

and rewarding his troops. Perhaps a minister of a different temperament from that of Mr. Gladstone would at once and without further parley have made a forward movement; safety might have been found in that bold course; but bold courses are easily suggested by irresponsible critics. The only hope now left is the mediation of Germany and Austria, each of whom must feel that if England were to succumb in the impending struggle her turn would soon come. Especially must this apprehension be present to the mind of Austria, whose doom has long been registered as next on the scroll of destiny to that of the "Sick Man." The sinister movements of France, which have fulfilled the anticipations expressed by us when she suddenly arrested her course of aggression in China, are likely to enhance German and Austrian fears by portending a still more extensive conflagration. Bismarck's sentiments towards England are probably unfriendly; he would not be sorry to see her forces consumed in a struggle which would weaken and impoverish Russia at the same time. But the German Emperor is, in the last resort, master of the German council: he is certainly in favour of peace, and he is believed to have great personal influence over the Czar. He ought to be able easily to convince the Czar that the idea of dissipating political dangers at home by setting the world on fire is no less foolish than it is wicked. The late Emperor of the French played that game and the deserved result was the death of that arch felon in exile. By European war all the revolutionary fires will be called into play and Nihilism will be the chief gainer in the end. Arbitration, about which some philosophic Radicals are babbling, is obviously inapplicable to this case, the military or imperial abettors of General Komaroff would be bound by no award, and the delay would only give them an opportunity of securing points of vantage. Mr. Bright shows his wisdom in refusing to attend an arbitration meeting. Among the difficulties of the situation with which the British Government has to deal must not be overlooked the character and habits of the Afghans, who are a collection of wild and predatory clans, brave and not ungenerous in disposition, but fickle and untrustworthy like other barbarians, while they obey no central rule, the measure of the Ameer's power over them being that of his personal force or influence. To operate against Russia across the country of these clansmen and in reliance on the steadiness of their friendship is perilous work. In India all looks well, and Russia is not likely to be encouraged in aggressive insolence by any signs of disaffection in that quarter. The wish that there may be no war is perhaps in us father to the thought that peace is still possible; but we look with rather more hopefulness than is generally felt to German and Austrian mediation. The vigorous preparations of England for war and the spirit manifested by her people will second the efforts of mediators in the most effectual way. Mr. Gladstone may not be the best man, nor may his Cabinet be the best set of men, for the crisis; but his character and his antecedents, especially with regard to the Russian question, are an assurance to the nation and to the world at large that a war into which he goes must be inevitable and just.

AMERICAN opinion, in the quarrel between England and Russia, is decidedly in favour of England. So our correspondents in the United States tell us. The tendency of sentiment is less visible in the Press, which, like the politicians, adheres rather mechanically to the Anti-British tradition and is more or less influenced by the Irish, than in society, the feeling of which has of late years been growing very kindly towards the Mother Country, while to the native American the Irish are as far as possible from being objects of love or sympathy. The tone, however, of the Press is generally favourable to England, and an almost universal disposition is shown by the journals to accept the English and reject the Russian version of the Pendjeh affair. It may safely be said that Russia will receive no sort of support, moral or material, from the American people, and that, if she attempts in any way to make their ports the base of her cruising or privateering, international law will be inflexibly put in force against her. Very different would have been the case fifteen years ago. Russia had then won the hearts of the American people by her cheap but welcome and polite professions of sympathy during the Civil War, while the memory of the contumelious treatment which they had received at the hands of the British aristocracy and of the ravages of the *Alabama* still rankled in their breasts. And now the policy of compensation for the depredations of the *Alabama* is abundantly vindicated. Now they who, during the Civil War, strove to restrain aristocratic outrage and to preserve friendly relations between the British and the American people reap a rich reward. Now some pensive reflections might find their way into the mind of Lord Salisbury, the leading incendiary of the Southern Club, if his lordship were not too much occupied in doing fresh mischief by scattering apprehensions of revolt in India, and adding, as far as is in his power, the perils of faction within the commonwealth to those of war without.

It may be regarded as a redeeming feature of the quarrel with Russia that it must put an end to the waste of British valour resources and blood in the Soudan. That ill-starred adventure was never justified by any settled policy or substantial object. The nation was lured into it by a heroic but mystical knight-errant who took up a position beyond the proper line of operations, trusting to his supernatural powers. The Government, in risking an army to rescue him, obeyed a violent burst of popular emotion, which it took for national opinion, though, if it had stood firm, the nation might have listened to reason. The passionate desire to smash the Mahdi has now subsided, or been superseded by a more serious cause of excitement. With an army of 200,000 men against Russia's 800,000, England plainly cannot afford to leave troops in Egypt. Her brave soldiers will be withdrawn, and we may be sure they will gladly depart from the scene of a warfare at once desperate and ignoble, of terrible endurances and of barren victories. It is of course desirable that the withdrawal should take place as quietly and with as little of the aspect of enforced retreat as possible. And now mark how the Party system of government works at a mortal crisis of the nation's destiny, and how completely identical the service of a Party is with devotion to the public good. Sir Stafford Northcote, as leader of the Opposition, espying an opportunity of embarrassing the Government, rises to declaim upon the importance of the Egyptian question and to protest against withdrawal. He is willing to maim his country when she is entering on a struggle for her life, rather than forego a chance of damaging his political opponent. And he is not a low demagogue or a ward politician, but a baronet with broad acres and a long pedigree. What then are we to expect from common partisans?

THE result of the Prince of Wales's visit to Ireland must be held to have justified the counsels of Lord Spencer, if it was by him, as is said, that the step was recommended. It is in accordance with the policy which has always been advocated by those who had most carefully studied the character of the Irish people. What the Irish want is not the repeal of the Union or political innovation of any sort, but kindness, respect, and sympathy. The road to their allegiance is through their hearts. It is deplorable that this was not seen and acted upon long ago. If the Queen could have been induced to spend every alternate summer in Ireland, the Irish problem would now be in a much less desperate state. One or two short sessions of Parliament at Dublin for the special consideration of Irish questions would also have been most useful, at once in guiding legislation by the light of local knowledge and in appeasing the craving for a Parliament in College Green. But while the Court has refused to do its duty and the Government persisted in its false line of political concession, demagogues and enemies of the realm have been allowed to carry on their work and they have succeeded too well in souring the Irish heart. Still the Prince and Princess as they passed along have almost everywhere evoked a great breadth of loyalty. The Nationalist policy of silent and dignified indifference has totally broken, and the Nationalist members of Parliament have been compelled to go in person and organize riots, which they have done with a very limited measure of success. Never again can it be said after what we have seen, that Ireland is a unit or anything like a unit in favour of separation. Evidently the preponderance of sentiment is the other way. In the Protestant North especially much good will have been done. The Government in upholding order with severe impartiality and restraining Unionist as well as Separationist demonstrations has worn the appearance of discouraging and almost of repudiating its friends. By the Radical, whose philosophic and philanthropic aim it is to purchase the Irish Vote with the dismemberment of the country, hatred and contumely have been poured upon the Ulster Protestants whose gallant, staunch and indomitable loyalty such politicians regard with the best reason as the main obstacle to the fulfilment of their designs. This had gone so far that fears for the fidelity of the North had begun to be felt by loyal men while hopes of its secession arose in the breasts of Disunionists. By the Prince's visit those fears have been dissipated and those hopes have been confounded. Alarms about the personal safety of the Prince and his consort we said, and have all along felt sure, were baseless as far as Fenianism was concerned. The Royal pair were safer in Ireland than at Sandringham. In Ireland they are specially guarded by the policy of those whom all the assassins obey and who know very well that their crime would be the most frightful of all possible blunders.

GENERAL GRANT shows the same indomitable tenacity in battling with the last enemy that he showed in battling with the enemy on the Rappahannock, and seems determined once more to fight it out on that line if it takes all summer. But a formidable consensus of physicians pronounce his malady cancer, cure impossible, and the end not far off, in spite of the