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LOUIS F. POST, Editor.

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Upon going to press last week we expressed an opinion, based upon the best information then obtainable, that the Spanish squadron under Cervera, which had dodged the American navy for ten days, was in the harbor of Santiago, and that unless Cervera surrendered his squadron would be compelled to remain there inactive during the rest of the war. The first part of this opinion was confirmed within the next three days by an official report from Commodore Schley. But at the present writing it appears unlikely that the Americans will be content with merely bottling up Cervera. It is altogether probable that a successful attack, preliminary to capturing or sinking his squadron, was made on the 31st, and that even as these lines go into type a continuation of that attack is in progress.

A story, for which, however, we cannot vouch, is told of Col. Watterson, of Louisville, Ky., to the effect that upon being asked by a friend to use his influence to obtain a commission in the army for the friend's civilian son, he declined with this explanation: "Two of my own sons are in the ranks, and I shan't use my influence to get commissions even for them." It is to be hoped that the story is true. And if it is true it ought to be given the widest circulation. Prominent examples of this kind are needed in times like these. They are needed in the first place to counteract the effect of military snobbery, by fostering a feeling among all classes that service in the ranks is as honorable as service in shoulder straps; in the second place, to discourage favoritism in military

appointments; and in the third to rebuke that form of selfishness which impels men to aspire to command their fellows who have offered up their lives for a cause, without having reason to believe in their own competency. The place in time of war for men who have not yet demonstrated their possession of military qualities, is in the ranks. If they there show fitness for promotion, it is the duty of those in authority—not for the sake of the men, but for the sake of the country—to see that the promotion is made. If that be not done, but "pulls" instead of merit control promotions, so much the worse for the country and its faithless upper servants. The attitude toward this matter with which Watterson is credited is calculated to create a sentiment against "pulls." Whether it does so or not, it at any rate has a tendency to raise the dignity of faithful service in the ranks, which is, after all, the most important consideration.

In these war days demands for a large standing army grow louder and more numerous. We are told that with 80,000,000 people we should have an army in proportion, fully equipped and always ready for the field. Had we maintained such an army heretofore, it is urged that the war with Spain would already have passed into history. This yearning for a large standing army comes from three sources. Young men in the veally stage are apt to want one because they are too thoughtless to realize the dangers to domestic liberties which are involved in the maintenance of large standing armies, and are ambitious to have their country recognized along with Russia and England and Germany as a "power." Men of great schemes looking to "expansion," who hope to enrich themselves if they

are civilians and to gain more rapid promotion if they are army or navy officers, are also to be counted among the advocates of a large standing army. But the most urgent appeals come from men who want to substitute a standing army for policemen and constables. Whatever the motive, however, or the pretense for establishing a large standing army, it is an innovation to be strenuously opposed. The latest argument for it is as flimsy as all the rest. We could have made but little quicker work in the war had we controlled a large standing army than we have done with hardly any standing army at all. Such delay as there has been was not caused by lack of troops but by lack of equipment. And, even as it is, we shall have an effective army in the field quite as soon as it can be advantageously used. It is not for any general good that a large standing army is being urged upon us.

If the militia of the several states had been properly organized and equipped, as a force of citizen soldiery instead of a collection of social clubs in military uniform, we should have been able to mobilize a well drilled, well equipped and unconquerable army within ten days after the first call for troops. What do we mean by a force of citizen soldiery? We refer in principle to that kind of militia system which was early adopted by the states, but was never properly organized or maintained. Every able-bodied man should be required during a certain period of his life to serve as a militiaman with the same regularity and in much the same manner that members of well disciplined national guard regiments now serve. If that were done, and this militia were properly equipped, we should have a military force at command in any emergency.

which would have cost us but a trifle in comparison with the amount necessary to maintain a large standing army, which could be brought into the field upon a day's notice, which would quickly make a better fighting force than any standing army that had not been furnished with frequent wars for practice, and which meanwhile would neither be an influence for war nor an instrument of tyranny. Such a system, held up to a high standard, is the solution of the military question for a democratic people. It is only autocratic governments, or governments that are ambitious to become autocratic, that need large standing armies.

When William J. Bryan offered his services to President McKinley in any military capacity in which the president might think him useful, he indicated the disinterestedness of his patriotism; and he proved it when, his offer to the president having been ignored, he enlisted as a private among the volunteers from his state. The president's action in the matter, however, is not to be condemned. He could not have offered Mr. Bryan a position of low grade, or suggested that he enlist as a private, without seeming, however unintentionally, to intend an insult to a political adversary with a following of only 600,000 less voters than his own in a total of 14,000,000. Neither could Mr. McKinley properly have offered him a position of military responsibility in anywise corresponding to his political standing without jeopardizing the interests of the service; for Mr. Bryan was deficient in military education and experience. But the president in ignoring Mr. Bryan's offer, would have appeared less ungracious had he not at the same time appointed to military positions of importance so many civilians whose military education and experience were no better than Mr. Bryan's.

The action of the Universal Peace Union in sending a letter of sympathy to the queen regent of Spain cannot

but grieve every member and friend of that society who is not a mere apologist for tyrannical government. The American authorities were right in refusing to allow the letter to go through the mails; and the president of the society exposed his personal partisanship in behalf of the Spanish government when he boasted of having sent it through other channels. It is one thing to stand up for peace under all circumstances and at any cost, and those who do so in sincerity and without partisanship are worthy of all possible consideration. Loyalty to unpopular principles is not such a drug in the American market that we can afford even to sneer at those who genuinely possess it. But sympathy with the Spanish government in connection with the Cuban question is quite a different thing from loyalty to peace principles. A peace man may condemn the United States for making war upon Spain in behalf of Cuba, without thereby in any wise approving Spanish government in Cuba or in the slightest degree withholding generous sympathy from the outraged Cubans; but he cannot communicate to the Spanish government such sentiments as those which were embodied in the Peace Union's letter to the queen without approving Spanish government in Cuba and in effect condemning the Cubans for resisting it. That letter was not a peace letter. It was a war letter—a letter which appears to have been intended, and certainly could only have had the effect of encouraging Spain to maintain her tyrannical grasp upon Cuba, and to resist the offers of the United States to establish freedom there. From the point of view of a sincere peace advocate—a peace advocate as distinguished from a Spanish sympathizer—it should be as much the duty of Spain to prefer withdrawal from Cuba to war, as of the United States to prefer Spanish tyranny in Cuba to war. This was not the point of view of the Peace Union's letter. Its point of view was distinctly that of unadulterated sympathy with Spain. The Philadelphia councils, therefore,

acted wisely in cancelling the privileges of the authors of the letter to occupy Independence Hall. And unless the Peace Union repudiates this letter which its president says he has smuggled into the palace at Madrid, it will deserve that withdrawal, which it will assuredly experience, of public confidence in its sincerity as an instrument for promoting peace.

From a source commanding our respect we are in receipt of a letter the burden of which is that this country ought to retain any territory which the fortunes of war may bring into its possession. In support of its position the letter argues that in that way the area of real free commerce would be extended, which would more than counterbalance any evils growing out of race questions; and it urges that by bringing the natives of the conquered territory into our Union and giving them all the rights which we ourselves enjoy, we should be doing them no wrong. Then, as to Cuba, the letter recalls that we have made no contract to establish there a separate government, our obligation being only to establish a "stable" government. And it insists that as all Cubans would have a right to a voice in the settlement of the affairs of the island, and a large proportion are too illiterate to be trusted with that right, a full generation under the advantages of schools must pass before our forces should be withdrawn. This is described as a condition which would be equivalent to full possession on our part. While admitting that there is much to be said on both sides, the letter finally asks if it is not best to take possession of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippines, and as soon as possible to admit them as states into the American Union; and it takes positive ground in favor of doing so, as a means of more certainly bringing on the Parliament of Man.

For ourselves, we feel constrained strenuously to oppose any such policy. Let it be remembered, in the first place, that the admission of con-