

study of the silver question. The final result of this study was his conversion to the free-coinage doctrine, and readiness to sacrifice himself for it.

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The report of the Government finances for the year ending with last month shows a deficit of \$26,000,000, as against one of \$43,000,000 a year ago. Most of this gain is due to increased receipts, especially from customs. The aggregate from this source was \$161,000,000, as against \$152,000,000 last year and \$132,000,000 in 1894. As 1894 was the last year of the McKinley Law, some of the advocates of the Wilson Law have claimed that it is a far better revenue measure than its predecessor. The comparison between '96 and '94, however, is hardly fair to the McKinley Law, as importations under it in 1894 were restricted by the prospect of lower duties when the Wilson Law changes went into effect. The average customs revenue under the McKinley Law (during the three years '92, '93, and '94) was \$171,000,000, or \$10,000,000 more than those under the Wilson Law last year. This difference, however, is chiefly to be attributed to the higher prices prevailing throughout the world when the McKinley Law was in force. Had the importations under it been appraised at present European prices, the taxes received by our Government would have been much less. The internal revenue receipts last year were \$147,000,000—\$3,000,000 more than last year, but \$10,000,000 less than the average during the three years preceding. This falling off is, of course, a disappointment to the framers of the present law, as an increase in internal revenue was anticipated from the increased tax upon spirits. The decrease is probably due, not to a decrease in the consumption of liquor, but to a decrease in the amount manufactured and put upon the market. Hard times affect public revenues as quickly as private. The Government's expenditures during the year just ended were \$352,000,000, or \$4,000,000 less than in 1895, \$16,000,000 less than in 1894, and \$31,000,000 less than in 1893. They are, however, \$53,000,000 greater than during the last year of Mr. Cleveland's previous administration. The great increase in expenditures during the present decade has been chiefly due to increased pension appropriations, which last year aggregated \$130,000,000, as against \$88,000,000 in 1889. There have also been serious increases in the appropriations for the navy and for rivers and harbors. The amount of money held in the Treasury over and above liabilities is \$267,000,000, or \$160,000,000 more than three years ago. The bond issues have aggregated \$262,000,000. The present National debt is \$1,222,000,000, or about \$100 per family of five.

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The Louisiana Legislature has partially fulfilled the pledges of reform made to the representatives of the New Orleans Citizens' League in order to secure Governor Foster's reinauguration. It has, however, fulfilled them in a disappointing fashion. A Constitutional Convention is to be called if the voters so order, but its work is to be so limited that no new election can be held to determine who was rightfully elected Governor in the recent contest. Governor Foster's message to the Legislature on this point was on the same level as his failure to give the New Orleans Citizens' League representation at the polls in the November election. Rarely has a Governor so distinctly avowed that his actions were governed by partisan considerations. "As chief executive of the State," he says, "I fully realize that I am the public servant of the whole people. As a representative, however, of that great major-

ity of the people whose political principles and opinions on public questions I share, I would deem myself recreant to the trust imposed on me by them if I should surrender a dearly won victory after a hard-contested political battle, to be again struggled for at the instance of the defeated party." The Citizens' League is thus defeated in its effort to secure an honest election to determine the question whether Governor Foster represents a "great majority" or a fraudulent majority of the people of the State. Regarding a reform in the election laws, the Governor is a trifle more public-spirited. He modifies his opposition to the Australian ballot system, but urges its adoption in the larger towns only. Respecting the registration lists he urges a complete and satisfactory revision. The majority of the Legislature has accepted the Governor's programme. Most of the members of the New Orleans League voted with the Republicans and Populists against limiting the work of the proposed Constitutional Convention, but a few were absent, and the partisan Democratic measure secured a majority. If the Convention is held, its revision of the Constitution need not be submitted to the voters. It is possible, however, that the voters may decide that no Convention shall be held. Apart from these matters affecting the franchise, the most important bill yet acted upon by the Legislature was one permitting the Sunday opening of saloons except between the hours of nine and twelve in the morning. This measure was advocated not only by the liquor interests, but by many public officials of the city of New Orleans. The position taken was that the present laws could not be enforced. The Legislature, however, refused to be guided in this matter by lawbreakers and those who connived at lawbreaking. After considerable discussion the bill was sent back to the committee. The fact that Sunday-closing laws have been enforced in New York has apparently strengthened the cause of Sunday closing throughout the Union.

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The troubles of the English Ministry are not confined to domestic matters. Our recent comment on the withdrawal of the Education Bill needs to be supplemented by a comment on the singular ill luck which has attended the Ministry in foreign affairs. It is the misfortune of Governments that they are always held responsible for disasters which occur while they are in power, even though, as in many cases, these disasters are the direct results of policies initiated by political opponents. It is impossible at this moment to determine intelligently how far Lord Salisbury has been responsible for the untoward results of the foreign policy of the Conservative Ministry up to date, but it is certain that that Ministry has met with a series of humiliating reverses. When the Conservatives went into power, there was a great deal of talk about a vigorous and creditable foreign policy, it being a commonly accepted maxim among the Conservatives in England that Liberal Ministries are always weak in foreign matters and Conservative Ministries strong. Lord Salisbury, especially, has been held up as what is popularly called a strong man, and there were hopes that Mr. Chamberlain would develop the same sort of aggressiveness. The Ministry had hardly taken office before the massacres in Armenia were crying aloud for vengeance, and instead of vigor, decision, and action the English Government not only did nothing, but appeared almost insensible to the shocking brutalities which stirred the conscience of Europe. The Great Power which has often, under the dictates of conscience, interfered at great risk in behalf of oppressed peoples, remained silent and with folded hands, the Sultan apparently entirely in-

different to English representations and threats, and the Russians scornful of them.

In the Farther East Russian diplomacy has, for the moment at least, established Russian influence in China as firmly as it has been established at Constantinople. In South Africa, where one of the strongest Englishmen of the day was practically in command, with one of the most skillful and daring of colonial ministers behind him, there has been a succession of disasters, which have in turn humiliated Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Chamberlain has shown a good deal of ability and frankness in dealing with South African matters, but the fates have been against him, and President Kruger has so far beaten him at every point. When the foolhardy invasion headed by Dr. Jameson failed, those who wanted a strong policy expected Mr. Chamberlain to take advantage of the situation and establish English authority in the Transvaal, and there is good reason to believe that Mr. Chamberlain would have been glad to carry out this policy; but there was no moral ground on which it could have been made respectable. It only remained for him to disclaim any knowledge of or sympathy with the attack on the Boer power, and at the same time to insist upon all the rights which belonged to England in South Africa. He is reported to have notified President Kruger privately that he was quite ready to fight if he had the opportunity. He then invited President Kruger to London, with the suggestion that the grievances of the Uitlanders should be redressed by amicable discussion, to which "Oom Paul" replied that Great Britain was bound to respect the independence of the Transvaal and that the grievances would be cared for at home. Matters were at this stage when the leaders of the insurrection pleaded guilty of the charges of treason against them, and their four leading men were sentenced to death. At the very moment when the tide of sympathy set in motion by these sentences was at its height, President Kruger published the cipher telegrams which threw such a light on the origin of the movement against the Boers and the connection of certain leading Englishmen with it as to give what first appeared to be a movement for the redress of outrageous wrongs a purely commercial character. In other words, a crusade in behalf of the rights of outsiders in the Transvaal was transformed into a violent attempt to overthrow the Boerish power for commercial ends. The publication of the cipher dispatches left the Boers master of the situation. The remission of the sentences of death was another master-stroke on their part, and "Oom Paul" now has the satisfaction of having outwitted the shrewd and able English Minister, protected his own country, postponed the granting of just reforms, and put into the Transvaal treasury, from fines, something more than a million dollars. This brief survey makes it clear that, despite the enormous majority behind it, the Conservative Ministry is still to justify its existence in foreign as well as in domestic affairs.

The Turkish Government is now reaping the harvest which it has sown with such a prodigal hand. Its evasions, delays, and falsehoods have not only forfeited the confidence of the entire Western world, but that of its own subject peoples. It is safe to say that nobody in Turkey or out of Turkey believes anything the Government says. This does not mean that the Turkish Government always lies, but it does mean that it has used the arts of lying so long that no one is now able to discriminate between truth and falsehood in its statements. This is strikingly shown in Crete, where, if appearances are to be trusted (and the word "if" is significant), the Sultan is desirous of pursuing

a conciliatory policy and of pacifying his Cretan subjects, but the Cretans do not believe him and are not willing to trust themselves in his hands. When the Assembly of the island met last year, a serious effort was made to deal with the financial situation, which was and continues to be extremely involved. Among other remedies proposed for immediate relief was a project for a loan, but although this project had behind it a large majority of deputies and the approval of the Governor, the Sublime Porte refused to act upon it. Distress has steadily increased, and as it has increased the feeling against Turkey has grown. The Porte is now desirous of acceding to the demands of the Cretans, and has taken steps in that direction. It proposes, among other things, a convocation of the Assembly of the island, to which will be submitted for discussion a scheme for the general reform of the administration of Crete; but one Christian member of the Assembly has already expressed a general suspicion when he said that the Sultan proposes by a convocation of the Assembly to secure in one place the attendance of the representative men of the island and then to quietly lay hands on them either for slaughter or imprisonment. It looks now as if the insurgents in the island would stand their ground until a definite joint action of the Great Powers has assured them that they may safely lay down their arms and discuss their grievances under the forms of law. If Turkey imagines that the crimes in Armenia are to go unpunished, she is even more short-sighted than people have believed. She is already bearing the punishment. No country has ever stood lower in the estimation of the world.

Nothing shows more strikingly the general acceptance of the democratic idea and the dominance of the democratic movement than the language of the claimants to the vanished throne of France. Comment was made in these columns not many weeks ago on the declaration of the representative of the older and younger branches of the historic royal family of France that he was quite ready to rise to power through popular suffrage. About the time this manifesto was issued there was an interview between its author, the Duc d'Orléans, and the ex-Empress Eugénie. This interview was very widely discussed, and it was believed in some quarters that an endeavor had been made to effect a fusion of the claims of the two houses, the Bonapartist interest to be thrown into a kind of pool with the Legitimist interest. Prince Victor Napoleon has, however, promptly denied this report, and he has denied it in words of thoroughly democratic purport. He says that he has not abandoned his rights, because the rights of the Bonapartist dynasty are not vested in that dynasty, but in the people themselves. If the people want him to rule, he is willing to rule; that must be his permanent attitude. He cannot abandon his duties. This is shrewd talk, like that of his rival on the other side of the line. It shows that the consciousness of democracy has penetrated even through the non-communicating atmosphere which usually surrounds claimants to thrones. It does not seem to have occurred to these gentlemen, however, that in abandoning the divine right to rule for the privilege of ruling by popular suffrage, they have yielded all that was distinctive in their positions. For the sake of a possible immediate advantage they are bartering the hopes of their grandchildren—if it may be said that the grandchildren of princes in this day have any hopes.

Professor Peabody, of Harvard, presents in the current "Forum" an interesting summary of an inquiry made in Boston last summer on behalf of the Committee of Fifty for the Investigation of the Liquor Problem. The inquiry