

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

ENGLAND AND ZANZIBAR.

The guns of Great Britain again have opened in war on the east coast of Africa, and a native power has gone down before them. As for the provocation in this case it seems to have been no more than the fact that the new sultan, Said Khalid, was not friendly to British interests. He committed no breach of the peace, so far as known, against the English. He is suspected of having pursued the usual method among the natives there of getting rid of the former sultan of Zanzibar by poisoning him, and then seized the throne. He was not favorable to British domination on the island, and the English commander at once interfered. The new ruler was summoned to surrender and refused. The British home government ordered at attack by the four war vessels unless submission was given. In the outcome Said Khalid doubtless has learned that he is no match for British force, and also that the British government is very prompt in enforcing its demands upon the native rulers.

Whether or not this affair will involve England with Germany remains to be seen. Perhaps it will not; yet German interests are directly involved. The defeated ruler found refuge in the German consulate. Zanzibar is an island off the coast of Germany's East African possessions, and a very important position commercially and strategically. This movement by the British places it wholly under their control unless Germany interferes.

There can be little question that the seizure of Zanzibar is part of a British design for an East African empire. This design is to include the whole of northeast Africa from the Mediterranean over to the Indian ocean, and taking in Egypt, Abyssinia and everything north and east of the Victoria Nyanza, down to the present German possessions—the entire valley of the Nile. This would make an empire about as large as the whole United States. It is a great scheme of territorial aggrandizement, and no doubt the plan has been deliberately settled upon as an essential British policy.

McKINLEY'S ACCEPTANCE.

The Republican nominee for the presidency, Hon. Wm. McKinley, has given his formal letter of acceptance to the public. While it covers much of the ground in the political controversy it is not burdensome in its length. The language used is plain, emphatic and dignified. There will be no question, even among those who disagree with Mr. McKinley as to his views, but that from his standpoint he has made a clear cut, concise and strong presentation of the case. Taken in its entirety, the letter is good and interesting reading either for those who would criticize or refute its assertions and arguments or who would adopt them as expressive of their political faith.

On the financial issue the statements are as distinct as could be desired. They give an official interpretation, if any was needed, to the plank of the St. Louis platform adopted in June last. The precise meaning of this has been a matter of some discussion among minor lights in the political firmament; but the practical application of the rule there invoked is the true definition, and this is furnished by Major McKinley as the person who, if any one is to, will have the privilege of enforcing the policy outlined. His statement, therefore, is authoritative. He pronounces emphatically against the unrestricted coinage of silver at a ratio of sixteen to one, by the United States, without the co-operation of other nations; he favors bimetallicism by international agreement, believing that the double standard can be established only by the concurrent law of nations; he favors maintaining the present gold standard in this country until such time as an international agreement for bimetallicism is effected; he denies an unfriendliness to silver, or that his party platform opposes its use as money; insists that, on the contrary, it favors the use of silver money and will keep in circulation all the silver and paper money now included in the currency of the country; and he pronounces most emphatically against the issue of paper money by the government direct.

The second great issue which the Republican nominee holds before the people is that of protection. He reviews conditions and doctrines on this subject, urging it as a matter of supreme importance to the people, and setting forth that in a stronger, more general application of the principles of a protective tariff and the giving of bounties lies the most potent remedy available for the existing hard times. In association with the protection panacea he points out benefits which flow from reciprocity.

The remaining features of the letter are a plea against sectionalism, either as to classes or localities, in the nation; an endorsement of restrictive legislation so far as it excludes immigrants of the criminal classes or those who come to make war on the Constitution and profit by public disquiet and turmoil, but adheres to the policy of admitting well disposed immigration; an endorsement of a liberal pension policy to soldiers and sailors; a declaration in favor of building up a national merchant marine and an effective navy; an endorsement of further civil service reform; and an expression in favor of dealing with revolutionary and disturbing elements by the prompt and vigorous assertion of national authority.

This is a brief resumé of the topics discussed and the manner of their treatment. There will be no surprise and no disappointment in the letter; it is just such a document as was to be expected, having been carefully prepared; and it no doubt ably and accurately expresses the political views of the one

selected to be the mouthpiece and leader of a great party in a great political contest. The letter of Mr. Hobart, expected in a few days, may be anticipated as in full accord with that of his chief. The next notable event of the kind will then be the letter of acceptance from Hon. Wm. J. Bryan, the Democratic nominee.

ANTIQUITY OF BABYLON.

Concerning the important discoveries on the site of ancient Babylon, according to which the history of that city is supposed to be carried thousands of years beyond the beginning of the commonly accepted chronology, a few further particulars have been published in the London Sun.

Professor Hilprecht of the University of Pennsylvania, who has charge of the excavations, is, as previously stated, confident that some tablets upon which he is now working date back about 10,000 years earlier than the present day, although he is not ready to fully commit himself yet on this point.

These latest discoveries, according to the published accounts, came about in this interesting way. Dr. Peters, worked down to a certain floor or platform, which he and others had taken to be the ground level of the ancient city. One of the party suggested that this level should be penetrated and digging continued until rock or virgin soil was reached. The suggestion was adopted, and to the delight of all concerned, it was found that what was supposed to be the level of the ancient city was only the level of a comparatively modern city built over the ruins of the older one, or a succession of older ones. Excavations above the level had gone through thirty-six feet of debris. They are now continued to a depth thirty feet below. The excavations above the platform discovered remains which covered a period of 4,000 years of Babylonian history. Below the platform to virgin soil was the accumulation of dralms, preserved and broken pottery, and various other objects of interest.

Twenty-three feet below the platform Professor Haines came upon the most ancient keystone arch known, an arch which Professor Hilprecht thinks cannot be later than 5000 B. C. Professor Haines excavated the lower part of the marvelous wall of the city. Its foundations were found to be sixteen feet below the level of the desert wall itself. It is seventeen feet high and forty-five feet wide upon the top. This wall stands upon another of unknown height. These walls were built of bricks twenty inches square, probably the largest bricks ever used. The most valuable finds were inscriptions upon broken vases, bricks and tablets. From these it is confidently predicted by Professor Hilprecht that the continuous history of Babylon will be written.

The conclusion as to the high antiquity of the evidences of civilization here found seems to rest entirely on the depth of the excavations made. It should be tolerably clear, however, that this mode of reasoning cannot be regarded as conclusive without strong corroborative evidence. In a place like Babylon, successively subjected to invasions and destructions, partial or total, built