The Tar has "fallen ill" it seems; four or five times over has the report been "confirmed" and "contradicted," so there must be something in it. Does it mean that another attempt at executing him has nearly succeeded? It is only the rage and fear and worry expressed by all the troubles that he sees rising round him or threatening in the near future? One thing seems assured, however, which is, that whether this possible typhoon meets a deserved fate or goes over a great at once of rage and sorrow, overlong reprieved, is coming in Russia, before which everything that has taken place since the French Revolution will seem small. And in all countries the hatred grows against the man and the system that sends so many thousands to their Siberian hell. Thirty-five years ago the same feeling put an enthusiasm behind the Crimean war, which led all, or nearly all, our republican predecessors to see ardent "patriots" for the time being.

Not that they were really "patriotic" or Jingo, but they hated despotism so much that they bailed with joy the chance of bringing "Colosus of the North" to his knees. Was it not their chance of bringing about the destruction of that great stronghold of thug and that storehouse of reaction, the Russian Empire. They did not reflect that the "constitutional" governments of England and Italy, being monarchies at all, must have a sneaking regard for even an autocratic monarchy, and would be sure to stop short of so smacking it as to make a republie inevitable; while Badinguet was only taking part in the fight so as to get himself recognised as being on equal terms with any other of the powers.

Nor would there be now; yet, if war against Russia were to break out, the warm hopes of all of us would go on the side of her enemy. For who knows how many prison doors some shuttering reverse of her arm might not shut! It is given, however, by any country to any country that when a war was declared, there would be all the enthusiasm of the people, if, for example, the Russian government were to go to the aid of the Russian in repelling the arisen people, it would have to be attacked at home, and given enough to do to occupy its attention for the time being.

An artist friend writes to us as follows: "The Royal Academy was instituted to enable very poor artists to expose their pictures for sale, and so bring their name and works before the public, by means that does away with the cruel blackmail of the picture dealer. Now it is an aristocratic Tory club. A poor artist could sooner get through the eye of the proverbial needle than into it. Give us poor artists a word of hope and you will gain many hundreds of believers, as each studio is a little world in itself."

We do not quite see how the Royal Academy can be other than it is under present conditions. Bourgeois society moulds everything after its own image, and what is the Academy or art itself that they should escape? The only word of hope we have for artists is the same that we have for any one else.

All the same, it is not easy to refrain from damning the Academy up hill and down dale for the worst collection of snobs, flunkies, and second-rate talents that the world has yet seen. The way in which they show out men of any independence until they are either strong enough to force their way in or weak enough to become "respectable," should make young or poor artists see that there is nothing to be hoped from these monopolists except for those who too young or too poor to have their remedy—combination—if they like to employ it; though, if the truth be said, the majority of artists are like the majority of anybody else nowadays, snobs potential if not snobs actual.

Is there going to be a protest made in the name of English labour against the gloomy and the Christ? The Englishmen to whom I wrote a letter in our last issue! Where is the Metropolitan Radical Federation? Will they take it up? All the Radicals and Socialists of London would turn out against the representative of the worst form of imperial policy, and the Irish would join him in a man against the English policy of grab which is behind him.

Murther at Knutsford! dreadful murder! Dreads enough this time, certainly; only it has been committed practically by the British nation, and therefore does not shock the moral sense of comfortable easy-going people, who think, probably, that it does not much matter to them how it happens, since they are likely to come into the clutches of the Judge and the Home Secretary. But to those who have learned to feel the burden of collective responsibility, these legal murders are far worse than any of those homicides caused by passion or misuse, which our law-rulers put aside by side with the calculated commercial slayings of such men as Palmer. The peculiar baseness of Matthew's "promise" in this case is in fact swallowed up by the shame which an actual murder is not signed of Wigan, which was so doubtful! As though in some unexplained way their fate was bound up in that of one of the two much-about-the-same and the very respectable geniuses who sought the suffrages of that very insignificant and corrupt nest of snobbery and toadstool—the "Royal Borough."