

side of the frontier. Such is the present situation. If the powers kept their hands off Turkey would undoubtedly, after a war of atrocities unparalleled in Europe for centuries, defeat Bulgaria and occupy that country. But the only certain thing in the whole chaotic situation is that the powers will not keep their hands off. They will not permit the Turk to extend his system in Europe. It may be that all four of the little Balkan independencies will be drawn into the struggle. In that case they are likely to wind up as dependencies or provinces of some bigger nation, which would not be a world calamity, since Serbia, Bulgaria, Roumania, and Montenegro are no better than they ought to be. Austria is now administering two former Turkish provinces—Bosnia and Herzegovina—and administering them well. They were formerly given over to slaughter, pillage, and persecution, but they are now lands of plenty and peace. If Austria is assigned the task of deodorizing and disinfecting another slice of the Balkan territory her past performances warrant the hope that she will do it well. Broadly speaking, any settlement that leaves the Turk in Europe will be but temporary, for as long as he remains west of the Bosphorus the Balkan question will live."

THE PORTO RICAN ASSEMBLY BY A VOTE of 60 to 15 has asked that congress shall admit the territory to full statehood or grant Porto Rico her independence. The Sioux City (Ia.) Journal, a republican paper, referring to this demand, says: "The news comes as an unwelcome surprise, but in the absence of information to the contrary the American public will assume that the resolution does not mean just what it seems to mean and that the Porto Rican legislators acted without considering the matter fully. Certainly it cannot be deemed vital to Porto Rican interests that the island shall be admitted to full statehood at this time, and as for independence it is out of the question from any viewpoint. The Journal admits, however, that "Porto Rico should take a seat beside Alaska, Hawaii, and the home territories prepared to do a little patient waiting."

ONE OF THE CLAUSES IN THE LEGISLATIVE appropriation bill recently introduced in congress forbids the payment of any money appropriated therein for paying the expense of horses and carriages or drivers other than for those used by the president, the heads of departments and secretary to the president, and this clause is designed to put an end to an abuse which has existed for many years. The Washington correspondent for the Philadelphia Public Ledger, referring to the measure, says: "The practice has been for every assistant secretary and many chiefs of divisions to have carriages for their exclusive use purchased with public funds and maintained at the public expense. This was done by indirect methods and payments made from appropriations of a miscellaneous character. These carriages not being required by the officials are used by the women members of their families in making calls, attending parties and theatres. There is no effort to conceal this use of the public property and funds for private convenience and profit. There is one case that is especially noticeable. The head of a certain division, who lives at a boarding house, kindly loans his landlady the official carriage to do her marketing, and in the afternoons and evening the daughter of the house has the unrestricted use of the outfit."

AL ADAMS, THE POLICY KING OF NEW York, was escorted to Sing Sing eight months ago. His case was taken from one court to another, and it has finally been determined that the policy king must remain in prison. A writer for the Chicago Chronicle says that although Adams is confined in the penitentiary, he is conducting an immense real estate business "from that home of vocal culture" without interruption. This writer explains: "Adams is said to be worth \$6,000,000 and the lowest estimate placed on his fortune is \$4,000,000. He was convicted after one of the most bitter legal struggles in the history of the state and finally landed in the state penitentiary for three years. The charge against him was that he was conducting policy games throughout New York and the evidence was overwhelming. Adams, it seems, is permitted by the prison authorities to superintend his big real estate operations and this work takes up most of his time. He is confined in the hospital ward as a patient, but, although he cannot break stone or make overalls, he finds

that his health permits him to do a pretty good day's work in attending to his private affairs."

THE "SOLDIER'S VOTE," ACCORDING TO the Washington Post, is a myth. Of course the Post admits that the old soldiers vote, but it declares the idea that any considerable number of participants in the civil war are banded together as a separate and distinct factor in politics is a wild absurdity. The Post adds: "The man who says that these ex-soldiers as a class are thus banded and that they act on the presumption that without such a political organization they could not get just treatment from our government, grossly insults them and outrageously maligns the American people." The Post adds: "For it is a fact—and one of the greatest facts in this republic's history—that the people, acting through their national, state and municipal governments, have made it their paramount duty ever since the war began to manifest their love and gratitude to the defenders of the Union. There is not a more eloquent or impressive story in the annals of the human race since time began than the record of this affectionate and grateful appreciation. It has excited the wonder and admiration of the civilized world as a new departure on loftier lines than any other people ever dreamed of."

IT IS THOUGHT TO BE A BIT SIGNIFICANT that while English-speaking Canada is all for Japan, French Canadian sympathy is as unmistakably for Russia as it was for the anti-British side in the Boer war. The Ottawa, Canada, correspondent for the Chicago Tribune says that it would just now be a ticklish thing for the government of Canada to allow the idea to go forth that the British war office authorities can count on Canadian troops for service in Asia if the mother country is eventually drawn into the conflict, and for this reason all offers of service from military men who are under the impression that Canada may before long be asked to co-operate with Great Britain in the far east are discouraged.

FOR SEVERAL YEARS AMERICAN NEWS-paper readers have heard considerable about the great trans-Siberian railway. Speaking to the New York correspondent for the Chicago Tribune, Charles Kliene, an Englishman, who for twenty years served in the Chinese custom service, said that for a distance of four thousand miles this road was mined in various places and that at a given signal, or what is far easier, at a specified time, the road could be damaged and connection between Russia and the far east practically destroyed. This traveler says: "Japan began to prepare for war long ago, for months spies have swarmed over Manchuria and eastern Siberia getting information and making preparations. Everything that could be learned they have learned, and they are in a position to act."

IN EVERY SECTION GANG OF CHINESE coolies along the railway, according to Mr. Kliene, there have been Japanese who have had no difficulty in disguising themselves and have quietly employed their spare time in distributing explosives along the track ready to be set off at the proper time. Many of these have worked upon the line when it was being built. Others were skilled engineers who used their eyes and ears as well as their hands, and Mr. Kliene says that "the blowing up of the railroad bridge recently is evidence of the truth of my assertion." In Mr. Kliene's opinion official corruption is responsible for the road being improperly constructed. Instead of being a well built, safe and serviceable track from St. Petersburg to the far east, the greater part of the trans-Siberian railroad is "of cheap and dangerous makeshift."

REFERRING TO THIS PIECE OF RAIL-road construction which newspaper readers were long ago lead to believe was a triumph of the engineers' art, Mr. Kliene says: "The rails are light and the ties too far apart to bear heavy traffic. The former are twenty feet long, and usually rest on three ties, one in the middle and one at each end. In laying the ties the workmen simply cut down trees as they went along, splitting the logs and laying the round side uppermost. The rails are insecurely fastened to the ties and to each other, not half the requisite number of rivets being used at the ends. To attempt to convey a large body of troops over the railway in a hurry would be attempting an im-

possibility. In the first place, the trains cannot consist of more than four or five cars, because of the character of the track. Then, partly for the same reason, a speed of much more than twenty miles an hour is not attainable. Likewise the transportation of heavy guns would be attended with vexatious delays. The Chinese all along the road are in thorough sympathy with the Japanese. All ill feeling engendered by the Chino-Japanese war has died out, and Japanese spies will not lack support from the people among whom they work."

NO ONE NOW SERIOUSLY DOUBTS THAT Mr. Roosevelt will be nominated by acclamation in the republican convention. The New York Tribune says that thirty-eight delegates have so far been chosen, and of these thirty-four have been instructed for Mr. Roosevelt. State and territorial conventions have been called for the following dates: Alabama, Birmingham, May 10; Idaho, Pocatello, May 10; Illinois, Springfield, May 12; Indian Territory, Claremore, March 17; Kansas, Wichita, March 9; Louisiana, New Orleans, February 17; Minnesota, Minneapolis, March 17; Mississippi, Jackson, March 23; Missouri, Kansas City, March 22; Nebraska, Lincoln, May 8; North Carolina, Greensboro, May 18; Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, April 6; South Carolina, Columbia, February 24; Tennessee, Nashville, April 7; Virginia, Norfolk, March 3; West Virginia, Charleston, April 14; Georgia, Atlanta, March 23; Texas, Dallas, March 22.

IT IS PROPOSED BY THE JAPANESE OF NEW York to raise \$5,000,000 to aid their home country in its war with Russia. The New York World says that while this suggestion will perhaps excite surprise because of the size of the gift contemplated, there is no doubt of their ability to finance their patriotism to the extent promised. The World adds: "The importance of Japanese business interests in the city is not generally realized. A quarter of a century ago the Japanese commercial houses of consequence in this country could be numbered on the fingers of one hand. They are now very numerous and almost uniformly prosperous. With the beginning of the new order of things in the island kingdom there set in a tide of emigration to the United States which last year reached the large number of 19,968. That is to say, more than half as many Japanese came as Irish and very nearly half as many as came from Germany. Scotland sent only one-third as many, France one-fourth and Spain one-ninth. They brought with them an intelligence and industry, an adaptability to occupation ranging from the kitchen to the counting room and a spirit of good citizenship by which the nation has been largely the gainer. The 'Yankees of the East' fit very quickly and well into the Yankeedom of the west."

REFERRING TO THE RECENTLY OR-ganized gigantic combination in the whisky trade, a reporter for the Cincinnati Enquirer asked Col. Fred Kinsinger, one of the leading spirits in new trusts, what the effect of the new organization will be. The colonel replied, "Well, it will result in preventing a demoralization of the spirits and alcohol trade by the cutting of prices. And in addition the output will be regulated so that the market will not suffer from overproduction. At present the distilleries of the country use about 60,000 bushels of grain a day in manufacturing their output and I believe that this will be kept up, in fact it may be increased. At this time of the year, when the navigation of the country is closed, the whisky business feels it. Products cannot be shipped by many of the water ways at this time of the year and there is always a falling off in the demand as a consequence. The fact is that there has been a great deal of cutting in the prices in the spirit trade, and this brought about a lamentable state of affairs which we are trying to remedy."

THE CLAIM IS MADE THAT THE UNITED States government is the only one in the world which builds and maintains homes for its disabled volunteer soldiers. Eight of these homes have been erected, respectively at Togus, Me.; Hampton, Va.; Dayton, O.; Marion, Ind.; Milwaukee, Wis.; Leavenworth, Kas.; Sawtelle, Cal., and Danville, Ill. It is said that these eight homes have a capacity of 25,000 inmates, which is several thousand less than the number who are entitled to admission under the laws governing the homes for disabled volunteer soldiers.