

## The Week.

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THE Ministerial crisis in France has ended for the moment by the formation of a Moderate Republican Ministry, representing a small minority in the Chambers. This is truly a Ministry of despair; every other possible combination has been tried, and this is all the result reached. Its first act must be the dissolution of the Chambers, and the new elections will assuredly sweep it away at once, for Moderate Republicanism is not on the growing hand in France. The country is seething with Socialism and advanced Radicalism, ready to boil over on the smallest aggravation; it is not far removed from the condition it was in on the eve of 1789. No doubt there is plenty of conservatism among the rural population; but these are unorganised and powerless beside the advanced Republicanism of the large cities. There is a dearth, or rather total lack, of great or strong men in France; the government of the Republic has used up or ruined every reputation concerned in it during the past sixteen years; and so the Premiership had to go a begging till accepted by a man who, eleven years ago, was charged before the Paris tribunals with outrage against public decency and morality. Imagine the state of England if no statesman of a higher rank than Mr. Labouchere could be induced to undertake the formation of a Government! So it is in France, however. The probability of the little success this attempt at "reaction against Radicalism, Militarism, and Socialism" will have may be estimated when it is considered that in the election in Paris, on May 8, thirty-five advanced Radicals, three Socialists, and six Reactionaries, were returned as against two Moderates. As to Militarism, Gen. Boulanger embodies in the French mind the idea of the might of France, with all that suggests, to some of recovery of prestige, recovery of Provinces, to others of repression of disorder, and establishment of efficient government; and without him, or at any rate without an equally representative military man, no Ministry will outlive an appeal to the people. As far as can be discerned, Gen. Boulanger is to-day the one strong man in public life in France; and therefore his accession to supreme power, soon or late, may be regarded as a certainty. It would be hailed with equal favour, though from opposite motives, by Chauvinist and Moderate alike. France, in her peril, internal as well as external, needs, above all things, a strong Government, and the experience of the last few years has shown conclusively that no strong Government is possible while affairs are the plaything of a number of rival Parliamentary factions. The present state of things must end: Gen. Boulanger is universally regarded as one of the chief forces possessed by France, and it will be very surprising if, as an outcome of the elections, he is not placed actually, or virtually, in supreme command.

WE think events of great importance are impending in Eastern Europe. The meaning of Prince Bismarck's recent polemic with the Russian press—his divulgement of the Partition Treaty between Russia and Austria—grows plainer every day. He knows France cannot afford to go to war unless with Russia by her side; and so to divert Russia from this alliance he tells her to go to Constantinople if she pleases. That is his plain meaning when he tells Russia that it was Prince Gortchakoff's fault, not his, that the Treaty of Berlin deprived Russia of the fruits of her victory. The interest of Germany in the fate of the Balkans is, in fact, as nothing compared with her interest in keeping Russia apart from France. If she can do this, though she may sacrifice the Austrian alliance, she may preserve both her western frontier from invasion by France, and her eastern from invasion by Russia. Indeed, Prince Bismarck would be mad to throw Russia into the arms of France for the sake of the Austrian alliance, by opposing Russian designs in the Balkans. Austria has sold herself to Russia behind his back already once; let her take care of herself now. As to England—the Russian march to Constantinople would certainly divert the attention of Russia from Afghanistan; if the Russians were seated on the Bosphorus, the English might rest without apprehension in India for another century, or forever. The Suez Canal never will be a secure route to India; and other English interests in that quarter will be amply safeguarded by her possession of Egypt, which must revert to her under the new Anglo-Turkish agreement, on the disappearance of Turkey. But how Italy, France, and Austria would relish the projection

of the Russian Power into the Mediterranean is another matter. With her arm able to reach around the shores of that sea, and her body out of the reach of assault, Russia would wield a terrible power, and all Southern Europe must combine anew to resist the danger.

MR. GLADSTONE has now persuaded himself that boycotting is sometimes justifiable. "Boycotting and exclusive dealing," he told the select meeting of Nonconformists at Dr. Parker's house, "may be very bad things, but they are the only weapons of self-defence belonging to a poor and disheartened people." He thought there ought to be inflexible resistance to a bill which proposed to take from the Irish people, "under the name of crime, methods of action which, though not to be desired in a healthy state of society, may, when society is in an unhealthy state, be the only perfect remedies at the command of the people." According to this teaching, if poor and disheartened people, of whom there are hundreds of thousands in London, should apply the "only perfect remedy" at their command, by plundering shops of provisions, clothing, and any luxuries they may think desirable, it would be wrong to oppose such methods of action because such a society is in an unhealthy state! Where will Mr. Gladstone stop?

AT the adjournment of the House of Commons for the Whitsuntide holidays, two clauses, containing some sixty lines, of the Crimes Bill had been passed in committee. This is all the result to show for a debate that has taken up about two-thirds of the session; and there are eighteen clauses yet to pass. It would be a pity, nevertheless, to cut the debate short yet awhile; every day this obstruction continues, Mr. Gladstone and his obstructionist following sink deeper and deeper in disgrace with the country. Let this go on as long as they please—the longer the better—until it is necessary to wind up the business of the session, when cloture might be applied sharply and rigorously with the approval of the whole country. The English wing of the Jacobin party must suffer immensely from such a record; even Mr. Gladstone will find it hard to explain away the part he has taken in this attempt to coerce Parliament into taking a course condemned by the country at the polls.

THE Secretary of the American League displays some humour when he contrasts the "manly, dignified conduct of the Toronto Irishmen while protecting the person of Wm. O'Brien, and maintaining the right of free speech," with "that of the howling mob, which by its own peculiar methods gave the American public a fair illustration of the strange idea of civil and religious liberty." In choosing his phrases he evidently had in mind the conduct of the English Members and the Parnellites in Parliament; and by ingeniously reversing the attributes of each, and applying the new terms to Toronto, he has managed to pay a pleasing compliment in borrowed phrase to his friends here. In the House of Commons on Monday, May 23, Mr. Healy described his opponents as a "damned lot of assassins." Dr. Tanner, being accused of calling Sir Trevor Lawrence a "damned coward," explained blandly that he had really said the "whole pack of Tory members were damned cowards." Subsequently Dr. Tanner got himself into difficulty with the Chairman by an expression which seems too strong for print. Perhaps the Secretary of the American League will tell us what ideas of civil and religious liberty the conduct of the howling mob of Parnellites in Parliament gives the American public?

THERE is sound sense in what the *Manchester Courier* says about the effect of the new iron duties. The bulk of raw materials used in Canada is so small compared with the bulk of British exports, that what would be a burden to the one would be almost unfelt by the other. The increase in the duty, too, enhances the cost of so many articles of Canadian manufacture of which iron is a raw material, and the product is so unimportant as compared with the product of British manufactures, that, like waters in a lock, it will not be impossible for the larger mass to flow over any protective barrier that may be raised at present.

THE unfailing report, based as usual on "undoubted authority," that the Government is anticipating trouble in the North-west, and is taking steps to prepare for it, has already begun to ferment in the columns of the Opposition press. We cannot form any very correct idea of the advance of spring in that distant locality by the season here, but the appearance of the foregoing rumour is a proof of vernal weather at its source which is simply unchallengable. We rejoice to know then that the wild roses are in blossom on the prairie, that the early potatoes are on time, that the fall wheat is up and coming. And we are equally grieved to infer that under the balmy influence of the spring the noble red man feels his pro-