

international diplomacy, were the irreconcilable and unchangeable determinations of the Spanish and American peoples.

To the President, Mr. McKinley, credit has been generally given, both in the United States and abroad, for having endeavoured to observe faithfully the high and terrible responsibilities of his office. I fully believe that he had every desire to avoid hostilities; or at least to wait an obviously just occasion on his country's behalf, and a favourable moment, after its preparations were complete.

It is, in the opinion of many, the misfortune of the United States Constitution that, while it exalts the Presidency into the supreme aim of ambitious chivalry, it does not endow the successful occupant with the necessary full powers to enable him to creditably discharge his responsibilities to the nation. Alike in respect to the internal policy to which he commits himself in his candidature, and in the conduct of foreign relations, he is at the mercy of hostile factions and prospective rivals in the two Houses, without whose concurrence he can do scarcely any important act.

The moderating disposition which many Presidents have exhibited in times of popular excitement, emphasizes a very great political fact; that concentration of responsibility, by the individualization of authority, is the best hope of good government under our representative systems. We have often seen the popular choice fall upon a mere party leader, not previously distinguished from his fellows, either by moderation of views or by any promise of statesmanlike insight. Yet the same man, promoted to a position where the decision of great issues is cast upon his single head, is seen to rise unexpectedly to the duties of the occasion. The mantle of kings seems to fall upon the individual who is called upon to exercise the office of kings. His vision is not always bounded by the November elections or the next Presidential campaign. His conscience takes the care of a nation in its keeping. That great ever-living Corporation becomes a guiding presence at his side; and he is able to hear the calm applause of history and the remote gratitude of future generations, above the roar of mobs, and the tumultuous passions and interests of the day.

The measure of individual power entrusted to the President is daily doing honour to the Fathers of the United States Constitution. That his powers were not made more explicit and com-