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It will be a surer guide. It remains for the minister to hold his majority, by at once submitting a series of business measures to the House, and insisting that they be seriously dealt with. These measures can be divided into two groups: the betterment of the finances—much in deficit and sadly confused; and the voting of such remedial Labour questions as are ripe for passing into law. Panama does not seem to have weighed with the electors; there were no heroic executions then notoriously daubed by that corruption. The election of M. Wilson, after all his antecedents in the Legion of Honour market, is at least, that the French do not believe in the doctrine of eternal punishment as applied to political sin. He has obtained a great revenge; but then several of his "political" enemies have since been involved in the Panama scandals. It is said that M. Wilson was never known to laugh; he can be accused if he now splits his sides. The election passed off amidst tranquil indifference. Every one appears to be satisfied, save the electors.

The ill-feeling between Italy and France, raised by the international quarrel of the neutrals at the salt marshes of Aignes-Mortes—the port where St. Louis set sail from twice during the Crusades—near Nismes, is deplorable. Why the present altercation should be taken up so warily by the Italians, is strange. The workmen of both countries are constantly growing. The Italians, like the Belgians, are generally navvies, a kind of work the French do not appear to be fitted for. It has simply illustrates the slender ties of European unity. Clearly the Latin "Sisters" do not exist in harmony, and the Latin Union cause does not appear to "catch on" with the principle. The last thing any one desires is war, because its consequences can be so tremendous. The conditions are so well prepared for fighting, and the nations are so new—nations against nations. If M. Crispien returns to power, he may force the hand of Europe.

Carlyle said the French were a "Messiah people," and de Lesseps, that they were a nation of "Isthmus Cutters." To take up the excavation of a canal across the peninsula of Siam, as a short cut to Saigon, and a death warrant to Singapore, is new to France. The second object of course has much to recommend it, and if it can be accomplished by the *honte* of a public loan, so good. But when the French declined to subscribe to the Russian loan, they are not likely to invest in Malacca scrip. However, England has not backed him up, as expected perhaps, in his quarrel with France. The French Government could offer to invest the war indemnity in the execution of the canal, and for the concession of the territory, the proposed company could offer a certain number of shares, never to be transferred to any foreign power without permission, and a fractional percentage in the profits. Naturally, English commerce would bring the grist to the mill, as at Suez and Constantinople, and in the Panama venture, if it ever comes, in the opinion of financial men here, it is impossible for it to exist, and which is not impossible, has all the elements of success about it, and if the names of leading men that I have been told of are backing it, they can well bring

it to a successful termination. But what can England do? Can she out-bid the French at Bangkok?

The establishing of a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean, with harbor accommodation in French ports, does not look as if the Franco-Russian alliance were dead. Nor is it an augury for peace, particularly as, is said, Germany intends to send a few war ships, the nucleus of a future fleet, that Italy will afford hospitality to. Naturally England will respond to the concentration of these naval forces of all kinds, by it is expected, a special fleet of greyhound cruisers. It does appear then not unlikely, that the long pending coming war will be decided, as some French admirals maintain, in the Mediterranean. The future will then be to the best seamanship and the best sailors—as ever. In this respect the Russian navy does not rank high. Cool opinion here does not feel comfortable at the prospects of the moment. People note the great silence of Germany; is she sharpening her weapons?

M. Schirmer, does not agree with Lord Salisbury, that the land of French Sahara is very light; he has "trotted" throughout the territory; and so has a great advantage over his lordship; nay more, he has studied the fauna of the desert, which is not absolutely astonishing, but also the "flora," which makes one feel amazed. The Sahara is not at all the repulsive place that a vain people think; on the contrary it is full of animation—query, Shifting Sands!—only the author is rather reticent of proofs. The best point about his book is that it does not propose any plan for working the Sahara, nor even for "cutting the first sod" of the main line of railway to Timbuctoo.

In the midst of life we are in death. A typhoid fever patient in the hospital Beaujon was prescribed baths, he held at all times a bath in horror, as did Louis XIV, so watching his opportunity, he escaped from the bath room, half dressed, and jumped into a passing omnibus, full of passengers, to return to his residence at Boulogne-sur-Seine. It appears his toilette was excused, as the torrid temperature pleaded for a slight change in manners. The Perfect of Police has only recently placed inside omnibuses, a notice, prohibiting passengers to expectorate on the floor of the vehicle: a post scriptum might be added, requesting typhoid patients to keep away. A few days ago, a conductor drew the attention of a buss passenger, to the police notice bearing on objectionable coughing accessories: "I cannot read," replied the terrible throat-rasper from the country; he had explained to him the nature of the ukase: "Well, then," he continued, "pull up the buss till I can expectorate by the window."

It is a bad wind that blows nobody good. During the great heat numbers of persons abstained from eating meat; they have found their health so much improved by the change, that they intend to abstain from flesh pots for the future.

At last it has been officially ruled—what custom never doubted, that a traveller has a right to select his corner in a railway carriage, and to mark possession by placing a rug, cane, or valise, etc., there—a warning off of poachers. An angular-minded man disregarding the *lex non scripta*, has just been reminded that he acted unbecomingly in removing the top coat and rug of a gentleman who had just jumped

out to buy a paper, after marking his place. I remember once witnessing a traveller—he was a German to boot—who with a friend, entered a compartment; only one corner was vacant; he pointed to his friend to take that, and removed the traps in the corner seat opposite. The two travellers then went to have, apparently, a drink. The rightful owner arrived, was bursting with rage at his place being so unceremoniously taken; we told him what happened; he retook his corner and baggage, and placed that of the invader on the top of his friend's. We encouraged the filling up of the compartment, save the one seat with the traps of the two Germans. The doors were being shut to, when the two travellers appeared; only room for one; the station master arrived to ascertain the delay in starting the mail; hot and unscriptural words ensued; a policeman was called, who dragged both of the Germans out, since they declined to descend, and having struck a railway porter, they had to go to the commissary of police. The station master whistled to start the train; when it arrived at Amiens, a telegram had been received to take out the small luggage in the carriage belonging to the arrested, and to impound the remainder of their luggage at Calais.

M. Zenger has sent a paper with proofs, of the "photographing of the invisible." It is not inaccurate; plenty of stars invisible to the naked eye are caught by the photo. In Zenger's case, there are proofs of Mont Blanc between ten o'clock at night and two in the morning, when the "Monarch of Mountains" was invisible to the naked eye, yet plain on the photo slide.

There are dealers who contract with restaurants, public establishments, and schools, for the broken meat, which is all scraped into a common *tinette* throughout the day, and taken away by cock-crow. The contractor then makes the refuse victuals into platefuls, or portions, at the uniform prices of two and three sous; he has a stall in the public markets, and to where the poor flock to purchase the crumbs that have fallen from the tables. The fragments are rolled up in a piece of old newspaper, put up at auction, so there can be no favours. Sometimes the paper may contain a "bonanza" collection of fish, flesh, fowl, and vegetables, not exactly fresh, but eatable—for the sanitary inspector is close by. One poor widow expended her last mite to buy a "harlequin" for her children, for such the package is called; it was composed of haricot beans, and being bulkier, was selected. The mother and four children indulged in the *regale*, but in the course of a few hours became sick, having been poisoned. The youngest child died, all the others are out of danger. The Commissary of Police was able to trace the haricots to the Louis de Grand College, that had thirteen cases of similar poisonings, caused by, it appears, filthy copper cooking utensils.

The lateness of trains on French lines is becoming a grave danger: 15 to 35 minutes is not uncommon for a train on a main line to arrive late. A traveller at Rochelle states that it is quite usual there for the local trains to start just at the hour their arrival at another point is due. And Rochelle is a line worked by the State. That's not promising for what the Socialists demand—"Collectivism," or, everything to be managed by the State.

Z.