

THE CUBAN POLITICAL SITUATION

IF ANY of my readers were strolling with me on the Prado about this time, he would be inclined to think something had happened, and it has. The Cubans have at last concocted a constitution, and they

that perhaps they have forgotten their long years of fruitless strife against the might of Spain; the terrible effects of Weyler's "reconcentrado" rulings and the relief so generously afforded by the United States; the shiploads of pro-

the red and yellow emblem of oppression. One of the conservatives, a man whose advice is heeded by his countrymen, recently said to me: "The Cubans will not insert in their constitution any

been wise, just and on the whole beneficial to Cuba, but they will go no further in their constitution. As to the granting of guarantees for naval bases, giving a guarantee that Havana and other fever infected ports shall be kept free from contagion, paying their debts in the future, avoiding foreign entanglements and granting the United States a right to intervene at its discretion in their domestic affairs—the Radicals declare that these are not matters to be inserted in the constitution, but to be arranged by treaty hereafter. And so far they are right. The constitution is not the proper instrument in which to define the relations

there is a perfectly justifiable suspicion in the minds of the United States authorities that they will not. For ingratitude is a racial characteristic, and now that their troubles are over, their fields producing bountiful crops and their treasury overflowing with pesos, they have already forgotten many of them, the cause of this wonderful change."

The latest official utterance on this question is the report of the committee on relations, in which they reaffirm their expressions of indebtedness to the United States.

In fact, they accept several clauses of the senate amendment to the

of Cuba; (2) they will not permit their territory to serve as a base of war operations against the United States or any other nation; (3) The Cuban government accepts, in its entirety, the treaty of Paris of 18th December, 1898, taking over all obligations assumed at that time by the United States; (4) it recognizes as legally valid the acts executed by the military government, etc.

An American closely connected with the official life of the island recently said in an answer to a Cuban Radical: "Though you Cubans protest your perfect willingness to accept in a spirit of thankfulness all the favors that have been bestowed upon you and are willing to receive such others as may come your way in the future, you do not offer to reimburse your generous benefactor even to the extent of bestowing an unoccupied port for a naval base and station. Cuba has a hundred harbors, many of them still existing in their pristine wildness, and there are two particularly—the bay of Nipe on the north coast and Guantanamo on the south coast—which are of no use to you commercially or strategically."

"But, no, you Cubans refuse to compromise yourselves to the extent of granting even a single harbor to the United States. Many of you say: 'The United States congress affirmed the independence of the island as a preliminary to armed intervention, yet after the surrender of the Spanish ports to United States officers a military government was established by orders of the president until such time as we [the Cubans] should organize a stable government of our own. This we have done; we now have a constitution and a flock of able statesmen to make and execute our laws. What we want now is a grip on the revenues, for we can show more than \$1,000,000 of imports and more than \$51,000,000 of exports, with our chief staples, sugar and tobacco, constantly augmenting. Your supreme court has decided that Cuba, in its relations to the United States, is a foreign country. Now get out! Allow us to manage our own affairs, especially the revenues of our rich and productive island, with its mines of copper, gold and iron, its vast forests of mahogany, logwood and ebony, its mountains as yet unexplored, its thousands of square miles planted with coffee, sugar and tobacco. You have done us a good turn, and we are sufficiently grateful. Let it go at that. But we cannot forget the vast horde of official parasites that have fattened on our revenues.'"

"These are the views of the sordidly ungrateful ones, like Sanguily and men of his stripe, who will entertain no compromise whatever. But there are the more moderate, like the patriot, General Gomez, who are content to abide the decision of the United States. They cannot fail to see that intervention has wrought great good to Cuba, that thousands of schools have been opened, mail facilities hitherto undreamed of afforded, roads made, waterworks erected and, above all, these pestholes of yellow fever, Santiago and Havana, cleansed, and thoroughly cleansed, of their accumulations of filth."

"Even if the United States were to forego its demands for naval stations and right of intervention, we could not afford to allow another San Juanito or another Havana of the old sort to arise as a perpetual menace to our southern shores. We have practically stamped out yellow fever in those cities and spots into cleanly abiding places. At human occupancy, and that is more than could be said of them three years ago. But you Cubans, like the Spaniards and the tramp, hold a grudge against any person or government that forces you to cleanse his habitation and take a bath; you like the good old fashioned Spanish way of having the kitchen and cesspool contiguous, you miss the pungent aroma that erstwhile was wafted up to the Prado from Calle Obispo and O'Reilly street, you disregard the fact that the harbor of Havana is as a fathoms sink of unspeakable filth and as severe the streets of your capital as the streets of your country."

The foregoing are some of the features of the situation as viewed from different standpoints in Cuba at this inchoate stage of government making. There is great unrest here, vast dissatisfaction at what the Cubans call interference in their affairs, but those who view the play of politics at close range say that the recently promulgated order from Washington abolishing the export duty on tobacco, which will affect the revenues to the extent of perhaps \$1,000,000, was a great concession to Cuban prejudices. Concessions are what the Cubans want, what the Cuban politicians hanker after with a great and mighty yearning—not to their prejudices, but to their national and collective aggrandizement. They have already formulated their desires in a saying, "Para que sea aquil," or, in the language of the great American statesman, Flannery of Texas, "What are we here for?"

The future prosperity of Cuba is not a political problem, but a commercial one, say the merchants, the large planters, the landowners and the citizens generally. And even the common people, aside from those with political aspirations, are inclined that way. It may believe the sentiments laid down now and then in conversation.

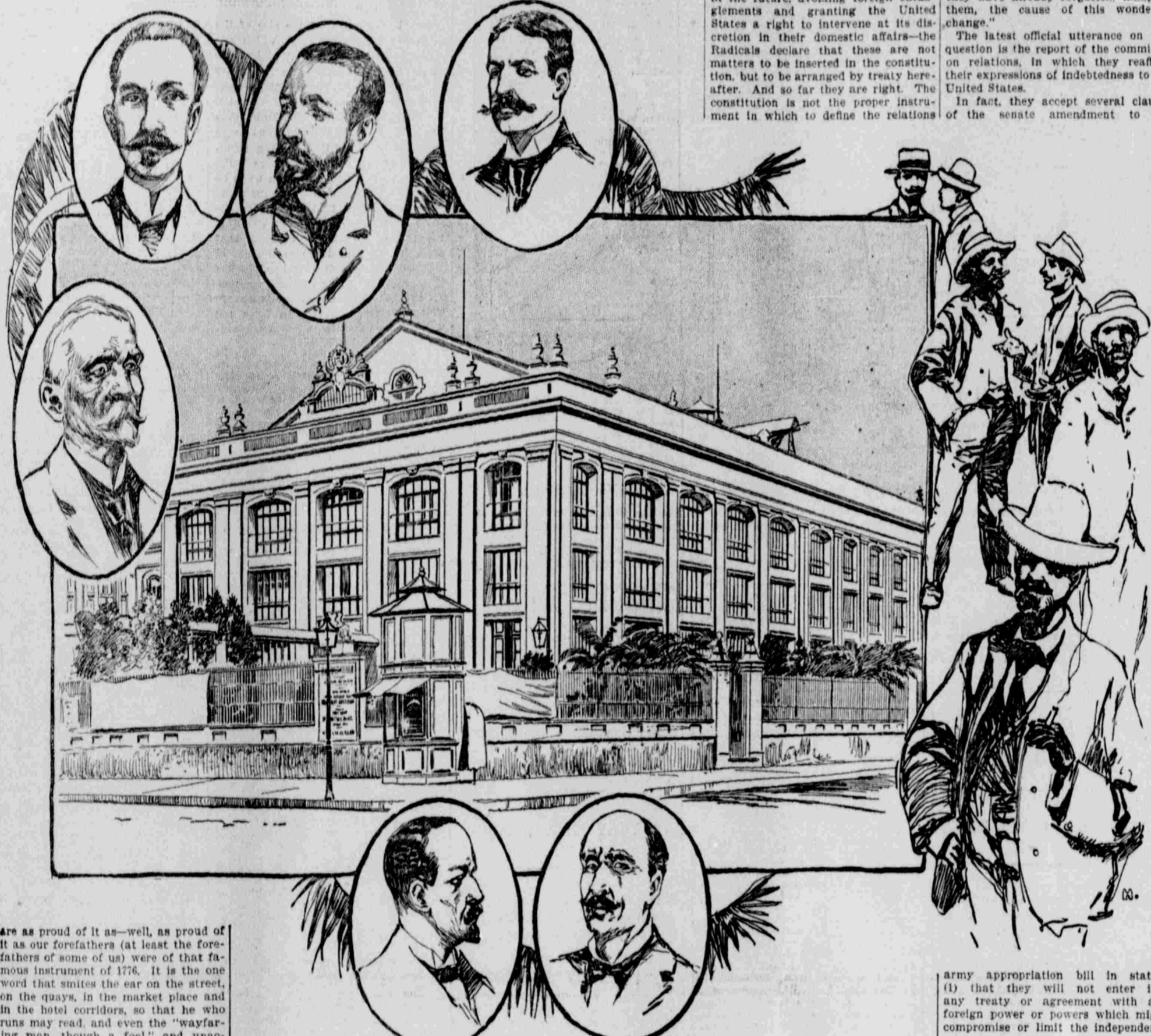
A popular ditty of the Annexationists, who are fond of doing everything in their power to annoy the Radicals, is:

In my heart is Cuba free;
In my head 'twill never be.

And so it goes, the representatives of the three parties pulling and hauling at each other at every possible opportunity. The Annexationists want no "Cuba libre" and call those who do want it short-sighted, hot-heads. The Moderates would like to see Cuba free, but incline to the opinion that it would be well if some provision could be made whereby the United States would stand between their country and harm in case of complications with foreign powers, and they are willing to make concessions to bring about that result. The Radicals call the Annexationists traitors, speak of the Moderates as time servers, declare the Americans must get out at once, nifty wily, and assert that they are competent to run their own country.

Numerically, the Radicals are stronger than Moderates and Annexationists combined, but what the end will be is one familiar with Latin politics would have the temerity to attempt to predict.

GEORGE K. WILLEMAN.
Havana, Cuba.



THE MARTI THEATER, MEETING PLACE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION—SOME TYPES OF DELEGATES.

are as proud of it as—well, as proud of it as our forefathers (at least the forefathers of some of us) were of that famous instrument of 1776. It is the one word that smites the ear on the street, on the quays, in the market place and in the hotel corridors, so that he who runs may read, and even the "wayfarer" man, though a fool, and unacquainted with the Spanish tongue (for "constitucion" is nearly the same in that language as in ours), might hear and understand.

Everybody in the States, of course, has been informed as to the new Cuban constitution; that it is a very creditable document; that it represents the concrete wisdom of Cuban statesmen, called together by General Wood's proclamation last September, and who were in almost continuous session until near the 21st of last month, when it was signed. It may be recalled that one of the most prominent Cuban members of the convention created somewhat of a scene by refusing to sign it and by loudly declaring to a foreigner: "You Americans are like monkeys. When you once get hold of a thing, you never let go!"

This rather rabid declaration of the aged Cisneros, twice a president of premature Cuban republics and looked up to by the extremists as the incarnation of patriotism and all the virtues, may seem enigmatical to many, but was perfectly clear to his countrymen. It meant that in his opinion the American government had forced the present condition of things in Cuba upon the island, and that also in his opinion it was meddling in matters not its own when it insisted upon a draft of the constitution being sent to Washington for approval.

In view of the strong feeling respecting what many Cubans regard as the unnecessarily protracted retention of power in this island by the United States government, an American citizen temporarily dwelling here, like myself, is likely to hear some unfavorable comment now and then. In fact, there are several fiery Cubanos walking around with chips on their shoulders, which, either tacitly or in so many words, they dash at the drop of the hat. They will fight at the drop of the hat, many of them, and it may be because there is no outlet for their bellicose disposition that they are ebullient. If there were only somebody or something to fight, the air might be cleared instantly and the Cuban situation simmer down to a matter of amicable arrangement between two friendly powers. But since United States troops are in possession of all the forts and ports, of all the towns and cities and the arms which the Cuban patriots carried were surrendered when our government paid down that bonus of \$3,000,000, there is nothing for them to do but accept the inevitable. That is particularly true what they don't want to do. The politicians generally are pretty much in the condition of another people of whom it was said, "They don't know what they want, but they're bound to have it."

According to some Americans here, the Cubans have been treated too leniently by the United States, and now, the politicians especially, are suffering from a very bad attack of "swelled head." It does seem, say these people, that the Cubans are rather ungrateful after all we have done for them, and

visions furnished; the thousands of poor wretches rescued from sickness and death; the pitching of the Spanish fleets into the sea; the setting up of freedom's flag where previously floated

reference to the great republic which freed them that will bequeath their indebtedness to posterity. They recognize the intervention to the extent of admitting that the military rule has

which shall exist between Cuba and the United States or any other power. As to whether the Cubans will be inclined to grant more favorable terms to the United States than to any other power,

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN Poet, Critic, Friend of Aspiring Authors

WITH the completion of "The American Anthology" Edmund Clarence Stedman has crowned his career as a critical editor of the English poetry of the nineteenth century. This volume was preceded by "A Victorian Anthology" (1895), "Poets of America" (1896) and "Victorian Poets" (1897). Although covering the same literary field as the two last named works, the anthologies are the results of the highest critical discernment and, so to speak, pronounce the editor's best judgment upon the achievements of this age in the art of poetic expression.

"An American Anthology" was not designed as a treasure house of imperishable American poems, but is a compilation of poems selected to illustrate Mr. Stedman's critical review of the American poets and poetry of the nineteenth century. The design and execution of the anthologies fitly indicate the character of their compiler. Mr. Stedman has all the courage and independence of the idealist and at the same time the painstaking conscientiousness of the man of action. He strikes fearlessly to the heart of things, but gives no snap judgments.

Intimate friends of the banker-poet-editor say that he is a many-sided man and must be judged on all sides. He has been at one and the same time for over 30 years a Wall street business man, a literary artist, an editor and a genial man of society. Just what has lain closest to his heart all these years is shown by his recent choice of evils. Physicians told Mr. Stedman that his health demanded that he give up society, business or literary work. He gave up society, but that was not sacrifice enough, and a year ago he withdrew from business.

The title "banker-poet" so long given to Mr. Stedman, at once suggests a banker with a harmless fond for verification. Stedman was a poet first. He wrote himself into fame while a newspaper worker, and, casting about for

means to devote his best thoughts to literary production, he hit upon the banking business as one of short hours and a real relaxation from mental effort, like chess or cards. After a day in Wall street and an evening in New York literary society, the author would take up his pen at midnight and devote four or five hours to composition.

As a poet Stedman's lyrical faculty is strongest; his critical faculty comes next. When writing, he always seized upon a theme of passing interest. Indeed, everything that Stedman has done shows him to be in touch with his time, his environment. He is in no sense a brooding recluse. Wall street associates and literary contemporaries, not always the most famous ones either, have been welcomed to his hospitable home.

For many years Stedman's house was a literary center. This was in the earlier years of the rivalry between New York and the Hub. In 1883 financial misfortune compelled the poet to give up his fine mansion and seek humbler quarters. This reverse, coming in middle life, did not crush the courageous soul of Stedman, and he set to work in his banking house and in his study to retrieve his fortunes. It was at this time that Stedman became collaborator with Miss Hutchinson in preparing the "Library of American Literature."

Some one has said that if every writer who has been helped by Mr. Stedman's advice in art production were to send him a violet his house would not hold the tribute. He has been more than the generous helper of beginners, for the task has sometimes made him a martyr. When his health first began to fail, his physician said that he must give up his correspondence with writers. That was the most wearing of all his occupations. It was not unusual for this master of literary criticism, this "dean of American letters," to write four to six pages to an entire stranger in answer to some simple question about the routine or technique of authorship. But worst of all was the

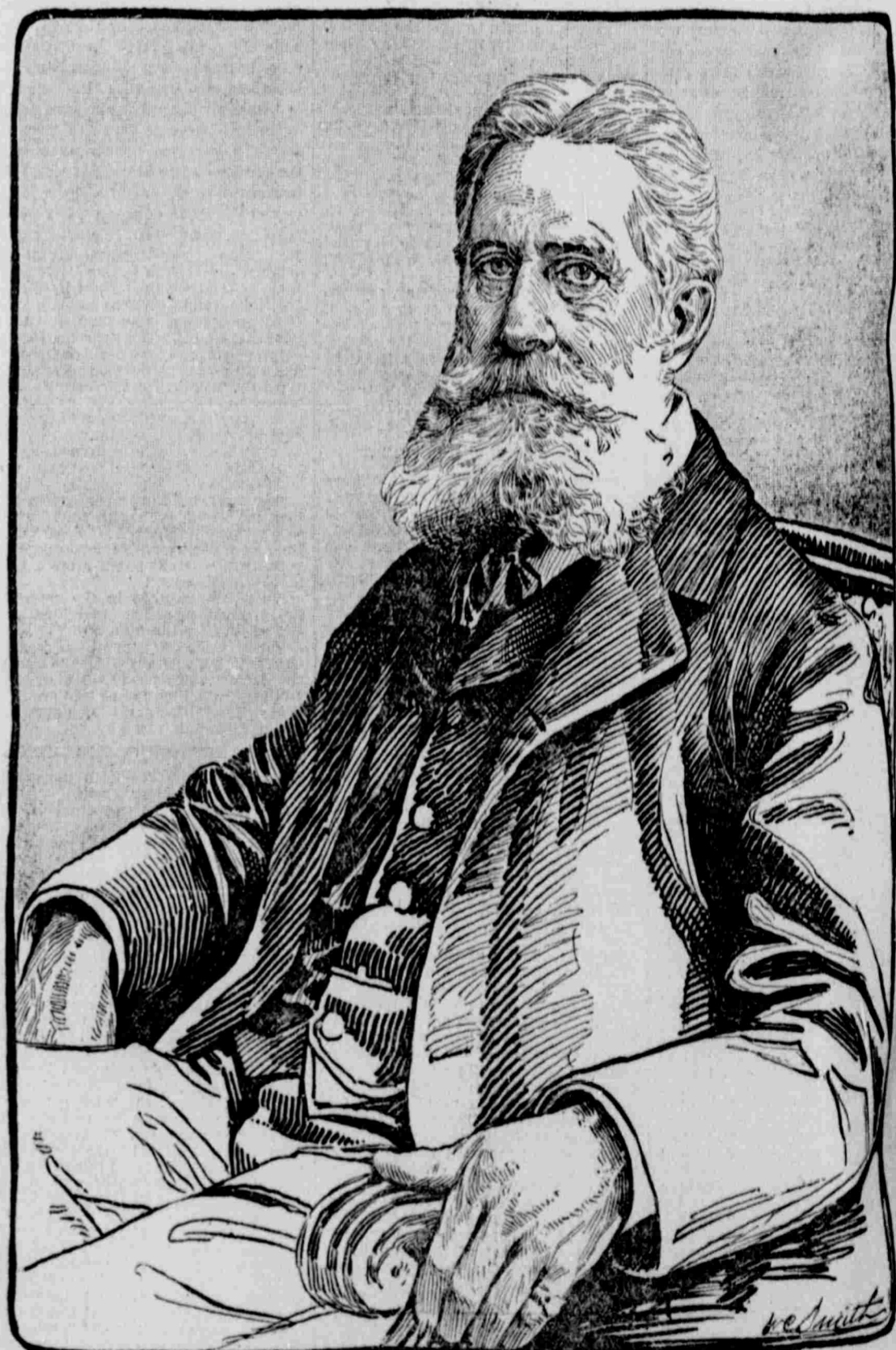
senate who part their hair in the middle. "But there are so few of us have any hair," remarked Senator Hanna when his attention was called to this. As a result of the antislavery agitation in Kansas a "joint keeper" at Westmore was notified on a Saturday that he would be given until the following Tuesday morning to close his place. He at once got out a thousand handbills announcing a "grand closing" on

strain put upon him by writers who invaded his home and read their poems and prose productions aloud to get his verbal criticism.

In person Mr. Stedman is a slight, dapper body who carries his sixty odd years with the grace of 30. His features are regular, eyes blue, beard snow white and combed out wide. There is nothing about him of the long haired, frayed coated negligee affected by the traditional poet. He is as neat and as well groomed as the most precise and leisurely clubman. In his youth Bohemia had attractions for the budding litterateur, but the more serious and orderly phases of life soon appealed the stronger, and the most that can be said of Stedman's jovial side is that he is genial with all of his kind of whatever rank. In his association as well as in his literary likings he is democratic. He is a social evolutionist, not a social revolutionist, and is a friend of the oppressed. The gems of Mr. Stedman's own art belong to the past, the era of youth, before he became a critic. His poems reveal the quality before referred to as the keynote to his life, courage and fidelity to the ideal—truth. As a poet and as a critic he is not a stickler for the finish. Strength, passion, imagery, are more than polished verse. "I never write a poem; a poem writes me," he declares. In inspiring young authors his dictum is: "Write, write, write. Don't wait to read all the best poets before beginning and do not cram with technical knowledge." When necessary to incite audacity in an overmodest beginner, he says, "Remember that a good barber is made at the expense of the public's hair." Although an ardent admirer of classic art, Stedman is not a dweller in the past. He believes that every age must have and should have its own poet expression. Toward the present and future in literature, and of American productions he is not merely tolerant and hopeful, but laudatory.

GEORGE LANGDON KILMER.

army appropriation bill in stating (1) that they will not enter into any treaty or agreement with any foreign power or powers which might compromise or limit the independence



EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN.

BRIGHT BITS FROM EVERYWHERE.

Dr. Berson and Lieutenant Hildebrandt of Berlin recently made the first trip across the Baltic sea in a balloon ever attempted. The wind carried them over and landed them safely in three hours and a quarter.

Heien Keller, the deaf, dumb and blind student at Radcliffe college, has been promoted to a course in English in

advance of her class. She is now studying history, government, English, French and German.

Calve persists in warning young girls that a quiet domestic life will afford them more true joy than any stage celebrity feels, even herself.

Senator Kearns of Utah is one of the three members of the United States

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Monday evening to which "one and all" were invited. A local paper described the "grand closing" as "the biggest drunk the town ever had."

Earl Fitzwilliam is the only living member of the house of commons which sat when Queen Victoria ascended the throne. When Viscount Milton and recently elected.

The family of O'Neil in the north of Ireland is said to be the oldest in the

United Kingdom and to be able to trace its line back to the dark ages.

Of the 39 ruling princes in Europe 20 have no direct male heir. These include among German princes the kings of Saxony, Bavaria and Wurttemberg; the Grand Dukes of Saxe-Weimar, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and of Hesse; the Dukes of Saxe-Altenburg and Saxe-Coburg and the Princes of Lippe and both Schwarzburgs. Besides these

there are the czar of Russia, the emperor of Austria, the kings of Italy, Spain, Belgium and Serbia and the Prince of Lichtenstein.

The first municipal crematory on record has been opened in Hull, England. It is a model establishment and cost \$12,500. The charge for cremating a body is \$5. In opening the crematory the mayor said that it was a departure from the established lines in municipal

enterprises, but that it gave every promise of proving a great public benefit from sanitary and economic points of view.

Lafayette's famous collection of relics and souvenirs is offered for sale in Paris by members of the family, which is said to be in poor circumstances. England has 50 engines for every 100 miles of railway; Germany, 51; France, only 47.