

IN Eastern Europe the outlook is still stormy; Servia on one side and Greece on the other are full of military excitement, and a general rush is commencing for the spoils of the moribund Turk. The Turk also is preparing for war; he is hopelessly bankrupt and destitute of material resources. But, in spite of the corruption of the Government and the decadence of the Empire, the descendants of the conquering hordes retain their military qualities, and like a tiger wounded to death Turkey may yet give the incautious hunter an ugly stroke of the paw. It is not likely, however, that war will actually break out. The Great Powers have a veto, which, if they can come to any sort of agreement among themselves, they will certainly use. The chief arbiter of the situation is Bismarck, who appears disposed to arrest the work of territorial spoliation and save for the present what remains of Turkey. A curious suspicion has dawned that he has an eye on the Asiatic Provinces of the Turkish Empire as a future field for German emigration. Lord Salisbury appears to acquiesce without resistance in the demolition of the most vital portion of the Treaty on which rests his diplomatic renown. It is instructive to remember that he and Lord Beaconsfield were actually prepared to leave Berlin and declare war in case this all-important article had not been conceded to them. Founded on the sand of Turkish connection, the diplomatic edifice was doomed to speedy ruin; and its wreck is a warning to Diplomacy that though she may make fancy maps she cannot alter real tendencies or relations. Russia evidently takes umbrage at the consolidation of a strong Christian principality on her road to Constantinople, and her jealousy proves that the true mode of curbing her ambition is not to prop up Turkey, which quakes at her frown, but to foster the growth of independent nationalities.

IF, as is stated, the Conservative and Republican papers in France with one accord ascribe the result of the elections to the Tonquin expedition, we must suppose that we were mistaken in ascribing it mainly to the recoil caused by the headlong violence of the Republicans in their attacks upon religion. Let it be noted, however, that it is to the Conservative party that the gain has chiefly accrued, though it is the Socialistic Radicals that are most opposed to a policy of military aggrandizement. Every symptom that we have observed of late has betokened, if not a religious reaction, a reaction against rampant, aggressive and tyrannical irreligion. The opinions of our most trustworthy informants on the spot pointed the same way, and so did the defeat of the Liberals in Belgium, of which the main cause unquestionably was their unmeasured hostility to religious education. But if a dislike of the policy of military aggrandizement was really the cause of the political revolution in France, the day was a happy one for France herself and for Europe: since we may infer that the unquiet and rapacious ambition which for two centuries has incessantly vexed Europe and retarded European civilization is at last sinking to rest; and that even in the land of Louis XIV. and Napoleon the government of the people—the government of those who bleed and pay—is opposed, as in reason it should be opposed, to war. The hope dawns that in time there may be a popular revolt against the blood-tax of the conscription, and that an end may be put to the European deadlock of bloated armaments by the franchise in the hands of the suffering masses. We only hope that it was not the ill-success of the French Government in Tonquin that was its crime. "Woe to the vanquished!" was the utterance of a Gaul.

THE Scott Act enthusiasts seem bent upon proving more clearly than ever that fanaticism is subversive of morality. No duty can be plainer or more important than that of voting at elections for the man who is best qualified to serve the State. In a democratic community, where so much depends on the right use of the electoral trust, the obligation is pre-eminently strong. Yet here are a set of people, pretending to superior morality and identifying their movement with the cause of God, who deliberately propose and exhort others to abuse their electoral trust for the purpose of excluding from the service of the State in all departments legislative, executive and municipal, down to the School Trusteeships, all who presume to differ from them as to the expediency of a particular mode of dealing with a particular social question. The point immediately threatened by these political boycotters is the municipal government of Toronto, from which they are resolved to cashier everybody who does not repeat their shibboleth. The interests of the city are various and the qualifications needed for its administration are equally so; but one qualification is to be paramount: that of entire submission to the will of the promoters of the Scott Act. Our sanitary system, our water supply, our public schools, our police, our finances—everything upon which the health, comfort and well-being of our citizens depends—may go to the dogs; the one thing needful is that all power and all public emolument shall be in the hands of the friends of the Scott Act. Temperance, however well-established, will not do; even total abstinence will not do; nor will adherence to the plan of

the Liberal Temperance Union, to the plan of High Licenses, or to any policy but the Scott Act. Statesman after statesman, legislature after legislature, on both sides of the Atlantic has tried to deal with the question and has confessedly failed. Massachusetts has had to repeal her law, and Iowa is apparently about to do the same. Prohibitionists differ among themselves; while notoriously some of the best and ablest of men, Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright among the number, are opposed on the highest grounds to prohibitive legislation altogether. But the promoters of the Scott Act are infallible, and not to agree with them is mortal sin. We know very well what will happen. The test will be refused by conscientious dissidents, who will thus be excluded from the service for which they are of all men morally the best qualified: it will be taken with enthusiasm by hypocritical knaves—tipplers, perhaps, in secret—who use a social agitation as a ladder wherewith to climb into political office, and some of whom have not failed here, as well as in the United States, to mingle with the sincere leaders of the movement; it will be taken with reluctance by men who are not knaves but whose consciences are weak and who will be demoralized and depraved by their submission. There is hardly a viler act than constraining a public man by threats of loss of votes to act against his convictions and to profess what he does not believe. Citizens, however, who care for liberty and public right now see what they have before them: that which is now done by the Scott Act men may be done hereafter by the Anti-Vaccination men, by the Anti-Tobacco men or by the devotees of any other tyrannical crotchet. What would be the condition of legislatures when this practice became general? If the game of boycotting is to be played on one side it must be played on both sides, and we shall have to mark down and to oppose on all occasions the men who resort to such practices for the coercion of their fellow-citizens. Does the Methodist Church, whose pulpits have become the organs of the Scott Act, sanction political boycotting? If it does, let us hope that the other Churches do not; for when they do, though they may be teachers of something higher than morality, teachers of morality they will no longer be.

THE members of the Church Temperance Society of the State of New York, as we learn from *Harper's Weekly*, have formally abandoned Prohibition, being convinced by experience that it is "absolutely impossible in great cities." They have embraced instead a policy identical in principle with that of the Liberal Temperance Union here. A Bill has been framed and will be brought before the Legislature of New York, founded on the recognition of "a broad distinction between distilled and fermented liquors." For the sale of distilled liquors it is proposed to enact a license fee of \$1,000; for the sale of fermented liquors a fee only of \$100. Evidently this practical mode of dealing with the question by the discouragement of whiskey and the substitution of beer, cider, and native wines, is growing in favour among the reasonable friends of Temperance in the United States. The tendency of prohibitory legislation is exactly in the opposite direction: it drives the people to the use of whiskey and other ardent spirits, as the only liquors which are easily smuggled. It practically discriminates, but in favour of whiskey. "When experience," says *Harper's Weekly*, "shows that prohibitory laws not only do not prevent intemperance, but breed evasion and contempt of the authority of law, it is no answer to say that dram-selling is a curse. If the object be to limit its evil results, experience shows that merely to repeat that it must be prohibited is practically to increase the evil." These are the words of common sense; but to crusaders common sense is apostasy and treason. Will our Scott Act friends venture to say that all the members of the New York Church Temperance Society have gone over to the Devil's side, and that *Harper's Weekly*, which approves their policy, is an organ of Satan?

WHEN people urged that the Mahdi should be let alone, the reply was that if you would let him alone he would not let you alone, inasmuch as he was no mere local pretender, but a viceroy of Heaven, and claimed dominion of the universe or nothing. The same is the case with every vendor of a universal panacea. Ayer's Pills, as they cure every kind of disease, leave no room for St. Jacob's Oil; and Mr. George, having proclaimed that all economical ills will be cured by the wholesale spoliation of land-owners, cannot admit that humanity has anything to gain by the rival nostrum of Protection. Those who, unsatisfied with the demonstrations of Euclid, require fresh proof of the rudimentary truths of Geometry, may find it worth their while, after the Euclids of Economic Science, to wade through the lucubrations of Mr. George. He who having read Adam Smith and Bastiat can still deny that the system of Free Trade is the best both for the distribution of wealth and for its production must be a protected producer or argument-proof. But reasonings were scarcely needed to prove that which common-sense dictates, and which is confirmed by the