

Efforts are making and it is believed by the postal authorities in the United States and England that the conclusion is near at hand when the uniform postal rate between the two countries will be the same as in that in either country, 1 penny, or 2 cents. The conviction of experts is that the increase of postal matter at the reduced rate would increase the postal revenue for both countries. Yet by a strange anomaly of conditions Great Britain is likely to be baffled in the attempt to make a similar reduction between the mother country and her confederated colonies. The objection on the part of Australia and Canada is that on their side of the bargain it would be unprofitable. What a curious turn may be presented by the early future—England and the United States with common postal dues; England and her colonies with discriminating rates!

The demoralization of the personnel of the shipping service in the United States is pretty well known. It strikes a note of alarm at a time when other influences and conditions look to a recreation of our shipping interests and carrying trade. We are prepared to build the best ships in the world now, and we should be able to man them efficiently. The brutalities of shipboard life have driven the American Jack out of the business, and foreigners for the most part man our seagoing vessels. Similar conditions exist in Great Britain, to the discomfort of all students of commerce there, and a thorough investigation is making preliminary to attempts at reform. It is time for us to be up and doing too, if not for humanity's sake, in the interests of business at least.

The Civic Federation Abroad.

That very noteworthy and interesting body of men and women in Chicago known as the Civic Federation has been laboring assiduously for half a dozen years or more to uplift the moral tone as manifested in the public aspects of the community where it had its origin. It has tackled social and municipal questions with the zeal of a modern St. Paul and labored in season and out of season for the common weal. It has been measurably successful in some of its aims, it has failed in many so far as immediate practical results go. Many a satirist has poked fun at the institution as a pretentious mugwump debating society where the members go to swell with pride at the sonorous flow of their own fine language, as they pose before the mirror of self complacency. This slander, however, is the futile abuse of the Philistines who shudder at the name of reform. It is beyond all question that the Civic Federation has been a powerful element of political culture. It has crystallized conviction among the better classes by the discussion on the broadest scale of public and social evils,

wherein lie their roots, wherein their remedies and as to what difficulties must be overcome to enforce those remedies successfully.

The aim in view is a noble ambition and worthy of rivalry, not only as an attempt at better things, but as an effective instrument of practical work. As brought to bear on municipal problems with a specific end to be reached its value is manifest. But the organization has been inspired to achieve larger conquests, if anything can be greater than municipal reform. It has called a meeting of representative minds throughout the land to gather at Saratoga in the latter part of August with the purpose of educating opinion about the harvest which we ought to reap from the war in the settlement of terms and the reaching out after results. It is eminently within the rights of free speech to do such things, and debate is a potent instrument of truth. The men who have been summoned to the rally are among the prominent figures of the intellectual and political world. Opposing views will be freely ventilated, and the jingo will lock horns with the conservative in the battle of words. But after all it looks very much like a junketing without much working pith in it. The thesis in view has been discussed to tatters by the newspapers, pro and con, and the argument of the controversy has been fully exploited. There is no such practical purpose in view as in the special field of the Civic Federation. It is not likely to affect the end by a jot or tittle. Yet if it does no good it will work no evil. One ventures to hope that the federationists will get much gain of health and strength by a copious absorption of Saratoga water.

The Great Asiatic Problem.

The fact is curiously interesting that the oldest and most densely populated empire in the world, which is also highly civilized in its way, is becoming as much of a cockpit for the rival aggressions of Europe as if it were a region occupied by African savages. Whatever else may be said of China, the gorgeous Cathay of Marco Polo, she is the inheritor of an ancient and once amazing culture. That she has remained petrified in that culture, indifferent to the strides of the rest of humanity, makes her now the victim of the powers, which have long beaten at her doors and now burst them in. At least five centuries behind every other great nation in all the arts and sciences which constitute power, she may be compared to a whale stranded on the beach. Her future now promises to be just what half a dozen powerful and ambitious governments hungry for extension of commerce and influence permit it to be. The grip they already have will be relentlessly extended at every opening and under every pretense.

That aspect of the problem which is found in the question, "What will be-

come of China?" is not more interesting, however, than speculation as to what this apple of discord will evolve as a stimulant to quarrels among the powers of the west. The old eastern question which kept European civilization wrangling and on the perpetual verge of war centered in Turkey and the Danubian principalities. The new eastern question, even more rife with explosive possibilities, has traveled 5,000 miles eastward. We can scarcely believe that the lions snarling over this immeasurably tempting prey will long keep their powerful fangs from each other. No division of spheres of influence, mapped out as in Africa, will make them contented any more than it has done on the dark continent. History will inevitably repeat itself. England's extraordinary naval estimate for the next five years indicates her lucid forecast of the forthcoming. Is America to be drawn into the terrific armed scramble which sooner or later will come? Should we become an oriental power as owner of the Philippines it will make our interest in the struggle directly personal. However tempting the thought of extending our possessions to the remote eastern seas, the imminent risk of entanglement in that mighty world quarrel beginning to mutter is one to be very seriously considered.

General Shafter's report of losses reaches only 1,595 casualties of killed and wounded among a force not much more than 15,000 during all the fighting about Santiago. This is a small ratio as compared with many of the battles of our civil war. Yet our brave fellows exposed themselves with the most reckless daring and gave the Spanish riflemen the best possible chances. It makes a world of difference who is at the butt of the gun.

Spanish law prohibited importation of patent medicines. Now that American law will supersede the people of Santiago will have the ineffable privilege of dosing themselves ad lib. with pills and nostrums. It is said that there are some 12,000 patent medicines recorded in Washington. What a chance to wreak further vengeance on the Spaniard under the guise of interest in his health!

Male Felinity.

"Talking about the humanity of man and the felinity of woman," said the independent woman, "let me tell you a little story of a man and a cat. The story was told to me by the wife of the man, who is a domesticated woman. It seems that the family cat, besides being of a sportive disposition, had more ingenuity than most cats or understood better how to relieve the tedium of a domestic existence. This cat caught a mouse. Being well fed, her sporting instinct came into play, and she kept the mouse to amuse herself with. That is a feline custom, as you are aware, but where this cat showed superior mentality was in hitting upon a place to hide