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Spain and the Carlists.

The possibility of a rising of the Carlists appears to be causing a good deal of anxiety in Spain. The present situation is a difficult one for the Spanish government. The people had been led to believe that the nation would be able to retain possession of the Philippines and the bitter news of their surrender has aroused strong popular feeling against the political leaders. The Carlist agitators are ever on the alert for a chance of successful revolution, and there can be little doubt that they have been looking forward to the present juncture as affording the most favorable opportunity that is likely to occur for a long time of bringing on a revolution which would result in placing Don Carlos on the throne. There are reports that the Carlists are smuggling arms into Spanish provinces on the French frontier, that elaborate preparations have been made for an insurrection and that the government is much alarmed. It is stated that the Spanish Minister of War, General Correa, declares that the government has 164,000 soldiers ready to take the field in the event of a Carlist rising, and will soon have 200,000. So long as the army remains faithful to the Queen regent and the government, there is probably little danger that the Carlists will attempt a *coup d'etat*, but the danger is that if the temper of the people shall seem sufficiently favorable, the military leaders or some of them may espouse the Carlist cause. It is reported that, in a manifesto shortly to be issued, Don Carlos will make a strong appeal to the army.

Italy and Abyssinia.

It appears that Italy is likely to have trouble again with King Menelek of Abyssinia. When Italy made peace with Menelek in 1896, after the war which resulted so disastrously to Italian interests in that part of Africa, the exact definition of the boundary between Abyssinia and the Italian province of Erythrea was left for future settlement by treaty. Efforts on the part of the Italian minister sent last year to Abyssinia to effect a settlement satisfactory to his government were however unsuccessful, because of what were considered the extravagant demands of the King of Abyssinia. Now King Menelek is reported to be moving with an army to occupy the territory on that frontier, which he claims as his. It is highly probable that his claims will be found to extend over considerable territory which Italy holds to be a part of her province of Erythrea. In her depressed and almost bankrupt condition, it would seem impossible for Italy to undertake an expensive and uncertain war for the sake of defending her claims against Menelek, and of this that warlike monarch is probably not ignorant. It is possible that if Menelek pushes his claims, Italy may conclude to pass over her interest in the territory in question to Great Britain, whose authority, since the recent destruction of the Khalifa's army at Khartoum, the Abyssinian King is said to regard with great respect.

Reciprocity and Political Union.

Congressman Hitt of the United States, who a few years ago introduced in the House of Representatives resolutions providing for commercial union between his country and Canada, is said to entertain very small hope at present of the adoption of any valuable measures of reciprocity between the two countries. Mr. Hitt believed that if a commercial union could be established, it would before long lead to political union. But he finds that the indifference of the people of the Republic to closer commercial relations with the Dominion is invincible. The people, he says, cannot be got to take

enough interest in the subject to inform themselves in regard to the advantages of free trade and of closer political relations with their northern neighbors. He recognizes the present value of the market which Canada offers for the products of the United States and the prospective greatness of the country when its immense resources shall be developed, and he chafes at the indifference of the people and public men of the United States toward a policy which it seems to him would tend to bind the whole continent together in a national unity. Mr. Hitt may have over estimated the effect of unfettered trade between the two countries in making for political union. The Canadian people—that is the English-speaking portion of the population—are very largely of British origin. They greatly value British institutions and there is a good deal in the constitution and administration of the United States which the people of Canada do not admire. Strange and inexplicable as it may seem to the patriotic American citizen, it is nevertheless true that intelligent Canadians almost universally prefer their own political institutions to those of their neighbors, they set a high value on British connection, they glory in the history and the prestige of the Empire of which their country forms no insignificant part, their hearts burn with loyalty toward their Queen and they are willing to suffer many disadvantages for the sake of connection with the mother land. But if there were any hope of winning the consent of Canada to cast in her lot politically with her republican neighbor, it would be along the line of Mr. Hitt's proposal for free trade between the two countries. The policy of starving Canada into the Union will not work. It has been tried, with the result of showing that the Dominion is not by any means wholly dependent on its big neighbor for its commercial life, and also with the result of making the bonds both commercial and political between the colony and the mother land stronger and closer than ever before. So far is Canada now from suing for admission to the American Union that there probably never was a time when there was so little annexation sentiment among her people.

Spain's Acceptance.

When the Spanish and American peace commissioners met in joint session on Monday of last week the Spanish commissioners at once announced the acceptance of the conditions imposed as an ultimatum by those of the United States. These conditions include the surrender by Spain of the whole Philippine and Salu groups of islands, as well as Porto Rico and Cuba, the United States paying to Spain the sum of \$20,000,000 on account of her expenditures in the Philippines. The answer on the part of Spain was put into very brief form. The Spanish commissioners, in accepting the American conditions, contended that throughout the negotiations the claims of Spain had been supported by the strongest arguments, and that, as between positions so diametrically opposite, the \$20,000,000 offered was far too small a sum. Nevertheless Spain had concluded to accept the American offer unconditionally and thus bow to the superior power of the victor. The secretaries were accordingly instructed to prepare the treaty articles embodying the conditions agreed upon. It is said that the acquisition of the Philippines by the United States is regarded with pronounced disfavor throughout Europe. Mr. William Stead who has just returned to London from a continental tour in the course of which he has visited all the principal countries of Europe is quoted as saying: "Outside of Great Britain I have not met a single non-American who was not opposed to the expansion of America." Public sentiment in the United States too is by no means unanimously

in favor of the acquisition of the Philippines. It is evident also that in the United States Senate the proposal to annex those distant islands will encounter vigorous if not effective opposition. Senator Hoar of Massachusetts has declared himself firmly opposed to such action, and predicts that it will not be endorsed by the Senate. It seems improbable however that this prediction will be fulfilled.

Railway Rates.

The very low rates of travel which have prevailed during the past summer on the principal railway lines of Canada, resulting from a war of rates between the C. P. R. and the I. C. R., have had the effect of increasing largely the volume of travel. For a time it is understood, this increase went far to compensate the railroads for the reduction in rates. After a time, however, the numbers taking advantage of the cheap rates declined. The railway companies found that their receipts were shrinking seriously, and they accordingly came to an understanding to resume their regular rates, which has been done. It is said, however, that experience of the year has inclined some railway men to believe that the interests of the companies, as well as those of the general public, might be served by making the rate of travel two cents a mile, as it is in New England and on the continent of Europe, instead of three cents as it is in Canada. There can be no doubt but that cheaper travel would be in the interest of the country. By promoting inter-communication, it would promote knowledge, intelligence, alertness and enterprise among the people. Railways should be restrained by legislation from imposing a high rate of travel when a lower rate will give paying returns. But it must be considered that the per capita cost of travel must be much greater in a sparsely settled country like Canada than it is in New England or the continent of Europe.

The Loss of the Portland.

It has been a long time since a November storm wrought such havoc on the northern Atlantic coast as that of Sunday the 27th ult. It has caused great destruction of property and loss of life. The gale was especially severe along the New England coast. In Boston Bay much damage was inflicted upon shipping, some thirty-five vessels of all sizes being wrecked and many lives lost. The most dreadful disaster resulting from the storm was that which befell the steamship 'Portland' which was lost with all her passengers and crew on her passage from Boston to Portland. The steamer left Boston Saturday evening and the disaster occurred Sunday morning on the Cape Cod coast. It is believed that she foundered not far from land. Portions of the wreck and many bodies have drifted ashore. The 'Portland' was a large boat of about the same class as those of the International line, plying between Boston and St. John. The number of her passengers is not exactly known but it is said to have been not less than 100, and may have been more. It is probable that, including passengers and crew, not less than 120 persons perished with the ill-fated vessel. Capt. Blanchard who commanded the 'Portland' appears to have been much to blame for leaving Boston on the eve of a storm and against the orders of the agent of the Company. His error not only cost him his life, but it has cut short the lives of many others who trusted in his faithfulness and good judgment, and brought sorrow to many homes. Among the lost were quite a number who were natives of St. John or of other parts of the Maritime Provinces. Hon. Dudley Freeman, a prominent politician of Maine was one of the passengers.