

of protection logic and protection prosperity, as well as of the more vulgar thimbleric.

The aroma of Wall street hung about the viands and impregnated the political atmosphere at the dinner to Mayor McClellan in New York on the 4th. One whiff should be enough to warn everybody that New York is no place for the national convention. To hold the convention there would be as good as announcing its owners, and that would be fatal at the election.

The drastic policy of Mayor Harrison with reference to the local theaters and public halls calls for more than passing mention. His appalling consciousness of past neglect seems to have thrown him completely off his balance. There is no other way of accounting for his peremptory closing of theaters and public halls, regardless of the great loss and intense suffering that this must cause and is now causing. There is no excuse for such a spasm. A requirement that the safety ordinances be fully complied with in a reasonable time, that the specially dangerous parts of the theaters be not used meanwhile, and that all immediately available precautions be taken, would have been wise administration. But what has been done is childish and reckless. We recognize the plea that it is the duty of administrative officers to enforce the laws as they find them, and if Mayor Harrison were doing this on principle and not under the spur of personal irritation, we should cordially sympathize with him. But he is not doing it on principle. Not only has he confessedly allowed these ordinances to be ignored in the past, but he is deliberately ignoring them now. It is only theaters and public halls that he orders closed. Yet, upon his own statement, churches and department stores are notorious violators of the same ordinances. Why not close them, too?

When asked why, by one of the theater managers, Mayor Harri-

son replied that the matter was under consideration by the council, and that it was for the council to say what should be done. But why for the council to say in the case of churches and department stores, and for the Mayor to say in the case of theaters and halls? These laws should be enforced impartially against all, if against any. But here is a situation in which, with rational precautions, reasonable time should be allowed to churches, department stores, halls and theaters to comply with the safety laws which all have so long been permitted to ignore. Not that there should be any toleration of the vicious doctrine of vested rights in wrong doing, but revolutionary changes should be made with as little disturbance as possible. Let the laws be strictly enforced; but when enforcement has long been lax let some notice precede a change of policy.

#### IMPERIALISM AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

There seem to be many who have failed to recognize any practical connection between imperialism and the internal social problems of a country. We are apt to think of imperialism as affecting only the foreign policy of the nation, and thus we fail to see its relation to home affairs, except, of course, as it increases government expenditures.

If we seek to get below the surface of vanity and hurrah, and try seriously to discover the real philosophy of the imperialistic movement, what, let us ask, is the impelling motive? Think of what England has added to her territory since 1870: an area of 4,754,000 square miles and an estimated population of 88 millions! Why this immense expansion? What strong forces are back of it? Manifest destiny and Anglo-Saxon push are words: what is the thing? Mr. Hobson, an English writer, in his book, "Imperialism: A Study," has given the answer.

"It is not too much to say," he writes, "that the modern foreign policy of Great Britain is primarily

a struggle for profitable markets of investment. To a larger extent every year Great Britain is becoming a nation living upon tribute from abroad, and the classes who enjoy this tribute have an ever increasing incentive to employ the public policy, the public purse, and the public force to extend the field of their private investments, and to safeguard and improve their existing investments."

In other words it is in the growth of concentrated capital and the consequent desire for profitable foreign trade and investment that we find the explanation of colonial expansion. It is for foreign markets and the exploitation of weaker peoples that battleships are multiplied, taxes increased, expenditures quadrupled, lives sacrificed, and principles trampled under foot. It is for extending trade influence at the behest of financial rulers that the natural spread of civilization and self-government is disregarded and a domineering tyranny established over unwilling subjects.

All this has become as true of America as of England. We have not an equal necessity of looking abroad, because of our larger home market; but we are looking abroad. It may be that the home market of America still takes 96 per cent. of all manufactured articles, only 4 per cent. going to foreign markets; but already we find that the extension of foreign trade and the competition in foreign markets are begetting and fostering our imperialism. And at the same time, as has been the case in England, they are beginning to be used as an argument for resisting the demands of laborers for better pay and shorter hours. This argument is being dinned into the ears of British workingmen, and in due time it will be dinned more and more into the ears of American workingmen. Furthermore, the same argument is used to excuse the monopolistic methods of trusts. In an article, for example, in one of the current reviews, a writer concludes a lengthy discussion of the Standard Oil Company by telling how this company sells about 60 per cent of the oil exported, how its power at home enables it to compete in foreign fields, and how it sells abroad at a lower price than at home

only where it comes into competition with Russia in the eastern market.

But in a still more intimate way the purpose and methods of imperialism connect themselves with social problems at home. Readers of *The Public* may, perhaps, remember a book on Poverty reviewed some time since in these columns. It was a minute study of the English city of York, in which place the author found that over 40 per cent. of the population were virtually paupers. Now suppose England, instead of overwhelming the Boers, had given her thought and effort to enabling these people to become purchasers of her goods! Well does Mr. Hobson speak of the "absurdity of spending half our financial resources in fighting to secure foreign markets at a time when hungry mouths, ill-clad backs, ill-furnished houses, indicate countless unsatisfied material wants among our own population." Imperialism turns its back on these conditions in the home market. It does not seek to increase this market by a better distribution of wealth at home. It goes about, at the cost of the nation's revenue and lives, seeking foreign markets and foreign investments.

Imperialism talks much about the spread of civilization. When we shall have attended better to social conditions at home, then and then only shall we have a civilization worthy to spread. But imperialists do not think so; the present civilization is good enough for them, and they want more of the same kind. So the great financial forces that in both England and America, through the Tory and Republican parties, are whistling patriotism and prosperity to the neglect of the conditions of ill-distributed wealth at home, are the same forces that are backing the policy of Imperialism.

Let us recognize the fact that there are many good men in these parties who have not considered the full purport of this policy. There are others who have been carried along by the impulse of a mistaken patriotism, or by the force of cleverly manipulated public opinion. To all these we must appeal to pause and think how

false the policy of Imperialism is both in spirit and in method. Its spirit is driving us to acts of cruelty and to the sacrifice of the optimistic principles of democratic government. Its method is to divert attention and to turn away from the betterment of social conditions at home, while it seeks new fields to exploit abroad.

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## NEWS

Week ending Thursday, Jan. 7.

The long expected clash of war between Russia and Japan over the Korean question (p. 213), a clash in which Great Britain, France, Germany and even the United States may possibly become involved, seems now most imminent. In the news dispatches it is freely predicted. Yet the authentic disclosures are thus far insufficient for a rational judgment either as to the probability of early hostilities or as to the immediate or nominal causes therefor.

In the western hemisphere the burning question of the week is the Panama complication (p. 612). President Roosevelt has devoted to it a long special message to Congress, which was read before both Houses on the 4th, upon their re-assembling after the holiday recess. In this message he reviews the subject vigorously from the Administration point of view, concluding with a declaration that the recognition of Panama as an independent republic is "already an accomplished fact," and therefore that the only open question is "whether or not we shall build an Isthmian canal."

Along with his special message the President transmitted a letter received by Secretary Hay from Gen. Reyes, the Colombian special envoy, and Mr. Hay's reply, which indicates the policy of the Administration with reference to Colombia's right to resist the secession of Panama. Gen. Reyes wrote (under date of Dec. 8):

I have the honor to address your excellency for the purpose of stating respectfully that I have received from my government instructions to inquire what

attitude would be assumed by the government of the United States in the event which may take place of Colombian troops or forces under the Colombian flag making their appearance on the Isthmus, or attempting a landing on the territory for the defense of the sovereignty and integrity of Colombia, and respecting the railroad line and the terminal points, in accordance with the stipulation of the treaty of 1846, which my country is ever ready to observe.

Secretary Hay's reply (dated Dec. 11) was as follows:

I have quoted your question textually, and in reference to it am instructed by the President to bring to the attention of your excellency the following facts: That the Republic of Panama proclaimed its independence on the 3d of last month; that, in consequence of this movement, the independence of Panama has been recognized by this government and by many others; that a treaty has been signed between the United States and Panama, which has been ratified by the latter state, and is now waiting ratification by the American Senate; that by the provisions of the said treaty the United States agrees to maintain the independence of the Republic of Panama; that although the treaty has not yet become law by the action of the Senate, there are already inchoate rights and duties created by it which place the responsibility of preserving peace and order on the Isthmus in the hands of the government of the United States and of Panama, even if such responsibility were not imposed by the historical events of the last fifty years. In view of these facts I am instructed to say to your excellency that the government of the United States would regard with the gravest concern any invasion of the territory of Panama by Colombian troops, for the reason that bloodshed and disorder would inevitably result throughout the whole extent of the Isthmus, and for the broader reason that in the opinion of the President the time has come, in the interest of universal commerce and civilization, to close the chapter of sanguinary and ruinous civil war in Panama.

A general debate upon the subject was precipitated by the message in the Senate on the 4th, led by Senator Morgan in opposition to the President's policy with reference to the recognition of Panama. Senator Morgan is reported to have declared that President Roosevelt's interference in Colombia's affairs on the Isthmus was not warranted by the Constitution and to have asserted that if there is to be a general policy on the part of the United States of upholding civilization that policy must be undertaken