

English Jottings.

Mr. Archibald Forbes's many friends will be glad to hear that his health has taken a decided turn for the better. He has been out of the fight for some years, pulled down by a wearisome disease. He is now at work again, and finds it one of the best restoratives. He has quite a handful of papers coming out in the principle magazines, but a more welcome and more permanent work on the anvil is the story of his own life, which, for varied adventures and wide accomplishment, it would be difficult to parallel. Arrangements have been made for the publication of the book, which will appear in the autumn in two volumes.

The Queen is back again after her visit to Grasse, which she seems to have thoroughly enjoyed. English men and women familiar with royal ways at home have read with pleased interest of her Majesty's personal popularity in the little Italian town. She seems to have won all hearts by her urbanity, and on leaving gave £60 to the poor. Her loyal subjects, who are very rarely permitted to bask in the sunshine of her presence, who are shut out of railway stations when a train awaits her, and if they chance to be travelling on the route are shunted into sidings for a quarter of an hour before the royal train passes, and ten minutes after it is out of sight, read with strange delight of her friendly greetings of the Grasse folk, and of the unrestricted movement of the population in her immediate neighbourhood. The change in demeanour abroad as compared with that observed at home is no new thing. It was the same at Biarritz, when her Majesty stayed there a couple of years ago. Last Autumn at Aix-les-Bains I heard a pretty story from an enthusiastic bath woman, who related how, just before the Queen left, she sent for the bath women, entertained them at tea, talked to them as if they were, after all, human like herself, and fairly won their hearts. This is very pleasant to hear and read about, but, in all the circumstances of the case, there remains a sort of feeling that with our gracious Sovereign urbanity, like charity, ought to begin at home, or, at least, should not be confined to foreign parts.

This is the great picture week, for though the Academy does not open to the public till Monday, its doors have been opened for the Press view, and the great crush ironically called the Private View. The New Gallery, as usual, held its Private View two days in advance. Recalling impressions after spending some hours in both galleries, I fancy this will not be regarded as a great picture year. There is one picture worthy of the best traditions of British Art; but there is only one. It is Luke Fildes' "Doctor," a marvellous picture, in the infinite skill with which the dawn, breaking through the window, is just beginning to over-master the light from the lamp that falls on the grave face of the doctor watching his little patient. Burne Jones has a big picture in the New Gallery, and at the Academy, Sir Frederick Leighton has several decorative panels. Perhaps the best portrait of the year is Mrs. Chamberlain, a work in which Sir John Millais triumphantly refutes criticisms current last year of his failing powers. There is a portrait of Mr. Gladstone, of which the best that can be said is that it is not so bad as the one acquired by the Reform Club. From the walls of the Royal Academy Lord Cross looks down with the pert yet wooden aspect familiar at the Indian office, and in the House of Lords.

Lord James Douglas, whose tragic death was announced this week, belongs to a very extraordinary family. His eldest brother, the Marquis of Queensbury, devotes his attention to prize-fighting, agnosticism, and peech-making from the stall of a theatre, and has taken high honors in the Divorce Court. Another brother is a Roman Catholic priest. Of the sisters, one recently married a German baker of about half her age; and the other is that ubiquitous, omniscient, sober teacher of the age—Lady Florence Dixie.

Dr. Magee was a man whose *factis et gestis* were so often the subject of the chronicler's pen that very little remains to be said at the supreme moment when we are mourning his loss. That the loss will be irreparable I will not say; for we know by every-day experience that no man is so exceptionally gifted as to make it impossible to replace him. That the eminent priest, whom a nation will mourn, stood head and shoulders above the majority of his fellow clerics no one is likely to gainsay. His promotion to the See of York, vacated by Dr. Thomson, was in the highest degree popular; indeed, had he not been translated to the archiepiscopal throne there would have been a general chorus of discontent. As it is, he did not occupy that coveted position for the brief space of six months. Stricken with influenza, he was ordered up to town by his doctor; but, alas! he came to London only to die.

It is no exaggeration to say that the unexpected news of the decease of the Archbishop of York, caused a feeling of the deepest regret throughout the United Kingdom. By common consent Dr. Magee was by far and away the most eloquent preacher which the Established Church could boast, whilst in the House of Lords he was one of the most effective of debaters. Without any straining of eulogy, it may be honestly and truly said of this estimable cleric that, he was not only a prelate of exceptional value, but a real bulwark of the Church of England as by law established.

That "the system of tipping on railways is dying out" is an assertion that would hardly have been accepted had it come from a less competent authority than the secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, Mr. Harford. In the course of examination before the House of Commons' Committee on the hours of railway servants, this witness said that guards would rather have extra pay and do without their tips. Tips were "not worth much in these days," and their tendency was to demoralise the recipient. It would be instructive to know upon what statistics Mr. Harford founds his statement as to the decadence of tipping.

Count Hunyadi, who has been negotiating with Queen Natalie on behalf of the Regency and Government, in order to induce her to leave Serbia, has been informed by her Majesty that she will not quit the country of her own free will. The Russian lady evidently means to worry the Servians as much as possible, and they will find it a far more difficult task to get rid of her than her Consort, whom a tidy little fortune, guaranteed during his lifetime, easily disposed of.

Now that Mr. Raikes is endeavouring to wipe out all private enterprise by the adoption of their methods, it may soon be possible to write automatic letters by putting the useful penny in the slot. A sort of type-writer will perhaps be set going by the slotter—(this sounds like a new word)—and a letter will be neatly stamped and folded for delivery. Mr. Raikes has given a free exhibition at those pillar-boxes to which the new contrivance is affixed, for admiring crowds stand round nearly the whole day long. The Postmaster-General seems anxious to cut out the Naval and German Exhibitions, in addition to his other wild and enterprising schemes.

I am glad to hear that, although several up-to-date newspapers gave obituary notices of Sir George Dashwood last week, that gentleman is doing well, and there is every reason to expect his complete recovery from his illness, which, while being very severe, was never pronounced as dangerously threatening his life.

Our pugnacious Portuguese friends on the Pungwè are not likely to bring off another *coup*. Pending the appointment of a proper representative the Government have deputed Captain Pipon, of the *Magicienne*, to act as Vice-Consul, and to protect British interests in the locality. The Portuguese are very keen on seizing arms and munitions of war when on cargo boats. There are plenty of these commodities on board the *Magicienne*, but, unfortunately for the Portuguese, she is not a cargo boat.