

THE GUSHING COLONEL.

Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll, formerly an attorney

and lecturer of considerable prominence, told an audience the other day that he "did not thank God" for the victory at Manilla; he thanked "George E. Dewey, the bravest admiral that ever trod a deck."

There are doubtless a number of people—there were twenty years ago—who regard Colonel Ingersoll as a courageous champion of truth, and a number who consider him a dangerous enemy to the welfare of the race; it must make a painful impression on members of his audiences, of either of these parties, to hear him utter such meaningless language as this. As to his opinion of the Deity, it is of no particular interest to anybody; they may safely be left to do justice to each other in the long run; but his characterization of Admiral Dewey is hardly complimentary to the intelligence of the audience which he expected to applaud it. Without either denying that Admiral Dewey is as brave as anybody, or that he thoroughly understands treading the deck, it may be submitted that it was neither of these qualities that primarily determined the outcome of the battle of May 1st. It no doubt requires courage for a man who is reasonably sure of winning to engage in combat, but at least an equal degree must be conceded to him who knows that he will probably lose. The qualities that won the battle of Manila were rather those, only developed to an extreme point, which are required in the man who has to build a high bridge, move a five-story building or make up time in drawing a passenger train; the every-day American virtues of appreciating your task, and then so employing your resources that the result shall be what you were set to do. Of all problems that have thus far been presented to the mind of man, the management of a fleet of modern war-ships would seem to be the one to demand the most varied ability; and it is for demonstrating entire mastery of this problem that the English-speaking peoples grant unstinted praise to Admiral Dewey, and not for courageously treading decks.

OUR ONE ISLAND IN THE SAGE-BRUSH SEA.

The United States has for more than thirty years been the possessor of an island dependency. It has caused commercial perturbations, financial discussions, party disorganizations and reached out with frenzied fervor to readjust the social and monetary conditions of all the people of this republic.

The island of Nevada, centrally located in the mid-continental sea of sage brush, was annexed to the United States for political purposes in the year 1864!

In the single year 1876 the argenti-ferous soil of Nevada produced more pig

silver than all the other silver producing countries of the whole world produced in the twenty preceding years.

In addition to its mineral output Nevada has from time to time extruded from its mental organism some remarkable economists and statesmen. But the Nevada Island brand of lawgivers has been always silver-tongued, silver-plated and tempestuous. The Sagebrush Sea which surrounds Nevada has not made the senators from that island sage. And the interminable and perpetually talking Stewart and his never-ending-a-speech-of-less-than-six-hundred-pages colleague Jones are a constant admonition as to the possible political evils which may come to the American people in the shape of senators from the islands of the Pacific. The island of Nevada and its senators and other statesmen are a headache after the first carousal which involved annexation for a party purpose.

A QUEER SURVIVAL.

In reading the great novelists of the last century, one is struck by the vast distance that separated the classes of society; the gentleman on the one hand; on the other the non-gentleman, the *roturier*, the lout, the "lewed man," as Chaucer called him, the plain *homo vulgaris*. The gentleman would as a matter of course order the lout about, beat him, chuck his wife under the chin, or do as he pleased with anything that was his; and the institution runs straight back to the times of conquest, when he might hang him at will into the bargain.

Now, it has recently come to light that the same two classes exist in the same relative position in this country; but a swift guesser could work at it from sunrise till sunset, and never guess who they are; and we fear most of our readers may think it a joke, when they learn that it is the officers of our army who are the gentlemen, and all the rest of us the louts. Any of our soldier-boys can tell plenty of stories in point; a very apt one is of some privates, who having to undergo a court martial, requested that two fellow-privates, who were lawyers of particularly high standing at home, might act as their counsel. And this was refused, on the ground that the officers composing the court martial, being gentlemen, could not meet those lawyer-privates, who were not gentlemen, on any such common footing.

We will evidently have to take this into account in bringing up our sons henceforth. If we have a son whom we wish to see a gentleman, we will have to get him by hook or by crook, a pair of shoulder straps to wear; his less fortunate brother, though he should become a college-professor, a railroad-president or a judge of the supreme court, is not and can not be a gentleman.

THE DIFFERENCE.

The Review of Reviews prints a picture from a

Spanish paper, which the editor comments on as significant. It shows a Spanish peasant mowing his bit of meadow, and the inference is that he wishes to be left to that occupation, his heart not being in foreign wars nor domestic risings.

This peasant is a fine sturdy type of man, and looks as if he might be capable of a good deal if he had a show; but his scythe is of the pattern of five hundred years ago, and a rake and a big basket lying near show how he expects to get his hay home; whereas in America, the poorest Indian on a reservation mows his wide field with improved machinery, and a few of his many horses draw his affluence of hay to his big barn for him.

A tax is the money demanded by the government, of a citizen, for a service rendered. And the service which the government is supposed to have rendered before making the demand for the taxes is protection to the property, the life, and the liberty, of the citizen. Everybody ought to pay for such protection. Those who have property protected should pay for the protection in proportion to the value of the property. Those who have only life and liberty protected should pay likewise for that protection.

All taxation, by all forms of government, to be just and righteous, must be levied and collected for the sole purpose of protecting property, life and liberty. That sort of protection is the sole business of good government. The sooner county commissioners, common councils, state legislatures and the national congress understand that to be the only business for a popular government the sooner taxation will be lessened.

THE CHURCHES WORSE THAN THE POLITICIANS.

Church influence is often more embarrassing to a superintendent than politics, and I have myself been hampered in my efforts to do the best thing for the schools by deacons and pastors, a school superintendent confesses in the November Atlantic. Ministers, through a mistaken sympathy, often allow themselves to indorse incompetent teachers, and so help to block the way for better things in the schools. This is so generally felt by superintendents of schools that a recommendation of a teacher by her pastor is seldom given any weight whatever. I usually throw such documents into the waste-paper basket when applicants send them to me unless I am personally acquainted with the minister and know that he is competent to form a critical judgment of a teacher's work. This is a professional secret which it may do no serious harm to divulge.

George Washington