

victory over the helpless Montejó. His pitiable exhibition of moral cowardice with reference to the Filipinos, with whom he formed an alliance which he afterwards tried to deny at the instance of the administration, must have had a prejudicial effect upon his popularity. McKinley's casting him aside like a squeezed lemon after "making use" of him as he confessed to "making use" of Aguinaldo, must also have had an influence; for this threw him into the shadow with all the powerful newspaper and other agencies of the administration. The ridiculous gift-house affair, too, was a factor in undoing him. And, then, to cap all, he made an astounding exposure when he concluded to run for president. The influence of all these circumstances we fully recognize. But a military hero is not so easily unhorsed. He holds the affections of a military people in spite of intellectual and moral weaknesses, in spite of his exposing himself to ridicule, in spite of everything except the one fact that he is a military hero. For that reason we incline to believe what we hope, that Dewey's decline is really due to the fact that the American people are losing their morbid disposition to exalt military heroes.

The pneumatic tube swindle in connection with the post office system received a temporary knock down last week in the lower house of congress. Representative Moody charged open bribery to promote legislation in its favor, and other members explained that the government was paying annual rentals in excess of the capitalized value. This explanation would indicate that the tube people have taken a lesson from the railroad people, who charge the post office department more for the rent of a postal car for one year than the car could be built for. But the tube people are somehow not "up to snuff." Their swindle, unlike that of the railroad, has been voted down. A motion to strike out the appropriation for pneumatic tube service was adopted by 87 to 50. This ought not to cripple the

postal service. It only raises a question of whether the postal department shall maintain its own pneumatic service system or leave it to the corruption of private contracting. On that question there should be no disinterested dispute. A postal pneumatic service is legitimately no more a private business than is the cancelling of stamps.

The disposition of the senate, though by a slender majority, to suppress a declaration of sympathy with the Boers in their struggle to maintain the independence of their republics, is not a gratifying fact. Under the circumstances it is deplorable. For a distinct impression had been created that the American government sympathizes with the British. This impression is deepened by the attitude of the administration, and it will be deepened still further if the senate remains silent upon the subject. So it will go abroad that the British, in the war of subjugation they are waging, have the sympathy of the American people. Yet that is not the fact. The American people, by an overwhelming majority, sympathize with the Boers. No one of intelligence here doubts this. Every observer knows it to be true. Max O'Rell, who has just returned from this country to England, assures the English of it. Some expression, then, of the national feeling ought to be made in an authoritative manner. If the government were really neutral, there would be no impropriety in maintaining silence. But as the government is not neutral, as it impresses all Europe as well as the British ministry with its British leanings, as it gives color to Chamberlain's assertion that there is "an understanding between statesmen"—for these reasons the senate owes it to the country to set the country right in the eyes of the world.

The one fact to be borne in mind at this stage of the South African war, is that it is confessedly on the part of the British government a war of subjugation. The Boers have offered

not only to arbitrate the issues, but to make peace on any terms, with the sole reservation that their continued independence shall be respected. This offer the British ministry rejects. Independence, therefore, and nothing but independence, is the issue. It is to maintain that, and only that, that the Boers are fighting. It is to destroy that, and for no other purpose, that the British ministry continues the war.

A peaceable disposition on the part of the British ministry would lead it to accept the proffered arbitration. A friendly disposition on the part of the American government would dictate that England be advised in the interest of peace to do so. This advice cannot be given diplomatically. In the first place, diplomatic etiquette would interfere; in the second, a disposition is absent. But the senate could proffer it by resolution as an expression of American sentiment. Nor should any notion that England cannot arbitrate with dignity be allowed to interfere. It is an absurd pretense that England cannot arbitrate because the South African republic is not a sovereign state. It is a sovereign state, except in the narrowest technical sense. There are some treaties which it cannot make without England's consent. Technically, that takes it out of the category of sovereign states. But it is as sovereign as England herself respecting its internal affairs. And it is over internal affairs, not over foreign treaty affairs, that the present war is waged. With perfect dignity, therefore, and in entire harmony with the spirit of international law, England could arbitrate those questions. And she would do so if her ministers were better disposed toward peace and amity and less inclined to swap English blood for colonial conquests.

The British idea of arbitration has been parroted by Frederick W. Holls, who acted as secretary to the United States delegation to The Hague peace conference. In a lecture before the

Chicago Commercial club last week Mr. Hollis said that "arbitration is as impossible between Great Britain and the Transvaal republic as it would have been between the north and the south in our civil war, or, as it would be between Great Britain and Ireland on the question of home rule." The American who utters that sentiment must have either a misty conception of the fundamental law of his own country, or a defective knowledge of the treaty relations between Great Britain and the Transvaal. The northern and southern states had by mutual consent formed a nation of which the states were subordinate members. The issue between them was whether that nation could be disintegrated except by the consent of all these members; and of course that was not a question which could be submitted to foreign powers for decision. It had to be determined by our courts, subject only to an appeal to arms under the reserved right of revolution. Precisely so with Ireland and Great Britain. Legally, they are parts of one nation. However unjustly this condition may have been established, it is an established condition. Consequently, Great Britain, which is legally the law maker for Ireland, could not consent to arbitrate the propriety of the laws she enacts for Ireland's government. But with reference to the Transvaal, there was and is no such condition. The Transvaal was a sovereign nation in the full technical sense until 1877. She was then subjugated by Disraeli. In 1881 her independence was restored in degree; and in 1884 it was completely restored, with the single reservation as to treaties. Then arose the conflict. It was not over any question of the treaty revision power reserved to Great Britain. It was over questions of internal government, regarding which the Transvaal was as independent as she had been prior to 1877. To say that Great Britain cannot arbitrate those questions, any more than she could arbitrate the parliamentary question of home rule in Ireland or than the north

could have arbitrated the constitutional question of secession with the south, is to assume that in international relations there is no eternal fitness of things.

While on the subject of the South African war, we wish to call attention to an article published some time ago in the Anglo-American, from the pen of Thomas G. Shearman. We shall refer to the final paragraph only, because the rest of the article, while it compares the Boers to the British very much to the advantage of the latter, advances nothing to justify the cause for which the British are fighting. But the final paragraph has been several times referred to us as embodying an analogy in conclusive justification. We give it in full:

Let any American ask himself this question: even if our own country had acted in a threatening, and, if you please, a bullying manner toward Mexico, but had still religiously abstained from entering upon Mexican territory, and then the Mexican government had suddenly demanded, by telegraph to Washington, that our government should withdraw all soldiers from within 500 miles of the Mexican boundary line and should pledge itself never to the end of time to send another soldier into California or Texas, giving notice that unless this pledge was telegraphed back within 48 hours Mexico would begin war, what would have been or ought to have been the response of the American government and people? Let him ask himself, further, if the Mexican government on receiving no answer in 48 hours had immediately invaded California and Texas and declared a considerable part of each state annexed to Mexico, what response he and all other Americans would make. Let him ask himself whether he would, for a moment, after that, have discussed the question of the previous attitude of the American government, or whether he would not, if able to do so, have rushed to the front as a volunteer to defend his country and to drive out the impudent Mexicans. I have never yet met a Boer-loving American who was willing to answer these questions, for the simple reason that they can be answered only in one way, and that is precisely the same way in which the British have answered the challenge of the Boers.

The great strength of Mr. Shearman's question lies in its minimizing if not ignoring, the most vital facts. What, for instance, are we to infer

from the assumption that the British "had still religiously abstained from entering" Transvaal territory? Surely not that Mr. Shearman never heard of the British conquest of 1877 nor the Jameson raid of 1895. He may, of course, have concluded that the former was not a conquest by the British but an abdication by the Boers. But to do so he must disregard the necessity of those formalities which should attest every abdication of independence, for there were none. So he may regard the Jameson raid as an unauthorized filibustering expedition. But as a filibustering expedition that affair was remarkably enveloped in British officialism. The leader was the agent of the chartered company, and his little army, largely officered by British army officers, entered the Transvaal carrying the British flag. On the surface of the facts at least, it is not altogether consistent with unbiased judgment to speak of the British as having "religiously abstained from entering" Transvaal territory. Doubtless Mr. Shearman intends to limit his remark on this point to the period immediately preceding hostilities. But the Jameson raid cannot be so lightly disregarded as one of the causes of the war.

There is another omission, one that goes to the heart of the subject, in Mr. Shearman's Mexico-Transvaal analogy. Besides ignoring the offer to arbitrate which accompanied the Boer ultimatum, he disregards the hostile action of the British which provoked it, except as he may have intended to summarize it in the mild and indefinite phrase "threatening and bullying manner." The ultimatum did not come like a bolt out of a clear sky, as Mr. Shearman's analogy would imply to the uninformed reader. Let us try, then, very briefly to recall the leading events of which it was the culmination. All through the summer of 1899, negotiations were proceeding between the two countries, ostensibly, on England's part, for the sole purpose of securing a naturalization law which would give full voting