

FOREIGN TOPICS.

CANADA AND THE NICARAGUA CANAL.

OUR Canadian neighbors emphatically reject the idea that the United States must control any waterway connecting the Atlantic and Pacific; and the practical refusal of the United States Senate to indorse the terms of the Hay-Pauncefote treaty has aroused a storm of protest across the border. Many papers, like the *Toronto Globe*, accuse the United States of base ingratitude, asserting as an historical fact that Great Britain saved the United States from European interference during the recent war with Spain. The *Winnipeg Tribune* declares that the world can not permit the Nicaragua Canal to become a commercial and political weapon in the hands of Uncle Sam, and the *Toronto Westminster* points to the Suez Canal as a precedent. Very few express themselves as moderately as the *Winnipeg Telegram*, which says:

"At this time, when mutual interests and a better understanding of each other have built up between the two nations a friendly feeling, it would be lamentable if this question should sow anew the seeds of discord. Each nation, it may be hoped, will do its utmost to meet the views of the other, and diplomacy may yet find some solution of the difficulty perfectly satisfactory to both parties."

Saturday Night (Toronto) says:

"The perfidious conduct of the United States Congress in its treatment of the Hay-Pauncefote and the Clayton-Bulwer treaties with regard to the Nicaragua Canal should enlighten Great Britain as to the utter absence of honor which characterizes the representatives of the United States in their dealings with foreign nations. Individually the people of the United States are liable to deal as fairly and honestly with one another and their customers abroad as the individuals of any other nation, but their Congress seems to have a code of honor fashioned upon the ethics of a gypsy horse-trade."

The *Toronto World* is shocked by our manners, our absence of regard for the rights of others, and our alleged contempt for international law, "which," it thinks, "is more binding upon nations to-day than ever." The *Toronto Telegram* says:

"Protests may come quick and fast from the South American republics, which view with alarm the disappearance of the treaty guaranteeing them against the effects of an aggressive policy by either Britain or the United States. When the Clayton-Bulwer treaty goes by the board the United States will be free to annex a few South American republics. Great Britain may oppose the annihilation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and the Panama Canal scheme may yet be effectively revived. The United States scheme contemplates a canal one hundred and sixty-five miles in length against the sixty-five mile canal which De Lesseps proposed to build."

There are also hints that Uncle Sam must behave or take a whipping. *Events* (Ottawa) says:

"Are the Americans prepared to fight? There are only two ways by which a treaty of this kind can be abrogated. One is by mutual consent, and the other is by war. As the Americans do not offer Britain anything for her consent to the abrogation of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty, and as she would be very foolish to give up so much for nothing, the only thing apparently for the Americans is to fight for it. The affair is very much tangled up, and the trouble is due entirely to American jingoism. As usual, the Yankee wants everything in sight, and he wants it for nothing. For Britain to give in to the extraordinary demands of the Americans would be a deplorable and a dangerous weakness. It would render all her treaties practically worthless if she allowed this one to be canceled without her consent, or even consented to its abrogation without getting a concession of full value in return. The feeling in Great Britain so far as it has found expression is that the Americans must on this occasion be made to toe the mark."

The *Montreal Witness* is rather sorry for the United States for having such a "clownish" Senate. It nevertheless adds:

"In reproaching these unreasonablenesses, however, we have to keep in mind that the law of nations still is that he should take who has the power, and he should keep who can, and that the Senate, in throwing aside every question of right or honor in dealings, is merely asserting in a blunt way a fact which can not very easily be denied, that the United States is a giant and impregnable power that can demand pretty much what it likes, as no one proposes to quarrel with it."

Goldwin Smith, who writes in the *Toronto Weekly Sun*, is inclined to think that John Bull will deal rather gently by us. He says:

"Palmerston, of all ministers the most bellicose, assumed a very menacing attitude in the Trent affair. But then the Amer-



HE PREFERS THE OLD PURSE.

MR. BULL: "Hexcuse me, Sammy, but your huncle John ain't a-purchasing gold bricks at present."

—The Montreal Herald.

icans were at war among themselves, and the union of the British power with the South, the French Emperor being inclined the same way, would have been overpowering for the time. The British Foreign Office will preserve its dignity. Bluster when you do not mean to fight is worse than useless. Great Britain has always done for her own interests and the interests of those under her protection on this side of the water the best that diplomacy could do; she never will do more. The precedent of the Suez Canal, which is under international control, is hardly available in the case of the Nicaraguan Canal. Great Britain did not build that canal; on the contrary, Palmerston, from fear about the approach to India, did all he could to prevent it from being built."

One Reason for China's Decline.—One reason for the failure of the Chinese to become a really great and enduring people is the lack of soul. This is the opinion of Léon Charpentier, who contributes to a recent number of *La Nouvelle Revue* (Paris) a paper on the popular mythology of China. M. Charpentier says:

"Altho the Chinese profess utter indifference as to the dogmas of their three religions, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, and while they consider the beautiful ethics and philosophy of Confucius as mere good advice, nevertheless the imagination of the Chinese people, deeply influenced by the mysteries of nature and life, has created a swarm of marvelous and powerful

beings, to which are attributed, by the fears and hopes of the believers, a constant and important rôle in the government of the world."

A detailed consideration of the many gods and sacred animals that enter into the daily worship of the people brings M. Charpentier to the following conclusion:

"No people reject all dogma as vigorously as do the Chinese. They concern themselves not at all with the lofty morality of Confucius; yet, at the same time, no race exhibits such abject slavery to a fetishism at once tyrannical and degrading.

"This is why the Chinese, altho they have an immense domain, will never become a really great people. In this vast body there will never be a soul. The ancient Greeks, few in number as they were, must be accounted the noblest race of history. Perhaps Confucius will bear comparison with Plato; but when a society has no noble code of ethics, it will not grow; when it has lost such a code, its period of decadence has begun. The whole question for any nation is to know or not to know how to put into action 'the sublime harmony of beauty and life.'"

—Translation made for THE LITERARY DIGEST.

BEHAVIOR OF THE ALLIES IN CHINA.

REPORTS of outrage, cruelty, and wholesale looting in China by the allied forces still come to hand, tho it is notable that such accounts receive currency chiefly in British and American papers. The correspondent of *The Straits Times* (a British colonial paper), who was in Peking during the entire siege by the European troops, declares that more than 50,000 Chinese men, women, and children, in the ordinary proportion in which they obtain in towns, were killed by the European and Japanese troops after the latter had entered the city. "Babies, children, men, and women," he says, "were indiscriminately bayoneted or shot." The correspondent of *The Daily Express* and *The Sphere* (London), Mr. George Lynch, declares that the savagery was "beyond conception." The Japanese and Americans were least culpable, but "a horrible lust of cruelty has developed throughout the private soldiery of all nationalities." To a representative of the Kobe



RUSSIA: "Open door?—Why certainly, there you are."

—Fischietto, Turin,

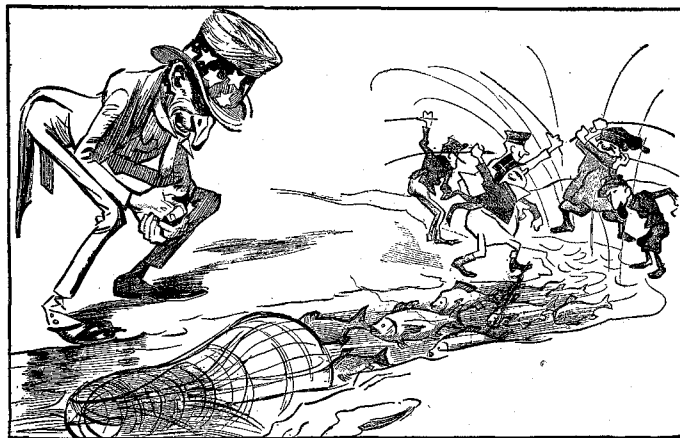
ken. . . . The Russians were perpetually committing acts of cruelty. As an instance of what continually occurred I saw them kicking along a little boy of ten or eleven years old like a football. . . . It was impossible to be a member of the expedition without noting the inhumanity exhibited by the Russians as a matter of course. The Russian soldiers were perpetually prodding the Chinese with their bayonets, which they had fixed on their rifles the whole time. . . . It was a notorious fact that fifteen Russian soldiers raped a girl of eleven years old to death. The French soldiers, I am sorry to say, were also exceedingly cruel. Indeed, no nationality was altogether blameless in this

representative of the Kobe *Chronicle*, (also under British auspices) Mr. Lynch said recently:

"In the course of the march to Peking, I found that the best-behaved body of troops among the whole lot were the Japanese. Particularly at Tungchau, where the Russians behaved abominably. I here myself saw Chinese women lying under the walls, from which they had jumped to escape being ravished by the Russian soldiers, with their hips broken.

matter. . . . Then you must recollect that it was a war without wounded. Practically no prisoners were taken."

One of the Japanese correspondents at the front (Mr. N. Taguehi, of the *Keizai Zasshi*) says: "Everywhere they [the French and Russian soldiers] went they scattered sorrow and anguish, their footsteps being those of plunderers and ravishers of women when no fighting was going on. Yet they showed themselves on the field of action the most cowardly of all." *The Japan Times* (Tokyo), commenting on the alleged outrages, says: "Such inhuman excesses will remain a lasting reproach to the civilization and honor of the countries to which the cruel brutes belong." "Enough has been done that the world knows of," says



IN STILL WATER THERE IS GOOD FISHING.

—Kladderadatsch, Berlin.

the Kobe *Herald*, "to stain the name of the Russian empire with a blot that will prove all but indelible."

The question of looting by the allied troops is still the subject of severe newspaper comment. Several of the powers—notably Great Britain and the United States—have officially condemned the practice by forbidding their troops to take without remuneration any article from a Chinaman or from a Chinese building. The French Government also has returned unopened a number of cases of plunder sent to President Loubet by General Frey (commander of the French marine forces in China); and Vice-Admiral Alexieff, Russian naval commander, is reported to have ordered his men to make out detailed lists of Chinese property in their possession, stating where such property now is. These orders are, however, it is averred, so easily evaded as to be practically of no effect. "The atmosphere of the city is loot," declares the correspondent of *The Westminster Gazette*:

"Moreover, people who a month ago were most emphatic in their condemnation of the practise are now among the most active in the wild scramble to obtain for nothing or next to nothing almost priceless treasures—the disease is as contagious as small-pox. It started with the soldiers, but it quickly spread until it embraces not only officers and civilians but missionaries and high officials within the Legations. Only a very few have withstood the temptation to loot, and these are inwardly rebellious because their consciences do not allow them to participate in the harvest."

In the interview with the Kobe *Chronicle* already quoted from, Mr. Lynch charges the missionaries with "disgraceful, promiscuous looting, or, at least, profiting from looting." We quote again from the interview:

"The private looting that took place was most successfully exploited by the missionaries. When an effort was made to stop promiscuous looting, every British officer was put on his honor to give an account of any loot that he had, and to return everything except one or two things of trifling value which he was allowed to keep as souvenirs. The looting stopped from that time among the soldiers—that is, private looting. But the missionaries were not bound by this at all. They took possession of big Chinese houses, where they carried on sales of everything they