

"learned from the very best sources that the Canadian Government has recently been approached by the United States Government with a view to the development of trade relations between the two countries, and that our Government has requested the advice of her Majesty's Government on the subject," the public were naturally led to believe that there must be something important on the tapis. But another paper, equally near the "very best sources," has since, we believe, discredited that statement. It is, however, difficult to believe that all these rumours can have been simultaneously set afoot without some basis in fact. There can be, we suppose, little doubt that communications of some kind, formal or informal, have been or are being interchanged between the three Governments concerning some phase of reciprocity. Even this belief is reassuring. All parties must be growing tired of the perpetual disputes about fishery matters, with the constant danger of the serious misunderstanding they involve. It is quite possible that an interchange of views with reference to some form of trade arrangement as a means of settlement may have commenced without it being very clear which of the three parties made the overture. That is a secondary and unimportant matter, so far at least as the people are concerned. Few thoughtful persons in Canada would care to deny that if a treaty of reciprocity could be agreed on, acceptable to the Mother Country as well as to the two parties more immediately concerned, and involving a complete settlement of all questions in dispute between the two nations, it would be a boon to all concerned. It is quite evident from past history as well as from present indications that England would gladly consent to considerable discrimination against herself for the sake of being rid of these vexatious disputes with a kindred nation, with which she desires to be on terms of peace and friendship. Even from the business point of view, considering the vast amount of British capital invested in both the United States and Canada, it would be greatly to her interest to have all standing disputes settled and perfect goodwill restored between the two countries. We do not know whether the postponement of the date of meeting of our own Parliament has any connection with the matter, but there is certainly some reason to hope that better counsels are beginning to prevail, and that these three great branches of the Anglo-Saxon stock may, some day not far distant, join hands in a covenant of perpetual peace and good will.

THERE seems now good reason to hope that the Indian difficulty in South Dakota may be settled without further bloodshed. The indications are that had the same patient and cautious methods which General Miles is employing been adopted before the Wounded Knee outbreak, that terrible massacre might have been avoided. It is true that the Commission which was appointed to enquire into the conduct of Colonel Forsyth in that affair has exonerated him from all blame. Strong evidence is said to have been adduced to disprove the charge that women and children were unnecessarily fired upon. It may be hoped, for the sake of our faith in the progress of civilized humanity, that this is true, though we do not know how the slaying and wounding of so many women can be otherwise accounted for. But, as the *Christian Union* observes, nothing seems to have been said about the unwisdom of beginning the treatment of the Indians by forcible disarming, or to show that a serious attempt to convince them that they were not to be ruthlessly shot down might not have averted the catastrophe. Meanwhile it is agreed on all hands that one of the chief causes of the difficulty in the first instance was the dismissal of a tried and experienced Indian agent and the appointment by the Government, under the pressure of office-seekers, of an inexperienced and incompetent man to the position. Back of all this lay the failure of the Government, either through the dilatoriness of Congress or the dishonesty of contractors and corrupt officials, to fulfil its promises to the Indians. It is little wonder that a fierce and warlike tribe, in a state of semi-starvation, exasperated by a sense of injury and infuriated by the dread of massacre, should have taken the initiative in an insane frenzy, and with such horrible results.

ONE of the strangest things in the whole history of the Behring Sea controversy is the anger, real or pretended, of certain United States' politicians and newspapers at the action of the British and Canadian Governments in the matter of the application recently made to the Supreme Court. A very curious feature of the outburst is the fact that the parties and papers who have been foremost in

ridiculing Mr. Blaine's pretensions, and assuring him that he has no case, are the hottest in their denunciations of the alleged insult to their diplomatists. It is surely in harmony with all precedents in civilized countries that any one who believes himself to have suffered injustice or injury at the hands of the citizens or officials of any country shall have free access to the courts for redress. Sir Julian Pauncefoot is said to have stated that the application to the Supreme Court is simply the latest and most natural step in a regular and normal course of procedure, and that the Government of the United States has long declined to entertain the claims of aliens to damages for acts committed under the authority of the Federal Government until a claimant has exhausted every remedy afforded him by the constitution and procedure of the federal courts. This is an eminently reasonable position for any Government. But it is, so far as we can gather, not the act of the owner of the vessel, but the intervention of the Canadian Government which has given umbrage, though the laws of the United States' courts make special provision for such intervention. It is true that the whole question, of which the capture and confiscation of this sealing vessel is but an incident, is, and has been for years, the subject of diplomatic correspondence. But it would be unfair, indeed, if after the claimant has waited so long in hope of a friendly settlement of his claim, or in consequence of inability to get it before a higher court, the Government of the country of which he is a citizen, may not come to his aid, in a strictly legal action, without stopping to consider what might be the effect of a favourable verdict upon the diplomatic negotiations. Those Democrats who believe that their own Government is in the wrong, and consequently that the owners of the confiscated vessels have suffered injustice, should be glad to have that injustice remedied by a legal and impartial action. Can it be that the anger of those who are raising such an outcry about the insult offered to the Washington Administration may be accounted for on the ground that they fear lest they may be deprived of one of their best campaign weapons? Seeing that the Government of the United States and its supporters have comparatively little to say about the matter, one might almost query whether they might not be pleased rather than otherwise to have the question taken out of their hands and settled by their own court. It might give them an easier way out of the difficulty in which they have involved themselves, than any other now open to them. Mr. Blaine has said that the step was no surprise to the Government. May it not be that he knew more about it than he would now care to admit?

THE ANGLICAN CLERGY AND THE SUNDAY STREET CARS.

IT is some length of time since we referred to the street car controversy, and during that period the question has been debated with a good deal of acrimony by different classes of persons—by the City Council, by the clergy, by the newspapers; and the hardest and harshest words have been spoken by the advocates of what is called the religious side of the question. Indeed to such lengths has this mode of debate proceeded that one of the clergy, at the recent meeting under the presidency of the Bishop of Toronto, actually proposed that they should merely vote and not speak, lest they should say something that they would regret; and a considerable minority voted for that proposition. The discussion showed that there was some reason for the caution.

The speeches at the meeting were in various respects remarkable; and they were, for the most part, expressive of the most violent opposition not only to the running of the street cars on Sunday, but to the submitting of the question to the decision of the people at large. We do not propose, at present, to argue the question of street cars on Sunday. We have on previous occasions indicated, as clearly and fairly as we could, the arguments *pro* and *con*; and nothing has occurred to produce any change in our convictions. At present we restrict ourselves to a few remarks on the debate at the Anglican meeting.

One of the most remarkable features of the discussion was the constant reference to the Fourth Commandment. Now, it is quite true that the Ten Commandments are read in the Anglican churches, and there are some good reasons for such recital. But no Anglican regards these Commandments as exactly binding in the letter, or as forming anything like a complete code of rules for Christian life and conduct. And with regard to the law of the Sabbath in particular, St. Paul says distinctly that we may

without blame regard all days alike, and that no one is to judge us in respect of Sabbaths or new moons.

If it be replied to this, that the Church of England has reinstated the Fourth Commandment, and that she has done this in the exercise of her lawful authority over her own children, it may be said in return, as it was said at the meeting, that the Church of England has given no special restrictions as to the manner of keeping the day. Least of all has she invented artificial distinctions between the righteousness or unrighteousness of private carriages, hired cabs, and public street cars.

In other words, the Church of England and every other Church, and even the Judaizers, have all left the application of the Commandment to common sense, guided by what one of the speakers called the principle of Christian expediency. We say that, in actual practice, although not with logical consistency, this is the principle universally adopted. In argument, however, it is the validity of the Fourth Commandment which is insisted upon, in spite of Whately and Hessey and all the principal writers of modern times on the subject.

But we are not even here touching upon the real difference between the two parties among the Toronto clergy. Not one voice was raised in favour of Sunday labour. Even the running of street cars was scarcely advocated. At the most it was urged that a means of conveying women and children, in the summertime, to High Park would be of advantage to the poorer classes, and that the running of street cars, under certain restrictions, might even lead to the diminution of labour on the Lord's Day. But the main point of difference was the question of referring the decision to the ratepayers or the people at large. These, it was urged, form the proper tribunal for the settlement of this dispute.

What was the answer to this proposition? One gentleman would have had no objection if the people had been Christians. Another denounced the scheme as an appeal to Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics. We have here certainly very noteworthy states of mind. Are we then under the fifth monarchy? Are the Saints actually the rulers of the earth? And, if they are, by what tests shall we know them? by what infallible proofs do they know each other? And these others, who are not "Christians," who are "Jews, Turks, infidels and heretics"—have they no civil rights?

And here we come face to face with the difficulty in which those are involved who refuse to trust "the people." These ratepayers who cannot be allowed to vote on the subject of street cars are the people who control our legislation, our education, and all the external regulation of our civil life. They are actually the people who do indirectly regulate our street car service. We cannot pretend to know the public sentiment on Sunday cars. But if ever it becomes strongly in favour of them, they will run in whatsoever manner the decision may be arrived at. No one, however eager he may be for the change, would force Sunday cars upon an unwilling majority. Very few want them for any reason except that of supposed public utility. It is a little absurd, in the actual circumstances of our times, to denounce the public vote; and the clergy are not well advised when they speak of the impropriety of allowing persons to vote who are not of their own way of thinking. It is quite proper that they should endeavour to give effect to their own convictions; but the very worst way of doing this is to refuse the same privilege to others.

COMBINES.

COMBINES and the remedy of their evils continue to be subjects of universal interest. In Canada the approach of Parliament lends a special interest to the subject, and starts the curious to conjecture what new schemes for the control of Combines have been evolved during the summer in the legislative minds of Messrs. Wallace and Edgar. Mr. Wallace can scarcely be said to have advanced any proposition at the last session of Parliament for the suppression of Combines, or, indeed, even to have avowed his enmity to them, although his appointment of a committee to investigate the subject may justly be construed to that effect. However, whatever may be thought of Mr. Wallace's lax profession or of the remedies he may be suspected of supporting, it remains the fact that the thinking people of Canada are deeply indebted to Mr. Wallace for the vast amount of evidence that was collected before his committee. In rivalry to Mr. Wallace, Mr. Edgar came forward and proposed abolition of the tariff as the only rational and practical method of destroying the rule of Combines. He was confident to an extreme in the virtues of his remedy, but it became tainted with party venom, and the House would none of it. An impartial consideration of Mr. Edgar's proposal must convince one