

dolence in reply to the message of the king. Mr. Balfour is first lord of the treasury and tory leader in the house of commons. His words, therefore, when not perfunctory repetitions of mediaeval forms, must be taken to express conviction and purpose if they import conviction and purpose; and in this speech they imported both. He spoke of the death of the queen as ending a great epoch during which "the influence of the crown in the British constitution" had been "not a diminishing but an increasing factor," and went on to declare that it—

must continue to increase with the growth and development of the self-governing communities over the sea which were founded by Great Britain through the person of the sovereign, who was a living symbol of the unity of the empire.

It is not true that the influence of the crown has been an increasing factor in Great Britain, though it is true that tory leaders have aspired to make it so. They have not yet realized this aspiration because public sentiment in England has not appeared ripe for a turning toward absolutism. Nor will they realize it without securing popular approval. The people govern England, and govern it so easily under the system of parliamentary responsibility that no radical change can be made without their assent. But there are possibilities that under the influence of thrilling pageantry in connection with the death of the queen and the coronation of the king, the people may submit to a reactionary movement. That some such thoughts are taking hopeful shape in tory brains may with reason be suspected. It behooves British democrats of all parties, then, not only to be on their guard against a reviving absolutism, but to be bold in proclaiming the democratic characteristics of the British constitution.

Sir Wilfried Laurier, the premier of the liberal government of Canada, has wisely seen fit to guard the dominion against encroachments. Lord Minto, the governor general, was ar-

ranging for a state memorial service in Christ church, Ottawa, the principal Anglican church of the diocese, when Sir Wilfrid intimated that the dominion ministry could not sanction a proceeding so well adapted to create an impression that the English church is the state church of Canada, and that no public money would be voted for the memorial service. As Canada has no state church, the premier's caution is to be warmly commended. It is a small matter of itself, but one pregnant with important consequences.

Unless signs fail, the Spooner bill is about to be pushed through congress. This is a bill giving the president greater power in the Philippines than any civilized monarch has anywhere. If passed it will invest him with that species of discretionary power which is universally conceded to be most dangerous—the power to make laws and to execute the laws he makes. The signs that the president is preparing to get it passed are numerous. First comes the Taft commission which wants the Spooner bill passed immediately. Next comes a petition from the directors of a native party organized under Taft's fostering care, the fundamental tenet of which is acquiescence in American sovereignty; and they want the Spooner bill passed immediately. Then comes a cable request from the German consul to his government asking that the German ambassador at Washington be instructed diplomatically to urge the passage of the Spooner bill. Mr. McKinley himself, with becoming delicacy, and the secretary of war less reservedly, also hint at the advisability of passing it. This sudden and significant demand for the Spooner bill must have a cause, and the cause is not far to seek. The Taft commission reports that the Philippine islands contain 73,000,000 acres of land, of which less than 5,000,000 are held under private ownership. The Spooner bill is needed to enable the president to distribute that public land. It is needed also

to enable him to grant franchises and other privileges. The German consul tells in his cable dispatch of two German mining corporations that are anxious to begin operations, but dare not until they can get mining privileges from some stable authority. The Taft report alludes also to capitalistic jackals that are waiting for franchises. This is the explanation of the urgent need for the Spooner bill. The Filipino patriots having been killed off, it is now time to throw down the bars and allow the herd of hungry monopolists that flock about McKinley to get at the franchise spoils. What a disgustingly sordid policy the bloody policy of "benevolent assimilation" is fast proving itself to be.

History repeats itself not only in similarity of events but in similarity of thought. The thinkers, however, get strangely mixed. A century and a quarter ago, British officers engaged in carrying out George III.'s policy of benevolent assimilation in the American colonies, wrote home that the majority of Americans would accept British sovereignty but for fear of the American rebels. These docile Americans were known to our patriotic forefathers as tories. And now that instructive British correspondence is paralleled by the Taft commission, which reports from Manila that a majority of the Filipinos would accept United States sovereignty, but for fear of the Filipino rebels. Even down to that detail the American attempt to subjugate the Philippines is identical with the British attempt to subjugate the American colonies. The war in the Philippines is the American revolution down to date, with the Filipinos in the role of the American patriots and President McKinley playing the part of the royal George.

The press dispatches from Manila announce the sailing on the 28th from that port of George T. Rice, as a military prisoner. He is ordered to be held as a prisoner until his arrival at

San Francisco, where writs of habeas corpus might reach him. This case furnishes a mild object lesson in the possibilities of autocratic government. Rice published a newspaper at Manila. Discovering what he believed and still declares to be financial rascality on the part of a military officer serving in a civil capacity, he exposed the corruption. Instead of trying the officer for corruption, a military tribunal tried the editor for libel and convicted him. Gen. MacArthur consequently ordered him deported to the United States. Let it be observed that military considerations nowhere entered into the matter. It is distinctly an instance of military meddling with civil concerns. The military officer was accused not as a military but as a civil functionary. The crime charged was not a military but a civil offense. The person making it was not a military man, but a civilian. Yet the accuser was tried under military law, as for a military offense, by military officers, and for the protection of a brother officer from criminal charges. A most excellent stage is Manila for private rehearsals of militarism, and Americans now living may yet see the curtain rise upon public performances at home.

This deportation of Mr. Rice from Manila for exposing official corruption appears to be in line with the action of the British government in proscribing democratic newspapers in Cape Colony. Among those proscribed are Reynold's, Stead's Review of Reviews, and Labouchere's Truth, all published in London. There is nothing for which your militarist and imperialist have such wholesome fear as an unsubsidized press. This was always so and is so now. Russian and German papers could tell an interesting story about it. They never have been free. American and English papers are likely to gather material for a similar story, as the great "world movement" goes on.

The Boxer uprising proves, as we

inferred (page 149) from the confusing reports received from China last summer that it would, to have been in reality an outburst of patriotism, such as, in similar circumstances, would have occurred in any country on earth. The information comes from George Lynch, an English war correspondent, who, as reported in the Chicago Record of the 28th, said:

Except as regards the attack on the legations, which was utterly inexcusable, there was nothing in the Boxer movement which cannot thoroughly recommend itself to the mind of any patriotic man, to whatsoever country he may belong. It was the patriotic rising of an exasperated people, who were goaded to desperation by unscrupulous foreign aggression. The motive of the whole movement was "China for the Chinese," as we might have said "England for the English" or "America for the Americans." The attack on the legations was absolutely inexcusable. Confucius says that the persons of emissaries are sacred. But what defense can we make for the attack on the Taku forts without any declaration of war? Let us try to look at things from a Chinese point of view. Every sentiment that people hold precious has been violated in China by the foreigners; every imperial edict rings plaintively with the refrain of "outrages on the gods."

An astounding confession of McKinley partisans is given publicity by the Washington correspondent of the Chicago Evening Post, a devoted McKinley organ. The publication is made apropos of the pending measure to compel the payment of government bonds and notes and the redemption of silver money in gold. Provisions of the same general character were inserted by the lower house in the gold law of last year, but they were struck out in the senate, thus possibly enabling a president to pay public debts with silver. It will be remembered that great stress was laid by the republicans last fall upon the importance of electing McKinley lest Bryan might take advantage of this hole in the gold law to put the country upon a silver basis. Our own answer to that plea was that if it were true the republicans had shown either their incapacity or their indisposition

to make a gold standard law. It now transpires that all this was part of a bunco game. The republicans deliberately struck out the protective clause in the gold standard law in order to serve a campaign purpose by making the law defective. Such is the confession referred to above. In the language of the Post's Washington correspondent (see Chicago Evening Post of 26th), referring to the striking out of the protective clause—

It is no violation of confidence to state at this stage that this was done with intelligence and primarily was intended to rally again to the support of the republican party the great host of neutral and democratic voters who feared the advent of a free silver regime. It was a clever political move and served well to array against Bryan once more the forces which defeated him four years previous. The republicans of the senate realized that if the gold act were made invulnerable the danger of the election of Bryan would be more acute, inasmuch as he would not have the power, with one of the branches of government in republican hands, to put his pernicious ideas of currency and political economy into practice. These facts may not be written when the history of currency legislation is drafted, but they are, nevertheless, plain truths which show how the political game of strategy is operated.

Once more the Colorado tax report may be procured at cost of postage—not more than five cents—by addressing Senator Bucklin at Denver. This has been made possible, we learn from Senator Bucklin, by Tom L. Johnson, who has ordered an edition of 20,000 copies. Demands for this excellent report are coming in large numbers from all parts of the United States and Canada. As we have heretofore explained, the report describes the nature and workings of the Australasian land tax, which has for several years been in force in New Zealand and parts of Australia, and the system of local option in local taxation, which is also in successful operation in those countries. The latter system is a practical application of that to which the New York chamber of commerce and other leading commercial bodies in