

ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND SOCIALISM

THE Englishman who had been abroad since last year finds on returning that the British middle classes have "discovered" Socialism since the last General Election. The Frenchman returning to his country after a rather longer absence would find that the *bourgeoisie* in the interval has been "discovering" Individualism. This no doubt is as it always is, and perhaps as it should be. The two peoples have often been called complementary of one another. In many ways they develop along reverse lines, and whither one is travelling thence the other hastens, both persuaded that they are on the road of progress, rightly, perhaps, as there is more than one road. When both halt, turn round, and look at each other, criticism on both sides is commonly and very naturally of the old mote-and-beam sort. Admirable advice is given to the British people by French critics, and every one knows how generously British opinion champions some French causes. Counsel and enthusiasm might often be just as useful at home, but at home "one sees things differently." The intelligent and informed foreigner can be a wonderfully acute judge; he may also be an illuminating encomiast. While he surprises us by finding fault with our pet foibles, he may delight by praising everyday virtues by which we set no store; he even reveals gold in our vices. Many Frenchmen admire John Bull precisely for that which in him annoys his critical sons,