

LIMITS OF ARBITRATION.

Now, we do not mean to claim that arbitration can remove, or even be used to remove, all the causes of war. Public opinion and the law justify a blow given in self-defence ; but the danger must not be passed, but must be imminent and present, threatening injury to one's person or property. So a nation must sometimes engage in war to protect itself from some attack threatened or already begun. No Government would ask an arbiter to decide whether or not it had a right to drive away an invading army. Such questions need immediate action, and force must be repelled by force. Civil wars cannot be prevented by arbitration, for neither party considers the other as an independent nation. The United States could not have referred to the decision of an arbiter the question of the right of secession. That question was a domestic one, and did not concern other nations ; it was also a question involving our very life, and the question of right must be answered by showing that the fact was impossible. The States in rebellion had already refused to be bound by the award of congress, to whom they had agreed to submit all differences ; and the army of the Union only fought to execute the award.

The United States could not consent that the King of the Netherlands should decide whether or no the Emperor of France has a right to establish Maximilian in Mexico ; because our Government have believed, and still believe, that its safety depends on the enforcement of the so-called Monroe doctrine. This doctrine expresses, not what the rest of the world may think in accordance with the principles of international law, but what the United States considers to be necessary to its security and prosperity. What threatens Mexico threatens our own government ; and so war, if it comes, must come in self-defence. In all these cases self-defence is the only justification for war ; and the parties to a war that is begun before an attempt has been made to settle the affair by arbitration should show why such a course was necessary.

There are but few questions which arise between nations which cannot be settled by some form of arbitration. In feudal times many questions which are now settled before the courts were settled by personal conflicts. Duelling is not now recognised even as an honourable method of settling disputes between individuals ; but nations still cling to the feudal idea, and