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THE ARBITRATION TREATY.

A year ago it seemed that there was a likelihood that war would break out between the United States and Great Britain. The occasion which brought about this state of affairs was not any disagreement on matters which directly affect the interests of the United States, but only on such as relate to them very remotely.

The balance of power is a principle which governs the relations of the European great powers, and it is considered to be a sufficient reason why each of these should have its say in regard to every question which has any bearing upon European international politics, whether the trouble be in Europe, Asia or Africa. No one power will permit the preponderance of another in the settlement of any such question, and so there are diplomatic difficulties and numerous interviews between the representatives of the powers concerned, whenever there is a question relating to any of the three continents we have indicated, affecting the relations of European powers to each other.

The matter may be a war between China and Japan, the securing of a maritime outlet on some new coast, as in the case of Russia's recent acquisitions on the eastern coast of China, the extension of English or French dominion in Birmah, Siam, Cochinchina, India, or Egypt, or of German or Italian influence in the Transvaal Republic or Abyssinia; but in all such cases every European power imagines, whether rightly or wrongly, we need not discuss here, that its interests must be consulted before any final arrangement be made.

The idea has grown in the United States also, that the balance of power is to be preserved in the Western hemisphere; though there is this difference between the cases, that the United States has acquired its preponderance at a recent date, whereas the European powers go back to past ages, and several of them had acquired possessions in America long before the United States had existence as a distinct sovereignty.

In America, North and South, questions also arise from time to time in which European powers have an interest, but the United States, being the predominant power in the hemisphere, has assumed that its welfare requires that no European power shall assume any sovereignty not already existing therein, or extend existing sovereignty beyond its present limits.

The doctrine known as the Monroe doctrine was laid down by President Monroe, whose tenure of office was from 1817 to 1821, and, though never formally recognized by the European powers, it has been adhered to with much pertinacity by successive Presidents of the United States, and when the boundary dispute arose between Great Britain and Venezuela President Cleveland so strongly reasserted it in order to limit the contentions of England in 1896, that it seemed on the point of becoming a cause of war between the two powers. The dispute, however, has been apparently satisfactorily ended, and a treaty has now been signed between Great Britain and the United States, whereby the whole Venezuelan question will be settled by arbitration.

Two arbitrators are to be selected by each of these powers to consider judicially the British demands. On the United States side it is expected that one of its arbitrators will be a nominee of the Venezuelan Government, and the other a United States judge. It is to be supposed that these arbitrators will incline toward favoring the American view of the case, whereas the two judges selected by the British Government may be supposed to be favorable to the British contention in the dispute.

This is naturally to be expected, even though all the judges selected by both powers were inclined to judge justly; for, however fair they may

wish to be, they would naturally incline toward the views of their own Governments, on doubtful issues at least. It became, therefore, a matter of great importance, who should be selected as the fifth arbitrator. Who was to settle questions where there would be a tie between the votes of the four arbitrators chosen by the Governments directly concerned in the dispute?

This matter has been settled by the appointment of King Oscar of Sweden to the position of fifth arbitrator, and the King has accepted the office. A fairer board of arbitration than this could scarcely be conceived, as it is not to be supposed that King Oscar would have predilections for either of the parties directly concerned in the dispute; but the chief matter for which we have reason for congratulation is that the peaceful settlement of this question, which a few months ago threatened to create what would undoubtedly have been a most disastrous war between the two great English speaking nations, is the first fruit of an agreement between the two powers, to leave future disputes also to the arbitrament of a similar judicial board. This provision is made for the future preservation of peace between the countries, perhaps for all time to come.

It is provided in the treaty that questions which concern the honor of either of the two countries shall not be thus subjected to arbitration. This proviso leaves room for either party to withdraw from the board of arbitration any question which it may deem proper, yet it is undoubtedly a great step toward the preservation of peace that the agreement has been made even with this provision.

A war between Great Britain and the United States would be disastrous to the interests of both countries, and we must congratulate the statesmen of both on the satisfactory conclusion which has been reached, and which forebodes a peaceful settlement of nearly all, if not all, future disputes.

No small honor is due to the Catholic Lord Chief Justice of England, Sir Charles Russell, for his foresight and wisdom in indicating the general principles on which a tribunal of arbitration might be agreed upon between the two nations. The treaty which has just been signed follows in almost every respect the lines on which Lord Russell declared in his address to the United States Bar, that such a treaty could be made with due regard to the honor of both countries.

THE REV. DR. LANGTRY'S LETTERS.

The Rev. Mr. Langtry is still engaged in writing letters which appear in the *Toronto Mail and Empire*, and the purpose of which is to show that Catholics "worship" images with the same adoration which is given to Almighty God, and he still maintains that this is the doctrine taught by St. Thomas of Aquinas.

We have already shown by quotations from the authoritative decrees of the Council of Trent that the respect shown by Catholics for the images of Christ and His Saints is a merely relative honor, not offered to the image itself as a material object, but to the original, and as Christ is the object of that honor when it is an image of Christ which is before us, of course the honor paid to Christ is the supreme adoration of latria—but the adoration is referred and offered to Christ, the material image being used merely as a medium to represent Christ vividly to our minds.

We have seen also that, according to Bossuet, there are theologians who do not coincide with the expressions used by St. Thomas, who is, after all, not the Church itself. Nevertheless, his explanation is not to be hastily rejected, as he stands in the front rank among the exponents of Catholic belief and practice.

But the Rev. Mr. Langtry is not in a position to insist so strongly that every theologian's views are to be taken as the sure exponent of the doctrine of the Church. It is only a few days since the Anglican Archdeacon Wilson declared that the existence of a Personal God is not a revealed truth. The non-existence of a Personal God means that there is really no God at all, and yet the Council of the English Church Union has just refused to take any step towards obtaining a condemnation of these views, on the ground that it is not sure that the Archdeacon is an infidel.

A clergyman who belongs to a Church in which positive Atheism is thus tolerated is not in a position to accuse Catholics of tolerating danger-

ous opinions; and there is, besides, this difference between the two cases, that whereas there is good reason for the view taken by St. Thomas, the views of Archdeacon Wilson cannot be explained in any other sense than that God is merely an imaginary being, and there are hundreds of Anglican ministers who hold views as subversive of all Christianity as are those of Archdeacon Wilson.

NEW HOPE FOR IRELAND.

The Tory press of England and Ireland have been very persistent in telling us that the cause of Irish Home Rule is dead, the last and decisive blow having been given it by the elections of 1895 which brought back to power Lord Salisbury and that implacable enemy to Ireland, Mr. Arthur Balfour.

The wish was father to the thought; but it is not so easy to destroy national aspirations at one blow, and notwithstanding the adverse present indications of the will of the people of England, and the deplorable dissensions existing among the Irish factions, the Irish Nationalists are as resolute as ever in demanding that justice shall be rendered to Ireland, a justice which cannot be had until self government be obtained.

The revelations made by the Financial Commission which has been investigating the monetary relations between England and Ireland have done more towards bringing the Home Rule movement to renewed life and vigor than years of argument have succeeded in doing, and we have seen that in a single moment the apparently hopeless cause has assumed a vigor which is both a surprise and a terror to the Government.

To the dissensions in the ranks of the Irish Nationalists, whereby they have been split into three contending factions, the apparently hopeless condition of the Irish cause was chiefly to be attributed, but now that it has been clearly shown that owing to the government of the country by an alien majority at Westminster, Ireland has been overtaxed to the enormous extent of £2,500,000 per annum, the first time in the history of the century there is a prospect that there will be now a really united Irish party; and this time that party will be composed, not of the Catholic tenantry alone, as has been almost the case down to the present time, but of all creeds and classes.

It has frequently been pointed out that Protestants are just as deeply interested as Catholics in the question of Irish autonomy; but the evidences of this fact were not able to convince them that they should be Home-Rulers, and comparatively few of them were ranged on the Nationalist side, though there were some honorable exceptions. The Orange element, especially, among Protestants pretended fear that the Catholic majority would tyrannize over the minority, and the landlord class, Catholic and Protestant alike, convinced that the Home Rule cause is inseparably connected with that of Tenant Right, and that under it the tenants would acquire many new privileges at the expense of the landlords, were also decidedly anti Home-Rulers.

But the enormous over-taxation to which Ireland has been subjected has suddenly opened the eyes of the anti-Home Rule party, and now we have the spectacle of landlords and tenants, Protestants and Catholics, the Orange and the Green, for the first time seriously uniting to fight under one banner, and the Protestant landlords who have taken up the cause of justice for Ireland, are more threatening in their attitude than have been the Nationalists at any time, unless we take the extreme physical force party, which has never had control of the Nationalist policy. With one voice the country now demands "justice for Ireland;" and at a meeting on Thursday last the Earl of Mayo was very outspoken in opposition to the Government. He threw back into Mr. Arthur Balfour's teeth the statement that Irishmen cannot pull together on any one question, and declared that on the present question they will be a unit. He said they are now ready to suggest economical reforms, and he reminded Mr. Balfour that over taxation had been the cause of many revolutions, and that it was just such a question which sealed the doom of Charles I.

This is just like what was said by Lord Castledown at the meeting which sounded the key-note to the present movement. The union of all Irishmen, which now seems imminent, will not suffice to overthrow the Government immediately, but it means the transferring of sixteen votes at once to the

Opposition, and the reducing of the Government majority by 32, which is a matter for serious consideration, as no doubt the justice of Ireland's claim will also have great weight with other present supporters of the Government in England and Scotland, and unless the Government yield in this instance the whole representation of Ireland in the House of Commons will be inevitably permanently united into one Home-Rule party.

This matter is not merely hypothetical. Col. Sanderson, who has been hitherto one of the staunchest supporters of Lord Salisbury, and who is regarded as the leader of the Irish Unionists, is their leader still in the new movement, and so far has it gone that the Unionists have had a meeting with the three Nationalist parties, led by Messrs. Dillon, Healy, and Redmond, and the Hon. Edward Blake has been selected to move an amendment to the address to the effect that justice be accorded to Ireland by the immediate reduction of her taxation. This course has been decided on, because the Government proposes to delay the matter until a new commission to be appointed shall make a report.

Mr. Blake has been chosen for the purpose, because he represents the cool-headed, argumentative and logical type, instead of the hot headed and fiery enthusiast. Thus Mr. Blake will represent the new united Irish party, and it is possible that this may forecast his appointment as leader of a new Nationalist party, which will represent the whole country, whether Protestant or Catholic. We have no wish to see Mr. John Dillon superseded in the leadership, but we are sure that Mr. Dillon himself would be glad to retire from his present post, if by his retirement a united Irish party could be established.

SUPERSTITIONS.

The superstitions of "Romanism" are a constant theme with our Protestant religious contemporaries, and there is scarcely an issue of the *Toronto Presbyterian* organs, especially, which does not deal sanctimoniously with the subject, it being assumed that the Catholic Church encourages superstitious practices. Hence it is held to be a very laudable enterprise to rescue the French-Canadians, the Mexicans, the Spaniards, and the populations of other Catholic countries from the horrors of "Romish superstition."

This is the only plausible excuse for the missions which Presbyterians and a couple of other Protestant denominations keep up in the Province of Quebec and elsewhere, where the population is chiefly Catholic. These missions are universal failures; but the missionaries engaged in the work are able, by misrepresentation of the facts, to induce their dupes to subscribe liberally towards their maintenance, and so the work goes on, though they have been unable to point to any real results therefrom.

The Catholic Church does not, and never did, encourage superstition in any form. Every Catholic child is instructed, in the little catechism which he learns at school, that all superstitious practices are strictly forbidden by the first commandment; but we do not include under the name of superstition prayers offered to God for mercy, or to the saints in heaven asking for their intercession with God for us, nor is it superstitious to show due reverence to the images of Christ crucified, or the images and relics of the saints, because these objects are used merely to remind us of Christ and the saints whom the images represent, or to whom the relics call our attention.

Protestant polemicists rave wildly against these Catholic practices, but they themselves employ images, statues, pictures, and relics of persons who may not be saints at all, as of monarchs or statesmen, and even of noted characters in the history of sectarianism, with precisely the same purpose in view with which these objects are used by Catholics.

Why is the image of Queen Victoria stamped on the current coin of the realm, unless it be that the Queen is to be honored through her image? Why are statues erected to the memory of distinguished statesmen, unless with the similar purpose of honoring the dead, or of inciting us to imitate their example, which is not always worthy of imitation in every respect? But with all the zeal of Protestant missionaries to repress superstition among Catholics, which does not exist, they close their eyes entirely to superstitions of a most gross character which are rampant among their own coreligionists.

Of all the superstitious frauds which have appeared on earth, under the name of religion, there has probably been none so transparently ridiculous and absurd as that which goes to-day under the name of Spiritualism, with the aliases of clairvoyance, animal magnetism, biology, etc.

Mahometanism has, to say the least, a code of morals to recommend it. It does not profess to regard infidels, that is, unbelievers in the divine mission of the mule driver of Mecca, as possessing any rights to life or property, and so we have witnessed during the past years the efforts of Sultan Abdul Hamid to rid himself of the inconvenient presence of Christians in his Empire, by wholesale massacre.

But the spiritualistic superstitions have taken great hold upon the minds of hundreds and thousands of people in spite of the boasted enlightenment of the age, and it is the more to be deplored as it puts on the mask of a species of religion as a means of propagandism. Yet its promoters are in almost, if not in absolutely every instance, simply prestidigitators who find among the people plenty of dupes to pay them well for their fraud. We are happy to be able to say, however, that it is very rarely that Catholics are caught in the meshes of this superstition, or any who have had a Catholic education. Would it not be advisable if some of the missionaries who are devoting themselves to the work of demolishing imaginary superstitions among Catholics, would put some of their energy toward destroying this superstition among those of their own faith?

A curious development of the Spiritualistic superstition has come to light within the last few days in Detroit. Under pretence of a gathering for religious purposes, a meeting is held in a certain house near the centre of the city, every Sunday, where ghosts appear and kiss or embrace the audience, with such endearing expressions addressed to the individuals as "Uncle Robert," or "Brother Alfred, do you not know me? I am your niece (or sister) Eva (or Ida etc.)" It often happens that the person addressed has neither niece nor sister of the name given, but the seances are nevertheless attended regularly by large audiences, who willingly pay a dollar a head for the religion they get out of them. It is needless to say that these people would be very backward about paying so much toward the worship of the true God, devoutly as they worship these material ghosts.

We recommend the missionaries now engaged in French-evangelization to devote some of their attention to evangelization among the wealthy Protestant citizens of the City of the Straits, and of some of our Canadian cities too, who are devoted to a superstition far worse than any to be found among French-Canadians.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is a strange fact that the mania for suicide is becoming more common; not indeed in Canada, where religion of some sort has its hold on the minds of the people, but in the United States, which have for over a complete generation been almost without any religious education. In the city of Detroit alone, with a population but little larger than Toronto, there were during the year 1896 forty six suicides, of which six were Americans, six Canadians, two English, two Irish, two Poles and one Bohemian. It is sad to think that in the closing years of this boasted century of enlightenment there should be such a record, but we have no doubt that to the absence of religious education in the schools this condition of affairs is chiefly attributable. Those Canadians who wish to abolish religious education in the Dominion are laboring for a similar state of affairs here.

A LETTER from Dr. Tristram, Bishop of Stepney, appears in a recent issue of the *London Times*, which shows the anomalous position of the Anglican clergy in regard to the questions of marriage and divorce. He declares that a large portion of the clergy, especially of the High Church section, desire that the marriage tie should be indissoluble, but he admits that owing to the Church being a State Church their views cannot be carried out in practice. A clergyman cannot refuse to marry a divorced person, nor can a Bishop refuse to issue a license for such a marriage, as by so doing the clergyman or Bishop would be subject to the penalties prescribed by law for refusal to fulfil his duties. The Bishop thinks that there ought to be a

provision whereby only a civil marriage should take place under such circumstances, but as the Church is entirely subject to the laws of the State it cannot refuse the religious marriage in the Church to those who desire it, if by the civil law they are free to marry.

The Anglican Bishop of Manchester is disgusted with the farcical demand made before the consecration or installation of a Bishop of the Establishment, that any person having any objections to offer should now come forward and present them, whereas when at Archbishop Temple's installation, the objector, Rev. Mr. Brownjean, was told that his objections could not be listened to. The Bishop of Manchester says the demand should be abolished from the rite, as it is well known it is meaningless.

The attendance at Catholic schools in the United States at the beginning of the year 1895 was reported to be 933,944. In the beginning of 1896 the number had increased to 1,059,366, showing the astonishing increase of 115,422 pupils. Facts like these are a sufficient answer to those who have said during the Manitoba school discussion that Catholics in other countries are quite satisfied to send their children to godless or Protestant Public schools. Catholics everywhere wish for the religious education of their children.

There is now a better prospect than ever that the condition of the Poles in Russian territory will soon be ameliorated. The reigning Czar has been supposed to be more humanely inclined than have his predecessors for many generations, but for some reason or other his attention has not been seriously called to the sufferings to which the Catholic people of Poland have been subjected on account of their religion. But the efforts of Pope Leo XIII. have been directed for several years towards drawing the Czar's attention to the matter, and it is stated that they have at last been successful, and that orders from St. Petersburg have been issued to officials to desist from the oppressive measures which have hitherto been employed in governing Poland.

It is something we could never comprehend, that Catholic France persists in electing unbelievers and enemies to religion to the Senate and Chamber of Deputies of that country. Religion has certainly not lost its hold upon the people of the rural districts, though the cities are very largely given over to the control of sceptics. But there exists an incomprehensible apathy among the people to elect sound Catholics to the chambers, and the result is the same year after year. At the elections just held for one hundred seats in the Senate it is said that only twelve who may be relied on as sound Catholics have been chosen. There are thirteen Radicals and thirty-one Socialists elected, and sixty-nine who are known as Moderate Republicans. We presume, however, that some of these are likewise sound on religious questions.

The Catholic Truth Society in Ontario is making splendid headway. In Toronto there are now four branches, connected with St. Mary's, St. Michael's, St. Basil's and St. Helen's parishes respectively, besides branches in Trenton, Ottawa, St. Thomas and Winnipeg. A public meeting is to be held at an early date in St. Mary's church, at which reports will be presented from the different branches in Ontario. In connection with this meeting a lecture will also be given by His Grace the Archbishop of Toronto (who is the patron of the society). He is taking an active interest in the work. The future of the society seems to be assured, and the encouragement which it is receiving from those in authority is very gratifying. We hope to see by this time next year branches established more generally and the laity more actively interested in the great work of disseminating broadcast amongst our separated brethren the knowledge of the teachings of the Church of Christ.

Lenten Preacher at Notre Dame.

The Cardinal Archbishop of Paris has appointed Pere Ollivier, the famous Dominican preacher, to the post of Lenten preacher at Notre Dame, vacant by the death of Mgr. d'Hulst, thereby continuing the tradition which connects the great order of "Preaching Friars" with the cathedral pulpit. Pere Ollivier, who is already well-known in Paris, has the reputation of a quarter of a century as a preacher of unusual power and originality, and a perfect master of the elocutionary art, who never fails to rivet the attention of Parisian audiences.