THE NATION.

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The Week.

The full text of Lord Salisbury’s reply to Secretary Olney on the merits of the boundary dispute itself, as distinct from the Monroe fantasia, is printed in the Congressional Record of December 17. It is a statement of the British case, such as has never before been made public. Mr. Olney, as Salisbury justly observes, had proceeded upon the basis of purely ex-parte Venezuelan representations; his historical argument is taken over bodily from the Venezuelans, as any one may see who will consult Senate Ex. Doc. No. 236, 59th Congress, where the whole of it appears in substance. That argument is now traversed by Lord Salisbury in a way sufficiently to account for Mr. Olney’s turning tail. He set out by roundly affirming that the Venezuelans were right. After reading Salisbury’s reply, he says he will have an investigation and see if they were right. An argument that has thus made the valiant Secretary eat his own words is surely worthy of consideration even by the war-crazed.

The Venezuelan claim that the territory is not British because the Spanish discovered America, is briefly dismissed by Lord Salisbury as both too vague and too sweeping; as well claim under the bull of Alexander VI. But the Venezuelans allege a specific decree of the King of Spain in 1780, describing Guiana (the then Spanish provine of that name is meant) as bounded on the south by the Amazon and on the east by the Atlantic. This proves too much, as it would imply the right of Venezuela to all of British, French, and Dutch Guiana, as well as an enormous tract of Brazilian territory. Moreover, this decree cannot be supposed to have overlooked the Dutch settlements formally recognized in the treaty of Munster, 1648. Furthermore, though the Spanish Government was a party to that treaty of 1814, under which the Dutch settlements were definitely ceded to England, and though the frontiers claimed by Great Britain were perfectly well known to it, at no stage of the negotiation did it interpose any objection. Back of all these late and shadowy Spanish claims, however, Lord Salisbury goes to produce evidence which, if uncontradicted, is absolutely decisive about the Dutch, and hence the English, right to the Ouyuni River—the very territory which is now alone in serious dispute. In 1739 and again in 1739 the States General of Holland addressed formal remonstrances to the court of Madrid against Spanish incursions into the basin of the Ouyuni. These protests were never answered, and an examination of the Spanish archives reveals the fact that the Council of State concluded that it had nothing to offer in rebuttal. Lord Salisbury cites textually the opinion of the Council that the Spanish title to the Ouyuni was “very improbable.” He also intimates generally that “researches in the national archives of Holland and Spain have furnished further and more convincing evidence in support of the British claims.”

How criminally rash and insatiate, in view of all this, appears the President’s flat-footed assertion to Congress in his message of December 3, that Great Britain was proceeding “in derogation of the rights of Venezuela.” That he has not, however, to abandon that flat-footed and reckless contention, and meekly admit that he does not know what the rights of Venezuela really are, makes his threats of war doubly disgraceful. What does he or Secretary Olney know of the documentary evidence in the Dutch and Spanish archives? What will his ridiculous commission know, who are to sit and merrily settle the whole thing on the basis of the evidence in the State Department at Washington? One comfort is that no lawyer with a reputation extending beyond the backwoods will consent to sit on such a commission unless all the evidence obtainable anywhere is to be laid before it. The result may be such another complete emasching of the American cause as we suffered in the Bering Sea matter. The Russian archives lamentably failed Mr. Blaine in that affair, and it may well be that the Dutch and Spanish archives may equally bring Mr. Cleveland to grief. As far as humiliation is concerned, that he has already himself provided for in full measure.

As was to be expected, the President’s conversion to the Jingo view of the Monroe Doctrine has had an electrifying effect upon the South American republics. They are all “out gunning” for wars and revolutions, marching through the streets of their capitals, cheering and shouting and declaring their determination to fight all creation, and especially all European Powers with which they may be at odds, because now they feel sure that the United States will take their side in every such shindy. What a prospect this opens for us! Endless wars over petty disputes with which we have nothing to do and about questions which in no way concern us. A movement is said to be on foot for a conference of all the South American republics on the subject of the Monroe Doctrine, with a view to bringing them into line under it, with the United States as the champion and protector of all of them. We should need, as Prof. Burgess points out in the Evening Post, a standing army of 500,000 men, a navy of 500 ships, and a war expenditure of $1,000,000,000 a year to sustain this rôle, and we should also have to give up all other business and devote ourselves exclusively to war.

That President Cleveland has been his own executioner is made clear by contrasting what he said in 1883 with what he says now. In his message of December 13, 1893, he affirmed: “The law of nations is founded upon reason and justice, and the rules of conduct governing individual relations between citizens or subjects of a civilized state are equally applicable as between enlightened nations.”

Now he says: “To-day the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and it is a law. Why? It is because of its vast resources, and its wisdom, and its valor, and its equity are the invariable characteristics of the dealings of the United States with other civilized people, because its wisdom, combined with its isolated position, renders it master of the situation and practically irresistible as against any or all other Powers.”

Was there ever another case of a civilized man throwing away his clothes and joining the howling savages? Mr. Cleveland says now just what Debs said in the summer of 1894. Law or no law, Debs and his fellow-anarchists gloried in being “masters of the situation.” It is a melancholy thing to find the President who put them down with a firm hand, now displaying himself as the greatest international anarchist of modern times.

We have received some inquiries as to what our explanation is of Mr. Cleveland’s extraordinary break with his own best traditions, and his apparent indifference to the objects which he once seemed to have greatly at heart. We have no theory about the matter which we can support with any proof. The one which meets with most acceptance is that it has been urged on him by his party managers that something must be done, in preparation for the coming canvass, to put the Democratic party on its legs, seeing that it is now, owing to its utter failure with the finances, and its widespread alliance with villians and humbugs, a complete wreck; and that he has done what plenty of politicians have done in like cases before now, and what Mr. Seward recommended Mr. Lincoln to do—got up a foreign rumour to turn attention away from home affairs, and rally to the support of the party the great army of the unthinking and chamois-patriotic and penniless. The puzzle of this is, that in so doing he has ruined the cause to which he has for the
What a picture the Jingo party present as they fall in line behind Cleveland, whom for months and years they have been denouncing as the exponent of all that was most detestable in American life and thought. He has adopted all their arguments, stolen all their thunder, and they find themselves obliged to rally around him and throw up their hats and fill the air with huzza for him. Think of it! Chandler and Lodge and Frys, Morgan and Livingston and Hill, circling hand in hand around Cleveland and asking the people to fill their voices with the same old song. How keenly they must enjoy it, and with what conscious pride must they view this accession to the ranks of his admirers! With every Republican newspaper in the country singing his praises, with the Tribune announcing by special cable message from London that "Mr. Cleveland has been an English idol, but he is now dethroned," what reason will the Republicans have for opposing him next year? Cleveland cannot be denounced again as an un-American candidate, the Republicans cannot claim to be the only true American party, and cannot claim a monopoly of the American flag as a campaign emblem.

It is a relief to turn from the average slandering editorial article of the day on the subject of our relations with foreign nations to one embodying some reflections that are really worth consideration by a sensible man. Such views we find in the answer given by the Memphis Commercial Appeal to a question that it asks, which may have occurred to many thoughtful people: "Why is it that the term 'Americanism,' as it is currently used in a large number of newspapers, has come to convey the idea of a dog, with tail erect and bristles raised, eager for a debate with some other dog?" The editor neatly shows the perversity of the comparison, and points out that "every dog that is worthy of the name is a natural born Jingo and full of spirit of 'true Americanism,'" so that "he only needs to be taught to walk on his hind legs to be a fit candidate for the United States Senate from New Hampshire or Massachusetts, or to edit a Republican paper in Boston or New York." But why, the Memphis Journal wonders, should all patriots be "furiously angry with every nation on earth," and why does such a state of feeling exist in "a country that has so few causes for international jealousy or ill-will, and the largest opportunity ever given to a great and enlightened nation to cultivate feelings of fraternity?"

There must be a reason for all this, and the Commercial Appeal finds it "in the policy of trade exclusiveness so diligently fostered and so long maintained in this country"—a policy which has "caused all to its aid every evil passion it could excite." It arrayed Cleveland against the country against the other by teaching the Northern people that, in advocating lower taxes, the Southern Democrats were trying to disrupt the Union; and it strove to strengthen its argument against foreign competition by cultivating prejudice against all foreign countries and representing "all nations of the earth as being leagued to break down the tariff barriers and ravage the land with foreign goods." The natural end of all this has been that "to teach hatred and hostility to other nations, to find an enemy in every stranger; and to fill their own land with imaginary terrors has become a second nature with a large class of Republican politicians and newspaper." This is certainly a strong argument. We should like to see the Jingo editors tackle it.

We doubt if the voice of the clergy has been so emphatic since the firing on Sumter as it was on Sunday. It spoke in a tone of as pure and ardent patriotism, too, as it did in 1861—as faithfully expressing now the horror in which the moral senses recoil from the wicked war talk of President and Congress, and the nation, that the general alarm that threatened disunion. And the sermons were remarkably outspoken. Few of them were content with mere platitudes about peace. The directness and force with which the ablest clergymen in this city and throughout the country, as far as reported, addressed their congregations, and their unqualified and international renunciation of the war, were refreshing. There was little of the Congressional chaplain's mumblding about "an honorable peace," but a deal of plain talk about a dishonorable and traitorous attempt to imperil peace. Bishop Potter's characterization of the whole Jingo hered as "the pinchbeck patriots" ought to stick to them. Nor were the congregations behind the preachers in repudiating the President's mad appeal to the basest passions of the mob. He got his fill of the Bray of the mob on Wednesday and Thursday; on Friday and Saturday he was overwhelmed with the execrations of business men; on Sunday he received the most unanimous and crushing rebuke that the pulpits of this country ever addressed to a President. He made his appeal to the conscience of the mob; he has now heard from the conscience of the God-fearing people, and their judgment upon him leaves him morally impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors.

The prayer of the chaplain of the House on Friday was another illustration of the way the fighting parsons think they can reconcile their real object, the defense of the war, with their professed vocation. His prayer at the opening of Congress, that we might "be quick to resent insults to this our nation," was combined with a prayer for "peace within our borders," thus making an excellent after-dinner joke, which was wholly out of place in a prayer. Anybody who pays any attention makes quick "to resent insults" cannot have peace within his borders. On Friday the same chaplain prayed that we might have peace, "but let it be honorable peace," pretending to fear that the Almighty, by keeping him from fighting, would inflict a disaster on his side, and then the general alarm that threatened disunion. And the sermons were remarkably outspoken. Few of them were content with mere platitudes about peace. The directness and force with which the ablest clergymen in this city and throughout the country, as far as reported, addressed their congregations, and their unqualified and international renunciation of the war, were refreshing. There was little of the Congressional chaplain's mumblding about "an honorable peace," but a deal of plain talk about a dishonorable and traitorous attempt to imperil peace. Bishop Potter's characterization of the whole Jingo hered as "the pinchbeck patriots" ought to stick to them. Nor were the congregations behind the preachers in repudiating the President's mad appeal to the basest passions of the mob. He got his fill of the Bray of the mob on Wednesday and Thursday; on Friday and Saturday he was overwhelmed with the execrations of business men; on Sunday he received the most unanimous and crushing rebuke that the pulpits of this country ever addressed to a President. He made his appeal to the conscience of the mob; he has now heard from the conscience of the God-fearing people, and their judgment upon him leaves him morally impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors.

Gen. Lew Wallace ('Tales of the Christ') and Gen. O. H. Howard (Christian Soldiers) are both furious for war, This they have a perfect right to be, but they have no right to mix up sanctimonious Christian phrases with their pagan war-whoops. Says Gen. Howard: "We are Christians; we both worship the same God and believe in the same Saviour, and war should not be; but, for all that, Cleveland has taken the right position, and there we should stand." In other words, Christian professions and sentiment are all very well for prayer-meetings and inter-sessional Young Men's Christian Association gatherings, but if he was a captain he would give the position and ethics of Sioux Indians for the sake of bringing on a war, just count upon us every time.

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another to wander about among the bar-
rooms in order to chastise anybody who
seems likely to insult you.

All the London correspondents of New
York papers are unanimous as to the ef-
fect upon the Armenian question of the
Jingo war with England. One of them
quotes an Armenian organizer as saying:
"The hope of England's doing anything
there has perished altogether, and the
Armenian sympathizers here who were real-
ly in earnest are plunged into the depth
of despair." Another declared: "What-
ever else may be said, President Cleveland
has come to the rescue of the unpeakeable
Turk. The Eastern question has dropped
eight of sight. The Sultan has ceased for
a week to be a prominent figure in the
eye of Christendom. He has escaped ob-
servation, and has been left at liberty
without order additional massacres of Armenians
and continue the process of pacifying re-
bellious provinces by bloodshed and ra-
pine." The latest news bears evidence that
the Sultan has not been slow to
"catch on" to the change in the situa-
tion, for it reports the attack upon Zulm
by the Turk, and the barest hint of the
peaceable resistance of the Armenians in
the place. Of course England cannot
look out for the Armenians while she
has a war with us on her hands. The only
way by which the United States could
exert any influence upon the Sultan was
by giving our moral support to England
in the matter, but we cannot fight Eng-
land over a boundary-line dispute in Ven-
zuela—a country in which there are no
American residents—and at the same time
join hands with England for the protec-
tion of the Christians in Armenia, among
whom are several hundred American
citizens; so we have turned the Christians
over to their fate, and he is dealing with
them in a style barbaric enough to suit
the wildest Jingo.

We take the following from a circular of
Dow, Jones & Co., issued just as the present
devildom was beginning:

"Some of the people who have been quoted
as favoring war measures, say privately that it
does not do to appear unpatriotic, but they per-
sonally think it would have been better to
have let the matter go, as it seems to the
majority almost universal that a great mistake
has been made, and that the language used by the Presi-
dent in keeping with the sub-
ject. We have taken some pains to ask for
opinions, and, while nobody wants to be quoted,
practically everybody asked regrets the stand
taken by the President and expresses disgust
over the whole business."

We wish to say to those who are now so
indignantly disposed of the present situation, that
they will find in the above few lines but a
modest explanation of the greater part of the
trouble. A large proportion of the Intellig
ent and educated men of the country who
are, or ought to be, in charge of our high-
best national interests, both moral and
financial, in ordinary times, year after
year, remain perfectly silent and appa-
rently acquiescent while demagogues, ruf-
fians, and ignoramuses fill the air with
abuses of foreign nations, and threats to
whip them, while the very children in the
public schools are brought up to hate them,
and consider the highest and most
glorious duty of the patriot to kill them
and burn their houses. Every rational
man knows that this cannot go on for
years and years without some day bring-
ing on a crisis such as that in which we
are now wallowing; and yet how many
ever have the courage to raise their voices
against it? Why, any blackguard can
rise up and with perfect impunity make
his own ravings about foreign affairs the
only true expression of patriotism, and the
best men in the community will not dare
to tell him that he is a repulsive doxy.

The unfortunate Tribunes, just issuing
from a patriotic debauch, is to-day declar-
ing against "war talk." "War talk" is
mainly harmful for the effect it produces
upon the people. The war spirit and the talk
of idiots among themselves is innoc-
ous. But war talk does not consist
simply in abuse of a particular nation. It con-
stitutes in threatening interpretations of the
Monroe Doctrine; in blatherites' news-
papers demands for a "vigorous foreign
policy"; in instantaneous endorsements,
without debate, of a missive message;
and in fact in everything which indicates
national excitability, irrationality, and
hysteria. We cannot afford to destroy all
confidence abroad in our steadfastness, calm-
ness, and common sense. We are all busi-
ness men, but foreigners will not do busi-
ness with people whose mental soundness
they suspect—and much of our current
"patriotism" is a thinly veiled form of
insanity.

Speaker Reed's committees attract no
more attention than the gamblers of the
squirrels in Central Park. In compari-
son with the issues of peace and war
with which the air is filled, they are of
no consequence whatever. The commit-
tees on foreign affairs would have been very
important if the House had not abdicated
beforehand so much of the control over
foreign affairs as the Constitution lodged
in Congress—that is, the war-making
power. By rushing blindly at Mr. Cleve-
land's hee-haw, it did all that it could to
chew up the Senate committees, and now
it stands before the country naked.
It will not recover from this exposure.
If the country is saved now, it must be
by the sober sense of the people. The
Tonic must come from the pulpit, the
counting-rooms, the colleges, and—also,
that we should need to say it—from the
socialists who are now agitating the
first idea of deposing the unholo and ucciviling
steps taken at Washington last week.
The reformation must come from the
bottom up. It will reach the committees
on foreign affairs in due time, but not
soon enough to save the reputation of its
members,

As to the ways and means committee,
it has gone to putting over the tariff as
though that could help anybody except a
few special interests which want to seize
this opportunity to plunder the public.
If Mr. Cleveland has a grain of self-re-
spect left, he will veto their bill. Probably
they expect that he will. Probably they intend that he shall. This commit-
tees of ways and means is penetrated with
the belief that the only thing needed by
the Treasury is more revenue in general,
whereas it need only and has no means of
getting it, since Mr. Cleveland and Con-
grress together have shocked the mo-
ral sense of the world by their senseless
vaporings about Venezuela. The fact is,
we have not a friend in Europe to-day.
From France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and
every other country that has a free press
the word comes that we are in the wrong.
The Jingoes thought that the peoples of
Europe were as immoral as themselves,
but it is now evident that they are far
removed from that view.

Here is something for the committee on
foreign affairs to chew over. The head
of that committee has held a diplomatic
position. Mr. Hitt knows what positions
are to be safely taken and what cannot, but
he has not dared to say that his soul was
his own up to this time. He may re-
cover the power of speech later. Mean-
while there is reason to believe that an
end has been made of the Presidential
prospects of every man in Congress who
has acquiesced in Mr. Cleveland's mud
prank either by word or by silence—and
that means all of them except Boulle,
if he had any such prospects.

* * * * *

All who believe in decent politics will
rejoice over the assurance from Ken-
ucky that Senator Blackburn cannot
possibly secure a re-election from the new
Legislature. That body, as made up
since the recent second election in a
Louisville district, is evenly divided
between the Republicans and the Demo-
crats, allowing each of the great parties
one of the two seats. The new Legislature
is justified by their propensities and
affiliations. No Democrat—and, for that
matter, no Republican—can secure an
election to the Senate who has not be-
hind him the solid strength of his own
party. Blackburn cannot secure that
strength on the Democratic side. Mr.
Carroll, the Louisville member who has
been twice given a seat in the Legisla-
ture by his district, has personally as-
urred hard-money Democrats that he will
never cast his vote for Blackburn, what-
soever action the party caucus may take.
That tiresome blatherkite is, therefore,
pure to be reired a year from next March,