

A GENERAL WAR

Imminent in Europe.

An English correspondent of an American paper thinks:—

The Eastern question is not the less surely culminating to a crisis, though both Government and Opposition are absorbed in ground game, the Irish Land Bill, Bradlaugh, and other domestic details. The ignorance and fanaticism which characterized the utterances of the radical party, and especially of their leader, so far as foreign politics were concerned, during the late electoral campaign, are about to be illustrated in the muddle in which they will shortly find themselves in the East. This is entirely due to the rashness and impetuosity with which immediately on the overthrow of the Beaconsfield Government they reversed the Conservative oriental policy, and rushed into new combinations which they fondly called a concert of powers in Europe.

They despatched Mr. Goeben, an eminent banker and financier, but quite inexperienced as a diplomat, not to take in hand the finances of the Turkish empire, for which he was admirably qualified, but to inaugurate a policy of coexistence upon the Porte in harmony with the other powers in respect of the fulfilment of the treaty of Berlin, a task which the most skilled diplomat would have found impossible. The Slav and Greek sympathies of Mr. Gladstone had to be instantly gratified. He was in daily receipt of congratulatory addresses from all the different Christian races and sects of European Turkey, and he was bound to take action which could only result in disaster. He therefore proposed a conference at Berlin, and he expressed it, "to arbitrate upon the stipulation contained in the Treaty of Berlin" relative to the Greek frontier. In this short phrase he made no fewer than three gross blunders. All that the powers could do legally was to mediate upon a recommendation in a protocol, which, as every diplomat knows, is a totally different affair from what they undertook. However, as Turkey is powerless to point out to Europe the immorality of its "concerted" action the Conference at Berlin has arbitrarily and illegally decided that a population of 400,000 souls are to be handed over, without being consulted, to Greece. But conferences invariably lead to wars, and this one, which has only just terminated, will be no exception to the rule. It has been harmonious so far as the dishonesty of its procedure has been concerned; the discord will come the moment the attempt is made to give practical effect to the resolutions arrived at.

It is probable that the reply of the Porte to the identical note which is to be handed in to-day or to-morrow, will be given in about a fortnight. It is not likely that the Turkish Government will openly defy Europe. It will ostensibly bow to its will, but it will profess its utter inability to give effect to it. It will tell Greece and Europe, as it has been decided to give Greece a large piece of Turkish territory inhabited by a population adverse to the transfer, that upon Greece and Europe must fall the responsibility of making it; and Europe will notify Greece that the territory has been assigned to her, and that she had better take it. It seems, also, to be the intention of England to offer the services of her fleet, in alliance with the fleets of France and Italy, to hold the sea, and prevent reinforcements being sent from Constantinople. Whether Greece will have the hardihood to dash her pigmy army of 40,000 men against the mountains of Thessaly, Epirus and Albania, is a question for her to consider; but there can be no doubt if she does, that she will find the tables turned.

There is at this moment an army of 80,000 Turkish veteran soldiers on that frontier, commanded by Mukhtar Pasha, the ablest General in the Turkish army; there are, in addition, 20,000 Albanian volunteers, also a most formidable force. The army has not been paid for three years, and it is to be expected that they will receive a hint from the War Office of Constantinople to volunteer in a body to assist the inhabitants in their resistance to annexation, and find their pay in the plains of Attica. Mukhtar Pasha will become the Chernyeff of the situation. The Russians set the example of allowing their army to volunteer en masse in the case of Serbia, and there are at this moment 15,000 Russian soldiers in Bulgaria, whose ranks are daily being swelled by volunteers from Russia. So, while Russians are volunteering into Turkey, Turks will be volunteering into Greece; and we shall have any amount of atrocities, a violent Phil-Hellenic agitation in England as the result, the Turkish Dash-Bouzonks threatening Athens, and all the classical radicalism in England alarmed at the possible destruction of the Acropolis and the interesting race of who are chiefly known to the world in those later days by their exploits as brigands. This will involve of necessity the landing of British troops in Greece to fight against the Turks, a consummation of Gladstonian policy which I should not be at all surprised to see before the year closes.

It is then that the "discord of the powers" will begin. Russia has already proposed to land troops in Athens, apparently afraid that England will be beforehand with her. It is probable that Germany and Austria will take advantage of the confusion to extend their Slav policy. Italy, which is always emphatically "on the make," has special designs upon Albania. At this moment an active Pan-Bulgarian agitation is in progress in eastern Roumelia, and the gymnast societies and militia of that province can scarcely restrain their impatience. The day that hostilities begin on the Greek frontier there will be a rising en masse in Roumelia for annexation to Bulgaria, in anticipation of which event Turkey is massing troops at Adrianople. This will also be the signal for an invasion by Montenegro into the northern portion of Albania, in order to obtain the cession of territory also awarded to the mountain principality by Europe, the transfer of which has been so long delayed. When fighting begins here, Austria will necessarily be drawn into the fray; but, as her interests are diametrically opposed to those of Russia and Italy, she will find herself in antagonism to those powers. Both in Serbia and Montenegro it is probable that this antagonism will reach an acute stage, and that other European powers will be drawn in. In fact, when all European Turkey is in a blaze, and the powers of Europe are compelled to intervene to advance or protect their rival interests, the European concert becomes impossible. And who can predict to what extremes the discord may be carried or what consequences to the peace of Europe at large may involve?

All this is the result of the policy of adventure, which has been inaugurated by the Gladstone Cabinet; yet the public in England seem still unconscious of the strength and rapidity of the current which is drifting the country into a vortex of war. The mistake which was made in the winter of 1876-77, when it is supposed by Lord Salisbury

that a combined European pressure exercised by a conference at Constantinople would compel the Turks to submit, is being repeated. It may be suicidal on their part thus to rely, if not openly, to defy the will of Europe, but it is none the less certain that they will do it, with the sort of grim feeling of despair which induced Samson to clasp the pillars of the temple and bury himself in its crash. The Turk knows the strength of his position, and it is a question whether the process of kicking him bag and baggage out of Europe, will not prove as disastrous to those engaged in the operation as to their victim.

VERY NEAR WAR.

A Russian officer has told another story of the threatened occupation of Constantinople by the victorious Muscovite army, after the fall of Plevna, and the appearance of the British fleet of Stamboul under command of Admiral Hornby. Our readers will remember that the Jingo party will sigh wistfully over the action of the Beaconsfield Government in ordering the fleet to force the Dardanelles and dispute the advance of the Russians; and he were led to believe that the Grand Duke Constantine halted at San Stefano because Admiral Hornby was before Constantinople. The Russian officer tells the story this way:—

After the fall of Plevna, when the Turkish resistance was seen to be futile, it was determined that Constantinople was not to be attacked out of deference to the opinion of the Powers, and furthermore, the Grand Duke Constantine was directed in his approach toward Constantinople to avoid Gallipoli, the occupation of which was protested against by England. There arose some discussion as to the necessity for foreign powers to temporarily occupy Constantinople, but the Czar and Russian Commander decided that it was not necessary to do otherwise than leave it in the hands of the Turks, whom they preferred to any other power naturally in view of the approaching treaty. It was feared by the Grand Duke that the British would send a fleet to the Bosphorus, and he asked for instructions in case they should do so. The Czar directed that in that event the army should advance upon but not occupy the city, except in case the Porte requested it. The Grand Duke heard that the fleet had been ordered to pass the Dardanelles, and asked for distinct instructions from the Czar, and a despatch was sent back commanding the occupation of the city within three days. This despatch fell into the hands of the Turks, who succeeded in solving the cipher and learning the purpose of the Czar. The Turks requested the British Ambassador, and requested that the necessity of carrying out this order be avoided by the withdrawal of the fleet. This was complied with, and the Russians, who had, in consequence of the presence of the British fleet in the Bosphorus, advancing to San Stefano, did not carry out the order, which had been repeated in consequence of the misunderstanding which arose between the Grand Duke and the Czar. There are very many points in the narrative which are so weak as to awaken strong doubt as to the truth of the whole, but we give the story as it appears in a contemporary.

ANNUAL PICNIC.

The Irish Protestant Benevolent Society of London. Out. Enjoying a Holiday—Three Thousand People on the Grounds.

(London Herald.)

It is a successful picnic made a fine day, an annual excursion of the Irish Benevolent Society was an unqualified success in every particular. By ten o'clock in the morning the first train to the Park, numbering 3,000 persons, was crowded from platform to platform. The ladies in numbers seem to prevail, and with their bright holiday garbs and happy faces presented a pleasing picture to look upon. A left about ten o'clock, and from London to the Lake a more delightful trip was never enjoyed. A short time after, a second train, consisting of a dozen cars, left the depot, and here again the cry was for a seat. Many of the ladies were obliged to stand, although the gentlemen, with becoming courtesy, made way when the opportunity arose. The public that no longer requires a fulsome notice. Just previous to dinner the following committee and Judges were appointed:—Dancing—J. W. Korps, manager of the club; Events for prizes, John Smith, Alderman and—Races—Mr. W. Meredith, Q. C., who with his family is stopping at the "Fraser," and P. Mulken. Quizzes—Patrick Boyle and the Irishman; Singing—James Egan and H. Beaton; Jumping—J. M. O'Meara, Boyle; Heaving; the latter to act as starter in the races. After an hour's permission, the executive committee proceeded to the Grand Stand which had been erected for the speakers of the day, and the addresses were announced. Mr. D. Regan, chairman, said he was gratified to see so many present, but that he regretted that the prominent speakers had been obliged to remain away. Letters of apology were read from Rev. John Gentry, Rev. Geo. G. Ballay, Rev. Conyn and G. A. Sling. The speaker continuing, said the annual gatherings for a day's enjoyment among the societies tended to more closely unite them. Some maintained that societies of a national character induced opposition and created factions. This was untrue, at least in London. The utmost harmony existed, and all the brotherhoods were gaining in strength by day. After congratulations and an appeal to have those who were not yet members to join the Society the Speaker introduced Mr. H. D. Long.

AT THE PLATFORM.

Mr. H. D. Long did not expect to be called upon to address them, but he thought to listen to the remarks of those who had been able to attend. He was not long in doing so, and he said something regarding the Society. Its object was to promote unity and benevolence. There was none other in the Dominion that could boast of having Catholics and Protestants so firmly united. It had been in existence but a few years, but those few had witnessed a growth that is surprising in the most sanguine of its founders. The good work should be continued, and every member should do his utmost to increase the number by inducing their friends to join. Father O'Mahoney was the next speaker called upon. He gave one of the most stirring speeches ever heard upon the grounds. He spoke as follows: The fact of so many of each nation being present here, being associated here, working with a harmony, was a most gratifying sight. It was gratifying, because it was a proof of the society, is gratifying. Wiseacres were predicting the speedy downfall of the Society. They were saying that the opposition as everything bad will be sure to find support. These men came of that class who are ever slow to recognize any good in human nature, and in the judging you are to find in one common bond our countrymen of every class. They did not understand, and consequently could not appreciate the good sense and sterling patriotism of the members of the Society. The foundation of your love for Ireland, has shown how vain were their predictions, and bids you hope for the accomplishment of great good in the future. And why should we not be united? The lesson of the past—necessity of the union of Catholics and Protestants—divided, our strength weakened and lost; united, the talent and genius for which our race is remarkable are utilized for the elevation of our country's share in the world. Only for our own homes, but also for that of our native land. Our country's cause is too weakened—slightest discussion in our ranks—and hence it is that from an occasion like the present the greatest amount of good may be drawn. In re-union such as this is kept alive that love for the land which bore us. Next to love for God, it holds first place in the heart of every honest man, a love that prompts to noble conduct and becomes the surest guarantee of an honorable career. Our meeting here to-day in such numbers shows to me that the spirit of patriotism—that spirit which rendered Clontarf a name to be cherished by every Irishman—that spirit which filled the breast of the grandest and noblest martyr to the Irish cause—the never to be forgotten Emmet—whose name is enshrined in the heart of every Irishman. That spirit is not dead, but is living and real in the hearts of you, gentlemen, who claim him as your fellow-countryman. No doubt there are some who are not particularly desirous of linking themselves with the name of Ireland. There are men who, when they are asked to do so, they do so with a heavy heart, and with a heavy mind. They are the weight of oppression and misery, would gladly disassociate themselves from her. But, thank God, they are few, indeed, and for them we have pity rather than contempt. They are the men who are not particularly desirous of linking themselves with the name of Ireland. There are men who, when they are asked to do so, they do so with a heavy heart, and with a heavy mind. They are the weight of oppression and misery, would gladly disassociate themselves from her. But, thank God, they are few, indeed, and for them we have pity rather than contempt. They are the men who are not particularly desirous of linking themselves with the name of Ireland. There are men who, when they are asked to do so, they do so with a heavy heart, and with a heavy mind. They are the weight of oppression and misery, would gladly disassociate themselves from her. 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