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OBSERVATIONS.

A Matter of Taste.

Land Commissioner Wolfe says that appreciation of trees is a matter of taste. True. The liking for human flesh is a matter of taste, likewise the savage fashion of splitting the nose and the lips, of painting the face in red and yellow squares, circles and triangles. But we think that is an ugly fashion and even Commissioner Wolfe and Commandant Fowler might object to a Buluwayan chief's arrangement of a landscape. Since Commandant Fowler's destruction of a thousand of the oldest and largest trees in the state, and Commissioner Wolfe's defense of his conduct, I am not sure that a Buluwayan chief's taste would be obnoxious to them. For concealing and preserving game and for stalking a foe, trees are highly prized by savages. It is therefore likely that if the Soldiers' Home at Milford had drawn the Buluwayan chief instead of Commandant Fowler the immemorial trees of the park would still be standing.

Commissioner Wolfe's statement being undeniable it is regrettable that the people of the state are at the mercy of two men whose taste is less cultivated than that of a Buluwayan chief. It will not matter if the Commandant's successor be a man of chaste taste and of regard for the rights of Nebraska citizens to their property, Commandant Fowler has destroyed the growth of a hundred years, and by building fires in the young timber, he has destroyed the next cycle's crop. No man can re-

place what the wanton has destroyed. As I said last week Fowler's moral turpitude would have been greater if he had killed a man, but fewer would have missed his victim. The oaks, elms, maples, walnuts and birches, which he has chopped down, were the pride of the state. Their beauty and utility were unquestioned until the Commandant told the board that the place needed cleaning up and Commissioner Wolfe told him "to go ahead," without enquiring what he meant by "cleaning up," without knowing that the Commandant's idea of beauty, was a treeless, bird-deserted pasture, surrounding a plain brick building and that probably there was not another citizen of the state who had not better taste in landscape gardening than this same sap-thirsty assassin of Milford. Even the inmates of the insane asylum love flowers and trees and they are assigned to plant and cultivate the grounds. Governor Poynter did not appoint Commandant Fowler. It was done by a board whose taste is questionable. The members lacked discrimination and appointed something that ordered the trees cut down because the singing of the birds disturbed his slumbers in the morning. Not that I deprecate Commandant Fowler's habit of late sleeping. If his days were as long as other men's days there would not now be a sapling left of all the fine timber on the Soldiers' Home demesne.

An Old Story.

Once upon a time a king offered his daughter, who was fairer than all other maidens, in marriage, and half of his kingdom to the man whom a jury should decide had performed the most remarkable deed in competition with contestants from all over the world. When the time of trial and weighing was come, the jury decided that the young man who had made a clock something like the clock of Strasbourg, only still more wonderful, had won the prize of the fair maid and the fair realm. But before the decision was announced a young fellow with a bull neck and greedy eyes, carrying an iron mallet in his hand, came forward and stood before the king. "I can do a still more wonderful thing," he said, and raising the mallet high above his head, in one stroke, he demolished the cunning, delicate machinery of the clock. The king was shocked but the man with the mallet explained to the king that what had taken the mind of a genius to conceive, and years to put together, he had demolished in one stroke and in a second's time. The king's ratiocinative powers were not his strong point and he and the jury awarded the unwilling maid and the unfortunate realm to Bullneck. Nobody knows what destructive exhibit induced the Board of Public Lands and Buildings to set Fowler to guard the beauty of a hundred years' mak-

ing at Milford. But the board is as easy to convince with vicious reasoning as this old king, who I have thought till now, was too silly ever to have lived. Fowler shows that this is not a fable, but a true story, and offers his appointment over the small realm at Milford and his own deeds there in verisimilar proof.

Expansion.

The democrats say they are opposed to a colonial policy and designate it imperialism. The opposition have only to make a noise and criticise the administration. Members of the opposition are not running the government and they are therefore only expected to denounce the men and methods that are. If an opposition were ever constructive, the anti-imperialists might be hopefully asked just at what point of the trouble with Spain the United States government should have yielded its place to another power. Do the antis contend that after Dewey's victory which did more to bring the war to an end than Cervera's defeat, that Dewey should have sailed away and left the islands at the mercy of Aguinaldo and his cut throats or patriots as the country and as Senator Hoar and his converts severally regard them? Germany was watching for a chance to acquire new territory and Russia, England, France and Japan were not asleep. China is the only country of any size and state that just suits the anti-expansionists. Nobody is afraid of the Chinese. Their neighbors of Russia, of England and of France take what territory pleases them, irrespective of China's claim to it and only watchful of each other. China has no policy of expansion. She is, therefore and for that reason more than any other, contracting. Natural law in the world of nations executes an inert nation. "Expand, colonize, possess more territory than you occupy, more commercial resources than you expend" is something like the rule which all the great powers of the earth have followed while they prospered, and ignored to their seizure by other peoples.

From the first occupation of the Rock of Plymouth to the accession of the Northwest Territory and of Alaska the United States has expanded. The horizon has lifted and the rainbow has forever receded. When definite boundaries have been once set to democracy it is like putting a baby in a dwarfish bottle: Thereafter it can only grow to artificial limits. The fact is, civilization has been creeping towards the orient for hundreds of years, and it has just risen and is running towards it in resistless leaps. President McKinley has had foresight enough not to get in the way of history. He has accepted the inevitable consequences of events prepared before America was discovered. All Spanish colonies have had the same history. The Filipinos have

been enfranchised by America. By the President's wisdom they are several hundred years nearer self government than they would have been had an ignorant busybody been administering the affairs of America. Expansion means the opening of new markets, the invention of machines, the new application of energy, teaching the gospel of democracy to despotic governments and only finally the accession of new territory. If the Filipinos are capable of democracy not all the power of the United States can keep them from establishing and enjoying it. Just as soon as they know how it works and show a comprehension of its mechanism they will guarantee to this country the rights of trade and coaling privileges. Until then more than a nominal surveillance will be exercised by the United States over the Filipinos. What is ours by treaty and the direction of Providence we cannot resign to an insurrectionist or to Germany or to any other power. If the United States should persistently refuse to take advantage of events it would eventually become as China. It has required a thousand years' stultification to make China the victim she is. Americans move quicker. We can by the adoption of Chinese statesmanship reach stultification quicker.

The President.

For what President McKinley has not done as well as for what he has done republicans and some democrats are grateful. Popular clamor affects him as it does any human being, but it could not make him fight before he was ready, it does not drive him to do an injustice to an officer of his appointment when he believes him able. Considering all the mistakes that mobs make, we need a president not inclined to grandstand plays, not afraid of mobs, and old enough to know their fickleness, their scorning of what yesterday they cheered, their apostasy from what was their creed of yesterday, their apotheosis of the man whom yesterday they would hang. Any man is better as soon as millions of votes have made him president of the United States of America, but the present incumbent has the presidential temperament. He realises the people he does not see or hear. Whether they will or not he is the president of populists and democrats as well as of republicans and like a king by divine appointment, he remembers his people always.

The momentous incidents of this administration, have been met with wisdom. The President has that supreme and indispensable qualification that Lincoln had: he is able to let events, wherein interference seems of doubtful benefit, alone. He trusts to time and the inevitable development and sequence of events. If his inspiration is reliable and his prevision accurate, he is sure that events will demonstrate his theory. In looking