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The December report from the reconcentrado camps in South Africa shows a slight falling off in the death rate, but the rate is still high enough. According to the London Daily News of January 18—

the deaths for the month amounted to 2,380, which is equal to an annual death rate of 244 per thousand. This is the lowest death rate recorded since July; but, unfortunately, the figures do not tell us the whole truth. In the Orange River colony the death rate is as high as 343 per thousand for men, women and children, and 464 for children only.

Gov. Taft has testified that the natives of the Philippines number about 2,000,000 Moros, 1,500,000 non-Christian tribes, and 600,000 Christian Filipinos, and that it is "the Christians who have carried on the insurrection." This must be cheering news to imperialists who have pictured the Filipino patriots as savage pagans, and prejudiced public sentiment by labeling them with a miscellaneous lot of strange tribal names derived from a remote non-Christian ancestry.

In connection with the American purchase of the Danish West Indies, a new apology for conquering or buying subjects of the American empire has been unveiled. It is explained, taking the case of the Danish West Indies for illustration, that the people there will not be prejudicially affected, even if they do not want to become American citizens, because "every one of them will be allowed to say whether he wants to be an American or a Dane." That is, if he chooses not to become an American citizen he may have the inestimable alternative

of becoming a foreigner, without citizenship rights, in the country of his birth!

When the bicycle trade began to subside—it was in the year of the last presidential election—the Republican papers attributed it to the popular fears of approaching Bryanism. Bryanism didn't come, unfortunately for the best interests of the country, but the bicycle trade languished nevertheless. It is now reported to have declined so rapidly and to such a degree that whereas on the 1st of January, 1900, there were 288 factories in the United States, only 69 were left a year afterward, and only 24 on the 1st of January, 1902. Were the Republican papers talking for political effect when they said that this is what would happen in the event of Bryan's election? Or is it due to Bryan's defeat?

Maj. Lee, of the British army, and tory member of parliament, has raised a ruction in England by giving out information which brings the British war department under grave suspicion of incompetency or worse. What Maj. Lee says has reference to the British purchase in the United States of horses for army use in South Africa. He asserts that he had an opportunity through the good will of "a high official," to get the services as adviser for the purpose "of the chief horse expert of the United States army," but was ignored by the British war department. The British public is angry because this opportunity was neglected. The American public has reason to be angry for another cause. What business had any American official, high or low, to offer Great Britain the services of the "chief horse expert" of our army as adviser in the purchase of American horses as munitions of war for the subjugation of

friendly republics? Congress might find it well worth while to inquire into this matter and uncover the "high official" who was so well disposed toward the British in a war in which our country was bound by international obligations and American sentiment to be neutral.

In German university circles the United States is understood to have virtually abandoned the Monroe doctrine. Prof. Jellinek, professor of international law at Heidelberg, who is in close touch with the German government, is reported to have phrased this feeling in these terms:

The Monroe doctrine had for its converse that the Americans would not touch any territory outside the American continent. In entering upon a colonial policy in the Philippines the United States have not observed this, and therefore the Monroe doctrine is no longer tenable.

As matter of international law the Monroe doctrine never was tenable. It rests upon no moral principle, no theory of natural rights, and it has no treaty sanctions. It could at any time as well as now have been ignored by any nation, without subjecting that nation to criticism for disregarding international obligations. It was simply a policy asserted by the United States with a warning to other powers that she would maintain it against all comers by force of arms. The United States can do this as well now as ever. That she would consider herself as under an obligation of fair dealing to abandon her exclusive "sphere of influence" on this continent merely because she has herself established a "sphere of influence" at the antipodes, is quite improbable. A nation that could disregard its own fundamental concepts of government for a "sphere of influence" abroad is not likely to yield its "sphere of influence" at home in recognition of the eternal fitness of things. Nothing but unsuccess-

cessful resistance in war or peaceful negotiations with plutocratic profit for their objective, will cause the United States to abandon the Monroe doctrine.

That some such negotiations are contemplated, under cover of the child's-play ceremonial of the naming of a German royal yacht by the daughter of an American republican president, is a fair inference. Such suspicion is at any rate abroad in Germany. The present German ministry is in the hands of capitalists who organized the reaction against the young kaiser's factory legislation, during the early nineties. Many of them are heavy holders of colonial investments. Their interests and needs are of the same kind as those of the capitalists now wielding power in Washington, and it is suspected that the visit of Prince Henry to President Roosevelt will result in an "understanding between statesmen" about South American affairs. Such arrangements are believed to be probable as will enable the German capitalists to push their South American schemes without restriction, while the sacredness of the Monroe doctrine is preserved on paper for purposes of domestic politics. The German suspicions—expectations or hopes would probably be a better word—may not be without a basis in fact. When potentates play with the vanity of presidents, it is not unreasonable to suppose that they are not seeking exercise merely nor are solicitous alone for their health.

An enormous work and a valuable service have been performed by Daniel Cruice, Thomas G. McElligott and W. J. Sullivan and their associates, in Chicago, in securing a municipal petition from over 140,000 signers demanding a popular vote, under the Illinois advisory referendum, on three questions: (1) municipal ownership of street railroads; (2), municipal ownership of light and power; and (3), nominations of city officers at primary elections. This referendum law was enacted last winter. It allows an advisory vote in municipalities on any

question, upon the petition of 25 per cent. of the voters. The large percentage was inserted under plutocratic influence with the unconcealed intention of making the law practically inoperative. In this instance, the number necessary was 104,000, and but for the energy of the gentlemen named and their supporters, so huge a petition could not have been secured. Even with that the effort would probably have failed but for the timely and effective assistance of the Chicago American. All the other local dailies were either silent or obstructive. Since the filing of the petition some of them have tried to discredit it and to cause its rejection by picking out and making much of a few instances of false signatures made by practical jokers. But all opposition is likely to fall through and at next spring's municipal election the three questions outlined above will probably be voted on. A favorable vote will not be mandatory. Neither legislature nor council need pay any attention to it. But after the vote, if favorable, one of the objections to these reforms—alleged popular indifference or hostility—will have been knocked out of the fight.

Indications regarding the delegate conference of the People's party to be held at Topeka on the 21st are pointing more and more in the direction of an amalgamation in that state of the People's party with the Democratic party. As already explained in these columns (p. 660) the necessity for some such action is due to the ballot law recently enacted by the Republican legislature, which prevents fusion nominations. One of the strongest advocates of amalgamation is Annie L. Diggs, editor of the Topeka Advocate and widely known as state librarian of Kansas. She argues that—

events are now shaping (notably the conflict of the people of the northwestern states with the consolidating railway corporations) which in the near future will compel a national party to take an unequivocal position and fight the battle for the people as against the corporate powers. This position the national Republican party cannot

take, because it includes in its dominating membership men who desire the corporation side to win. The national Democratic party can, and will, unequivocally and aggressively espouse the people's side, unless its next national convention shall be recaptured by the men who dominated it before "Bryanism" came to the front. Right here is the great service which Kansas Populists might render to practical politics; they might, by uniting with Kansas Democrats, form so consequential and forceful a delegation to the national convention as to aid greatly in holding that body to the new Democracy and prevent Messrs. Hill, Cleveland et al from walking off with the situation. For should Kansas show her faith in the new Democracy, like action would follow in other states and reformers everywhere would take heart and enthrust with the effort to use the great national party machine, already constructed, for genuine reform and progressive politics.

That is good argument and good sense. It has the merit, moreover, of telling the whole story in the briefest possible compass. And this and other like arguments are having the effect of fostering the amalgamation sentiment among the rank and file of the People's party. Many of the delegates are coming up to Topeka instructed by their constituents to favor amalgamation with all the forces opposed to the Republican party in Kansas. One obstacle to this most important conclusion is the fact that prohibition is generally opposed by Kansas Democrats, whereas Kansas populists very generally favor it; but it is believed that this obstacle may be surmounted. Should the amalgamation be made, the Republicans will of course promote the organization of a bolting People's party—another "middle-of-the-road" contingent in Republican pay and service. But that need give the body of the party no serious concern. Investments of that kind by Republicans in the past, whether in Kansas or elsewhere, have not proved profitable to the investors.

"About this time look out for"—something; snow, or rain, or hail, or winds, according to the season. That was a familiar warning in the patent medicine almanacs of our youth. The