

yet to be discovered. Of course, having a great commerce England incurs greater risk of losses, to be recouped at settling day, but that shows the necessity of her having a most powerful navy to act when necessary, and by its omnipotence to deter. Naval warfare is not now-a-days conducted on the lines of two centuries ago. M. Lockroy counsels the Emperor of Germany not to call for a congress to declare merchant ships not trading in war material, free from capture, etc.; he would prefer freedom for the Corsair and the Salee Rover.

The Third Republic has scored a triumph neither royalty nor empire dare in their day attempt. The highest Court of Appeal has ruled, after an exhaustive and brilliant series of debates, that Bull Fights are a violation of the Grammont law, that for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. In the south of France bull fights were nearly as common as in Spain; they were suppressed in Paris, but the authorities hesitated to do so in Bayonne and Provence; the laws were not uniform. The local courts decided that the Grammont law only applied to domestic animals, that a circus bull was a savage beast, etc. It was against that ruling that the appeal was made and successfully. The French of Southern France are savage against the prohibition of their favourite pastime—the fair sex unhappily leading the way—and threaten insurrection. But southerners are proverbially hot-headed. It was shown that the arena bulls were not by nature more savage than those of other races, only the principle of selection had been abused. The animals having irritable tempers and wicked inclinations, were those chosen for breeding and rearing; they were kept in dark stables and goaded into fighting form till the time came, when they were set free suddenly into an arena, under full blaze of sun light, a combination of accessories arranged to daze and madden till darts, spears and the sword, rendered gorings on the part of the infuriated bull useless. It was stated that an ordinary sheep if subjected to similar breeding and preparation for the ring would become as mad as any bull, intended to be slaughtered to make a Spanish or French holiday.

The French follow with an increasing curiosity, not the woman question in England, but the social evolution of women, and which is considered to have eclipsed the *feministe* movement in the United States. In comparing the State woman with that of France, no comparison is possible. No French woman has the slightest desire to pass as “manfish”—*garconnee* is a nicer and more expressive word; she has not a particle of interest in politics. There are a few women who keep to the front, but they merely make a noise to demonstrate that they exist. The single or married woman suffers from a disability that is in the way of being removed, that of protecting, as her individual property, what she individually makes. Women in France is either a toy or an industrial power; in the latter, she is the equal of man, and often the grey mare is the better horse; when she weds her fortune is so tied up that the husband—nor herself—cannot touch it, both can enjoy its usufruct, however, for the common welfare of their life's occupation. In business, the wife acts well her part in the management, so there will be no waste, no error, her eye and her judgment will be everywhere; often the husband becomes mechanically the sleeping partner.

A tub has been thrown to the whale; that section of the public which is not employed by the State, and that never can expect to be so, has secured a parliamentary commission to inquire into the alarming augmentation of the estimates for the various public offices, and to report how expenditure can be reduced by decentralising the administration of the country. It is a very old political plaything, but the magnitude of the abuse has frightened away all Reformers. To vote the Committee of Inquiry is one thing, but to vote its surgical conclusions is not the same. Constituencies select candidates that will be able to secure for them some kind of an adhesion to the budget; to be able to have fixed pulls at the State milch cow. Every parent in France who has made a little money, dreams first of all, of arranging that his son shall figure either in the liberal professions or in a public office. To bring him up as an artisan or a tradesman, perish the idea! The consequence is, the liberal professions have veritable clusters of unemployed and starving members who, in the course of a few years, will figure on the night rolls of the refuges; in a public office the hope of the family will have to vegetate on 1,500 or 2,000 frs. a year. The unfortunates in both cases are unfitted for emigration—the last aim they would think of, but they urge others to self-expatriate. These

reasons, and the abolition of the law of primogeniture which secures to every child, angel or devil a like share in the paternal patrimony, explain why the French will never be a colonizing people. Before 1789 they were, but never since.

A kind of re-action is setting in on the part of the public respecting the press black mailings. It was felt, the charge of making the Fourth Estate responsible for the badness of three editors, one of whom could not write a line, was too sweeping. The cool reflection of the public is just. The authorities spared no effort to effect a great exposure, and all they found was three or four men, well known to be tarnished. And the Press itself lent its aid to the sanitary visitings of the police. The public is now pleased matters are not what they rashly concluded them to be.

The continued cold is wearing people out. Changes take place, but they are from bad to worse, that is, the more things change the more they remain the same. From the present sickness is to be dreaded as constitutions have run down, from the depression of the monotonous weather, and the slight coughs and chills that few have escaped during the last five weeks. People have ceased to be initiated; they are now becoming fatigued and listless. Then business is anything but satisfactory, and worse, exhibits no signs of getting on its legs. Sadder statistics, and still more eloquent, are the number of shops being closed. The establishments were never very robust, yet they paid their way. But their collapse moment arrived. These seamy shops not only represented the last cartridge for many a family, in its industrial struggle, but it often represented, also, the subscribed capital of relatives to set up one of theirs in life. The commercial classes are suffering to an extent few can imagine, they have to expend, though gaining nothing; on their being able to weather the storm depends their being able to sail with the long-due, flowing tide. The farmers are a puzzle; they vociferate and buzz, that they are being slowly decimated, yet the General Agricultural Show, now taking place, never afforded greater material proofs of the agronomic wealth of France.

As the rough, final plans of the 1900 exhibition have been prepared the General Purposes Committee will meet at the close of the month, to decide that the definite plan be published. It is the new structure that is intended to replace the present Palace of Industry which causes the delay. It is said that the proposed architectural ornamentation of the Machinery Hall will be at once commenced so that it can afford, during the erection of the new palace in the Champs Elysées, the necessary accommodation for the Picture, Agricultural and Olla Podridal exhibitions. The changes in the Machinery Hall will cost 12½ million frs. for the rough work alone.

The grand railways of France are being well dissected, anent the inquiry into the strange conventions executed in favour of two of them, by Deputy Raynal in 1883. Figures detailed go to show that all the lines would be bankrupt were they not annually subsidized by the state; that is to say, it is the nation's taxes that guarantee a dividend. But this is not more extraordinary than paying bounties to shipping, or to farmers for cultivating sugar beet. What would be then the situation of the country had it to depend on the efforts of individualism?

Preliminary noise is being heard in anticipation of May Day Labour Fete; but that subject attracts little attention. Working class politics contain nothing explosive in France; the masses know that after all legislation cannot secure them work, or guarantee them against the sufferings of stagnant trade and paralysed commerce. No ameliorative legislation for the working classes can be effective, if the money necessary to the carrying of it out be not forthcoming. That money the treasury does not possess, nor is it very clear how or when it can be raised. The new schemes of taxation will keep France at boiling point from May day next; the poor assert that our burden of imposts is too heavy to be borne, while the rich proclaim we will be crushed or ruined if further financial bleedings be practised upon us. It is then not a struggle between the masses and classes that France has to face, but a collision between the Haves and Have-Nots. This will explain why French Socialism can neither advance nor recede; why in the free public meetings held on Sundays there is not any longer the wild language of former days. The situation all round is gripped better. Some change must be boding, as at a recent reunion, a *viva* was given for “Jesus Christ.”