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NOTES OF THE MONTH.

WE place the recent further advance in the direction of establishing a Board of International Arbitration as one of the chief events of the month, since it is a movement fraught with such far-reaching and momentous consequences, not merely to the Anglo-American races, but to every nation upon the globe.

That the movement should have advanced far enough, first, to assemble a Congress of Peace in Washington during May for the sole purpose of promoting it; and second, to bring an influential deputation of representative English gentlemen to wait upon Lord Salisbury in the later days of June with purpose of directly interviewing the Premier upon the question,—shows how largely the highest sentiment of the Anglo-Saxon people reaches out toward a condition of international relationship, which but a few years ago would have been viewed as a chimerical ideal, but is now already a possibility.

The establishment of such a board would be the first fair harbinger of millennial dawn.

THE note received by His Atrocious Majesty the Sultan, warning him of the certainty of losing the 'good will' of the powers if he permits the continuance of the Cretan barbarities, sounds decidedly farcical in view of the past and present condition of Armenia.

Let us hope that the term is used in an official sense, one that conveys some definite warning; since there is surely none in the civilised world, either as nations or individuals, who to-day hold 'good will' toward such a ruler.

Of the four leaders of the Johannesburg revolt, three signed a document pledging themselves to abstain from interference in politics, and were permitted to remain in the Transvaal; the fourth—Col. Rhodes—refused to sign, and was banished for life.

The demand of the Government was just and reasonable; yet one cannot help admiring the man who preferred banishment to being denuded of those rights of citizenship which are the full measure of manhood.

ONLY last month it was ours to comment on the sad series of many catastrophes, each involving heavy loss of life. June continues the grievous list:—in northern Japan, where ten thousand went down into a yawning earth; in the shipwreck off Brittany coast, where three hundred women and children sank, sleeping; and in the explosion of an American pleasure steamer which sent twenty citizens to a cruel death.

These sweeps of disaster which recur at periodic intervals, startle us with a haunting sense of the mystery of life, and the Power that controls it.

IN the heat of the election campaign, the rapid movement toward the unification of the British Empire is hardly receiving the share of attention from the press and people which so great a project demands. Mr. E. B. Osler, who was one of the delegates at the recent Chambers of Commerce Congress, speaks not one word too emphatic when he declares it "the most important gathering of its kind ever held in the history of the Empire."

There must have been a fine inspiration in this assembly of practical, large-viewed business men, gathered from all points of the Empire for the sole object of considering how the commercial solidification of the Empire may be accomplished.

It is only another phase of the impulse which on Britain's side has recently commanded that henceforth in all official documents the colonies shall no more be included under the term 'foreign countries.'

That Canada's strong empiric enterprise has been recognised and appreciated by the Mother Country was evidenced at the Congress in unmistakable terms.

The final decision that at the request of the colonies the British Government should appoint a commission to discuss the policy of preferential trade, is most gratifying and acceptable, and a big step forward in the direction of Imperial Federation.

THE various June ministerial conferences have shown each in their own line certain interesting phases, truly indicative of denominational features.

Dr. Langtry's protest, which has already become almost celebrated, may be passed amusedly as the honest utterance of an ecclesiastical Rip Van Winkle; but the grave error of the Synod lay in permitting Principal Sheraton to withdraw a motion that without doubt expresses the sentiment of the majority of Anglican clergymen of to-day.

The motion should have been pressed and passed, and the broad Christian sentiment of the Synod placed upon record; whatever of discussion there may have been would have done good rather than harm.

THE Methodist Conference, assembled in Hamilton, may have intended only a gentle wit when its greetings to its brother conference in Winnipeg took the form of the Bible verse:

Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

The fact that it was received by the latter with laughter bears out the inference.

Yet the question arises whether what might be harmless in the privacy of individual speech remains so when exercised in public way.

That a body of ministers should so deliberately apply the words of Holy Writ that the interpretation causes it to be received with

laughter, seems hardly fit, in the eyes of a world which, however cynical it may be, yet looks upon the pulpit to hold the Bible for all reverent uses.

THE General Assembly, which was the largest and most important of all the ministerial gatherings, did a large amount of fine official work.

Apart from this, the most important pronouncements were those dealt with by Principal Cavan:—first, the report of the Committee on Church Union; on a proposition from the Methodist Church concerning the proposed appointment of a federal court to be composed of representatives of various Churches, with the object of securing co-operation and preventing the overlapping of church work in newer fields.

The big advancement toward Church Union in the establishment of such a court is obvious, and herein lies the importance of the Assembly's approval of the recommendation.

CONCERNING the Manitoba School question, there is no doubt that Principal Cavan's resolution was one worthy of the Church to which he belongs; in its clearness of thought, decision and moderation of tone; while his masterly speech in support of the same was one of the best expositions and elucidations of the case that has yet been uttered.

One of the Rev. Principal's most admirable points was that, while his words were definite in statement, they were yet free from party bias. He recognises, what all other ministerial pronouncers upon the question have yet apparently failed to see,—that there are distinctly two sides to this question—one might almost say two rights involved;—and his suggested solution takes cognizance of this.

In adopting Principal Cavan's resolution and endorsing his thoughtful exposition, the General Assembly has placed itself on record as the one ministerial body which has fully grasped the situation and ably dealt with the same.

THE incident of Prof. Goldwin Smith and the proposed LL.D. honours,—which the gentleman himself definitely settled,—is one of those questions concerning which directly opposite views may be taken by excellent people.

That the introduction of politics into the sphere of letters is not desirable, we all admit; but the point upon which the question hinges is whether an ardent advocacy of annexation with a foreign power, an urging of transference of national allegiance, however worthy the motive,—can be viewed merely as a matter of politics.

Does it not go deeper? Is it not the infringement of an unwritten law of citizenship, which we instinctively recognise and demand in those whom we delight to honour? And is not this instinctive feeling the cause of the protest on the part of many?