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## London In **A Turmoil**

Alarmist Reports and Flaming Extras Cause War Panic in England.

vs of Russian Fleet's Sailing and Activity at Gibraltar Causes.

Diplomats Quietly Discuss the Matter Oblivious to the Scare.

London, Nov. 1.—Negotiations between Great Britain and Russia looking to a settlement of the North sea affair are progressing favorably, and there is not the slightest danger of any friction arising between the two governments. The constitution of the commission under The Hague convention is on the verge of settlement.

In spite of these pacific conditions, Great Britain today experienced a warpanic that can only be compared to that which followed the sinking of the British trawler by the Bussian squadron. Not for years have so many alarmist reports and flaming extras flooded London. The most extraordinary feature of the situation, which was serious enough while it lasted, is that there was not one single circumstance to justify it. The excitement started early in the day, when the newspapers announced the departure of the Russian second Pacific squadron from Vigo. The public were not in possession of the information cabled by the Associated Press that only the officers concerned in the firing on the British trawlers would be detained, and jumped at the conclusion that Russia had broken faith by not delaying the vessels involved in the affair.

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On top of this came reports of activity at Gibraltar. Hour by hour the news from Gibraltar became more serious, until at last the climax was reached with the announcement that the British fieet had cleared for action. Some even said the fleet had sailed to meet the Russian squadron. In huge type the papers made the paralleled statement: "The Russian fleet has sailed." "The British fleet has cleared for action." No newspapers seemed to be able to explain these events. The reassuring information available in America that the sailing of the second Pacific squadron from Vigo was with the knowledge of, and agreeable to, the British government, was not even hinted at by the papers here. The news from Gibraltar became more and more alarming, and finally the foreign office was overrun by reporters, some of whom brought the rumor that Admiral Beresford had already sunk the remnant of Admiral Roiestvensky's fleet

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The Russian ambassador at that moment was quietly discussing with Foreign Minister Lansdowne the personnel of the international commission, but it was rumored that he was receiving an ultimatum. Premier Balfour; Admiral Sir John Fisher, commander-in-chief at Portsmouth; Lord Selborne, first lord of the admiralty, and Prince Louis of Battenburg, director of naval intelligence, were all in conference, and it was openly hinted that they were planning the first stroke of war. As a matter of fact they, like Lord Lansdowne, were engaged in considering names that had been suggested for the international commission.

When all London was in this state of mind, and while anybody wno might be supposed to know anything, was constantly being asked, Has war been declared?" the foreign office a base of the control of the clared?" the foreign office, having to adopt a course most unusual for it and in order to allay the public, gave out to the press the following statement:

"Before the Russian fleet left Vigo instructions were given the Russian admiral with the view of preventing injuries." al with the view of preventing injury or inconvenience to neutral ships during the passage of the Russian fleet to the Far East. In compliance with Russia's engagement, four Russian officers have been left behind at Vigo. The two governments are now discussing the terms with reference to the international commission which will be entrusted with the proposed enquiry."

Although it contained nothing that had not been published some hours earlier in London despatches from the Associated Press, St. Petersburg, it served to inform the people here of the exact situation. The general public, however, went to bed tonight firm in the conviction that it would wake up to hear that the Russian squadron was at the bottom of the sea.

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Today's furore would be ludicrous except for the striking instance it has afforded of the willingness of the British public to believe that almost any development is possible after the North sea affair and for the enthusism produced by Gibraltar's warlike news. The foreign office is intensely irritated at the construction placed upon what they declare must have been fleet exercises. We are authorized to state that no orders have been given the fleet at Gibraltar to make warlike preparations in connection with the departure of Admiral Rojestvensky's squadron.

Some annoyance was caused in Downing street earlier in the day by the announcement of the sailing of the fleet Today's furore would be ludicrous ex-

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