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EDITORIAL

THE WAR CLOUD IN EUROPE.

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READERS of *The People* will remember that, barely two months ago, no less self-assertive an individual than Col. Roosevelt took the stand before the Steel Trust investigating committee of Congress, and then told the tale of how, during his presidential term, and the crisis of 1907 being then at its height, two leading Steel magnates called upon him at the White House, and there unfolded a tale to the effect that, if the Steel Trust were left unmolested in the purchase of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company from a certain firm, name unmentioned, that firm, said to be a very prominent one, would be saved from bankruptcy, and the crisis would be checked, whereas otherwise the firm, name unmentioned, would come down with a crash, and the crisis would spread indefinitely. Readers of *The People* will furthermore remember that Col. Roosevelt testified to his having given the desired consent, without inquiring the name of the prominent firm for the saving of which the anti-trust law was to be stretched.

In other words, readers of *The People* will remember that, according to his own testimony, the Chief Magistrate of the country, commander-in-chief of the country's Army and Navy, and he, at that, a type of excessive self-assertiveness and pugnacity, surrendered his judgment, and thereby his office, to two leading Plutocrats. Meekly abstaining from demanding the name of the firm in question; meekly, accordingly, allowing the two Plutocrats to decide upon whether or not the emergency demanded a suspension of the law, he, then President of the United States, humbly did their bidding. Punchinello-like his eyelids shut tight, obedient to the pull of the strings of the Steel Plutocrats.

By the light of this nearby, and duly authenticated event, far away happenings, now going on across the Atlantic, can be read distinctly.

In Germany, elaborate naval manoeuvres are being held on the Baltic, and

ashore large forces are operated to repel the sham attack from the water. In France, regiments are massed on the German frontier, are being manoeuvred to resist invasion, and are practicing the methods to relieve Belfort in case of its investment. What's all that about? A mere grown boy's play with soldiers? Not a bit.

It is a repetition in the open, upon the Baltic and on the Franco-German frontier, of the indoor scene that took place in Washington at the presidential residence on that morning of 1907, testified by Col. Roosevelt himself.

Punchinello-like the political heads of the Capitalist Class move as their masters, the Capitalist Class, pull the strings. According as the strings are pulled, Presidents and Kings, Congresses and Parliaments, shut their eyes to infractions of the law, or rattle their sabres. Obedient to Capitalist dictation laws are superseded, or passed; and war clouds are pulled upon the scene, or pulled off.

The war cloud, now darkening the sky of Europe, is a stage performance that warring French and German Capitalist interests in Morocco dictate—the same as the performance in Washington was dictated by American Top-Capitalists. Not always do these performances end bloodless. They did not end bloodless in 1898 when the Sugar, Tobacco and the Standard Oil Trusts pulled the strings for the war with Spain. They may not end bloodless now in Europe.

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