

OUR TIRED IMPERIALISM.

Chancellor Von Buelow alluded deprecatingly the other day to what he called the "China-fatigue" (Chinamuedigkeit) which he said had become almost epidemic in Germany. There are signs that our own imperialistic Titans are in like manner growing weary. They are "tired" of the Philippines. To talk to them about Cuba makes them look around for a spring tonic. Ask them how their permanent army of 200,000 men is getting along, where their big navy is that was going to be able to whip Germany with one hand, just how much of the Nicaragua canal is dug, in what seas are the subsidized American steamers that were to invade all markets with American goods and bring back the spoils of the ends of the earth through the open doors of our custom houses—and "that tired feeling" is painfully visible on their faces. They may be a world-power, but they look uncommonly like a world-weariness.

Such reaction and disappointment, after a gorgeous paper programme of imperialism, were inevitable. The dreams which our old men dreamed, and the visions of our young men, immediately at the close and in consequence of the Spanish war, were truly grandiose, but to translate them into reality—there was the rub. We have now been more than three years about it, and what have we to show? We think that an honest and observant foreigner, taking a survey of the United States now, and comparing it with his estimate of five years ago, would say that the more we had changed, the more we had remained the same old thing. We talked, indeed, he would say, of having entered upon a "new era," and cast off our "swaddling clothes," but there we were, in fact, just the busy and argumentative democracy we ever had been; disputing over every new step; standing up vehemently for local against imperialistic interests; and offering a dead weight of inertia in the shape of long and jealous discussion and infinite delays, for an impetuous imperialism to dash itself against vainly and in despair.

There is nothing strange or vexing about this except to those who did not foresee that it would be impossible to commit the American democracy to the new policy in a year. In reality, a decade will not suffice, nor a lifetime. Some philosopher has said that it is the common "solecism of power" to think to attain an end without employing the necessary means. Exact-

ly that was the blunder of the creators of our new world of imperialism. They had magnificent conceptions. Did not their stump-orators and their editors and platform designers construct for us a splendid course of empire? Why, we could already see the Oregon bursting through the isthmus, Manila an entrepot greater than Liverpool, and our happy colonies sending their products into the wide and free market of the United States! But they reckoned ill who left out the conflicting interests, the many congressmen of many minds, only by whose appeasing and harmonizing could the star of empire move at all. Schiller said that he could write a drama in five acts more easily than he could keep house for one day; and our imperial playwrights have found out that it is easy to sketch the plot and plan the scenario of a grand production of "Uncle Sam Emperor," but that the drudgery of the necessary governmental housekeeping is far harder.

No one need regret that the wheels of the imperial chariot have thus driven heavily. We speak not as anti-imperialists, but as plain American citizens. No matter what the sweeping new policy proposed to our people, it is a good thing to know that it takes a long time to instruct and persuade them; that they are very inquisitive, and will insist upon having their questions answered; are very cautious, and will desire to wait to see whereto this thing may grow; yes, and are very selfish, too, and will want to know where John Smith out in Ashtabula is going to be advantaged by a splendid scheme of world-empire at Washington. While we have only condemnation for the obstinate attitude of the beet sugar representatives to-day, we cannot fail to see in it a wholesome reminder to our empire mongers. Their large and easy plans of greatness have got to satisfy the vast mass of the people, the veriest "country wittlings and chaw-bacons," before they can come to enactment. It is all very well for the American orator or statesman to urge the launching of our ship of state upon proud new seas, but there will always come to him the troublesome inquiry from each of a hundred exigent local interests, in the words of the tailor to Cowper:

Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph and partake the gale?

It is not surprising that our extemporized imperialists are growing weary of this continued rising of

the petty interests of locality to thwart their noble schemes for the nation. Their chosen instrument, the republican party, has been for many months little more than an organization to show how not to do it, "doing nothing reduced to a system." One reason for this cooling after the first flush, this stagnation after the early energy bent on doing all in a day, is that the whole imperialistic policy now suffers from the misfortune—it has been said to be one of the greatest misfortunes of a statesman—of having appeared only "temporarily magnetic." If an orator makes only a first pleasing impression, but cannot command a long hearing, nor endure the test of meditation on his words, he can never be a leader of men. For a few months imperialism seemed to cast a glamour over the minds of Americans, but its charm diminished on examination, and its feeble and discredited operation has now well-nigh completed the disillusionment. From being weary of it, the people will soon come to think the best thing to do will be simply to "write off" the losses incurred by that folly, and begin a fresh account.—New York Evening Post, of March 17.

MAYOR JOHNSON'S WAY.

A RAILROAD BROUGHT TO TIME.

Mayor Johnson stated yesterday that he had received a communication from the Erie railroad to the effect that the Union street grade crossing matter had been brought to the attention of the directors, and that some action would be taken in the near future.

All former attempts of the mayor and the grade crossing commission to obtain any answer from the railroad company have been entirely futile. The matter was entirely disregarded. Recently the Erie has applied for the right to lay a switch track over old River and Seneca streets. Monday night this ordinance passed the council, but Mr. Johnson announced his intention of refusing to sign it until the Erie took some steps or made some reply in the Union street matter.

It seems that Mr. Johnson has carried his point.—Cleveland Plain Dealer of Apr. 16.

MR. JOHNSON ON MR. HILL'S HARMONY SPEECH.

David B. Hill's harmony speech at the Jefferson dinner in New York does not meet with the approval of Mayor Johnson. The ideas of har-