

If so, the world should know what they are. But the question may well be asked—what has occurred to make any particular interests prominent? Plevna has fallen, but that was inevitable, and might have been foreseen. At what precise point are the Russian victories to be checked? In what has the position changed since Lord Derby made his speech to Lord Stratheden and his companions? England allowed Russia to go, single-handed, to war with Turkey to enforce the fulfilment of Treaty promises. Russia has expended her men and her money on that war. Russia is victorious, as all reasonable people expected she would be. And surely Russia has the right to treat with Turkey alone as to the conditions of peace. If those conditions shall be found to interfere with the interests of Britain—then Britain has the right to interpose. But what probability is there they will so interfere? Will the Dardanelles be closed to British traffic? Will the supremacy of Britain be endangered? Will the safety of the Indian Empire be put at risk? Neither contingency could happen. British interests are not bound up with the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire in its integrity or its independence, and it is to be hoped that while the Cabinet is divided, and alarmists are abroad, the English people will maintain a calm reasonableness that shall make what must be a fruitless and disastrous war impossible.

Religious discussions continue to excite great interest. Not only has the question of eternal punishment been brought to the front of theological controversy—but in many quarters the whole question is raised, what is Christianity? It has been forced upon them by their search for a true ground of communion. Many men of large hearts, unswerving faith and cultured minds have longed for a wider, and deeper, and more real Christian brotherhood. And unlike some raw theologians and barbaric Christians of the United States—who make theological difference the ground of social and all other kinds of separation—seek a true fellowship based upon the sentiment of love. They say—"we have a variety of dogmas, but the Christ we feel is one. Let the Christianity which all good men experience be our bond of brotherhood." Of course orthodoxy is filled with dismay, and that means anger,—yet it is reasonable in its use of language. The old wild talk and lofty indignation have been superseded by a tone almost apologetic.

Where will it all lead? Eloquent denunciations of the ancient dogma, as to eternal punishment, in Westminster Abbey—vulgar and ill-taught speech on "Hell and the Divine Veracity" in the *Fortnightly Review*—searchings for a basis of communion—the teachings of positivism as to the soul and immortality—where will it all lead? To Babel, Mumbo-jumbo, Night, Nowhere? Or to clearer conceptions of Truth, to fuller revelations of God to the soul, to larger liberty, and lasting fellowship of heart? These latter we think.

POLITICS IN FRANCE.

France has passed through a most momentous crisis. There have not been the usual startling catastrophes; deeds of comedy and tragedy mingling strangely, as we have been accustomed to see in the working out of all French revolutions; but none the less has the situation been most grave. It is owing to the patience and calm diplomacy of the Republicans that the people have been saved from bloodshed and ruin. No thanks to the Marshal-President. All that lies in the power of incompetence and obstinacy to do the Marshal has done to bring riot and war on the land. He has lent himself, and the power of his position, to a band of Monarchical intriguers. The country has proved itself to be in heart and mind Republican, and the President has maintained, until within a short period, an attitude of insolent opposition to the wishes of the country. The army, the Jesuits, social ambitions and political corruptions, have all been pressed into the service of a fanatical dynastic faction. The people of France have to work out an old problem. They have an ideal of social and political life. They are Conservative by instinct and by education, holding to old objects of veneration with passionate devotion. They are proud of their history, which, in their ears, reads like an epic poem, and exalts them among nations. But they are anxious to establish the Government on a good and sound basis, and not to repeat the blunders of the past. More than ordinary difficulties stand in the way. The Church has regained much of its old authority, which had been shattered by the disasters of the last century. It is full of zeal, and passionate in its efforts to resume the old ascendancy; it is rapidly increasing in wealth, and perfecting its organization. It was no new indictment when M. Gambetta, during the last session of the Chamber of Deputies, accused the clericals of being the creatures of Monarchical power, and opposed to national progress.

The *ancienne noblesse* is another hindrance to the final establishment of the Republic; for it has returned, and with it has come great memories of the past days of chivalry and pomp. The members of it regard the whole movement as radical and revolutionary, and leading, not to great wars, and the shining of a great glory, such as their ancestors delighted to walk in, but to prosy industry and commerce, the reign

of the people—Democracy—if not Communism. The Monarchy—any monarchy—is in their eyes better than that. The white flag of the Bourbon, or the banner of Napoleon, or any other, but a rag of royalty must float over the Tuileries.

The rulers of the Bourse, the capitalists and speculators form another, and no mean element of trouble. They have ventured and won. They played high and fortune favoured them—that is the Government, which has been so palpably swayed by dynastic ambitions. A Republican holding the Presidency, even a man who had the national good at heart, would have been able, by the help of the true men of the nation, to sweep these obstacles out of the way. But the President has played into the hands of skilful and unscrupulous intriguers.

The Marshal was elected at a time when the conquering German occupied a third part of French soil, and were anxious to place one in power who would probably reduce chaos to order, and pay the demanded milliards. France was under military control. Popular meetings for the selection of candidates were forbidden, and the Chamber had to be made up in haste, just to make peace and get rid of the invader. Gambetta and all his allies were unpopular; for though they had made great, almost sublime, efforts, they had failed to beat back the advancing tide of disaster. The Chamber was formed—made peace with the Germans—crushed out the Commune, and established once again civil administration. M. Theirs was cast down from the position he had so well filled, by the plottings of those who sought to restore some kind of monarchy. The Assembly secured the Executive, and packed the Senate with its own tools. Marshal MacMahon was chosen to fill the place—not to exercise the office—for seven years. This was not done by a popular vote, but by a coalition of men who by accident possessed themselves of power at the moment when the nation was stunned by a great disaster. The Marshal was thrust into a position for which neither nature nor education had fitted him. A brave soldier enough—but not a great, not even an ordinarily capable, General-in-Chief; for though he had some good fortune earlier in life, the catastrophe of Sedan could hardly mark him as a man of professional genius. He had scarcely a quality which the office demanded. It can only be said that as a tool in the hands of others he displayed some aptitude. Obstinacy was needed; the Marshal was obstinate enough in all conscience; refusing to yield to majorities in the Chamber or in the nation. Ministry after ministry was formed, only to resign or be dismissed. It seemed at last as if a dead lock had come. The Marshal had done all that illegality, and intrigue, and obstinacy, could accomplish; elections had been manipulated; every engine of fraud and robbery had been put in motion, but all to no purpose. The nation had declared for the Republic, as shewn by the elections of October. In two months from that time, the Marshal awoke to the fact, and surrendered at discretion. The sky is somewhat cleared—a new era is entered upon, and France bids fair to work out her own regeneration. All will echo the words of the Marshal, "The Universal Exhibition is about to be opened; commerce and industry are about to take a new spring, and we shall give the world a fresh testimony of the vitality of our country, which has always revived through labour, through thrift, and through its profound attachment to ideas of conservation, order and liberty." The whole world will wait and look for the fulfilment of that promised testimony, trusting, not to the Marshal's genius or honesty, but to the people's "labour and thrift."

DEATH OF VICTOR EMMANUEL.

The news of Victor Emmanuel's death has startled the world. We knew that he was ill, but none seemed to dream of danger. Italy is plunged into grief, for it has lost more than a King, and more than a friend, it has lost its political saviour. When the nation was groaning under the iron yoke of a despotic ecclesiasticism, supported by the bayonets of France the King came to its help. With a strong but gentle hand he fought down the tyranny and set his country free. He was not the enemy of the Church, but he was the constant friend of the people. By the wisdom of his policy, and the firmness and equity of civil administration, Italy has been rapidly rising to a position of power and influence in Europe. If he may not be counted among the heroes of the earth, his name will take its place on the head roll of true and noble spirits. He has accomplished a great work, set a great example, and his deeds will live after him. The Pope has excommunicated him, fulminated bulls against him, but it may find a more ungenerous opponent. He will be mourned as widely as his name is known, and his worst enemies will be compelled to say, a *man* is dead.

We need not look for a revolution in Italy, or for a backward movement in the temporal interests of the Roman Catholic Church, nor can it in any way disturb the peace of Europe by adding to its present perplexity and danger, but Europe might have lost many another notable man, and have had less cause for sorrow. The King Victor Emmanuel was a brave soldier, a wise statesman, a good patriot, the friend of Garibaldi, the friend of liberty, of progress, of peace. He is dead. He is mourned.