

in Cuba. The fact that the attitude was struck because of an overt act on the part of the Spanish and not because the time had come to teach the world a lesson in liberty, has nothing to do now with the heroism and generosity of our attitude to Cuba. Germany and England and Russia will please note that we have conceded what is due to history by alleging an ideal reason for declaring war on Spain instead of the real one. They will note also that when we have licked Spain off of our continental islands we will take our ships back to our own harbors and let the reconstructionists agree and disagree as to the kind of government they will have in their island. If Russia and England and Germany were not already committed to a territorial aggrandisement policy if it were not for the fascinations and weaknesses of Egypt, China, Turkey and India the lesson of a disinterested love of freedom for its own sake might be learned by a czar, a xuen and an emperor.

The life and letters of Lord Tennyson lately published in two volumes by his son, Hallam Tennyson, is a record of a life spent among the hill tops and by the sea. No one can read the thousand pages without gaining a profound conviction of the greatness of the poet. His thoughts were of nature and his heart was full of love for his kin, for his friends, and for his wife and for the world, with the difference that with the latter he did not wish to associate personally. He would not consent to pose for and talk with the miscellaneous and lion hunting stranger who chased him over the hills to his home. He would not accept chairmanships of this and that society whose habit it is to select a mighty man to preside at feasts and anniversaries for the looks of the thing. He would not for poetry's sake accept the hundred and one empty, sounding honors that it is society's tiresome custom to inflict upon distinguished men. He would not be banqueted and he would not go to receptions arranged by officious busy bodies in his honor for their own glory. He had time to write, to walk the downs and climb the hills, to watch the sea and the sky, to retire a half hour after dinner and smoke a solitary pipe and those about him learned while he was still a young man that Alfred was to be let alone. To be sure his refusal to join in the usual tortures of breakfasts, receptions, teas, dinners, etc., gave him a reputation of being a bear. But he did not care. He would not and he did not chatter away his life in what is called "company." He loved a few devotedly and was to them a perfect host. To his wife and children he was kind and loving and he discharged his obligations to the world by writing the best poetry for it and by helping the needy who applied to him. After a life of unique separation from any consciousness of the meanness of human nature, because of a persistent refusal to examine it he died at the age of eighty-three. Such an existence is as different from the average flagellated lot of man as though he had lived in Mars. Most of us could be better and greater in a small way if we let solitude and reflection do their most for us, only like a flock of sheep we get in each others' way and do not progress.

It is curious that in a book which contains so few intimate revelations of the real affections and family life of the Tennysons, we get so clear a view of the gentle deep soul of Lady Tennyson, her sons and her husband. In the thousand pages of letters, unpublished poems and friendly comment, all consciously anxious not to betray the sacred seclusion both of fam-

ily and person, the person and character of Lord Tennyson is clearly and unmistakably drawn. He was a gentle poet, scholar, and most lovable man. His friends were the eminent men of literature and science in England and America. There are even a few letters from Frenchmen, but not many. Tennyson's character and genius was too essentially Anglo-Saxon to be in sympathy with French literature and the makers of it.

Those who have happily read the biography have been lifted for the time being into the atmosphere Tennyson breathed all the time and they have gained by the change of air more love and charity and faith, as well as a new conception of the object of literature.

A prophet in his own country has to live on crusts and water until his fame has reached another country, when he gets a wage that in his humble habit of receiving nothing at all seems beyond his deserts. In the person of Mr. William Reed Dunroy Nebraska has a poet that so far she has done nothing to deserve. The melody and rhythm, the genuine poetic feeling and expression, the symbolism of Mr. Dunroy's poems are only to be compared with the greatest of our country's poets. Mr. James Whitcomb Riley's *genre* or dialect rhymes are incomparably less poetic, less meritorious. The literary value of such a poem as the one printed in last week's *COURIER* and entitled "A Prairie Pastel" is recognized by every one. Because of the number of those who have asked for a copy of it, it is reprinted in this week's issue. Such phrases as "As northward fly the wild geese in an arrow huge and black, The only shade against an azure sky, and the light winds lift the fragrance of the grass and bear it far to some bare land and leave their precious gift, or, And near the shallow stream that flows through sand the stunted willow lifts its lance of red, show a discriminating search of words for their sound and color and exact meaning. Mr. Dunroy is the only poetic authority on prairies. He is the only writer in this country who has given the prairies their literary place. His book, "Corn Tassels," the apotheosis of the prairies, has received columns of appreciative criticism in the largest and best newspapers in this country and there are probably not three hundred people in this city who have bought it, though there is no other way of illuminating our prairie home with "the light that never was on land or sea." Mr. Dunroy is standing up for Nebraska all by himself in the literary world. A little expression of appreciation from the prairie dwellers might encourage our neglected psalmist to go on with the work that only he can do.

Considering that we have alleged the cause of war to be disgust with the savage rule of Spain in an island colony and have disclaimed any reward for our exertions and expense except those which are bestowed by an approving conscience upon virtuous conduct, there is some question among the ingenuous who accept official documents as proofs of the actual situation as to the right of the United States war ships to capture Spanish merchant ships. So long as no other nation has ever declared war from a love of fair play and to secure the extension of freedom and at the same time disclaimed any reward, the barbarous precedents which allow nations to make captives of non-combatant and unarmed merchant vessels can not be consistently followed by our super-extra-virtuous war department. This being the first expedition of the kind, at least since the holy war of

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the crusades, the historical sense which led us to select so exalted a *casus belli* ought to guide us in the practice of celestial campaign tactics.

No department of the university is so frequently celebrated by original work of graduate students as the botanical. The new book on the Phytogeography (or plant geography) of Nebraska by Messrs. Roscoe C. Pound and Frederic E. Clements is a valuable contribution by two young men who have already distinguished themselves by other botanical papers. Mr. Pound as the director of the botanical survey of Nebraska has made maps which those who know his capacity for conscientious and accurate work will recognize the value of. Work such as this is what is giving the University of Nebraska an enviable reputation.

Why the United States Wants Cuba. (Copied from *Le Soleil Paris*, April.)

According to the statistics published by a New Orleans newspaper the total consumption of sugar in the United States is about 200,000,000 tons a year. Out of this the United States produces 300,000 to 400,000 tons, or one-fifth or one-sixth of the amount consumed. The remainder is obtained from foreign ports, thus involving an expenditure of \$100,000,000 per year.

Mr. McKinley's compatriots desire not only to free themselves from this importation but also become exporters

in this line and thereby furnish the old world with sugar, as they now supply her with cotton, wheat, lard and other products. In a government report by the American consul at Berlin there is the following note:

"It is necessary to keep account of every pound of sugar and flour exported from the United States in order to pay for the importation of sugar. The total value of all meats, beef products and lard exported scarcely equals the sum paid on sugar importations. Our enormous exportation of cotton just doubles the value of our sugar importations."

Now Cuba is able to furnish enough sugar not only for the United States but for the whole world.

Out of the 118,000 square kilometres, the superficial area of Cuba, only 11,000 are cultivated. The remaining territory is either waste or forest land. Throughout the island the soil is very fertile, but the means of communication are decidedly inadequate and to this reason is due the extent of uncultivated lands.

The cultivation of sugar cane is the principal resource of the island. The sugar plantations cover an area of only 3,400 kilometres, which produces a million tons of sugar. The extension and perfection of this industry with proper means of transportation would certainly increase the annual yield tenfold.

We understand now why the