army officers to accept commands in the Reserve on account of their objection to the practice of dueling. The Minister did not assert the righteousness of dueling, but he declared that the practice must go on because it is the practice of the educated classes in civil life, and because without it officers must, in certain cases, resort to fisticuffs. This would seem to indicate that in certain cases Bavarian officers cease to be gentlemen. The Minister of War may be an adept in his profession, but he is curiously lacking in the ability to distinguish between a social peculiarity and a moral law.

—With that delicate sense of fairness which always characterizes its attitude toward those who differ from it, the New York "Evening Post" says: "It was not perhaps to be expected that the religious press would read the evidence in the Hawaiian case, and so earn a right to speak upon its legal aspects." It was to be expected, however, that the editors of the "Post," who have a very considerable knowledge of English, would read their own columns. We commend to their attention the following sentence taken from the same issue: "The inspector to-day had a number of cases like this, and regretted that Providence had not stepped in and acted so that on the appropriation of some charitable person, who had stipulated that the gift should aid some deserving widow, could not be applied to the relief of these families."