

(8) A walking-stick from timber recovered from the ruin of the famous Arctic steamer "Alert," broken up in the port of Quebec in September, 1895.

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Parisian Affairs.

PARIS, March 11, 1896.

THE panic element of the Italian crisis is subsiding. The Italians are regarding the mess and muddle of the situation with cooler heads, and public opinion is satisfied that the end of the world is not a whit nearer by the defeat of the Italians at Adoua. Perhaps King Menelik may feel less comfortable at his good luck. General Baratieri is now accepted as having lost his head, as there was neither skill nor strategy in his attack. It recalled the tactics of MacMahon at Sedan; he had no plan, did not see clearly his way, but would fight a bit to note what would turn up. Italy must first regulate her home situation; the disappearance of Signor Crispi does not remove many interior dangers totally unconnected with the African disaster. No nation likes to be whipped, especially by a foe ranked as their inferior. The French went into hysterics at the Langson disaster, and were prepared to bestow Carthage crucifixion upon Jules Ferry; yet that affair was only a flea bite in comparison with Italy's misfortune. The Americans had their Bulls Run, or, more correctly, two; the Spaniards do not accept their contests in Cuba with joy; England herself was not pleased after Gaudiana, Majuba Hill, and, later, Krugersdorp; only the English did not rend their clothes or tear their hair, as if Israelites en route for Babylonish captivity.

The Italian State coach having secured a new driver, what next? Suspend, as necessity compels, any exchange of marches with King Menelik; get the financial situation of Italy into smooth water—she will obtain a recuperative loan, for the nation, though not rich, is industrious and frugal. Then will come the moment to consider the attention to be given to the victor; his army is a combination of diverse tribes; they may be kept together while a battle is in view; but to be kept in uncertainty as to when it will come off will be trying for them. To advance into the lowlands will be dangerous for the Abyssinian highlanders. Patience is not a virtue with savage tribes. As to the Italians having no right to invade Ethiopia, that is hardly fit for the severe virtues of a debating society. To day every nation drafts its own decalogue, and practises half a dozen of moralities. Italy has had to peg off a tougher bit of the Dark Continent than the other good Samaritan powers, who, save England, have not been successes in their developments of their grabs of Africa. Whether Crispi or di Rudini be at the helm, Italy will remain a member of the triple alliance. That will not please France, nor perhaps Russia, but the latter obtains all she wants by simply remaining quiet and on the watch. Germany has to count with France, and Austria with Russia. England counts only with herself, but armed to the teeth and ready to take to the warpath when her interests are endangered, or when she is threatened by imperial telegrams or presidential messages.

In Europe, then, nothing will be changed. But the Egyptian question will become more business-like, for England, now that the Osman Dignas and the orthodox and heretical Mahdis are on the move, will strike the iron while it is hot, and advance into the Soudan. That may prevent her naming the exact day when she will be able to quit the valley of the Nile. The French have thus no reason to bless King Menelik. It is well known that diplomatic discontent is general at the sly excelsiorism of Russia. Germany is reported to be very sore on the point. After all, the Kaiser has obtained no concrete advantages by playing second fiddle to the Muscovite; neither has France, as first violinist. Japan and Great Britain do not belong to the concert.

The English Blue Book published upon the Venezuela conflict is viewed by the French as a most admirable production of foreign office literature. It leaves the Venezuelans without a leg to stand on. But the most surprising part of the matter is, what proofs had President Cleveland to justify his very grave message that was on the brink of plunging two nations, kinsfolk, into a fratricidal war? Happily, the cool temperament and sound judgment of England saved America herself from a terrible calamity. Sir Frederick Pollock's *résumé* of the case, and his *précis* of the facts, constitute a

reputation of imaginary claims as logical as it is crystally clear. There can be no second opinion on the dispute now; not an anglophobist in Tamanny Hall could "take the floor" and place a finger on a weak spot of the British case. There is this question which rises to the reader of the Blue Book, which is as interesting as a volume of travels: "Why, with the crushing evidence at its command, did England allow the sore to remain open for fifty years?" It is full time for America and Venezuela to ring down the curtain; at the same time it is to be hoped that Lord Salisbury will let off Venezuela as modestly as possible, consistent with English rights and the interests of British colonists.

Uncle Sam does not appear to have his hand happy in regulating European questions. The Spaniards continue to be very wroth against him. However, it is only fair to give the new commander-in-chief of the Spanish army time to oppose the rebels in a fashion different from that adopted by Marshal Campos. Spain will show thus that she has more than one General. Delaying her philanthropy for a while will not make its value less when its exercise will have no protests.

M. Faure's tour through Southern France has been, on the whole, good, save to the political parties that will never pardon him for his committing the cardinal sin of nominating M. Bourgeois premier, though it is a majority of the Chamber of Deputies that keeps him in office. The southerners are very warm-blooded, so they must not be judged too harshly in the few cases where they cried *à bas le Sénat*, a body they viewed as a collection of uninteresting fossils. They dipped the tricolour, with a red knot at the top, under the nose of the President, to show that they had their views of the Commune. This was at Ciotat, a sort of Chatham dockyard, near Marseilles, and the latter feels proud at being able to boast it declared for the Commune before sleepy Paris did, just as Lyons is proud at having voted the downfall of the Second Empire two days before the capital. The dockyard men are full of fun. When the "Marseillaise" was played, they replied by their own band with Chopin's "Funeral March," and, instead of presenting the customary nosegay—the bread and salt—offered to visitors, they presented a mortuary crown. But these out-and-outers did not indulge in a *vive* for the Panamists, nor a cheer for the Duc d'Orleans, nor a hurrah for Prince Victor Napoleon. The tour's moral is that the people want a Cabinet of action, a Ministry fearless to expose corruption and the corrupted, and to put an end to namby-pambyism in the proceedings of the Executive. It is against M. Faure, personally, that the Opportunists wage war now.

For the third time the Chamber of Deputies has indulged in a *fi! fi!* when asked to validate the election of M. Wilson, famous for his specialties of raising the wind, when his father-in-law Grévy was in power. Yet "Dan's" misconduct was nothing when compared with the wholesale corruption of the Panamists, the railways, and the colonial concessions. It is to be presumed Wilson has been fairly elected, since no illegality has been established. But the cause of virtue, etc., etc.

The assizes of Riom presented the curious spectacle of three of the jurors, before any verdict was arrived at, or the trial concluded, applauding the speech of the prisoner's counsel. The act, of course, will lead to the finding being quashed on appeal. It is known as the *affaire Marie Michel*—the country servant girl, not aged yet nineteen, who, three years ago, when her mistress, a strong and robust widow, was found strangled and robbed, accused a local government clerk named Cauvin, who was promised to be left the wealth, with the crime. Cauvin was married; material evidence told against him, but he got the benefit of the doubt, and was transported instead of being guillotined. Informalities led to new trials and law's delays. In the interim Marie, a model wretch, had become penitent. She owned that she was the mistress of Cauvin, that it was she who strangled the old widow, and demanded to be tried and guillotined. The public prosecutor did not concede these requests, but had Marie tried for defeating the ends of justice. She was convicted, and has been sentenced to five years' solitary imprisonment. Were her story credited, Cauvin should be liberated; he expects to be so. That is where the case is now; a young girl avows she committed a murder; the alienists attest she is not mad; yet no one will aid her to reach the guillotine—a disappointment which causes her to shed many tears.

The Lebaudy blackmailing trial has commenced. The two "sons," the scions of the late Duke of Brunswick, "Old