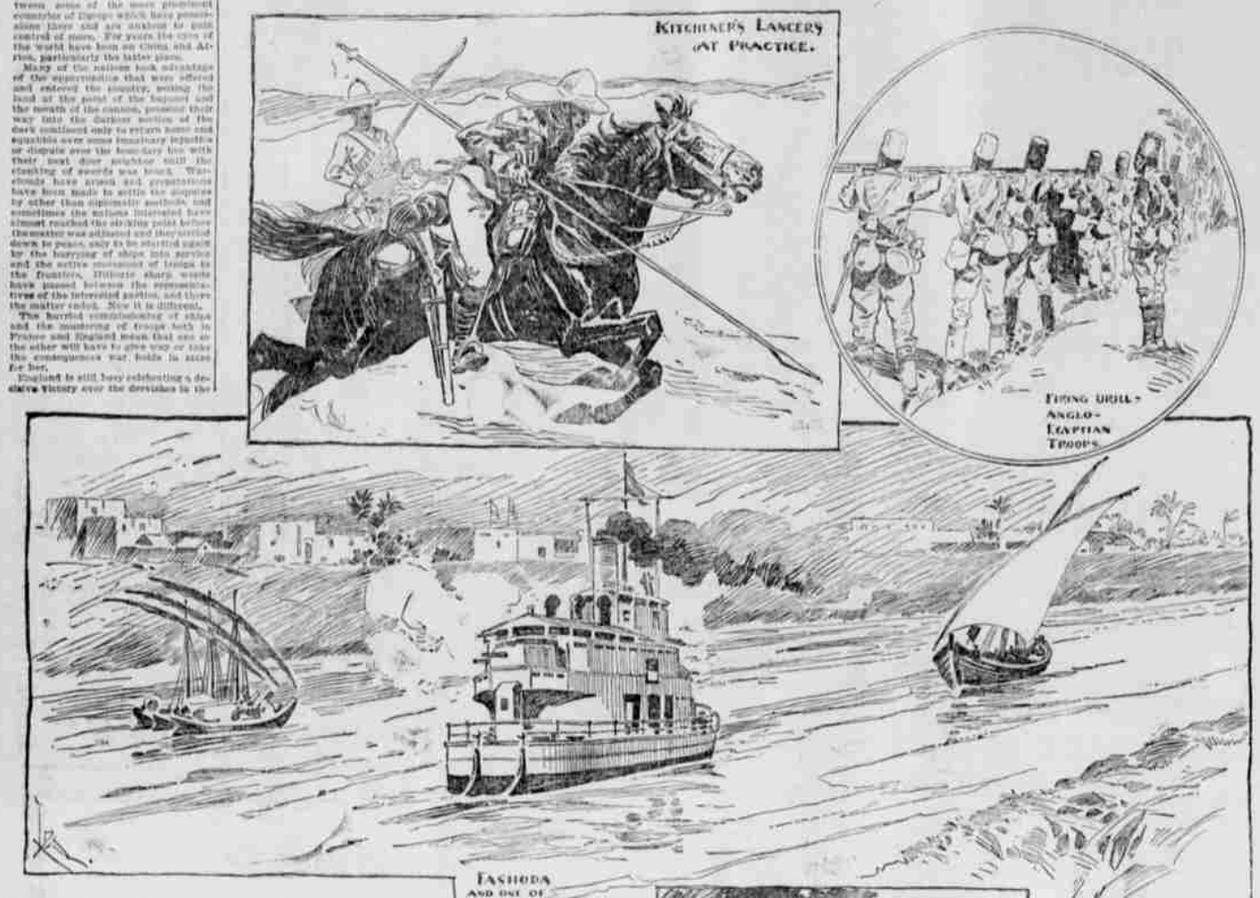
FRANCE AND ENGLAND FOES BY INHERITANCE

THE COMPLICATION IN AFRICA.

FIGHTING STRENGTH OF THE TWO NATIONS.



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THE Nile, the more other parts of the dark continent, has been the scene of numerous fierce combats in which the natives taking part have seen some of their best troops swept into eternity and their most practiced officers killed. Not only has it been the scene of conflicts between the natives and the civilized troops which have been sent to open it up to commerce, but it has been the cause of many disturbances between some of the most prominent countries of Europe which have promised alone there and are anxious to gain control of more. For years the eyes of the world have been on China and Africa, particularly the latter place.

Many of the nations took advantage of the opportunities that were offered and entered the country, sending the land at the point of the bayonet and the mouth of the cannon, pressed their way into the darkest section of the dark continent only to return home and squabble over some insignificant difficulty or dispute over the boundary line with their next door neighbor until the clashing of swords was heard. Warrants have arisen and propositions have been made to settle the disputes by other than diplomatic methods and sometimes the nations interested have almost reached the striking point before diplomacy was attained and they settled down to peace, only to be startled again by the hurrying of ships into service and the active movement of troops to the frontiers. Bitterly sharp words have passed between the representatives of the interested nations, and there the matter ended. Now it is different.

The hurried commissioning of ships and the mustering of troops both in France and England mean that one or the other will have to give way or take the consequences war holds in store for her.

England is still busy celebrating a decisive victory over the dervishes in the Soudan. Omdurman, their stronghold, has fallen and with it their power. England was moving toward the south, but has stopped over a country where much was gained with the loss of her best troops from sun and to sun, and she has found, for possession of the land has by long, long years of her, but she is on the field. The way from Cairo to Cape Town was open, and the railroad which has been the pet scheme of the "forward" party was to be right when another obstacle appeared, which was not only put a stop to the railroad scheme for the present, but is likely to cause trouble and more trouble between one of the most powerful nations in the world. The check came with the arrival at Fashoda of the French troops from their posts on the eastern coast of Africa in command of Major Marchand. Fashoda is only a few hundred miles south of the country where the English and Egyptian troops in command of General Sir Herbert Kitchener, sister of Gordon, won their famous victory, avenging the death of General Gordon and opening up the country through which the railroad is to come. Fashoda was to be the best place of English troops, and the French troops are on his way to that place that he turned that the French flag was in possession.

This was the signal for the warlike to again raise its appearance. Both countries have looked upon this part of the Nile for many years and have fought for it. England has fought for it, and it has cost her dear. With it in her possession she can block the French movement from the east to the west coast, which France has long been trying to accomplish, knowing that to carry it out this purpose would mean the destruction of England's power. The strengthening for holdings to control the tributaries of the dark continent, it has been a desired land of France for years, and the first to get a foothold and to conquer it would naturally be looked upon as the rightful owner. England had succeeded in driving her off of all claimants in the Soudan with the French arrived on the scene. General Kitchener went to Fashoda and requested the French to leave the land. His request was refused by Major Marchand. This was the first step taken, and trouble was in sight. Both nations prepared, and are being ready for war.

England will not allow France to remain in that section of the Soudan, for she has been heard to say she should adequately to have the reserve force made ready for active service and for every ship she has ever to be given her full war complement of officers and men. France has not looked on idly, too, in making preparations, and has every ship in her navy on the move. Both countries are arming every nerve, and with the strictness for the fighting force of two of the greatest nations in the world will be brought to gether in deadly combat.

In speaking of the feeling in England concerning the French movement in the matter a prominent English statesman said: "England will never consent to French occupation of Fashoda. We have sacrificed the flower of our blood and treasure in the Soudan to drive the rabble of barbarism out of the country, and we have earned victory by, to mention little but at the moment of final triumph. Many of the provinces of England have gone hollow in the pocket that an Indian interference will be allowed in England's management of affairs in the Soudan. It would be that England will not give up a foot of the country she has gained by hard fighting, with the loss of so many good men, without a struggle to the end of the last man." This sentiment has been taken up by England's foremost men, and the nation is preparing her money and her men to defend the country she has fought so hard to conquer.

France and England have never been on the most friendly terms. There have been many causes for this, the principal one being the idea of England rulers in Egypt. This, again, France has not forgotten, and it is the hope of the English lions to prevent the French from any occasion. The property of France is not insured in the French, and it is hoped that it may not come to that point. The insured is further taken care of by a talk with in London by men, and also and was when William the Conqueror left France and landed on the shores of 1066. Since then England has been since found France for her foe.

France is already busy in making what she has gained at the point of the bayonet. The powerful navy and army are always ready to attack in the event of a war between the two countries, and with the strictness of the force combined with the fleet of the English navy, it will be no easy matter for France to hold her own. If necessary, they could be joined upon by other nations, and would make a valuable addition to her fighting force.

The list of both navies, giving the number of ships and the total tonnage, is as follows. It is taken from the latest official reports of each of the governments:

	England.	France.
Battleships, first class A	15	7
Battleships, second class B	9	3
Battleships, third class C	17	4
Large armored cruisers	21	4
Unarmored cruisers	47	17
Coast defense vessels		8
Protected cruisers (armored deck)		
First class	32	3
Second class	18	4
Second class (old gunboats)	11	4
Third class	4	4
Torpedo rams	2	2
Torpedo boats, first class of unlike size, but considered seagoing	3	3
Torpedo boats, second class, seagoing	3	3
Torpedo boats, second class, coast service	11	11
Torpedo boats, second class, harbor service	11	11
Torpedo boats, third class	11	11
Torpedo boats, third class, harbor service	11	11
Torpedo authority, first class	22	11
Torpedo boat destroyers	36	3
Torpedo boat destroyers, second class	11	3
Torpedo boats, second class	11	3
Torpedo boats, third class	11	3
Torpedo boats, third class	11	3

Several of the larger ships and a number of the torpedo boats in the French list as given here are under construction and will not be ready for service for some time. Most of the torpedo boats in the English list are under construction and available for service.

The above shows the real fighting strength of each nation on the water. The table does not include a number of the old wooden vessels that both France and England still carry on their naval lists. These are obsolete and useless as fighting machines. The transports are also excluded from the list, as they are not of the class, do will be seen by the above statement of England has 10, to a little over 3 of her total naval tonnage to France's 3. Not only this, but the English ships carry heavier and more guns than those which for the trifling of Europe's circular reports. The tonnage of the English navy is estimated by Jane's to be something over 1,000,000. The tonnage of France, however, the auxiliary fleet, is composed of some of the finest and largest of the transatlantic lines and the largest merchant ships of the world. Her army, which compared with that of the other large countries of Europe, is comparatively small, France has a powerful army and navy in point of mere numbers. The following figures of the French and English armies are taken from the latest official reports. England's total fighting strength on foot in time of peace is 216,000, while on a war basis it can reach to 677,000. That of France on a peace footing is 504,000 and in time of war 2,600,000. It will be seen that the French army is in time of peace more than three times as large as that maintained by England while the war footing is nearly four times greater. England has a reserve for compared of men who have all been under arms and have been trained. If necessary, they could be called upon for active service, and would make a valuable addition to her fighting force.

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A summary of the fleets of both navies is given:

	England.	France.
Ships of the line	47	7
Cruisers	93	21
Coast defense vessels	9	8
Torpedo craft	203	29
Total	352	65

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