

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

HE WILL CONTEST.

Mr. Warren Foster, the Populist candidate for Representative to Congress, announces it to be his intention to contest the election should the choice of the people fall on B. H. Roberts. Mr. Foster does not assume that his vote will be so pretentious as to justify the proceeding on the ground of hoping to win for himself, in which he is no doubt correct; the vote of his party two years ago—a trifle over 2,000 in a total vote of more than 78,000—was not of such proportions as to inspire confidence in that direction, especially when it does not appear that Populism has gained much headway in the interim. As he does not expect to gain the seat, the question arises as to what his motive can be in entering the arena at all after the people's verdict has been rendered.

Undoubtedly any one whose name has appeared on the official ballot as a candidate for Congress can make a contest for a seat. In Kentucky once there lived a man who rejoiced in the sobriquet of "Live-forever Jones." He made the race for Congress two or three times, getting a handful of votes each time, and finally hit upon the scheme of so changing things that the one who had the fewest votes would be declared elected. Armed with this purpose, he duly presented himself at Washington when the time came around and asked to be seated on the showing made. His application was filed and is perhaps there somewhere yet. Contesting is simply a matter of taste and judgment, the ethical phase of the business not being at all retarded by the *douceur* which the House sometimes allows a contestant whether he wins or not. This, however, is generally predicated upon an apparent case, one in which the vote was very close, or there were frauds or intimidations of sufficient magnitude to change the result from what it should have been. But contesting not to get in but to keep the successful candidate out—that is, making a case not as a party in interest but by relation and for the "patriotic" purpose of benefiting the public, is another matter.

The Constitution invests the House of Representatives with the power of being the sole judge of the election and qualifications of its members. It can admit or refuse to admit, expel or refuse to expel and there is no appeal. The first proceeding, as a usual thing, when a contest is taken up, is to make an investigation regarding the election. If this is not questioned—as we are advised will be the case with Mr. Foster—the matters of fraud or intimidation or other unfair means by which an election is alleged to have been had are gone into. If nothing of this kind appears, there is still the ground left that the sitting member is not a citizen or is otherwise ineligible, but it does not require a formal contest to make such grounds available, since it is merely a question of vacating the seat or leaving it as it is. It is only necessary for the House to be made acquainted with the facts and it will take the necessary action of its own accord. As the unseating of a member on such grounds would by no means cause the seating of any one else, especially one whose vote was so far in the rear as not to figure at all in a practical sense, there would be some doubt about such person being paid roundly for what amounted to no more than supplying the House with information which it could otherwise

have obtained with but a trifling expense.

However, it is for Mr. Foster to decide as to what action he will take. These remarks are simply our views on the matter and have no more reference to him individually than to any one else in a similar position.

OUR DUTY TO THE NATIVES.

In an interview with the Apache chief, Geronimo, the captive warrior expressed himself to the effect that it is a waste of money to educate Indian children as it is being done now. A child taken from the reservation and sent to school and then returned to the reservation, quickly lays aside the garb of civilization and dons again the blanket. "What can an educated Indian do in the sagebrush and the cactus?" is a pertinent question, generally overlooked by the friends of the present system of Indian education.

Their supposition is that every educated Indian child would be a leaven, eventually leavening the whole tribe to which he belongs, but this reasoning overlooks the fact that it is much easier to fall from the pinnacles of civilization to the depths below than it is to climb from a lower level to a higher one. They forget that improved types of animals and plants, if left without care soon will revert back to the original forms. There are now, we are told, nearly 24,000 Indian children in reservation and boarding schools. The philanthropy that has placed them there ought also to provide some means whereby these children are given an opportunity of pursuing the avocations of civilized life. Then there is hope for them and their children, but if they are turned over to barbarous environments as soon as their course in the school is ended, their education is lost.

The manner in which our government has approached the Indian problem has not always added glory to its otherwise glorious record. We are about to enter upon new relations to the aborigines of other parts of the world, if the advocates of expansion carry the day. The Hawaiian Islands have already been annexed and notice has been given to the world that Porto Rico is ours. Events in Cuba may lead to final annexation of that island, and a chief part, if not all, of the Philippines will become United States territory. It seems necessary from the outset to be determined not to repeat in any of those regions the mistakes which have been made relative to the Indians. The natives have rights, and these should be respected. If the greed of individuals tempts them to do wrong, the arm of the government should protect the victims, irrespective of the color of the skin or the intellectual development. If any prejudice is to be shown it should be rather in favor of the weak, that may be unable to protect themselves. The British government has in India followed the policy of protecting even the superstitions of the natives where they were harmless and could do injury to anybody else. This has been found to be a wise policy—one that is worthy of emulation by other governments.

UNFIT FOR MARRIAGE.

The question whether laws should not be enacted for the restriction of marriages to those "fit" for the propagation of the human race is discussed by Dr. Harry Campbell in the *Lancet*.

The doctor, according to a review of his article in the *Medical Record*, treats the matter from a scientific and medical point of view. He shows that to a large extent the process of natural selection is interfered with among civilized nations by the restrictions governing the marriage laws and by the saving of lives which under primitive conditions would be lost. He thinks that, viewed from the standpoint of physical hygiene, the abolition of the old patriarchal order of marriage was a mistake, but that since its re-establishment is impossible, the only course to pursue now is to attempt to prevent the effects resulting from ill-judged marriages.

As unfit for matrimonial relations the doctor marks all who are suffering from pulmonary consumption, organic heart disease, epilepsy, insanity, chronic Bright's disease and functional disorders of the nervous system. The including of the last mentioned ailment in the list calls for the following remarks by the *Record*:

"There can be no doubt that if the 'neurotics' never married, in the course of time diseases of the nervous system would greatly lessen and probably die out; and it may also be true that a world peopled with phlegmatic, thick-skinned mediocrities would be happier, in a sense. But the question may here be asked: Do we want to be without our 'neurotics,' or can we get along without them? If history be ransacked, it will be found that most of the great deeds of the world have been performed by individuals of highly sensitive, nervous temperament. The contention, too, that the thick-skinned mediocrities are the happiest persons is open to doubt. If a more or less animal life is the end to be gained, then they may be; but at the same time the fact should be borne in mind that, while they never descend into the depths of misery, like the being with the ill-strung nervous system, yet, on the other hand, they are incapable of experiencing many of the delightful emotions and of ascending into the heavens of joy, as are the neurotics. In this country the suggestion of Dr. Campbell, that any person afflicted with neurotic taint should be precluded from marrying, will scarcely meet with favor, as in that case probably half the population would remain single."

From this little bit of highly interesting discussion it appears that, speaking from a hygienic standpoint, some day we may find out that only half of the civilized race—perhaps less—is really worthy of becoming fathers and mothers. What is the matter with civilization? Has it entirely forgotten its mission?

A SUGGESTION OF SANTIAGO.

The findings of the naval board investigating the points in dispute in the naval encounter at Santiago, although depriving Schley of some of the glory public opinion generally has attributed to him, shows clearly why victories like that at Manila and Santiago were possible. The fight was a "captains' fight." Admiral Sampson had laid his plans and given his orders to each ship; each captain knew exactly what to do in case Cervera should attempt to break through the line, and when the attempt actually was made, each one carried out his part of the program, notwithstanding the absence of the admiral. Each captain was for the time being an admiral. All were conversant with the general plan and could, therefore, cooperate towards a common end.