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EDITORIAL

Colombia and the Monroe Doctrine.

If it be true that the Monroe doctrine is threatened by an alliance between Germany and Colombia, as Washington dispatches of the 10th intimate, whom shall we blame? Hardly can we blame Germany, an Empire which with large commercial interests in South America and great military ambitions at her own capital, seeks a governmental foothold on the American continent as naturally as water seeks its level. Shall we blame Colombia, then, if that Republic enters into an alliance with Germany which involves a cession to the great European empire of blood and iron of Colombian harbors on the Atlantic coast, even within "striking distance" of the Panama Canal?



We might indeed have blamed Colombia for this before the Panama incident. Until then Colombia and the United States were united in a treaty which, in view of the Monroe doctrine, bound the latter to protect the former from European invasion, and conversely, in virtue of the same doctrine, bound Colombia to make no territorial concessions to any European power. But when the United States repudiated its obligations under that treaty by its ruthlessly lawless conduct with reference to the Panama secession, it not only released Colombia from her implied obligation to respect the Monroe doctrine, but it imposed upon her the necessity of disregarding it in self-

defense. This release and this necessity are emphasized by the persistent refusal of the United States to arbitrate the Panama question with reference to that treaty with Colombia.



If difficulties arise between the United States and Germany over the cession of territory to Germany by Colombia, the fault is clearly with the administration of President Roosevelt for riding rough shod over the Colombia-American treaty, and with the administration of President Taft for refusing Colombia's urgent and repeated requests for arbitration. Very well may Colombia feel that a Monroe doctrine which thus exposes her to *American* aggression, might wisely be modified by guarantees of *German* protection. Reasonably may her statesmen argue that if these harbor concessions had been made to Germany before the secession of Panama from her federation of States, Mr. Roosevelt would not in a twinkling have recognized Panama as a sovereign nation, or if he had Mr. Taft would not have refused arbitration of the act as a breach of the Colombian treaty.



Foreign Potentates in American Politics.

Those Catholic ecclesiastics who persistently try to plunge their Church into American politics, as a church, may begin now to see some of the signs of danger to which we have repeatedly called attention.* Perhaps they themselves won't see these signs even now; but the signs may be seen and heeded by American Catholics who have no sympathy with this ecclesiastical aggression and yet would be involved in any catastrophe that might result from it. The particular sign to which we allude is the reported organization of the "Guardians of Liberty," with General Miles as "a leading light."



This organization is said to aim at preventing the election of Roman Catholics to public office. Now the exclusion from public office or citizenship of any person for religious reasons is intolerable to the spirit of democracy. There is no reason why Roman Catholics should not be citizens and public officials, no reason why they should not participate in all political activities. Indeed there would be no reason of citizenship why they should not bring even religious questions into politics, provided they were actuated by their own motives of citizenship and not by obedience to

authoritative instructions from a foreign ruler. This latter is the real point at issue.



We do not say that any American Catholic is governed in his politics by instructions from Rome. We know many Catholics who distinctly are not. We understand that the imputation is denied by or for all Catholics. But there is that in the history of the Catholic hierarchy in the past, there is that in its current history in Europe, and there is that in the conduct of some of its ecclesiastics in the United States, which affords reason for just fears that American Catholics are subject to foreign control, not only in their religion but in their politics. Even now the Socialist administration in Milwaukee is under attack from Catholic pulpits in circumstances which create an impression of the exercise of ecclesiastical authority.



Many Catholics in Milwaukee are opposing this crusade, more or less openly; but the fact itself lends color to those suspicions and fears of the "Guardians of Liberty" which they express in these terms: "We maintain it to be inconsistent with and destructive of free government to appoint or elect to political or military office any person who openly or secretly concedes superior authority to any foreign political or ecclesiastical power whatsoever." The fears which that clause expresses—and they are by no means upon a small scale in the public opinion of this country—could be allayed readily and effectually by Catholics themselves. If those of them, both clerical and lay, who hold themselves in freedom from Roman dictation in American politics, would promptly and publicly denounce the utterances of ecclesiastics who speak authoritatively as such in political affairs, there would soon be no such plausible reason for "Guardians of Liberty" as it must be conceded that there is now.



The Seattle Election.

With the election of one of their own group for Mayor of Seattle and the polling of over 12,000 votes for the incorporation of their most ultra preliminary demands into the city charter, the Singletaxers of Seattle have nothing to mourn over. On the mayoralty their candidate was opposed by the candidate of disreputable interests that make money out of vice, supported naturally enough by reputable interests that make money out of the economic conditions upon which money-making vice flourishes; and, although by a narrow

*See *Publics* of October 6, 1911, page 1017; November 3, 1911, page 1115, and November 24, 1911, page 1186.