

explosion and its deadly gases. To these the best of exits would have afforded no escape. It is, therefore, not sufficient to trace responsibility to builders, owners and officials with reference to construction and precaution. The cause of the explosion ought also to be clearly ascertained; and the responsibility for it—if there should prove to be any peculiar responsibility for that phase of the disaster—should be definitely fixed. There has seemed heretofore to be an inexplicable indisposition to take up this line of inquiry with any vigor.

Nations have this advantage over individuals, that they can know just what their friends think of them. It is not always a pleasant experience, but oftentimes the frankly spoken word, however unpleasant, is wholesome. Observe, then, how one of the principal and most thoughtful papers of Great Britain, the *London Speaker*, regards our new venture in Panama. Describing President Roosevelt—quite appropriately it would seem in the light of what he and his other boasting friends say of himself—as “the genial buccaneer” who at present guides our destiny, the *Speaker* proceeds to comment with wholesome severity upon his message in justification of the Panama affair. “His explanation,” it says, “does not justify an act of brigandage; it is merely an insistence upon the expediency which tempted the United States, in lawless defiance of the rights of nations, in aiding and abetting the revolt of Panama from her sovereign.” Then comes the rebuke that stings because it speaks truth plainly: “The United States has shaken the confidence of the civilized world in her honesty; the acquisition of the Isthmian canal a little earlier, and on easier terms, has cost her very dear in that moral prestige which is the truest wealth of nations. We do not wonder that a government committed to this buccaneering policy is straining every effort to build up a great navy. And yet there is a deep pa-

thos, almost a tragedy, in the pride with which this once peaceful democracy is aping the militarism of effete Europe.” For this ape-like world-powerism of ours, we have given up the glorious distinction of a world pioneer.

#### SENATOR HANNA.

“Of the dead, say nothing but good.” This is one of those precepts which live because there is the wisdom of truth in it. It is also one which, like most true sayings, is often perverted in application.

The personality of the dead should indeed be sacred. For that matter, so should the personality of the living. Death can add nothing to the sanctity of the individual. What death does is to dramatize the humanities in such manner as to place unusual emphasis upon the human quality of personal kindness, a quality which ought to be as active in the presence of the miracle Life as under the shadow of the miracle Death.

Quite as true is it that we should say nothing but good of the living, as that we should say nothing but good of the dead. If the evil that the living do is not harmful to others, it is something about which we should be silent; if the evil that the dead have done dies with them, it should be buried with their bones in the grave.

But some men are conspicuous representatives of great human currents or forces. They are types of social tendencies. In this position they personify to the multitude something which, if it happen to be evil, does harm to others while the man lives and does not die when he dies.

To say that such a tendency or force must not be criticized in connection with the personality of its conspicuous representatives when they die, is to exalt persons above principles and the dead above the living. To make their dying the occasion for emphasizing their good personal qualities in such manner as to seem to justify the evil principles they may have personified with distinction, is to pervert the old precept. While careful to say nothing but good of the dead, we must be care-

ful to say nothing that is good of the evils with which in the public mind the dead may be identified.

This distinction can be easily made with reference to the late Marcus A. Hanna, United States Senator from Ohio.

In his private relations Mr. Hanna is described by those who knew him intimately, as a man of lovable personality.

In his private conduct he appears to have been beyond reproach, so that even if evil reports might be properly sought for they could not be found.

He seems in business to have been not only diligent and progressive, but upright according to the best ethical standards of his business environment.

And if in the warfare of politics he may have used munitions and strategy that would not stand the test of the higher laws of moral philosophy, it is to be remembered that individual behavior must be tried by existing codes of honorable conduct and not by ideals. Moreover those evils are of the kind that usually die with the doer. If their influence survives at all it is because more profound evils perpetuate it.

With reference, then, even to this larger field of private conduct, where accusations against Mr. Hanna are most numerous and weighty, we may all unite in burying those accusations along with the body of him against whom they rose; and with deep sympathy and profound sincerity we may agree neither to say nor desire to say anything of the dead Senator but good.

His greatest rival in Ohio politics, Tom L. Johnson, did not wait for death to come before recognizing and acknowledging the virtues of Senator Hanna. In the very thick of a political fight, in which Mr. Johnson was the target for volleys of unjust and violent epithets, he frequently took occasion to refer to Mr. Hanna as a good neighbor, in whose private life and character he saw no faults that he would exploit. If Johnson could find it in his heart to say nothing but good of Senator Hanna then, why may not the dead Senator's bitterest enemy rise to the level of saying it now?

But the social tendency or force

which Senator Hanna so conspicuously personified is a different matter. This cannot be forgotten while it retains vitality, nor can Senator Hanna's personification of it be ignored. Much less may Mr. Hanna's personal virtues be so emphasized and elaborated as to augment the vitality of the evil he represented. We must not allow personal sympathy and tenderness to close our minds to the fact that the Ohio Senator was the most conspicuous personification of the most evil tendency of our time. He personified that tendency in public affairs which substitutes the doctrine of might under the forms of law, for the essential principle of right.

Mr. Hanna perceived no other standards of right than the conventional ones. That these are subject to an analysis under which the false in them must be rejected while the true is preserved, exceeded his powers of comprehension.

He believed, for instance, in the sanctity of property rights. But of property rights as moral rights, in contradistinction to legal or institutional rights, he had no notion. To him everything was justly property that the law recognizes as such, and nothing else was.

He was incapable of seeing that property in what men produce and voluntarily exchange is fundamentally different from property in advantageous privileges which the law grants. Thus, a street franchise and the rails or cars, a building and its site, a miner's wages and a mine-owners royalty, a structure of any kind and a monopoly privilege created by naked law, were all property to him and all equally sacred. Had he lived in Mississippi in slavery days, his economic philosophy—if philosophy it may be called—would logically have prevented his seeing any difference in sacredness between property in a horse and property in a Negro. Conventional laws and institutions, regardless of justice, were his only standards.

Nor in altering those standards did broad moral considerations seem to have any influence with him. Success alone was his ideal. Charitable he was, as charity goes; and upon a generous scale. But power was what he sought—power for his country, power for his party, power for the business in-

terests of his class, power for himself. He did not recoil from the obliteration of republican land-marks and the subjugation of "inferior" peoples, when imperialism was to be set up and his country made a world power. He saw nothing wrong in taxing one man for another's profit, and so had no hesitation in boldly advocating subsidies out of the public treasury for the private interests with which his business prosperity was allied. He saw nothing wrong in bending legislative bodies to his will by any means when there were legislative ends he desired to attain. Though he would not defy the law, he would make of law-making his weapon of might. To "stand pat" was his motto and to "get there" his ambition; not alone for himself, but for all that seemed to him as part of himself—his class, his faction, his party, his country. He believed that we must make our own destiny, and that our destiny determines our duty.

To understand this attitude of Senator Hanna's mind is to understand much in his career that engendered personal discredit in his life time and will probably bring his fame, should it long survive him, under general condemnation.

It is also the key to an understanding of the meteoric success of Mr. Hanna's career in public life. Doubtless his attractive personal ways in many respects contributed largely to that success. But it was chiefly due to the fact that with great ability, unflagging energy, and exceptional singleness of purpose, he united his feeling for the sacredness of established institutions as the repository of all the rights there are and the expression of all the justice that can exist. His narrowly utilitarian philosophy was the prevailing philosophy of his generation, and his personal qualities enabled him to become its very conspicuous, perhaps its most conspicuous, exemplar in public life.

What Abraham Lincoln was to the last era of democratic revival, almost that was Marcus A. Hanna to the present era of plutocratic dominance. And for corresponding reasons. Each possessed and

utilized the personal qualities that made him a protagonist of the spirit of his time. Opposites in principle, the two men were nevertheless much alike in their personal adaptability to the hostile ideals for which they respectively stood.

With the friends of Senator Hanna who mourn for him, all may sympathize. No one can stand in the presence of death without sorrowing, nor think of its be-reavements without sympathy. But with the tendencies in business and political life of which Mr. Hanna was so distinguished an exemplar, none can sympathize who intelligently love their country, who deeply love their kind, or who look with optimistic eye to the unfolding of God's beneficent purposes in the social sphere of human life.

#### EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Washington, D. C., Feb. 14.—Some months ago The Public commented upon certain correspondence between the vice president of a Cleveland corporation and the L. M. Whiton company of New London, Conn. (p. 322), in which the former endeavored to enlist the cooperation of the New London firm in a movement having for its declared purpose the placing of a secret agent of the Cleveland organization among the employees of all large industrial establishments in the East, whose business it would be to report and checkmate as far as possible any movement among his fellow employes looking to an organized effort to secure increased wages, shorter hours, etc.; also to report the proceedings of the labor organizations to which these employes belong so far as it affected their relationship with their employer. It will probably be remembered that the New London company refused to subscribe to this service and denounced the whole plan as un-American.

On Thursday of this week the House committee on labor was favored with a harangue by a Daniel Davenport, who announced himself as an attorney of Bridgeport, Conn., stating he was general agent of the American Anti-Boycott Association. Apparently devoid of all sense of humor, Davenport announced that the ground of his opposition to the proposed 8-hour bill was that the bill "was not wanted by either the employer or employe." Incidentally, he denounced it as socialistic legislation of the worst character. Of course, no one should question Mr. Davenport's authority to speak for the tens of thousands of employers and millions of employes in the United States, but singularly enough he