

the political, financial, and military upheaving. If the Transvaal decides to patronize bloated armaments; if Germany infiltrates military emigrants in the Republic, while augmenting her own forces directly in her adjacent colony to keep the "Hottentots," the newest name for possible uitlanders. Britain will have to demand what all that organizing and pulling together means and take her precautions accordingly. The Cape Colony will be deprived of no liberty, but aided to acquire any new ones desired; no imperial taxation troubles the situation; but British supremacy, if only for strategic reasons, must remain unquestioned. Should any jealous foreign power or powers provoke serious complications it does not necessarily follow these will be settled at the Cape. Diplomatic raiders can be touched in their vulnerable points nearer home. Covetousness can be satisfied and jealous opposition bought off at the expense of third parties, for when war breaks out who can arrange the chess board? Germany and England, to outward appearances, do not stable their horses together. How much of that is real, how much intended to foil mutually laid plans? How can we expect to know more of the inner ring relations between England and the Triple Alliance than of those between France and Russia? Only the light intended to lead astray, to dazzle and to blind, is proclaimed from the house-tops.

France has gazetted her thirty-seventh ministry since the advent of the Third Republic in 1870. That instability is deplorable. New ministers have hardly ever sufficient time to undo the work of their predecessors. It is unjust to assert that parliamentary institutions are on their trial in France, or unsuitable for the Latin races. The truth is, they have never been at best more than an experiment in France. They are unworkable because politicians are undisciplined and will not sink their individuality in allegiance to the leader of a party and a common programme, and fairly play the game of ins and outs. Every senator and deputy is ambitious to be a minister, premier, or president. Failing to be so, he hives off and forms a Little Bethel of his own, and becomes at the same time its sole high priest and entire congregation. Till his dying day General Changarnier was the immortal type of this concentrated unity, and no spectacle was more painfully comic than to listen to the General menacing a premier with the condemnation of himself and his party.

May day has degenerated in France to a compulsory idleness of twenty-four hours for the working classes. The experiment of walking about with hands in pocket, smoking cigarettes, and swiping, has failed to achieve the solution of any labour problem. The authorities will not tolerate the organization of processions; these can be revolutionary columns in the twinkling of an eye, for their components are all military men, and it would be hazardous to afford them the chance of seizing a weakness on the part of the authorities; hence, why full measures are taken in advance by the Prefect of Police and the Minister of War. On expected manifestation days the former has close at hand his young drummer, who, when storms threaten to burst, executes, when ordered, the three legal rolls of the drum. That constitutes the reading of the riot act. If the mob displays no inclination to disperse, after an awful pause, the republican guard, all seasoned soldiers, make ready, present, and, when the commanding officer lowers his sword, fire. This extreme measure is not resorted to till after the police have been beaten back and the cavalry obliged to give way. Steady artisans utilize the holiday to enjoy the spring weather in the country; they never take part in demonstrations, have confidence in the legislature ameliorating their condition as far as possible, while not being blind to the limits of parliamentary remedies.

No miracles are expected from the new Meline cabinet. It has no republican majority in the Chamber, and is supported by the Monarchists; it is the prisoner of the latter. Its death may arrive at any moment, or it may lead a zig-zag life like so many of its predecessors. The problem is, how to end the split in the republican party, and by securing a solid and working majority impart weight to ministerial acts and impress the country with confidence? A foreign minister, not sure of his curule chair for twenty-four hours, cannot much influence ambassadors. The remedy for the present unsatisfactory situation must be found either in a dissolution or the convocation of the National Assembly to decide whether the Senate or the Lower House possesses

the right to make and unmake cabinets. The question of the revision of the Constitution has "caught on" beyond yea or nay and the knot must be dealt with.

A creaming of the census returns of the 29th of March last gives the population of Paris at 2,512,000 or about the moiety of that of London. As compared with the 1891 census the aggregate increase is only 87,250, or 17,450 yearly, which is regarded as disappointing, especially when compared with previous increases. There is one tendency clearly revealed, that of the inhabitants to quit the central zones of the capital for the circumference and also for the suburbs. The diminution has been 10,200, that is the number of persons who have flown to find more light and purer air, despite the obstacles placed in their way by the municipal council, who declines to sanction any metropolitan line or intersuburban railway, as that would empty the capital of thousands of residents, cause a fall in rents, and a shortage in the excessive taxation. But the people will fly all the same. The tram-cars, working in with the grand railway termini, are slowly defeating the municipality, whose temple of Ephesus is more than in danger. Another cause is daily becoming more important, the spread of cyclism. Patresfamilias and young men now ride their bikes to offices and workshops, so time is gained, health secured, and families better lodged, and more cheaply fed outside Paris.

An exceptionally strange murder has been committed by a father, who killed his son, aged 19, to save the "honour of the family" and protect society from the probable consequences of the lad's downward progress to infamy. The populace rank the father equal in heroism to the disinterestedness of a Spartan, or the abnegation of an old Roman. The crime rather resembles that of Gribouille, who jumped into the river to save himself from the rain. Brutus the elder did not condemn his sons to death till after the commission of their crime. Having executed his duty of magistrate, he retired to weep as a father. Virginus only poignarded his daughter when he was certain her dishonour was near. Peter the Great immolated his son and heir for reasons of state. But it is the first time a parent has killed his son for a vicious life not proved to be irremediable and on the conjectural or hypothetical grounds that he would eventually be a danger to society. Let it be said that the populace classes in France inherit the belief that they enjoy the right conferred by the Roman law of a father's possessing the power of life or death over all the members of his family.

In the present case there is no such heroism or tragic poetry. We are in the presence of a foul and coolly premeditated crime. Vasseur is aged 50, a publican of hasty temper and of much self-importance. He has a wife in whom there is not a single drop of the milk of human kindness. They had two girls and one boy. Eugene, the victim, aged 19, was apparently a ne'er-do-well. The father detested him, tried his prentice hand to "remove" him, in which work the mother wished him success. In self-protection the lad avoided the parental roof. A cousin, Jean Boucher, clerk in a railway office, helped to support Eugene by daily pittances. No evidence was adduced that the victim was averse to work, indeed, it was under the promise of obtaining a waitership in a restaurant that the lad was decoyed to the Bois de Vincennes, when the father sprang from his hiding place behind a tree and throttled his son, then passed a cord round his neck to finish the strangulation. Boucher kept his hand on the mouth of the victim during the perpetration of the deed. Both men then rifled the pockets of the victim to remove all papers of identity. They tore these up as they walked back to Paris, having dragged the corpse into the brushwood. Boucher had a bill of 3,000 frs. to meet, but not the cash. Vasseur, the father, promised to give him that sum did he decoy Eugene and aid in getting rid of him. After enjoying a glass of beer the murderers separated. The body having been soon discovered and identified the assassins were soon arrested. They made a full confession, the father signing his as calmly as if a receipt for a barrel of wine. Conducted to the guard room at the Prefecture de Police, a temporary bed was fitted up for Vasseur. He simulated profound sleep. At four in the morning, when his guards were asleep, he jumped up, opened the window, dashed twenty feet down upon the flagway and shortly expired.

The mother was in her pub. selling wine. A journalist interviewed her, announced the murder of her son by his