

and reaction, and that, next to the British Empire, the free Republic of the United States is, to use Lord Rosebery's term, the secular agency in the world best worth preserving. But there have been more admirable things than the spirit in which a great part of the press of the United States drove the republic on to that war, and we may feel sure that the story of American rule in the new possessions of the republic will read better to future generations of Americans than the story of the methods by and the conditions under which those possessions were acquired. One wonders why such sober-minded statesmen as Mr. James Bryce and such brilliant journalists as Mr. Massingham of *The London Chronicle*, who gave their hearty assent to the war against Spain, should express such stern doubt as to the necessity for the war in South Africa. If in the first case they could give the benefit of the doubt to the United States, surely in the second they can give the benefit of the doubt to Great Britain. In the calm judgment of the historian very few of the wars even of the last half century were either just or necessary. But in all of these wars the press drove on the nations to the combat, and necessarily was the eager ally of the combatants. For this last attitude one should perhaps be slow to censure. When war is on, the patriot holds up his flag and gives his heart and his prayer to the armies of his country. But except when the very honor of a nation is at stake, it is a poor thing to make the patriotism of men an instrument for insult