

resort to brute force ; but it is better still for the disputants to come to an agreement between themselves. Direct negotiation by those concerned shews a better spirit, and in the long run will be more satisfactory, than any settlement by a third party however impartial.

Now Diplomacy, ill-omened as the word sounds, is really only the means by which two nations talk. The language is shrouded in curious phraseology ; the communications are marked more by literary excellence than by conversational life ; the answers take long to arrive. But still, diplomatic intercourse has always been and always will be the real vehicle for the interchange of opinions between independent States. It has a bad reputation ; it suggests underhand deals and very sharp practices ; but much of its bad name is quite undeserved. No nation believes in it ; a sure sign that no one profits unduly by it. The Frenchman raves of "perfidie Albion" ; the Englishman is sure his own statesmen are outwitted by the foreigners. All feel it is not sure to work for their advantage and therefore all declare it to be unutterably bad.

Part of its unpopularity is no doubt caused by its secrecy. We are all gossips and a reserved man is as much disliked as he is feared. The successes of diplomacy are often scored in the dark ; its failures are written upon the wall. When we are openly successful, we feel it is our undoubted due : when we are palpably checked, our statesmen receive little consideration for their difficulties. Even if all the papers of a dispute are published, the few who read them do not appreciate their meaning. It is hard to believe that a threat can be very terrible when it is launched against "Your Imperial Majesty."

Diplomacy often fails ; but it fails for definite reasons, and there is no reason to believe that where it has broken down, arbitration will succeed. Sometimes the interests involved are too complicated ; sometimes the mind of one State is too firmly made up or the whole basis of international relations is changing. If a country is vitally affected by a dispute, no amount of negotiation will make it give way. If its needs demand an encroachment on its neighbour, that encroachment will be made. If the sympathies of a people urge its leaders on a certain course, nothing will check them. In cases such as these, diplomacy breaks down, even when there is a sincere desire to reach a settlement. But there are other times, when there is no such desire. History tells us again and again of dishonest statesmen and discreditable motives. The politician as well as the actor can play to the gallery and it is an old device to cover domestic mistakes by an enterprising foreign policy.

But if diplomacy in such cases must fail, what chance has arbitration ? It is based entirely on the theory that every dispute has a right solution and all parties are willing to find it. In the case of the political gambler, of the politician who will stake provinces to gain popularity, there clearly can be no good in referring his claims to impartial judges. They will be at once dismissed and at once revived. Sooner or later, somehow or other, the adventurer will plunge his country into war, and no court ever devised will prevent him playing the game, on which his personal power directly depends. With such a man directing one side in a dispute, arbitration will inevitably fail, and with every failure its moral effect will be as surely diminished.

In those cases, too, where popular passions are excited, it is as useless to appeal to judicial methods. Here again one condition of their success is lacking. If Arbitration is to be of value, there must be a real desire to ascertain the merits of a dispute. Popular passion thinks all this superfluous. It has no need to investigate the truth ; it knows it already. All it has to do is to act upon opinion and woe be to those who dare to thwart it. Again and again has the enthusiasm of a people hurried them into an unnecessary war ; and to oppose a national outcry with any such frail barrier as a Court of Arbitration is to lean upon a broken reed. Moreover it often happens that the real point of issue is missed by the people in their excitement. The war of 1759 began with "Jenkin's Ear ;" it continued about the Austrian Succession ; its real importance was the struggle for colonial supremacy. But on what could a Court of Arbitration have pronounced ? On the claims of Maria Theresa ? On the right of search ? On the ownership of India and America ? Possibly it might have settled one of the first two

questions ; certainly it would never have thought of the last. Even if it had, how would it have helped on the cause of peace ? England wanted to fight Spain and France and fight them she did ; not all the neutral powers, nor any number of special commissions, would have induced her to forego that longed for conflict.

But there are graver dangers in the way of Arbitration than even popular passion. It is a judicial method and judicial methods are essentially conservative. A judge is not a legislator ; his business is to decide cases according to laws, not to make laws according to cases. On the other hand the methods of Nature are evolutionary. She never stands still ; she is always benefiting the strong at the expense of the weak. Of morality she reckons nothing, with her might and right are synonymous. One State may claim the Province of another. History, morality, law may declare the claim is bad. But the invaders need the territory they seize ; it is better for the world that they should take it ; moreover they are determined to keep it and have the stronger armies. No doubt the invaded will resist and war must follow. But evolution almost implies suffering and war is the suffering of states. In vain will Arbitration bar the way. No precedent or legal proof, however strong, has ever yet prevailed against natural forces allied with superior arms. Indeed if they should prevail for a time, they might do harm in the long run ; for their are few instances of the victory of the more vigorous people over the weaker which did not tend to advance the cause of civilization. Luckily there is little chance of any semi-judicial tribunal, however eminent, being able to stem the course of a strong and determined nation.

Less common, but still inevitable, are the cases, in which the evolution concerned is not the evolution of states, but the evolution of ideas. The history of wars shows that their causes may be classified more or less according to their dates. Religion, Commerce, Colonial Supremacy and Nationality have, so to speak, come into fashion in turn as the ultimate causes of wars. The dispute that sets a light to the conflict may be trifling or weighty ; it may be akin to the underlying principle or totally unconnected with it ; it may shew what the real trouble is or may mislead the enquirer. But whatever the immediate quarrel is, there is certain to be a great trend of popular sentiment, which for the time determines the course of the world's history. How will a Court of Arbitration deal with such a state of affairs ? Even when they are willing to go behind the immediate dispute, what safeguard is there that they will recognize how deep the causes lie ? They must always be judges and sometimes law-makers ; are they now to be historians as well ? Are they to pick out from the details of every-day life just those facts, often very minute, which show how the tide is setting ? And if they do so, how are they to enforce their views on an unbelieving and deeply interested world ? They would only afford one more instance of man living before their time.

In such cases as these Arbitration must fail or at least be unsatisfactory. Possibly a wrong decision will be allowed to stand ; but still the principle will be weakened and the disinclination to resort to semi-judicial methods increased. It is far better to recognize frankly the impossibility of Arbitration in every case than to endanger its usefulness by too sanguine expectations. A permanent court is sure to fail in many instances and special courts for special cases will in the end lead to more valuable results ; for they are more flexible and less likely to be employed where success is hopeless.

For their opportunity is ever-increasing. Wherever the vital interests or honour of a State are not concerned, there is their fitting field. As States become larger and their resources increase, the tendency towards peace grows. Fewer quarrels are all-important ; the stakes involved are greater and the military organizations more terrible. A dispute which would have set Canada and the New England Colonies by the ears now barely claims a newspaper paragraph. There is every hope that as time goes on more and more questions will become amenable to Arbitration. But let every care be taken while the principle is yet new. Let no exaggerated hopes plunge us into disappointment. Let it be fully realized that the scope of Arbitration is limited ; that beyond its sphere it will do more harm than good ; and it may be trusted that with use will come confidence and with experience wise adaptability, so that every benefit that is obtainable may be gained from this great and Christian principle.