

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

OUR FLAG IN CUBA.

For the first time in the history of the world, the flag of the United States has been unfurled on the soil of Cuba.

A brief dispatch in today's "News" announces that the American scouts succeeded in making a junction with the insurgents; a sharp engagement followed soon after, in which sixteen Spaniards were killed and sixty wounded, the remainder being put to flight. During the encounter the Stars and Stripes floated proudly in the breeze alongside the beautiful emblem of Cuba Libre, and under these united symbols of freedom the victory was accomplished.

This war is not only proving itself a maker of epochs, but of swift and surprising climaxes as well. It was all anticipated in a general way, but the working out of the details is something at which the thinking world may stand agape and after its amazement is vented, ponder over.

Cuba is to be free. It is more than probable that the Philippines are already free. Thus are the decrees of a registered destiny being evolved by the land which owns no crown, bends to no tyrant and brooks no oppression.

AS TO THE PHILIPPINES.

Before long the question will be discussed what to do with the Philippine islands. Four nations, viz., the United States, England, Russia and Japan, are particularly interested in that question. By the military occupation of those islands and the driving out of the Spaniards, they are left virtually without an administration, and upon this country rests the responsibility of providing a form of government that will bring a measure of political and religious liberty to the unfortunate inhabitants, as well as make the infinite resources of those delightful regions available to the rest of mankind. How this best can be done will have to be decided in a near future. The only thing so far settled is, that Spain should never again be allowed to establish a rule of oppression there.

Great Britain has demonstrated her ability to govern foreign colonies to the satisfaction of the natives, as is evidenced by the condition of the Straits Settlements, and probably Russia could, by proper compensation in other parts of Asia, be persuaded to agree to an arrangement turning the entire group of islands over to England. Japan, too, might be considered in the selection of an administrator, but that country is rather a young member of the family of nations, and probably there would be serious objections on the part of the mikado's friends to strengthening his hands by the addition to his domain of another ten millions of subjects, many of whom have shown themselves as persistent fighters against great odds. On the whole it is impossible to doubt that the interests of the Philippines would be safer in the hands of Great Britain than Japan.

The United States must have a deciding voice in this matter. European nations have a habit of silently watching two combatants and then stepping in and dictating the terms of peace and dividing the spoils. This was done in the wars between Russia and Turkey, Japan and China, Greece and Turkey. But it was not done after the war between France and Germany, and the fact that the latter country had statesmen who successfully resisted all attempts at undue pressure to deprive

the victor of the fruits of victory established the power of the empire for ever afterwards. In Europe there is an idea that the great American Republic can be treated on the lines usually followed in negotiations with second class powers. Commodore Dewey's brilliant achievement at Manila has partly dispelled that illusion; for after all, European-built ships and European military skill was there pitted against American ships and enterprise. But it remains for American statesmanship, after the war, to complete the victory and establish the fact that this Republic is supreme in its independence. That done, peace will be assured for a long time to come, and the nations of the earth will know that the principles on which this government rests are superior in every respect to the old systems, the main support of which is iron and blood. The victory then, will be the triumph of liberty.

IRRIGATION AND EDUCATION

At a meeting held some time ago at Colusa, Cal., in the interest of irrigation, one of the speakers, Mr. George H. Maxwell, strongly advocated state ownership and control of irrigation works. He claimed the state could get back every dollar invested in irrigation and that the direct benefit to the state would be enormous. In the course of his remarks he touched several subjects of general interest, whether his views be endorsed or not. He said for instance:

"The trouble with our irrigation development in California has been that we have not recognized the indisputable fact that irrigation for large areas to wheat or staple crops will not pay for the construction of costly irrigation works. If California is to realize the full possibilities of prosperity which can come for the development by irrigation of her arid or semi-arid lands, we must recognize the broad fact that irrigation must go hand in hand with intensive farming—the farming of small tracts to diversified products. In fact, farming for a home and a living rather than for a business or on a large scale for profit. It is the man who wants to build up a home on ten acres of land from which, by his own labor on his own land, he can produce his own food and his own living and provide comfort and plenty for his family, who needs irrigation. It is true there are comparatively few men now who know how to do this or realize the latent possibilities of ten acres of land with water for irrigation. But as a whole people will find out that this is a source of livelihood and comfort for our millions of laboring men who are now idle—without work in cities because there is no work for them to do. There are over three million workers idle in the United States today. The tendency of modern invention is to do away with the need of human labor. The army of unemployed is constantly increasing. What are they to do? They cannot starve and there is no source to which they can go for food except to go back to Mother Earth and get it with their own labor directly from the land. The problem with them is how to get food, and there is no food for them unless they go direct to nature's granary for it."

Speaking of the necessity of giving men an education that will enable them to become their own employers and make them more sure of employment as long as they live, he said:

"In every agricultural county in California there should be farm training stations where any industrious man, who wanted to go back to the land and till it for a living, could learn how to do it.

"Our whole system for the education of youth is radically wrong. It ignores what should be the ultimate object of all education—to train a boy to earn an honorable livelihood by his labor. The ideal that is now set before every boy is to become a millionaire. All cannot be millionaires, and in this ambition the multitude must fail. What the state should do is to educate producers—farmers and miners—and train every boy so that he will know how to get a living for himself and family from ten acres of land. Then let it be recognized and taught to every boy that an honorable independence and a home on the land is the highest ideal of American citizenship. Nine-tenths of the boys who are now graduated from our state university are unfitted by their education from earning their living. They are trained in theories but in nothing practical. Our state university should be a college of agriculture and mining—nothing else. There is no reason why the state should educate doctors and lawyers—we have too many of them now. What we want in California is farmers and miners and a race of people trained to a practical realization of the fact that a man who has the requisite training, with a wife trained on the same lines, can have more of the genuine comforts and satisfactions of life, with the highest culture and refinement, in a rural home of ten acres on fertile lands than in any other occupation for he can produce by his own labor a comfortable living, and gradually lay by a competence for his old age, and all through his life be building a home where every charm exists which that word implies."

Every earnest word in favor of the rational education of our youth is timely. A thousand prosperous rural communities is a greater benefit to a country than a big city with its poverty, slums and vice, spreading corruption far and wide.

STATUS OF ALIENS IN TIME OF WAR.

A great many people are asking as to the status of those aliens in the United States with whose country we are at war. It is largely a subject of regulation, but still is controlled in its main features by the international common law. It has been so long since this country engaged in active hostilities with any other that the subject, like many others in recent days, has had to be "looked up" somewhat; it involves the concomitant question of how our citizens would be entitled to be treated when finding themselves within the jurisdiction of a hostile power.

The rule in "such case made and provided" is that every citizen of a country is at war with every citizen of the country or countries at war with his own. The doctrine is several hundred years old and is practically obsolete among civilized powers; that is, while it remains a theoretical factor in legal jurisprudence, no civilized nation of late years has put it into actual practice as a general thing. The rule strictly enforced would make every subject of an enemy within a nation's borders at the time of the breaking out of hostilities a prisoner of war of such nation, and his property would be subject to confiscation. There has been but one conspicuous instance of the enforcement of this semi-barbarous doctrine during the present century; this was when the rupture occurred between England and France after the treaty of peace of Amlens in 1802,