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Now that Mr. Blaine is becoming so aggressive—though we desire a quarrel as little as he does—it may be some slight comfort to recall the military judgment pronounced by General Brackenbury on an invasion of Canada from the South. The premises on which that distinguished soldier bases his conclusions may not be exactly those on which we would build an argument for safety, but they doubtless enter into the problem. He recalls Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, as an illustration of the possible fate awaiting the aggressors, and evokes that terrible picture of a grand army in the last straits of starvation from hunger and cold. The comparison is, to be sure, somewhat far-fetched, especially in these days of railroads and rapid evolutions and universal knowledge of geography. We really hardly think that the Lees, McClellans and Grants of the present day would be caught by such a surprise as that which overtook the meteoric conqueror of the Revolutionary aftermath. Our neighbours, with whom we have no more ambition to cross swords than they with us, are not so strange to Canada or its climate as to attempt a winter campaign without making some provision against General Frost's guerillas. The fact is that, our frontiers being conterminous across the whole continent and the isothermals not always following the line of the political boundary, the Canadian strategist would run almost as great risks at times and in places, if he carried the war into the States, as his antagonist would incur in inhabited Canada. There is a difference, we allow, and we can imagine circumstances when and where, on a small scale, the retreat from Moscow might be reenacted by our uninvited visitors. But such a drama is not among the probabilities.

Just at this moment we are by no means happily circumstanced for the contemplation of such a struggle—that "officer not below the rank of a colonel" who should lead our citizen soldiers to defence or attack being actually inaccessible. The Jingo feeling is not a sentiment to be encouraged at any time, and we would be sorry to give it countenance. But, believing that, in the Behring Sea controversy, we have the triple armour of a just quarrel, and that Mr. Blaine, by his tone and language, has done much to cause a breach between his country and Great Britain, we cannot help thinking this is just one of those crises when, if ever, the survey of our means of defence should inspire Canadians with courage. Let us suppose, for instance, that the aspirations of Young Canada had been fulfilled and we were to-day face to face with hostile neighbours, are we in a position to defend our frontier from Halifax to Victoria against all comers? This question, never irrelevant, has a peculiar opportuneness at the present time.

Yet, while Mr. Blaine is, by what we must regard as persistence in groundless claims, using his position to stir up strife between two great and kindred nations, some American gentlemen, who not unfrequently have their centre of operations at Philadelphia (the City of Brotherly Love), are

doing all in their power to realize the Sermon on the Mount and hasten the hour when nations shall learn war no more. The society in question is still in its infancy, having been established in May, 1886. Peace societies there were, it is true, before its birth. The American Peace Society, which has its chief seat in Boston, has long been a well known institution. At every great crisis on this continent, indeed, there has been a peace party, which commended the settlement of the points at issue by friendly conference. At the period of the Revolution there was, we know, an important proportion of the inhabitants opposed to taking up arms against the king. Again in 1812 an organization was formed to resist the war policy of the Government, but that organization was very much more political than philanthropic. The Mexican war was in like manner opposed and the greatest civil war of modern times (that of 1861-65) would never have come to pass had the advice of Elihu Burritt (who lectured in Montreal on "The peaceful extinction of slavery") been taken some years before. But this Philadelphia society differs from all these and other organizations in being essentially and avowedly a Christian body. It is, moreover, a body of considerable influence, and its list of membership comprises some of the most illustrious names in the United States. The more comprehensive peace societies admit members of every creed or no creed, and most of them base their preference for peace, as contrasted with war, on economic grounds. The Christian Arbitration and Peace Society, without being adverse to the sister bodies (the usefulness of whose work and aims it acknowledges) looks upon its own *raison d'être* as higher than that of mere utility or even ordinary morality. It has its sanctions—as its adherents claim—in the Word of God and in Christ's own teaching. It has laboured strenuously and not unsuccessfully in the interest of the Indians and helped on the arbitration movement, which was the most important outcome of the Pan-American Conference. It sent representatives to the great European Peace Congress, whose sessions were held in London from the 14th to the 19th of July. It is not without significance that this great pacific congress should have been sitting at the very time that Lord Salisbury and Mr. Blaine were corresponding on the Behring Sea question.

If the telegrams that have recently been received from Central America are even partially trustworthy, the treaty of arbitration which was adopted by them and by the South American States a few months ago has not proved very effectual. The treaty in question contained provisions for the settlement by arbitration of every dispute that might arise between any two or more of the signatories. Yet now we hear of Guatemala and Salvador going to war as though such a treaty had no existence whatever. There is, besides, another convention binding the Central States alone to submit all controversies of an international character to a similar tribunal. This arrangement was entered into after the failure of the federal scheme, on the success of which the late President Barrios had staked his life, reputation and fortunes. He was a man of large views and of rare executive power, and under his rule and influence Guatemala had attained a position of prosperity which excited the jealousy of Mexico and the fears of its smaller neighbours. He had won over three of the Republics to his plans, and had them all matured when the defection of Salvador (always noted for sudden changes of policy and revolutionary surprises) compelled him to take the field. The result was that the federation, which had been proclaimed in his own capital, came to a violent end, as did Barrios himself, and the idea of union was abandoned even by Guatemala. The present president of that Republic, General Barillas, is a man of considerable ability, and, though he has ventured on no *coup d'état*, after the manner of his abler predecessor, he is naturally in favour of a policy which would make Central America a power in the world (though a small one), and would greatly enhance the importance of Guatemala. Again

Salvador stands in the way, and all sorts of intrigue seem to be at work. The population of the whole five States—Guatemala, Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica—is between two and a half and three millions. Costa Rica, the smallest, does not number 200,000 inhabitants. Salvador, which alone is powerful enough to measure its strength with Guatemala, has not much more than 650,000, which is little more than half the population of its rival (1,224,602, by the last census). It is the fear of the ascendancy that Guatemala would exercise, that has proved the great obstacle to union.

The publication of Mr. Stanley's work, "In Darkest Africa," has not diminished the fame of the great relief expedition. On the contrary, the authentic and consecutive account, with its number of striking details, hitherto unknown to the world, brings out more saliently than the necessarily condensed newspaper reports the terrible nature of the obstacles that the explorer encountered and overcame. The route selected was full of unforeseen dangers, the thick deep forest beyond Yambuya having been previously undreamed of. The sight of such a barrier would have deterred a leader who was not gifted with rare resourcefulness, self-reliance, and the faculty of influencing others. The circumstances that impelled him to choose the Congo route instead of that by which he brought his enlarged company to the coast, were of a peculiar character. He was in the service of the King of the Belgians, and was delicately but firmly given to understand that unless he went by the Congo His Majesty would not sanction his acceptance of the command. He was, moreover, disposed himself to consider it the easiest and surest path by which to reach the Governor of Equatoria. King Leopold promised to place at his disposal the vessels of the Free State and to assist him in other ways. Another consideration in favour of the Congo was that by going in that direction he allayed the suspicions of the Germans as to the political aims of the expedition and quieted the fears of the French for the safety of their missionaries. It was also expected that the Congo route would ensure the fidelity and courage of the Zanzibaris who were liable to panic and desertion in the Arab country. Of the other routes proposed—the Abyssinian, the Zambezi and Nyassa, and the Masailand, the event proved this last to be far the best. But had he taken the easier route, much of the knowledge that he brought back with him—touching the hydrography of the Nile and Congo, the great lake system, the mountains and the forests would have still to be won. The expedition has supplemented his own previous discoveries, as well as the labours of Livingstone, Speke, Schweinfurth, Du Chaillu, and other explorers, whose conclusions it has sometimes confirmed and completed, sometimes corrected. In the interest that it has attracted from all parts of civilization it surpasses all preceding expeditions, and has ensured the opening up of Africa to European enterprise.

That part of his experience which affected Mr. Stanley most vividly and lastingly was the immense forest, the range of which he computes to be some 300,000 square miles, and whose gloomy shades were associated with his sharpest spiritual as well as physical trials. Of its tropical characteristics he writes in terms of enthusiasm. Its economic products—especially its wealth of india-rubber—may, he thinks, be made the basis of an important commerce. The experiments in planting carried on at Fort Bobo under the supervision of Lieut. Stairs, in a clearing made for the purpose, yielded some interesting results. The products raised, including corn, bananas, tobacco, etc., showed to what good use the soil could be turned by cultivation. It is not likely that, even if the operations could be conducted on a larger scale with equal success, any appreciable number of white people would be induced to settle in Central Africa. With a view to the industrial education of the native population, these experiments may, however, be deemed hopefully significant.