

FROM OUR OWN OBSERVATORY.

The Great Victorian Age and the Great Augustan Age.

NEARLY two millenniums have passed since what was in many respects the greatest empire the world has yet seen attained the height of its glory. Never, since then, has the mentality of man reached such a brilliant development; never, since then, have the rights of men and women as citizens been placed upon such broad and enduring principles; never, since then, have the fortunes of a great State seemed to be based on such solid and stable foundations. Yet have we seen such a marvellous condition of prosperity and progress wiped out by the incursions of barbarians, against whose successive onslaughts the efforts of civilized man seemed utterly futile. Can such a fate overtake the greatest of modern empires? It seems hardly possible; and yet there are considerations which might well make us hesitate as to our answer. Certainly, the world is, in a sense, much smaller than it was in the days of Cæsar; the factors are all, to a large extent, known. To-day, we can send a message round the world in less time than it took to cross the Tiber; and we can number our possible savage assailants as accurately as probably the inhabitants of a Roman province were ever numbered. But in many ways the conditions are very similar, even if they are not worse to-day than they were under the Imperial sway. Slavery was the lot of a large proportion of the Roman people; to-day, modern inventions and methods have reduced, not only the lowest orders, but the great bulk of the middle and upper classes, to a condition of practical slavery which only assumes a more irksome shape because it is nominally a condition of freedom. We see, too, enormous and overpowering properties accumulated, while the discontented classes seem able to do little but join in a chorus, demanding bread, while their strikers destroy the capital employed in producing it. And if we have no fear of the destruction of our civilization by the incursion of millions of Chinamen, let us not forget that the real enemy may come from within. With the trades unionists, democrats, and socialists organizing a "universal strike" of labor, to be consummated in the case of a general war, we may see where our real danger lies, and we may understand why an English statesman hesitates to plunge his country into a great war. And we should be led, also, to contemplate most seriously the methods we must adopt to prevent such a calamity. If we are to be saved from destructive racial and religious and class wars, every effort should be made to improve the mental condition of the masses, and thus facilitate their development into free and intelligent and unprejudiced citizens.

Attitude of the United States on the Armenian Troubles.

Some of our friends who are never weary of denouncing England—alternately as a truculent bully and as a cowardly trader—must feel some slight twinges of conscience when they see the quiet way in which the President disclaims any intention of interfering in European quarrels. Of course, it is not the business of the United States to protect the Armenians from their bloodthirsty oppressors, but if not, it is difficult to see why it should be the duty of England to step in, at the risk of producing far worse calamities. Certainly, if any nation owes it to humanity to strike a blow at the present time, that nation is the United States. Her missionaries have doubtless done more than anybody else to precipitate the crisis; yet probably all she will do, when the climax comes, will be to send a guardship, under cover of British guns, to bring away her ambassadors

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