

War and Literature.

Whatever tends to stir the imagination and enthusiasm of a people very deeply awakens all its powers to fresher vigor. As literature is the record of the thought wherein man surveys his own actions and the things related to them, the result of war is quite sure to stimulate what may be called this efflorescence of national life. The influence may not be perceptible in wartimes themselves. The intense interest in the actual at such a period rather finds its outlet nowadays in the newspaper and the magazine than in bookmaking and book reading. But after the war is over and thought subsides from its effervescent to the reminiscent mood then the effect is apt to show its strength. The lover who writes a sonnet to his mistress' eyebrow is not at that moment the victim of a grand passion in all its fury, but he must have felt something like it previously. Petrarch could not have written his exquisite poems if he had been actually sighing at the feet of Laura.

There was a magnificent outburst of literature in England during the Napoleonic wars, it is true, but there were influences at work besides the current war spirit to produce the result. It was rather the fruit of the French revolution which preceded Napoleon's rise. So in the magnificent Elizabethan period, when England was fighting a life and death struggle with Spain, then at the apex of its power, the chief fertilizing force was the vision of a newly discovered world, with all its boundless possibilities, which intoxicated the imagination as men speculated on its marvels. During our civil war, which shook the country to the roots, there was but little done in literature. But the fertilizing effect was very evident after the war ended, and the period since has been one of brilliant literary activity. It would be easy to multiply proofs that the stimulus to literature from war takes its active form after the intense excitement has subsided alike for the people who make books and those who read books. Then human energy finds in its reminiscent and reflective attitude a greatly enriched field in which to work. It will be natural to expect some increment of literary vigor as the outcome of our war with Spain, and it will be a matter of curious note to measure the effect as the tide of immediate excitement ebbs with the coming of peace. The gauge of the nilometer pretty generally accorded with the lushness of the crops.

Germany in the Philippines.

America failed to see what sound warranty under international usage Germany had for concentrating a powerful fleet at Manila. The pretext that this great weight of metal and big force of marines and bluejackets were needed to protect a baker's dozen or so of German mercantile houses and their em-

ployees seemed pretty flimsy. But even that excuse disappeared with the arrival of the first detachment of General Merritt's expedition, which gave Admiral Dewey ample resources for such protection to foreign residents as they are entitled to under the law of nations in such circumstances. Consequently more than half of the German fleet sailed away, leaving two warships behind.

But little importance would have attached to the presence of the German ships had the United States not suspected an undercurrent of hostile sentiment in the government circles and people of Germany. No feeling grew out of the presence of four British cruisers at Manila, for the absence of jealous motive on the part of England is well assured, but the general drift of public opinion in Teutoland has been unmistakably against us, and the suave assurances of the German foreign office might easily mean no more than those diplomatic generalities which mean nothing. Facts were regarded as more eloquent than asseverations. Various indications conjoined to show that Germany, if not anxious for colonial grip in the Philippines, would at least welcome such a splendid point d'appui for commercial aggrandizement as possession of a commanding stronghold in the islands would give her. Her recent exploit in taking China by the throat is presumptive of what she might be inclined to do in the Philippines under favoring conditions, if it were safe to accept Spanish title against American protest.

The ease with which withdrawal from an advance step tentatively made, but afterward found inconvenient, can be effected is well known. It is only a question of an apology and the charge of superserviceable and unauthorized zeal on the part of some commanding official. But if further conditions favor how easy it is to stretch the inch gained to the ell! Our English cousins are not unfamiliar with the working value of such a method, which may be called a diplomatic "reconnaissance in force." It is eminently in character with what Emperor William has hitherto done and shown to avail himself of any opening in the Philippines and then trust to luck to make it good. Such a step having once been effectively taken, it can be made of unquestionable, of enormous help to the extension of German commerce in the east. There is good reason to question the intentions of Germany, in spite of any soothing plaster of words.

The Rising Tide.

Despite complaints in certain branches of business that the much talked of return of prosperity has not yet reached them there can be no just doubt that the year 1897-8 on the whole has been full of good omen. The immense returns from our crops, an unprecedented amount, have laid the solid foundations of another recurring epoch of good

times. The farmers, whose work underlies all else, have naturally felt the benefit first, and their prosperity throughout the length and breadth of the great west is like an Aladdin romance. The mechanism of industrial society is so complex that it takes time to feel a movement throughout, but the dynamic force ultimately reaches every cog and lever. We can now rest assured that the good conditions of the present year are sure to operate in the coming one not only with equal but with cumulative powers, sufficient to pervade all the nooks and crevices of business.

The statistics of research from sources both governmental and private promise the largest tonnage of crops from the present harvest ever known to the country. There is every reason to anticipate, too, that prices, if less than those which have made the recent average so notable, will greatly exceed the figures which had preceded. Conservative estimates expect at least \$100,000,000 excess in value over the total of the fiscal year just closed. The great advance in the price of agricultural lands shows what farmers themselves believe. The balance of trade in favor of the United States has just doubled that of any previous year and we have also surpassed our own high water mark of 1892 in exportations of manufactures by 20 per cent. An equal or bigger increment may be reasonably looked for as the result of the coming fiscal year. A steady swell for several years of the favorable forces, working for us with such potent swing, is in strict accordance with the lessons of past economic experience. The conditions of the money and bullion market are not less auspicious. Our tremendous imports of gold in payment for exports have been swollen by great returns from the goldfields of California and the Klondike, the streams from which have the signs of a permanent flow. Money has been easy, and the circumstances of trade in sight promise to keep it so. The extension of the iron and steel industry, particularly in the south, is of the most encouraging stamp, and the output of pig, of manufactured products and of structural steel already presents the earmarks of a great boom. The large demand for additional labor required to repair the waste consequent on war and the inevitable expansion of commerce with distant lands are also agencies which must be counted in an estimate. Altogether the situation is one to make the most surly pessimist smother his growling.

Kaiser Wilhelm the Restless will visit Jerusalem this fall. It will not be with scallop shell on breast in dress of humble palmer to expiate his imperial sins, but in all the peacock gorgeousness of Solomon himself. He will march to the clangor of drums and trumpets and cymbals and patronize the scene of Christ's life and crucifixion with his usual condescension.