Dr. Abbott's Resignation

The letter addressed by Dr. Lyman Abbott to his congregation, resigning the pastorate of Plymouth Church, will be found on another page, and is a full statement of his reasons for taking this step—a step which, on account of the National and historic position of Plymouth Church, is a matter of general public interest. Dr. Abbott's health is not impaired, but he finds it impossible to do justice any longer to his work while carrying the double burden of the administration of a great parish and a growing paper. Dr. Abbott will hereafter concentrate his energy and time upon his editorial work on The Outlook, of which he has been for twenty years the Editor-in-chief.

Spain Yields

It is not improbable that before the end of the week the treaty of peace between Spain and the United States will have been signed. At the joint session of the Peace Commission held in Paris on Monday of this week Spain completely and finally yielded to the demands of the United States with regard to the Philippines; and as all other points named in the protocol have already been discussed and a determination reached upon each, all that really remains to be done is to put in formal and diplomatic terms the treaty itself, and to have it signed by the representatives of the two countries. The reply of Spain, presented on Monday by Señor Montero Ríos, the President of the Spanish Commission, was quite brief. It said, in effect, that while the American propositions were, in Spain's opinion, inadmissible on legal principles, and not even a proper compromise, still, Spain has exhausted all diplomatic resources, and, for "reasons of patriotism and humanity, and to avoid the horrors of war, resigns herself to the power of the victor." With regard to the American offer of $20,000,000 for the Philippines, Spain's reply urges the view that this is a totally inadequate sum, and will be accepted, not as a compensation, but as a partial offset and a necessary condition of peace. No special reference was made, so far as the cable dispatches show, to the proposition of the United States with regard to the Caroline Islands or to some other minor points in the new demands presented by the American Commissioners at the last previous joint meeting. It is to be presumed, however, that in all these matters Spain will consent to the requests of the United States. After the presentation of Spain's reply the joint session of the Commission was adjourned until Wednesday of this week, when it is probable that a draft of the treaty will be submitted.

In Cuba

It is now understood that the Spanish Commission in Cuba will formally turn over Havana to the United States authorities on Christmas Day. Some progress has been made in the evacuation of the island by Spain, and at least one military province, that of Holguín, has already been evacuated. The Spanish soldiers have been paid some part of the money due them, and in consequence there have been no further mutinous demonstrations. The Cuban forces are reported to be gradually diminishing as the men return to their homes, but there has been no formal disbanding. The Commission
country if they so desire, even if this required a readjustment of the salaries.

The chief topics of discussion before the Anglo-American Commission continue to be reciprocity and the North Atlantic fisheries; and the fact that these present the only known points of serious difficulty would seem to confirm the report that before the Commission adjourned at Quebec there was an understanding that the other questions would not stand in the way of a general settlement. As regards the two chief questions, there is evidence of a change in the views of some of the Commissioners. Their names are not given, but their assertions show a nearer approach to harmony than has yet been manifest. The two items for which Canada most desires free entry into our market are lumber and fish. Of the former it may be said that the Michigan lumber interest still holds out against it, though Ontario is perfectly willing to remove the export duty on logs in return for free lumber; but it is not believed that our Commissioners, who are charged with the consideration of general instead of special interests, will allow this item to be obstructive. The question of free fish complicates the reciprocity with the North Atlantic fishery question in a way which calls for the complete settlement of the latter before fish can go on the free list. In our last issue reference was made to the Treaty of 1818 and the archaic interpretation of its first article insisted upon by the Canadians. The Bayard-Chamberlain Treaty, had it been ratified by the Senate, would have been a satisfactory disposal of the question; and our Commissioners are said to have become willing to make a concession which will remove the difficulty which was fatal in the opinion of the Senate. That treaty permitted our fishermen to purchase bait in Canadian waters and to transship their catch in bond through Canada, in return for free fish; but the Senate did not look upon this as a true concession, holding that we were already entitled to it in return for similar privileges enjoyed by Canadian fishermen in our waters. In order, it is said, to secure a favorable view by the Senate, our Commissioners have agreed to give up this claim of a right never admitted by the Canadians, who held strictly to the terms of the Treaty of 1818. Free fish, in that case, can be held to be a substantial return for the privilege granted to our fishermen of purchasing bait and transshipping in bond. Thus the question stands at present.

The military party in France is apparently entirely inaccessible to ideas, or the significance of current events. Although under the gravest charges which can be brought against officers and gentlemen, it pursues its steady policy of keeping the truth from the people. Great indignation is being felt in Paris and throughout France at the determination of General Zurlinden, the Military Governor of Paris, to try Colonel Picquart before a court martial, on the charge of revealing military secrets. Everybody understands that this charge simply means that Colonel Picquart, with the courage of a soldier and the honor of a gentleman, has been trying to secure justice for Captain Dreyfus. It is known that he has already been subjected to persecution, and his trial by court martial at the very moment when the Dreyfus case is before the Court of Cassation is interpreted as a breach of the decencies of judicial procedure and a defance of French sentiment. General Zurlinden declares that he is "acting in the light of his own conscience;" but it must be remembered that the military conscience, as disclosed in some parts of Europe, shows no connection whatever with ethical principles. General Zurlinden's obstinate persistence in the course which he has marked out may lead to an acute collision between the military and civic authorities. The position of the Government on this aspect of the Dreyfus matter has not as yet been made public.

France and Italy France has been quick to seize the opportunity, offered her by the defeat of Spain, of reviving the community sense between the Latin peoples and of making herself the official head of the Latin races. The making of a new commercial treaty between France and Italy is an important step in this direction. For many years past the two countries have stood apart, and there have been many minor causes of difference which have created a sensitive feeling in both countries. The French have resented the alliance of Italy with Germany and Austria, in view of the aid which France rendered Italy in securing autonomy. Under
DANIEL WEBSTER, in the opening of his celebrated Reply to Hayne, remarked that it was decidedly not useless, after all that had been said in the discussion, to return to its beginning and state again what it was all about. Perhaps the same thing may be said now about the Dreyfus case, which has been more or less before the public for the last four years, and which we do hope may now be reaching its final crisis. What will be attempted here is, not to provide with arguments either those who believe the ex-Captain of artillery to be guilty, or those who hold him to be, according to Major du Paty de Clam’s dramatic expression, the greatest martyr of this century, but simply to state those facts which lie on the surface, and which, in the heat of the discussion to which this celebrated case has given birth, may have been somewhat forgotten by the public.

Late in the fall of the year 1894, a Paris newspaper, which had then gained neither the notoriety nor the circulation it now possesses, “La Libre Parole,” announced that a Jewish officer, who belonged to the offices of the General Staff in the War Department, had been put under arrest and was soon to undergo trial under an accusation of treason.

Although “La Libre Parole” was known to be a fanatical anti-Semitic newspaper, and as such had time and again leveled at members of the Jewish race accusations which had proved totally groundless, the statement...
at once produced in France the greatest excitement. In the midst of the violent discussions to which political questions had given rise since, and even before, the establishment of the Republic, the army had been the one subject upon which the French had felt that, in sentiment at least, they were all absolutely united. Especially had it been so since the disasters of the Franco-German War, and through the long and persevering efforts which had been made with the object of reconstituting the military strength of the nation. An accusation of treason against an officer in possession of important military secrets could not fail, therefore, deep-ly to stir public opinion; and it was at once admitted that no such accusation would be formulated unless it rested upon the most serious grounds. Surprise was, however, expressed at the channel by which the public was made acquainted with a fact of such national importance.

It was soon learned that the statement of "La Libre Parole" was correct. The name of the suspected officer was Alfred Dreyfus. He had already been incarcerated in the military prison of Cherche-Midi for more than two weeks. He belonged to an Alsatian family, and was one of the most brilliant officers of the French army. After graduating from the École Polytechnique and the special artillery school at Fontainebleau, he had for a while served in an artillery regiment, and then entered the École Supérieure de la Guerre, which is designed to provide the General Staff with officers familiar with every branch of military science. It was owing to the simple force of his demonstrated merit that he had been called to the confidential position he occupied in the central offices of the General Staff. It was also stated, and not denied, that he belonged to a wealthy family, and that his fortune placed him, in appearance at least, above the reach of temptations of a pecuniary nature.

There was, therefore, from the start in the case a mysterious element. What motives could have induced a son of Alsace to betray the country to which Alsace remained so passionately attached, in spite of its annexation to Germany? What motives could have induced a Hebrew to betray the country which of all countries in Europe had proved most generous to his race? The anti-Semitic papers had a ready answer to these questions. Captain Dreyfus was a traitor because he was a Jew—that is, a man without a country. But the credit of the anti-Semitic papers was then very small, and in the press as well as in public opinion there was, on the whole, a widespread disposition to suspend judgment until after the meeting of the military tribunal before which the suspected captain was to appear, and a hope that, after all, it would be found that the ranks of the beloved French army did not contain any traitor.

This hope was doomed to disappointment. The military tribunal met on December 19, 1894. The proceedings were secret. It was said that a publication of the evidence might have brought about a declaration of war of Germany against France. The culprit was ably defended by the foremost criminal lawyer of the Paris bar, Maître Demange, and at the close of the trial was declared guilty as per the indictment. The charge was that of having communicated to a foreign power documents of such a nature that they might result in a declaration of war. The penalty was that of degradation from the army and transportation for life in a fortified spot. It is to be noted here that one of the chief witnesses for the accusation had been an officer holding a high position in the secret information depart-
ment of the War Office, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry.

What had been thus far the attitude of the man who had just been declared by his peers a traitor to his country? Consistently, continuously, from the very first day of his imprisonment, he had protested his innocence, and no word had escaped him which might be construed into an admission of guilt. What was his attitude after sentence had been passed upon him? In public it remained what it had been before. He went through the terrible ordeal of public degradation in the presence of detachments from all the bodies of troops then garrisoned in Paris, surrounded by thousands and thousands of spectators, whose hearts were filled with execration for the crime of which he had been declared guilty, and who found even his terrible punishment too lenient for such a crime. He never flinched. From the moment when he was brought before the troops to the end of that terrible marching past in front of every detachment, after having the insignia of his rank and his uniform buttons torn from him, and after having been proclaimed unworthy to belong to the French army, his firmness never deserted him. Hardly any words escaped his lips except these: "I am innocent! Long live France!" Was his attitude the same when far from the public gaze? Here the cautious historian must refrain from making any positive statement. The authorities contend that some words that escaped the condemned man contained a virtual admission of his guilt; his friends deny it; and we do not intend to enter here upon any discussion of the weight of evidence upon one side or the other.

On the whole, public opinion in France accepted the verdict as a just one. There was no disposition to doubt either the correctness of the proceedings or the intelligence and honesty of the military judges. It was known, moreover, that at the War Office, from the Minister, General Mercier, down, everybody was convinced of Dreyfus's guilt; and confidence in the motives and ability of the members of the War Office was then universal in France. Here and there only some of the co-religionists of the degraded captain refused to believe in the guilt of one of their race; and it was soon known, in addition, that two other men, at least, were firm believers in his innocence. One was his counsel, Maître Demange, who declared pub-
merits of the case, of which, moreover, very little was known; and what interested the public was to learn how the sentence that had just been passed would be carried out. It was universally regretted that the military code had not allowed the passing of a death sentence, and any alleviation of the penalty would have been universally condemned. It was soon announced that the spot selected for the enforcement of the judgment of the court was a small island near the coast of French Guiana, known by the name of Devil's Island. There the Captain was to remain alone with his keepers, and every precaution was to be taken against his possible escape. The programme was carried out to the letter, and soon Alfred Dreyfus was on his way to his terrible abode of confinement.

Chief among those who considered him a victim either of a mysterious fate or of a base conspiracy were, of course, the members of his family. Whatever opinion be held about the man, no words of praise can do more than simple justice to the admirable wife whose faith in him never wavered for a moment and whose efforts in his behalf have known neither rest nor discouragement. She first asked to be allowed to share her husband's captivity, but this, of course, had to be denied. At the same time, surrounded by her relatives and a few friends, and guided by the experience and devotion of Maitre Demange, she went to work, trying to discover some flaw in the procedure which had resulted in her husband's conviction, and which had upon appeal been upheld by the highest court in the land, the Court of Cassation. Her hope was that the discovery of some new fact might enable her to appeal to the Minister of Justice for a revision of the trial. She and her friends also tried to influence public opinion, and their warm advocacy of the ex-Captain found a ready ear among the Hebrews in and outside of France, and also, to a certain extent, in the most intellectual part of the Paris population. Protestants and freethinkers especially were impressed by the fact that nearly every one of the officers of the War Department who had been most hostile to Dreyfus were graduates of a celebrated Jesuit school in Paris, which made a specialty of fitting young men for admission to the two great military schools, the École de Saint Cyr and the École Polytechnique. Ground, therefore, had been well prepared for a pamphlet which was published in Belgium in the fall of 1895 under the title of "Une erreur Judiciaire," and the author of which, though at first not named on the title-page, was soon known to be a talented literary critic of Hebrew parentage, M. Bernard Lazare.
From that moment the question of Dreyfus's guilt or innocence was before the public. Outside of France opinion seemed to be almost unanimous that the military court had sentenced a guiltless man. The Governments of Germany and Italy, the two countries which were believed to have been the beneficiaries of Dreyfus's treason, took pains to assert that they never had had the slightest dealings with him, and it was even reported that the German Emperor had gone so far as to state that he knew Dreyfus to be innocent. In France opinion was divided. While the mass of the nation persisted in the belief that seven officers of the French army, sitting as a military court, could not have been capable of sentencing a brother officer for treason unless his guilt was absolutely demonstrated to them, the number grew daily, among the most intellectual members of the population, of those who believed that there had been some gross irregularity in the trial, and that the case for the prosecution was not as strong in law as it was said to be. It was stated that the chief proof against Dreyfus was a bordereau or list of documents sent to a foreign embassy, which he was charged with and denied having written, and that the experts who had examined the document had been divided as to its authorship. This division of public opinion was made more dangerous and violent by the injection into the case of race feeling. Up to the opening of the Dreyfus case there had been very little of this in France. The anti-Semitic leaders had but a small following, much smaller than had been the case in Germany during the Stoecker agitation, or than was actually the case in Austria under the leadership of Dr. Lueger and Prinz von Lichtenstein. But the Dreyfus case made matters decidedly worse in this respect. Anti-Semitic newspapers pointed to it as a proof that they were justified in their hatred of the Jews. They called attention to the fact that all over the world, and even in France, Hebrews were more ready to believe that seven French officers had sentenced an innocent man than that a Jew had been proved a traitor, and they soon found ears willing to listen to them when they accused the whole race of hatred against the French army. The almost unanimous stand taken abroad, especially in England and Germany, against the finding of the court did not help matters; rather the reverse. It was considered an intrusion of foreigners into matters that did not concern them. It enabled the anti-Semitic papers to state the case thus to the people: On one side the foreigners and the Jews, on the other our own generals; choose between the two. As for the Government, which was time and again questioned in the Chambers about the case, its answer was always the same: The Dreyfus case is res adjudicata, and unless an application is made in due form to the Minister of Justice for a revision of the case, an application based upon new facts which were not known at the time of the 1895 trial, there is no longer any Dreyfus case.

That there still was such a case became, however, evident when Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, who had been for quite a while at the head of the secret information department in the War Office, was suddenly removed from his post and sent to command a regiment in Tunisia, for it was known at once that the reason of this decision was a difference of opinion between the Lieutenant-Colonel and his brother officers in regard to the whole affair. About the same time the rumor grew that Dreyfus's conviction had...
been procured only by the production before the military judges of secret documents which had not been placed in evidence during the trial, and which had never been shown to the defendant or to his counsel. Finally, in the fall of 1897, it was announced that one of the most eminent members of the Republican party, M. Scheurer-Kestner, Vice-President of the Senate, had become convinced of Dreyfus's innocence and would ask the Government to grant him a new trial. Events after that began to follow each other in rapid succession.

M. Scheurer-Kestner's appeal to Prime Minister Mélite, and to General Billot, then Minister of War, was not followed by any practical results, except that in an interpellation to the Cabinet an ex-Minister of War, M. Godefroy Cavaignac, insisted that there was in the hands of the Minister a report of Captain Lebrun-Renault, who had had Dreyfus in his keeping on the day of the military degradation, and that that report contained an admission of his guilt by the ex-Captain. This, it must be said, was at once indignantly denied by Dreyfus's friends and family, but it was later shown that there was some foundation for M. Cavaignac's assertion.

The next step in the development of this dramatic case was a letter from M. Mathieu Dreyfus, a brother of Alfred Dreyfus. This letter, addressed to the War Minister, plainly stated that Alfred Dreyfus had been sentenced for another man's crime, and it gave that man's name. He was Count Ferdinand Valsin Esterhazy, a major in a regiment of infantry, and was declared to have been the author of the bordereau which had played an important part in the trial of 1894. At the same time facsimiles of the bordereau began to appear in the daily papers, together with specimens of the handwriting both of Dreyfus and Esterhazy, and numbers of people began to declare that these documents pointed to Esterhazy and not to Dreyfus as the guilty man. Among those who thus openly declared themselves was M. Émile Zola, the celebrated novelist. The publication in the daily newspapers of letters purporting to have been written by Esterhazy, and which were grossly insulting to the French army, compelled the War Minister to proceed against him, and he was sent before a military court, similar to the one which had judged Dreyfus. His trial was a short one, conducted part of the time with open, part with closed, doors, and he was acquitted. The next day, in a paper, "L'Aurore," edited by a prominent politician who had espoused Dreyfus's cause, M. George Clémenceau, appeared a letter in which Émile Zola, using the most violent expressions he could find in the French language, denounced the Esterhazy trial as a mere sham, accused the War Min-
ister and all the officers of the General Staff of being members of a conspiracy of fraud and deceit, proclaimed Dreyfus innocent, and dared the Government to prosecute him.

The challenge was answered. The prosecution of Zola was decided upon, but it was determined to base the accusation simply upon a few lines of the letter, charging the judges in the Esterhazy trial with having acquitted, upon orders, a man whom they held to be guilty, and not upon the whole letter.

In the trial, which took place before the Court of Assizes of Paris, every effort was made by M. Zola's counsel, Maitre Labori, in order to bring about a complete examination of the Dreyfus case, but these efforts were generally thwarted by the presiding judge, Justice Delégruche, and the trial resulted in Zola's conviction. He was sentenced to one year of imprisonment and a fine of five thousand francs, for libel against the military court.

A sensational incident of the trial had been the assertion by one of the witnesses, General de Pellieux, that there was in the War Department a letter, written in 1896, which contained additional and absolutely convincing proof of Dreyfus's guilt. General de Pellieux's assertion was corroborated by the Chief of the General Staff, General de Boisdeffre.

One of the results of the trial was that it began to be generally admitted that Dreyfus's conviction had been procured by means of secret documents which had not been in evidence at the trial. Upon this Madame Dreyfus based a new request for revision, which was answered negatively by the Government, as they held that the fact of the introduction of secret documents had not yet been proved.

Upon appeal, the Court of Cassation annulled the proceedings against Zola, upon the ground that they ought to have been initiated, not by the War Minister, but by the libeled court itself; and when an attempt was made to begin a new trial, Maitre Labori managed to force a postponement of the same, and Zola disappeared from the country.

In the meanwhile new elections had taken place, and a new Cabinet, of more radical tendencies than the Méline Cabinet, had come into office. It had for its War Minister M. Cavaignac, who, a few days after taking office, delivered before the House a speech setting forth some of the proofs of Dreyfus's guilt. Among these proofs he quoted the letter of 1896, which had been alluded to in the Zola trial. The next day, in an open letter, Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart, who had been retired on account of his advocacy of Dreyfus's case, offered to prove that this letter was a forgery.

A few weeks later Lieutenant-Colonel Henry admitted that he had forged the letter himself. He was instantly put under arrest, and a few hours after being led to the Mont Valérien fortress committed suicide.

Colonel Henry's confession and suicide brought about a complete revulsion of public feeling. Irrespective of their opinion about Dreyfus's innocence or guilt, the people insisted that a trial in which a self-confessed forger had been one of the princi-
pal witnesses must be revised, and it was soon known that the Cabinet agreed with the people.

In spite of the opposition of two successive War Ministers, the first steps prescribed by the law for the revision of a criminal trial were soon taken. A letter of the Minister of Justice placed the whole matter in the hands of the Court of Cassation.

On October 25 the Houses, which had adjourned for their summer vacation three months before, resumed their sittings. Their first session will ever remain a memorable one in the parliamentary annals of France. Goaded into complete loss of self-control by an insulting attack of the anti-Semitic leader, Paul Déroulède, General Chanoine announced from the speaking stand his resignation of the office of War Minister—not, however, until after asserting that he shared his two predecessors' views in regard to Dreyfus's guilt and the inadvisability of a revision of his trial. The discussion which followed this unprecedented announcement resulted in a defeat for the Brisson Cabinet.

Two days later the Criminal Chamber of the Court of Cassation met, in consequence of the letter of the Minister of Justice referring to it the question of the revision of the trial of 1894. It heard three very able arguments: first, one by one of the Justices, Justice Bard, who had been commissioned, according to the practice of the Court, to prepare a preliminary report; second, the requisitoire of Procureur-Général Manau, representing the people; third, an address by the lawyer representing the family, Maitre Mornard. Every one of these arguments had for its conclusion a request to the Court to order a revision of the judgment of 1894 and a retrial of Dreyfus. Procureur-Général Manau even asked for a suspension of the penalty inflicted by the military tribunal. Already begun to hear witnesses and examine the documents relating to the case.

The Cabinet which opened the revision proceedings is no longer in office, but the new Cabinet, which, curiously enough, has for its head the Prime Minister of December, 1894, M. Charles Dupuy, has neither the desire nor the power to interfere with the court of supreme jurisdiction in France.

The ground is now cleared. Nearly every one who was concerned in the Dreyfus and Esterhazy trials has had to step aside. Esterhazy himself has been put out of the army by decision of a military Board of Inquiry and expelled from the Legion of Honor by the Council of the Order. General de Boisdeffre resigned his position of Chief of the General Staff immediately upon the detection of Colonel Henry's forgery. Colonel du Paty de Clam, who was one of the chief informers against Dreyfus, has been put on the retired list. General Gonse, who was at the head of the secret information department of the War Office, has left the War Office, and Lieutenant-Colonel Picquart is in the military prison of Cherche-Midi.

This is the past history and the present state of the case. Let us hope that the new trial of Dreyfus, which is now inevitable, will clear for all sincere minds the question of his guilt or of his innocence.