



THE WIDE, WIDE WORLD.

TN interesting and pertinent interview with Comte Etienne de Naleche, editor of the *Journal des Debats*, and members of his staff, on the subject of the relations between France and England, is published in a London paper. The gist of these gentlemen's opinion is that there is a general subsidence of the anxiety and suspicion with which Frenchmen as a body regarded England six months or a year ago. Even then the French attitude was rather defensive than offensive. Certainly, no one desired a conflict with Great Britain, although many feared that a clash was unavoidable. The English made a mistake in accepting certain coarse caricatures as evidences of deep national hostility. They ought to have taken into consideration the insignificance of the prints in which these offensive skits appeared. No intelligent Frenchman ever dreamed of attaching the least importance to them. They provoked a smile from the careless and were straightway forgotten. The English ought to remember the vast difference between the French temperament and their own. In France there was the utmost astonishment at the fierceness of the indignation excited by these irresponsible frivolities. Now each nation is beginning to perceive the injustice of which it has been guilty to the other. The gravest causes of difference have been settled, others are in a fair way of adjustment, and the chances of new disagreements are daily becoming more remote. The true policy for both is mutual friendship and confidence.

Some additional light is thrown upon the recent horrible massacres in the Amur region, by a letter published recently in London. The writer declares that they originated in a lamentable misunderstanding. According to his account, the Russian reservists arrived at Blagovestschensk on July 1, and for the first time drilled on the river bank. A crowd of spectators watched the proceedings. At the end of the drill the soldiers were ordered to bathe. There were 750, and the Chinese seeing them from the opposite bank as they jumped into the river, thought they were about to attack them. A band of Chinese fired a few shots from their cannon, and wounded five soldiers and killed three spectators. The next day 160 Cossacks crossed the river, burned the Chinese villages, and massacred the entire population. The Chinese of Aigun, persuaded that war had broken out, bombarded Blagovestschensk with some old wooden cannon,

which, in reality, did very little harm. The next day two regiments utterly destroyed the towns of Aigun and Saghaline, in which not a single inhabitant was spared. The Chinese ran away, after killing their women in order that they might not fall into the hands of the Cossacks. The children were saved, and forty were adopted by the Cossacks. Then, the writer says, the chief of police of Blagovestschensk, who had probably lost his head, ordered the population to drive the Chinese out of town. The town is inhabited by a great number of sectarians known as molokare, to whom the Chinese merchants give credit. It can be readily understood with what zeal the debtors fell upon the creditors. Thousands of the latter were driven into the river, their bodies were robbed, and their property confiscated.

For some time past certain French and Russian journals have been expressing sympathy for Spain on account of the isolated position which she holds in Europe. Now the *Rossia*, in an article which is thought to have official inspiration, suggests that Spain might easily assume a place more in accordance with her ancient dignity, by becoming a third party to the Franco-Russian Alliance. France, it says, would willingly supply the money needed for the reorganization of the Spanish army, and both countries would profit greatly by a consolidation of their commercial interests. Moreover, there is a great and natural sympathy between French and Spaniards. The English, the article then proceeds to argue, will continue to threaten and overawe Southern Europe through Gibraltar so long as a Spanish Ceuta stands on the opposite side of the Straits. "But once Spain has ceded Ceuta to her French ally, the British will no longer be able to boast that the key of the Mediterranean remains in one pocket. For Spain herself it were an incalculable advantage to bring home to England the conviction that Gibraltar was a practically useless possession. The British Government might not even then be disposed to sell Gibraltar to Spain; but with the sight of the French flag flying over a strongly fortified Ceuta, the pride and glory of its rock fastness would wane before the fact that a second key to the Achillean gate was in the pocket of France, that is, in the pocket of Russia's faithful friend and ally." How the transfer of Ceuta is to be arranged without a war the *Rossia* does not explain.

The inhabitants of Crete are beginning to find out, that their island, though free

from Turkish interference in its internal management, is, nevertheless, territorially an integral part of the Turkish empire. The Ottoman flag still floats over the little island at the entrance to Suda Bay. Whatever the Constitution may pretend, Crete is not an independent territory, and Prince George of Greece is in the position of a vassal prince of the Ottoman empire. Moreover, the present arrangement leaves the Cretans under certain positive disabilities. If, for instance, they desire to trade with or travel in other parts of the Ottoman dominion, they do not possess the status and accompanying rights of Turkish subjects, but are practically foreigners, without any consul to whom they could appeal for assistance or advice in the event of their falling into any trouble. What the Cretans desire is a real independence. Their earlier zeal to be incorporated in the Greek kingdom has been abating rapidly. They think they could do better for themselves.

According to the latest reports from France the coal crisis in that country is rapidly approaching the acute stage. The rise in price is already considerable, and, with the winter close at hand, the outlook is serious. Railway companies have been forced to order coal from America, in order to replenish the reserve stock, for in the event of a mobilization of troops, it would have been impossible, it is said, to have found fuel for the number of trains required. But railroads are not the only sufferers. Laundries, wash-houses and baths are in an especially bad way on account of the great increase in working expenses. It is feared that a great number of these establishments will have to close, throwing hundreds of persons out of employment on the threshold of winter.

Up in an obscure corner of North Wales the only gold mine in the United Kingdom is being worked. It is known as St. David's. Here a profitable plant, covering 730 acres, is in operation. The total results from all sources show a recovery of fourteen and one-half pennyweights gold per ton of ore, and the total cost of mining, milling and concentration is placed at the extremely low figure of 8 shillings (\$2) a ton. The St. David's mine is said to be still undiscovered as far as its ultimate possibilities are concerned.

Advices from Newfoundland say that now that the fishing season has closed it becomes possible to form an approximate estimate of the results. Lately the weather has been fine, and much has been done by the fishermen in many localities to make up for deficits in the earlier part of the season. Although there are many short catches on the Labrador coast, yet on the whole the fishery of 1900 will be a fair average, and Newfoundland will be able to reckon this a fairly prosperous year.