

THE HISTORY OF THE YEAR 1890.

It is very difficult to get any connected idea of the course of affairs in any country throughout the year, and much more difficult to follow the general course of events all over the world. To us, the most portentous event of the past year is the successful establishment of a good illustrated daily paper, the *Daily Graphic*. The first anniversary number reached us a week or two ago; it is devoted to a description—interspersed with sketches—of all processes by which the paper is put through the press. We have seldom read anything more interesting,—the sketches add to the vividness of the impression made at every turn. Not content with the success of this number, the management followed on with a supplement to their New Year's issue, which is in fact a brief and straightforward summary of the year's events all over the world. We do not scruple to extract the part that deals with the colonies: it is a good framework for him who will—and can—on which to build up a history of the year of grace 1890.

THE NEW WORLD AND AN OLD POLICY.

Both North and South America have passed through a year of bustle and turmoil. The United States have accomplished a long stride in the path of protection by the passage of the McKinley Tariff Act, the most aggressive protectionist measure ever adopted in any country. It has given rise to an angry feeling in Canada and Europe, where numerous attempts at tariff revision have been made, and where proposals have been freely ventilated for the organisation of a European Zollverein against the United States. Although Mr. Blaine prophesied that the new Bill would bring about "an era of unexampled prosperity," it was severely condemned at the general elections held in November, when the Democratic party achieved a decided victory. The second most important feature in the year's history of the United States has been a crisis in the negotiations with Great Britain regarding the Behring Sea. From the official correspondence, published in August, it appears that, two months before, the British Minister had been instructed to present a formal protest to Mr. Blaine, holding the United States Government responsible for the consequences which may ensue from acts which are contrary to the principles of international law. This seems to have resulted in a modification of the American attitude, and was followed by proposals for arbitration by Sir Julian Pauncefote. These overtures have as yet not been accepted, but it is said that a presidential message is in preparation in which Congress is to be advised to persist in the *mare clausum* contention. During the latter part of the year the Indian tribes, principally the Sioux, have been in a state of ferment, and a rising is feared. In South America the chief events have been a revolution in Argentina, resulting in the retirement of President Celman, and a financial crisis in that country which has seriously affected the London money market.

Brazil has made substantial progress in the organization of its new Republican form of government. A proposal to federate the five Central American Republics produced a war between Guatemala and Salvador and a revolution in Honduras.

GREATER BRITAIN.

But for the excitement caused by the McKinley Tariff, Canada has passed through a comparatively uneventful year. Energetic steps have been taken to find new markets for the produce and manufactures excluded from the United States. The Toronto University, with its entire library, was destroyed in February. Newfoundland has made a strenuous effort to obtain a solution of the difficult questions raised by the French fishing rights on the West Coast, and a special mission was appointed to lay the views of the Colony before the Home Government. Negotiations were opened with France, but as yet no result has been announced. In India the problem of self-government has continued to be much discussed. Lord Cross's councils bill was strongly opposed by the Indian National Congress. In Australia a huge strike has

occurred which, for a time, nearly paralysed the whole shipping trade of the Antipodes. The object of the strike was to obtain recognition for the principle adopted by the New Unionists that labour should be the monopoly of the Unions. The employers organized themselves to oppose the strikers, and succeeded eventually in breaking up their movement. The questions of Australian Federation and the division of Queensland have also been prominent in the public mind. The New Zealand House of assembly has adopted female suffrage.

LOCAL AFRICAN POLITICS.

Closely connected with the settlement and exploration of Africa are the proceedings of the Anti-Slavery Conference which has been sitting at Brussels during the greater part of the year. The refusal of Holland to agree to that portion of the Convention which provides that the Congo Free State shall levy import duties to defray the expense of the suppression of the local traffic in slaves, has brought about a suspension of the negotiations. The Slave Trade generally has been the *motif* of an active movement. Cardinal Lavigerie presided over an Anti-Slavery Congress in Paris, and obtained a statement from the Pope on the subject. The Sultans of Turkey and Zanzibar have both issued new edicts abolishing slavery in their dominions. The destiny of the Congo Free State has been the subject of an important Convention between King Leopold II. and the Belgian Government, by which the former agrees to bequeath his sovereign rights in Africa to Belgium, and the latter consents to aid the Congo State financially for a period of ten years. Substantial colonising progress has been made by the several British companies in East Africa, on the Niger, and in Mashonaland. The accession of Mr. Cecil Rhodes to the Premiership of Cape Colony has given a marked impetus to the work of the South African Company, of which he is one of the leading spirits. In the local politics of the Cape the most important events have been, besides the change in the Ministry, a tour of Bechuanaland by Sir H. Loch, and the conclusion of a Convention with the Transvaal providing for a joint administration of Swaziland. In Egypt the prolonged negotiations between Great Britain and France for the conversion of the debt at 3½ per cent. were brought to a conclusion. Insurrection in Southern Morocco has much troubled the Sultan of that country. An attack on the Spanish settlement at Melilla raised difficulties between Morocco and Spain, which were, however, amicably adjusted. In Tripoli and Tunis the more or less silent conflict between Italian and French interests has continued throughout the year, but without reaching any serious crisis. It has been persistently rumoured, however, that Signor Crispien has sounded the Powers with regard to an Italian occupation of Tripoli, and, in consequence, the Tripolitan army has been strengthened, and the Porte has sent transports of troops to protect its sovereign rights. On the west coast the chief event has been the outbreak of hostilities between France and Dahomey. A treaty of peace was eventually agreed upon, and the King of Dahomey ceded Kotonon to France, and agreed to recognise the French Protectorate over Porto Novo.

Among the famous foreigners who have died during the past year are King William of Holland, the Seyyid Khalifa of Zanzibar, the Dowager-Empress Augusta of Germany, and the Duke of Aosta; Count Andrassy, author of the famous "Andrassy Note", Dr. Dollinger, the founder of the Old Catholic Movement, Alexandre Chatrian, who wrote with Erekmann, and Alphonse Karr, the French journalist.

"In military circles," says the *Graphic*, "no personage of conspicuous importance has disappeared, unless we except the Sioux chieftain, Sitting Bull, who was killed in a *melée* with the police in Dakota early in December."

PASSENGER (to Guard): "I suppose you notice a great change in riding back and forth so many times?"

Guard (sadly): "Yes, sir, I notice the change, but I don't get much of it nowadays. People ain't brought up as liberal nowadays as they used to be."