

ited by hundreds, aye thousands of people from various parts of Europe and some even from faraway America. Among others, the venerable Sir Henry Layard was present, and, as he looked upon the multitude of these simple-hearted mountaineers, listened to the fervid eloquence of their preachers or gazed upon the grand old snow-clad peaks which surround these valleys, it is doubtful if he had ever seen in his excavations at Nineveh anything more interesting or impressive.

It is quite impossible to understand why certain Italian newspapers should seize the present moment for declaring that the Pope has finally resolved to transfer his residence from Rome to Avignon in France. If it was for the purpose of eliciting French public opinion on the subject the ruse has been successful. Even the most Catholic of French newspapers recommended the Pope not to think of transferring the Papacy to Avignon, and advised him to stay at Rome, or if he must leave that city to keep away from France. The *Tribuna di Roma* says: "The Pope has decided to leave Rome next February, and, returning to the traditions of 1377, his new residence will be Avignon, which city will again become the capital of Catholicism. It is true that in the event of war between France and Italy, the place of residence for the Pope is not Rome—but can it be Avignon?"

A French contemporary replies: "France cannot afford to play Don Quixote. France is no longer the eldest daughter of the Church. We have troubles enough at home without an additional trouble. The only country that can give the Pope an asylum is a neutral country. Perhaps England will allow the Pope to settle at Malta; but can the Pope accept the hospitality of a heretic nation? There is the Catholic country Austria; perhaps she will give the Pope an asylum? Strange no one in Italy suggests this alternative. Would it be dangerous to the triple alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy? Let reflective ones answer the question."

"I am an agnostic," remarked a young man in a proud and dignified tone of voice. "And an agnostic is what?" inquired an elderly gentleman. "An agnostic," replied the smart youth, in a manner full of pity for the old man's ignorance, "an agnostic—ah—is ah—a fellow, don't you know? who—ah—isn't sure of anything!" "I see, I see," was the old man's reply, "but how does it come that you are sure you are an agnostic?"

Just so in regard to French politics. The English, the German and the Italian press have been busy discussing the probabilities of the French elections, which took place on Sunday the 22nd of September. The result shows that the journals were not sure of anything. In spite of all the jarring elements of Royalists, Imperialists and Boulangists, the Republic of France may well be congratulated that a signal vic-

tory has been achieved. Up to the present time five hundred and sixty returns have come to hand, leaving only sixteen to be accounted for, and of these the ten from the colonies may be confidently counted on as swelling the Republican majority. So far as known the actually elected deputies comprise too hundred and twenty-four Republicans, eighty-six who favor the interest of the Comte de Paris, fifty-one for the Bonapartists, and twenty-two who favor the interest of the *le brav* General Boulanger. The results are therefore not at all favorable to the knight of the white plume and the black charger. It requires the victories of Arcola, Lodi, and the campaign of Egypt to make the *coup d'etat* of the 18th Brumaire possible, and place the first Napoleon as the first consul of France. It was scarcely to be expected that the mere organization of the army, however skilful that may have been done, and a promenade on the Boulevards of Paris, would be able to give a similar position to the polite and affable Boulanger. France has decisively pronounced for the time against any revival of that personal element, that "one man power," which has so often played an important part in her politics. The lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine have not been recovered, nor has the French flag been carried in victory across the Rhine. Until something is done to cause France to forget her humiliation she will not be in much danger from military adventurers.

The defeat of M. Jules Ferry removes from French political life perhaps for ever, the ablest leader of French republicanism. He sought to gain renown by extending French power in the East, but the failure of the Tonquin expedition brought about the downfall of his ministry, and his opposition to the Jesuits seems to have told against him in the late elections.

M. Floquet, the antagonist of Boulanger, has also been placed on the retired list, and M. Clemenceau is likewise unsuccessful. It is evident that France is learning to trust the good sense of her moderate men and not run so much after gilded oratory. This fact argues much for the future of the Republic.

A number of Italian statesmen have been visiting the Exhibition lately and have been received with marked distinction by the Paris municipal council. During the interview there was an exchange of pretty speeches, and much was said about international fraternity. The Hungarian deputation also manifested great sympathy for France, and so have the Servians, Bulgarians, etc., who form the fragments of the once mighty Servian empire. A prominent French journal, however, advises France not to build too much on foreign sympathy, seeing that all the monarchies are in reality adverse to the Republic.

The Russian journals, lately, have been devoting considerable space to German and Austrian affairs, and urging the discontinuance of the German-Austrian alliance, promis-

ing that in such a case there would be no cause for an alliance between Russia and France. As nothing is published in Russia except by order, it is evidently a hint as to what Germany may expect if she persists in the triple alliance.

For the past few weeks one of the principal "topics" of English conversation has been the great strike of the dock laborers of London. The victory of the laborers has been complete enough to satisfy all except those who wished triumph without any compromise. But the effects of the strike will remain for some time to come. The idle shipping in the great port of London for nearly a month, and the valuable time of the laborers that went to waste, thereby causing great suffering among their families, are only two of the items in the vast bill of expenses. The fact that thousands of tons of Christmas goods, destined for Australian customers, will now have to be sent by steamer instead of by sailing vessel, and consequently at a loss to London merchants, is another item which should not be forgotten. But the most serious loss is the fact that much of the colonial and foreign trade has been transferred to other ports, notably those of Liverpool and Bristol. There are those even who declare that London will never fully overcome the shock she has received. Few incidents have created such a far-reaching effect as this battle on the banks of the Thames. It has actually created even greater excitement in Sydney and Melbourne than in London. This is an interesting proof of the interests at stake between the mother country and the colonies, and gives food for reflection to those who are concerned in the prospect of Imperial Federation.

But the story of the London dock laborers is outdone altogether when we take into consideration the complaint of the plate-layers of the Great Western Railway of England. What will the public think when they read the memorial of the poor plate-layers, which has just been transmitted to the directors. The following is an extract not altogether devoid of interest. "We respectfully demand of the directors that our wages be increased from 3½ pence per hour, \$4.50 per week, to 5 pence, or \$6.25 per week. We submit that ours is skilled labor, demanding intelligence and care; that we incur great hardships through want of rest, having to attend sudden calls, at all times and in all sorts of weather; and that we incur great personal risk of life and limb in the execution of our work. Consequently, we consider we are entitled to be classed with other bodies of skilled laborers who receive not less than 6 pence and sometimes even up to 1 shilling per hour. We venture to assure the directors that it would be for the company's interests to enable their workmen to support decent homes and to live better, so that they might arrive at their work strong and vigorous, instead of hav-