

occurred. The loss of life was appalling, over a hundred being killed and nearly 400 fearfully injured. In the work of rescue, tending the wounded, relieving the distress of those whose bread-winners were killed, and in other humane acts Boer and Uitlander have joined hands. For the nonce, at least, they have forgotten their recent bitter enmity, and it is more than probable that the calamity which has made such sad havoc in Johannesburg will prove a far more effective means of reconciliation between the Boers and the Uitlanders than the diplomatic efforts of the English Colonial Secretary—supplemented though they be by those of President Kruger.

\*\*\*

One of the results of the warfare which—in Venezuela. England and Spain waged against each other over two hundred and fifty years ago, was the acquisition by England of the territory in South America now known as British Guiana. About the year 1670 the territory passed into the hands of the Dutch who gave in exchange what is now New York State. In 1814 British Guiana again became tributary to England, being ceded to that country by treaty. At that time the Republic of Venezuela did not exist, Venezuela being part of the possessions of Spain, whose colonists revolted several years subsequent to 1814 and constituted themselves a republic.

\*\*\*

Spain had always acknowledged England's right to the territory forming British Guiana. The newly established republic, however, felt itself called upon to demand of England a portion of the territory which they claimed properly belonged to Venezuela. This claim was based upon a bull issued some centuries previously by a Pope of Rome, who divided the entire new world between Spain and Portugal, which at the time were the only maritime and colonizing powers. Naturally enough England refused to entertain the claim of the Venezuelans.

Granted that the part of British Guiana claimed by Venezuela had been apportioned to Spain several hundred years previously by the Pope of Rome, the fact that Spain had for over a hundred years recognized England's position and never called into question the latter's frontier boundaries, rendered the demand of the Venezuelans absurd.

For a period of fifty-five years the Government of Venezuela has been striving to induce England to hand over the disputed territory or submit the question to arbitration. England was prepared to make some concession, but on no account would she entertain the possibility of handing over to Venezuela a district inhabited by 40,000 British subjects, and which had been in the possession of England and Holland, alternately, for 200 years.

\*\*\*

Venezuela is one of those republics of which an American humorist has said, they have a change of government every twenty minutes and a revolution every twenty-four hours. It is a republic in name only. In reality it is a faction-torn community, each faction being ready to assert its claims by force of arms on the slightest pretext. The President is practically a dictator, for the time being exercising a power as arbitrary as that of monarchs of the middle ages. The Government is absolutely lacking in stability and other essential qualifications. The affairs of the country are administered solely with a regard for the interests of the faction which at the time controls the revenues and army of the country. As a matter of fact a change of Government is generally determined by the latter withdrawing its support from the Government and siding with one of the opposing factions. The possibility of placing 40,000 law-abiding, industrious British subjects at the mercy of such a disorganized, half-civilized country could not be seriously contemplated for a moment by any British statesman.

Failing to attain this end the Venezuelans broke off diplomatic relations with England in 1886. Since then they have made several requests to have the whole question submitted to arbitration without any limit as to the area upon which the arbitrators should render an opinion. England has invariably declined the proposals unless the reference to area was limited so as to exclude

that territory inhabited by British subjects, to which we have alluded.

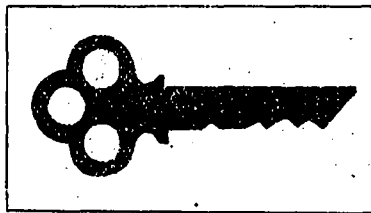
\*\*\*

Foiled at every point, the Venezuelans showed a disposition to act in an ugly manner. England at once made it manifest that she would maintain her position with the aid of maxim guns if necessary. This brought from the Government of the United States a request to England to submit to arbitration, as the United States would regard as a violation of the Monroe Doctrine any attempt by England to force her claims on Venezuela.

England's Premier courteously declined to accede to the request of the Government of the United States. Then the President of the latter country launched his famous Message, in which he declared that England's attitude on the Venezuelan matter was hostile to the national rights of the United States; that England was in the wrong; that England must submit to arbitration, or the United States would appoint a commission to enquire into the merits of the question (in which England was already declared to be in the wrong!) and if that commission reported against England's claim the United States would, at all hazards, insist upon England withdrawing from the position she had taken. The whole world was startled at the thinly veiled threat of war from one Anglo-Saxon nation to another. Feeling ran high in both countries, but the cooler heads of each tried to calm the storm before it got beyond control. Their efforts were so far crowned with success that no sensible man believes in the remotest possibility of a war between the United States and England, which is more than could have been said at the beginning of the year. There is a strong probability, according to latest reports, of England and the States appointing a joint commission to enquire into and report upon the claims of Venezuela.

\*\*\*

It is not only within the political arena that startling events have been taking place. Excitement and speculation are rampant in the scientific world. Ever since it was announced last month that Professor The New Photo-Röntgen had discovered a new force of light, by which it was possible to photograph *unseen* things, chemists, photographers, electricians, and scientists of all classes, in all parts of the world, have been making experiments with a view to satisfying themselves that this apparently impossible feat had really been accomplished. Some of the results so far obtained are, photographs of parts of the interior of the human body, photographs of objects enclosed within wooden boxes. We reproduce the photograph



of a key, taken through an inch board. It is impossible to estimate the advantages that medical science and surgery will derive from the discovery. Its use in this respect has already been put to practical test, and, by the aid of the cathode rays, photographs have been taken showing the exact location of foreign substances in human bodies; in one instance a bullet; in another the point of a knife; and in a third, a needle, which had entered the patient's foot and defied discovery by the ordinary means. Their location being known, it was an easy matter to remove these substances without resorting to the slow and tortuous process of probing.

\*\*\*

Another reported achievement in the world of science is the discovery of the North Pole by Dr. Nansen, who left Norway in June, 1893, full of hope of accomplishing what, in attempting which so many lives have been lost. The report of Dr. Nansen's arrival at the Pole is not credited by some of those whose opinion is entitled to consideration. These hold that it would have been impossible for Dr. Nansen to have returned in so

short a time to the station in Siberia whence the news of his success was received. In view of this, we must possess our souls in patience and await the return to civilization of the gallant explorer himself.

\*\*\*

In addition to our interest in events transpiring in other parts of the Empire, we in Canada are afforded plenty of opportunity for reflection by the trend of affairs in our own country. The storm, which has been gathering ever since the Romish Hierarchy in Canada set itself the task of undoing the work of the Manitoba Legislature, when that body abolished separate schools, is about to burst; and the political world, or part of it, is in a state of trepidation in consequence.

\*\*\*

So long as the courts declared that the Act of abolition passed by the Manitoba Legislature in 1890 was constitutional, the Dominion Government could do nothing towards granting the request of the Hierarchy that it compel Manitoba to restore separate schools; and the Dominion Government was greatly pleased thereat. But, when the highest court of the Empire—the Privy Council—declared that it lay within the power of the Dominion to pass an Act restoring separate schools to the Roman Catholics of Manitoba, the Government found itself on the horns of a dilemma. It could no longer plead that it was beyond its province to interfere. The Dominion Government could interfere, if it wished, the Privy Council had said. An attempt was made to induce the Manitoba Legislature to rescind its Act of abolition; and failed. The people of that Province showed two months ago by their votes that they thoroughly approved the stand their representatives had taken. The Dominion Government had to choose one of two alternatives, either refuse to interfere and lose the support of the Roman Catholics of Quebec, or interfere and run the risk of alienating supporters in Ontario and other western provinces.

The latter course was followed and a bill to restore separate schools in Manitoba was introduced in the Dominion House a few weeks ago, but not before Parliament and the country had been shocked to the core by a series of the most disgraceful scenes that ever took place in the history of representative government. The Government and the Conservative party were as a house divided against itself, and the most bitter recriminations were indulged in by the leaders of each faction. Members of the same Government accused each other of falsehood and treachery; against one member was made the accusation that he had written an anonymous letter charging a fellow-Minister with receiving bribes. Although the Minister charged with writing the letter disproved the accusation, the incident served to further demonstrate the existence of discord and distrust in a quarter where it had been declared, with reiteration, that all was peace and concord.

\*\*\*

The outlook for the Government and party was decidedly ominous, but the breach was patched up so far as the former was concerned, and Sir Charles Tupper, until recently High Commissioner for Canada in England, entered the Cabinet, with a view, it is said, to assuming the leadership eventually.

That Sir Charles will lead the Conservative party back to office at the next election is a matter of some doubt. Signs abound on every side that the people of Ontario, Conservatives as well as Liberals, will not be party to coercing Manitoba on the school question. One of the most significant of these was a meeting held in Toronto on Saturday, the 23rd inst., when over 5,000 people filled Toronto's largest hall and unanimously adopted several resolutions in which those present pledged themselves to resist any and all attempts to force separate schools on Manitoba. The speakers at this meeting included many prominent men of both parties, and the unanimity which prevailed throughout presages evil days for the Government that shall call into activity the hostility of such a representative gathering.

\*\*\*

We do not speak with any political bias when we say that we unfeignedly regret that the Government of Canada should have thought fit to attempt to impose upon Mani-