

RUSSIA, ENGLAND, AND M. JOSEPH PRUDHOMME

SOME inquirers go to the Paris papers for their impressions of French public opinion, which are queerly mixed in consequence; others go to the Quai d'Orsay, where they are received with exquisite urbanity. But the real authority to consult is Monsieur Joseph Prudhomme. He is not dead; he never was more alive than now, since he was created by Henry Monnier, and, having been enrolled in the National Guard, and having girt his sabre about him, uttered those memorable words: "This sabre is the proudest day of my existence, and I will wield it at the peril of my life to defend the Constitution of my country, or, if needful, to overthrow it." There is now no National Guard, and the very word "Constitution" in French has an early nineteenth-century flavour about it. But M. Joseph Prudhomme still possesses an admirable genius for summing up in gems of rhetoric the voices of his countrymen. Every true son of French soil is in moments first cousin to M. Joseph Prudhomme. If we record how M. Joseph Prudhomme's views towards England and Russia have altered in the last two years, the birth and growth of the *Entente Cordiale*, and the weakening hold of the Franco-Russian Alliance on popular French feeling will be explained.

There are three landmarks in the recent tide of events, as M. Joseph Prudhomme would say: King Edward's visit to Paris at the end of April 1902; the outbreak of the Russo-