

IN THE LION'S DEN.

Everything is "the will of God," nowadays, with people who have to make excuses. Everything they want to do, or are afraid to oppose the doing of. Well, doubtless it is the will of God that there shall be cowards and fools—else they wouldn't be so numerous. But we aren't obliged to forget that He has not specially commissioned *us* to be the one.

Conscience by Roll Call.

Senator Perkins has "strong convictions against our holding the Philippines," and begs the distinguished legislature at Sacramento to instruct him whether he shall follow his convictions or not. Senator White of California has convictions also. But he does not ask anyone to tell him what to do with them. He will follow them.

Now here are the "two kinds of conscience." Senator Perkins is an upright man. He would not lie or steal for the world. He ought to be above the popular (and presidential) notion that it is all right for a man to do wrong if a legislature or a crowd instructs him to.

We do These Things Differently.

The death of Matias Romero, for a generation minister of Mexico at Washington, is a misfortune not only to his own country but to ours. And it points a text Americans need doubly to heed at present.

We have sent many ministers of the United States to Mexico; some of them able men, some of them gentlemen. If they chanced to be either, all right—but that was not the reason we sent them. They got the place for party services; they were changed when the party in power changed. And the great United States never sent to Mexico a minister who commanded half the respect in Mexico that Matias Romero won in this country; never one who did a tenth part as much for his nation; never one who did a hundredth part as much to build up friendly relations between the two countries. General Grant was the only man who ever had anything like the same influence; and he was in Mexico simply on his own business.

We have never sent to Mexico a minister, except Pacheco, who could talk Spanish, even by the time he came home, and he was the only one who could talk Spanish at all. We have not even taken pains to send one who could speak French. Therefore, the minister of the United States has never been able to meet on an equality the president of Mexico nor the officials. He has had to hobble through his interviews with a conscious air and an interpreter, like an awkward child to whom grown-up speech has to be explained.

Only those who never think can fail to see what a handicap this is. There are very few educated Mexicans who do not speak at least two languages. Mr. Ro-

mero spoke better English than some of our congressmen do—or he never would have been sent to represent his country in Washington. He could—and did—talk with presidents and cabinet officers and senators and American business men and won their esteem, and did more for their opinion of Mexico than a dozen stately dumb figures could have done. And he was not beheaded every four years. He was appointed minister, not because he had "stumped the district," but because he was fitted for the place. It would seem that this great nation might begin to use as much common sense in its diplomatic service as Mexico does.

How are the Mighty Fallen!

Nothing could sooner avail to dissolve the marrow in an optimist's bones than the spectacle of *The Outlook*—beyond question one of the cleanest and most valuable family weeklies on earth—turning its coat on a moral question. For that "imperialism" is a moral question, no one now extant (except a religious paper) can for a moment doubt.

Up to a little while ago *The Outlook* believed that Washington and Lincoln were not fools; but it has changed its mind. It believes now that we have "outgrown" their brains and morals—in a word, their principles.

It ought not to need that this profane Western page remind *The Outlook* that principles cannot be decently outgrown. Else they are not principles—the sole unchanging things on this mutable planet. Alps rise and sink, seas wax and wane; but a principle has no variableness nor shadow of turning. The people nowadays who persuade themselves that they have "outgrown" the principles of the founders of the republic never really grew up into them.

For the fathers bequeathed us not a fashion but a principle. Our heritage is not crinolines or knee breeches, but an immortal justice. Their creed was not "so long as you can't make money by governing people against their will, let them be free." They maintained that "all government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed." Every thoughtful American knows that this is true; that it is as true in 1899 as it was in 1775; that it will be true as long as the world stands. It is the central truth on which this nation has grown to all its greatness.

The Outlook has joined the people who are trying to make the whole past of the United States a colossal lie. They are mostly timid people, afraid to face loud talk; or easy-going people, to whom the current is argument enough; or thoughtless people, ready to mistake the drift of their own ward for the voice of God.

And, alas, while I never heard of a "business office" in the kingdom they preach, there is one to every religious

weekly—and too often at the top of its neck.

One Head or Two.

Anything an inch short of the prompt cashiering of Eagan would disgrace the army and the country forever. No apologies can cancel his offense. It is well he should be sorry for having been a blackguard; but we do not need men in the service who have to entertain sorrows of that sort. Whether he fed our soldiers meat as indecent as his tongue is another matter, which should be probed to the bottom. If he did, he should also be punished as a criminal. If he did not someone else should be cashiered. The Lion is not exactly a swollen partisan of General Miles; but he doesn't take that officer to be a liar, in his trachea or other anatomical reinforcements. Every grown American knows that the government has been swindled somehow. To know that we have had a war is enough to make that certain. And there is every reason—including his own character and the character of our politics—to presume that Miles has testified truly.

A Long-Felt Want.

One whose veins swell with the blood of the old circuit-rider can hardly have anything structural against the ministry; but *The Lion* fears that our modern theological seminaries use too wide a mesh. He suspects that a good many men wiggle through whose only "call" is that preaching is easier than plowing. There is a bitter overstock of ministers who think that whatever is right. As a matter of fact, what is is just as likely to be wrong. If it is ordained at all by Providence, it is merely as a punching-bag for the righteous. We need more ministers who can swing an axe, and fewer going around with feather dusters taking care not to nick anyone's idols. We need more Luthers and fewer Reverend Smirks. We need men who can think and dare think. In this our world one can't throw a stone without hitting something that needs to be bettered; and to better things takes backbone—for it always means a fight. No mollusc ever shamed the devil yet.

They Know Not What They Do.

If "God's country" in its winter glory could just be shaken in the face of the chattering East these days, Macaulay's New Zealander might cross at once and begin business at the Brooklyn bridge. The exodus from Egypt wouldn't be a circumstance.

But fortunately it cannot be. California hasn't room for seventy millions. All we care for is the respectable minority that know enough to prefer Eden to an ice-house and can afford to swear off freezing.

Dodging Behind Words.

The people who try to cover the cloven hoof of empire with the petti-