

CURRENT TOPICS AND EVENTS.

THE WAR POLICY.

"Suppose" writes Dr. Sandwith of Kars, in the *Nineteenth Century*, "an English prime minister were to persuade himself and a large section of the public that the security of our dominion in India required the sacrifice, once a year, of twenty innocent natives of both sexes, with every circumstance of cruelty and indignity which could add bitterness to death; and suppose a bill were introduced into Parliament for the purpose of giving practical effect to such conclusion. How many members of Parliament would be found to vote for it? Not one, I believe. The most loyal and submissive of the minister's followers would recoil from participation in the guilt of so great a crime, even though the alternative should be the probable loss of our Indian empire.

"Now, what is the difference, in point of morality, between the policy which I have supposed and that which has found so many advocates in England during the last eighteen months? We have been told on high authority that we are bound for the sake of 'our own interests' to 'uphold' a political system of which we know that one of the inevitable fruits is the periodical torture and slaughter of 'ten thousand or twenty thousand' innocent human beings, to say nothing of other evils which are not periodical but chronic."

These are the words of a British surgeon in Armenia, who has for many years been an eye-witness of Turkish misrule and oppression. It seems to us that his words are especially applicable when England seems to be not drifting, but, as Lord Derby says, "rushing into a purposeless war"—a war for which many of the wisest and best minds in the nation see no adequate cause, and which may result in the unutter-

able agonies and cruel death of many thousands of the husbands, fathers, or sons of English wives, children, or parents, producing poignant anguish throughout the nation.

We have greatly rejoiced at the strong, persistent, and outspoken remonstrance of the English Methodist press against the war policy which seems in favour with a considerable portion of the community. It requires great firmness of principle to protest against the war spirit when the nation's blood is up, and a martial enthusiasm is the prevailing popular sentiment. But this adherence to the teachings of the Gospel will bring with it the benediction pronounced upon the peacemakers; and, when moments of calmer reflection come, will command the reluctant admiration even of the Hotspurs who clamour for war. In a recent issue, the *London Watchman*, the most important Wesleyan paper in Great Britain, speaks thus:

We have consistently advocated peace; and if that course should expose us to the reproach of being peacemongers we can only reply that, under the present existing circumstances, we recoil in disgust from the alternative of being warmongers. The advocates of peace are sometimes rather severely reflected upon, as if they were careless of the credit and honour of their country. But, on the other hand, is it so very creditable to proclaim aloud to all the world that we are prepared to do anything or fight anybody, but that it must be in defence of British interests? Has a spirited foreign policy, then, come to this—that while liberty, life itself, and all that makes life worth having, are at stake for millions of our fellow-creatures, while blood has been shed like water, Great Britain stands coldly by declaring that her "interests" alone