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If the origin of the poet laureate may be traced to the king's fool, the present British laureate is a painful instance of atavism.

Over \$1,000,000 was paid last year in dividends from American breweries to English stockholders. This item helped to swell the excess of American exports. It was an outgo without an income. How does that kind of exporting enrich this country.

With unspeakable impudence, the coroner's jury at Leavenworth, Kan., finds a verdict declaring that the negro who was recently lynched and burned there by a mob of a thousand well-known people, was killed "by a party or parties unknown to this jurv." No witnesses had been called. The jury made no effort at all to inform itself of the facts. Yet it appears that photographs of the barbarous scene, clearly identifying the mob leaders, are known to exist.

The reason given by John T. Bass, the well-known American newspaper correspondent from the Philippines, for maintaining a large army there, does not fit very snugly into the assurances received from administration sources during the campaign, that all the inhabitants except a fraction of one tribe rejoice with exceeding great joy in the American occupation. Mr. Bass outlined his reason in the Chicago Evening Post of the 21st. Referring to the inefficiency of the Filipinos as fighters, he said: "In view

of this fact the only logical explanation of the need of a large army in the Philippines is the general hostility of the native population." That reads as if President McKinley's war were one of subjugation.

A Kansas woman, Mrs. Carrie Nation, has been smashing the windows and furniture of saloons of Wichita, maintaining her right to do so because liquor selling in that state is a lawless business. She may possibly learn that physical attacks upon property, even where it is used for purposes legally criminal, constitute an offense. If not more criminal, they are at least breaches of the peace. Since liquor selling is prohibited by law in Kansas, infractions of the law should be dealt with in a lawful manner. All order is at an end when the law is enforced lawlessly. But why is not the Kansas law against liquor selling enforced legally? How comes it that there are any liquor saloons in Wichita? For more than a generation Kansas has been a prohibition state. Is it, like other prohibition states, a prohibition state only in name?

The senate amends the house bill for the reduction of war revenues by making several annoying provisions. For one thing it proposes to retain the two-cent bank check stamp until next January, and then, instead of abolishing it, to reduce it to one cent. The check stamp tax is in the highest degree discriminating in these days when so great a volume of exchange is effected by means of small checks. To makers of one-dollar checks it is a tax of one per cent. To makers of hundred-dollar checks it is a tax of only one hundredth of one per cent. To both it is

a nuisance. And why should this or any other war tax be retained? There has been no legal war for two years or more, and the Dingley tariff bill has all along been pointed to with pride as an abundant revenue raiser for all the purposes of peace. Even the extra expense entailed by "our valuable new possessions" ought to be met by the regular revenue laws if they yield income as freely as their friends pretend. The disposition to retain war taxes after the war is over is strongly suggestive of subsidy legislation. The chance of taxing the masses in ways they know not of, for the purpose of subsidizing millionaire ship owners, for instance, is too tempting to be passed by.

A person occupying the high official place that Queen Victoria did, comes quite naturally, regardless of her true character, to be regarded as a paragon of goodness. It is only human, also, after she has reigned so long in an era so marvelous, to ascribe to her personally an excess of credit for the general progress in the tide of which she has lived so conspicuously. The "Victorian era" acquires a connotation not easily distinguishable in the public mind from "the era that Victoria has made." So, when such a personage dies, extravagant displays of emotional affection, more or less intelligent and more or less sincere, must be patiently borne with; especially if, as in the case of Victoria, her career was tinged with the soft shadow of a pathetic romance. The royal idol ranks next to the religious idol in its mastery of the imaginations of the multitude—of the upper ten thousand and lower.

But the reputation of Queen Victoria as a good woman, is not all idol-

atry. Though scores upon scores of thousands of women as good as she, but whose virtues are unheralded, have died since her accession to the English throne, their virtues had shone in narrower circles and from less conspicuous stations; and if the story of hers is echoed over the world to-day merely because of the royal place she held, it must not be forgotten that she possessed them in eminent degree along with her sisters more obscure. Victoria was truly a good woman. Were her virtues worthy of no other remembrance, she would deserve to live in history as a magnificent example of the truth that intelligent and conscientious performance of even the most exacting civic functions is not incompatible with any of the duties or charms of maidenhood, wifehood or motherhood.

Nor is the popular disposition to credit Queen Victoria with the British progress that has distinguished her reign wholly misplaced. The English crown and throne are, indeed, only surviving symbols of divine right in a democratic environment. Like the absurd medieval oath of allegiance which members of parliament have taken to the queen's successor, they are mere mementoes of departed royal power. If they were more than that, the British would not be the people they are. Nominally, British sovereigns may veto acts of parliament. In reality that prerogative is obsolete, and its exercise in our day would be rightly regarded as an act of reactionary revolution. Parliament is supreme in England, and answerable only to the people. Nominally, British sovereigns rule, but in reality a committee of the majority party in parliament—the ministry—rules in the sovereign's name. Nominally, the sovereign chooses the chairman of that committee—the premier; actually he is chosen by his party associates. He is the leader of the popular party. A British sovereign who attempted to force an

unacceptable premier upon parliament, would bring the whole governmental machinery to a standstill. In fine, the British sovereign, so far as concerns official authority, is a highly ornamental, an impressively historical, a solemnly hypothetical, an utterly weak, and for the latter reason a very useful, personification of Britannia. Considerations of official power aside, however, the sovereign may wield great influence, both personal and official. And such influence was undoubtedly wielded by the now departed and affectionately lamented Victoria. Throughout her mature life she was an intelligent participant in the administration of public affairs. Her influence, unfortunately, was always conservative, and at times reactionary; but there is ample reason to believe that it was exerted in good conscience. And in the conservative point of view, it was put forth with statesman-like foresight and judgment. Doubtless her thought and aspirations, besides largely influencing social life, have molded and vitalized in some degree both the legislation and the administration of her phenomenally long reign. Upon her bier, democrats not less than aristocrats may be permitted to place a tribute of respect to the memory of this sovereign who was a British statesman, this statesman who was a good woman.

Ex-Congressman Tom L. Johnson is vigorously making good his determination to devote himself as a private citizen to the public service. At the Jackson day banquet in Cleveland early in January he publicly announced that he was now "free from business associations of every kind," and proposed to devote the remainder of his life to promoting the public welfare. "I shall not limit my work to Cleveland," he is reported to have continued,—

but shall extend it to state and nation, fighting for the principles of democracy, for the great principles in which I believe and with which you are all familiar. I want no office; I will ac-

cept none. I simply want to be in the ranks with the rest of you.

In the same speech he declared against the extension of street car franchises, and for low fares and municipal ownership.

What Johnson meant by being in the ranks he has since exemplified. He is at this moment in a rattling fight against the Cleveland street car ring, along the lines suggested by his speech at the Jackson day banquet. The street car ring of Cleveland, though its street franchises have yet several years to run, is trying to secure long extensions, with five-cent fares and no other substantial concessions than a percentage of gross receipts to the city and tickets at the rate of six for a quarter to the people. Against this Johnson is making his vigorous fight. He opposes the plan of selling rides at wholesale by means of tickets, because only the well to do benefit by it. Speaking from experience as a street car manager in Cleveland, he says that by far the largest proportion of street car patrons are reluctant to invest in tickets. They pay as they ride. Again speaking from experience, he asserts that the best financial results for the companies are to be obtained by three-cent fares; which are best also, under private ownership, for the patrons of the roads.

Judging from the Cleveland papers, Johnson is pushing his opposition to franchise extensions with effect. He is accused of circulating anti-franchise petitions and paying two cents a name for signers. This horrifies the ring, which denounces it as bribing voters! To which Mr. Johnson characteristically retorts that if the people are to be bribed for two cents a head, the ring had better buy them up than to corrupt councilmen. Of course he is suspected of political ambition. Because he fights the street car ring so vigorously, its managers are sure he wants to be mayor. Mr. Johnson himself says he doesn't want to