

—Spanish, Portuguese, and English; but Mr. Curtis was not a *persona grata* to all the delegates, and the opposition to him was prompted by some Spanish-Americans in New York whom Mr. Curtis had offended: the Argentine delegates were much displeased with a magazine article Mr. Curtis had written concerning the financial credit of their country; the Colombians because of an article concerning the family relations of President Nuñez, and his concordat with the Pope; the delegates from Chili were offended because of his comments upon the then recent war with Peru; and Señor Caamaño, of Ecuador, disliked some humorous personal allusions in the *Capitals of South America*. The publication of this book was the principal cause of the opposition, as it contained allusions to other Spanish-American countries which had in some way offended their respective delegates, who thought he had committed many serious mistakes and made many uncomplimentary remarks in speaking of their capital cities. This would not seem strange, taking into consideration that the time Mr. Curtis spent in each city was very short, and remembering how difficult it is under such circumstances to know and understand a country, and, still more, to write about it without making mistakes, which are generally to the prejudice of the country treated of. All of the delegates at the close of the Convention were generous enough to write Mr. Curtis congratulatory letters upon his management, with assurances of their personal regard.

The Committee on Rules presented a resolution, which was approved by the Conference at its second meeting, to elect two Secretaries, one to take charge of the Spanish work and the other of the English, both to be conversant with each language, and both to be elected directly by the Conference. The Secretary of State accepted this resolution out of deference to the Conference, notwithstanding that the law which convened the assembly gave him the appointment of all its clerks; and his right to do this was still more clear because the salaries of the Secretaries were paid by the United States Government. As Mr. Curtis did not know Spanish, he was precluded from being a secretary; Mr. Blaine then appointed him Executive Officer of the Conference, and he acted until the end as chief of all the clerks. I must state here, in justice to Mr. Curtis, that during the time he served in this capacity he succeeded in dispelling many of the unfavorable views which existed regarding him.

Señor Don Fidel G. Pierra.—The notoriety acquired by the Spanish Secretary of the Conference makes it necessary to say a few words about him. Señor Don Fidel G. Pierra is a Cuban who lived many years in New York, where, I understand, he had some commercial business. He accompanied the Spanish-American delegates on the excursion which preceded the Conference, as representative of the

Spanish-American Commercial Union of New York, and secured their acquaintance and friendship by rendering them services as an interpreter and in other ways. The Conference elected him Spanish Secretary; but on account of his peculiar temperament and disposition he was not able to remain long in that place, although he had the good-will and support of the Latin-American delegates. He complained that he had not competent clerks to assist him, and he thought the Executive Clerk, Mr. Curtis, was unfriendly; he also alleged that the salary assigned to him by the Department of State was not sufficient compensation for his work, although it was higher than the salary assigned to the Assistant Secretaries of State, and as high as the highest paid to clerks of the Conference. Finally his resignation was accepted, and soon afterwards Señor Pierra addressed to *La Nacion*, of Buenos Ayres, Argentina, a letter dated at Washington, on March 10, 1890, in which he gave an account of the proceedings of the Conference, making many incorrect and some slanderous assertions in regard to incidents which occurred in the Conference, and more especially respecting some of the delegates of the United States and Mexico.¹ I thought it proper on my part to publish a correction of such misstatements, and I wrote a correct statement of such incidents, which was published by *Las Novedades*, a Spanish newspaper of the city of New York, in its issue of July 7, 1890. Señor Pierra's assertions were incidentally considered in the Senate of

¹ When Señor Pierra's letter to *La Nacion* of Buenos Ayres reached New York, a few extracts from the same were printed by the *New York Herald* of June 28, 1890, and in its issue of July 3, 1890, it published fuller extracts of such portions of the letter as contained abuse to the representatives of the United States, as well as to myself. As soon as I had the first intimation of that letter, by the first publication of the *New York Herald*, I obtained a copy of *La Nacion* of Buenos Ayres which had the letter in full, prepared at once an answer, which was intended to be read especially among the Spanish-American people, to dispel inaccuracies of Señor Pierra, and sent it to *Las Novedades* of New York, which published it in its issue of July 7, 1890.

In a discussion in the Senate of the United States, which took place on July 3, 1890, on a bill to subsidize a line of steamers from New York to Buenos Ayres, Senator Vest, under the misapprehension that Señor Pierra was the Secretary of a society in the city of Buenos Ayres and had accompanied to Washington the delegation from the Argentine Republic to the Pan-American Conference, and believing that Señor Pierra expressed the views of the Argentine delegates about their colleagues representing the United States, read some extracts from Señor Pierra's letter in which he abused the United States delegates. This abuse so excited Senator Hawley that he qualified the aspersions of Señor Pierra with most forcible and strong language, as appears on pages 7495, 7496, and 7497 of the *Congressional Record* for July 4, 1890; and finally Senator Frye, in the session of the Senate of the 14th of the same month, spoke on this subject for the purpose of dispelling Senator Vest's misapprehensions about the position of Señor Pierra in the Argentine Republic, using, like Senator Hawley, very strong language to characterize Señor Pierra's conduct, and then Senator Vest disclaimed all responsibility or endorsement of any of Señor Pierra's statements.

the United States on July 14, 1890, and qualified in the harshest possible manner, although fully deserved, considering the impropriety of his conduct. I append to this paper a copy of my communication to *Las Novedades* of New York.

Arbitration.—Arbitration is a very difficult and complicated subject. It cannot be denied that during the present century mankind has advanced very rapidly in civilization and moral sense, and it is to be hoped that, at no distant period, such advancement will make war impossible, for war has been thus far one of the greatest scourges which has afflicted the human race. But so long as the moral sense of highly advanced countries does not disapprove of war as an uncivilized way of adjusting differences among themselves, not much progress can be made by accepting arbitration in solemn treaties, especially if no method of coercion is agreed upon against such nations as may refuse to compromise their differences, and such a method cannot be established without attempts against the sovereignty and independence of the respective states.

It was thought by some Spanish Americans that the purpose of the United States was to establish a permanent court of arbitration at Washington, and this was looked upon as a way of giving the United States a decided preponderance in all questions affecting this continent. Although I understand that the United States delegate who was chairman of the Committee on General Welfare looked favorably upon the idea of having a permanent tribunal, and his views on this subject were shared by his Colombian colleague, the plan was not accepted by the other Latin-American delegates, nor by the Secretary of State of the United States, and had therefore to be abandoned.

Mr. Blaine wished arbitration without limitations which might nullify its principle. Chili did not favor arbitration, except in a very restricted manner. Mexico and the Argentine Republic desired reasonable limitations, while all the other States accepted the idea without any limitation. The Argentine and Brazilian delegates introduced, on January 15, 1890, an arbitration project which contained, besides, declarations and stipulations against conquest.

The Argentine delegates were the nucleus of the opposition to the acquisition of territory by conquest, and naturally were joined by the South American nations which had lost territory in the then recent war with Chili, namely, Peru and Bolivia. The object of the Argentine delegates was to have the Conference declare that territory could not in any case, past or future, be acquired as a consequence of war. Such declaration would interfere with the acquisition by Chili of territory belonging to Peru and Bolivia. The United States delegate in the committee thought it inexpedient that the Conference should join in any such declaration, among other reasons because that would be

equivalent to condemning the acquisition of Mexican territory after the war of 1847 and 1848, and he could not therefore join the Argentines in accomplishing that object.

The text of the Argentine and Brazilian project appears in Mr. Henderson's letter of February 14, 1898, which will be found among the documents (No. 4) annexed to this paper, taken from the minutes of the meeting of the Conference held January 15, 1890. The Argentine-Brazilian project was referred, upon its presentation, to the Committee on General Welfare, and was not reported by that committee¹ until April 14th, near the close of the session of the Conference, which finished its work on the 18th and adjourned on the 19th of the same month.

While this project was in committee Mr. Blaine had two meetings with delegates at his residence; the first one with the representatives of Chili, the Argentine Republic, Brazil, and Mexico, whose views were supposed not to be in entire accord with Mr. Blaine's, although the Republican Government of Brazil had then authorized its delegates to accept the broadest possible plan of arbitration; and the second meeting with all the other delegates, who fully accepted the views of the Secretary of State.

The divergence of views between the United States and the Latin-American delegates about the details of the project was so great that Mr. Blaine had to take the matter into his own hands, and summoned all the members of the Committee on General Welfare to discuss the subject with him at his private residence, spending the greater part of two nights in that work. He suggested several changes to the Argentine-Brazilian project, which had been accepted by all the Latin-American members of the committee, and suggested further, as the only way in which matters could be adjusted, to divide the project into two parts, confining the first to a general arbitration, and the second to a declaration against conquest, which the Argentine delegates made a condition *sine qua non* to accept arbitration.

After the committee had accepted Mr. Blaine's suggestion they agreed upon a draft for the first project, which when completed was handed to Mr. Curtis with instructions to have a clean copy made of the same and submit it to Mr. Blaine for his information. Mr. Curtis did so and Mr. Blaine amended it considerably, and with such amendments, and others afterward made, it was reported by the committee. Mr. Curtis keeps in his office in this city (Washington) the original type-

¹ The verbal incorrections which are noticed in the Plan of Arbitration as reported by the committee, were due to the fact that Señor Cruz, the Guatemalan delegate to the Conference, and a member of the Committee of General Welfare, was entrusted to put into English the Spanish text of the project, who, although a good linguist and having a fair knowledge of the English language, was not then entirely proficient in the same.