

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