

THE EDITOR'S COMMENTS.

ONE LESSON OF THE WAR.

The newspapers are, very properly, endeavoring to state the lessons to be drawn from the events of the war just closed. One of these is particularly to the point and ought to be of benefit not only to this country but to others as well. It is a lesson furnished by the battles in which our volunteers distinguished themselves, with so much honor.

Ever since the triumphs of the German arms and the establishment of the Teutonic empire, it has been an axiom with the rulers of Europe that vast standing armies and years of training are necessary for a country. Slowly the European countries have been converted into military camps. The nations have gradually yielded to the entreaties of kings and rulers and voted money and men for armies on a "peace footing." Even small countries have been compelled to overtax themselves in order to make a showing of military strength.

Our volunteers have demonstrated the fallacy of the reasoning that has fastened a curse upon some of the nations of Europe. They have proven that the youth of a free country when put to the test is equal to the occasion. They have proven that military service of two or three years' duration, except for those who choose a military career for life, is unnecessary. They have furnished an unanswerable argument to the leaders of liberty and humanity who heretofore have so often been silenced by sentimental appeals to the patriotism of the masses. From now on they will ask this simple question: If American volunteers after two months' training can fight better than European soldiers, what kind of patriotism is that which compels the flower of a country to abandon their pursuits for years in order to serve in the army? And the disciples of Bismarck will be unable to reply. Then a demand will be raised for institutions that will foster intelligence, love of liberty and enthusiasm for deeds of heroism. The barracks for the masses of the nations will have to give place for the school, and coming generations will bless the volunteers who taught the world this lesson.

THE PEACE COMMISSION.

It seems to be settled now that Secretary of State Day is to head the peace commission which will meet at Paris for the purpose of finally arranging the future relations between this country and Spain. Ambassador Hay is to become secretary of state and Whitelaw Reid will go to London as the representative of our government there. Secretary Day has proved his ability to hold the helm of the state during the storm that has passed. Notwithstanding the criticism that has been bestowed upon the administration he has discharged his duties to the satisfaction of the American people, and it is felt that the interests of the nation are in safe hands. He is thoroughly familiar with the views of the President and in a position to speak with authority upon any question that may come up before the peace commission. The members of the Spanish commission are said to be made up of expert and accomplished diplomats under the leadership of Almodovar del Rio.

The chief difficulty promises to be the Philippine islands. Probably Spain will maintain that she has a right to keep all except Manila, and in this she

will be supported by all the European cabinets, except that of Great Britain, not because they desire to preserve the Spanish power in the islands but because a temporary continuation of that power there would mean, probably, a chance for the land-hungry empires to help themselves to that territory when needed. On the other hand the policy of the United States with regard to the Philippines is believed to be to retain the entire island of Luzon, while the remainder of the group may be given to Spain to rule under certain guarantees as to the kind of government to be administered. In that event the United States having possession of Luzon and its troops and naval vessels being there it will be able to enforce the guarantees as to the government of the remainder of the group. These guarantees will probably require all the islands to be surrendered by Spain in case she fails to maintain the conditions agreed upon in the treaty.

Should this solution be agreed upon the Philippines may become a bone of contention between the United States and some European countries. For with the island of Luzon Americanized, the inhabitants of the other islands would soon become discontented and wish to throw off the Spanish rule in order to get the benefits enjoyed by their neighbors. Spain would be unable to subdue the people. The United States would have to take a hand again in the affairs of the islands. The only way to avoid future complications is to settle the matter now thoroughly. And this is all the more important because the fate of the vast Chinese empire is now trembling in the balances, and the United States ought to be in a position to make herself heard in the councils of the nations that presume to dictate in matters of vital interest to the entire civilized world.

FOR U. S. SENATOR.

It is not an open secret nor much of a secret of any kind that a great deal of the interest that is being and will continue to be (a fortiori) taken in the coming State election, centers upon the personnel of one office which the people do not fill directly. This is the United States senatorship. There is by no means anything reprehensible in the voters of the realm taking such interest, albeit deprived of participating directly in the choice; nor is there anything specially if at all censurable in a qualified citizen nursing an ambition to fill the place. When all things are considered in the light of their own consequence the post of a senator of the United States has but two or three superiors in the whole governmental fabric, the exceptions being the Presidency certainly and in any event, the secretaryship of state when filled as it was by Seward or Fish, and the treasuryship when its functions are presided over by such a man as Salmon P. Chase.

The senator is not merely a law maker but in many respects a law interpreter. He sits in a place which is called the upper house for other reasons than figurative attitude. It is the body which represents the states in their sovereign, aggregate capacity, as the representatives do the individuals who compose the sovereignty. The Senate, jointly with the Executive, deals with foreign powers in the matter of treaties, and assists—sometimes con-

trols—the President in the matter of the higher grade appointments. It exercises a steadfast surveillance over his official acts, causes them to correspond with the great charter and the enactments of Congress, and for gross violations of either, or for general behavior not in consonance with the dignity and honor of the station, can remove him from office. When a man holds a position of this kind and in addition has for himself extensive education, a comprehensive intellect, a copious and always available vocabulary, a good presence and a forcible delivery, he is apt to become conspicuous if not famous, and it is not difficult to understand why it is that the place is rated so high and why there is always so great a demand for it.

It is only fair to say that it is very rarely that utterly unworthy or incapable men succeed in making their way to the Senate as members thereof. In the first place a man must have a high and honorable standing in his state before his name is likely to be seriously mentioned in such connection. He must then be popular enough to have at the beginning of the legislative term which elects the senator a majority of that body favorable to him and not a few who prefer him to anyone else. With a decided following, even though many votes short of a majority, he is still not necessarily without hope unless a majority are immovably against him. Here is where much of the odium attaching to senatorial elections has its origin. The boon sought is of such great consequence and the struggle for it sometimes becomes so exciting and confused that men are induced too often to act without consulting their best judgment, and not infrequently they yield to the influences of money. As much as this practice has been denounced, as often and persistently as it has been legislated against and as thoroughly as investigations have been made, it is no nearer extirpation now than at any other time in the nation's history; on the contrary it seems rather to have taken deeper root. Undoubtedly there are legitimate campaign expenses which those concerned must meet and there should be no reproach upon the candidate or the candidates' friends who pay the bills for services properly and legitimately rendered. There is no fault being found with this *per se*, although the practice is so susceptible of abuse—it is so difficult at times to determine where legitimate expenditure leaves off and actual corruption begins—that it is as well not to look upon the political payments on a large scale too lightly.

A man or woman who will permit himself or herself to receive money other than what was "nominated in the bond"—what he or she impliedly consented to perform the official duties for—or to take by devious or roundabout methods anything of value not embraced in the contract, is unfit to be a member of a legislature or to hold any other office of honor, trust or emoluments. These are not numerous hereabout and it is sincerely hoped they never will be. While all that has previously been said regarding the rightfulness of a contest for the senatorship stands, it does not follow that any one, no matter where he lives or what his station, has any right to employ such agencies to effect his purpose as cannot be brought to light without subjecting the parties thereto to a criminal prosecution or the reprobation of all law-respecting people. And this does not refer exclusively to the use of money, although this is the chief method of corrupting. It is nearly if not quite as bad to have mem-