

GREECE SUPPORTED BY RUSSIA.

Greece appears to be determined to create a disturbance in the Balkan Peninsula, despite the protestations of the European powers. She has seen the Prince of Bulgaria appropriating and successfully annexing Eastern Roumelia, with but a passing protest from the Turkish Government, and with the evident concurrence of at least two of the great powers. Greece looks upon this extension of the Bulgarian territory as irreconcilable with the failure of Turkey to pass over to the Grecian Government the district surrounding Janina, in the southern portion of Albania, which, according to the terms of the treaty of Berlin, was to have been placed under Grecian control. It is doubtful, however, that Greece would have undertaken to vindicate the righteousness of her cause, were it not that she counted upon material aid from Russia. It is well known that Russian diplomatists have for some months been urging upon the Grecian Government the necessity of striking during the present critical juncture in Europe; and though the Russian representations look ultimately to the furtherance of the Muscovite cause, Greece may feel justified in commencing hostilities, in which she hopes eventually to be supported by Russia. The Greek Government can now put into the field a force of 60,000 well-armed men, in addition to which, it has an available reserve of 29,000 men. Against this force, Turkey will be able to hurl her well-disciplined army, numbering 320,000 men, including 35,000 horsemen. The odds against Greece are so tremendous that no sane man could believe for a moment that she would undertake the part of the aggressor, were it not that she counted upon outside assistance. The Montenegrans, though always ready to fight, could render Greece no material aid; the Servians will be held in check by the Austrian Government, while the Bulgarians will, if drawn into the struggle, take sides with Turkey. It will thus be seen, that unless Greece is aided by Russia, there is little hope of her being able to cope single-handed with a Government having a force at its command five times as great as that of the Greeks. It may be that Russia, fearing the establishment of a strong Bulgarian power, which might bar her road to Constantinople, has decided to espouse the cause of Greece, with the hope that by so doing, she may reach the goal of her ambition, and hoist the Russian flag upon the fortifications at Constantinople. The events of the next few weeks may be looked forward to with interest by those familiar with the complications which have arisen in the Balkan Provinces during the past quarter of a century.

PROTECTION FOR BIRDS.

The crusade which has been begun by the English and the American press, against the wanton destruction of birds, cannot fail to receive the hearty co-operation of all lovers of these feathered inhabitants of the wood. The latest fashionable craze for trimming ladies' hats with whole birds, and often with several of them, has gone so far as to awaken general alarm. So long as a wing or a head of some unmusical bird sufficed for the decoration of one piece of head-gear, the evil was unnoticed. But, unfortunately, many of the fair sex have an ambition to carry about on their heads whole show-cases of taxidermy. And in many instances, the birds which are sacrificed on the altar of fashion are not the most handsome in plumage, but the sweetest in song, whose little throats, silent forever, by their very silence "plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against the deep damnation of their taking-off." An American reporter recently made an inventory of the feathered decorations of five ladies' hats, seen in one street car, showing that number one wore the wings and tail-feathers of three starlings; number two carried an entire bird, name unknown; number three had no less than seven warblers somewhere above her; number four was surmounted by a large-sized tern; while number five looked out from under the remains of three shore larks. Surely, when man was given dominion over the beast of the earth and the fowls of the air, it was not intended that man's wife should make such glaring abuse of her authority.

Akin to this question of the wholesale slaughter of those birds which are used for decorative (?) purposes, is the killing of game birds out of season. In most civilized countries it has been found expedient to prohibit the destruction of game during certain months of the year. Not only is this a necessary precaution against the total disappearance of game, but it is the opinion of experts that, during the close months, game birds are quite unfit for human food. In no country are the game laws enforced with sufficient rigor; and in England the difficulty seems to lie in the permission to sell game, on the ground that it is imported from Sweden, Norway, or Russia, where there is no game law. Of course, as an English contemporary points out, it is impossible to tell where the birds offered for sale were killed, and hence much English game is for sale during the close season. The same journal adds:—"It is, in fact, an inexorable law of nature that wherever men increase and multiply upon the earth, wild animals and birds disappear. For these very obvious reasons game laws are the necessary correlatives and sequents of civilization. It is not creditable to such countries as Sweden, Norway, and Russia, that in them fur and feather should not be protected by close times."

AN AGE OF SHAMS.

The nineteenth century has been marked by the material advance made in the arts and sciences, by the improvement in the means of communication and transportation, and by the cheapening and general diffusion of newspapers, periodicals, books and printed matter. But notwithstanding these undeniable advantages the age is after all an age of shams, and has been aptly styled an age of obtrusive insincerities. The advances made in the arts and sciences have not always been fraught with good to mankind,

as science has frequently been perverted and turned to uses that tend to lower rather than improve our civilization. An analysis of many of the articles used by us as food only serves to prove to what an extent science has been degraded. An able writer referring to the question of food adulteration in a late number of the *London Post* says:

"Most people who read of artificial eggs being manufactured in America will regard the matter as a joke, to be classed with such Yankee notions as wooden nutmegs and clocks without insides, for which Massachusetts enjoys a great reputation. The idea of anything like real competition with the hencoops will appear absurd. But it is a fact, nevertheless. A large firm at New Jersey is engaged in the manufacture of fresh eggs, and so well are they made that experienced buyers cannot detect the imposture until the articles are boiled. A man named OVERDANK, living in Rockland county, New York, was recently fined fifty dollars and costs for selling fresh eggs at a low price. They were admirably made, the shells of a composition of lime, the whites of artificial albumen, with a yolk—looking almost as good as the real thing—of ground carrot and saffron. In boiling the 'inside got mixed up,' and in this way the cheat was discovered. It further transpired that these eggs were being turned out at very low figure by a New Jersey firm."

Cognac and castor-oil seem remote enough from each other; and the problem how to turn four ounces of the objectionable oil into a barrel of first-class brandy will appear to most people one by no means easily solved. But certain Hamburg chemists are fully equal to the task, and the French authorities are perfectly cognizant now of the fact that the basis of most of the cheap cognac made in France is neither more nor less than castor oil. The *Republique Francaise* recently gave some interesting details of the falsification under the eminently suggestive heading, "A German Poison." It is a liquid preparation largely sold in France, but made in Hamburg, expressly for the purpose of adulterating genuine and manufacturing spurious brandies. Its name, as set forth on the labels of the small blue bottles in which it is imported, is "Essential oil of the lees of wine." It is, however, as innocent of wine-lees in any form as American honey of the true nectar of flowers. Samples of it have been seized by the sanitary police and analysed at the municipal laboratory, and it has been proved to consist of castor oil which has been subjected to the action of nitric acid, and afterwards etherified with a mixture of ethylic alcohol. Four ounces of this precious extract, it is stated, added to a sufficient quantity of common beetroot spirits—the very worst there is—will make a barrel of fine cognac brandy.

Perhaps for unscrupulous audacity both must yield to a Philadelphian genius who was recently engaged in making artificial quinine. It was valueless as a medicine, but looked well, tasted well, and what was more to the point, sold well among the poor.

The commercial ingenuity which enables unscrupulous men to palm off upon the community as genuine, spurious honey made of maize starch treated with oxalic acid, tea made from prepared willow leaves, preserves made from turnips, and butter, in the production of which not one drop of cream has been used, would if turned in proper channels be of great service to the world. But the race for the goal of wealth has become so general, and the competition so keen, that men who would not be guilty of direct theft have no scruples in enriching themselves at the expense of the unwary consumer, and appear to have grown callous to the dishonesty they thus practice. If the adulteration of food were always harmless in its effect, the strong arm of the law should still be used to protect the people against imposition, but as it frequently results in the substitution of poisonous for nutritious ingredients, it is time that society, through its rulers, took vigorous measures to prevent the further growth of an evil which has already assumed alarming proportions.

CAPE BRETON.

That the Island of Cape Breton is a constant and material contribution to the revenue of the Province of Nova Scotia is a fact very well known to our readers. That these contributions have hitherto been largely spent in constructing public works (railways for instance) in Nova Scotia Proper, while Cape Breton has been altogether neglected, is equally well-known. We and many others have been entertaining the idea that such neglect of the Island was under the circumstances unjust. But Mr. Mack, M. P. P. for Queen's County, gives us to understand that we have been all wrong. He says that no greater favor could have been done to Cape Breton than to have made the expenditures referred to all outside the Island; that all the public works beyond the Island are of the greatest possible utility to its people, and that they should be grateful to the beneficent men who caused this state of things to be. Upon the same principle, P. E. Island should have contributed to the building of the I. C. R., and be grateful for the privilege. When a man in Cape Breton wishes to carry the product of his industry or speculation from Cape Breton County to the Strait of Canso, or from Margaree to Sydney, it must be consoling to him to think that he ought to be thankful that his contributions to the revenue of this Province have been applied—not to building railways in Cape Breton, but to public works in Nova Scotia Proper! Well done, thou fair and faithful statesman, Mack! After this we shall with awe behold thee:—

"Still shall we gaze and still the wonder grow
That some small heads can carry 'till they know."

Within the recollection of many of our readers, San Francisco was not. The city now boasts one hundred millionaires. No enumeration of its paupers and of those who live from hand to mouth, not knowing where the next meal is to be obtained, has yet been made public. Extremes meet, millionaires and paupers never live far apart.