

tion" appears from Washington dispatches to be proved to have been a true exposure. Instead of a surplus of \$219,000 for the fiscal year 1911, the deficit for that year is reported to be several hundred thousand dollars.



Boy Scouts.

One of the slipperiest places in the human mind is the spot where it mistakes form for substance. Here is where we slip when we kow-tow to a flag but stultify the lessons it symbolizes. We do it when we venerate the Bible as a printers' product but quote it in the Devil's cause. This is paganism—patriotic paganism the one, religious paganism the other. But the slipping may be in an opposite direction. If, for instance, we hate the wickedness of war, we may get to detesting military forms too blindly, merely as forms. Some such mental tendency may account for some rather thoughtless denunciations of the Boy Scouts.



It is true that the Boy Scouts, which originated in this country, was adopted and adapted in Great Britain by a professional soldier; but his object was not warfare, if we may believe his word. In his address on the subject in Chicago, Gen. Baden-Powell said: "I've seen enough of war to want to keep away from the military idea. Woodcraft, handicraft, and all those things are invaluable. First aid and all that goes with it is excellent; but the boys should be kept away from the idea that they are being trained so that some day they may fight for their country. It is not war-scouting that is needed now, but peace-scouting. The explorers, the pioneers, the persons who are always on the lookout to do something for the benefit of humanity, are the ones who count, and that should be the motto of every boy scout." In the United States, the head of the Boy Scouts not only never has been a soldier, but he is and has always been one of the most pronounced protagonists of peace to be found anywhere. We mean Dan Beard. Why object to Boy Scouts organized under such impulses and for such purposes, because they adopt some of the features of military training? Why should military forms be abhorred in so far as they serve to promote health, strength, alertness, readiness, skill, discipline, unified activities, antipathy for all unnecessary killing and eagerness to relieve suffering?



It may be replied that unwarlike forms would serve those purposes as well. But they might not;

if for no other reason, then for this: that in the animal stage of a boy's growth, military forms appeal to him. They appeal to him because, it may be, of the fighting blood that then courses through his restless system. And what can be better than to offer that fighting spirit an outlet which, while attracting him because of its military form, utilizes his energies in peaceful activities? And may it not also disgust him with the murderous spirit of warfare before he comes upon the stage with those who decide for or against war in times of national crises? In all things let us be cautious about getting our minds involved in the entangling alliances of substance and forms.



The Initiative and the Referendum.

The United States Supreme Court has bowed to it. Mr. Roosevelt has boosted it. Oregon and several other communities have adopted it. Ohio is on the verge of it. Senator Lorimer is against it. The Big Business Men's Association is waxing profane about it. President Taft threatens to use the Big Stick on it. All signs are favorable.



IS IT POSSIBLE TO GIVE THE PEOPLE TOO MUCH LIBERTY?

The question as stated is an absurdity, for it assumes that there is *somebody* or *someone* competent to give more or less liberty to human beings, and naturally this entity would be their Creator. It would be presumption to say that the Creator had given men too much or too little liberty, since that would be ascribable to faulty wisdom, and that is unthinkable as appertaining to the Deity. The question should probably have been put thus: "Is it possible for man to have too much liberty?"

And yet that seems equally absurd, for it resolves itself into this—Is it possible for man to have more than he wants?

His *natural* liberty is God-given, is unalterable, is inalienable, and is among those rights mentioned in the Declaration of Independence; and his *civil* rights depend upon his own volition. So whichever way we turn to ask questions about man's social or civil liberties, we must come back for an answer to man himself. God has launched the ship, but the sailing is left, without his intervention, in the hands of the sailors, his creatures.

The measures and boundaries of a man's liberty are his God-given rights, and the duties consequent upon those rights.