

encampments would lend new support to the defence, and again hinder the mobility of the assailant." And after turning the subject over, he arrives at the conclusion that war, where it has to reckon with fortifications like those constructed in France, "will, for a time, be of a dilatory character." Shall we go back, then, to the days of Marlborough and Eugene, and spend months, not to say years, before a barrier such as did not exist at the beginning of the eighteenth century? If so, the boasted "war of movements" will cease, until a new Gustavus or Turenne breaks the charm. "If in a future war," the author goes on, "the leadership of our armies is just as circumspect, and the bravery of our soldiers and Generals as great as heretofore, we must at the same time be alive to the fact that it will not be possible to conceive of a similarly rapid course, and of like fortunate and rapid results as [were attainable] in 1866 and 1870. As King Frederick, after the battle of Lowositz, wrote to the bold Marshal Schwerin, 'we do not find the old Austrian,' so shall we at the beginning of a future war be obliged to confess 'we do not find our old foes more.'" These words are consolations for the French, and imply how deep an impression has been made on thoughtful Germans by the brand-new army and bristling frontier of France.

THE projected visit of the Shah to Europe next year, especially to St. Petersburg, where he goes first, impels the Calcutta correspondent of *The Times* to advise that England should take some steps to cement an alliance with him, giving him a promise of active support; or he will probably return as a practical vassal of Russia. Well, let him. If he is fit for his position he must know very well that the objective point of the Russian advance in Asia, southward, is Persia, not India, and if he chooses to sell himself to his enemy why should England interfere? The Russians planted on the Persian Gulf might perhaps threaten the road to India, if she had any designs in that direction; but most likely the achievement of a sea outlet for her land-locked populations is all she wants, and the government of Persia would be as much as she could manage. The Czar might be as good a neighbour in Persia as the Shah. At any rate, if England is to keep her road to India clear of possible foes in this fashion, it will be necessary that she take possession of half the earth.

It may be that England is more firmly planted in India than is generally supposed: the free gift of two million dollars made by the Nizam of Hyderabad to the Indian Government for the purpose of strengthening the defences of the northwest frontier against possible Russian aggression, is a substantial indication of loyalty on the part of the Mohammedan populations that must be disturbing to Anglophobists everywhere. All India evidently is not groaning under English tyranny; and an invader could not count on the whole population rising to aid in shaking off the English yoke. And if Russia really has any designs India-wards, perhaps the fact of this gift, and the reflection that England has fifty million loyal Mohammedan subjects whose fighting men would ask nothing better than to be led against the Power that is threatening the Caliph of Constantinople, may induce an enduring hesitancy. The fate of Constantinople too may rest in the hollow of England's hand, while she has this reserve of soldiery antagonistic to the Muscovite.

THE English Court officials appear to have blundered disgracefully in the reception of guests during the Jubilee festivities. Not only were the host of petty German Princelets given precedence over the Indian Princes, but even the Queen of Hawaii took superior rank. The consequence is that several of the Indian Princes—to please whom on such an occasion extraordinary efforts should have been made—were deeply offended, and have carried a lasting grievance home to India.

THE current number of the *Westminster Review* contains a very fair and full statement of the arguments which are being urged with increasing force by statisticians, to the effect that India, over a large portion of which wheat can be grown for from 5s. to 7s. 6d. per quarter, as compared with 12s. or 13s. in Dakota, could, with Americanised facilities and Americanised railway rates, compete favourably with the United States as an exporter of cereals, cotton, etc.—might, in fact, "wake up like a young giant refreshed, and assume a position in the economy of nations that her many disabilities have hitherto hindered her from attaining." The development of India as a wheat-growing country is of great interest to Canada: a successful rival to Dakota would be a successful rival to our Northwest also; but the *Westminster* reviewer seems to make too little of the great difference in freight between India and America to England, which must always heavily handicap the first-named country.

LORD DERBY, a most cautious and competent authority, has stated lately that the land-owning class in England had, as a body, lost \$1,500,000,000, or nearly a-third of their whole property. The main weight of the continuous depression of seven years has fallen upon them. This is grievous; but we are inclined to believe that bottom has been now quite or nearly reached: and if rents are adjusted to the lower value of land, agriculture in England may revive, and with it the prosperity of the land-lord class. Of course nothing can bring back the lost value, and much hardship must result to individuals, necessitating numerous changes of proprietorship; but that accomplished, there is no reason why agriculture should not flourish on the new basis.

A LATE number of the *Illustrated London News*, of which the excellent American reprint is before us, contains a view of Krupp's latest big gun, made for the Italian navy. It is a monster, 45 feet long, weighing 118 tons, and capable of throwing a steel projectile of nearly one ton weight a distance of nearly eight miles. Simultaneously with this comes news of a discovery which if genuine may make of the Latest Big Gun the last of a race of giants—soon to become as antiquated as any giant of old. A new explosive named Sleetover is said to have been discovered by a Russian engineer, whose qualities are such as to cause a complete revolution in methods of warfare. Ordinary gunpowder and guncotton explode by expanding either simultaneously in all directions, or else downwards. In using gunpowder, therefore, to propel projectiles from a cannon, the cannon has to be made of sufficient strength, weight, and thickness to resist the explosion of the charge. The new gunpowder is an explosive which only acts in one direction,—namely, forwards. This quality immediately does away with the necessity for solid, heavy instruments from which to throw the projectile. It is said, indeed, that ball-cartridges loaded with Sleetover have actually been fired from cardboard tubes with complete success, and without damaging the tubes in any way. Again, one of the great difficulties of the repeating-rifle also is its weight. If, however, the barrel could be made of some light substance—paper, sheet tin, or aluminium, the lightest and toughest of metals, the weight saved might be utilised by adding to the charge in the magazine, and a rifle that would fire thirty shots in succession might conceivably be produced. The new explosive can be produced at a tenth of the cost of ordinary gunpowder, and its strength is equal to that of pyroxyline. If the artillery-train for an army can consist of tubes of aluminium, and a siege train can thus be carried on men's shoulders, or slung between horses, the protection now afforded by mountain ranges will be gone. The people of wild and mountainous regions, as the Boers, the Montenegrins, and the Swiss, who have been able to maintain their independence against far superior military forces, owing to the practical impossibility of using artillery, will lose this advantage, and with it their liberty; while in the case of India, the formidable Himalayas will be surmounted, or a Russian advance by the snowy passes of the Cabul range, the most direct route into India, always regarded as impossible because of the difficulties of conveying the cannon, will become most easy. And in the case of war ships a still more complete revolution may take place: the whole plan of construction may be changed when it is no longer necessary to provide for carrying heavy artillery; much greater speed may at any rate be gained; and the growing revulsion against big ships may issue in a perfectly new and more efficient type.

THE DEAN OF CANTERBURY has written the following letter to the hon. secretary of the Church of England Burial Reform Association:—"The inquiry how to dispose of the dead continues to exercise men's minds as believers in the 'resurrection of the dead.' We do right in showing respect to their mortal remains, but the endeavour to prolong the period of their natural decomposition is not true respect for them, and is a violation of the laws of nature. We profess to be restoring 'earth to earth,' and yet, by solid coffins and bricked graves, we prevent the healthful separation of human remains into their component parts, and store them up to the injury of the living."

A WRITER in *Macmillan's Magazine*, dealing with politics in England, has a few sentences that are not wholly inapplicable to politics this side of the Atlantic. The divorce, he says, between politics and reason is now complete; even expediency, in the honest sense of the word, has little to do with them. They are purely a matter of partisanship even among those politicians whom it is most possible to respect: what they have sunk to among the rank and file, and even in some cases among men who once were leaders, the exigencies of the law of libel forbids me to explain to you. The proceedings of our House of Commons, if ever literally reported, would furnish you, however, with a vocabulary ample for the purpose.