

diers in war to that of bankers, in a way that tends to bring all bankers into contempt by force of association. After pointing out the futility of the pomp and circumstance of war without the means to sustain it, this modest Pharisee asked where a government could look for its means "but to the patriotic spirit of the bankers." And then, to illustrate how patriotic the bankers are, he told of a visit of the secretary of the treasury to New York before the issuance of the war bonds, and of his there meeting a body of bankers who "assured him of their patriotic desire to see a three per cent. loan floated at par." Furthermore, "to enable him to make it a popular loan, without fear of miscarriage, they agreed to take the whole or any part of \$200,000,000 at par." Wasn't that a magnificent exhibition of patriotism? But what did it really amount to? To an offer to take at par millions of three per cent. bonds which every banker knew at the time would go to a premium, and which in fact did go to a premium before they were issued! He who has the hardihood to describe that as "patriotism," and to liken it to the heroism of men who offered up their lives—many without hope or expectation of reward, most without even the possibility of promotion or distinction, and all without enough pay to keep them in decent food—would hardly see any incongruity in describing the robber of a mission fund as a self-sacrificing missionary. We find no fault with the bankers who offered to take the war bonds. If the people allow their public servants to tie up future generations with interest-bearing mortgages upon their labor, it is the people and not the bond buyers who are to be condemned. But let the bond-buyers take to themselves no fancy names. The transaction is "business," pure and simple "business;" let them not nauseate the public by calling it "patriotism."

Before the war began there was a persistent pressure to increase the standing army, which was then limit-

ed to 25,000 men. The motives for this pressure were numerous, some plausible and some not, some sentimentally patriotic and some sordid; but the inevitable effect would have been to prepare the way for the strong man on horseback. Congress resisted the pressure until the beginning of the war, when it consented to a temporary increase to 60,000 men, distinctly providing, however, that at the close of the war the old limit should be resumed. Whether this resumption will take place remains to be seen. The pressure to keep the regular army up to its war footing, and even to increase it by 40,000 or more, is strong. Not the least of the motives for territorial expansion is the excuse it would give for maintaining a large standing army. The most popular plea in this connection is a variety of the old argument that a large standing army is necessary for defense. But the utter weakness of that has been demonstrated by the war. As to soldiers, we were ready to fight before even the best equipped enemy could have disturbed us. Within a few days 200,000 selected volunteers were in the field. Within a few days more they were drilled for action. Within less than three months they had proved their efficiency in battle. Those that were criticised were blamed for what their equipments and not they themselves were responsible for. The rough riders, no better men than the other volunteers, but better equipped, proved as effective as the regulars; yet all of them were engaged in peaceful pursuits when the war broke out. The whole experience of the Santiago campaign, the Puerto Rico campaign, and the mobilization of troops at different points in this country, proves conclusively that we need no large standing army for purposes of defense. What we do need for those purposes, and all that we need, is a competent war department, and a president who makes army appointments for merit and not for favor.

Our army showed itself to be weak

not as to men, but as to supplies. For that weakness there was no excuse. The soldiers had not dropped down from the clouds so as to increase the number of people to be fed. They had been drawn from 70,000,000 who were already being fed. If there were supplies enough before the mobilization of troops, there must have been supplies enough afterwards. And so there were. Had the mobilization been of as many Christian Endeavorers, experienced hotel keepers would have provided for them amply and comfortably; but our war department could not provide for a small fraction of the army at a point within daily communication of one of the largest markets in the world, during a suspension of hostilities, and four months after the call for troops. This failure, and the same is true of all the others, was not because the country was short of supplies, but because the war department was long of incompetent favorites. Instead of a large standing army give us a competent and faithful war department, and in reliance upon volunteers in an emergency, our country will be as safe from invasion as if it were surrounded by an impenetrable, an un-climbable, and an un-shoot-over-able wall.

#### THE HUNGER SCOURGE.

Repeatedly since The Public first appeared, we have had occasion to chronicle some of the horrors of contemporary famine. Not famines like those of the old times, when crops failed and whole nations went hungry; but famines in the midst of abundance. For such is the character of the modern hunger scourge. Its victims jostle the well-fed, and even as they die of starvation inhale the odors of rich food preparing for their immune brethren.

This hunger scourge is universal. For several years it threatened India, pinching the people more and more as each season passed, until it culminated in famine widespread and ghastly. Men, women and children died like rotten sheep. They died of starvation. Yet not all the people died so, nor were all of them hungry. Many of the inhabitants of India have no

notion to this day of what hunger is, except as they have seen its effects upon others. Like the unscathed survivors of an epidemic of cholera or yellow fever, though they saw others suffer and die, they themselves escaped even the breath of the scourge. It passed them wholly by. Elsewhere the hunger scourge is as severe as it was in India, though not so dramatic. In Galicia and Hungary it has become chronic. The war advertised its presence in Spain. Last spring's riots told the rest of the world that it had Italy in its grip; and in China and western Russia its ravages even now attract attention.

Out of all these countries have come heart-rending reports. From hunger alone 100,000 people in Italy go mad, while hundreds of thousands live upon nothing but moldy corn and die by wholesale of diseases it generates. Meat is unknown in nearly 5,000 districts, except among the few families of immunes; and in 1,700 districts even grain food is commonly known only as a luxury. In Russia, whence it is reported that the peasants eat but one meal a day, the bread consisting more of the bark of trees, leaves, and chaff than of flour, this condition is officially described as ordinary. Eighty per cent. of the people in Hungary are landless, and \$60 a year is extraordinary wages for a whole family; while in China, in the very heart of a garden valley of the earth, the workers are driven to the verge of rebellion by hunger.

To recapitulate the horrors of the hunger scourge would be an ungracious task, nerves are so sensitive to stories of suffering and so indifferent to the fact of suffering, but such a task would be useful. Could mankind only be forced to know how the hunger scourge drives its millions to disease, insanity and death, sleepy consciences might be awakened to the wickedness which all this implies.

But no account of the hunger scourge would be complete which stopped with the story of hunger in Asia and Europe, however full that story might be. As we have said, it is a universal scourge. In New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and even in the farming regions of the boundless and bountiful prairies, hunger has its victims. It is manifestly so in the

great cities. Every now and then a case of death from starvation is brought to public notice. It is also true of the country districts, though there hunger takes the insidious form of poor nutrition, and works its ends through supervening disease instead of ordinary starvation. But hunger is everywhere. The hunger scourge is indeed universal.

Not only is the scourge universal, but universally it flourishes in the midst of plenty. There was no lack of food in India, even at the height of the hunger scourge. There has been no lack of food in Galicia, none in Hungary, none in Italy, none in Spain. There is no lack of food in Russia, no lack of food in China. It is plentiful in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, London, Paris. They send it away in carloads from the very prairie farms on which people suffer from hunger diseases. Everywhere food is abundant; and the opportunities for producing it are everywhere not only abundant but limitless and exhaustless. Yet everywhere the scourge of hunger prevails! Yet everywhere, too, its victims are food producers!

The last observation admits of no dispute. All know that food abounds where famine strides, and that it is produced in its abundance by the famine sufferers themselves. It is the poor, those who have little or nothing but their labor to live by, who in any country or at any time in these modern days suffer from the scourge of hunger.

Some there are who say that all this is right, and altogether as it should be and must be. Those who think in that way, lay the responsibility for poverty in the first place upon the poor themselves. The poor are lacking in industry, it is said. But how should anyone be more industrious than the working poor? If industry would make men rich, the poor of our time, the poor who die of famine, would be rich beyond the dreams of avarice. But industry does not necessarily make the industrious rich. They may spend their lives, as Cowper puts it, in—

Letting down buckets into empty wells,  
And growing old with drawing nothing up.

Or, it may be, we are told again, that

the poor are thriftless. But how shall he be thrifty whose wages yield him no better food than rotten corn? Pray, what may he save—the hull?

As if to confound those who say that the starvation of the poor is due to their indolence and unthrift, there rises up the great big unyielding fact that the hunger immunes, the people who are secure against the hunger scourge of modern times, are the nobility of some countries and the monopolists of others. These classes as a rule are neither industrious nor thrifty; they pride themselves upon their idleness, and advertise themselves by their extravagance. They toil not and save not yet they live in luxury when the toilers are dying of starvation.

Driven by this stubborn fact from their comfortable position that the victims of the hunger scourge become such because they are idle and thriftless, your devil's advocates—some of them insatiable devourers of widows' houses, and others smug preachers of a perverted Christianity, but hypocrites and blasphemers all—next place the responsibility for dire poverty upon the bountiful Father of men. They tell us that God did not make the world big enough nor rich enough to accommodate all mankind, and that the hunger scourge is one of his beneficent devices for diminishing the oversupply of human souls. Think of the blasphemy of it! One is driven to paraphrase Col. Ingersoll, and say to them, "if that is your idea of God, be kind enough to explain your idea of the devil!"

But this is a perverted idea of God. The true explanation of the hunger scourge is much simpler, though not so easy to accept. It is safer to slander the goodness of God than to accept an explanation which threatens the unholy privileges of the rich. God will forgive; the rich won't. Nevertheless, the true and obvious explanation of the persistence of the hunger scourge among the working poor and the immunity of the idle rich is this, that by means of disorderly institutions and laws—institutions and laws, that is to say, which conform not to divine standards of right—food which the poor earn is diverted without compensation to the possession of the rich who don't earn it. In other and

plainer words, the universal hunger scourge is one of the phenomena of a universal system of theft.

Let all the people earn without hindrance and possess their earnings without ransom, and the hunger scourge would abate along with the curse of monopolized riches which causes it.

That this condition could be brought about, will be evident upon reflection to whoever desires the change. An explanation is not necessary. He who has not that desire in his heart, would lack the understanding in his head to grasp an explanation. What such as he need most is to be confronted with the horrors of the hunger scourge, until it becomes a veritable hell and he sincerely prays for relief—for relief not from disturbing accounts of the horrors, but from the unrighteous condition that makes such horrors possible.

## NEWS

Startling accounts of starvation and disease among the returning soldiers, have filled the newspapers during the week. It would be impossible in our limited space to attempt a recital of these horrors of the camp which have succeeded and outdone those of the battle field. Complaints came at first from Camp Wikoff, on Montauk Point, L. I., where the troops from the front had been brought for rest. At first the complaints came fitfully, and then in a perfect storm; and they were supplemented with similar complaints from rendezvous camps in other parts of the United States. Gov. Hastings, of Pennsylvania, describes the camp at Chicamauga as "a regular pest-house," in which no man could "live for any length of time without contracting fever." When the First Maine, originally a splendid regiment, reached New York on the 26th, although it had never been nearer Cuba than the Chickamauga camp, it was so broken down that every fifth man was unable to walk, and of 200 placed in hospital cars half were expected to die. This was not an exceptional case. When the 71st N. Y. Vols. marched back to its armory in New York city, it was less than 300 strong; the remainder of the regiment, except the killed and wounded of the San Juan battle, were sick with fever, helpless from starvation, or had

died of disease. The regulars suffered along with the volunteers. Ten men of the 7th U. S. Infantry were starved before they could be landed at Camp Wikoff, and the death reports impartially include regulars. Accounts of sick men left to die, lying on wet ground without blankets and without suitable food, are numerous enough to make a catalogue. A typical instance is said to be that of Lieut. Tiffany, of the rough riders, whose wealth called especial attention to his case. His death certificate, given by Dr. F. M. Johnson, of Boston, where young Tiffany died, described his death as "due to protracted fevers due to war life in Cuba, and starvation during the convalescent stage." The starvation had been suffered in the transport which brought him home. The total sick in home hospitals on the 27th was reported as 10,150, but it is evident from the reports that a large proportion of the men not in hospitals ought to have been there. Instances of the refusal of surgeons to send complaining men to hospitals are abundant in the report. In one startling case of this kind which occurred at Camp Wikoff the complaining man died on the ground within a few hours. Most of the suffering and death since the surrender of Santiago is due to maladministration.

Owing to the bad condition of Camp Wikoff, the secretary of war made a personal visit there for inspection. Upon his return on the 28th he gave out a prepared interview in which he said he did not intend to order an investigation, but to stand on his record, leaving the president or congress to investigate if they chose. He placed the responsibility for lack of supplies upon the commanding officers in the field. The reports of the bad condition in the camps continued, nevertheless, and they were confirmed by the broken down state of returning soldiers. The popular demand for a rigid investigation is unmistakable.

Rumors of court-martials also, are in the air. A disposition to hold Gen. Shafter, who is now on his way to Washington, responsible for the suffering and loss of life on transports bringing back soldiers from the front, is reported from Washington. This has had its origin apparently in the controversy between Gen. Shafter and Surgeon Gen. Sternberg, over their responsibility respectively for the absence of medical supplies at the time

of the battle of San Juan, but it is probably not unconnected also with charges that Shafter not only ignored the medical department but disobeyed Gen. Miles's orders in allowing the troops to frequent pest spots.

Another court martial which is reported as probable, seems more likely to take place. It is one in which Gen. Miles would figure as the defendant. He is accused of the technical offense of publicly criticizing his military superiors. The basis for this rumor is an interview with Gen. Miles, published in the Kansas City Star, over the signature of J. D. Whelpley, one of the most careful and conscientious of newspaper reporters. In that interview Gen. Miles does, by indirection at least, most severely criticize the war department. He tells how a secret dispatch was sent to Shafter by the department, while Miles was conducting the surrender negotiations at Santiago, assuring Shafter that Miles's coming there did not supercede him. Miles resents this attempt to secretly subvert his authority while he was the recognized commanding general. In the same connection he charges the department with mutilating the messages to him which it gave out for publication, thus putting him in a false position before the public. Gen. Miles also complains that his recommendations as to the removal of troops from Santiago and his orders as to the occupancy of fever-infected houses were disregarded, in consequence of which suffering and loss of life resulted. Moreover he charges the war department with divulging the original plans of the Puerto Rico campaign even in minutest details, so that the plans had to be abandoned lest the Puerto Rico army be involved in dangers similar to those which confronted the army at Santiago. It is understood that if Gen. Miles does not repudiate this interview, he will be subjected to a court martial; his friends intimate, however, that nothing would be more gratifying to him under the circumstances than a court martial, and that if not called before one he will demand a court of inquiry.

The president has appointed the peace commission. Its composition is the same as was anticipated, except that Whitelaw Reid has been named instead of Benjamin F. Tracy. The commission consists of Wm. R. Day,