

## THE PROGRESS OF REFORM.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND's brief address at the unveiling of the Garfield statue in Washington on Thursday fitly and forcibly enforced the "sad and distressing lesson" of his predecessor's death. "While," he said, "American citizenship stands aghast and affrighted that murder and assassination should lurk in the midst of a free people and strike down the head of their Government, a fearless search and the discovery of the origin and hiding-place of these hateful and unnatural things should be followed by a solemn resolve to purge for ever from our political methods and from the operation of our Government the perversions and misconceptions which gave birth to passionate and bloody thoughts. If from this hour," the President concluded, "our admiration for the bravery and nobility of American manhood and our faith in the possibilities and opportunities of American citizenship be renewed; if our appreciation of the blessing of a restored Union and love for our Government be strengthened, and if our watchfulness against the dangers of a mad chase after partisan spoils be quickened, the dedication of this statue to the people of the United States will not be in vain."

The occasion suggests a contrast between the situation as regards the civil service in 1881 and that in 1887. In his second annual message to Congress, December 5, 1870, President Grant recommended "a reform in the civil service of the country" which should "govern not the tenure, but the manner of making all appointments." In March, 1871, an amendment was tacked on to an appropriation bill in the Senate authorizing the President to prescribe "such rules and regulations for the admission of persons into the civil service of the United States as will best promote the efficiency thereof, and ascertain the fitness of each candidate in respect to age, health, character, knowledge, and ability for the branch of the service into which he seeks to enter"; and also authorizing him to employ suitable persons to conduct these inquiries. A civil-service commission was appointed, and rules were established for the filling of vacancies by competitive examinations, which were put in force during the summer of 1872. The new system speedily demonstrated its advantages over the old, and in his annual message, December 1, 1873, President Grant urged its extension, pointing out that "to have any rules effective, they must have the acquiescence of Congress as well as of the Executive." The Forty-third Congress was Republican in each branch, more than two to one, but the party managers had no sympathy with the reform, and they proceeded to starve it to death. Mr. Blaine, as Speaker, appointed a committee on civil-service reform of which that unblushing spoilsman Gen. Butler was the leading spirit, and, under the lead of Blaine and Butler, a House Republican by 195 to 92 refused to make any appropriation for the support of the Commission in 1874, and the system soon after expired of inanition.

President Grant made no further attempt to push the reform, and the halting attempts of Mr. Hayes were so handicapped by his entanglements with the Returning Board rascals that little progress was made

during his four years in the White House. Gen. Garfield's first step was a step backward. He chose as his chief adviser the man who as Speaker had been chiefly responsible for the smothering of civil-service reform in 1874. Within three weeks after his inauguration, he turned his back upon his own professions in favor of reform by an ostentatious action based solely and almost avowedly upon the spoils system. A collector in the New York Custom-house was removed midway in his term, not for the good of the service, since it was acknowledged that he had been an efficient and faithful official, but for the purpose of making room for a politician whose personal demand upon the President's chief adviser must be paid off at the public expense. This backward step was not retraced, and on the morning of July 2, 1881, the outlook for reform was most discouraging.

Perhaps nothing short of Guiteau's shot could have impressed the people with "the dangers of a mad chase after partisan spoils." Certainly the assassination of Garfield marked the turning-point in the struggle with the spoils system. In the next election of Congressmen, in the fall of 1882, the popular demand for a change was made so plain that the expiring Congress, promptly upon meeting in December, 1882, took up and passed the Pendleton bill, which its author had for two years vainly pushed upon the attention of his colleagues. In July, 1883, the competitive system was put into operation. In 1884 the growing demand for a thorough-going reform of the civil service forced the nomination by the Democrats of a proved reformer, and secured his election over a Republican candidate who had shown his attitude towards the question when he committed it to the tender mercies of Gen. Butler ten years before. A change of parties for the first time in a quarter of a century made the natural desire of Democratic politicians to escape the restrictions of rules and regulations in 1885 a hundred times stronger than that of Republican politicians had been in 1874; but only a few straggling Democratic votes could be rallied in Congress to imitate the example of their opponents and starve out the Commission. The system became, month by month, more firmly entrenched, and in May, 1887, an extension only second in importance to its original establishment is made through the approval by the President of rules which apply the competitive principle to promotions as well as to entrance. Most important of all, this latest and most significant action of the President is criticised only by a few spoils organs, dwindling in circulation and bankrupt in influence, while the progressive Democratic newspapers throughout the country accept it as one of the strongest arguments which the party can present for asking another lease of power in 1888.

It is not yet six years since Garfield's assassination, but it is already evident that the lesson of that event has been mastered by the American people. The spoils system reached its full fruition in his murder by a disappointed office-seeker, and the people have taken "a solemn resolve to purge for ever from our political methods and from the operation of our Government the perversions and misconceptions which gave birth to passionate and bloody thoughts."

## THE BEVERLY INCIDENT.

BEVERLY is an old town in Essex County, Mass., bordering on the coast, one village of which, known as Beverly Farms, has become of late years a favorite summer resort with rich Bostonians. This new class finally came to constitute a large proportion of the taxable population of the town, and sought to escape bearing its share of the common burdens by having Beverly Farms set off as a separate town. An appeal was made to the Legislature which met a year ago last January, but it failed. Last January another appeal was made, and this time the division scheme went easily through both branches.

Before the bill had passed its final stage, a member of the Senate declared that an attempt had been made to bribe him to vote in favor of division, and that a definite sum had been offered for his vote. After much hesitation, an investigation was ordered, which developed a startling state of things. It was found that, whereas last year the divisionists had submitted their case on its merits, this year they raised a fund of about \$20,000, which was given over to a lawyer, who proceeded to organize a lobby and thus easily carried the bill through. The lawyer was cynically frank about the matter. He attributed the success of the measure to the thousands of dollars which he had distributed. It could not be established that any legislator had sold his vote for a definite sum, but it was made perfectly clear that it was the illegitimate use of this fund which had caused one Legislature to favor division where the previous body, viewing the question free from such influences, rejected the scheme. The House Committee of Investigation reported that "such methods were pernicious, if not fatal to good and wholesome government," and declared that "these influences, however, wherever, or by whomsoever exerted, should be and must be emphatically and strongly condemned."

As the bill had not gone to the Governor, there was still a chance to undo the blunder of its passage and save the reputation of the Legislature. Every argument was in favor of refusing to do anything further in the matter this year. The question of division is not a pressing one, and can be postponed a year as well as not. The disclosure that its passage was due to lobbying must necessarily taint the measure if it should become a law. There was just one way in which the pernicious influences could be "emphatically and strongly condemned," and that was by making the \$20,000 corruption fund of no avail, by refusing to enact the division. Justice, and even decency, demanded that the Legislature should embrace the opportunity which fortunately remained to defeat the scheme.

Each branch of the Legislature, however, has refused to retrace its steps. Both the Senate and the House have deliberately voted not to reconsider their action, and the work of the lobby is thus soberly endorsed. Seldom, if ever, has so plain a test of the attitude of law-makers towards lobbyists been made anywhere in this country. It is a public proclamation that legislators regard "the Third House" as a legitimate adjunct of law-making.

The criticisms of the lobby by the Investigating Committee are of no account so long as the bill which owes its success to the lobby is enacted. The upshot of the matter is, that the existence of the lobby is practically justified by the Massachusetts Legislature.

There are two aspects of this business which are of importance. It illustrates very forcibly that growing demoralization of legislators as a class, which is one of the most alarming signs of the times in this country. It is impossible to conceive of a body of gentlemen sensitive to their reputation deliberately condoning such an offence as has been here disclosed. Such a body would have improved eagerly the chance to clear their skirts by reconsidering the passage of the tainted bill and pushing the matter over to another year. The incident also illustrates the lowering tone of the Republican party. As the dominant party in the Legislature, it must shoulder the responsibility of this business, and must figure before the people as a party which condones corruption and humors the fancy of rich men who are ready to "put up" a large fund to secure legislation. "It presents itself to their eyes," says the careful Boston correspondent of the *Hartford Courant*, "in the light of rich Boston people coming into the county to settle, and then setting themselves apart from the old town and creating for themselves a new one composed chiefly of their rich and aristocratic selves. They say that, if this is done in one place, it may be in another, and the whole shore may thus be lined with towns of this character, in which much of the taxable property is cut off from its original association."

And yet there is nothing surprising about this. It is the natural sequence of the surrender of 1884, when the old "party of moral ideas" threw away its principles, and accepted a Presidential candidate who had shown his lack of character when he wrote that he "would not be a dead-head" in a matter of legislation pending before him. The Beverly incident in the Massachusetts Legislature is of a piece with the railroad incidents in Speaker Blaine's career in Congress. The *Boston Journal* has made frantic appeals to the Republicans in the Legislature to take the back track as the only way of avoiding defeat next fall, pointing out that a change of only 4,732 votes last November would have elected a Democratic Governor. The *Journal's* mistake consists in supposing that a Republican party which had sunk to accepting a Blaine as its candidate for President, and a mere millionaire as its candidate for Governor, would feel squeamish about a little matter like humoring the lobby in the division of a town.

#### DIAMONDS.

THE sale of the French crown jewels which is now going on in Paris, is probably the most marked indication possible, not exactly of the extinction of the monarchical tradition in France, but of its failure any longer to touch the popular imagination. No such outward and visible sign of the separation of the French people from royalty in all shapes and forms has been afforded in rational times. In the early days of the first Revolu-

tion, half-crazed fanatics chose more emphatic modes of expressing hatred and contempt of kings and queens, but in sober days Frenchmen have never until now proposed to put up the "properties" of the Court at public auction. After the war of 1874, the Empress Eugénie's underclothing was disposed of to the highest bidder, but her wardrobe was not an heirloom of the French nation, as the crown jewels have always been considered. The sale of these means clearly that the French people either have done with royalty, or think they have, with a certainty and solemnity they have never experienced before. A monarchy must by immemorial usage have plenty of jewels. A king who had none, or could be eclipsed on a state occasion by a finer display than he could make, on the part of one of his pampered nobles, would feel humiliated. Every people which employs a king, in fact, expects him to have an abundance of diamonds, and would be mortified if he could not make a good show of them on state occasions. In fact, it is almost impossible to conceive of a diamondless king or queen. Diamonds have come down from the middle ages as one of the marks of royalty, and the most essential part of the splendor of a court. They have, ever since the rise of modern Europe out of barbarism, been considered marks of great wealth. Down almost to our own day wealthy people were not very numerous, and all belonged to the court circle. It was then "the thing" for every noble's wife to have a good supply, but for the Queen to have more than any other woman.

In our time, however, wealth, and even great wealth, has become so widely diffused that diamonds are no longer the exclusive luxury of monarchs and the great landholders who formed the nobility or gentry. Every rich woman now lays in a fine supply of diamonds as soon as she comes into her money. There are to-day many women who cannot boast very long descent, who can make a show of diamonds as good as were ever seen at any Christian court. To this class they are more valuable to-day than they are to any royal family. During the present century the means of crowned heads, outside their private fortunes, have been on the whole declining, and there is enough revolution in the air in all countries to make the expenditure of large sums on personal luxury or adornment seem a dangerous pastime. In fact, we think it very doubtful whether the diamonds of any of the royal houses have received very marked additions within the last fifty years.

On the other hand, the passage of diamonds into the hands of what may be called "the people"—that is, of recently enriched persons of humble origin—has been going on at a wonderful rate, and has supported the diamond market, in spite of the increased supply and the diminished means of the monarchs and noblemen who were once almost the only purchasers, because the only persons who, under the then generally accepted view of the proper constitution of society, were entitled to wear them. In an age when nearly every one is engaged in one way or another in pursuit of wealth, and the acquisition of wealth means success in life, it is of course desirable to have some simple and conspicuous

mode of letting strangers know that you have succeeded. Nothing supplies this so readily as diamonds. They are easily portable; they attract instant attention wherever shown; they bring their value in cash, if one is "hard up," in almost any part of the world, and they produce a wonderful effect in a woman's costume under artificial light. They are, in fact, except rubies, the only means by which one can exhibit a considerable fortune on one's person without seeming odd or ridiculous. How useful they are to many people in this way is readily understood when we remember how deep-seated and widespread what is called "the passion for display" is. The poor girl who wears a cheap gold chain and locket over her waterproof in a street-car, is striving after the very same result as the fine lady at a ball who carries one or two hundred thousand dollars' worth of brilliants in her hair and dress; that is, she wants people who know nothing else about her to know that she is in easy circumstances and can command luxuries.

The part played by the diamond in American city politics and railroading in our day is one of the most interesting facts in its history, but needs fuller discussion than we can give it to-day. There is a certain type of man among us who is as sure to buy a large solitaire diamond pin and stick it in his shirt-front, when he has achieved what he considers a proper measure of success in life, as he is to improve his furniture or his house. It is a type which is largely represented among the classes whose calling brings them into contact with many people, such as we have said, as politicians and railroad conductors. To them the diamond shirt-pin serves the grateful purpose of giving notice to the spectators that the world is not going badly with the wearer, that his fight for the mere necessaries is over, that he has leisure to think of costly ornamentation, and the means to procure it, and that, in short, he is entitled to take his place among the successful people of the world—the people who have "arrived," as the French say. Looked at in this way, the diamond shirt-pin is not as ridiculous as the newspapers try to make it out when they compare it to the "head-light of a locomotive," and tell stories about railroad managers preferring, as a matter of economy, to keep a conductor who has procured his pin to putting in his place one who is still only longing for it. In fact, it does for the owner in our society somewhat the same thing that the little red ribbon in the button-hole does for the Frenchman. It takes him out of the common herd, who are still fighting for a bare subsistence and have not begun to dream of luxury or fame.

#### SPRING MEETING OF THE AMERICAN ORIENTAL SOCIETY.

BOSTON, May 14.

THE spring meeting of the American Oriental Society was held in this city on the 11th instant, in the rooms of the Boston Athenæum. Prof. Whitney, the venerable President of the Society, was again prevented by illness from attending. In his stead Prof. Andrew P. Peabody of Harvard College occupied the chair. After the trans-