

THE THOUGHTS OF THEOBALD.

THE DAWN.

The public servant has waited long and patiently for a proper recognition, and in the appointment, though only an acting one, of Mr. LeMessurier to the head of the Postal-Telegraph Service, the faint glimmerings of the day of emancipation are seen, and in the address presented to him by the Postal officials, the hope is theirs that the appointment may be a permanent one.

So often has political pull been allowed to triumph over merit and long service in all departments of the Government, that the address seemed to me to be a thankful outburst that at last experience and faithful service have come into their own. The Postal Service has always provided a place for political friends who have come in and been put over the long-service men, and who have had to learn the routine of the work from their inferiors. Against this the Postmaster-General has been powerless. The matter of suitable appointments, which should have been his affair, was always arranged from the Executive Chamber, and it was almost useless for him to protest. The service undoubtedly suffers from this, and it is proven from the recommendation made by the Canadian expert in Postal matters who inspected the Department a few years ago, that the service would be more efficient if several employees were provided with jobs elsewhere. The Government were not brave enough to do this and risk the anger of political friends, and so it remains. And while absolute strangers to the work are given positions over those whose experience entitles them to these positions, efficiency cannot be the watchword of the Postal-Telegraph Service. In no other Department of the Public Service does there need to be such regularity, such clock-work accuracy, and anything that disturbs this regularity should never be allowed. Just take a simple instance. If I post a letter in the morning, I expect that that letter will be delivered to the address in the afternoon. But it is not always so. If the addressee has, or is connected with a concern that has a letter-box, the letter may be put in that box and remain there undelivered till the next time the box is cleared. Town deliveries should be distinct from foreign mails, especially when the latter arrive with such irregularity.

Sir Robert Bond's manifesto promised, I think, that the office of Postmaster-General should be made a Departmental one, carrying with it a seat in the Executive. This certainly would improve matters, as the Head of the Department would surely fight against political expediency impairing the efficiency of the Postal Service. If this were done, Mr. LeMessurier would become the permanent deputy-head, and first official of the service. This is not likely to happen under the present Government. If we are to believe the rumours of the hopes of at least two prominent members of that body.

AN INSTANCE.

I know of one instance, the record of one official, the recital of whose adventures in the Postal Service would make entertaining reading were it not for the injustice which stalks ever through the story. The smallness of the Government's reasoning is astonishing, as for instance, the reply of the then Colonial Secretary that it could not be better for the official while one of his relatives had so much to say about politics! As if any one was responsible for the actions of his relatives! Another instance of irregularity, if not slackness, is seen in the recent case in which a girl took a mail bag at one of the stations on the line. I understand that the bag was thrown off the train with some others opposite the post office building, the mailman coming back when the train had stopped to put the bags in the post office. Whether the bags were counted then or not, the fact remains that not till the mail matter was found missing, was the bag found to be gone. The girl had evidently found the bag and taken it. Now surely we want our mails to be taken care of better than that. We should be able to have the fullest confidence in the proper carriage of our mails.

WHO DID IT?

Some weeks before the recent Ward referendum I pointed out that the cost of the election lay at the door of the Civic Commission, as it certainly does. The importance of the subject is manifest by Mayor Gosling's desire for a separate election, and is surely the warrant of the Citizens'

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Committee in bringing the question up. However, the truth of the matter is this, that the apparent indifference shown in the small vote was really a premeditated indifference, but it serves no good purpose at present to go into the matter. He who runs may read.

MISSING.

How weary it must be to wake each morning hoping for news, and to go to bed still unsatisfied, hoping for something on the morrow. The problem of our missing lady is the greatest and saddest burden the mothers and fathers have to bear now. Hope has been deferred so long that the heart has almost become sick, but "no news is good news" and there is still room for hope that many of our "missing" will yet be found, and alive.

To the number of "missing" is now added the crew of the motor boat "H. V. Morris" who, pursuing a peaceful voyage to St. John's from Trinity two weeks ago to-day, have unaccountably disappeared. Mr. Orlando Morris, son of the venerable Joseph Morris, and prominent in church and commercial life in Trinity, was the skipper. He is married and has two children. The boat is named after his three-year-old son, Harry Victor. His brother, Stephen Morris, was killed "Somewhere in France" just two months ago, which makes the anxiety greater to his father and mother. On board also were Robert Guy whose family

consists of his wife and four children; Ephraim Hiscock, whose wife and five little children anxiously await tidings; Adam Lucas, who was married but last winter and was on his first visit to St. John's; James Locke, a young lad who shipped as cook; and Edmund Charles Hiscock, a boy of 14 who was coming to St. John's to see his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Moore. Mrs. Moore has already passed through the fire of sorrow as she lost her husband and two sons in the Trinity Bay disaster of 1892. How can we love the sea and the wind when they can be so cruel!

The gloom of anxiety has rested over Trinity for two weeks, but still there are hopeful ones who believe that "there is always Hope from the ocean," and indeed on several occasions have vessels and crews returned after many days and many months. The storm of two weeks ago might have taken the vessel out to sea and in the track of some sailing vessel or steamer. May it be so, and may we hear shortly that all are safe and well.

Luck in a Mistake.

When the Famous Singer Albani First Went to London.

The curious story of Mme. Albani's first London engagement is as follows: Colonel Mapleson heard of her singing at a theatre at Malta, and, thinking that she would be successful, he made her an offer through an agent of a contract to sing in Her Majesty's Theatre. She agreed to it and went to London, but on arriving there she told the cabman to drive her to the Italian opera house.

He, instead of going to Her Majesty's, took her to Covent Garden, which was also devoted to Italian opera. She was shown up to the manager's office and stated that she had come to sign the contract which Mr. Mapleson had offered her.

Mr. Gye, thinking to play a joke on his rival, Mapleson, made out a contract, and Albani signed it. Mr. Gye then told her that he was not Colonel Mapleson, but that he could do much better by her. He offered to tear up the contract if she liked, but told her that Nilsson was singing at Her Majesty's and would brook no rival.

Albani decided to let the contract stand and thus became one of the stars of Covent Garden, eventually marrying the son of Mr. Gye's West-minster Gazette.

NORWEGIAN STEAMERS.—We are informed that the Norwegian steamers Jacobson and Njord will not prosecute the seal-fishery next spring, as had been stated previously.

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.—This morning quite heavy rain showers, accompanied by thunder and lightning, raged in the city, but only lasted a short while.

The War Week by Week.

By OBSERVER.

A week strangely devoid of any of the large developments to which we have become accustomed allows us leisure to examine the merits of the position of each of the fronts, instead of chronicling achievements. For it is likely that the coming weeks will see events on every side each one of which would deserve elaborate treatment. Since our last review there has been little to report from any theatre except Macedonia, which, as it is also the most interesting for the present, has a double claim to be considered first.

There can now be no doubt that General Sarrajl at last means business. He has a fine army at his command and the assistance indirectly of Russia and Roumania, but the task that lies before him is arduous and may prove tedious. The Bulgarians oppose him in great force and they have had ample time to reinforce with the aid of modern engineering skill and strong natural defiles that the mountainous terrain affords them. Nevertheless, they are being driven back and their hold is loosened. The chief honours to date rest with the Serbians and British, before Monastir and on the Struma respectively.

The Allied front is not continuous. The Italians in Albania are isolated from the rest, and are for the present a sort of flying left wing. The wing proper is where the Serbians are fighting stubbornly and with success back and their hold is loosened. The chief honours to date rest with the Serbians and British, before Monastir and on the Struma respectively. The Allied front is not continuous. The Italians in Albania are isolated from the rest, and are for the present a sort of flying left wing. The wing proper is where the Serbians are fighting stubbornly and with success back and their hold is loosened. The chief honours to date rest with the Serbians and British, before Monastir and on the Struma respectively.

For the moment, then, the West front is, strangely enough, the most mobile and the key to the whole situation. The French are obviously preparing for the reduction of Peronne and the British aim at Bapaume. At either place success would have a great and instantaneous effect which would be certain to spread to all the Eastern fronts through the redistribution of men made necessary to the Central Empires. It is to be noted, incidentally, that there has been a

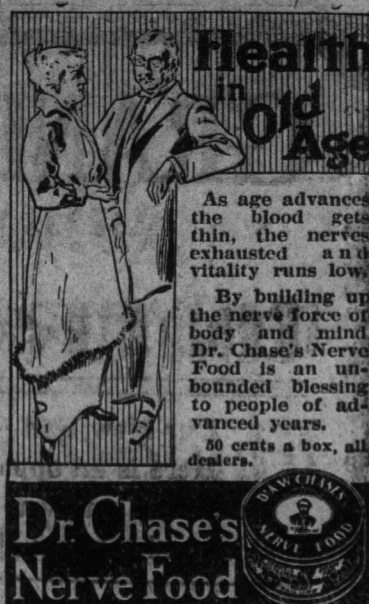
en, they would be unable to stem the avalanche that would pour through the breach.

There is a certain amount of mystery about the situation of Roumania. Her accession to the Allies' cause, bringing nearly a million fresh troops and at least two new battlefronts, has not yet shown anything like the effect it might have been expected to have, for the reason that the Germans have thrown great reinforcements into this area. More than that, they sent an expedition in great force into Dobruja, led by the redoubtable Von Mackensen, which at one time seemed to hold out a serious threat to Bucharest. But the Roumanians have the situation well in hand. Falling back to the first practicable line of defence and reinforced by the Russians, they held the invaders and seem now to be holding them in a temporary deadlock. Undoubtedly a great Russian army is scheduled to advance upon Bulgaria from this very region, and when it does we shall see Mackensen's army retire precipitately. Meanwhile, the Roumanians have gone steadily on with what they evidently consider the major operations in Transylvania. Here and there we hear of their being forced back, but they have established a line that the Austrians are compelled to hold with full force. An instance of the Roumanian fighting powers was seen some days ago, when they immediately retook the Vulcan Pass after the Germans had established themselves there in what their communique described as an impregnable position. This campaign of the Roumanians seems to be designed to affect rather the Austrian than the Balkan situation, and should probably be read with Brusilov's movements in Galicia.

There the Russians claim a further gain near Berezany, in their drive upon Lemberg, though Berlin counterclaims their repulse in the direction of Brody. The truth of the whole situation appears to be that Hindenburg has effected a considerable transference of men from West to East, and the Russians are making much greater resistance than formerly. But we shall see this in a short time react upon the West front, to which, if the Allies continue their advance much further, Hindenburg will be compelled to recall very many troops. This is working out of the Allies' grand strategy, in the light of which they can afford to ignore a few local setbacks.

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Here and There.

SUCCESS BACK.—The schr. Success, 43 days from Bahia, reached port this morning in ballast to J. M. Baird, Ltd.

BOWRING'S SHIPS.—The S.S. Prospero left Grand Bank at 7.40 a.m. to-day, due to-morrow night. The S.S. Prospero left King's Cove early this morning, going north.

COMING NUPTIALS.—The marriage of Mr. Joseph Courtenay, barber, and Miss Hilda, daughter of Sergt. N. Neary, of the Central Fire-Hill, takes place on Monday afternoon at the Chapel of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

ASSAULT CASES.—The attention of the Magistrate's Court was occupied all this forenoon in the hearing of a series of assault cases. One of them was preferred against a young man who took certain liberties with a young woman whom he never saw before. His Honor, Judge Morris, held that whilst a formal introduction was not absolutely necessary, the conduct of the defendant did not tend to stimulate the moral uplifting of the city and a fine of \$5 or 14 days was imposed.

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