

was an article of faith, with continental café statesmen, that America and Germany had only to raise their little fingers, to menace John Bull, and he and his isle were wiped out. By courtesy, forbearance, and dignity England has conjured bugaboo number one away, and "laid" number two, by the shadow of her fleets.

England has now broken the back of the conspiracy to smash up her Empire, but she must henceforth "go it rough" with the foreigner; show him she can fight, as well as trade and colonize, and must clear out from her midst all the fads about peace and maudlin sentiment. She will be only respected and left quiet, so long as she displays her quickness to defend her honour and to protect her empire. "Hands off," should be "skyed," for the benefit of sneaks. Delagoa Bay is safe and Portugal has Torres Vedras lines there to loyally keep out Cape Colony invaders. Germany can never put a foot in the Transvaal now; even Holland will think twice ere she jeopardizes her existence by doing "fag" for Germany. There is no second opinion in France that Germany could never conquer England, while the latter would blockade her into capitulation, with the surrender of her baby colonies in Africa, and the payment out of what rests of the French war indemnity of five milliards of the cost of the war.

It is very difficult to exactly gauge at the present moment, the concrete opinion in France, as to passing events. The French have been astounded at the swift rush to arms, and the terrible rapidity by which squadrons have been fitted out, by England; they expected to be calm on-lookers at hostilities between the United States, aided by "grand son" William II., and England, and then, at the propitious moment, dictate and impose conditions. All that day-dream is now vanished; Britain is *debout*, and can point her illustrated answer to those who reproached her with—how resembling to other Tutons—attacking the weak and avoiding the strong. Anglo-phobism rages unfortunately more than ever in France. Let the paroxysm spend itself. Above all, let not England display the slightest desire at present for any alliance with France; be very polite and civil; very firm and very resolved, but let her rely on her own right arm. She ought to come to an understanding with her "best enemy"—Russia. The latter has no sentiment—happily, in her diplomacy; she has interests only to advance—so has England. A Russian friend said to me a few days ago: "Well, what do you think of the triple alliance now? England always charges us with disloyalty, treachery, and rapacity, but we have never deceived the English, like Christopher Sly, Emperor William." As the Turkish Empire is on the eve of breaking up, England can well consent, not to oppose the possession of Constantinople by the Czar who in return would guarantee her Egypt, and both could dispose of the Far East question to suit their combinations, but above all, their interests. That would checkmate Germany in Europe; then France would be compelled to fall into line with England and Russia, and demand of them "Mirth! admit me to thy crew." The trend of England is to make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, and to effect a *mariage de raison*, with her best enemy—the Muscovite. Their mutual trade would thereby be enormously developed; not a soldier could stir in Europe without their permission, and the dread of losing Alsace, and his foot-hold in Africa, would cure his majesty from writing telegrams, with the aid of his ministers, to flatter his grandmother, and humbug the Boers—before devouring them.

The present will be a very important year for the home politics of France. Of course I do not allude to the humorous circular letter of the Comte de Paris to the Royalists, for them to be ready, as he is about taking a grave step—that of doing a bit of globe trotting. It is the same "saw" with all pretenders; they assure their partisans—query dupes?—that the psychologic moment is at hand, but they are not. "Be ready; overthrow the Government that oppresses you, and after the victory you will find me at your head!" Modern pretenders do not risk their liberty or their life to deliver anyone. They have not the pluck of a Transvaal "Dr. Jim"—who, with all his faults, is admired still. The Comte de Paris bemoans the mis-government of France by the Republic; but France shows no dissatisfaction; France banished, and, in one case, decapitated, her Bourbon Kings and crushed her Napoleons for not keeping the country "the first flower of the earth and the first gem of the sea." But the Comte has neither named the day nor

selected the spot where he will disembark. In honour of his virile intentions, his "staff" attached to his newspaper had a five o'clock tea.

The important events of this year will be the proposed ameliorative legislation always promised to the country but never seriously proposed. Premier Bourgeois will compel the legislature to vote or to reject the outstanding remedial measures, but grappled with they must be. And he is a man that will keep his word. Thus, a graduated income tax law will be proposed at once. The new Session has just opened; pensions for old age, state assurance against the accidents of machinery, etc., compensation for permanent injury, and aid during sickness; and last, not least, the public departments will be cleared of their drones and useless public expenditure curtailed—such are the principal bon-bons. The Minister virtually classes the legislators into "go-a-heads" and "stick-in-the-muds." His programme will be short, but based on action. He has the chances to win. He dares, and the masses are with him, while the reforms are no novelties in other countries. In fact, some drastic financial reform must be adopted, or the country must succumb to its crushing weight of taxation.

The country owes a debt of undying gratitude to the Bourgeois ministry for its implacable campaign against black mailers. When Arton shall have been extradited, the mass of Panama corruption will be exhumed and those swindlers who have escaped by favour will be exposed to the full blaze of noon-day. For the moment, the reigning scandal is the plucking of the young millionaire pigeon, Max Lebaudy, by a horde of lame ducks and renegade press men. The *Petit Sucrier* Lebaudy was skinned like a flint of the moiety of half his fortune of 27 fr. millions, and, being a conscript, a private soldier at the time, and up to his death—aged 22, the Minister of War, handed all the extortion documents over to the public prosecutor. Some well-known writers have been arrested and are now in prison. The big gun of the *Figaro* who was also the correspondent of the *New York Herald*, with an aggregate income of 100,000 frs. a year—"Jacques Saint-cère"—Rosenthal is his family name—extorted 35,000 frs. from the deceased juvenile. This man was the leader in the press of the Anglo-phobists, for no subject appears to be more popular than making—till recently, at all events—a Turk's head of John Bull. Rosenthal is a German Jew, the son of a synagogue beadle, so, like Uriah Heap, his origin was "humble." It is curious that mostly all the writers in the French press told off to write on foreign politics rely on Anglo-phobists for their matter, and are next to invariably German Jews.

Paris, January 15th, 1896.

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* * * Music and the Drama.

THE Toronto Philharmonic, as it is now called, gave its first performance of the present season on the 23rd inst. in the Massey Music Hall. Haydn's oratorio, "The Creation," was the work presented, and the production of this venerable masterpiece was looked forward to with considerable interest, as it was to be the first appearance of the Society under the direction of the recently appointed conductor, Mr. J. H. Anger. It may be said at once that Mr. Anger proved himself well fitted for his difficult task, and that so far as he is concerned there need be no anxiety in regard to the future success of the Society. The chorus on this occasion contained about 225 members, practically the same number as took part in the production of "Una" last season, but the orchestra was this time considerably smaller, numbering only thirty-four. The reduction, however, proved a distinct gain, for, while still powerful enough, the orchestra became more manageable, particularly when delicate effects were required. The reed instruments were a little noisy at times, but evidently against the wishes of the conductor, who could not be expected, considering the short time he has held his position, to have his forces perfectly under control. The chorus showed a very fair balance of parts, although the basses did not produce as much effect as the numerically much weaker tenors. "The Marvellous Work," "Awake the Harp" and "The Heavens are Telling" aroused considerable enthusiasm on the part of the audience. Exception must be taken, however, to the very marked quickening of the time towards the close of the last-men-