

ence—of the right of the people of that island to work out their own liberties in their own way. Already the god Jingo has raised his head and demanded that Cuban independence be sacrificed upon the altar of “national expansion.”

Then there will be the question of the disposition of the Philippines. Whether to sordidly sell those islands to some European nation; or to languidly hand back the inhabitants to the merciless cruelties of the Spaniards who have outraged them for three hundred years; or to ambitiously appropriate the islands to ourselves in the interest of “national expansion;” or, with a sturdy love for liberty, to take advantage of our opportunity to empower the Philippine Islanders to establish a government of their own and work out their liberties in their own way. Such are the forms which that question will probably assume.

Both questions are full of significance with reference to our own freedom. Just as we move in their settlement in the direction of liberty or of authority, so will we move in settling our own home questions. If we aim to extend greater freedom to others whose destiny has by the fortunes of war fallen under our control, we will for the same reason—because our sense of liberty is expanding—seek greater freedom for ourselves. Our treatment of Cuba and the Philippines will indicate whether our ideas of liberty are advancing or receding.

Even the question of perpetual peace will be in evidence. It is possible to bring the principle of peace into public contempt by identifying it with stubborn opposition to a particular war already raging, which commends itself to sober men who believe in peace with liberty.

Peace men have a higher mission than to isolate themselves when war is on. By doing so they strengthen the arm of the jingo expansionist, and give aid and comfort to the monopolist who, to subjugate his fellow citizens, plays upon the “patriotic” passions which war easily excites. The true mission of the peace man is less to oppose particular wars than to conserve his influence for the things that make for peace.

And in doing this, peace men must

remember that they are dealing with men and not with automatons, and that they must affect public opinion if they would accomplish results. But how will they affect public opinion if they persist in identifying what they stand for—methods of establishing liberty, and things that make for peace—with opposition to a generous war for the peace of a war-racked neighboring island and the liberty of its inhabitants? They will affect public opinion with reference to those things pretty much as the “copperheads” affected it with reference to the grave questions of local self-government that were left over by the civil war.

We shall soon need the influence of peace men who believe in other things than peace, in adjusting questions of greater importance to mankind than the question of one war more or less. But if they maintain their present attitude, we shall find their influence when it is needed all worn out with futile opposition to a public sentiment that is now unalterably fixed. In that case, jingoism, “national expansion” and monopoly, well identified with a war for liberty and peace, would have clear sailing; and the war, instead of being as it might be made, a stride in the direction of justice and therefore of peace, would give new masters to Cuba and the Philippines, strengthen the power of monopoly in our own country, and still further postpone the era of universal peace.

#### THE HOAR AMENDMENT.

Unless the lower house of congress refuses to concur in a joint resolution passed by the senate on the 10th of May, the legislatures of the several states of the union will soon be called upon to ratify or reject the following proposed amendment to the federal constitution:

The term of office of the president and vice president of the Fifty-sixth congress shall continue until the fourth day of May, in the year 1901, at noon; and the fourth day of May, at noon, shall thereafter be substituted for the fourth day of March as the commencement and termination of the official term of the president, vice president, senators and representatives in congress.

Meantime the people should consider the propriety of such an amendment, with a view to influencing the

action regarding it of their respective legislatures.

The object of this amendment was explained in the senate by its author, Senator Hoar, of Massachusetts, as being two-fold. What he termed the lesser reason for it is that as the people have come more and more to desire to witness the inauguration of presidents, a less inclement day than the 4th of March usually is should be selected for that event. But he stated the more important reason for the change to be that as the second session of congress now lasts only from the first Monday of December to the 4th of March, which is too short a time within which to give proper attention to the appropriation bills, that session ought to be extended as the amendment proposes.

To describe the amendment as vicious might be harsh; but a very much milder term would not fit the case. On the surface it appears to be of slight importance. For that reason alone it should be rejected. The cumbersome proceedings for amending the constitution of the United States should never be invoked for trifling purposes. But this amendment is worse than trifling. Not only would it arbitrarily extend the terms of senators, and of the president and vice president now in office, for two months beyond the period for which they were elected—a petty objection, perhaps, though one that ought not to be incurred except for an important purpose not otherwise attainable—but it would put a serious obstacle in the way of securing an amendment which, while meeting the graver reason offered for this, would recognize one of the great principles of democratic government that we now ignore.

Under the existing system to which the amendment in question relates, the president does not take office until four months after the people have called him; and representatives in congress, though they nominally take office within four months after election, do not do so in fact, except when an extra session is called, until 13 months after. These long intervals between the election of public servants and their entry upon their duties tends to separate them from the people and to weaken the voice of the

voter in public affairs. They are, therefore, undemocratic.

Moreover, they are contrary to the popular methods of all countries which are advancing in democracy. In Great Britain and her dependencies the time between a parliamentary election and the convening of the new parliament is inconsiderable. The popular mandates there are instantly obeyed. When the people vote upon an issue, the legislators whom they choose to execute their commands enter upon the duty at once. No time intervenes within which the defeated party may annul the popular mandate through hold-over officials, or special interests may wean the new legislators from the principles to which their constituencies have pledged them. The defeated party goes instantly out of power, if it were in power before; and the victorious party, coming fresh from the people, acts under the spur of public opinion on burning questions. The heat of the contest has not had time to cool when it finds itself in power and called upon to act.

It is only in this country, among the democratic countries of the earth, that the legislative servants of the people are kept out of office so long after election as to forget the lessons of the election. A notable instance was Cleveland's second administration. He and the members of his first congress were distinctly commissioned by the people to abolish protection. There was no other burning question in the campaign. But four months elapsed after the people had spoken before he took his seat, and 13 before the members of congress had a chance to act upon the issue upon which they were elected. Meanwhile Cleveland, never very earnest, perhaps, respecting that issue, ignored the popular mandate and lifted a subordinate issue, "sound currency," to first place; and congress, when it got to a chance to act, had so far forgotten the issue upon which it was elected that the very corporate influences which had been defeated by the people were triumphant at Washington. That would not have happened if the president had been inaugurated and congress had met immediately after the election.

We often think of Canada as anxious for annexation to the United States. But we are mistaken. The Canadian sentiment for annexation is astonishingly weak. Nor is this because Canadians cling to monarchical government. They do not. They are as democratic as we. Whatever other reasons might weigh with them against annexation, one is insuperable. The Canadian would not abandon his "responsible" system of government. He has a government now which is directly and promptly responsible to the people, and he shrinks from swapping it for ours, under which the voice of the people is silenced by legislative straight-jackets. In other words, the Canadian's objection to annexation is not that his sentiments are monarchical, but because they are too democratic to submit to our legislative formalities, most important among which is the one that puts off so far from elections the induction of the president and representatives into their offices, and thereby severs one of the most important links that bind public servants to the public.

With this Canadian sentiment, every American of democratic instincts, who understands the situation, is in sympathy. Our system of long intervals between the election and the installation of legislative servants, weakens the influence of public opinion upon legislation. Modified only in degree, it is the same in principle as life tenures would be. If, therefore, an amendment with reference to this subject is to be submitted to the states, it should be one requiring the congress to which representatives are elected in November, 1900, to take their seats on the first Monday of the following December, and the president elected that year to be inaugurated on that day. Or, if balmy weather be desirable for inauguration ceremonies, the amendment should change the date of presidential and congressional elections to March or April, beginning with 1901, and fix the first session of the congress then elected, and the inauguration of the new president, for a day in May immediately following the election.

By the former plan the graver reason for the Hoar amendment would be met, for the incoming instead of

the outgoing congress could give all the attention that might be needed to the appropriation bills for the ensuing year. The latter plan would answer both objects which Mr. Hoar professes to be desirous of serving. It would give us a salubrious inauguration day, provided his own chosen month of May did not prove fickle; and as congress would then have a full year at its disposal for each session, it would afford ample time for the perfection of the appropriation bills of both sessions. And what is of vastly greater importance, if this country is to be governed by the ballot box, either plan would make the government at Washington respond instantly to the wishes of the people as expressed at elections.

But the amendment proposed by Mr. Hoar would very likely for a long time prevent the adoption of either of these plans. It is so difficult to secure constitutional amendments, when any great interest opposes them, that if such an amendment as Mr. Hoar proposes were adopted, a powerful argument against either plan here proposed would be found in the fact that the subject had been already disposed of. Indeed, it is not so certain that this may not be the real purpose of Mr. Hoar's apparently innocuous little amendment. While explaining his amendment on the floor of the senate on the 10th of May, Mr. Hoar said that he had never heard but one plausible objection to it, which was—that the amendment ought to be changed so that the new congress would meet immediately after the election, and that the popular will, which is expressed in the change of political power in a new election, should find expression in legislation without even the intervention of a single month or a single year.

And then he added:

Some persons with whom I have talked on this subject have held that view, but I think that the time is brief enough. This great political being of ours ought to take a little time to change its mind. It is not always convenient for the gentlemen who are elected to the house of representatives to leave all their business and repair to the seat of government within a week or two after the result of a doubtful election is declared; and it is well, I think, that the heats, excitements and passions which sometimes—not so much of late as in former years—prevail in this country in a sharply con-

tested election should have a little time to pass away before the permanent and deliberate will of the people is enacted seriously into the statutes.

Evidently Mr. Hoar sees the hostile relation between his amendment and one which would enable congress to meet immediately after the election of its members. Would it be unfair, then, to infer that he has introduced one in order to head off the other? He flatly expresses his preferences for the present system, so that the country "may have a little time to change its mind," so that the excitements of a sharply contested election shall have "time to pass away before the permanent and deliberate will of the people is enacted seriously into statutes." Pray how is the "permanent" and "deliberate" will of the people on burning questions to be determined, if not in exciting elections? Can there be any motive for allowing time for the excitement to pass away, except that the legislators chosen at such elections may substitute their will for the will of the people who commissioned them? To enable them to do so may be wisdom, but if it be, it is the wisdom of plutocracy. In a democratic government the place for what Mr. Hoar aptly calls "this great political being" to change its mind, the place for it to manifest the subsidence of its excitement over burning questions of public policy, is not in the halls of legislation, but at the ballot box. We should make it clearly understood that legislators are public servants, and neither public masters nor public mentors.

The proposer of the Hoar amendment, Mr. Hoar himself, has thus given sufficient reason for the democratic sentiment of the country in all parties to oppose and defeat it. If there were no other objection to it, its adoption would be a stumbling-block in the way of the kind of amendment that ought to be adopted.

#### "IF CHRIST WERE HERE?"

This was the subject of a sermon delivered recently by Lyman Abbott in Plymouth church, and subsequently published in *The Outlook*. If Christ were here in this nineteenth century, as he was in Palestine in the first, what sort of man would he be, and what kind of life would he lead?

That was the question which Dr. Abbott put, and to which his answer must in the main be most satisfactory, except to those who in the hardening processes of conventional piety have lost all sense of the mission and character of the Nazarene carpenter. In one respect, however, this answer seems to us faulty—radically so. We refer to Dr. Abbott's saying that if Christ were here now, he might be a man of wealth. That is unthinkable.

No man of wealth is known to our civilization, who earns all his wealth. Many of them earn nothing. But even men who do useful work—and they are doubtless the men of wealth whom Dr. Abbott has in mind—though they work with extraordinary industry and skill and productiveness, they do not, if they are rich enough to be accounted men of wealth, earn more than a small proportion of the wealth they command and call their own. Upon examination, their fortunes will be found to depend, directly or indirectly, not upon the usefulness of their labor, but upon unjust privileges created by law. What goes, therefore, to make them wealthy, is unjustly diverted from their brethren. They may not be conscious of the injustice, but it is upon injustice that the superstructure of their wealth is built, nevertheless. No man in our civilization is esteemed wealthy who does not get from others more service in the aggregate than in the aggregate he need return to others. Dr. Abbott cannot name an exception. How, then, could we expect Christ, if he were here, to be a man of wealth?

He could not be an Astor, for instance, living in luxury upon the increment of city land, to which all contribute; nor a Rockefeller, drawing fabulous sums from the monopoly of mineral resources and rights of way for pipe lines. And in saying this we impute no personal wrongfulness to either Astor or Rockefeller. We simply intend to imply, what all intelligent persons know to be true, that the wealth of the Astors and the Rockefellers is largely unearned by them. It is unthinkable that Christ, if he were here, would, like them, be a wealthy man.

Dr. Abbott endeavors to make a

distinction between men of wealth who do, and those who do not, serve their fellows. He explains that if Christ were a man of wealth, "his problem would not be how to make one dollar get two more dollars, but how to make one dollar render the largest service that one dollar can." But that explanation will not do. It is unthinkable also that Christ, if he were here, would appropriate unearned dollars even to do good with them.

Mere men may be and remain the beneficiaries of unearned wealth without guilt. On one hand they may not know that their wealth is unearned. In the complexity of our industrial conditions, under which the function of serving the community by work and the privilege of plundering it by monopoly are blended in what is known as "business," it is not remarkable that men who have never earned a dollar, and have never rendered a service except with dollars that somebody else had earned, should be unconscious of the illegitimate character of their wealth. Much less remarkable is it that in these circumstances men who earn some of their wealth and do not earn the rest, should suppose that they earn it all. On the other hand, wealthy men, though aware of the unearned character of much of their wealth, may believe, what is perfectly true, that as the conditions which give them this wealth are not personal but social, they can be reformed only by social action. There is no obligation upon such men to give away their wealth, nor to ignore the opportunity for making it which society insists upon thrusting before them. If they use their influence to enlighten society, and to cause it to alter those conditions so that no one can have the advantages of monopoly, they do not only all they are in conscience required to do, but all that it is possible for mere men in their individual capacity to do.

Not so with Christ. As we can conceive of slaveholders as being personally innocent of the crime of slavery, but not of Christ as a slaveholder, so, though we recognize the innocence of wealthy men, we cannot think of Christ as wealthy. If he were here now, he might, as Dr. Ab-