

obnoxious Asiatic labourers, and for that purpose is willing, if necessary, to add to the list of murders already sufficiently appalling. If Chinese labour threatened to come into general competition with native labour, white or black, and it became a question whether native labourers should be forced to accept the scale of living which suffices for the lower needs of the Chinaman, but is not acceptable to other races, a case for the consideration or interference of the legislative authority would have arisen. But the civilization of the United States has not been confronted with this question; the competition of Chinese labour, far from being universal, is felt only at a few points; much of it is employed in non-competitive occupations, where, making additions to the general wealth, it benefits all and can injure none. The majesty of the law violated in this outrage should receive a fitting vindication.

In the dispute over the Caroline Islands the blood of the Spaniard has been heated to the boiling point, and a Madrid mob has added to the complications by a wanton insult to the German ambassador. King Alfonso has been placed between two fires: when he apologizes for the outrage, he incurs the ill-will of nearly the whole Spanish nation. The atmosphere of passion in which commercial Spain breathes is unfavourable to the settlement of the question of ownership. Collision between the authorities of the two countries on the disputed islands is not impossible, but in any other sense war, as a result of the dispute, is out of the question. This is not the first time that mere discovery, not followed by continuous occupation, has led to disputes. When the colonizing spirit was at its height all European nations deemed themselves at liberty to take possession of any country occupied by savages, and "not in possession of any Christian prince." Mere discovery did not of itself confer a political title on the nation by which or by whose subjects it was made: to complete the title occupation must follow. Temporary occupation followed by abandonment would leave the country open to any new adventurer. In the Spanish title to the Caroline Islands it may not be impossible to find flaws. Flying into a passion will not improve the title, if faulty, and insult to the German ambassador to Madrid would have been an outrage even if a *casus belli* existed. If the rage of the Spanish mob put on a national character it must remain impotent in presence of such a foe as Germany would prove to be. The interest of other nations is that no injustice should be done as the result of this dispute; and the question where the right lies is not yet very clear. If appearances are against Germany, the explanation that the seizure of Yap was unauthorized, if followed by suitable action, must clear the way for the removal of the difficulty. If the Spanish title to the islands can be maintained, the action of Germany is indefensible; but Spain in showing more feeling than a just indignation would in any case warrant is doing her best to put herself in the wrong. But distinction must be made between the excited populace and the Government; if the former is all violence, the latter seems disposed to do its duty. If both nations want a naval station in that part of the world, the best solution would be to divide the islands between them, Spain, having some sort of an ancient title, taking the first choice.

THE coming electoral struggle in France is full of interest in itself, and political sympathy between nations has of late been so much quickened by increased inter-communication that the result in France is likely to be not without influence in the contest which will soon follow in England. Nothing, however, seems certain except that no party will return from the polls with a majority sufficient to form the basis of a stable government. French society has been compared to gunpowder, which would explode if it were not mixed with sand; the gunpowder being the population of the cities, the sand that of the rural districts. The French peasant, though not dull of wit, nor even wanting in polish of outward manner, is inconceivably ignorant, and between him and the Parisian there is a political antipathy which in the days of the Commune assumed the extravagant form of an attempt on the part of Paris to shake off altogether the sway of the "Rurals" and set up as a Republic by herself. A communist the peasant freeholder is as far as possible from being: as a proprietor he abhors the idea of repartition; on the other hand he is a democrat from antagonism to the classes above him and the bitter enemy of aristocracy. Anything which appeals directly to his material interests is pretty sure to decide his vote; over a large district his political action was once determined simply by resentment against the Papal Mint for debasing a coin which had obtained currency in France. Of the dynastic pretenders neither appears to have any strength in himself. The great rampart and rallying-point of Conservatism is in the Church, against which the storming columns of Radicalism have lately been directed with frenzied energy, the Radical leaders having by this time thoroughly imbibed the lesson so well taught them by Quinet that the First Revolution failed because it left untouched

the religious ideas of the people. Of the great institutions of Old France the Church alone remains, and to it has accrued whatever survives of the influence once shared by the Monarchy and the aristocracy; for the quasi-aristocracy of large proprietors and the titular nobility, whatever may be their social position, are, as objects of popular jealousy, politically weak, and at the polls a Radical notary beats a Duke. Between the Church and the Radicals the great tug of war will be. With female suffrage, the Church would win, and France might be launched into a crusade for restoring the temporal power of the Pope. But the male peasant, saving in Brittany, is indifferent to religion. It is said that the propagandism which the Radicals have been systematically carrying on in the rural districts by the diffusion of anti-clerical literature has not been without its effect, and that positive scepticism, as well as indifference, has begun to appear. The peasant freeholder feels, at all events, that his title to his land is derived from the Revolution, of which the priest is the natural enemy. On the other hand the Church has her advantages. Not only is she alone stable, or apparently stable, in a land where all is fleeting; she alone is majestic and impressive in a land where a crude democracy has reduced everything else to commonplace. The ceremonial of what Macaulay called "an august and fascinating superstition" is the only poetry of peasant life. The French peasant, however irreligious, still resorts to his parish church, as does the Nonconformist peasant in England, for baptism, marriage and burial. He sees in the priest, as well as in the *gendarme*, an indispensable personage of the *commune*, and often finds in him a temporal adviser as well as a social companion. Even if a peasant is sceptical he hardly wants to tear down crucifixes or to teach atheism in the village school. Nor have adversity and exposure to hostile criticism failed to produce their salutary effect on the French priesthood, many members of which are exemplary and even saintly in the discharge of their parish duties. The anti-clerical movement in Belgium the other day overshot its mark, brought on a great re-action and was totally defeated by the clerical party at the polls. It would not be altogether surprising if in France something of the kind were to occur, though there being no large district in France so clerical as Flanders, the force of the re-action is not likely to be so great.

THE columns of a contemporary were recently the scene of a debate about the position of Englishmen in Canada, which, commencing on the economical ground, extended to the general question, ending with a rather lively fusillade. The subject is curious as well as ticklish. A Briton who brings here nothing but his muscle and aspires only to the wages of a day-labourer, provided that there is room for him in the labour market, will certainly find himself just as welcome and as much at home in Canada as he would in Victoria or New Zealand. But it is otherwise with regard to the higher callings. In these there is a marked and growing jealousy of British intrusion: occasionally there are ebullitions of stronger feeling. A bank which employs British clerks is regarded with an evil eye. Years passed before resentment ceased to be expressed at the appointment of two English scholars to offices in the University of Toronto. The admission of an Englishman to the Civil Service arouses the same feeling. The other day a paper in the Maritime Provinces threw out a suggestion that a man of British birth should be made a Senator. Another journal at once replied that places of honour and emolument, such as a Senatorship, ought to be reserved for native Canadians. What emphasizes the fact, and at the same time seems to point to a cause different from mere nativism, is that the same objection is not felt to the appointment or election of Americans naturalized in Canada: nobody makes any angry remark when Mr. Plumb is nominated to the Senate, or Mr. Dodge is elected to the Commons. But an Englishman of the wealthier and more educated class can hardly settle in Canada without being made to feel, so long at least as his nationality is remembered, that he is half a foreigner, and that in competition for emolument or honour he is regarded as something like an interloper. Yet, in the United States, a country reputed as unfriendly to England as Canada is friendly, the individual Englishman, let him take what walk of life he will, encounters no prejudice whatever. All callings and offices are just as open to him as to the native American, nor is any jealousy expressed at his advancement. Headships and Professorships of American Universities are freely conferred on English scholars. Nobody in the States, we believe, would think of taking umbrage because the clerks in a bank or in any other commercial institution might happen to be principally of British birth. The English immigrant, we apprehend, seldom goes into American politics, but we do not believe that he would find his birth a disadvantage, except where the Irish vote was strong. The explanation, we conceive, is that the history of Canada has hitherto been that of a dependency, placed like all dependencies in a position of inferiority to the Imperial country. Her chief offices and the high places in her