

to the United States was the work of Divine Providence rather than the fruit of chicanery, intrigue and greed. In this he has followed well-established precedent. No modern world Power ever grabs territory or preys upon the weak and defenseless. When it becomes necessary for it to despoil the weak, it does so in the interests of civilization and humanity as an instrument of a Higher Power.

Toronto (Ont.) Weekly Sun (Goldwin Smith), Dec. 2.—"We needed Panama in our business, we have got her, and we are going to keep her." So writes the editor of a great American journal. It is starting to find that such words can be penned, and are probably read by large numbers with satisfaction, in a civilized and professedly Christian country. But such are the tone and tendency of the day. Even if the conduct of the American government has been as bad as appears, other governments are not qualified to cast the first stone. Russia wants Finland to round off her despotism, and in defiance of her solemn covenant she takes it, while a British writer of eminence justifies her action on the principle that force makes law. Great Britain wants the Transvaal that she may paint South Africa red; and she takes it, solemn pledges notwithstanding. We are apparently drifting into a renewal of the age of Machiavel, when in politics expediency, or what to rapacity seemed expediency, made right. The forces of moral resistance are happily greater now than they were in Machiavel's day, and we may have faith in their ultimate triumph. But before righteousness regains its ascendancy humanity may have a bad quarter of an hour.

Springfield Republican (Ind.), Dec. 4 (weekly).—Rev. Dr. Newman Smyth's "misgivings rather than thanksgiving" for the Panama business was a telling phrase in the New Haven divine's Thanksgiving day sermon. He was quite justified in deciding to "postpone giving thanks for the Panama canal until another Thanksgiving day." But better still was Dr. Smyth's daring rebuke of the Outlook—and the word "daring" is used because it is a rare and courageous clergyman who will call attention from his pulpit to the sanctimonious humbuggery of the New York weekly journal which fills a semi-religious role with such artful solemnity. There has been nothing more laughable during the Panama affair than the Outlook's antics with the moral law—unless you except the Amherst college professor's funny theory of "international eminent domain." Happily there is an eminent divine who is not deceived by these moral and legal prestidigitateurs, and his name is Smyth. "We are not to be satisfied," said Dr. Smyth, "with hypocritical explanations or pretenses, or with any such easy justification of it, superficial in reasoning, and with large spaces in it vacant of facts, as has appeared in papers representing the religious sense of the community, like the Outlook."

IN CONGRESS.

This report is an abstract of the Congressional Record, the official report of Congressional proceedings. It includes all matters of general interest, and closes with the last issue of the Record at hand upon going to press. Page references are to the pages of Vol. 37 of that publication.

Washington, Nov. 30-Dec. 5, 1903.

Senate.

There was no session on the 30th, and no business of general interest was transacted on the 1st. Adjournment was taken on the 1st to the 4th. No business of general interest was transacted on the 4th nor on the 5th.

House.

There was no session on the 30th, and on the 1st, after a random debate the House adjourned to the 4th. No business of gen-

eral interest was transacted on the 4th, and on the 5th the time was occupied with desultory debate.

Record Notes.—Itemized statement of expenditures of the Isthmian Canal Commission (pp. 380-86).

MISCELLANY

WHAT IS LIBERTY?

Translated from the Norwegian, for The Public, by Waldemar Lee.

What is liberty? Define it if you can—Liberty, that all the world demands; Liberty, that scorns our man-made law, And in the crippled soul of serf makes longings grow.

Liberty! Just try a definition, And give an answer worth consideration. Well, here is one:

"In liberty the horse is often sent To show his tricks upon the tanbark, 'neath the tent."

THE TRUE OPTIMISM.

Portions of a sermon on "Optimistic Pessimists," delivered by H. S. Bigelow at the Vine Street Congregational church in Cincinnati, December 6.

The parable of the mustard seed reveals to us the philosophy from which Jesus drew his abounding optimism.

Truth was to him like unto a grain of mustard seed, "which, indeed, is less than all seeds; but when it is grown, it is greater than the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and lodge in the branches thereof."

Jesus spoke this parable to men who who had become imbued with the truth he taught. But they were humble men. They were only a handful against the world, and they were altogether without honor in their time.

"Yes," said Jesus, "it may seem to be a forlorn hope. You despair because you compare your feebleness with the world's strength. If that were the contest, there would be no hope. You forget the all-important factor, namely, the vitality of the truth."

Truth is not a burden that must be upheld by the hand of men. It is a seed that you put in the ground. It is a thing that grows. A man might as well try to manufacture an oak from an acorn, as to overcome by his own might the power that is arrayed against the truth. But he can sow the seed. And it is as vain for men to contend against the growing truth as it would be for them to try to put the oak back into the acorn.

For those who keep their religion tucked away in a snug little church; for those to whom Christianity is a creed, and not a deed, a dream, and not a battle, this parable will have little significance.

But this parable is pregnant with hope for those who find their religious endeavor in service for humanity.

The men who have sided with the truth, which the power of their day has frowned upon, and before which ignorance has trembled; the men who, in advance of their fellows, have stood on the skirmish line, looking with blood-bespattered faces into open cannon mouths; the men who, with hope deferred, have waited for prejudices to melt and passions to subside; the men who have toiled on in patience, while year after year the fickle multitude has been thrown into paroxysms of joy over the defeat of that truth which was its only salvation; the men who have made war upon the hoary customs and legal crimes by which the race has been held in bondage;—these are the men who must find comfort in the parable. For the parable declares to them that they are not alone; that the truth they plant is sending its roots into the ground, even while its misguided foes dance upon what they take to be its grave; that the same power which brings the oak out of the acorn is working in silence, and working mightily for the triumph of their just cause.

The true optimist is the man who fights the wrong with good heart, because he knows he is but contending for the recognition of eternal laws, and because with the eye of faith he can see the future grandeur of his humble truth. What inspires him is the assurance of the good time coming when the thoughts of down-trodden men will soar on high, and the heavens resound with the mighty shouts of the Sons of God, rejoicing in their new-found freedom.

MAYOR JOHNSON'S WAY.

CIVIL SERVICE IN THE WATER WORKS.

A delegation of prominent South side Democratic politicians, headed by Louis Cook, Stanley Harrison, Dan Kollicker, called upon Mayor Johnson yesterday afternoon to file a formal protest against Prof. Bemis. They said that Bemis has alienated many good Democratic workers, and that he has become an object of hatred among the workers. They insinuated that the revolt of Democratic councilmen last Monday night, when two administration water works measures were defeated by Democratic votes, was aimed at Bemis over the head of Johnson.

"You cannot hit Bemis without hitting me," replied the mayor. "I approve of what Bemis is doing, and I stand for the