

agitation, did not make the Torrens system obligatory, but provided that any county might adopt it by a popular vote. The Chicago Real Estate Exchange secured the submission of the question, and the voters sanctioned the reform by a majority of sixteen to one (82,507 to 5,038). This law is now declared unconstitutional by the (State) Supreme Court, on the ground that the clause authorizing the registrar to examine titles and convince himself of their validity before registering them conferred judicial powers upon an administrative officer. The defenders of the statute criticise this decision, on the ground that the duties imposed upon the registrar were purely ministerial, and that the law provided that an appeal to the courts from the registrar's decision might be taken at any time within five years. However, they admit that the decision, right or wrong, is not likely to be changed in the near future, and have set to work to secure a change of the statute. The modifications will doubtless be framed along the lines of the new Ohio statute, which provides that all titles must be declared valid by a court before registration. The only objection to the Ohio plan is that it doubles the time and trebles the expense necessary for the first registration. Nevertheless, the expenditure even under the Ohio plan is much less than the old system demanded, and, when once made, does not have to be repeated every time the property is sold or mortgaged.

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The question as to how large a standing army the United States should maintain is again raised by General Miles's annual report. It is quite natural that the Commander of the army should wish to maintain its efficiency and should lay stress on its importance. General Miles points out that while in a third of a century the population has doubled and property values have increased enormously, the army is now only half as large as it was at the beginning of the period. This comparison ceases to be as striking when we remember that the need of soldiers to subdue hostile Indians has greatly lessened. General Miles believes that we should have one soldier for every 2,000 of population as a minimum. This would mean an increase of over one-third from the present basis. His contention is that our force is now insufficient properly to man existing posts and to garrison the new system of coast defenses, which require a skilled military guard. For the coast defenses themselves he calls for liberal appropriations, and specifies amounts to be used at stated points; in all, he asks for about \$13,000,000 to be expended at twenty-two places, about \$1,250,000 being for the entrances to New York. General Miles refers to the feeling of some that the construction of the modern appliances of war is a danger and menace to the laboring classes, and replies that these things are rather "a protection to the life, property, and welfare of all classes, from the highest to the lowest." The general condition and discipline of the army is reported to be excellent. The matter of increase of our army is too serious to be here discussed in a paragraph. But we may express our serious doubt about the advisability of spending any money on harbor fortifications. Thus far they have ceased to be useful almost before they were completed; improvements in naval warfare have made them antiquated. It is at least a serious question whether we must not rely for the protection of our harbors, not upon soldiers and forts on land, but upon ships at sea.

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The assurance that the Governments at Washington and London have reached an agreement on all the main questions involved in the Venezuelan discussion has given a satisfaction to the people of both countries so deep and

general as to be in the highest degree significant of the temper of the English-speaking race. The friendliness evinced toward this country is more outspoken and universal than ever before in our history, and ought to wipe out whatever remains of old-time antagonism against England. The details of the agreement have not yet, however, been fully given to the public. It is apparently certain that England has consented to arbitrate the question of the disputed boundary-line between Venezuela and British Guiana; that the Court of Arbitration is to consist of two members of the Supreme Court of the United States, to be appointed by the Chief Justice of that Court; two members of the High Court of Justice of England, to be appointed by the Lord Chief Justice; and a fifth arbiter who has been named in advance, and who is to be King Oscar of Sweden. The fifth arbiter is to be ex-officio President of the Court, the work of which is to be completed within three months from the time of the signing of the agreement—a period which would expire on February 9, 1897. The United States agrees to use its good offices to influence Venezuela to accept the treaty, and it is reported that Venezuela has already practically given her consent. All the territory in dispute between England and Venezuela will come within the scope of the arbitration agreement, with an understanding in advance, however, protecting the rights of those English subjects who have had uninterrupted peaceful possession, for fifty years, of land within the disputed section. The exact character of this condition has not, however, been clearly stated, and it is impossible at this moment to define its precise scope and meaning.

There is but one discordant note in the general chorus of satisfaction with which this agreement between the two Governments has been received, in England as well as in this country. It has been assumed in some quarters that the agreement involves the exercise by the United States of a kind of supervision of the South American countries, with corresponding responsibilities. Some of the German newspapers have already given formal notice that this interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine will not be accepted by Europe, and that the action of England will not constitute a precedent. It is very doubtful whether such an interpretation would be accepted in this country, and we cannot believe that President Cleveland would put the country in a position which would make it responsible for the right action of the Governments of South America. No position could be more perilous or involve greater indeterminate responsibilities. It would be the height of unwisdom for this country to put itself behind the Governments of South America in whatever action they chose to take, or to assume the responsibilities of a protectorate over them. We do not believe that even the wildest American patriot of the most flamboyant type would be willing to put the country in that position, and we do not believe that President Cleveland would consent to any arrangement which would involve the assumption of such responsibilities.

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Mr. F. Hopkinson Smith, who is a very versatile and charming painter, novelist, lecturer, and builder, with gifts as manifold as his activities, plunged into a sea of troubles when he undertook, upon very insufficient knowledge, to defend the Sultan's course during the past two or three years, to condemn the Armenians, and to arraign the missionaries. Mr. Smith knows picturesque Constantinople well, but he does not understand the Turkish situation, nor is he well posted concerning the events of the last

few years. He has made occasional visits to Turkey, but he has not lived there thirty-five years, as did Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, who, in a recent letter to the "Tribune" of this city, has very vigorously answered some of Mr. Smith's statements and charges. Dr. Hamlin takes Mr. Smith's statements up in order and disposes of them with a great deal of effectiveness. He convicts him of many misunderstandings, of much misinformation, and of general lack of knowledge of the situation. It is a mistake to take Mr. Smith too seriously in this Turkish business. The Sultan has been courteous to him, as one must be to a man of such charming personality. The mosques, the old buildings, the crowded streets, the costumes of the people, have all appealed to Mr. Smith's sense of the picturesque. These things he knows, but the moral situation in Turkey he does not understand. When he takes his brush in hand to give us a glimpse of Constantinople, he shows us something which he has really seen; but when he talks about the Armenians and the missionaries and Turkish policy in general, he is talking about something upon which he has no special knowledge. Dr. Kimball, who is a very cool, clear-headed, and intelligent woman, free from hysteria, also knows the Turks and admires their good qualities, but she has had opportunities of seeing the other side of things, and her testimony, which we give on another page, would be convincing apart from that of the missionaries, the official reports, and the practically unanimous judgment of all those who know anything about the situation.

The widely published rumors of serious misunderstanding between Spain and the United States on account of Cuba seem to have little behind them but theory and inference. It is said with truth that Spain is in a desperate state financially and politically; that her people have a strong feeling against this country because of the help which the Cuban patriots have received from individuals here, because of the unquestioned sympathy of almost every one here for the Cuban cause, because of the declarations in both the great political platforms, and because of the recent agitation in Congress. It is then argued that there is a likelihood that Spain, which has already discriminated unjustly against American shipping and dealt harshly with individual American citizens, may be led to affront this country, and that danger is in the air. On the other hand, President Cleveland has taken occasion to privately reiterate the intention expressed in his last message to carefully fulfill every international obligation and to maintain the neutrality laws; Minister Taylor has cabled from Madrid to London that there is no reason to fear a conflict between the two countries; the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Duke du Tetuan, has by cable contradicted a story about a circular note alleged to have been sent out by him to foreign ministers at Madrid asking what would be thought of an act of resentment toward the United States; and there is now no overt act of unfriendliness by Spain under consideration. In short, the position last week was not different from what has existed for months. One of the papers which has been most active in publishing rumors of war, speaks in its financial column of "the false but disquieting rumors of possible conflict with Spain." The new Spanish loan of \$50,000,000 was opened on Monday, and it is reported that bids for over \$100,000,000 were received; one report from Madrid states that ladies are selling their jewelry and bishops the church plate to help the Government. Meanwhile little definite is heard from General Weyler's new "aggressive" campaign, but that little indicates that, as he advances into the hills, Maceo's forces are breaking

into small bodies and are harassing his flanks continually. He has certainly so far accomplished little or nothing.

It looks very much as if Germany were rapidly taking the place of isolation which England has occupied for several years in European affairs. One of the signs of the change of feeling toward England is the notable change of tone recently manifested in the Russian press. For many months the Russian newspapers, like the German newspapers, were filled with bitter and rancorous attacks on everything English. There has been, however, almost a magical change. Great Britain is now spoken of respectfully, sympathetically, and oftentimes in a very friendly spirit, by the same journals which not many months ago were denouncing and abusing her. The conversation of one of the Russian editors, reported in the "Evening Post," throws light on this change. Several of the disputes which alienated Russian feeling from England have been settled, among them the matter of the Afghan frontier and of the Pamirs. The interference by England in 1878, at the very moment when Russia was about to grasp the fruit of her struggle, left a long trail of bitterness behind it; but the treatment which Russia has received from the Balkan principalities, and especially from Bulgaria and Servia, has greatly diminished Russian interest in that section of the Eastern question, and has consequently very much modified the feeling against England which arose from her interference eighteen years ago. In the same conversation some very sensible things were said about diplomacy, which, in the judgment of the editor in question, often obscured matters at issue and held apart peoples whose sympathies were essentially with each other. There has been, he said, the strongest sympathy between the French and the Russian peoples for many years past, but diplomatic opposition to the alliance between the two countries has really kept apart two peoples who were together in feeling. Diplomacy, he said, has been and is obscuring in the same way the strong natural sympathy between Russia and England. Every educated Russian has a great respect for the English people, and confidence in their ability to act in international affairs disinterestedly. The drift of things, in his view, was evidently towards a closer alliance between the two countries.

The French Ministry successfully weathered another storm in the Chamber of Deputies last week, caused in this instance by the Radicals, who are the determined foes of all Republican Ministries which refuse to accept their own programmes. These gentlemen have been scheming for some time past to compel the retirement of the Méline Cabinet, although no one knows precisely what they could hope from that event. On Tuesday of last week the Deputies decided, by a majority of 19, to discuss on Monday of this week the mode of electing Senators. The Government opposed the proposition, but it was adopted, the Government refusing to consider the result as an expression of want of confidence. On Thursday the Radicals made another attack on the question of the Government permitting priests, although they are State officials, to hold Congresses. It will be remembered that the Government does not allow professors and school-teachers to hold Congresses. The Radicals took the ground that priests belonged in the same category, and that, in order to be consistent, the Government could not permit them to hold Congresses. The point of attack was the recent Clerical Congress held at Rheims, at which some very sharp things were said about the Republic. In reply the Minister of Public Instruction and Worship declared that it was his intention to introduce a measure in the Chamber authoriz-