

TURKEY COMING TO TERMS.

There is good news from Constantinople. The Powers, it is announced, have peremptorily renewed—with a slight modification—their demand of May 11 for reforms in Armenia. The Porte, reluctantly convinced of the futility and extreme danger of further quibbling and delay, has decided to yield. That decision has been communicated to the Ambassadors of England, France and Russia. In a few days it will be publicly proclaimed, and an imperial decree putting the reforms into operation will be issued. That is the news, and if true, as it probably is, it is most gratifying. It means justice and peace for Armenia. It means also, of course, some respite for the Turkish Empire from impending dissolution, which is not altogether an evil. It also means what is by no means the least gratifying, that it is still possible for those three Great Powers to overlook for a time their jealousies and hatreds, and to act together for the good of humanity. A very foolish and wicked attack was made the other day by Germany—or by the semi-official German press—upon England, charging her with responsibility for all the trouble in the East. That doubtless served to keep France and Russia all the closer by England's side in this new Triple Alliance.

The terms of the memorandum of May 11 may now be pertinently recalled to mind. That memorandum deals with the six vilayets of Erzeroum, Bitlis, Van, Sivas, Mamouret-ul-Aziz and Diarbekir. It provides that their number shall be decreased and their boundaries so rearranged as to make the population of each as homogeneous, ethnographically, as possible. The

Valis, or Governors, shall be appointed without distinction of religion, and shall be such as are satisfactory to the Powers. Associated with each Vali shall be a Moavin, or Deputy Vali, who shall receive petitions, control tax-gathering, and supervise the police and prisons, and fill the Vali's place in the latter's absence. Wherever the Vali is a Mahometan, the Moavin shall be a Christian, and vice versa. Subordinate or district Governors shall be Christians or Mahometans, according to the religious faith of the majority of the population, and each shall have a Deputy of opposite faith. District Councils shall be composed one-half of Mahometans and one-half of Christians. The police or gendarmerie shall be recruited without regard to race or religion, but at least one-third shall be non-Mahometan. The prisons shall be radically reformed in the interest both of justice and of physical health. The Kurds shall be disarmed and kept under strict control. Farming of tithes and the corvée shall be abolished. There shall be no more quartering troops upon the people without compensation. Justices of the Peace shall be Christians in Christian communities, and one-third of all justices in each district shall be Christians. Prompt and just trial in all cases shall be assured. Ample indemnities shall be paid to all sufferers from the outrages at Sassoon, Talori, etc., and full amnesty shall be granted to all Armenian political prisoners and exiles. The rights and privileges of the Armenian Christians shall be respected throughout the Empire. And to see that all these things are done there shall be at Constantinople a permanent Committee of Control, composed of three Christians and three Mahometans, selected and appointed, of course, with the approval of the Powers.

Such are the reforms demanded in the memorandum of May 11. An Imperial High Commissioner, to oversee the whole work in Armenia, is also required, and he is to be a Christian. If these reforms are honestly carried out there will be no further ground for complaint on the part of the Armenians, and the "Armenian problem" may be regarded as practically settled until the time comes for the ultimate dissolution of the Empire. That they will be carried out we are inclined to believe. They must be, unless the three Great Powers ignominiously back down and confess themselves baffled by the "Sick Man," and that the Powers will do that is not credible.
