

Winged Death.

The report of the medical commission sent to investigate the condition of the large southern camps and the causes responsible for the virulent epidemic of typhoid fever, which has slain more than Mauser bullets during the war, is of great interest. The substance of the revelation involves nothing new, but it illustrates what had been recognized in a vague fashion with a startling vigor and gives awful importance to what medical science had before passed as a minor fact. That fact is the possible connection between flies and the transmission of typhoid and other dangerous forms of disease of an infectious or contagious nature. The conditions involved are best shown in the investigation of Camp Thomas.

In the first place, it is to be remembered that the natural surroundings of this camping ground are of the most favorable character—water, air, drainage and lay of the land. Nature picked out this place for such a use. Yet, being the most populous of the organization camps, it has been the most fatal center of fever, pestilence. The conditions which inevitably accompany the concentration of many thousands of men unless under the most rigid control of discipline and good management speedily began to prevail. The arrangement of the sinks, among other things, seems to have been one of the worst features amid much crass organization of detail. The excremental filth lay exposed to the attention of the millions of flies, which began to swarm with the onset of warm weather, and this innumerable progeny of Beelzebub flew freely everywhere—sleeping quarters, cookhouses and mess tents. Specially as the rains set in, driving the creatures to every possible indoor shelter, the very ten walls were fly specked into a mourning hue. No guardianship of the hospitals was able to exclude them. The first cases of typhoid fever were without question imported from the state camps. But badly ordered swarms of men at Chickamauga, so far as camp arrangements were concerned, and swarms of flies by the million soon multiplied the few cases into the many, the sporadic into the epidemic. Men were prostrated by whole messes and tents full. The winged messengers of death held high carnival, and he stalked through a lush harvest.

The matter takes a grave general interest at once aside from the problem involved on its army side. If flies have the facility of transmitting disease in one case, why should they not in many others. It may be said that the danger is not in a few flies, but in their millions, under the peculiar conditions of a badly arranged camp. There have been swarms of flies at the Jacksonville camp, too, but the sickness there was small. The sinks were covered, directly connected with the town sewers, and these were flushed every day. But, ad-

mitting that the most deadly circumstances under which the fly becomes a certain carrier of disease do not exist in ordinary civil life, the sharply accentuated thought is that the ordinary house fly has this power to some degree under all conditions. His hairy little feet easily bear away some particle of all the filth and contamination on which he feeds in his uncertain journeys. Disease either of the infectious or contagious sort may be carried about as the bee carries the pollen of flowers in his flight. The startling fashion in which the possibilities of the fly are thus made emphatic invests this winged nuisance with a sense of terror as well as of annoyance and disgust. Dr. Koch declares that the mosquito carries with him in his attacks on man the germs of malaria. But the fly in his devious wanderings may be the vehicle of a score of terrible diseases.

The ineptitude of the Spanish race in the practical work of business and scientific industry is one of the causes of their lagging pace in the march of history. The records of their mining operations in all their rich colonies, famous for their mineral wealth, show how little they were able to get from them. They simply robbed what others had taken. The report that Spain is about to offer a further mortgage on the Alameda quicksilver mines as security for another loan from the Rothschilds calls to mind a story from Buckle's "History of Civilization." About the early middle of this century the government was alarmed at the decrease of the quicksilver output. Foreign mining experts were imported to discover the cause. They promptly perceived that the veins ran obliquely, while the shafts ran perpendicularly. It was simply a question of following the veins with oblique shafts. But the Spanish miners refused, because their ancestors had always done things the old way. So other miners had to be brought from Germany. What a vivid illustration of national character!

The Chinese Kaleidoscope.

Little less than a month since the world was interested in strange news from China. The young emperor had issued a series of decrees inaugurating remarkable reforms in the civic, administrative and educational policy of the middle kingdom, which had been crystallized by the habits of thousands of years. These changes were of a sort to be far-reaching and down reaching, with promise to attack some of the worst evils of that strange oriental society at their very roots. This assurance was quickly followed by the equally astonishing news that the empire had been deposed from power by the empress dowager; that the imperial edicts of reform had been recalled, and that Li dismissed from the primacy in the tsung-li-yamen, because once an advo-

cate of reform, had become a reactionist, and that the representative of Russian influence had been reinstated.

That this palace revolution was eminently in consonance with the wishes of the great mass of mandarin officials, who naturally feared the destruction of their own corrupt power, is likely enough. But it appears to be believed in European diplomatic circles that it never would have been achieved so promptly without the backing if not the direct inspiration of Russia. The other European nations, England in particular, having secured their spheres of influence, are more immediately interested in the growth and progress of the Chinese people than in their continued immobility. The advance of Chinese society in the arts of modern civilization and good government is tantamount to the vast extension of her market for the goods of the west. The Chinaward ambition of the leading manufacturing countries is commercial and not political. The conviction of Russia's rivals is that this great power contiguous in territory to China is political as well as commercial in its aims. Only the complete possession of Manchuria will perfect that great Siberian zone across the Asiatic continent to the Pacific. Russia has been moving toward it for a half century with the slow and implacable force of a glacier. Anything tending to awaken Chinese nationality and public spirit through the agency of reform would interfere with this astute plan toward which St. Petersburg intrigue recently made a long stride. Therefore it is concluded, with some show of logic, Russian advice had much to do with the revolution, which killed proposed reform at its very inception.

However farfetched this reasoning, it is not without a semblance of truth. It is perfectly justified by all the precedents of Russian diplomacy, which has ever been more potent in winning its way than Russian arms. The end in view is consistent with Russian interests. The late developments show that England can act with France and Germany in the Chinese question without any serious clashing. But with Russia there is a radical cleavage of interests, a difference of aims and ideals, which breeds perpetual antagonism. That antagonism on Chinese soil will probably evolve a remarkable political drama before the twentieth century will have scored many years.

Commercial colleges, though sometimes sneered at by the fanatical admirers of the higher education, play a very important part in the evolution of our progress. They provide the elements of a respectable education in the English branches with special reference to the pursuits of trade. In many of them French, Spanish and German are taught as features of the complete course. There is a class of schools, however, in