

for it, and that on this assumption their project in Asiatic Turkey was justified, cost what it might. Fighting to suppress Serbia, Germany and Austria would be enabled to work on interior lines, with all the advantage derivable from their superiority in strategic railways.

The construction of the Bagdad Railway was an organic part of the same programme. But at the present moment we are less concerned with the motives of Germany in commencing that enterprise than we are with the bearing of the Bagdad Railway on the future of Constantinople. On March 18th the *Temps* devoted a leading article to the sentiments which France might be expected to entertain regarding the occupation of Constantinople by Russia. The view therein advanced is that "France would welcome sympathetically her ally's entry into the Mediterranean powers, while England no longer fears the Black Sea fleet as a menace to India, to which the Suez Canal, the Persian Gulf and the Bagdad Railway are now keys, instead of Constantinople." Conceivably this view may also be held by Sir Edward Grey, but if Russia is to have Constantinople there should be distinct provision as to British control of Mesopotamia. On this subject the view which F. L. Garvin stated years ago in the *Fortnightly Review* still holds good. The indifference which Palmerston showed towards the report of the Euphrates Valley Expedition was, perhaps, excusable. But we live in the days of Sir William Willcocks, and Bagdad means much more now than it did half a century ago.

THE ante-bellum despatches which have been published by the various governments are, like their covers, polychrome. Dealing with the same subject, they illustrate by a classical example the value of the comparative method. No set is to be deemed negligible, despite the fact that in all cases the ground covered is so nearly the same. Those who take the trouble to build up their own composite from the data thus made available, will find that the result rewards the pains.