

that we have no time for "the hours of chat and walks and drives together" of which our correspondent writes, or for most of the other things that would do us good.

But is not the growth of the new friendship the greatest cause of the decay of the old? The old friendship was asexual, because one sex had the monopoly of the interests that make friendship. The new friendship between the sexes has very largely taken its place. It used to be a rare thing for a man to make a friend of his wife or a wife of her husband; it is now a common thing. The equalization of the sexes has done that; for, as Aristotle understood and Bacon, by the by, forgot, there can be no true friendship except between equals.

THE SACREDNESS OF PUBLIC PROPERTY.

In his Mark Fagin article, Mr. Lincoln Steffens sent his lance to the core of our social sore. He said: "All men know that private property is sacred. For centuries that sense has been borne in upon us till even thieves know it is wrong to steal private property. But highly civilized men lack all sense of the sacredness of public property; from timber lands to city streets, that is private graft."

Those councilmen who were prosecuted by Gov. Folk—what had they done? They had stolen. But what had they stolen? They had not stolen private property. They had assisted certain individuals to steal public property.

A promoter went to St. Louis and induced the council to give him a street railway franchise. The inducement consisted of a bribe of \$250,000, distributed among the members of the council. He did not lay a rail. He did not string a wire. He did not operate a car. He went straightway to Wall street and sold the franchise for \$1,250,000.

Now what did Wall street buy? It bought certain legal privileges in the streets of St. Louis. These privileges were worth a million and a quarter—probably much more. They belonged to the city of St. Louis. They were public property. The promoter and the councilmen found this public property in the streets of the city, took it, and sold it, and put the money in their own pockets.

If a bank robbery had been committed in the city and a million and a quarter of the bank's funds taken, so that the bank had been ruined and

many people had lost their savings—that would have been the talk of the nation, and those thieves would have been hunted down and sent to the penitentiary if possible. But when a million and a quarter is stolen from no one in particular, but from everyone in general, few take enough interest to go to the city hall to see the thing done, and those who get the plunder usually remain as before, the most respected citizens of the town.

Our richest citizens not infrequently are our most successful beggars if not our most artistic thieves.

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PUERTO RICAN IDEALS.

A new monthly magazine called "The Star of Borinquen" is issued in the interest of Puerto Ricans, and bears the native flag of independent Puerto Rico on its title page, though the place of publication is Puerto Plata, Santo Domingo. The declaration of principles of this outspoken publication may interest those who suppose that in Puerto Rico at least the new American colonial system is flourishing.

It is a matter of common assertion and generally recognized that Puerto Rico can only attain the position which is due to her civilization and to her manifold resources by the active and harmonious efforts of her inhabitants, maintaining in the eyes of the world her reputation as a nation to which free institutions are dear.

In these pages the idea of such co-operation and union takes tangible form. It will be realized whether we succeed here or no because this idea, even though it were to remain latent, will be inherent in the soul of our nation, an un fading aspiration which can never be destroyed, having its root in race feeling.

This feeling is so powerful that although in the seven years of American administration it has been steadily discouraged by subtle influences and ingeniously devised plans, it is still as strong as ever in the hearts of the people. We are so absolutely possessed by it that it was not extinguished even during the sad epoch of our national life when unbridled passions struggled in the arena of party strife.

Fortunately we have discovered that we were on the wrong path and that envy and hatred of each other did not help solve the problem that confronts us and that it is idle to direct weapons against our brethren which, in wounding them, wound ourselves.

But it is nevertheless not surprising

after all to note that, the passionate strife, the unparalleled madness which possessed all minds, the chaotic condition into which political passion has carried us, the train of endless influences which swept over the country having entirely passed away, we now enter resolutely and urgently upon a course diametrically opposed to the former one, and that now brother recognizes brother and drops the fratricidal weapon. This sudden phenomenon, this harmony and union, did not result from calculation, from design, from any premeditated agreement by the leaders that formerly urged the masses blindly onward to strife for which there was no cause. If such were the case it could not be permanent.

Something deeper has called forth this generous zeal, this saving idea, and this "something" was the race feeling which was latent and has now blossomed forth, calling into life all the energies of which it is capable, to resist the encroaching influences of Americanization which, like the irresistible overflow of a river in flood, was invading the land without meeting the resistance of dam or embankment. Far be it from us to claim for ourselves a leadership which would be unfitting from every point of view, but we are inflexibly resolved to show no favor to the false claims of any advantage to accrue from the absorption of the soul of Puerto Rico by the gigantic nation that is now governing us.

Such an absorption cannot be brought about. It has not been satisfactorily attained in those States of the Union which were settled by the Spanish or French races, in spite of the fact that continuity of territory has served as a tremendously powerful means of harmonizing racial relations. It is still more certain to fall in an island which has no more affinity to the North American continent than the circumstance that it also is inhabited by human beings! Though some persons overpowered and blinded by the Yankee power are intent to hope that Puerto Rico may form a part of the Union the only union or confederation to which we could consent would be the independent confederation of the Antilles, however remote its realization may be. Whether it were to be under an American protectorate matters little. However brought about, its promoters will render a tremendous service to civilization. It would mean undying glory for the United States to