

The Latest News From Paris.

(By Our Special Correspondent.)

M. HANOTAUX, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, continues to score all the innings, respecting the Anglo-Franco African disputes. The English here, while regretting the fact, admit their diplomacy is nowhere, in presence of the cool head and masterly hand of M. Hanotaux. He has arranged the Sierra Leone frontier by obtaining all he claimed from England. "To give in" makes this a very good world to live in. And what constitutes the secret of the success of the French Palmerston? He knows his mind, has a fixed end to attain, and, like a certain little boy and a cake of soap in a certain advertisement, "will not be content till he gets it." And what does England oppose to that resolute and defined action? "Words, words, words," served in linguistic syrup, and handed in with up-to-date blandishments. Naturally he accepts the flummery, and all the pretty things dished up about the two great civilized nations, dwelling in brotherly love, and the usual diplomatic trimmings, but M. Hanotaux, not the less, will give no pledge that French explorers, like other land-grabbers, will cease to penetrate into the Niger Company's territories and into the abandoned Egyptian provinces of Central Soudan. And he accuses England squarely, and in the Legislature, of shirking the solution of these difficulties.

Now, nothing but very plain speaking and very vigorous action on the part of England will prevent a collision between her and France. If she pursues the ostrich policy of shilly-shally and scuttle, France may dance the *Bourre* or the *Carmagnole* upon her prestige. Never were the English more unpopular in France than now; detestation is passing into contempt—there is no use cloaking or mincing matters. There is a certain class of journals that make it a specialty to "pitch into England"; the respectable French have no sympathy with that, but at a certain zenith of excitement, it might be awkward for English residents. Such sensational journals do not spare Germany nor Italy—they like to fish in troubled waters from time to time; then the French press is free to either yell or to remain silent as a carp. Happily the screechings have no echo outside France. The serious matter is that M. Hanotaux has "cornered" England; his primary aim is to compel her to call a congress, where Egypt would of course be the *piece de resistance*, or to make a compromise about the Niger and the Nile valley. He challenges the right of the Niger Royal Charter Co. to exercise any sovereignty powers, and quotes Liverpool merchants who also take that view. Hence the Company cannot forbid the advance of French Joshuas into its hinterlands. That's nut number one to crack.

Though it be the twelfth hour, England ought to proclaim her protectorate over the Nile Valley. The great blunder was not to have done so before. To evacuate means making way for the French occupation—a fact as certain as that England has no intention of leaving. If France kicks is England prepared for a fight? That must be the issue; who are her allies? what are her retaliations? While England fiddles—so far as is known—at Cairo, it is not denied that French armed explorers advance into British hinterlands, recognized by the same kind of vapour treaties as France holds her own like takes; France pushes also Nile-wards by the Madhi-conquered provinces of Egyptian Soudan; England forbids that encroachment, as the trustee of Egypt and the defender of Ottoman rights. France requests to be told where the frontier of the Khedival Soudan begins or ends. As well demand the map of the freehold of the man in the moon's allotment. If Anglo-Egyptian authority "shirks" supplying that information, as M. Hanotaux says it does, he will apply to the vice-roy's sovereign, the Sultan himself, for a copy of his ordinance survey of Dongola and its Tom Tiddler's environs. That may provoke for one occasion in His Majesty's life a laugh, though Turks are smileless, as well as proverbially "silent." If France cannot obtain the demanded topographical information, nor from the Mahdi, who has no land surveyors' department, she will march ahead, till pulled up by force. By whom? England is the only barrier. However, it does not follow that Anglo-Franco disputes about African grabs will necessarily be settled in Africa. That's nut number two to be cracked, and explains how fragile are the "amicable relations" between the two powers; how near the sparks are flying about the heaped up inflammable materials in Old Europe; and

why palavers and sugar candy will not weigh with M. Hanotaux.

The situation between France and England is very grave but that between France and her budget is not less so. The revenue for the quarter ending 31st March, shows a drop as compared with that of the corresponding quarter of 1894, of 40,000,000 frs., and in place of a surplus for the current budget, a deficit of 10,000,000 frs. for three months has resulted. This permanency of deficits cannot continue; it must end in a collapse. One fact has been demonstrated that the experiment of protection has failed. France has, during its operation, lost old clients, who have found new markets, and has learned to her cost, that to her locking out of the foreigner, the latter has retaliated by a counter-lock-out. As a scape-goat for their mining the commerce of the country, the protectionists lay all the blame on the anti-bimetallists. How cause the stream of Pactolus to reflow? By retrenchment.

Another proof of the "decline and fall" of the English in France: the Military, Polytechnic, and other colleges prefer to study German, than the language of Shakespeare. In the war of 1870-71, the French suffered dreadfully from their ignorance of German. It can be said, we have cured all that. Despite the reluctance of collegians and Léon Sais' alliance to propagate the German tongue, the latter is a long way behind the official language of the United States and Great Britain.

One of the most terrible defects in French justice is that when an individual is arrested, he is not allowed to see a relative, friend, or legal adviser till after he has been threshed and winnowed—his whole life included—by the *juge d'instruction*. That secrecy is not justice. So believes Ex-Home Minister Constans, who has brought in a bill authorizing an accused to be represented by counsel, who is merely to observe, during the committal examination by the *juge*. The institution of coroner's inquest is sadly needed. In presence of presumed sudden death or suicide, the inquiry remains wholly in the hands of the police and law officers. General Ney, grandson of the "bravest of the brave," was found dead under circumstances that his friends believe did not justify the conclusion by the legists that he destroyed himself. He was bringing a large sum of "hush money" to a certain lady; the rendezvous was a lonely house in the suburbs; his body was found in the cellar with two balls in the head—the money had disappeared. His chums demand, now, a full inquiry, but the family decline—it is their legal right after the lapse of seven years—to have the case reopened.

Strange reply to threatened eviction, and never tried in Ireland; when rent is due either for land or housing, in France; if not paid by noon on quarter or six month's day, the landlord hands a writ to the police inspector, who orders the tennant out, bag and baggage; to resist, is to resist the police. Then if the sticks block the roadway, and be not removed, the police will seize them as a nuisance and auction them off. That's sharp and swift. Two old men were in arrears for the rent of their room, since two years. The landlord finally resolved to expel them. On last Saturday night, the eve of ejection day, they passed their time preparing an infusion of poppyheads; they drank their brew. It was their last big drink. The bodies lay on a mattress on the floor—all their household goods—linked arm in arm. A sheet of paper was attached to their joint breasts, on which was written: "We bequeath our bodies as a souvenir to our millionaire landlord."

Deputy Descobes is in quest of a law to regulate the situation of the foreigner in France: the latter ought to be tolerated, or next to, on condition of taking out letters of naturalization, the cost of which is 175 fr. For this, the foreigner would be entitled to serve three years in the army, and then to enjoy all political and civil rights. Of the one-and-a-half millions of foreigners in France, 93 per cent. are composed exclusively of Belgians, Germans, Italians, Swiss and Spaniards. A poll-tax would do no good, and might provoke reprisals. On an average, two bills are presented every year for coming at the foreigner, either for the blood or the money tax. That average includes Deputy Michelius' bill, declaring only the third generation or the grandchildren of naturalized parents to be viewed as patriotic French citizens. That's not very complimentary to the new nationalists. The collected foreigners in France, it seems, threaten to submerge the native population, as the English are doing in the