

any superior bravery or skill of her own soldiers and officers. It must be admitted, however, that the dread which avails to draw Russia, and Germany, and France together with a view to concerted action in order to conserve European rights, must be too strong to be wholly the product of excited imaginations. In view of the clear and apparently frank assurance of the Japanese authorities that the commercial privileges stipulated for are to be shared with all other nations, the attitude of the British Government in leaving the Oriental antagonists to settle their quarrel between themselves seems both fair and wise. The recent proclamation of the Japanese Emperor is admirable in tone and contents, and in the absence of any evidence of duplicity, it is hard to see why it should not be accepted in good faith.

A Movement Against Lobbying.

Two Acts which were before the Legislature of the State of Missouri during its late session were defeated, it is currently believed, by the disgraceful operations of lobbyists. Great public indignation has been aroused in consequence. The Bills in question were (1) a Bill to make railway corporations liable for accidents to their employees due to the incompetence or negligence of their fellow servants, and (2) a Bill for the prevention of fraud at elections. The aim of the first is to make railroads responsible for accidents to their employees just as they are responsible for the same to the travelling public. The placing of this responsibility upon the corporations would, it is believed, lead to the introduction of appliances for safety which would greatly reduce the fatalities and injuries amongst the employees of the roads. Statistics show that, as things now are, while the total number of passengers killed and injured yearly by the railroads aggregates 3,500—a sufficiently large number, surely—the enormous aggregate of 34,500 employees are killed or injured during the same period. This Bill is believed to have been defeated through the influences brought to bear by the lobbyists of the railway corporations. The other bill mentioned above was defeated by the equally scandalous influences brought to bear by agents of both political parties, who united for its defeat. Governor Stone has now sent out a vigorous message recalling the members for a special session, at which these two measures are to be re-introduced, prefaced by another which aims to crush out lobbying by making it a felony. The result of such a measure, if passed, will be to restrict corporations and individuals who wish to promote or defeat proposed legislation, to written communications, a most desirable restriction surely, and one which would have a powerful and salutary effect upon the character of much of our legislation.

Hypnotism in Relation to Crime.

A most startling judgment was that rendered by the Supreme Court of Texas, a week or two since. A farm labourer, who had shot and killed another man, was acquitted on the ground that he was an irresponsible instrument in the hands of his employer. He claimed that he had acted as a blind, unwilling tool. His employer was then tried for the same crime and convicted. There seems to be some difference of opinion as to the exact significance of the latter judgment of the Court. Some understand it as merely re-affirming the familiar and just principle that the instigator or employer in a criminal transaction is fully responsible for the deed. Others take it to be a declaration that those who acquire and use hypnotic influence over others are responsible for the deeds of the subject while under that influence. But leaving out of sight all question as to the grounds on which the employer was convicted, the principle underlying the first-named judgment

unquestionably is that hypnotism, in the estimation of the Supreme Court of Texas—for the jury pronounced the verdict of acquittal by order of the Court—a valid defence for crime. This is, perhaps, the first instance in which the reality of hypnotism as an occult force has been legally recognized. It is undoubtedly the first in which it has been accepted as a sufficient ground for acquitting a hypnotized criminal as irresponsible. It may be remarked in passing that the verdict, even admitting the temporary irresponsibility of the agent, seems to be at variance with the just principle which has come, we think, to be generally accepted in respect to crimes perpetrated under the influence of liquor, viz., that the man who voluntarily allows himself to be put into a state of temporary irresponsibility cannot be permitted to plead that irresponsibility as a valid defence. But let the recognition of hypnotism as a real power by which one man may be made the unconscious instrument of the will of another become general and what a maze of perplexing possibilities is entered. Surely a judicial investigation into the facts, touching the nature and governing laws or conditions of the thing itself, should be the first step.

The Germ Theory Not New

The well-worn saying of the wise man of old, that there is nothing new under the sun, is receiving from time to time in these days interesting illustrations. Professor Nicholas Murray Butler has recently published a work in which convincing proof is said to be given that the theory of man's descent from animals of a lower type, generally thought to be one of the most unmistakably modern, was held by old Greek philosophers. The *National Druggist* now comes to the front with extracts from a work on Country Life (*De Re Rustica*), written by M. Terentius Varro, about 115 to 110 B.C., which go to prove that the germ theory of disease had also its advocates among the ancient Romans. The grounds of this assertion may be seen in some extracts which we reproduce in abbreviated form from the *Literary Digest* of the 20th inst. Giving somewhat minute directions for the choice of a site for a villa, Varro is quoted as follows:

"You must also pay attention as to whether there be marshy places around, and for the same reasons, and moreover, because when they dry up they breed *certain minute animals, invisible to the eye, and which, carried by the winds [or air], penetrate the mouth and nostrils, and propagate obstinate diseases.*"

"Further on we have an imaginary conversation between Fundianus, a landed proprietor, Agrius, a farmer, and Scrofa, a sort of interlocutor, frequently introduced by our author when he wishes, by a dialogue, to enforce some point, previously given in didactic style, as in the present instance. Says Fundianus:

"Suppose I should become heir to a farm of this kind, what shall I do to avoid contagion?"

"Sell it," answers Agrius, 'for what you can get for it, or abandon it altogether.'

"Not so," interpolates Scrofa, 'you must be careful that your house shall not front the direction from which the insalubrious winds usually blow; nor be built in a hollow valley, but on an eminence, where, if unwholesome emanations come, they will be most quickly dispelled. Another advantage [offered by the eminence] is that a place on which the sun shines all day is the most salubrious, since *if any animalcules develop, or are brought thither, they are either at once driven away by the wind, or they soon perish from dryness [of the atmosphere].*'

"We have translated freely, but have been careful to preserve the exact meaning of the Latin in the more important phrases, printed in italics."

The Anti-toxine Treatment.

Time was when the popular presumption was strongly against so-called scientific innovations in medical practice. Popular prejudices and superstitions discredited in advance new