

CURRENT EVENTS AND OPINIONS.

WE may safely credit to the genius of the Correspondent the report that Russia, Germany and France have entered into a league for the purpose of arresting the maritime and commercial aggrandizement of Great Britain. That Russia, the one power in which England had, and might always have had, a fast friend, has been embittered, perhaps hopelessly, through the insanity of the Jingo, egged on by the Jewish Press, is too true; but France will not so soon be found in the arms of Bismarck. The report, however, may be taken as prefiguring the swarm of growing jealousies and embarrassments which gather round the course of advancing empire. Bismarck, for his part, is no dupe of reveries about the extension of Germany. He understands well the burdensome weakness of distant dependencies and the value of concentrated power. Egypt is annexed, let Mr. Gladstone disclaim the intention as he will. This was destiny from the hour when the Suez Canal was opened. Reluctantly, not only on grounds of interest, but on grounds of morality, the nation accepts the new burden, and its reluctance has been shown in a hesitating and wavering policy which, though creditable in so far as it is a proof of moderation, has entailed on it disaster and some shame. Yes, under whatever guise or name,—whether dominion, protectorate, or control—Egypt will henceforth be a part of the British Empire in the East. And this great and perilous addition to the sum of Imperial cares is made at the moment when, by the Irish revolt, Great Britain is in some danger of having a hostile republic carved out of her own side.

FRANCE and China, after much vapouring and sparring at each other, seem likely at last to come to blows. What will be the result? The Chinese will no doubt make a much better fight than they did in the old times, when they took the field with bows and arrows instead of muskets, and with tom-toms to frighten the enemy instead of cannon. It is now more than likely that some day a civilized power, while displaying its civilized morality by making filibustering attacks on the territory of these people, will see reason to wish that it had been content with its own. But in this war, if war there is to be, the odds will be on the side of France. Even military civilization is still very imperfect among the Chinese, and their ridiculous self-conceit combined with their ignorance of everything outside the Celestial realm, will prevent them from measuring the force of the foe and adopting the improvements necessary to place them really on a level with him. The Krupp gun and the Martini rifle China has, and with them she probably fancies herself invincible. She has a certain amount of military discipline though, it seems, not good officers. But her Conservatism has rejected railroads, and, therefore, her numbers though overpowering cannot well be brought to bear. The passive indifference to life which characterizes her people affords no assurance of their active valour. The chances are that the Gaul will once more hang up some captured standards, or, in their absence, pigtails, in his *Invalides*.

It is strange that sensible Americans should be able to persuade themselves that Bismarck has done them wrong in refusing to receive the Lasker Resolutions, and should even be talking of what they would do to Germany if they had a fleet. If any hostile step were taken against the Fatherland, it would quickly be seen that the German vote in the United States is at least as powerful as the Irish. Congress has been guilty, not for the first time, of a breach of international manners, and has received from Bismarck, as it richly deserved, a dignified and effectual rebuke, under which, no doubt, it is wincing. What business had American politicians to be interfering between parties in Germany and telling the head of the German Government that his opponent, the leader of the Opposition, "by his firm and constant expositions of free and Liberal ideas, materially advanced the social, political and economic condition of the people?" Suppose, upon the death of Lord Beaconsfield, the Conservative majority in Germany of which Bismarck is the leader, had sent the Gladstone Ministry resolutions of condolence on the loss of a statesman who had been so successful in checking the progress of Liberalism, and upholding the cause of order against revolutionary innovation, would the Gladstone Ministry have put up with the impertinence? It is probable that the tears shed at Washington over the bier of a German Radical had their source partly in the quarrel with the German Government about pork. But Congress, at least the House of Representatives, is the Anacharsis Cloutz of Assemblies. Happily its ways are not those of the American people. "They are fit for nothing," says somebody in the *Breadwinners* of a set of blatant vagabonds "but to be sent to Congress, and they cannot all be sent from this district."

THE New York *Nation*, a paper which holds its head very high as a public moralist and censor, being owned by an Irish Nationalist, is employ-

ing its superior knowledge of political ethics in providing the Americans with excuses for paltering with their honour on the subject of dynamite and assassination. Being obliged to admit that the United States themselves asserted, in the Alabama case, the principle, that no defects of municipal law can constitute an excuse for the non-performance of an international duty, and that they are now holding a large sum of money (more to their advantage than to their glory) in pursuance of that very plea, the *Nation* suggests that in the present case no proceedings can be taken for the repression of the outrages, because there is no overt act. Public meetings held for the organization of a dynamite war, subscriptions taken up avowedly for that purpose, publications of all kinds advocating the use of dynamite and assassination, even the assassination of particular persons, are not overt acts! In the French Republic a man has just been imprisoned and heavily fined for preaching assassination. A dynamite magazine is now being published in the United States. The Alabama slipped out to sea while the order for her arrest was on its way, and her devastations, though savage, were the acts of belligerents and not of Thugs. Do civilized morality and the sense of international honour prevail in the United States, or do they not? Americans will soon have to give a practical answer to that question. By the answer which they give they will show whether the Republic is or is not the slave of the Irish vote; for nobody doubts what are the real sentiments of all decent Americans. Not but that well-advised sympathy for the Irish would point the same way with international honour. Great Britain is prevented from crushing rebellion and Thuggism like an eggshell only by those restraining sentiments of moral civilization on which savagery relies in playing with her forbearance. If she was once transported with anger at the murder of her citizens by dynamite, or seriously alarmed for her own safety by the junction of the Irish with the enemy in a foreign war, she would speedily settle the Irish question in the same way in which it was settled by the fellow citizens of the *Nation* on the occasion of the Draught Riots in New York.

IN the debate in the Local Legislature on Co-education it was once more asserted by the advocates of the experiment that it had been successful in the United States. Once more it must be repeated that only in a very qualified sense is this assertion true. Female students have been introduced without any bad results of a palpable and serious kind into several American universities. But these students are a mere fraction of the whole number of young women undergoing high and final education, while most of them belong to a special class, as your eye will almost tell you at a glance. The great mass of American parents have positively and, it seems finally, rejected the system after having seen it in operation now for something like a quarter of a century, and after having had it pressed in every imaginable way on their acceptance. For reasons connected with the delicacy of the female character and with the special destination of women, which to nobody but a fanatic can appear baseless, they decisively prefer the separate system wherever it exists and they can afford it. *Vassar* and a multitude of other female colleges are just as full of students as ever. The education at these colleges is as high as that in a male university, though it is adapted to the requirements of the female sex, and trains woman to be the partner and the complement, not the rival and competitor of man. To confound co-education with high education, and opponents of the first with opponents of the second, is therefore a patent fallacy. As well might it be said that people objected to a lady's taking horse exercise because they objected to her taking it on a man's saddle. How many Canadian women really desire co-education will be seen when the experiment which the Local Legislature decrees shall have been made. From what the "Bystander" can glean as to the female opinion in general, he would not be surprised if the number should be small, and confined for the most part to the class of young ladies now under training for the educational profession in the Normal School. He does not expect the popularity of our Ladies' Colleges to decline, while these institutions will have an additional claim on the support of all who cherish the distinctive graces of female character, and desire, as a manly education for men, so a womanly education for women. The number of women who show any active interest in the agitation for sexual change altogether appears to him, both in England and here, to be small. He does not mind so far risking a betrayal of his identity as to say that, as a Liberal, he signed the petition to Parliament in favour of Mr. Mill's measure of Female Suffrage, but was led to reconsider his opinion and refuse to sign a second time, by finding that among the women on whom he had been accustomed to look as examples of female excellence, hardly any were in favour of the change. By far the greater number believed that it would jeopardize, for no adequate object, the position and privileges of their sex. This seemed practically conclusive so far as Englishwomen were concerned. In the United States there is really something like a third sex.