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## ARBITRATION TREATIES.

THE signing of the arbitration treaties between the United States and Great Britain and between the United States and

France is an incident full of promise for the peace of the world. But its chief importance lies perhaps in the intention of the parties, rather than in the obligations of the treaties themselves. The issues which in their nature are most dangerous to the peace of nations are excluded from the operation of the treaties except by the mutual consent of the parties interested, which is practically the state of affairs existing before the treaties were made. The agreements, however, create the machinery for the automatic reference of many disputed questions, to what it will be an international legal tribunal. These are rather vaguely defined as differences which are susceptible of decision by the application of principles of law or equity. It is for the parties themselves to settle whether or not any particular difference is under this clause subject to arbitration. We are not disposed to carp at the treaties, which are manifestly well meant and which could not very well be made applicable to all the issues that may arise between the nations. It is difficult to consolidate the functions of a court of law and those of a court of honour. Questions of national honour and territorial integrity are bound to arise and these are the very questions upon which all nations are most sensitive. The United States would not be likely to admit that any issue involving the Monroe Doctrine is a fit subject for arbitration and yet the American interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine might work against both international law and justice in its strict application. The treaties are, however, a long step in the right direction, and if the same international good-will prevails in their operation as prevailed in their inception they may avert much trouble.

## UNITED STATES CROPS.

THE United States Department of Agriculture reports a great and general decline in the crop prospects

for this year. The most seriously affected region is from New York and Pennsylvania to the Rocky Mountains, which has evidently suffered severely from the long protracted drought. In the Southern States, Virginia, and North Carolina excepted, and in the Pacific north-western states conditions are better. Corn promises 69.6 per cent. of the normal, the in-

dicated yield being 22.6 bushels to the acre, compared with 27.1 bushels, the average for the last five years. Winter wheat promises a total yield of 455,149,000 bushels compared with 464,044,000 bushels average for the last five years or 14.5 bushels per acre compared with 15.5. Spring wheat promises only 59.8 of the normal compared with 82.3 per cent. average in the last ten years, or 10.1 bushels per acre compared with 13.5 bushels average in the last five years. All wheat indicates 12.8 bushels to the acre compared with 14.1 last year and 14.7 average for the last five years. Oats promise 65.7 per cent. of a normal compared with 81.9 per cent. last year and 82.2 per cent. average for five years; or 23.2 bushels to the acre compared with 31.9 bushels in 1910 and 28.4 bushels average for five years. Barley indicates 66.2 per cent. of a normal compared with 70.0 in 1910 and 85.1 average for ten years. The preliminary estimate for rye is 30,677,000 bushels compared with 33,639,000 bushels last year and 32,414,000 bushels average for five years.

The crop in which Canada is chiefly interested is wheat; and although every allowance must be made for the exceptional weather conditions this summer, it is evident that in the United States at least, there is great opportunity for the farmers and the Department of Agriculture by taking thought for the morrow to greatly increase the yield of wheat per acre. In the United Kingdom the average yield of wheat per acre from 1895 to 1904 was 30.85 bushels. In 1905 it was 32.88. It reached as high as 34.75 in 1898 and the lowest it touched was 26.33, in 1895, a year of exceptional drought. It would of course be absurd to expect the same average per acre in the enormous wheat area of the United States, including land of greatly varying capacity, as in the limited area under wheat in the United Kingdom, where the inferior lands have been withdrawn from wheat cultivation, and, where the tillage is better and correspondingly more expensive. In Canada for other reasons the average yield per acre is much higher, a normal season in the western provinces producing 21.84 bushels to the acre. It has been 23.70 in Saskatchewan and 26.49 in Alberta. The tendency where land is cheap is to resort to mining or quarrying the new and naturally fertile lands, instead of "farming" them with a view to maintaining their productive capacity.

