

pean policeman alone. Britain will be only one in the squad of six told off by civilization. Only here the police do not do their duty. They decline to arrest the common disturber of the peace. In the end Russia will see her waiting game will not pay.

The Government is making all preparations for the reception of the sovereigns on a quiet but luxurious scale. French taste is on its trial, and the crowds flocking to Paris already from all parts testify to the magnitude of the popular manifestation. It was well the State took the reception under its own wing as the people, frantic with delight, might have run into very eccentric extremes of hearty welcome. There will be no special railway station prepared for the arrival of their Majesties in the Bois de Boulogne, but that existing at La Muette, close to Lamartine's once residence, will be in part demolished at one side and made as beautiful as staging can do. Indeed it will be the same route as was prepared for the late Shah. All the gala coaches of the Executive will be placed at the disposal of the august guests; they will have no coat of arms, save the cipher "R. F.;" that is, all will figure on the panels of the vehicles. An "*Ich dien!*" motif would well typify the situation. It is not unlikely the routes intended to be taken by the Czar will be only made known day by day. It is a matter of regret for many that President Faure has no official costume; but he would not listen to any proposal to be decked out in feathers and fuss. He will be severely plain as a M. Cleveland: evening dress and the codfish-tail waiter's coat that all gentlemen at their best must patronize. It is regrettable that Madame Faure cannot accompany the Empress in her drives; she occupies no official rank, is only the wife of the first citizen of France. The French nobility take no part in the political rejoicings of the Republicans. Apart from that they are not believers in the Franco-Russian alliance.

Neither are many of the Republicans who demand that the nature of the treaty of the alliance between the two countries be made as fully known as is the case with the triple; that would be the best way to comprehend the amity of the Czar. The French, as is their nature, imagine the alliance is like to *open sesame* in the Arabian Nights till pulled up with the reality, that as yet no concrete advantage has been scored by France. The restoration of Alsace and Lorraine is not on the cards; that will involve the peace of Europe, and the dual alliance, as in the case of the triple, is pledged to maintain the peace of Europe. To make war against England, to reward the French by trying to admit them to Egypt, as a recompense for their backing out of their signed treaty to help Britain to suppress all rebellion—Arabi Pacha's included—might lead to the disruption of the peace of Europe also, and here, too, the watching-each-other-allies are bound to maintain order. But all this time Russia stealthily advances her interests, and she would be a fool not to do so while the sun shines. She is in a great measure handicapped by the *non possumus* diplomatic attitude of Britain to plunge into no isolated action to redress the grievances of the universe. However, the madness of the Sultan who, anticipating dethronement or the other form of "removal," might let loose all the fanaticism of Islam, so that the prophet's inheritance would end as it rose, in a social deluge. Who would be allies, then, in that scramble for the debris of an empire? There are some free-lance journals very severe at the expense of France, allowing herself to play second fiddle to Russia, and to be trotted out by her great partner as important ladies introduce others in society. France will make any sacrifice rather than to be isolated again. Even that aversion for solitude is felt by the Socialists, who are reconciled to remain passive spectators of the Czar's visit.

Li Hung Chang's visit is not altogether forgotten; no one in France views it otherwise but with cynical pleasantry and as those laugh best who laugh last. Li, belonging to the latter, can shake his sides. Opinion would wish him success in modernizing China, but feels that if he had no mission to negotiate anything pending his voyage he may not have much more power to gain to his side his colleagues and opponents in the Chinese Privy Council. He has really only the Empress-mother that backs him through thick and thin. But her life, like his own, is measured. Li is too wideawake to imagine even he can infuse the spirit of the Westerns into his country's old bones in a few years. The prestige of the empire has vanished; it has gone down before the Japs, and while China will be clumsily labour-

ing at resuscitation the Japanese will be simultaneously moving ahead, and entrance into the Flowery Land demanded more and more incessantly and peremptorily by Russia and England.

The anniversary of the fourth of September, 1870—the fall of the Second Empire and the victory of Sedan for the Germans—passed off very quietly. This is due to the fact that home politics have no grip on the people, who have had many scales removed from their eyes since the advent of the Republic. This form of government has not given all the blessings expected by the masses, while it has developed not a few drawbacks and some shames. But, on the whole, the nation instinctively feels it is the form of government, as Thiers observed, which divides them least. As for the Pretenders, no one—their few followers included—believes their great expectations come within the sphere of any realization. Prince Victor Napoleon is perhaps the wisest; he lives in a well secured Dutch cheese awaiting the moment when Providence will call him to the throne of France. The Duc d'Orleans is also awaiting the invitation of Providence to the same post; he makes a little more fuss than his rival, keeps better before the footlights, but is equally an impossibility.

There is a bronze war raging. It appears that the copper of foreign countries inundate France so much so as to affect the circulating medium at home. Copper coin is really not a money; its intrinsic being insignificant as compared with its nominative value. The gods be praised there is no bi metallism question; the 15½ of silver to one of gold cannot be expanded to ninety of copper and tin to one of silver. In France the State fixes an artificial value for silver on the coins in that metal; it coins copper *ad libitum*, but no one is bound to take more than five francs in bronze in payment of account, while at some times the law ignores altogether bronze money. But there are money changers who do a brisk trade by buying up foreign coppers at the price of old iron, smuggling them into France, and passing them off—being of the same size—as the equivalent of the home "browns." This traffic yields 75 per cent. profits. The French authorities issue decrees not to accept such coins, but the exchange goes on all the same. The persons who smuggle in the tabooed currency arrange to accept, at a reduction, all the foreign bronze coins; they export them to the country where they are a legal tender, and so obtain full value. To manipulate "sound money" in France is becoming difficult owing to the quantity of silver and gold coins legally accepted from some countries and declined from others, in addition to the worn-out coins of French rulers from Napoleon I. downwards. The street boys sell for two sous a sheet with illustrations, and as large as the page of any penny paper sold for a half-penny, of coins to be refused.

The Colonial Minister is commencing to adopt a plan of propagandism, to induce the French to emigrate to their own colonies, by making the latter better known. Hence, in all the post offices a big notice is posted up respecting New Caledonia, the conditions to enable emigrants to obtain land concessions, etc. That is excellent; the French make as good emigrants as any other people, only they prefer not to rough it, to go to an equivocal climate to be annoyed by local circumlocution officers, and last, not least, to the law of obligatory military service. But the Government must climb down a little more in the way of assisting emigrants; unless possessed of 5,000 frs. capital, it is useless starting for New Caledonia; to venture as to Madagascar 70,000 frs. will be necessary. The farm hands with 5,000 frs. capital are few, and if they possess it they prefer remaining at home, buying a plot of land, and hiring themselves out as labourers. The other class is not that inclined to leave their country at all; with the interest on that capital at 3 per cent., and a clerkship at 1,000 or 2,000 frs. a year, with a wife expert at her needle or able to run a small shop, the couple can, by resolving to have no children, live very happily at home. By a system of free emigration for years, with facilities for creating the homestead and repaying the advances by small and long term instalments. France can people her best possessions. But she has a quantity of territory only good to figure on maps and bamboozle the *gobemouches*.

The humble house in which Ernest Renan was born at Trégnier, in Bretagne—part of the fisherman's dwelling—the illustrious man's father and uncles were followers of St. Peter's profession—has received a slab to commemorate the birthplace of the celebrated villager. Many stories are cir-