

of the big guns of the Channel and Mediterranean Fleets, he was permitted to proceed to the Far East, where Admiral Togo anxiously awaits him. It is likely that he will get all that the British public wish him without the expenditure of a drop of British blood or an ounce of British powder.

It is, perhaps, difficult to follow the course of events without experiencing a suspicion of humiliation. Even though we are assured that the magnanimity of Britain is appreciated at Washington, Paris, Vienna and Rome, it is irritating to be told by certain Russian journals that "whatever happens, England won't fight," the plain inference being that Russia should not accept any suggestions that we may offer, or take heed of any demands we may make. There is, however, one solid reason why we should be glad that the Imperial Government has, in spite of the sharpest temptation, kept its hands off Russia. To do other than has been done would have been to play directly into the hands of Germany. Germany alone would profit by the embroilment of Britain with the Tsar. It has been broadly asserted that the commander of the Baltic Fleet had received special warning from somebody at Berlin to beware of Japanese torpedo boats on the Fogger Bank, but whether the accusation is or is not susceptible of proof does not matter much. What it is of consequence to bear in mind is this, that it is Germany's interest (1) to create trouble between Russia and England, and (2) to re-install the sentiment of distrust that has kept England and France assunder for so many centuries, and which has, to a great extent, been removed by recent intimate political intercourse. The Anglo-French Arbitration Treaty is fraught with consequences to Germany more important and more alarming than any liable to be induced by the agreement be-

tween France and Russia. It would suit the Kaiser's temporary purpose to get Britain into a scrape with anybody, but he would not trouble himself to make mischief between London and Petersburg simply with that object and nothing more. Germany has always felt safe with Russia. They are natural allies. Both are vitally interested in the maintenance of the autocratic principle in government, and heretofore their interests have not clashed to any appreciable extent in Europe, or in the East, or Far East. It is, of course, true that recent developments of the Kaiser's world-policy threaten to antagonise Russia. The friendship between Germany and the Porte and the railway and settlement schemes in Asia Minor, cannot be acceptable to Russia, which regards all Asia as coming within the sphere of her ultimate influence. But then we can never be sure of Germany's aim. Every particular manifestation of her acknowledged scheme of national expansion may be made, for all we can prove to the contrary, with the express sanction of the Tsar. All that Germany has done, or tried to do, in the extreme East of Europe, or in the Asiatic provinces of the Sultan, equally with her efforts in the Yellow Sea might conceivably form part of a combined plan by means of which Russia would be enabled to realise all Peter the Great's dreams of Asiatic domination, and Germany would materialise her ambitious projects in Africa, South America, and the Western Pacific. The Common Enemy, of course, is Britain. But Britain is not so essentially the enemy of Russia as she is of Germany. For Germany can do nothing of any consequence so long as we hold the dominion of the Ocean. If we assume that the Kaiser is trying to force the pace with Russia, we have the key to much that is otherwise inexplicable. The cautious policy of Britain, and the changing sentiment in France must, however, have