

ANOTHER PROBLEM FOR DIPLOMACY.

American ambassadors abroad have many difficulties with which to contend. They think they are obliged, for the sake of keeping up appearances, to live far beyond their official incomes. Whether or not this is an idle notion matters little, since deference to it has become a precedent stronger than written law. Now arise new troubles.

Inspired by the gorgeous peacock, its feathers tossed by the breeze, a shimmer of color, or perhaps having listened to the seductive tones of a tailor, the state department is inclined to favor the adoption of a court-dress, the uniform of diplomacy, the badge of high office and another inroad upon the over-worked income. True, the court-dress may be impressive, but it ill comports with the theory of democratic simplicity. The ambassador who may look fairly well in the ordinary garb of civilization might look otherwise were his trousers to pause at the knee. Much would, of course, depend upon the calf. Shall, then, the aspirant for station abroad be compelled to submit to an examination as to the picturesqueness of this essential portion of his anatomy? Shall the lean be rejected, the over-fat told first to train down? As to the usefulness of a court-dress there can hardly be a question, since it must include a sword. No American feels entirely at ease unless armed. However, the sword is not the accustomed weapon here. The six shooter is more familiar to the touch, and could not become entangled among the feet, thereby causing a rattled ambassador to commit a *faux pas*. It is easier to draw, and the appropriateness of drawing it in a drawing-room appeals to reason. An ambassador, during a pause in the conversation, by shooting the lights out, would certainly attract attention and make a hit. He could never hope to do this with a sword.

Years ago there was a prescribed diplomatic uniform. In 1814 the Ghent commissioners agreed upon a suit deemed becoming and dignified. It consisted of a blue coat embroidered with gold, white breeches, gold knee-buckles and white silk stockings, shoe buckles, sword, and small black hat with a black cockade. For grand occasions this beautiful costume was made somewhat richer, and doubtless the Ghent gentlemen would have compared favorably for impressiveness with any spangled set of circus-riders. John Quincy Adams recommended this costume, and he was secretary of state, fully qualified to know what was what. The process of evolution gradually divorced the American from the pomp of velvet and tinsel. His gold buckles have since been found useful as heirlooms and in the propagation of family trees. President Jackson assisted evolution by ordering a simpler uniform,

and, in 1853, Secretary of State Marcy instructed the nation's representatives abroad to dress after the manner of American citizens. There was no murmur of dissent, because the representatives had an uncomfortable feeling that the old rig made them look like a lot of amateur theatricals.

But as all things move in cycles, out of the dim and distant past the memory of the court-dress comes to assume material form. Congress, in 1867, forbade its use, but perhaps Secretary Hay can win it over to his way of thinking, and let ambassadors at least wear a cocked hat and bear a sword, as Buchanan did after the usher had firmly but courteously bounced him from the diplomatic tribune at the opening of Parliament, for refusal to array himself in splendor. They permitted him, as an international concession to wear his own clothes. Hay yearns after the gilded frogs and the rich embroidery of other days. He does not propose that in comeliness the army and navy shall outdo the *personnel* of his own command.

The distinguished author of "Little Breeches" ought to be content to let his fame rest upon this achievement, and retire from the breeches line. No bow-legged ambassador can be made to wear anything he does not wish to wear. Such compulsion would conflict with that part of the immortal document which guaranteed to the individual the right to pursue happiness. Could such a one do this in knee-breeches and a clanking sword? The question of uniform ought to take a change of venue over to the attorney-general.—The Argonaut.

NEBRASKA'S PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

The state historical society has issued the third volume of its valuable series of documentary history of the state. In full the title of the latest book is "The Provisional Government of Nebraska Territory" and the Journals of William Walker, provisional governor of Nebraska Territory, edited by William E. Connelly. The book has a complete and scholarly index. It will be reviewed in these columns soon.

The work which the historical society is doing for the state in the preservation of records and the publishing of these

journals is not sufficiently recognized. On the occasions when the annual meetings of the society is held, or on the appearance of a volume like the one just mentioned, its real activity and unique function become apparent.

J. Sterling Morton, of Nebraska City, is the president of the society, Mr. Charles H. Gere is treasurer and Prof. Howard W. Caldwell is secretary. Mr. Jay A. Barrett is librarian and assistant secretary. The members and officers are scholars and lovers of learning. They are anxious to spend money and time to foster learning and to cause to be written and preserved for the use of scholars and historians, hundreds of years hence, the records of a great state in its infancy and youth. In times when every action is determined upon or rejected by the measure of gain the nobility of the devotion of the members of this society to its purposes is unobscured by many other examples of the same description.

Among the most devoted members of the society was that gentle scholar and brilliant lawyer—Judge James W. Savage, of Omaha, who was its early president and an original investigator of the ethnological evidences of early explorers.—Lincoln Courier.

TIN SOLDIERS.

There are a number of colonels in Nebraska whose warless records, gunless valor and battleless renown make them almost equal, in military achievement, to Col. Wm. Jennings Bryan himself. The colonels to whom THE CONSERVATIVE alludes have declared THE CONSERVATIVE a liar because it had literally quoted and published an extract from the pen of Colonel Bryan saying, without regard to grammar: "I assure you that it is the money that is in the office and not the honor that attract me."

Is it possible that the leading characteristic of Bryanarchic finance is to be grafted upon grammar so as to have sixteen nominatives to one verb; or sixteen verbs to one nominative? How would this new style appear in state papers?

Will some shootingless colonel kindly "tide" the public "over" this "beginning here" of an innovation upon American literature?

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