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EDITORIAL

WAR IN EUROPE?

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EUROPE has not changed since the time, half a century ago, when Lamartine referred to it as “this Europe, where everything crackles and threatens to crack.” On the contrary. With due appreciation of the crackling state of European affairs, there is much to justify the expectation that Morocco will not lead to hostilities.

The facts that justify the expectation lie far below the chopped sea of diplomatic notes and of diplomatically framed speeches by cabinet ministers. Diving below these surface turbulences, the following state of affairs is found:—

A certain German capitalist adventurer, Mannesmann by name, discovered iron ore in Morocco. He immediately organized a syndicate and received from the Sultan of Morocco the right to operate the mines found by him. As is usual in such cases—we here in America are familiar with the methods of our American adventurers in Central America—Mannesmann was no sooner in possession of the Moroccan franchise when he sought the backing of his own Government. The trouble then began to brew, and the pot was not Morocco, but the capital of the German Empire.

The trouble arose from the circumstance that no sooner did large German metal firms, the Krupps leading, and having plenty of use for iron ore, hear about iron finds in Morocco and of the Mannesmann syndicate claiming seignory over the same, when they let it to be known that they were not of a mind to allow Mannesmann to “exploit” them. Thus the Mannesmann set, on the one hand, the Krupp set, on the other locked horns at the Berlin foreign office.

So far the immediate consequences would rather make for peace. So long as the Krupps and Mannesmanns were quarreling Morocco could breathe and the rest of Europe go its way in peace—so far as Morocco was concerned. But the matter is not so simple. Another factor enters into the calculations. There is in Paris, that is, on

French soil, another syndicate, a mining syndicate, at that, and the French concern has struck a sort of partnership with Mannesmann. If the German Government sides with Mannesmann then it sides with the French concern, and all would go smoothly. If, however, it sides against Mannesmann, that is to say, in favor of the Krupps, then it simultaneously sides against the French concern, which, having considerable power, can give the French government wires pulls enough to cause the sabres to rattle ominously.

It is said that the German government inclines to the Krupps. This is quite probable, and the probability has been the cause of all the symptoms of war over Morocco. Considering, however, that the interests of the French mining syndicate brings this concern in closer affinity with the Krupps than with the Mannesmann, relatively an upstart in the German capitalist world, the probabilities preponderate that, in exchange for the French concern's dropping Mannesmann, the Krupps will conclude some pact with the French syndicate, and, consequently, there will be nothing to fight over.

'Tis not Germany, France and England that are growling. The growlers are Mannesmanns, Krupps and the French syndicates. The circumstance that the Paris Bourse is the most optimistic at this crisis denotes the prevalence at Paris of the belief that the French syndicate is making headway—and that means that Mannesmann will be dumped, which in turn spells peace.

Of course, in “this Europe where everything crackles and threatens to crack” any new factor may at any time “butt in” and let loose the dogs of war.

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