



FRANCE.—After the brief excitement of the elections, French affairs have subsided into comparative quietude. Politicians in general are inclined to take a holiday, and it is officially announced that President Grévy will not return to Paris to hold a Council, as nothing in the political situation, either at home or abroad, requires the meeting. Thus all idea has been abandoned of dissolving the present Chamber before the appointed time, and there will be little change of any kind until the new House meets in November. The Ministry will then resign, and the great question whether M. Gambetta will take office must be decided. This latter topic is almost the sole subject of discussion just now, and on all sides M. Gambetta is forcibly urged to accept the Premiership, while even his own organ, the *République Française*, virtually acknowledges the necessity, although in studiously guarded terms. M. Gambetta himself keeps strict silence on the matter for the present, but some explanation of his views may be looked for next week, when he visits Normandy. His brief speech at the Winter Circus on Sunday, where he was present at M. Bert's lecture on lay instruction, was solely in praise of Democratic progress and secular education; while his support of the lecturer's violent attacks on Catholicism will certainly arouse additional bitterness among the Clericals. Discreetly avoiding a fresh contest in the disputed division of Belleville, M. Gambetta has issued an address to his electors, explaining that as he cannot sit for both divisions, it would be useless to undergo a second ballot, and stating that he is perfectly content with the "decisive election" which has not been affected by "the baseness and violence of all our enemies." Belleville will, in all probability, return the Irreconcilable journalist, M. Révillon, for the Opposition candidate has been very badly received at a recent meeting. Only a languid interest is felt in to-morrow's voting, as in most places the sixty-four second ballots are pretty sure to go in favour of the Moderates.

If there is a lull at home, as much cannot be said in North Africa. Notwithstanding every effort of the French Government to circulate favourable reports of the situation in Tunis, it is only too evident that the insurrection is spreading widely, and may now be expected to grow even more serious, as the Ramadan Fast is over, and the crops are carried. The Bey's troops are inactive, partly from transport difficulties and partly from disinclination to fight their compatriots, and the French forces are insufficient in number, and suffering under bad sanitary conditions. Their religious feelings being aroused by the advance on Kairwan, which they regard as a second Mecca, the Arabs have risen on all sides, and are blocking the communications of the French columns. Besides daily minor skirmishes, a serious engagement has taken place at Erbaim, near Zaghouan, in

a serious engagement, in which the Arabs were worsted, the French camp at Gabes is frequently attacked, and a large rebel force surrounds the encampment at Hamamet, being kept, however, at a polite distance by the shells of a French gunboat. Moreover, two other Maltese have been murdered, and pillaging continues extensively throughout the country, while the inhabitants of Susa are so alarmed that they have asked the French to occupy the town, and there has been a fresh panic at Sfax. A joint commission of the commanders of the British, French, and Italian ironclads is sitting at Sfax to consider the claims for damages in the late bombardment. M. Roustan has gone to Paris, after taking a most affectionate farewell of the Bey, and there are plentiful reports that he will not return to Tunis. Meanwhile in ALGERIA the French have not increased their influence by destroying the sacred tomb of the Marabout Sidi Cheik, near Geryville, the cradle of one of the most important tribes, and a highly-revered shrine of pilgrimage. Although the bones of the saint were transferred to a neighbouring mosque with great respect and pomp, the act has produced a very bad effect on the natives, and seems to have been thoroughly uncalled for. Extensive fires frequently occur throughout the province, probably due to incendiaries. The Enfida estate is now stated to have been adjudged by the Hanefi Court to the Marseilles Company.

Returning to France proper, the declaration in the Queen's Speech respecting the Treaty of Commerce is most favourably commented on, and M. Tirard is strongly pressed to renew the negotiations at once. Paris is recovering from her summer dulness, and crowds are visiting the Electrical Exhibition, which has now got into shape, and is open in the evening, thus showing its fine collection to the best advantage. There was a private rehearsal of the lighting on Saturday night, when M. Gambetta and other guests were invited to inspect the different systems. Many of the theatres re-open this week. A translation of the late Mr. Robertson's *Society*, adapted to current events under the title of *Les Elections*, has been brought out at the Gymnase, but proved an utter failure. Another serious fire has occurred in Paris—a spirit warehouse at La Villette being completely destroyed, and there have been two serious railway accidents. The express from Belfort to Paris collided with a luggage train, one person being killed and four injured, while a train to Nice ran off the line owing to some malicious person having pulled up the rails. The engine and some of the carriages fell over on to the rocks beneath, killing the stoker and driver, and injuring the guards and seven of the passengers.

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## THE GRAPHIC. SEPTEMBER 3, 1881.

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