The Outlook

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THREE important sets of resolutions bearing on international affairs were last week before the United States Senate, the first two relating to the Venezuela difficulty, the third relating to the Armenian tragedy. Senator Sewell's resolutions affirm that the Monroe Doctrine as originally propounded was limited to a protest against the acquisition of territory which would be dangerous to our safety; that it rests for its justification on our interests only; that the President's message presses the Monroe Doctrine beyond its original significance, seems to involve a committal of this Government to a protectorate over Mexico and the Central and South American States, is unwise, dangerous, and adverse to our traditions; and that neither Congress nor the country can be, or has been, committed by the action of the executive department thus far taken as to the course to be pursued when the time shall arrive for final action. We hardly need say to our readers that these resolutions as an interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine are in accordance with the substantially unanimous testimony of all expert American authorities on constitutional history and international law, and that as a statement of our present duties and obligations they seem to us eminently wise and statesmanlike. They have been made the text of a speech by Senator Wolcott, of Colorado, which we should be glad to see in the hands of all interested students of this subject. He shows that not only was the Monroe Doctrine suggested by England, but that in the battle for South American independence the British soldiers fought valiantly for the emancipation of the colonies from the Spanish yoke; that it is doubtful whether Venezuela would be free to-day had it not been for British aid; that there is nothing in the original Monroe Doctrine which calls for our intervention, and nothing in the nature of the Spanish republics which appeals to our chivalry; that, in fact, they are largely military despotisms; that Venezuela in particular has had revolutions at average intervals of eighteen months, and that of her population of two million people less than one per cent. were whites until the discovery of gold brought in foreign immigration; and, finally, that mining industries in the disputed territory cannot depend for protection upon Venezuela; that commerce and international interests would lead us to desire that they should be under English law. He modestly acknowledged that if he had been present in the Senate when the vote was taken on the establishing of the Venezuelan Commission he should very possibly have joined in the unanimous action of his colleagues. But he coupled this disclaimer of superiority with the not too strong affirmation that our course has made arbitration more difficult to Great Britain than it was before.

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The second set of resolutions are those referred to by us last week, introduced by Senator Davis, of Minnesota, and favorably reported by the Committee on Foreign Relations. To the casual and careless reader these resolutions apparently extend the Monroe Doctrine in most extraordinary fashion, and assert that no other country may acquire any territory in either South or North America, even peaceably, by purchase. It is not strange that, so interpreted, they have aroused indignation in Great Britain. Even the "Daily News" (London) understands them to indicate that "whatever arrangement [with Venezuela] is made, it must be submitted to the United States as a sort of suzerain." This claim of sovereignty over two continents is preposterous, and not even to be seriously considered by the American people. But if the resolutions of Senator Davis are read with care, it is clear that they embody no such claim. In fact, robbed of their verbiage, they are the veriest bit of bunkum ever attempted to be palmed off on an intelligent people as an enunciation of principles; for they declare that "any attempt by any European power to acquire additional territory on the American continent, in any case in which the United States shall deem the attempt to be dangerous to its peace or safety, will be regarded as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States, and will not be regarded with indifference." In other words, if any foreign power shall do what we think is dangerous to us, we will think that to us it is dangerous! That such a Bunsbyish resolution should have passed the portals of the Committee on Foreign Relations is not creditable to its intelligence and sagacity. The indications at this writing are that the resolution will not pass the Senate, that it is disapproved by the President, and that if it should reach the House of Representatives it will be buried there.

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The resolutions introduced by Senator Cullom in regard to the Armenian outrages, unanimously passed by the Senate and immediately concurred in by the House, recite the requirements in the Treaty of Berlin guaranteeing the Armenians against the Circassians and Kurds, and promising to protect their civil and political rights and their religious liberty, and the horror with which the American people have beheld the recent outrages perpetrated upon the Christian population of Turkey, and then proceed as follows:

"*Resolved*, by the Senate of the United States, the House of Representatives concurring, That it is an imperative duty, in the interests of humanity, to express the earnest hope that the European concert, brought about by the treaty referred to, may speedily be given its just effects in such decisive measures as shall stay the hand of fanaticism and lawless violence, and as shall secure to the unoffending Christians of the Turkish Empire all the rights belonging to them both as men and as Christians and as beneficiaries of the explicit provisions of the treaty above recited.

"*Resolved*, That the President be requested to communicate these resolutions to the Governments of Great Britain, Germany, Austria, France, Italy, and Russia.

"*Resolved*, further, That the Senate of the United States, the House of Representatives concurring, will support the President in the most vigorous action he may take for the protection and security of American citizens in Turkey and to obtain redress for injuries committed on the persons or property of such citizens."

These resolutions we regard as more significant than either the Sewell or the Davis resolutions respecting Venezuela,

because these call for executive action. The expression of the opinion of this country that the Christian powers have some duty to perform, that this obligation is imposed upon them, not only by considerations of humanity, but also by the provisions of the Treaty of Berlin, and that they are not only palpably guilty of a disregard of their general obligations to preserve peace and order in Europe, but especially guilty of a breach of faith in allowing the guaranties of Turkey to her Christian subjects to be ruthlessly disregarded, cannot be wholly in vain. If our Government should, in accordance with these last resolutions, send such a fleet to the Turkish waters as to command the respect of the Turkish Government, and, if necessary, co-operate with the British fleet in enforcing respect, these resolutions might prove to be the first step toward the protection of the long-suffering Armenian populations. In this connection we call attention to the strong article on this subject on another page, by Dr. Newman Smyth.

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Until last week the Senate debate upon the House bond bill with its free-coinage amendment was not especially interesting. Nearly all the speeches made were on the side of free coinage, and the ablest was, as usual, that of Senator Jones, of Nevada, recognizing the desirability of international co-operation in restoring silver to the world's currency, but urging that the difficulties in the way of independent action were by no means insuperable. Last week, however, in the course of Senator Teller's speech, the discussion lost its academic flavor. With a boldness almost startling, the leader of the free-coinage Republicans, in discussing whether more revenue would enable the Government to redeem legal-tender notes in gold without bond issues, declared that on this point President Cleveland and Secretary Carlisle were right and Senator Sherman wrong. To redeem in gold, he urged, required gold, and an increase in revenue would not supply it. There had been a deficiency, he recognized, but there had not been a deficiency of $262,000,000. We quote Mr. Teller:

> Mr. Teller—I am bound to say that I have not the slightest doubt but that we should have broken into it [the gold reserve] if Mr. Harrison had been re-elected. It was not the Democratic party that came into power that made it, it was the condition of the country.
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> Mr. Sherman—It was Democratic law.
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> Mr. Teller—It was not a Democratic law. There was not any law and had not been any law. That was long after. . . . What I complain of is that on this side of the Chamber the majority of the Republicans are absolutely without a policy. You dare not redeem the greenbacks. That you know would afford you relief. You dare not go before the public in 1896 with your candidate on that kind of a platform. A majority of the gold men in this Chamber believe it ought to be done. You are in sympathy with the President, in my judgment, on that point, and if you are going to maintain the gold standard, I repeat what I said before, that is the logical and the only way out of it. The people of the United States are now demanding from us some action that will relieve the country; not a temporary thing, but some system. The President and the Secretary of the Treasury have offered us one. We reject it. Now, then, ought we not to offer something? We offer free coinage. You offer nothing.

In other words, the intermediate position on the financial question occupied by Senator Sherman and the Republican majority does not really satisfy either the uncompromising gold men of the East or the uncompromising silver men of the West, and the latter at last threaten boldly to revolt. Under any circumstances such a speech would have created a profound impression, but last week the impression was deepened by the fact that it seemed to indorse in the name of the free-silver Republicans the action of the Silver Conference assembled in Washington calling for a National Convention in St. Louis in July to organize a party pledged to the free coinage of silver. This Convention will meet side by side with the Convention of the People's party, and to it is already pledged the support of prominent men in both the old parties in the event that their own party platforms do not indorse free coinage.

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During the past year, according to the Nashville "Banner," mobs killed 171 persons—161 men and 10 women. Of these lynchings 144 occurred in the South and 27 in the North. Of the total number killed 112 were negroes. The number of legal executions in the United States last year was 132, of which 89 were in the South and 43 in the North. We learn from "Bradstreet's" that the lynching record has been improving since 1892, when there were 235 occurrences of this nature. This is probably due to the increasingly strong movement against the evil in the South, which has now manifested itself, not only in the newspaper denunciations, but in legislation. The new Constitution of South Carolina calls upon the Legislature to enact laws forbidding lynching, and holding officers having prisoners in charge to a strict responsibility for their safety, under penalty of impeachment and disqualification for office-holding. The law would also make the county where the lynching occurs pecuniarily liable to the friends of the victim. The unfaithful officer is to be tried in a county other than the one in which the lynching occurred, and the suit for damages by the next of kin of the victim of the mob must also be removed to another part of the State. If, on account of a lynching, a county is mulcted in damages, it may recover from participants in the lynching. The minimum of damages is put at $2,000. Legislation to this effect is now pending.

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It is a great pleasure to note a similar movement against mob law in Virginia and Georgia. The Governors of both States have asked their respective Legislatures to pass a law analogous to that provided for in South Carolina. In Virginia such a bill is already before the Assembly. In Georgia Governor Atkinson, in his recent message to the General Assembly, has called special attention to the fact that since his inauguration there have been five persons lynched in the State; in each instance the party lynched was charged with the same offense—namely, rape; Governor Atkinson has vainly endeavored, by an appeal to the civil authorities and by offering rewards for the lynchers, to bring to trial some of these violators of the law; for the courts have been unable to secure proof, and without this they are powerless to enforce law. In Georgia one-third of the population is composed of those who but a few years ago were slaves, a large percentage of whom lack moral training and have not the proper respect for law nor the rights of others, women being peculiarly liable to brutal attack. Governor Atkinson well declares that one mob begets another mob, that every man who engages in lynching violates the law against murder, and that the arresting officer is now empowered to take the life of his assailants while resisting their efforts to take his prisoner from him, and it is his duty to take the life of his assailants if it is necessary to protect his prisoner and retain him in custody. A law requiring a thorough investigation in every case and providing adequate punishment where the officer falls short of the full measure of his duty is recommended. In Alabama we find a similar demand for new legislation. But in Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas public opinion has not manifested itself with a proper degree of emphasis.

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The "Raines" bill to substitute a tax for a licensing system in regulating the liquor traffic in New York State