

THE German Press has completely changed front on the Batoum incident. At first, it was not Germany's affair, it was solely England's; the feebleness of government in Mr. Gladstone's hands had brought it on. But now the *Cologne Gazette*, which then defended Russia's proceeding, turns round and advocates the English annexation of Egypt as a set-off against Russia's closing of Batoum. The truth is, Germany is beginning to recognise that the European branch of the Eastern question is primarily a German affair, not an English one,—the Danube is a German river, and Russian supremacy in the Black Sea would threaten other besides English interests. Accordingly, the usual annual meeting of the three Emperors gives place this year to a meeting of the Emperors of Germany and Austria alone. Austria has discovered that the Russian interpretation of the compact between the three Empires is that Russia shall lay down the law, and that Germany shall support her in coaxing Austria to yield; and whenever, as in the Bulgarian and Greek questions, Russia's aims are widely divergent from those of Austria, and she fails to obtain submission to her views, she follows an independent line of her own. Hence, naturally, the alliance has come to an end; and it is useful to note in this changed aspect of affairs that the *Paris Figaro* announces that arrangements are being made for a conference between M. de Freycinet and M. de Giers, the French and Russian Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

It is believed that Lord Lyons will retire from the Paris Embassy on or before the completion of his seventieth year, next April. In the probable event of the Conservatives being in office, the post is likely to fall into the capable hands of Lord Lytton.

WE to-day give unusual space to British affairs. Besides Professor Goldwin Smith's usual English letter, there will be found in another place a chapter of "Election Notes," contributed by Mr. Smith to the current number of *Macmillan*, which contains in a short form a comprehensive review of the late crisis that we hope may prove interesting to our readers and instructive to Mr. Smith's critics of the Canadian Parnellite Press.

It is reported that Sir William White will be made "of the Privy Council," in recognition of the assistance he has given, during his holiday in London, to the Government on pending Eastern questions. He ought to be promoted permanently to Constantinople. It was quite agreeable to Gladstonian statesmanship to remove him after the good work he did there last winter; yet he is by far the fittest man for the post of danger now visible in the diplomatic service.

It is satisfactory to learn that assurances of the completest neutrality in case of any action by Russia against Turkey have been received both in Constantinople and in London from the Government of Roumania, but that this neutrality would be changed into hostility in the event of any armed interference in the Balkan Peninsula. With a hostile Roumania to overcome, and, when overcome, in her rear, and Austria threatening her flank, Russia will hardly venture to attack Bulgaria.

REFERRING to the Treaty of 1818 between Great Britain and the United States, the *St. James's Gazette* says:—"The fact that the changed conditions of the fishing industries have made the treaty work differently from what was intended by its authors, may be an excellent reason for revising it, but it is no excuse whatever for violating its provisions. The Canadians are not averse to relax its terms for good consideration. The Americans made a bad bargain in 1818; and they cannot expect us to endorse their pretension to rescind it for nothing. Canada is technically right, and she is entitled to our support."

HERR WETTENDORF, who during the last six years has occupied the post of Under-Secretary in the Turkish Ministry of Finance, is returning to Germany. Failing health has compelled him to decline the offer of a renewal of his contract with the Imperial Government. The correspondent of the *Standard* says:—"Talking over affairs with Herr Wettendorf, the latter admitted to me that his efforts during his stay at Varna to put Turkish finances in order had not been crowned with all the success he could have desired, notwithstanding that in his plan of reform he had made many concessions to local customs and prejudices. In his opinion, based upon his six years' experience of things in Turkey, if the financial regeneration of the country is ever to be effected—and he does not despair of this—it must be by the Turks themselves, and not by any individual foreign expert whose services may be acquired by the Porte."

THE Montreal *Herald* indulges in a tirade against Mr. Goldwin Smith, condemning, but not attempting to answer, his criticism of Mr. Gladstone's conduct in the late crisis, and arguing in effect that it had been better for Mr. Smith and the other Unionists to let Mr. Gladstone break up the Imperial Government, establish an independent Parliament at Dublin, and precipitate civil war in Ireland, rather than run the risk of seating Lord Randolph Churchill on the Treasury benches. And since the new election has actually had this result, it is now their duty, having "deposed Gladstone," to blindly approve of everything done by his successors in office. The *Herald* has a peculiar notion of the meaning of the independence of statesmen and publicists, as well as of journalists.

MR. GLADSTONE has given notice that henceforth he will be "unable to promise the devotion of time and surrender of personal liberty which the efficient conduct of intercourse by letter with not less than twenty thousand persons each year requires." This will be welcome news to holders of the Gladstone autograph, which, in consequence of an over-supply during the late elections, has suffered a great depreciation in value. The following advertisement in a London paper, headed "Gladstone Autographs Purchased," gives the latest quotations: "Political letters, twelve shillings per dozen; ditto post-cards, one and sixpence per dozen. Other subjects, if of interest, from one shilling to two and sixpence each. Address 'Collector,' Messrs. Deacon, 154 Leadenhall Street, E.C." This is very sad; and must be most disappointing to the many who have for years been hoarding up every scrap of paper bearing the G. O. M.'s magic name or initials, under the impression that a few years hence fabulous prices would be offered for them. Why was he not kept out of that unlucky campaign!—in his excited state he was sure to flood the market; and now we doubt if the stock is really worth more than the Confederate bonds he once so confidently invested in.

THE London *Advertiser* renews its attack on Mr. Goldwin Smith by citing, in refutation of Mr. Smith's criticism of the "masses and classes" electioneering manœuvre of Mr. Gladstone, an article written by this gentleman, and published in the *Nineteenth Century*, July, 1878. In that article Mr. Gladstone stated in much the same shape as lately the monstrous proposition that instinct is superior to reason, and is, as we infer, generally to be preferred to it when the question at issue is one where a knowledge of history, a wide mental view of the circumstances, and a habit of trained thinking, are essential to a right decision. This citation clearly proves what was never questioned—Mr. Gladstone's consistency; but it does nothing for the immorality charged against him, of, for electioneering purposes, setting class against class and race against race, within the British Isles. This is what Mr. Goldwin Smith condemns, and it is no answer to show that Mr. Gladstone is consistent in his peculiar views. Whether these views be right or wrong, he republished them in the late elections with what must be characterised as a mischievous intent, just as, it may be feared, to carry his point, he would have used, or concealed, or denied, or explained away any other former utterance of his, if it had served his purpose to do so.

To those two or three Canadian journalists who have plucked up heart since Mr. Goldwin Smith has been absent from the country, and are now so courageously aiming their shafts behind his back, we commend what Prof. E. A. Freeman, the historian, says of Mr. Smith, in his "Methods of Historical Study." Assuming that so eminent a scholar as Professor Freeman knows what he is writing about, the intelligent reader may infer from this passage that possibly Professor Smith has at least as profound a knowledge of public affairs in general, and therefore of the Irish question, as the eminent publicists, his critics, whose whole knowledge has the look of having been derived from the exclusive perusal of one another's papers, relieved by listening to an occasional Fenian lecture. Prof. Freeman says:—"Again, after a season, his chair passed to a memorable man. It passed to one who had indeed drunk in the spirit of Arnold; to one who knew, as few have known, to grasp the truth that history is but past politics, and that politics are but present history. It passed to a scholar, a thinker, a master of the English tongue; to one who is something nobler still, to one whom we may truly call a prophet of righteousness. The name of Goldwin Smith is honoured in two hemispheres, honoured as his name should be who never feared the face of man wherever there was truth to be asserted or wrong to be denounced."

An old parish clerk was courteously thanking a church dignitary for kindly taking on emergency a village service. "A worse preacher would have done for us, sir," he said, "If we had only known were to find him."