

AN INTERNATIONAL COURT.

Turgot, whom Carlyle depicts as "virtuous, philosophic, with a whole reformed France in his head," uttered a great sociological truth when he said: "La masse du genre humain, par des alternatives d' agitation et de calme, avance quoiqu' à pas lents vers une perfection toujours plus grande." Although the desire for a tribunal for the peaceful settlement of disputes among the family of nations found expression in the earliest literature of International Law, it was not until the last year but one of the nineteenth century that such a tribunal was realized and established as a result of the International Peace Conference at the Hague, convened on the initiative, oddly enough, of the Emperor of Russia. On the 16th of October last, the first judgment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration was delivered, and that judgment will stand in the annals of all time as a token of the greatest ethical achievement of the civilization of our age. The reports of this court ought to refresh the wells of aspiration in us all, and bid us take courage that the true Golden Age lies ahead of this generation and not behind it, in the dreams of ancient poets.

That which had the honour of first setting the wheels of justice in motion in this court was "The Case of the Pious Fund of the Californias." It arose, to state it briefly, in this way: So long ago as the year 1697 the collection of a Roman Catholic fund was started for the evangelization of the Indians of California. A large amount of money was eventually obtained, some \$800,000 in all, and was safely invested. Until Mexico got her independence from Spain in 1821 the fund was administered by the Spanish Government. From that time on till the acquisition of California by the United States, the Mexican Government duly administered the fund in conformity with the object for which it was raised. Thereafter, however, that government declined to pay over the income to the Bishops of Monterey and San Francisco. At the instance of these ecclesiastics, the United States Government made a demand upon the Mexican Government for the annual income of the fund during the period it had been withheld. In May last the governments of the two republics entered into a formal agreement to submit the controversy to the final determination of a tribunal of arbitration under the provisions of the Hague Convention. Five judges of the Permanent Court were chosen to hear the case, and within the period of five months, a