

Will, then, the habitual disuse of the lower extremities tend to a physical degeneration in the civilized races by which they in muscular development and form will approach the Hottentot and the orang-outang? That is the serious question raised; perhaps reliable statistics gathered from the various recruiting stations would aid in a rational understanding of it. It is not impossible that modern civilization is confronted by a problem, which the growing interest in various outdoor games and in physical culture has not been able to solve. If so, the sooner that fact is understood, the better. Improvements in the system of the training of the young may be needed to meet the changed conditions that have arisen as a result of the progress of civilization.

NOT MUCH NEWS.

* There is not much to say regarding the war today, for the reason that there is not much war going on. A few desultory skirmishes—or it may prove to have been but one skirmish—numerously reported—have taken place on Cuban soil if the reports are correct. But that they are seldom so is at last painfully apparent, and dispatches purporting to come or actually coming from the front are received with many degrees of incredulity. The navy seems to be practically inert and the whole situation is, to those who desire a vigorous prosecution of the war at least, not at all encouraging.

To add to this unpleasant situation, the vacillating course which the army of invasion is made to pursue may be mentioned. One day the forces have embarked, the next they have not; now they are fully prepared, again they have nothing in readiness. Yesterday morning came the "information" that the whole troop was under way, having left early in the morning, and today we are advised that this is not true. If this latter is designed for the purpose of a blind for the Spaniards, as may be the case, its propriety is certainly questionable. Americans cannot afford to adopt Spanish tactics even to fight the Spanish with.

It is not at present probable that the news for a day or two will be of absorbing interest, but this is by no means certain. Sampson is at his post and may accomplish a grand coup at almost any time; still, the last advices regarding him, which were from a British source, were not at all reassuring. We will have to wait and "see what we shall see."

SPANIARDS AS ENGINEERS.

The New York Times says the Spaniards always were bad sailors and the change in naval methods has increased Spain's inferiority on the sea. This source of weakness was emphasized in a lecture by Joseph R. Oldham before a club of civil engineers. He said:

"The Spaniards do not make practical engineers. For several years I was assistant to the chief engineer of three lines of Spanish steamers, and, though all the officers and crew were Spaniards, the whole engine department was managed and worked by British engineers, and as people of that nationality are not loved by the Spaniards, it may be accepted as proof positive that they are incapable of managing their own machinery, or they would never pay Scotch engineers two or three times as much as Spaniards would readily work for."

The lecturer declared that when the truth comes to be fully known, it will be found that the Spaniards' total incapacity to stand up for any length of time before our ships was largely due

to their ignorance and inefficiency as engineers, for a modern battleship or large cruiser is nothing less than a complicated piece of machinery, from keel to truck, in hull, armament and equipment. It is known that many foreign engineers have already left the Spanish navy, and it may well be that much of Admiral Cervera's much-praised strategy was nothing more than helpless yielding to necessity, and that his success in eluding the American fleet was due to the fact that he was not engaged in war, but in desperate flights from port to port in search of engineers able to make repairs.

POWER OF CONGRESS TO GOVERN.

A recent decision by the United States circuit court of appeals at San Francisco concerning the government of Alaska is taken to be a judicial declaration on the much discussed question whether this country can assume the government of colonies without violation of the letter or the spirit of the Constitution. The case was one concerning the sale of liquor. Two men were arrested for violating the law prohibiting such sale. Their defense was that Congress has no constitutional right to impose upon one territory a law not intended to be binding upon other territories as well.

In his decision Judge Morrow defined the general power of Congress as regards the government of territories. He said:

"The answer to these and other like objections urged in the brief of counsel for defendant is found in the now well-established doctrine that the territories of the United States are entirely subject to the legislative authority of Congress. They are not organized under the Constitution, nor subject to its complex distribution of the powers of government as the organic law, but are the creation, exclusively, of the legislative department, and subject to its supervision and control. The United States having rightfully acquired the territory, and being the only government which can impose laws upon them, have the entire dominion and sovereignty, national and municipal, federal and state. Under this full and comprehensive authority Congress has unquestionably the power to exclude intoxicating liquors from any or all of its territories, or limit their sale under such regulations as it may prescribe. It may legislate in accordance with the special needs of each locality, and vary its regulations to meet the circumstances of the people. Whether the subject elsewhere would be a matter of local police regulations or within the state control under some other power, it is immaterial to consider; in a territory all the functions of government are within the legislative jurisdiction of Congress, and may be exercised through a local government or directly by such legislation as we have now under consideration."

If this view is sustained by the supreme court, it is clear that there can be no Constitutional argument against extending the blessings of American government to any territory, or race, over which, under the direction of Providence, the Stars and Stripes may be unfurled. If Congress may legislate in accordance with the special needs of each locality and vary its regulations to meet the circumstances of the people, it clearly has the power to establish in lawfully acquired territory, a dictatorship or an oligarchy, not to mention imperialism, as it has to provide for a popular form of government. All depends upon the condition of the people in the territory to be governed.

This decision limits the discussion about territorial expansion to the more

simple question of utility, and eliminates the issues raised on Constitutional grounds. The matter will be decided solely on its own merits. Is it for the best interests of the Republic to enter the field of colonization and establish itself in foreign waters? In Great Britain the question is now being discussed from a European point of view, and it is urged, with regard to the Philippines, that the United States will do well in keeping the group of islands, in order to save Europe from trouble. But even this consideration will not be the deciding one. For although in the family of nations the stronger ones necessarily will feel under obligation to help in maintaining peace as far as possible, yet the policy must ultimately be shaped by a desire to promote the future welfare of the people here, not in Europe. The Alaska decision is one that gives the friends of the so-called new departure policy much satisfaction.

EUROPE'S NEW PROBLEM.

It now appears that a secret understanding has existed between Russia and Austria for more than a year, or since the visit of the Emperor Francis Joseph to St. Petersburg in April 1897, according to which the Balkan states, Roumania, Servia, Bulgaria, Montenegro and Turkey, are divided into "spheres of influence" over which the two emperors have agreed to maintain peace and the status quo. A German "zeitung" explains that it is not a political agreement but merely a "state treaty" signed by the emperors and countersigned by the foreign ministers. By its terms the Balkan peninsula is divided into two spheres of influence, each of which contains an inner sphere and a wider one. Servia belongs to Austria's inner sphere and a large part of Macedonia falls in her outer sphere. Bulgaria is Russia's inner circle and the outer one comprises European Turkey east of Austria's sphere. The two emperors, it is said, have agreed that no warlike complications occur in their spheres, and that no agitations affecting Turkey, and thus threatening peace, shall emanate from Servia or Bulgaria. To gain this end each of the two states will intervene in its own sphere with or without previous agreement. Should friendly intervention prove futile, and Servia or Bulgaria wish to bring on war, the state to whose sphere the peace-breaker belongs will be entitled to intervene in arms.

If the report may be relied upon that such a secret treaty exists, its publication at this time may be regarded of the utmost importance. It is nothing less than a notice to Europe of the ultimate intention of Russia and Austria to settle the Turkish question without reference to the interests of the other powers generally regarded as members of the European concert. The ostensible object of the alleged compact is, as stated, to maintain peace and the status quo, but it also provides that in case of war in the Balkan states, it shall be the duty of Russia, or Austria, to intervene, each in her own sphere of influence, and it can hardly be doubted that the result of such intervention will be in the interest of annexation in one form or another. It is really a secret treaty for the ultimate division of Turkey.

In Great Britain the alleged treaty is not looked upon in a favorable light. It is believed to be a declaration of the intention of the emperors to exclude England from the settlement of the eastern question, and that country therefore is confronted by a serious problem. The British government cannot recognize Russian influence in Constantinople, but by what means can it be prevented from making itself