

this country within a year, she could make as strong an indictment against the United States, and one as true, as she does make against the Boers. But we doubt if Mr. Spragg and his fellow reformers in Australia would therefore favor the prosecution of a war against the United States by the British ministry, nor yet by our outraged Canadian neighbors, even though he had personal knowledge of the truth of the indictment. The question of the justice of the British war in South Africa turns not upon the goodness or badness of the Boers in their internal government. Great Britain has no more right to regulate that than she would have to make war upon Russia to abolish knouting. It depends entirely upon whether it was wantonly made by either party.

That question must be decided, and in history it will be decided, against the British. They seized the Transvaal in 1877, making an unwarranted though bloodless conquest. The Jameson raiders, officered by British army officers, manned by a British police force and carrying the British flag, with the connivance of Rhodes and in all probability of Chamberlain, tried in 1895-96 to seize and subjugate it a second time. And in September-October, 1899, the British ministry threatened its extinction as a government, by force of arms, at the same time placing their active troops in strategic positions and calling out their reserves to make the threat good. It was not until after this that the Boers issued what Mrs. Lewis calls their "unparalleled act of defiance"—the ultimatum. Unparalleled! A powerful nation would not have waited so long. And even that ultimatum, as Mrs. Lewis and all the apologists for the British ministry always conveniently omit to state, was accompanied with an offer to peaceably submit all differences to arbitration. This rejected offer would put Great Britain in the wrong even if she had been in the right before. Lest Mr.

Spragg and our other friends in Australia may still think we are writing under the influence of "imperfect information," let us add the assurance that every word we have here uttered can be verified by reference to British histories and British blue books.

A movement has been started in Chicago to abolish special assessments for street improvement and to put the cost of such improvement upon the general tax levy. The principle urged in support of this change is that street improvements confer benefits upon the whole public. This is true only in one sense, a sense that is moreover irrelevant. Street improvements benefit the whole public only by affording accommodations to the whole public. But they benefit adjacent lot owners in another and very direct and substantial way. They increase the value of their lots. A good sidewalk, for instance, is beneficial to a tenant who must use it in going to and from his residence daily. It accommodates him. But it benefits his landlord financially. His landlord's property is increased in value by it. And the tenant has to pay a higher rent in consequence. In other words, he pays the landlord for his sidewalk accommodation. And that is the rule. Such benefit as the public generally may get from street improvements, they have to pay for to their landlords in increased rents. To make them pay also for the improvements is therefore double taxation. Though special assessments have been much abused in their application, the principle is sound and should not be lightly relinquished.

It is no longer possible to conceal the fictitious character of the "prosperity" of which so much has been heard by the masses during the past two years, and so little seen. The whole flimsy fabric is flapping and fluttering, and a collapse is apparently not far off. That business did experience an improvement, no one disputes; but the activity was due to the

necessity for somewhat replenishing empty shelves. There had been such a long period of starvation that some revival of demand was inevitable. This temporary spurt, when it came, was mistaken for prosperity. But it is over now. We are on the down grade, and shall go on down until the shelves get so bare again that replenishment again becomes a necessity. It would be only human if the bi-metallists attributed the approaching depression to the new gold standard law. They would be reasoning as their adversaries have done. The truth is, however, that the new period of adversity we are entering is not a new one at all, but a fluctuation in the depression that has been with us since 1890. The gold standard law has neither lifted us out of it nor put us into it. It has had no more to do with it, one way or the other, than the color of the chips in a gambling game has to do with the fall of the cards.

Our usually phlegmatic British brethren must henceforth modestly refrain from poking fun at the hysterical French for their unbridled emotions. Irrationally excitable as Frenchmen are, they could hardly have experienced a more severe attack of hysterics if they had conquered Germany than that which overwhelmed the English when Mafeking was relieved. Yet how small the matter that occasioned that display of British weakness. It was but the relief of a British garrison at a point which it had long been conceded ought not to have been garrisoned, and this in a wantonly aggressive war for the subjugation of two little republics with a population less than that of St. Louis. The English will always have many reasons for pride in their traditions, but this outbreak of super-French hysterics over Mafeking will not be accounted among them.

There is now pending before congress a bill, introduced in the senate by McMillan and in the house by Lentz, which should be passed with-

out delay. It is intended for the relief of persons that have occasion to send or receive money through the mail in small sums, and who are now embarrassed for want of some convenient and safe means of transmission. This bill would meet that requirement while furnishing the most convenient small change ever yet devised. It provides that post-check notes shall be substituted, to a certain extent, for the paper currency now in use. These notes would be of various denominations, from five cents to five dollars, and in size $2\frac{1}{4}$ by 4 inches, and a space would be left on each for writing in the name of a payee and his post office town. So long as this space remained blank the note would pass from hand to hand as money; but by filling in the space and affixing a postage stamp of one cent for notes under one dollar and of two cents for those above that amount, the holder of a note could make it payable to a particular person at a particular post office. These notes, therefore, would be exactly like paper money, except that they could be transmitted through the mail with the same safety as a money order or check. The effect of the bill consequently would be to replace all the paper currency of five dollars and under with post checks which, while passing from hand to hand as money, would at any moment be available for transmission as checks drawn to order.

IS IT THE DEAD CAPITAL OF A DYING REPUBLIC?

One needs to spend but a few weeks in Washington to feel the influence that the party in power has over visitors that come to the city even for a short time. All hesitate to make an adverse criticism concerning the war now pending in the Philippines, however strongly they may condemn it in their own minds.

It is no longer possible for citizens of the United States to remain in doubt upon the radical departure of the present incumbent of the white house from the principles and policies which have guided all presidents

in the past. Although this cannot commend itself to the intelligence and conscience of a large number of people, yet they are silenced, or almost stifled, if they attempt to express a conviction based upon the great principles enunciated in the declaration of independence.

How thoroughly the lash of the party in power whips all its members into line is well illustrated by a conversation with a congressman held in the parlor of the Riggs house. He was a man under 40, educated, one would think, as a true American patriot. The conversation was in part as follows:

"Then you approve of converting our republic into an empire?" To which he answered:

"Most assuredly I do."

"Do you believe in a revolutionary movement which will destroy the principles of the declaration of independence?"

"Oh, fie!" he replied. "What is the declaration of independence? Merely a piece of schoolboy oratory."

From whence is the influence which can so revolutionize the minds of our young men, especially those we trust to make our laws?

Three women's conventions were held in Washington during the month of February. All were silent upon this burning question of the hour. Officers of the Suffrage association made it difficult for its members to give any public expression concerning the Philippine horror, although many of them pronounced it the greatest crime of modern times. The Daughters of the American Revolution held their annual convention during the week which includes Washington's birthday. Long reports were made of the preservation of valuable relics of the revolutionary war, many of these antiquities being mere stocks and stones; but nothing was said about preserving our immortal declaration of independence and the constitution inherited from our forefathers. Also the Woman's National Single Tax League, which was organized in Washington in February, refused to pass a resolution denouncing the Philippine policy of the administration, because some of its members were in government employ. These organizations lost an opportu-

nity to make their influence felt when they did not permit the Philippine iniquity to be publicly discussed at this particular time. But we have a consolation in the fact that men possess the Australian ballot and by their votes can give forcible expression to their opinions with impunity.

LOUISA SOUTHWORTH.
Cleveland, O.

THE GREATEST WANT OF THE AGE.

This boasted nineteenth century of progress, of social activity and of so-called philanthropy has had many critics and detractors. Plenty of men have detected the hollowness of its civilization, and the questionable nature of its philanthropy. They have seen that material progress does not mean human happiness, that intellectual culture is not the same thing as moral culture, and that the moral progress of the human race is almost brought to a standstill by the huge spectre of international distrust. What the age wants is not somebody to tell it that there is "something rotten in the state of Denmark," but somebody to act as if he believed that there was.

In short, what we want is some indication on the part of those who know the truth, that they really believe it, and are prepared to make some sacrifices for it.

Let us for a moment "survey mankind from China to Peru." Do we not find that the best energies of the men of all nations are devoted to the manufacture of machines for slaughtering their fellow men, who have the same right to live as themselves? Do we not find that nations, even when not at "war" in the physical sense, are still in the habit of erecting tariff barriers on the boundaries, thus preventing that natural interchange of labor which God intended, and insuring the maximum of human exertion with the minimum result? Do we not find that the throne of the world is occupied by capitalization with its callous disregard for all the nobler aspects of human nature, that for its sake governments are prepared to make war, the law courts are prepared to decide that black is white, the newspapers are prepared to blacken the character of inoffensive tribes, the church is prepared to pour its mercenary bless-