

most happy if he could follow faithfully in the foot-steps of his distinguished predecessor.

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR, SALISBURY'S successor, is conceded to be a man of great ability. His ancestors were known as "the bloody Balfours," and while for many years the Irishmen were very unfriendly to him, it is said that in recent years they have entertained for him more kindly views. Balfour is 54 years of age. He entered parliament in 1874, and in 1878 he began service as private secretary to the Marquis of Salisbury, who, by the way, is his uncle. A writer in the New York World, commenting upon Balfour's career, says: "He began by being despised; he went on to be hated; and he has now conquered respect." This same writer quotes a distinguished Irish clergyman as referring once to Balfour in these words: "If the people only hated the devil half as much as they hate you, my occupation would be gone." But this same writer adds:

"At last the Irish members of parliament learned to give him the respect due to a relentless, consistent, fearless opponent. The people themselves regarded him even more favorably after a time. Among the measures he brought forward was the bill for the improvement of Ireland by the drainage of the Bann, Barrow and Shannon and by the construction of light railways. The New Purchase of Land bill, which created a congested districts board, was a measure of real relief to the peasantry. Ten years ago Mr. Balfour was unanimously elected conservative leader in the house of commons. His speeches added to his reputation for statesmanship and showed his ability as a debater as well as a student. He rose by sheer might of intellect. His relationship to the prime minister, instead of advancing him at once, as might have been expected, rather tended to keep him back. But he was not to be kept back. He rose in the councils of his party, and at last Lord Salisbury was forced to take him into his cabinet, where he has since held a foremost place."

ALTHOUGH CHAMBERLAIN FAILED IN obtaining the position of premier there are many indications that under the new regime the shrewd colonial secretary will have considerably more influence than he had under the Salisbury administration. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the chancellor of the exchequer, has also resigned. Hicks-Beach has generally been unfriendly to Chamberlain, and some say that Chamberlain may succeed Hicks-Beach as controller of the money-bags. Others declare this to be improbable, however, and yet it is very generally understood that under the new arrangement, the Chamberlain star will be very clearly in the ascendancy.

THE OUT-GOING OF SALISBURY AND THE in-coming of Balfour marks, as one newspaper writer well puts it, "the end of an era." Salisbury was in the seventy-third year of his age and for fifty years he has been conspicuous in English politics. He was an old-time opponent of Gladstone and he succeeded the "Grand Old Man" as prime minister in June, 1885. In the general elections of that year Salisbury was retired from office, but in the general elections of 1886 he once more became prime minister. In the general elections of 1892 he was again retired, and in 1895, when Lord Roseberry resigned, Salisbury formed a new cabinet, and since then has held undisputed sway. Salisbury figured in international politics so long ago that it is recorded that at one time he was a big enough man to arouse the ire of Bismarck, and that the great German statesman once referred to Salisbury as "a wooden lath painted to look like iron."

THE CITY OF JOHNSTOWN, PA., SEEMS to rest under adverse fate. Thirteen years ago a dam broke above the city and the resultant flood in the Connemaugh valley literally wiped the city of Johnstown from the face of the earth, and nearly five thousand people lost their lives. It was one of the greatest disasters of the civilized world. Johnstown pluckily rebuilt and in two or three years all traces of the great flood were removed, save for the monuments erected to the victims of the disaster. Now Johnstown is suffering from another great disaster, and nearly one hundred and fifty of Johnstown's citizens lost their lives there. An explosion of gas in the Bethlehem Steel company's Johnstown mine, known as "The Klondike," caught the miners while eating their noonday lunch, and hundreds were killed and injured. The list of dead foots up one hundred and fourteen, so far as actually known, and several miners are still missing. No other American city has ever been called upon to mourn two such fearful disasters.

ONE OF CECIL RHODES' GREATEST AMBITIONS was to build a Cape-to-Cairo railroad, but he died before work was begun thereon. Indeed,

many thought it but a day dream that could never be realized. Now there is every likelihood that work on the great scheme will begin in a short time. On July 16 the state department at Washington made public a report on railway development in Africa from United States Consul Ravedale, at Beirut, bearing date of May 10. The consul says that by an agreement signed at Brussels the previous month by Robert Williams with the king of the Belgians the German route was abandoned and the railway from Cairo to the Cape is to be carried through the Congo Free State to the upper waters of the Nile. From Stanley Falls, on the Upper Congo, a railway is to be built to Mahagi, on Lake Albert Nyanza, and this connection will supply the missing link between the Cape and Egyptian railways. The consul reports that the new railway project does not necessarily replace the original central line through German territory, as planned by Mr. Cecil Rhodes and the German government. In fact, he says that it is quite likely, if the proposed railway be built from the coast of Dar-Esh-Salaam, the capital of German East Africa, that the original Cape-to-Cairo scheme, by way of Tabora, will be realized. "Both lines," says the consul "may astonish the world before many years as full-fledged realities." The consul says that the United States is not playing an important part in the development of Africa, and that "Stanley's momentous work in the seventies has not been followed up by his quondam countrymen." Only with Cape Colony is our commerce of any material importance.

WAR PROPHETS ARE AGAIN AT WORK, and this time they declare that Japan and Russia will be the next great nations to engage in war. Japan was deprived of the fruits of her great victory over China by reason of the interference of other nations, chiefly Russia. By the terms of the agreement reached in the settlement of the Chino-Japanese war Russia was to vacate Manchuria, a territory Russia long has coveted. Russia, however, has thus far failed to withdraw her troops from Manchuria and Japan is said to be preparing to fight to enforce the terms of the agreement.

A CONVICT NAMED HARRY TRACEY, who escaped from the Oregon penitentiary, has been holding the center of the stage for an unusually long time. Tracey eluded the officers, baffled the bloodhounds, forced people to feed him and killed several of his pursuers, in the meantime keeping the newspaper readers of the country busy following the accounts of the fruitless efforts made to capture him. Tracey's escape and flight possesses some really wonderful features, and one is impelled to wonder what such a man might have accomplished for good had he bent his energies in the right direction.

AFTER READING A LITTLE INCIDENT that occurred at the Piasa, Ill., Chautauqua, one cannot censure Captain Richmond Pierson Hobson for remarking that he is "tired of the hero business." A young woman named Miss May Cerf, of St. Louis, wondered if Hobson really possessed heroic qualities, and in order to ascertain asked him if he would rescue her in case she fell into the river. He replied that he would try. A moment later Miss Cerf was struggling in the water. Captain Hobson dived overboard and succeeded in grasping her as she was about to sink for the third time, and after a desperate struggle brought her within reach of parties on shore. Miss Cerf is now convinced that Hobson is a hero, and it is not difficult to imagine what Hobson thinks of the young woman who put him to the test, although he probably would decline to express his thoughts save in the privacy of his own apartments.

THE JOKE RECENTLY PLAYED ON THE Official Police Gazette of Prague by which in the columns of that publication was printed a notice offering a reward for the arrest of the German emperor and referring to him as a lunatic, recalls to a writer in the Washington Post incidents that occurred during the reign of King George II. According to this writer, this particular king was wont to spend far more time in his kingdom of Hanover than in his British dominion. The notices which appeared in the papers of the day and which were likewise posted in the shape of big bills on the palace walls, read as follows:

"Lost, strayed, or stolen, a man known as George of Hanover, who has deserted his wife and children, leaving them dependent upon public bounty. Four shillings and eleven pence three farthings is the reward offered for any information which will lead to his restoration to his abandoned family, as he is not worth a crown." (The latter being the denomination of the five shilling bit.)

The Post writer further points out that "an-

alogous notices have likewise appeared within the last few years in the Belgian press, especially once when King Leopold was found to be missing from Belgium during the midst of a ministerial crisis. Nothing could be done to straighten out matters without his presence. He was sought high and low all over Europe—but in vain, and it was only at the end of more than a fortnight, during which everything had been at a standstill at Brussels, both politically and administratively, that King Leopold was suddenly discovered engaged in a driving and walking tour in fair but frail company in one of the most remote portions of Switzerland."

RECENTLY JOSEPH MARINER, A WALL paper manufacturer of Philadelphia, failed in business. A meeting of his creditors was held to discuss ways and means of saving as much as possible from the wreck and it was decided to appoint a committee of four to outline a plan of procedure. A proposition to include a banker creditor on the committee was opposed on the ground that the bankers were already amply secured by life insurance policies. A banker present admitted that the banks held the life insurance policies, but declared that they were such that the banks could not realize on them. "There is only one course," said the banker, "by which the banks can figure as preferred creditors in this case, and that is for Mariner to considerately commit suicide." The brutal remark was afterwards repeated to Mariner, and after brooding over the matter for several days he "considerately committed suicide."

Need Only to Watch.

The ease with which the schemes of the "re-organizers" may be thwarted was shown by the action of the Missouri democratic convention. The committee on resolutions sought to evade reaffirmation of the Kansas City platform, asking that it be left to a later convention. But watchful and loyal democrats, knowing that in the meantime the "reorganizers" would be perfecting their plans, refused to accept the advice. The resolutions reported by the committee contained no reference to the Kansas City platform, but loyal democrats on the floor of the convention offered an amendment reaffirming that platform and the amendment carried by an overwhelming majority.

What was done in the Missouri convention can be done in any other democratic state convention if loyal democrats insist upon standing by democratic principles. And loyal democrats need only to be put upon their guard to nullify the schemes of those who would make the democratic party so like the republican party that the trusts and combines would be willing to accept either. The Commoner discusses live political questions and topics of the day. Its news summary and other departments are being constantly improved. The Commoner will arouse loyal democrats to a sense of the duty imposed upon them. Its influence is limited only by its circulation, and an extension of the circulation means an extension of its influence. In order to extend its influence and circulation the "Lots of Five" plan has been adopted. By it The Commoner is placed within reach of all, and democrats are enabled to assist in securing subscribers. Subscription cards, each good for one year's subscription, are sold in "lots of five" at the price of \$3 per lot, or 60 cents per card. Each card is good for one year's subscription when properly filled out and mailed to this office. Will you not undertake to place five or more cards among your friends? If you doubt your ability to sell the cards, order one lot and pay for them only after you have disposed of them. The Commoner is willing to trust its readers. Fill out the following blank request for one "Lot of Five" and address it to this office:

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