

the convention which framed the federal constitution, declared that any form of general government honestly administered would be a good thing for the states and the people. And that this one might endure for some time, but that at last, becoming corrupt, it might be succeeded by a despotism—the only form of government adapted to a corrupt people.

"Public office is a public trust." No man who is dishonest in his personal and private life,

Probity.

who will cheat or deceive in business or professional affairs, should be made a trustee for his fellow-citizens. The value of truth and the beautiful facility with which truth adapts itself to the promotion of the general welfare at all times and under all circumstances should be inculcated in the common schools everywhere every day in the week. Truth and honesty in public life are the only antiseptics to render this republic immune from fatal corruption and speedy death. The need of a national conscience sensitive to discover, alert and courageous to extirpate dishonesty in office, is the supreme want of the hour.

THROWING DOWN THE REINS AGAIN.

Whenever the government emergencies become pressing and critical, and the president gets under the cross-fires of conflicting opinion of his duty, he never fails to retreat by throwing down the reins, and, placing all responsibilities upon congress or a commission, he sails out into the blue empyrean of national politics upon a smooth sea of glittering generalities. Upon these short and sudden voyages he scintillates and shines with a peculiarly soft and mellowing light.

RHETORICAL STATESMANSHIP.

The late war with Spain was, to a great extent, incited by those forms of human speech which are supposed by some people in this country to be oratory, and by most people in other countries to be turgid vulgarity. Before it was finally declared by the patriots in congress this sort of thing gushed in vociferous volume from the exhaustless fountains of "sound and fury" which are carried around in the pulmonary reservoirs of such men as Mason and Thurston. Not satisfied with covering the land with shallow anathema and malignant falsehood upon the Spanish government and people, the champion yellow newspapers of the country sent these senatorial volcanoes to sea that they might distribute whole cargoes of the stuff along the coasts of Cuba for Spanish consumption. At no time, let it not be forgotten, during these Vesuvian eruptions can it be truthfully said that as many as one-third of the sober-minded farmers and business men of the country favored the war, for any one, or all, of the reasons which

were put forth to justify its declaration. Rhetorical statesmanship precipitated the war, and it is now in full chorus in diverting its victories to a dangerous policy of conquest and Asiatic domination.

The appeal comes now from the organs of power, in and out of the senate and house, to the mixed mercenary and military passions of the people. It would be incredible, if we did not know the crazy instinct of our race for gain, and the savagery of men when war passions are aroused, that what appears to be inevitable could possibly be permitted in the face of every teaching and tradition which we have been accustomed to respect and revere since the foundation of the government.

PROGRESS OF SLAUGHTER.

The "glory" of sinking a lot of old Spanish tubs in Manila bay with the splendid armored war-ships under Admiral Dewey has penetrated to the very marrow-bones of the national vanity, and now comes the slaughter of men, women and children, and the destruction of the coast villages of the Filipinos, to give additional lustre to the army and navy, whose ability to wield the modern instruments of war is not questioned. It is given out that great satisfaction is expressed in the white marble home of the president over cablegrams which inform him of the extent of the killing of the people of the Philippines, and it is not doubted that the greater the number who are slain the greater the satisfaction of the president. As a purely Christian statesman, he probably reasons that the true way to bring peace is to kill and maim as many people and destroy as many homes as possible, and this, indeed, is an accepted principle in the organized murder which is called war in the vocabulary of truly Christian nations like our own.

A RACIAL QUESTION.

When the republican party was waging its war for the delivery of the slave from bondage and formulated the equality principle in an amendment to the constitution of "no distinction on account of race or color," in enforcing these mistaken decrees before the people it forgot the primary question of *race* and buried it in that of color. The real question was always racial. *Color* was but an incident and a sign of the inferiority of a race among men which, all history shows, was inferior to nearly every other. The question is again before the people of the United States in the case of the Filipinos. Complexion with that tropical people is not in debate. It is a grave matter of incorporating into our national life and placing under our forms of constitutional law and free government a race of men who are alien

and inferior to our own, and in the plans of many, to open a school for teaching millions of semi-savage men the beauties and methods of self-government by the power of force.

It would seem to even an ordinary observer of our national condition and affairs that we have more than we can attend to, after more than thirty years of honest effort to teach an inferior and alien race, incapable by God's own ordinances of amalgamation with our own, in the ways of free and orderly government, within our own boundaries. Wholly apart from the moral iniquity of this proposed conquest of the Philippines, and without the least reference to the constitutional questions involved, this racial question, which was always the question, and still remains the question with the negro in our own country—a perpetual menace and danger to our national peace and safety—would seem to be the primary question for consideration and judgment.

ABSENT.

The absence of J. Sterling Morton on a trip to California over the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railroad, as the guest of his son, Mr. Paul Morton, the vice-president of that company, will account for the non-answering of many personal and other letters addressed him, during the last week, at the office of THE CONSERVATIVE.

Mr. Morton will however be again with THE CONSERVATIVE early in March, when more copy from his pen may reasonably be expected.

THE NEW PHILOSOPHY OF GOVERNMENT.

The new school of philosophers who are deluding mankind with the idea that "the state" can be made a fountain of happiness by a social evolution which is now in progress whereby the poor can be made rich without labor, and the rich made poor by spoliation is not entirely new. It is as old as history in some of its phases, but its main proposition is that individualism, honesty, industry and thrift, by the magic of some power not yet discernible, "the state" can abolish competition and support the children of men, no matter what their increase may be, by the enactment of laws for this purpose. Mr. Godkin, of The New York Evening Post, several years ago, dealt with this subject in one of a series of essays in a clear and lucid inquiry as to the cost of this kind of government, "which is not to be a money-making, but a spending evolution. Everybody is to live a great deal better than he has been in the habit of living, and to have more fun." And Mr. Godkin goes on to say:

"The income of this and every other country in the world * * * is the product of land and labor. Some of this income goes to pay wages, some