

sufficient to them and which we will not question. There was one feature of special note in this connection, however, and that was that the Council established itself as superior to one of its committees. According to statements made to the Council, the committee report on the nomination was made out and signed, the minority refusing to concur. Yet the report was withheld, the reason being, it was asserted, that some of the committee wanted to do some manipulation of Council members in favor of their view. Whether this procedure was really intended or not, it was nipped promptly by the majority of the Council, and may perhaps serve as a notice to committees that reports should be made with reasonable promptness, and not be used as a means of trade or manipulating Council members in ways that are dubious, to say the least.

A GREEK POINT OF VIEW.

In the April number of the North American Review M. D. N. Botassi, Greek consul general at New York, gives a brief account of the circumstances that brought about the present uprising on Crete and the interference by the Greek people and government. He contradicts the statements recently made by the Russian press that the responsibility for the trouble rests with King George and his cabinet.

M. Botassi says Crete has always been one of the worst governed provinces of Turkey, and that the Christians there have suffered untold miseries. In 1866 a formidable insurrection broke out which lasted for two years and cost the Turkish government over \$80,000,000, more than the Crimean war. The result was the promulgation of an organic law, which, however, never was carried out. The powers inserted in the San Stefano treaty a paragraph enjoining the Sultan to apply that law, but it still remained a dead letter. In 1878 a new revolution was commenced. The sublime Porte again promised to introduce reforms and signed the treaty of Haleps, by the terms of which a Christian governor was to be appointed and some measure of autonomy granted. The power of the Christian governor, however, was rendered inoperative by the appointment of a military governor, who, being a Mussulman, refused to act in harmony with the Christian governor. Finally the military authority was all that remained.

The result was another insurrection in 1889, and the island has been in a state of ferment ever since. In July, 1896, hostilities broke out with the accompanying evils of plunder, massacre and the burning of villages. The Christians fortified themselves in the mountains and volunteers came from Greece to swell their numbers.

Greece, however, through her consul, advised the Christians to patience, assuring them that the powers were working in their interest. The Porte was compelled to issue an order, promising to appoint a Christian governor with the power to use the imperial army to maintain order and appoint officers, and placing the island under the supervision of the powers. The Cretans accepted this decree, but

the Mohammedans were enraged at the powers granted to the Christians, and pillage, massacre and incendiarism were renewed, until the atrocities at Canea forced Europe to take cognizance of the state of affairs. The repeated massacres caused intense excitement in Greece. Demonstrations took place under the very windows of the king and the premier. Against the swelling current no human power could avail. The king could do nothing else but dispatch a squadron to Cretan waters and land troops. Had he refused, an insurrection would have been the result in Greece.

M. Botassi concludes his article by pointing out that all talk about the necessity of guarding the integrity of the Turkish empire is so much nonsense. The dismemberment has been going on steadily. Crimea, Greece, Moldavia and Wallachia, Belgrade, Servia, Bulgaria, Kara, Batoum, Cyprus, Bosnia and Herzegovina have all been snatched from Turkey. It is only when Greek claims are involved that the integrity of the Ottoman empire is considered necessary for the peace of Europe.

In considering the Cretan question and the various complications arising from it, the hand of the Ruler of nations is plainly visible, as indeed throughout the pages of history. The Turks at present hold away over a country destined to be the central stage of important events. This stage must be cleared, and somebody must be instrumental in bringing this about. The nations and the princes may hesitate and even tremble for the outcome, but when the moment arrives, that which has been decreed shall be accomplished, and the world will be impressed with the fact that the consummation has been brought about by the hand of God.

POLITICS A POOR PROTECTOR.

For centuries the little country in northern Europe constituting what is generally known as the Netherlands has protected itself against the restless sea by a magnificent system of dikes. Not only has it preserved its lands from overflow from the surging tides, but it has also in large areas conquered the ocean itself, and by the construction of impenetrable walls and the scientific use of pumping and drainage apparatus, made steady encroachment upon old Neptune's realm. Its stupendous engineering achievements, resulting from the patience and unexampled industry of its people, have been for generations the wonder and admiration of the world. The lesson imparted has been that no obstacles were too great to be overcome by man's ingenuity and labor, even when those obstacles came in the form of a ceaseless struggle with the storm-tossed waters of the unrestrained German ocean.

Generally the world has appreciated this splendid lesson; yet truth compels the admission that its full import and value still fall of recognition in this choice and promised land of America. Within a fortnight past the papers have teemed with accounts of existing and threatened calamity from overflowed and broken levees in the great Mississippi, and the

heart is chilled with fear as to the probable extent of loss, both of life and property, before the danger shall have past. The visitation, while by no means usual, is still not without precedent and plenty of it; there have been disastrous floods before in the now-inundated regions, and millions of dollars would not cover the actual loss incurred, to say nothing of the hundreds of priceless human lives which were offered up as a sacrifice to the angry waters.

We realize that there is cold comfort in the policy of reserving words of criticism till the dark hour of distress. Yet the pointing out of shortcomings can frequently be made more effective at such times. In that hope for the present instance, we may be permitted to say that it is about time the work of constructing levees along the Mississippi river and its tributaries, and of carrying off the waters of that mighty stream, were done in a more systematic, thorough and secure manner. Most of these works are done under government auspices—where not, they should be, because private negligence as to the strength of a dike ought not to be allowed to imperil neighboring life and property for miles around. Millions upon millions of dollars have been appropriated by states and the national government for the protection of adjacent lands and the improvement of river channels. Much of this money has been absolutely wasted, as everybody knows. By dredging, by jetties, by a scientific study of all the methods possible in the correction of a menace of this magnitude, a far greater measure of protection might have been attained than has as yet been enjoyed. The trouble is there has been a lack of system coupled with a surplus of selfishness, and in and through and around it all has been the fatal ban of politics. This latter was never known to control rivers or rescue flood-threatened lands; yet there always was a vast amount of it in all operations where public money had to be expended. The Mississippi river and valley ought to be taken at once out of the "apollo" column, in which they have rested so long, and placed where they ought to be, under civil service of the strictest type. To leave them longer under the reign and subject to the caprices of politics will be nothing short of a national crime.

IN THE North American Review United States Surgeon General Walter Wyman presents an elaborate and carefully prepared paper on The Black Plague. The history of this scourge, which has ravaged the old world from time immemorial, and which at present is epidemic in Bombay, is most interestingly narrated by General Wyman, who regards its effective quarantine and the knowledge now possessed of the means necessary to prevent its spread, as a signal illustration of the scientific advance of modern medicine.

IF ANYBODY desires a greater variety of spring climate than the local weather clerk is just now dealing out, our columns are open for the publication of his petition.