

Current Literature.

For several years the *Fortnightly Review* has been the acknowledged organ of so-called liberal thought in England. Its unquestioned success as a periodical may have led its talented Editor to wander farther from orthodoxy than on cool reflection would commend itself to his own judgment. There is indeed an indication in the current number* that Mr. Morley will not devote so much space at least in future numbers to criticisms, which, as a rule, had better be left to the incorrigible *Westminster Review*. The undoubted ability of the magazine (published only once a month by the way, and not every fortnight, as its name indicates), induced its present Canadian publishers to enter into arrangements with its English publishers for its publication in America. To secure accuracy, this is done every month from a duplicate set of stereotype plates. There is reason for saying that the degree of public favour extended to the venture fully justifies the Canadian publishers in their faith of finding a market on this side the Atlantic.

The first article in the August number on the "Secret Societies of Russia," by that great authority of Russian questions, Mr. D. Mackenzie Wallace, is an admirable *resumé* of Russian history, and a lucid exposition of the causes which have made Russia a hot-bed of Secret Societies—nay, of the causes which have led to the present war. The history of Russia, unlike that of England, has been a succession of breaks with the past; a series of new departures. In the reign of Peter the Great, the thread of continuity was suddenly snapped, and ever since violent reform and violent reaction have been the rule. The history of the present campaign in Asia Minor has so far illustrated well the Russian character and habitual mode of action. First, great enthusiasm, inordinate expectations and a haughty contempt for difficulties; next, a rapid advance, obstacles surmounted with wonderful facility; difficult positions stormed with reckless, dashing gallantry, and, as a result of all this, overweening confidence, whispering them that, as one of their proverbs graphically and quaintly puts it, "if they tried to ford the ocean, the waters would not rise higher than their knees." Then comes a check, obstacles are met which no amount of dash and gallantry can surmount, the over-heated enthusiasm cools, the retreat begins, the imprudence of neglecting to secure firmly and methodically the positions gained becomes apparent, and the great shadowy conquest collapses into the most modest of acquisitions. In the history of the nation secret societies have sprung up with most luxuriance in the hours of recoil. This is illustrated by a review of the four great reforming epochs, which are associated with the names of

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