

banks of four European countries was \$453,000,000; in 1890 it had risen to \$680,000,000, and in 1893 to \$1,023,000,000. Evidently in the struggle for the "scanty blanket" these institutions are getting more than their share. They are "cornering" the gold and putting up the price so that that of every other commodity, silver included, must come down. When Dr. Johnson wrote:

"How small of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure."

He failed to take into account the power possessed by kings or Governments over the world's money supply; or to fully appreciate the condition of the debt-burdened farmer or merchant struggling against a continuous decline in prices.

ADAM HARKNESS.

I have credited these lines to Johnston though they appear, I believe, in Goldsmith's Traveller. As I understand it Johnson was Goldsmith's literary executor and finding this poem incomplete he added, among other things, these lines. They appear to be written in "Johnsonese."

A. H.

Parisian Affairs.

THE discussion of the projected 1900 Exhibition is becoming more passionate between the Parliament and the Government. But the Fair will be held all the same. There continues to be no enthusiasm about the venture; it will be an international play-ground during six months for the benefit of hotels, restaurants and the show-world. The Parliamentary Committee is dead against the project, but it finds itself bound hand and foot by the Government breaking its *parole*. It promised to make no decisive step till Parliament had expressed its opinion, but, contrary to the precedents of previous Shows, it issued formal invitations to all nations to take part; the replies accepting leaves no liberty to the Parliament. That smacks of jockeying or smuggling. But the Parliamentary Committee has its revenge: it will recast the plan of the Exhibition. "You cannot," says the Government, "for the plans are all prepared, and no time exists to alter them." "Halt there," retorts the Committee: "four years remain to construct the edifice; none of the preceding Exhibitions—1855, 1867, 1878, and 1889—required more than two and one-half years to be run up." Besides, the Committee, unless Parliament wishes to abdicate its supreme right of controlling money grants, will reduce the area of the 1900 Scheme extensively. It will not allow the Champs Elysees to be touched; the coming can have the same site as its predecessor; if more space for facilitating amusements be required, fall back on the Bois de Vincennes—the People's Park—for the accommodation. Let the entrance to the Show be on the left, and not the right, side of the river; near the esplanade of the Hotel des Invalides, not on the Place de la Concorde. And so say we all of us.

The underground history of the intrigues is this: The 1900 Fair is purely a Parisian toy; the Municipal Council pulls the strings; its support and guarantee of 12 of the 100 millions of frs. of the total cost has been obtained by the Government in exchange for the latter's not pressing the execution of the metropolitan railways, that the great railway companies are prepared to construct and work at their own risks. The Municipal Council opposes the construction of underground lines, with bill and claws. Why? Because the facilities would induce an Hegira among the inhabitants who would fly to the suburbs to escape the crushing rents and grinding taxation of the city. The latter would have its loan oases after business hours, just as has London. The city's revenue would be diminished; rents would tumble down and the active dues dwindle, for there would be fewer inhabitants to feed. Parisians can do nothing but submit to be fleeced. As the present ministry basis its *raison d'être* on the sweeping away of all abuses, it has an excellent opportunity to commence by favoring the making of the underground railways. Parisians are more interested in that than in the extradition of Arton and his Panama corruptions.

The French claim kinship turn by turn with the Latins and the Greeks, to say nothing of the Gauls. In their love for the *parem et circense*, they have still a relict of the old Roman. Deputy Clovis Hugues—whose wife shot a baliff dead for insulting her, was tried for murder, and acquitted—is a poet. He in a sense lives by grinding stanzas. He is an "Our Own Correspondent" for a few journals, and con-

tributes his weekly letters—not in prose but in poetry. How many Academicians, or confrères, or crown pretenders could do that? But he can be a legislator, too, in his off moments. Thus he has a bill on the stocks to provide the French with their daily bread free, that would save them supplicating it, materialists—he is one himself—excepted. He is an extreme Socio-Democrat though descended in right line from tenth century Hugues Capet, and so related to the "Widow Capet," better known as Marie Antoinette, who recommended "cakes" for Parisians when they had no bread. Other deputies take charge of providing the people with amusements, from an international exhibition to a Bœuf gras procession. M. Clovis Hugues does not intend to feed the thirty-eight millions with four pound loaves gratuitously; that would imply a daily baker's bill at the rate of one pound of bread per month of 5½ fr. millions, or a total increase of two milliards of francs to the national budget which is 3½ fr. milliards. He proposes that the State should go into the bakery business, as it does in the case of tobacco, postage stamps, and what is looming in the future—the distillation of alcohol. The city sick and indigent bake their own crusts in common, so do the soldiers. If the State opened kneading troughs and ovens and made bread-baking a monopoly, sufficient profits would be made to feed the poor free. This would be a new form of crumbs falling from the rich men's tables. The poet forgets that the profits on tobacco and stamps are arbitrarily fixed by the State just as it coins money by making a piece of silver of an intrinsic value of two francs do duty for five. But this is the threshold of bimetallism that people, careful of their peace of mind, ought to avoid.

We are on the eve of great events, it is whispered. We always are and will be till they occur. Since England smashed the legend of the Kaiser's omnipotence, the Triple Alliance, which was really himself, has become very sick. It has received another "ram" from Russia who has regained Bulgaria. What a change that two-year-old baby—the Prince Boris—has made in South Eastern Europe, by having his religion changed for him. The Pope deplores the conduct of "papa," and the latter is complimented by the Czar for selecting the Greek, rather than the Latin Church as the baby's road to heaven. With Bulgaria the Muscovite can defy Austria and Germany; can send missionaries into Macedonia, and archaeologists and other scientists to study the port of Salonica.

The French have the hair a little standing on end by the taking-away-of-the-breath presumed naval estimates of England. Their magnitude is not the less regarded as the compensation for any isolation Britain may suffer. A nation with a plethora of Flying Squadrons, with boundless wealth, unlimited credit and nearly forty millions of a home population out of which to obtain red coats and blue jackets can only remain isolated till war opens. The Emperor of Germany promised in his official wire to President Kruger to back him up also with his "powerful friends," whose existence even Stanley cannot discover. The French view it as rank folly on the part of William II. to run a race with England in a bloated navy. They deplore the expenditure of money under that head, as it will render difficult, when accounts come to be balanced, the return of their five milliards. The Czar forgets that the English navy is the work of three centuries, and he aspires to accomplish a similar miracle in one-quarter, or so, of a century.

It is the opinion here that Mr. Chamberlain and President Kruger will make all matters straight in the Transvaal, provided the latter does not play with fire by speculating upon foreign aid. The foreigner who would do so would have to count with unpleasant regattas nearer home, with British war-ships, as well as at Delagoa Bay. If Kruger comes to England to partake of bread and salt, and invites "Dr. Jim," after pardoning his *frasque*, to join in the friendship lunch, much good would result.

About the 14th July, France expects to be able to issue her new postage stamps; the image—as was easy to beat—is an improvement upon the present. "Marianne," on the new stamps, as the lady of the Republic is called, has too much masculinite in her features, softness is lacking, and that could be obtained without altering the expression of strong-mindedness. The hair is arranged in a fashion to suggest a trace of the *coiffure* of the Furies; to many Scorpion twists; one arm (the left) is only visible, houlding a bunch of olives over the shoulder; the hilt of a tremendous