The Week.

Gen. Sherman dropped in upon a gathering of clergymen in Washington, ten or twelve years ago, and was rallied a little on venturing among so many heralds of peace. He rejoined, in his swift, incisive way, "You gentlemen in black coats are the men who make war. We of the army and navy simply end the wars which you bring on." It cannot be said, however, that the clergy as a whole are now adding anything to the war fury, except as their words are distorted by lying newspapers. Nearly all the references from the pulpit to the Maine disaster are moderate and calming in tone. The President himself listened to a peace sermon in Washington on Sunday. Certainly if ever the ministry feels itself called upon to withstand the active powers of darkness, the need of opposing and exposing the diabolical newspapers which are trying to lie the country into war must be obvious. The trouble is that the lying is so devilish that it perverts even words of truth and soberness that any sane and honest man may speak. It seems impossible to give the lie to these yeasty and unspeakable sheets in so explicit a form that they will not twist it into an explicit endorsement. Luckily, the lying has been done on such a monstrous scale that nothing these papers say is now credited by any rational man without independent confirmation. A long course of lies, which, like the father that begat them, are gross as a mountain, open, palpable, is at last working out the natural result of breeding universal distrust of anything seen in print. But the hare go jauntily on their way to the lake of fire prepared for them, and

"blind and valorous Ignorance Delivers knowing judgments, unashamed, Of all things all day long."

Nothing could be more curious than the contrast between the wild aspect of the first pages of our penny dreadfuls and the calm demeanor of the persons who are seen reading them. If half of what the "scurril" headlines reveal were true, the first impulses of the reader would be to remove his family to a place of safety, dispose of his property as best he could, and make arrangements to leave the country. A few years ago the hireling of a newspaper set up in this extraordinary style, with headlines in bill-poster type reaching quite across the page, would have started a panic. People would have inferred that nothing less than a most dangerous condition of affairs could have led the editor to such unusual demonstrations of alarm. Now they are read with entire passivity, even although they declare war to be imminent, and indicate that a majority of the American people, including those of them who are in power, are either lunatics or maniacs. The new journalism has been steadily raising the tone of its yelling till it has reached the highest limit possible. The loud it shrieks, the less attention it attracts. What would remain for it to do in case of real danger, or a real war, is difficult to imagine. The resources of type have been about exhausted. Nothing in the way of larger letters can be used, unless only a single headline is to be given on the first page. Red ink has been resorted to as an additional element of attraction or terror, and if we had a war, the whole paper might be printed in red, white, and blue. In that case, real instead of imitation lunatics should be employed as editors and contributors.

The chief trouble between the United States and Spain at the present time is not the disaster to the Maine in Havana harbor. Nobody really thinks that the Spanish Government or its military or naval officers caused that disaster or intended that it should take place. If it was caused by a private person, we have no means of knowing whether he was an adherent of Spain or of the Cuban rebellion. He may be an insane person. He may have perished in the explosion. Leaving that disaster out of the reckoning, the remaining trouble remains; that consists of a mutual misunderstanding, and therein lies the danger. The two nations do not look at the same facts in the same light. The Spaniards think that we want to acquire the island of Cuba. It belongs to them. It was theirs centuries before we became a nation. They think that we want to take it from them for our own use and benefit, and that all our declarations of such a purpose are hypocritical and false. In point of fact, we do not want the island at all. One of the most powerful dominating influences which have held us aloof so far is a reluctance to become responsible for the future social and political condition of the island if it were wrested from Spain by us. Moreover, it angers us to be charged with a selfish motive in reference to Cuba. This is the way Spain misunderstands us.

We misunderstand Spain in a different way. We look upon her first as a monarchy. Our knowledge of the monarchical governments of Europe as they exist to-day is extremely vague, and of Spain the vaguest of all. To the great mass of Americans—to those who have not travelled abroad or who have not had the advantage of schooling in political science under modern masters—the Spain of to-day is the Spain of Cortez, of Pizarro, of Philip II., of the Armada, and of the Inquisition. More Americans have had their conceptions of Spain moulded by the writings of President and Motley than by all other influences taken together. These writings are true of the time to which they relate, but not of the present time. They are true just as the speeches of Burke and Clapham were true of the Government of George III., but not of that of Victoria. Perhaps as many Americans fail to distinguish between the England of 1766 and that of our own time as between the Spain of Alva and that of Castelar. We can remember a time, during a former rebellion in Cuba, when Charles Sumner thought it necessary to make a speech against our intentions and pointing out the fact that Castelar was then at the head of the Government of Spain and that the world contained no better republican than he. Castelar still lives, and his voice has been heard, in remonstrances against the misconceptions that we have formed concerning Spain and Cuba.

It is to be remembered, by people who think at all about consequences, that the Cuban trouble would not end with the expulsion of the Spaniards. We should then find ourselves in possession of an island desolated by war, and inhabited by a mongrel race unused to self-government, grossly ignorant and superstitious. Consequently, any one who is working out a plan of campaign, should work out at the same time a plan for the reorganization of civil society in the island by the United States. We are not saying this by way of joke or sarcasm. We mean seriously that the performance of some such task will be one of the inevitable consequences of victory, and if we are to dispose of the Spaniards as easily as we think we are, it is not a bit too soon to begin to think about it. If Cuba is to be a dependency of ours, how are we to govern it? What class of men are we to select for the purpose? Are we to allow popular suffrage to have any share in it? If we admit the island as one, two, or three States of the Union, what kind of addition will these States make to the Senate? What effect will this have in producing further annexations—Hawaii, other islands in the Far East, Mexico, and the South American states? The doctrine that "all will come out right in the end," on which Americans have in the past relied so much, and with so much success, was, it must be remembered, based on the fact that our problems were dealt with by a ho-