

It is doubtful whether the Armenian agitation has taken hold of the English people. It wants a leader and a leader on the platform. Nothing but platform oratory seems to reach the moral sense of this people when moralities have to be translated into politics. Mr. Gladstone writes letters, but letters do not make a good fire. The press, without distinction of party, has taken up the cause of the persecuted Christians in Armenia; two Dukes of eminence appear at this week's meeting; the clergy, some Members of Parliament, numbers of persons animated by the most excellent intentions present themselves to the public as Armenian advocates; questions have been asked in the House of Commons and prayers offered up in churches and chapels.

With all this, the Nation, though its sympathies are ready enough, remains rather apathetic. The source and seat of great popular movements in this country are usually the North, but the North shows few signs of being deeply touched. I do not pretend to explain the secret of this comparative indifference; I only record the fact. Of course, there are enthusiasts who assure you that England is ready to march against the Turk, but when you ask them for the evidence, they have very little to give you. Possibly one reason is that so many radical crotcheteers have contrived to associate themselves with an enterprise which requires, first of all, moderation and good sense. They complain bitterly of the Government, without saying clearly what it is they would have the Government do.

It seems probable, nevertheless, that Ministers have quietly forestalled the complaints of these gentlemen. Diplomacy has been at work, and the more effectively because quietly. A joint note to Turkey is understood to be preparing, France and Russia combining for this purpose with England. This makes the third Triple Alliance. Germany and Italy lend their benevolent countenance. The Treaty of Berlin, which so far as Armenia is concerned has remained a dead letter, is once more invoked. The Sultan will be invited to discharge the express obligations he assumed under that treaty. If he declines, the Powers will step in.

There are, however, two difficulties. First, he will not decline, but profess himself ready to do what is asked, and then will not do it. Second, in what shape are the Powers to intervene? Russia alone has any military access to Armenia

—perhaps the only effectual form of intervention where the Turk is concerned;—but the moment Russia begins to move troops across the Turkish frontier, unless it be as the mandatary of Europe, the Eastern Question is reopened.

Every statesman on the Continent will watch these negotiations with solicitude. The sentimentalists may think it a slight matter; practical men know that an attempt to relieve Armenia may precipitate a crisis.