

# LATEST BY CABLE.

## Anglo-German Agreement—France's Threat

—Startling Reports From the Balkans.

The Anglo-German agreement makes fewer friends for its African clauses, however, as time goes on. An important protest against it is being signed by both Tory and Liberal members of the Commons, who declare that it is injurious to British interests both in Central and Southwest Africa. On the other hand, German public opinion is growing openly hostile. This is largely due to hints judiciously dropped by Bismarck's journalistic jacks to the effect that the ex-Chancellor would have seen his right hand withered before he signed such an inglorious treaty.

Bismarck himself is not learning to bear his exclusion from office with equanimity. The restless shifting of moods of which I spoke a while ago seems to grow on him. He has now definitely decided not to visit England at all this year, with the result that very many invitations here to dinners and house parties had to be rescinded.

France's threat to call a European congress has brought Lord Salisbury down, and England is now engaged in negotiations to compensate France for allowing the Anglo-German agreement to stand. In substance the French demands are the abrogation of the treaty with Tunis, which gives England favored nation's commercial rights there, the abandonment of the English claims to similar rights in Madagascar, and a recognition of French supremacy over Hinterland, back of Algiers and Tunis, a vast region which embraces the Northern and Central Sudan to the southward of the Niger Valley.

It is possible, however, that we are on the eve of events which will divert everybody's attention from Africa. Private telegrams from Constantinople report a rumor that Russian troops have actually entered Armenia. Grave trouble has been brewing in that remote quarter for a long time; so much so that nearly a year ago the missionaries there had their effects all packed ready to fly at a minute's notice of a Russian advance.

English Liberal papers for weeks back have contained telegrams reporting widespread uprisings, massacres, &c., in Armenia, but these were disregarded on the theory that they were for political effect. Their reality is now beyond doubt, and it seems equally clear that Russia is on the point of invading the Armenian frontier. This movement is spoken of as a demonstration to compel Turkey's payment of the arrears of the war indemnity, but it really means a Russian intention of advancing another long stride on the march to the Bosphorus. As England, by treaty, guarantees Turkish sovereignty over Armenia, further news about all this is awaited with acute interest.

Curiously enough, the Sultan of Turkey, who does not grow either fat or lazy, is confronted by the serious hostility of the religious classes because he meddles too much with affairs of State. The Sheik ul Islam is the leader of a widespread conspiracy among the Sufias, who wish to dethrone Abdul Hamid and dispossess his eldest son, Selim, now twenty years old, and the Sherief of Mecca is said also to be in the plot. The Sheik is a sort of a prisoner in his palace, and numerous arrests are being made.

The Balkan countries would not be Balkan countries if at this juncture they failed to boil over with fresh complications. Turkish soldiers are reported to be massacring inhabitants on Montenegrin soil. A Serbian Consul has been murdered on the street in an Albanian village, and Bulgaria is on the eve of stopping payment of the Turkish tribute and declaring her independence.

## Shakespeare's Aphorism.

No one has contributed more to the aphoristic treasures of his country than Shakespeare, says a writer in *Macmillan's Magazine*. In at least one instance he has supplied a saying upon what, though noticed elsewhere, had never received due notice in English. The saying occurs in "Romeo and Juliet," where we are told that "He jests at scars who never felt a wound." This goes to the very foundation of human sympathy as described by Aristotle, showing that it is only those who have suffered who can really feel for the suffering of others.

Our countrymen, as a race, have not been of sufficiently tender mood to trouble themselves over this question enough to make it into a proverb; it was left for gentle Shakespeare to find them a household word on sympathy and its true source. They have been mostly content with sayings that have strengthened their natural hardness, such as "Keep your breath to cool your own porridge," or (in the most modern form) "Paddle your own canoe." The Hindus, however, have a couplet as pertinent if not as poetical as the line from "Romeo," which may be thus rendered:

Whose heels have never cracked in sunbaked fields  
How can he know what pain my heel-crack yields?

This is almost an equivalent of the truth conveyed in Dido's words: "We must suffer before we can learn to sympathize with suffering (Hand ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco)."

## The Kissing Spot on Note Paper.

A fad in writing paper is what is called lover's stationery. It is fine note paper delicately tinted, the most fashionable shade being light pink. The water mark, to be detected by holding the sheet up to the light, is a blending of two hearts pierced by an arrow. In the lower corner of each fourth page (or reverse of each second half-sheet) appears what at first sight looks like a blemish. But this is the charming feature of the novelty; it is the kissing spot, for here the correspondent presses his or her lips, and thus a salute is wafted to the absent lover. The kissing spot is about the size of a shilling (twenty-five-cent piece) and is covered with a thin aromatic gum that imparts to the lips a pleasing odor and taste. A more ingenious bit of maudlin sentimentality could hardly be devised, yet we must all confess that it is of just such innocent and inane follies that the joy of human life largely consists.

## A Lost Paradise.

Green fields and young faces,  
Sunshine and flowers—  
Ah, in the far-off fair-places,  
Once they were ours!

Now, when cares and crows' feet thicken,  
Crowns looks are gray,  
Do the heather-rows somewhere quicken,  
Flushing with May!

Are the buttercups as golden?  
Do the harebells chime  
In those meadows of the olden  
Blessed time!

Look, how cold that sky above us!  
Ah me! to walk  
Where the daisies know and love us,  
And the sparrows talk!

Hush! the wistful children heed us,  
Patsing in their play!  
Darlings, take our hands and lead us—  
You know the way.

## The Nearest Task.

The path that lies straight before us,  
And the duty that must be done,  
Is the path to be trod, the task to be wrought,  
Ere the victor's crown be won.

Ever the task that lies nearest,  
And the path that lies plain in view,  
Though that task and that path are the hardest,  
That ever shall come to you.

The hardest tasks are the nearest ones,  
The every-day duties are these  
Which seem not to count in the battle of life,  
But shall gain "well done" at its close.

Then onward, with all thy strength, dear,  
For thy task is given in love;  
And the toil and the task of every-day life  
Are but steps to the heaven above.

EMMA S. THOMAS.

## A Dead Soldier.

He sleeps at last—a hero of his race,  
Dead!—and the night lies softly on his face.  
While the faint summer stars, like sentinels,  
Hover above his lonely resting-place.

A soldier, yet less soldier than a man—  
Who gave to justice what a soldier can:  
The courage of his arm, his patient heart,  
And the fire-soul that flamed when wrong began.

Not Caesar, Alexander, Antonine,  
No despot born of the old warrior line,  
Napoleons of the sword, whose cruel hands  
Caught at the throat of love upon its shrine—

But one who worshipped in the sweeter years  
Those rights that men have gained with blood  
and tears;  
Who led his armies like a priest of men,  
And fought his battles with anointed spears.

—Harper's Magazine.

## Agnes.

I open again the garden-door,  
When the flowers live their little time,  
And I stand, as you used to stand before,  
By the rose-bush in its prime;

And I pluck one bud from the laden stem;  
"This is for you," I say;  
Then I take a leaf from the glowing gem,  
And fling the rest away.

Now, why should I place this simple leaf  
Where my other treasures lie?  
And why should I keep it like the grief  
That is seen in a thoughtful eye?

I keep it because it was thus you stood,  
That summer afternoon,  
Plucking a rose in your maiden mood,  
And humming a low sweet tune—

Humming a low sweet tune alone,  
And watching with half a smile,  
The fairy rose-leaves that were strewn  
Around your feet the while.

And I stood in the shade of the garden-door,  
And heard you at your song,  
And saw the rich leaves downward pour,  
As the low wind came along.

Now, when Death has plucked your life's sweet  
bud,  
And your footsteps are heard no more,  
I think it a joy to stand where you stood,  
By the rose at the garden door.

So I creep in, as beneath a fear,  
And pluck, with trembling hand,  
A rose from the bush you held so dear,  
Ere you went to the spirit-land.

And I take one leaf from the bud—no more,  
And fling the rest away,  
Then turn again to the garden-door,  
In the golden summer day;

And whisper: "The bud that I resign;  
Is thy clay to its own earth given;  
But the leaf that I keep is that spirit of thine,  
With its incense—all of heaven!"

## Vacation as a Fact.

BY H. C. DODGE.

It's planning for a month ahead and purchasing  
with care  
Gay flannel shirts and blazer coats and scarfs  
and things to wear;

Then with a racket and a bag and lots of fine  
cigars  
You say "good bye" and off you rush to catch  
the boat or cars.

It's stepping in a boarding house and feeling  
rather strange  
While with the older boarders furtive glances  
you exchange;

But soon you get acquainted and a maiden you  
select  
With whom to flirt and fall in love—in case she  
don't object.

It's playing tennis with the girls and lots of  
silly talk  
And taking with your chosen one a lovely  
moonlight walk

And rowing with her on the lake and hunting  
flowers wild  
And dancing with her at the hops and being  
more beguiled.

It's feeling like a millionaire and spending  
money free—  
Without a thought of afterwards—for anything  
you see.

It's getting rid of business cares and troubles of  
the town  
And putting on your happy face a healthy hue  
of brown.

It's being just in Paradise that hasn't any end  
With, oh, the sweetest angel you devotedly  
attend

And falling head and ears in love—then sudden-  
ly you know  
But one more day of bliss is left ere back in  
town you'll go.

It's spending the last evening in a silent sorrow,  
sweet  
Alone with her and promising to write and  
often meet;

Too soon the awful moment comes when you  
and she must part  
And wofully you board the cars—broken in  
purse and heart.

It's feeling simply wretched when you strike  
the dusty town  
To bear again the burdens that you for a while  
laid down.

And for a week you dream about the Paradise  
you're lost—  
Till all at once you realize the fortune it has  
cost.

It's going without dinners and all other pleas-  
ures, too,  
And trying hard to borrow so you're able to pull  
through  
While paying for your Summer fun that  
brought you into debt,  
And writing her long letters—that she hasn't  
answered yet.

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