

clambering into office, a compact with the Parnellites: men, be it observed, who not only seek the dismemberment of the realm, trample on the national flag and insult the Heir to the Crown, but are leagued with and subsidized by American Fenianism, a foreign association formed for the invasion of the Queen's dominions. One article of the compact was the abandonment of the Crimes Act, another was the betrayal of Lord Spencer's reputation for the vengeance of the men against whose murderous domination he had defended loyal life and property in Ireland. The second article has now been carried into execution under cover of the paltry subterfuge of substituting "personal" for formal inquiry, which only makes baseness doubly base. That Lord Spencer was guilty of putting the innocent to death by means of suborned evidence and letting the real murderers escape for a political purpose, Lord Salisbury, Lord Randolph Churchill and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach knew, all of them, to be as foul a calumny as ever came even from the lips of Mr. Parnell. They know that the insult sullies the honour of national justice, not that of the upright and kind-hearted statesman against whom it is directly levelled. But they have sold themselves for office as never British Ministers, even in the most corrupt times, sold themselves before. It is something to see that the national sentiment of honour is not dead, but finds vent in the Press, and not only through Liberal organs like the *Daily News*, or neutral organs like the *Times* and *Telegraph*, but through honest Conservative organs like the *Standard*. The hollowness of Lord Salisbury's outward bearing and pretensions extends beyond his vaunted courage. Twice in full Parliament and in face of Europe, in the Schouvaloff case, and again in that of Tunis, has he been convicted of prevarication, and in the question between him and Lord Derby as to the internal action of the Beaconsfield Cabinet, though witnesses could not be called, nobody doubts that Lord Derby told the truth. When a municipal politician like Mr. Chamberlain, in his greed for power forgets his loyalty to his colleagues and breaks the honourable rules of public life, it is felt that he is only acting after his kind. Stronger indignation is aroused by profligacy and falsehood cradled in high traditions and placed above vulgar temptation. But again we see that character is not really elevated, in most cases, by artificial rank. To natures exceptionally high, it may be, all rank presents itself as responsibility, while all wealth presents itself as a trust. But the usual effect of artificial rank is to debilitate and debase. The bearer of a title feels not that his obligations are higher than those of the untitled, but that he is placed above ordinary obligations, and that he may do ignoble things and yet remain noble.

If the Prime Minister of Canada had recently described the American Government in a public speech as morally either a bankrupt or a swindler, and the Minister of Marine and Fisheries had wound up a series of similar compliments to the Cabinet at Washington by telling them that they lied as only Yankees could, we should be prepared for a little friction in the Fisheries negotiations. Changing the persons, we must expect a little friction in the negotiations with Russia about the delimitation of Afghanistan. Lord Salisbury will also deem it necessary, no doubt, to pay a decent tribute in the shape of resolute rhetoric to the Jingoism to which before his accession to office he appealed. But there can be no doubt that he accepts the Gladstone settlement, and we cannot believe that there is any real danger of a renewal of the quarrel. Stockjobbers, of course, are at work. At last there is a recognition of the fact that there is a regular manufacture of Russophobic news, the central works of which are in the Semitic Press of Vienna and Berlin. It cannot be denied, however, that Russia is always kept in a state of restlessness by her desire to reach an open sea, and that her attitude is likely to be always more or less hostile to the power which makes it a settled rule of its policy to bar her way. That her pressure on the northern boundary of India has for its object not the invasion of Hindostan, but the removal of the obstacle to her progress elsewhere, is the opinion of many good judges, and seems at least a plausible supposition. She can reach an open sea at the Dardanelles, on the Gulf of Scanderoon or on the Persian Gulf. To repel her from the Gulf of Scanderoon was probably the main object of British statesmen in occupying Cyprus and adding that isolated possession to the burdens and dangers of the Empire. Her latest movements, if they are correctly reported, seem to point in the direction of the Persian Gulf, in which case, if England persists in her policy of exclusion, trouble may come in that quarter. On the Persian Gulf the presence of Russia as a maritime power would unquestionably be more of a menace to the Indian Empire than it would in the Eastern Mediterranean. Persia is hopelessly decrepit and utterly corrupt. To conquer her would be easy, to buy her easier still.

The formidable part of a war with Russia is that it would, in all probability, bring a war with France in its train. It is impossible to look into

any of the organs, or watch any of the indications of French sentiment, without being convinced that the hatred of England, though utterly causeless and irrational, is as strong as ever. At Paris, the other day, a mere report that some British guests in a hotel had opposed the holding of a ball was sufficient to provoke a regular demonstration of anti-British feeling. Sir Charles Dilke's ardent flirtation with the French Government has come to nothing: so completely that it is said to have disgusted him with diplomacy altogether. It is not likely, perhaps, that France would actually enter the field at once as the ally of Russia; but she would take advantage of England's distress to aggress upon her and insult her, till at last they would come to blows. The French fleet being added to the Russian, British commerce could hardly escape ruin for the time, and the multitudes who depend upon it would be deprived of bread. That Germany would take the part of England is a most precarious assumption: if she did, it would be from policy and a desire to give France a quietus, not from affection; for she too seems to feel an envious dislike of the insular power, and she has been taught by the blatancy of the Jingoism to regard England as a jealous antagonist in her new career of colonization. Too probably, like the commander of a German corps at the battle of Steenkirk, when urged to hasten to the support of a British division which was defending itself against overwhelming odds, she would prefer standing by and "seeing how the bull-dogs fight." At Steenkirk the bull-dogs fought desperately, but were cut off almost to a man. Mr. Bright, pouring his sorrows into the sympathetic bosom of a pacific Frenchman, laments that the progress of democracy has failed to put an end to war. Human nature is not changed quite so easily as political institutions. Self-taxation will tell in time; but time will be required for it to tell.

There are indeed enthusiasts who fancy that there is a way of putting an end to war at once and for ever. Their talisman is the discovery of an all-destroying projectile. An invention of wholesale slaughter thus becomes the dream of the philanthropists, and the infernal powers themselves are to be made ministers of peace. It would be a curious, and for mankind at large might prove an awkward, part of the discovery that it would invest its first possessor with omnipotence, and enable him to compel all nations, on pain of annihilation, to receive him as universal emperor. The *London Spectator*, in a paper discussing this vision at great length, pointed out that the improvement of weapons has so far resulted only in a change of drill and tactics without banishing or even diminishing war. It is certainly curious that the rate of slaughter, instead of keeping pace with the increased range and precision of firearms and artillery, should have remained stationary, as it appears to have done, or rather has diminished. The rifled breechloader does nothing like the execution which was done by the bow. At Crecy the French dead were counted by heralds on the field, and their number exceeded thirty thousand. This was mainly the work of, according to Froissart, five thousand two hundred archers. At Batoche, we are told, nineteen thousand rounds were fired, and by good marksmen, besides Gatling ammunition and shells; and the number of killed and wounded on the side of the Half-breeds was about thirty. Batoche was not a normal case, it is true, because the enemy were in rifle-pits; but still the contrast is striking. The archer was not confused by smoke or noise, nor could he discharge his arrow without drawing the bow to his ear and taking some sort of aim, while many soldiers in a modern battle are said not to bring the rifle to the shoulder or take any aim at all. But we must wait for a great sea-fight before we make up our minds what effect scientific invention is likely to produce on war. From naval war at all events all the romance, all the pride, pomp, and circumstance, which largely stimulated the martial spirit, must now have fled. We shall see whether the souls of men are to be fired by the prospect of what Farragut called going to—the nether world—in a tea-kettle.

In the British character there is an element of blind pugnacity, accumulated through centuries of war, with which a statesman has always to deal. But it is strange that in Canada any one should fail to feel grateful to a British minister who strives, consistently with national honour, to avert a war with a maritime power. The writer of "An Australian Appeal to the English Democracy" in *Macmillan*, calls on the promoters of Federation, to which he appears personally favourable, to see that naval protection is at once provided for the colonies. Land forces, he seems to think, Australia could furnish for her own defence, though it may be suspected that he overrates the power of a militia to stand before even a small invading force of regulars. But with regard to the prospect of a naval war, he says that a German purchased cruiser, or the ships of the Messageries Maritimes, would clear the sea of Australian commerce. Were this done, he adds, the result would be national bankruptcy; were the influx of capital stopped,