

will influence a patriotic politician to disavow his English connection. We have troubles of our own and the transplanted Irishman need not expect that we will ever interfere in the unpleasant and everlasting family row between Ireland and England. They must fight it out or sulk it out in one island or the other. The British colonial policy is adapted to the needs of each colony. Canada and Australia lack few autonomous characteristics. Scotland and Ireland bear almost the relation of states to the central government and Egypt and the African colonies still have a military government. Our hesitation in interfering with the barbarous Spanish government of one of the continental islands of North America ought to be a significant indication to the Irish who think they can prevent a cordial *entente* between us and the kingdom of eternal day.

Whatever be the motives of England's present friendliness and however unjustly she treated us in the days of our youth, Uncle Sam is not in a position to reject the advances of the ruler of the seas. In case of war with Spain (written April 11, 1898) friendly ports in the British Isles, with the privilege of coaling might make all the difference between defeat and victory. The United States, in view of such favors and many other contingencies, should pay the damages adjudged against this government in favor of England many years ago. The haggling, recalcitrant policy pursued by the state department is undignified and deserves the European criticism which it has received freely enough.

The country goes into the war with a hastily assembled navy and a small land force, reinforced by militia and it needs all the friends diplomacy can make.

The City Improvement association has already affected a marked difference in the appearance of the city. The plan of the society is to engage an auxiliary in every block thus arranging for a ramification, practically coincident with the city limits. The influence of the society in arousing the children to a love of order and neatness, is one of the most desirable ends it is striving to accomplish. Speaking of ramification too, nothing and nobody can equal the children at that. The effect of their silent disapproval upon careless parents is also of great importance. What the honorable Sterling Morton has done for trees in the west the City Improvement association hopes to do with those small running plants, the children. The society will have to wait perhaps a good many years for the result of their well directed efforts, but when it comes a bronze monument will not be handsome enough to express the appreciation of those who come after us.

The deplorable condition of the children of the poor in the large cities, especially in summer time when the schools are closed, induced the Society for Improving the Condition of the Poor in 1894 to institute what is called "vacation schools" where the children are taught music and various manual occupations. Two years ago the movement was started in Chicago. The pupils numbered three hundred and sixty, while almost four thousand who applied for admission, on account of the lack of accommodation, were turned away.

In the crowded tenement districts where families of from four to ten live in one or two rooms in which all the forms of housekeeping which involve cooking, washing and ironing, are carried on, there is no room for the children to play. There is no room outdoors either for the children, ex-

cept the streets and alleys and the back yards, reeking and untidy. There are no parks for the little people too young and poor to ride miles in street cars where the city has segregated land and planted flowers and grass and trees for everyone to enjoy who can. It has been found that a park increases the value of the surrounding property and the houses of the well to-do surround them. Of course the very poor must live in the cheapest places and the cheapest localities smell so bad in summer time and are so overcrowded and so ugly that criminologists say that baby criminals, born from mothers protesting against such ugliness make war on society in one way or another as soon as they are strong enough.

If the property owners in crowded districts would consent to a tax for the purpose of buying land enough to scatter small parks or breathing spaces throughout the squalid parts of a city their property would become more valuable, for the tone of the neighborhood would be better, because healthier, and the boys and girls who are shut off from all beauty and in consequence become criminals would have some of the aids to growth that have made so many country boys into noble men and women.

In the meantime, while these sanitary measures of self preservation have not yet been learned by a people who will only admit that there must be room for traffic even if a few ignorant and bewildered foreigners are squeezed into an impossible space, these attempts to ameliorate the unnatural condition of the children of the poor are steadily accomplishing good results.

Miss Sadie American, of Chicago, chairman of the committee on vacation schools, says in The Commons that the women's clubs of that city have taken up the matter this year. Representatives from the twenty-three women's clubs are each striving to secure as much money as possible for the vacation schools this summer. It costs about \$2.50 for each child for the six weeks. The educators of the city are in favor of the schools. In New York the board of education has adopted them into the public school system. Private kindergartens preceded public kindergartens by many years. It will probably be so in this case, though the need for the manual training school for girls and boys who have reached the age of most rapid development and acquisition is greater than that of the toddlers who receive the first sympathetic attention of their lives in the kindergarten. Husted from the hot overcrowded rooms by tired and slatternly women the boys have no place to play. The traffic of the streets and the sidewalk must not be interfered with and there are policemen everywhere who make all the trouble they can for the boys who are only asserting their inalienable right to play and the pursuit of mischief. But Miss American says: "Our laws are formed to protect property rather than character. No matter how tempting an empty lot, the boys must not go into it to play ball if the owner objects; neither may they play ball on the street for fear they may break someone's window or head." This plan to give the boys and girls something to do and somewhere to go where they are wanted might be tried in Lincoln under the auspices of the women's clubs in their own vacation.

To the Editor of THE COURIER:

I beg leave to answer through the columns of your paper an editorial which appeared in the Omaha Excelsior of April 9, in which the Excelsior took occasion to publish a letter of mine which I had written him respectfully calling

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his attention to a statement which occurred in his paper March 26, in regard to a translation of one of Heine's poems. The editor in that issue of the paper said:

"The following original poem, contributed by Mrs. Alexander Hamilton de Peyster, shows that richly endowed woman to be possessed of gifts of fancy and of versification as great as they are uncommon, and which we cordially commend to those of our friends who write verses and who contemplate favoring us with the fruit of their dalliance with the muse."

By comparing the "original poem," line by line with Heine's poem, it can readily be seen that it was a literal translation (with the exception of a few glaring mistakes) and not an original poem. I quote below the first stanza of each:

"The Rhine Witch"

I know not what it signifies,
That I am so sorrowful,
A fable of old times so terrifies
Leaves my heart so thoughtful!

"Die Lorelei."

Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten,
Dass ich so traurig bin;
Ein Mäerchen aus alten Zeiten
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn.

The editor admits that he has received a number of letters similar to mine in which his attention has been called to the same statement, but instead of admitting his mistake he makes an attempt to defend himself by resorting to irony in which he manifests a truculent mood throughout his article. In referring to my letter he says:

"In conclusion, although the Excelsior, from motives of prudence as well as politeness, would by no means be understood as calling its erudite correspondent a solemn ass, it recognizes the right of individual opinion to form conclusions suited to the peculiar exigencies of the case."

While the editor is too polite to call me an ass, I shall likewise be too polite to call him an ox, but simply remind him of an old adage of which he has probab'y heard, if he never heard of Heine's "Die Lorelei" until Mrs. de Peyster's translation was made, "A live ass is better than a dead ox"

FRANK E. OSBORN.

Lincoln, Nebr.

ARBUTUS.

Along the woods' brown edge
The wind goes wandering
To find the first pink pledge—
The hint of spring.

The withered leaves around,
She scatters every one,
And gives to wintry ground
A glimpse of sun.

And to the woodland dumb
And desolate so long
She calls the birds to come
With happy song.

Then the arbutus! This
The pledge, the hint she sought—
The blush, the breath, the kiss—
Spring's very thought!

—April Scribner's.

Dolliver—These strong-minded new women are always gadding about on their wheels. They never stay at home.

Henpeck—Yes; that's one good thing about 'em.

"He seems to be a hopeless drunkard."
"Not quite. He hopes to get drunk again."

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