

it had reached the wicket, which it once again struck with unerring aim.

There was a moment's pause, and all eyes were bent on the umpire.

Could it be?

He was walking off the field, and the match, a victory for the English team, was over.

Then there arose such a scene as the building had not witnessed since its erection.

The enormous mass of people gesticulated and shrieked with indignation. One or two of the electric stations blew up, owing to the infuriated spectators at Chicago having wrecked the Biograph.

The President, looking down on the hideous babel, realised that the whole question was reopened.

He withdrew, amidst an extraordinary outburst of patriotism, and his headquarters in Long Island were soon surrounded by thousands of enthusiasts.

It was known that he had immediately summoned the Secretary of State and that a conference was being held.

It was a difficult situation. The umpire, himself an American, had given it in the Englishmen's favour—why, nobody could make out, the vast majority declaring that it was obviously a "no ball."

In a few hours' time papers came out with the news that the Secretary of State had called on the English Ambassador to request the immediate recall of Toplift.

The Ambassador asked for time, and was given twelve hours, although he took upon himself to say that the English Government would never consent, and that the time limit was a matter of form, pointing out at the same time that if the decisions of umpires were not to be held sacred there was an end to international sport—or, in fact, sport of any kind—and he gave this as his own opinion, being himself a sportsman and champion golf player amongst the diplomatic corps in Washington.

The American Secretary replied that this was an exceptional case, and the Ambassador retorted:

"Not at all."

And so the interview ended.

The English Government declined to

give way, and the team was ordered to retire to Canadian territory, which they did, all excepting Toplift, who was nowhere to be found.

The English Radical press implored moderation, or, at least, suggested that the matter of all cricket matches should be shelved for ten years, when no doubt the difficulty would have blown over. But, as usual, nobody listened to them, and they called loudly on history to vindicate them by recording their inspired advice.

The so-called "Jingo" press declared that the sacred rights of cricketers for all time required that the decision of the umpire should be upheld by force of arms if necessary; and pointed out how, many years before, the surrender of Majuba, which had been a small thing at the time, had led to vast consequences.

"Give way on this subject," they said, "and the Senate at Washington would take upon itself to issue the rules of cricket, a privilege which had for years been vested, by international agreement, in the English Parliament. People must either declare that sport was of no account—which no madman could be found to do, considering that all progress, economic and otherwise, was its outcome—or else fight to the bitter end for the independence of the judges."

The American papers went on declaring that it was an occasion which had no parallel, and that, therefore, precedent could not be appealed to. The rest of Europe, which had always played cricket with difficulty, presented memorials to their respective Sovereigns, begging them to interfere so as to avert bloodshed, and declaring that they could see no reason why everyone should not bowl underhand—which would have the advantage of making the game less dangerous.

The Canadians flew to their frontier.

The determination that the Stars and Stripes should never float over the Dominion had grown with years, and they were ready to shed their last drop of blood to avert such a humiliation.

England arose as one man. The public schools, who had a right to a voice on such a subject, drew up a huge memorial, and entrusted it to half a dozen