

graphically described by Ex-President Cleveland, became the policy of the High Commissioners of the United States. Though Great Britain was entitled, by the Convention of 1892, to hold the United States bound by their re-affirmance of the boundary line of 1825, she made a generous and conciliatory offer to waive, for the advantage of the United States, the absolute terms of that Convention, and to concede to the United States the benefit of the fifty-year occupation, or settlement, conditions, imposed by the United States on Great Britain in the Venezuelan Arbitration. The British conciliatory offer was nominally accepted, but was met by a contrecoup, which practically nullified the fifty-year limitation, by proposing, as a condition of arbitration, that "all towns and settlements at tide-water, settled under the authority of the United States, at the date of this Treaty, shall remain within the Territory of the United States,"—in effect a realization of Ex-President Cleveland's prediction of "extensive spoliation," and a reversal of the Forty-mile town case just referred to.

The proposition may be cited as a sample of the superb daring of American diplomacy. The most exhaustive eclectic in diplomacy would vainly search for precedents of a similar contrecoup in previous diplomatic protocols.

Lord Clarendon once said in a debate on the Oregon question:—

If the United States did consent to negotiate, it would seem that it could only be upon the basis that England was unconditionally to surrender whatever might be claimed by the United States.

Ex-President Cleveland has aptly illustrated how unsanctioned occupations of territory influence international diplomacy:—

An extension of settlements in the disputed territory would necessarily complicate the situation, and furnish a convenient pretext for the refusal of any concession respecting the territory containing such settlements.

And again:—

It is uncharitable to see, in reference to possession, a hint of the industrious manner in which [a nation] had attempted to improve its position by permitting colonisation, and other acts of possession, since the boundary dispute began.

And, in commenting upon a contention that there should be no arbitration in a late case, because a large part of the disputed territory had been occupied by subjects of the opposing nation, he