

MISCELLANY

By an oversight we stated Dec. 22nd that the admirable poem entitled "The Question," by Townsend Allen, was written for The Public. As a matter of fact it had already appeared in the Boston Courier of August 18. We apologize to the Courier and the author.

A CENTURY POEM.

The following poem was read by Edwin Markham at a dinner given on the evening of December 31, 1900, at Arlington hall, New York city, under the auspices of the work- ingmen of New York, as "Labor's Greeting to the Twentieth Century." Ernest H. Crosby was toastmaster. The other speak- ers were John Swinton, A. J. Boulton, Bish- op Potter, George E. McNeill, Henry George, Jr., R. Fulton Cutting, John Ford, Joseph Barondess, Bird S. Coler and M. A. Fitzgerald. Mr. Markham's poem closed the exercises.

We stand here at the end of mighty years,
And a great wonder rushes on the heart.
While cities rose and blossomed into dust,
While shadowy lines of kings were blown
to air—

What was the purpose brooding on the
world,

Through the large leisure of the centuries?
And what the end—failure or victory?

Lo, man has laid his scepter on the stars
And sent his spell upon the continents.
The heavens confess their secrets and the
stones,

Silent as God, publish their mystery.
Man calls the lightnings from their secret
place

To crumble up the spaces of the world
And snatch the jewels from the flying
hours.

The wild, white smoking horses of the sea
Are startled by his thunders. The world
powers

Crowd round to be the lackeys of the king.
His hand has torn the veil of the great law,
The law that was made before the worlds
—before

That far first whisper on the ancient deep;
The law that swings Arcturus on the
north

And hurls the soul of man upon the way.

But what avail, O builders of the world,
Unless ye build a safety for the soul?
Man has put harness on leviathan
And hooks in his incorrigible jaws,
And yet the perils of the street remain.
Out of the whirlwind of the cities rise
Lean Hunger and the Worm of Misery,
The heartbreak and the cry of mortal tears.

But hark, the bugles blowing on the peaks;
And 'hark, a murmur as of many feet,
The cry of captains, the divine alarm;
Look, the last son of Time comes hurrying
on,

The strong young Titan of democracy;
With swinging step he takes the open road,
In love with the winds that beat his hairy
breaat,

Baring his sunburnt strength to all the
world,

He casts his eyes around with Jovian
glance—

Searches the tracks of old tradition; scans
With rebel heart the books of pedigree;
Peers into the face of Privilege and cries,

"Why are you halting in the path of man?
Is it your shoulder bears the human load?
Do you draw down the rains of the sweet
heaven

And keep the green things growing? Back
to hell!"

We know at last the future is secure;
God is descending from eternity,
And all things, good and evil, build the road.
Yes, down in the thick of things, the men
of greed

Are thumping the inhospitable clay.
By wondrous toils the men without the
dream,

Led onward by a something unawares,
Are laying the foundation of the dream,
The kingdom of fraternity foretold.

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY MUST
REMAIN RADICAL.

To say nothing of the absurdity of
two great parties, both doing homage
to the God-of-Things-as-They-Are, it
must be evident that the only reason
for the existence of a democratic party
at this time is the urgent necessity for
an organized movement that shall
sweep away the outworn wrongs and
abuses that, in the very nature of
things, attach to the continuance un-
der any system or laws for more than
30 years. Note that I say "laws," not
political administrations. It is true
that since 1860 we have had eight years
of an alleged democratic president, and
democratic fourth-class postmasters,
but the web and woof of our institu-
tions have been republican.

In his "Physics and Politics" Walter
Bagehot points out the inevitable ten-
dency of human society to form a
crust of conventional forms, opinions,
codes, laws and systems, which stifles
healthy growth, and prevents the free
development of social activities into a
complete and harmonious whole. And
it is to this conflict between the ever-
growing, ever-changing spirit of prog-
ress and advancement, and the reac-
tionary forces that ask only to be let
alone, now that society has been mold-
ed into forms that work for their ag-
grandizement at the expense of the less
favored, that the democratic party
owes its vital force to-day.

Mr. Bryan's statement of the central
issue of the recent campaign, made in
a speech delivered a few days before
the election: "We assert that the work-
ers who produce the wealth of this
country do not get their fair share of
the wealth they create, and that
some men who do no work get an un-
fair share of the wealth produced by
the workers," is an absolute and un-
questionable truth. Under this sign
the democracy can conquer.—Whidden
Graham, in St. Louis Mirror.

Jimmy—What time do yer have ter
get ter work?

Johnny—Oh, any time I like as long
as I ain't later than seven o'clock.—
Harper's Bazar.

CURRENT POLITICS IN AUSTRALIA.

For The Public.

In this colony of South Australia
we have just succeeded in getting
through the legislative council (cor-
responding to your senate or the Eng-
lish house of lords) a bill, which has
been blocked by a single vote for
three years, which gives municipali-
ties the power to levy all rates from
unimproved land values. The meas-
ure has yet to receive the sanction of
the lower house, but it has passed
there again and again, and is perfectly
safe in their hands.

This means a great victory for us.

We have also beaten an attempt
made by the Westinghouse com-
pany to get control of our street
tramways. The single taxers stood
practically alone, against all the mu-
nicipal authorities and great, pow-
erful vested interests. They stirred
up the people, held meetings in the
leading suburbs, filled the Adelaide
town hall to overflowing by a great
enthusiastic meeting, and compelled
attention from the political trimmers.
That the government will now na-
tionalize the lines is practically as-
sured.

The issue of our first federal elec-
tions, which occur about March next,
turns upon the tariff. In America you
can hardly credit the strength of the
free trade movement in Australia, and
the weakness of protection. The Rt.
Hon. G. H. Reid, former premier of
New South Wales, delivered a mag-
nificent address in Melbourne (the
stronghold of protectionism) last
week, and worked up his audience to
such a pitch of enthusiasm that only
two hands were held up in favor of
protection.

He also spoke here in Adelaide. The
town hall was packed and the great-
est enthusiasm prevailed. Of course
we shall have to fight, but the vic-
tory is, I think, absolutely beyond
question for free trade. We will send
in a majority of free trade represen-
tatives; so will New South Wales, Tas-
mania and West Australia. Queens-
land is doubtful, but the labor party
are mostly with us there. Victoria
is said to be strongly protectionist.
Calculating on these lines, we have
a substantial majority for free trade.
Of course it isn't real free trade; but
it isn't protection, and we can knock
out the revenue tariff afterwards.

Reid, of course, is a democrat, and
favors a mild dose of land value tax-
ation. Barton, the leader of the pro-
tectionists, is an admitted conserva-
tive. Barton will probably be sent for

to form the first government, but Reid will probably oust him when the tariff comes up for final adjustment.

Adelaide, S. A., Nov. 8, 1900.
CRAWFORD VAUGHAN.

WHAT WAS NOT SETTLED AT THE LAST ELECTION.

You cannot vote down the Decalogue. No moral question was ever settled until it was settled right. None ever will be. That is the only way to kill it off as an issue. Every man in America might vote that two and two make five; but the multiplication table would outlast them all, and be just the same as though they had never lived. For the truth is eternal, whereas man is a snippy and ephemeral little ex-monkey who has done as many wrong and foolish things as he could, by himself. His only salvation is that having nothing else to tie to, and being much more "wobbly" than any other animal, he finally drifts to the unvarying truth.

Men who are still young can remember when the United States voted overwhelmingly to maintain human slavery. Men who are only middle-aged can remember when the few Americans who stood up for the abolition of slavery were alone and despised and even mobbed. But even the election of Buchanan did not prove slavery right, nor yet "settle the question" in politics. The very next campaign brought Abraham Lincoln and the downfall of slavery. The election of 50 Buchanans would not have made slavery right—it would not even have proved that the American people deemed it right. All men that God has made have conscience; the Americans, we trust, as much as the next. That is the reason why whoopings-up, and torch-light processions, and tin badges and full dinner pails never settle a question. An American votes for president one minute in four years; but his mind and his conscience he has to sit up with all the time. Not only that. Truth never fails of sons; and the sons of truth never say die. Every real cause begets men to fight for it; and they always win. It was only a few men, at first, who overcame the colonial Tories and defied the king. Only a schoolboy thinks that even in 1776 the colonies were unanimous. And '76 was the outcome of a long uphill campaign. Only a few men were they who, in time, overturned the slave-holding south and the slave consenting north. But they were right. And it was then, as it shall still be, that "One man on God's side is a majority." It seems incredible to us to-day that Americans ever cringed under the brutal rule of

George III.—but they did. We can hardly realize that for more than four-score years this nation defended and practiced human slavery. Even to the elderly men who used to own 500 "niggers" in the United States, it seems a dream. But it was no dream. And men now living will see the time when our present comparable policy of subject races will seem as unreal. I myself, who am no chicken, expect to see this bad dream forgotten in our waking.—Chas. F. Lummis, in *Land of Sunshine*.

THE LONDON TIMES UP AGAINST AMERICAN HUMOR.

An editorial note in the number for November 17 of *Literature*, published weekly by the *London Times*, runs as follows:

The popularization of history can, of course, be carried to excess. Chicago university is gaining a reputation for "fads," and this seems to be one of them. Here is a literal report of part of a lecture by Prof. Thatcher on Charles I.:

Charles was a good many different kinds of a chump. He couldn't play a square game, and made ducks and drakes of everything he got his hooks on. He had a first-class show at the king business, but he slipped his trolley every time he undertook to touch the democratic bosses. He tried a lot of monkey business with parliament, but it landed him in the soup; and when he tried to tackle old Pym, who was a tough proposition, he found himself up against it to beat the band. Pym took a fall out of him every round. He had no more chance to win out than a pair of deuces against a straight flush, and though he put up a first-class bluff it didn't go. It took him a good while to drop to it that the old gag of divine right was well enough when playing to the gallery, but that the orchestra and boxes were on to it, and that it was played out anyway. Cromwell and Ireton were too fly to be scooped by any such tommyrot. Charles had always been a high roller, and when his gang got scrapping with the Roundheads he was dead broke and had to pull the leg of all the dead-easy tenderfeet in the kingdom. The ante was too much for him. Cromwell finally sized him up and got the district attorney to press the indictment of his royal nibs for everything that was out. Charles worked his pull for all it was worth, but he got the razzle-dazzle just where the chicken got the ax. They waltzed him off to the bone-yard p. d. q., and Cromwell had the innings. See?

The professor's study of the American language and its resources would seem to be more profound than his study of English history.

In *Literature* of December 15 appeared the following editorial note, supplementary to the first:

We seem to have done some injustice to Prof. Thatcher, of Chicago, in a note which we recently published on a lecture he was supposed to have deliv-

ered on Charles I. Mr. Edward Osgood Brown, counsellor-at-law, writes to us from Chicago to assure us that the professor's "worst offense in the way of 'slang' was an instance or two of colloquial expressions, in his teaching work, which would have passed entirely unnoticed if uttered from any chair in England; but which the 'priggishness,' so to speak, of certain of his female auditors made a subject of criticism which accidentally reached the newspapers." The quotation which we gave was, as Mr. Brown supposes, "taken from some American newspaper, where it was jocosely credited to Prof. Thatcher." This, says our correspondent, is "a very common form of American humor." The jocosity of the newspaper which gave the extract had, we fully admit, escaped us. For us in the old country the true inwardness of the Chicago humorist is somewhat subtle; we have hardly yet risen to what may be called "the higher jocosity." But we are much obliged to Mr. Brown; and the more so because he assures us that "those of us in America who have most attachment to the 'old home' and its people are often obliged to defend your fellow-countrymen from the charge that they have a very poor sense of humor, and find it difficult to take a joke."

THE POWER OF THE TAFT COMMISSION IN THE PHILIPPINES.

For The Public.

We are told by the news dispatches that the Philippine commission has enacted legislation for the establishment of provincial civil government under American sovereignty in the Philippines. I find, also, upon reference to the report of the secretary of war for 1900, page 83, that a decree of the commission assumes to be a civil enactment. It begins with these words: "By authority of the president of the United States, be it enacted by the United States Philippine commission, that—" etc.

Now, I do not understand how that commission can legislate, i. e., make laws as a civil power. It is merely a branch of the military rule enforced by the president. The executive order appointing it instructed it to report to the secretary of war.

As the good McKinley has frequently told us, we all know that until congress acts, the military arm of the government is supreme in the archipelago. Congress has not acted, because the Spooner bill, which was to authorize a civil authority, was withdrawn by the administration for fear that its enactment would make more