

her mercantile marine and West India possessions be possible of accomplishment without involving us in war? Will the immense amount of English money invested in the United States lead to English interference for the protection of Atlantic sea-ports from Spanish guns? Will the huge debt of Spain to France be the means of bringing the latter power into the quarrel for the defence of Cuba? Has the sudden activity of Russia in China arisen from knowledge of the fact that France in conjunction with Spain may keep England and her supposed new ally busy in the western world? Surely France, eternally on guard and watching Germany, will not share the fortunes of Spain in a fight with the United States.

We can hardly believe in any of these talked-about possibilities as likely to be the explanation of the recent sounding of the shrill clarion of war in the arsenals and dockyards of the nations most interested in the complications in the far east and the near west.

We prefer to hope and believe that, in the event of an outbreak of hostilities between the United States and Spain, the ships of Admiral Sir John Fisher will only be employed in protecting the commerce of England, the volume and never-ceasing activity of which is so well described in an old poetical tribute to the noble river Mersey:

That stream which, fretted by a thousand prows,  
No liquid rest no silent slumber knows:  
Whate'er the hour, whate'er the tide prevail,  
Behold, the outward and the homeward sail,  
Winged messengers that haste, with sail unfurled,  
To barter produce with some distant world.

We cling to the conviction that the maintenance of peace is yet possible, and we are unwilling to attach too much importance to the reported recent meeting at Washington between the President of the United States and representatives of the Imperial Government forces in the Dominion of Canada.

#### CAN PRESIDENT MCKINLEY PRESERVE PEACE?

(TWO VIEWS OF PUBLIC OPINION.)

That President McKinley should be reported as pleading with Congressmen to restrain themselves during his present correspondence with Spain is not surprising.

If he is able to preserve peace it will be a triumph for the statesmanship and diplomacy of modern times. With a Senate thirsting for blood and the clergy breathing fire instead of the blessed gospel of peace, the good President and his immediate supporters are being sorely tried. Blatant demagogues in the senate and pulpit are disgracing a great nation and form a far from pleasant spectacle.

It has remained for a foolish and fiery Senator from the State of Illinois to outstrip all competitors in the struggle to provoke a bloody and useless war. The passionate declamations and senseless vapourings of a portion of the United States press has been offset

by the splendid work of the New York *Evening Post* and other well conducted papers, and we venture to hope that the speech of Senator Mason of Illinois will not remain unanswered. Men may come to think unless a warning voice is heard that this indiscreet Senator, who, in the course of his speech, remarked "Mr. President, I speak only for myself, and I am for war," really represents the honest public opinion of his country. We refuse to believe this, and we absolutely decline to accept this Illinois gentleman's declaration of belligerent intentions as any proof of his willingness to fight. We may be doing Senator Mason injustice. But when we read his references to Concord and Bunker Hill, and ponder upon his invitation to the nation to "awake to glorious war," we find ourselves doubting his sincerity, and even sceptical about his courage.

The concluding peroration of this warlike Senator is said to have fairly electrified his hearers. 'Tis not a cause for wonderment. Here it is:

"Let us awake. Shake off the Chinese narcotic that locks us in drowsy indolence, murmuring 'Peace at any price.' Awake, as our forefathers did at Concord and Bunker Hill; awake to glorious war against a nation that burns homes and murders women and children; awake to glorious war that seeks no gain for us in treasury or territory, but a war to drive the oppressor from the continent, to set the Cuban flag in the sky forever, and a war that will help us for generations to come, by giving notice that the honor of our flag and the lives of our citizens must be respected among the nations of the world." (Long continued applause in the galleries).

We choose to believe, for the honour and credit of our neighbours, that the long continued applause was largely ironical and mixed with laughter. The man who talks of setting the Cuban flag in the sky knows but little of the ability or inability of the insurgents (whom the owners of Cuba are always trying to find and pacify or kill) to govern the island he longs to liberate.

Again, by what right would Senator Mason's countrymen proceed to "drive the oppressor (Spain) from the continent."

It is refreshing to turn from the perusal of these American Senators' declarations of war to a calm and sensible review of the situation published in the New York *Commercial Bulletin*, and it is comforting to know that the President and his best advisors are more likely to be impressed by such expressions of public opinion as this paper gives than by the frantic appeal contained in Senator Mason's speech—which it is amusing to note "was read from a manuscript, but was delivered with all the vigour and fire of which he is capable."

Let the gentleman from Illinois go to Cuba and wrestle with its climate or the Spaniards single handed, whilst we take comfort in considering the following extracts from the sensible article in the *Commercial Bulletin*.

"We have stated that the open commitment of our Government to the Cuban cause, backed by a large-