

The Latest News From Paris.

(By Our Special Correspondent.)

THE discussion of last year's budget is progressing, that for the current year is on the stocks, but people are not satisfied at the laying aside for additional examination of the scheme of the progressive tax upon succession to property. All this looks as if the powers that be are afraid to grapple with the inevitable—the adoption of an income tax. Nor is the country satisfied with the conduct of the Raynal Commission, which was appointed to inquire into the reasons why that gentleman, when Minister of Public Works, bartered the liability of the State to two railway companies to recoup certain interest during an unlimited number of years. The public mind always suspected that all was not as clear as noon day in that strange bargain; the Chamber voted the appointment of a grand Panama Committee to examine the subject and arraign M. Raynal for gross neglect of duty, if such were shown; instead, the committee named consists of 30 members out of 33, who had previously voted against the inquiry. This confirms the public that there is an eel beneath the rock; something to be cushioned, hence its bad humour. And the deepening of the impression that the bottom of the third republic's scandals has not yet been reached. And what can the foreign lookers-on conclude, but that France has an Augean Stable as much requiring cleansing as any in the United States. M. Ribat is doing his duty well. He has dismissed a high functionary, Isaac Levaillant, a Departmental Treasurer, who, when head of the Secret Service, at the home office, prostituted his opportunities to influence the judges, and apparently with success in the case of suits where he had an interest. He was allied to a bankrupt watchmaker and jeweller, a shareholder in a hell, and to have ten per cent. of his trade profits and to incur no risks. Naturally the country is uneasy; it feels that the great swindlers have not yet been put on their trial.

The weather keeps everybody out of sorts, people appear even to have enough of skating; perhaps the chief employment with the majority of people is to arrange to stay at home. To have the inclement season's maladies in some form appears to be a necessity. Citizens are unanimous in anathematizing the municipality for adopting salt instead of scavengers of both sexes, or the unemployed to remove the snow. The salt produces a sudden lowering of the temperature, while developing a catarrh-generating humidity. And the Sludge? It is in barges it ought to be removed, not in carts. It has a death-killing look, and as it is swept to the kennel sides of the roadway, only hop, step and jumpers can cross the gutters; all others go into the brine ankle deep. The novelty must have been introduced to provoke citizens into rebellion. The extraordinary part of the horror is this that in the suburbs, where the centre of the roadways are broomed to give a grip to horses feet, there is no difficulty respecting locomotion or transport. The report is current that the sewers have carried so much salt into the Seine that the fish—fresh water residents—have been decimated. The poor are not being badly cared for, and they appear in their thousands. They obtain some kind of a night refuge, while in the day time they have the run of the soup kitchens and form part of the public meetings round the street braseres or furnaces. Women and children are retained all day as well as all night in the shelters. The philanthropists are leading a crusade; why not keep the several churches open all night for the distressed, as they are during the day time, when the edifices are heated and so thronged by the cold and food-famished? In time of war and plague the churches are converted into hospitals. "Did Christ come to Paris!" He would not whip the wretched out of the sacred building. He would rather say to the clergy: Night-shelter them; "that do in remembrance of me."

As was expected the general lines of the 1900 exhibition building will coincide with the general desire of the citizens. The principal entrance will be on the Place de la Concorde, near the spot where Marie Antoinette and Madame Roland were guillotined. Then an aerial electric tram line will convey the public from the entrance, with stations on each side of the river, up to and around the Champs de Mars, across the river to the Trocadero, and back to the Champs Elysees. That's excellent. Then the Brummaggin Palace of Industry will disappear, to be replaced by a moderate

building close by, and in a less obstructive situation, while a new avenue from the Champs Elysees, will start from the Elysee Palace Gardens. Span a pretty bridge over the Seine, and terminate before the Invalides. That's good. The Champ de Mars will be devoted to agricultural exhibits and the Trocadero will be allocated to the colonies of France. The Machinery Hall will be retained, but it will be ornamented with domes and minarets. The other old properties will be demolished, less that light of other days, the Eiffel. Then the Champs de Mars will be freed of terraces and similar obstructions. But where will be the exhibition proper? All along the river sides, from the Place de la Concorde up to the Trocadero. A venetian kind of arrangement will be a link'd sweetness, long drawn out, of little exhibition buildings, representing nationalities and groups of exhibits, dovetailing into one another. There will be lifts to raise slices of the multitudes to the over-head aerial railway. So the Paris restaurateurs and cafe interest have won. Very few visitors will remain in any exhibition dining-room unless the latter can, which is not possible, under sell the city houses, that will have no installations to make, save to buy a few more chairs and deal tables. One fact is clear; the doing of the exhibition will be simplicity itself. A child may be entrusted alone to execute that tour of the world. The railway tickets will be for the day a different colour; once inside the visitor may pass all the day sky-travelling and enjoying bird's-eye views of the Fair.

The students of Paris have knocked one abuse on the head. A kind of self-appointed association, consisting of a handful of students, arrogated to themselves the right to represent the whole body. A general meeting of the students has taken place, made a clean sweep of the Tooley Street concern, passed a reform bill and ruled that every student should have a card with his photo of identity, signed by the Secretary of the Faculty—law, medicine, etc.—in which he may be graduated. Odd, they were students of a score of years of standing, that "boomed" the demolished association.

Let the Comte de Paris and his co-pretenders take courage: Monarchy is not dead altogether in France. A "queen bee" has been elected by the laundry and wash tub interests of Paris to figure in the Mid-Lent cavalcade of the ladies and their helpers of the suds and smoothing irons. Each laundry and wash house sent a delegate to vote for the new queen—the dynasty is annual—as some Reformers would have the parliaments of the future; it was a jynocratic conclave, so the "queen of queens" was elected by her peers. Mlle. Marie Grimm, a beautiful blonde, age nineteen, a part owner of a *levoir*, was elected for this year. She was at once presented with a gold ring with pearl settings, a gift of fealty from the united students. Two demoiselles of honour, one a brunette and the other a blonde, were chosen for her majesty elect. What becomes of all the old queens?

It is proposed to abolish the present type of postage stamp because it was the product of the reactionists under the MacMahons. France desires to have a better design for her postage stamps, but no artist has risen to the occasion. A plain figure head of our Lady of the Republic might suffice the majority of patriots. It does duty on the coin of the realm.

The Municipal Council, with the approval of the Prefect of the Seine, has authorized the distribution of clothing in the Communal Schools to the scanty-clad pupils. As the law insists upon compulsory education, the pupils respond only when they have no means to obtain food or raiment. It is useless trying to teach them any of the three R's. The new plan saves the running up of the expenditure on account of the hospitals and dispensaries. Already the needy children receive a good meal at noon, and scraps are gathered up to give the poor youngsters a bite in the afternoon. The schoolroom is opened at seven in the morning, heated, and kept so till seven p.m., when it is ventilated, and swept by special servant, till eight o'clock, when the evening adult classes, etc., commence. It is best to begin the education of children by enabling them to live. Few can object to that municipilization.

M. Sardou, when he brings out any new thing for the theatre, is never satisfied unless the critics all agree with him. If they have a different opinion respecting his production, he "heckles" them, and they give back sigh for sigh. He has just brought out a spectacular piece at the Châtelet theatre—"Don Quixote." Opinion did not consider that worthy of his talent; and he explains it was only composed