

OUR LONDON LETTER

The Prospects For a Busy Session of Parliament.

The Programme of the Irish Party—Other Interesting Features.

LONDON, January 22.—As the session approaches the several matters that will probably engage the attention of "honorable members" are being freely discussed, and much speculation is of course indulged in as to the fate of the more important measures promised. The Irish members will have their hands full, and have already drawn up a programme which promises to give the House abundance of material for debate, though some of it will be found difficult of digestion by the Government and the ultra section of the Tory party that give them their blind support. "Home Rule" will certainly take its place, and its claims will be championed by the liberal-minded English members as warmly as by the most devoted and determined of its Irish supporters. It may not make as much progress as its friends wish, but it will certainly be advanced a stage.

The Government will be asked to take prompt and effective steps to deal with the distress in Ireland, especially with that which exists in the South and West, caused by the partial failure of the potato crop, and will probably be called on to account for the "masterly inactivity" which has hitherto characterized its treatment of this serious matter.

The Local Government Bill—the proposed temporary substitute for, or first instalment of, Home Rule, will in itself be sufficient to occupy the time of the House through many long nights though it is hardly expected, even by its most sanguine supporters, that it will pass much beyond the initial stage in this session. The dissatisfaction of Irish members generally, if not unanimously, will be expressed in emphatic terms, because of the Government's unpardonable neglect to deal with the "Financial Relations Question" and the statement they have made, in the face of what may be called, in so far as at least, as this matter is concerned, United Ireland, that no second is called for or either necessary or desirable. A grant in relief of Irish agricultural interests, proportionate and similar to that afforded to those of England will also be asked and urged. Deficiencies in the Land Laws Act of 1896 will be pointed out and amendments to remedy them will be proposed and pressed. Support for evicted tenants and amnesty for political prisoners will hold prominent place on the programme, which will also contain as one of its most important features, if not its piece de resistance, the all-absorbing question of a Catholic University for Ireland. It is hoped and believed that in these several matters the Irish members will act irrespectively of their individual differences on other questions, and present a solid and united front.

Amongst other matters foreshadowed by the speeches of Cabinet Ministers who have been so generously enlightening and instructing their constituents during the recess, the proposed increase of the army comes in for its full share of attention as it so directly appeals to John Bull's pocket, which is very sensitive to the touch. England has now the cheapest army in the nations of the world, if we may accept the statement made last year, by Sir Ralph Knox, and he looks with suspicion on any proposal to increase its cost, whether it be in the direction of increasing its land or its sea forces. The latter will now have an energetic and fearless advocate in the person of its Irish Lord—Admiral Lord Charles Beresford.

The correspondents of certain papers seem to devote their attention in a certain particular to the three most prominent men of the world. And thus on one day we have unfavorable accounts of the Pope's health; the next they report the death of Bismarck, and then the "Grand Old Man" is in an alarming state. But they are at present all alive, and apart from the fallings inseparable from their advanced years are in good health. The Pope's regular life and habits are such as to ensure him still many years on the Papal Throne.

Reports from the Indian frontier still give cause for anxiety, and there is a general belief that operations against the Afridis will have to be resumed in the Spring. Considering how little is to be effected even by annihilating these mountain rebels, the prospect of losing more valuable lives to effect so little is not encouraging. The sacrifice of life already made is larger than the general public has had any opportunity of knowing.

A report comes from Corfu of an occurrence which eclipses the recent murder of the actor Terris as he was entering the Adelphi Theatre in London, though the victims of the tragedy were entering an essentially different building. The following item from a city paper tells the story: A young Englishman named Everett, who desired to become a priest and is believed to be afflicted with religious mania, made a murderous attack upon four priests at the Catholic Church, Corfu, on Monday evening, as they were about to enter the vestry after Vespers. One of them, Canon Lightwood, died a few minutes after having been stabbed. Fathers d'Emento and Suriana are in a critical condition.

In connection with the advance of English troops on the Soudan, General Kitchener, for reasons not given and best known to himself, gave an order that no war correspondents except Reuter's agent should be permitted to accompany the expedition. Lord Salisbury has taken the matter up and advised him to withdraw, or, at least, to modify his decision.

London is putting on quite a continental appearance, and giving certain interesting features which characterize so many cities and towns on the other side of the Channel. For instance, Kiosks have been opened on the wide pavement

of New Oxford street, on the refuge at the Holborn end of Shaftesbury avenue, and on the wide pavement near the Royal music hall in Holborn. They have been erected under the sanction of the local authorities, and are at present an experiment only. The kiosks are fitted up with telephones and messenger calls, and are now open for public use. They will aid considerably in lighting the streets, as they will be brilliantly illuminated at night, the lights only being put out at the same time as the street lamps.

It is stated that Mr. Dudley Baxter, B.A., Oxon. is engaged upon a work dealing with Canterbury, Catholic and Protestant. It will illustrate the ancient connection between Canterbury and the Holy Roman Church, include a short history of Cardinal Pole, an investigation into the acts and teaching of the Protestant Archbishops, and conclude with a comparison of the See of Canterbury with that of Westminster. The book is to be dedicated by special permission to his Eminence Cardinal Vaughan and will be in commemoration of 1897. The author has several times contributed to our pages; he took his degree in the Honour School of Modern History in 1894, and was for some time a resident at the Oxford House in Bethnal Green. The University settlement in the East End of London in connection with the Church of England. Mr. Baxter was received into the Catholic Church in 1896.

The late Sir Frank Lockwood who accompanied Lord Chief Justice Russell on his trip to Canada, was not only a brilliant wit but a remarkably clear-sighted and able man, and his caricatures are said to be greatly admired, and it is intended to make a collection of them and to exhibit them either in one of the halls of the Inns of Court or some other suitable place, and to devote the proceeds of the admission money to the excellent purposes of the Barristers' Benevolent Association.

An interesting article appears in the Standard on the strategic value of cable communications in time of war, and their direct importance to a commerce representing £970,000,000. It states that Great Britain has not as large a monopoly of submarine communication as is supposed and that if her outlying dependencies are to be kept secure as bases for local action, her communication with them must be kept assured. The total length of cable throughout the world is 162,908 miles. A war with France or Germany would reduce our cable control by 24,369 miles. Our principal weakness lies in the direction of Australia and South Africa, which accounts for the two schemes of the Pacific cable proposed by the Governments of Great Britain, Canada and Australia and the Eastern Telegraph Company's plan to construct an all British cable to Australia by way of Africa. The strongest possible arguments are advanced in favor of this scheme, and it will be vigorously pushed.

The findings of the jury in the Cripple-gate fire of 19th November have engaged much attention. They emphasize the fact that the London Fire Brigade is by no means an 'up-to-date' institution and recommend more fire alarms—gas stopcocks outside of buildings—means of indicating the position of all hydrants and suggestions for obviating delay. The pressure of water available in London was found to be lamentably and dangerously insufficient, and the idea prevailed that until a supply can be had from Wales the water works of the Metropolis will not be what they should be.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

The floral tributes on the occasion of the funeral of the late William Terris, the great London actor, who met with such a tragic death, are said to have cost one thousand pounds, or five thousand dollars. Comment is unnecessary.

The agitation which the so-called American Protective Association has been creating in Poughkeepsie for several months over the employment of four Catholic nuns in the public schools has taken the form of an application to State Superintendent Skinner to compel the Board of Education to annul the contracts made with the Sisters. St. Peter's Catholic Church owns two school-buildings in which parochial schools were held twenty-five years ago. Then they were placed under control of the Board of Education at a rental of \$1 a year. The city has always employed four nuns as teachers in those schools. The other teachers have been young women not under vows. Up to a few weeks ago religious exercises have been held in these schools by the nuns preceding the regular morning sessions, but, owing to the agitation on the subject, these exercises have ceased. The appeal to the State Superintendent was made by Edward Keyser, said to be a vice president of the A. P. A., and a spokesman for the organization, Poughkeepsie, and who has taken an active part in politics. Not only is the removal of these four nuns demanded, but the city is asked to provide new schools in place of those belonging to the Catholic Church. Superintendent Skinner has indicated unofficially that he will decide this appeal against the Sisters, as he did in the Water-vliet case. If he does so, and the contract with the nuns is broken, the city will be obliged to spend thousands of dollars for new school houses to accommodate the 600 Catholic children.

Assemblyman Laimbeer, of New York, does not take a humorous view of his bill to round up tramps on a farm colony and teach them to work. He is convinced the number of idle and dissolute men and boys in the city would be decreased if they were instructed in the methods of earning an honest living. The establishment of a reformatory on the lines defined would, he thinks, prove a profitable investment for the Empire City. The bill provides for the issue of bonds to the amount of \$100,000 for the purpose of establishing a farm colony.

Ranchmen and settlers along White River, Chamberlain, S.D., are killing coyotes by the dozen, the animals being very numerous this winter. The pelts of those killed are being utilized for a curious purpose, the outside of the settlers' houses being covered with them to keep out the wind and cold. In the spring the hides will be well dried and will then be taken down and shipped to market.—Pioneer Press, St. Paul.

TOWANDA, Pa., Jan. 24.—A colored man giving his name as "Dr. William King" has been mystifying local doctors during the past week. He enjoys the distinction of having two hearts which he can control in their positions and beats at will.

"During the past week he has been examined by several Bradford County doctors and they have been unimpressed.

which is to be conducted by a board of managers of five persons appointed by the Mayor. The board of managers is to appoint a general superintendent, as soon as the buildings are ready. The Mayor shall give notices to all the courts and magistrates in New York City that the farm colony is ready. Thereafter any court or magistrate may sentence and commit to the farm colony for not more than three years any male between the ages of sixteen and thirty years convicted of vagrancy or habitual drunkenness, provided that he be not insane or mentally or physically incapable of being benefited there. The managers shall have the power to use such means of discipline and reformation as they may deem expedient, establishing rules and regulations for the conduct of the inmates. The latter may go on parole outside of the farm colony and may receive compensation in the discretion of the superintendent, who also may maintain a uniform system of fines, to be deducted from any compensation standing to the credit of any inmate. The bill has the support of the United Charities Societies.

The York election, in which Lord Beresford championed the Tory and Sir Christopher Furness the Liberal party, has created more interest than is usually shown in bye-elections, and has resulted in a close fight, with the odds in favor of the "Well-dome-Condor hero," and the Irish admiral, Lord Charles Beresford, now sits in the British Commons as representative of the grand old cathedral town of York. Unfortunately the noble Irishman in most respects, is not in favor of Home Rule, though he will not be found a violent opponent of the policy.

PECULIAR HAPPENINGS.

QUEER PLACE FOR A WEDDING RING.

About this time some woman is wondering where her wedding ring is, and also whether she will ever regain possession of it. Saturday Stephen S. Cook, St. Paul, ordered his driving horse Major, a smart looking brown gelding, brought to his office at the Bryan Hotel. After taking a drive Mr. Cook instructed his man to take the animal to a blacksmith shop to be shod. The blacksmith found wedged in between the frog and the diamond shaped caulk, on one of the shoes with which the horse was shod, the ring, bent up into the shape of an ellipse. On the inside of the ring is engraved "F. P. B., Oct. 20, '87." That the ring was not in the least scratched or injured, beyond the bending, is rather remarkable.—Minneapolis Tribune.

A FIGHTING JUDGE.

Justice of the Peace Parr of Milan Mo. is always willing to support his legal opinions with his muscle. During the progress of a trial there to-day a bench warrant was issued for John M. Clapp, an attorney, who was charged with contempt. Justice Parr sentenced Clapp to five hours in the county jail, but later modified the sentence to a fine which was paid.

Clapp, burning under the punishment inflicted by the Court, continued to make irritating comments during the progress of the trial. Justice Parr ordered Clapp to take a seat. To this Clapp retorted by requesting Parr to adjourn court for two minutes so that the judge and lawyer might be on the same footing. To the surprise of the spectators Justice Parr immediately adjourned court and, seizing an iron poker, assailed Clapp. The two men exchanged blows, but were separated before serious injury could be inflicted by either. Clapp was led from the room and Justice Parr returned to the bench, called court to order, and proceeded with the trial.—Chicago Record.

AN ALLIGATOR WITH PECULIAR GRINDERS.

A big alligator was caught recently at the mouth of Salt Creek, in the Osage country. Its mouth was full of teeth and they all slant inward. One of the Franklin boys had his coat caught in the gator's mouth and came very near being a victim of the big fish. He measured about six feet in length. The gator was brought to town by Mr. Northrup.—Courier, Oklahoms.

A TEMPERANCE RESERVE.

There is not a saloon between Florence, Ala., and Paducah, Ky., on the banks of the Tennessee River. The distance is more than 300 miles, and is said to be the longest of its kind on any navigable river in America.—Nashville Banner.

A STRANGE TOMB.

Lumbermen at Dunkirk recently cut down a large oak tree on the Baker farm that it had probably been standing for over 100 years. They discovered, after the tree was down, that it was hollow, and they had not gone far until they came across the skeleton of a human being. From the growth of the tree it is apparent that this man, who is supposed to have been an Indian, had crawled into this tree at least seventy-five years ago and had died, the tree having grown over him. The bones were in a good state of preservation.—Cleveland Leader.

NEW USES FOR PELTS.

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A WONDERFUL OLD WOMAN.

Mrs. Angeline Gaipeau, formerly of Montreal, now living at Northampton, Mass., recently celebrated her one hundred and fourth birthday. According to an American Journal she is a truly wonderful woman. Very few there are whose faculties are so little unimpaired as hers. She goes about the house as spryly as many middle-aged women; assists in doing the housework, reads, sews, knits and sings. On New Year's she danced as lively as any young girl. She never used a pair of glasses in her life and her eyesight is as good as when she was a young girl. She can see a pin upon the floor.

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Has brought to light many desirable lines that we have gone carefully over and marked at prices decidedly in favor of the purchaser.

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Broken lines of Ladies' and Children's Black Kid Gloves; also Gent's Jockin and Tan Kid Gloves. Your choice of any pair in the assortment for 15 cents net.

Another line of Ladies', Gent's and Children's Lisle Gloves, in Black and other colorings. Your choice of any pair, 50 pair, net.

DRESS GOODS!

All Wool Cheviot Serges, 42 inches wide, in three very desirable shades of Brown; a regular 50c line for 25c; and, less 10 per cent. for cash.

BLACK DRESS GOODS COSTUMES.

The balance of our beautiful line of All Black Silk (Grenadines and Black and Colored Costumes, 70 per cent. reduction, with 10 per cent. for cash.

Also, the remainder of the choice line of Silk and Wool Broche and Stripe Effects in Black and White, exquisite patterns; 20 per cent. reduction with 10 per cent. for cash.

HEPTONETTE!

Waterproofed Black Heptonette, width 56 inches, always sold at \$2; while it lasts we will sell it at 50c yard, less 10 per cent. for cash.

JAPANESE CREPON!

The handsome Fabric for Evening Wear, in plain and figured patterns, all in Black, Green, Navy, 27 inches wide; always sold at 50c yard, now reduced to 42c yard, less 10 per cent. for cash.

REMNANTS!

The balance of our lot of Remnants of Silk, in useful lengths; also, Remnants of Velvets, all in plain and figured patterns, at 33 1/2 reduction, with 10 per cent. for cash.

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In Axminster, Russian Velvet, Wilton, Brussels and Tapestry, ready for use and at clearing prices.

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ALASKA.

Alaska is nature's own reservation, says John Muir in the Atlantic, and every lover of wildness will rejoice with me that by kindly frost it is so well defended. The discovery lately made that it is sprinkled with gold may cause some alarm, for the strangely exciting stuff makes the timid bold enough for anything and the lazy destructively industrious. Thousands at least half insane are now pushing their way into it, some by the southern passes over the mountains, perchance the first mountains they have ever seen, sprawling, struggling, gasping for breath as they climb step by step over rough angled boulders and thin, miry bogs, laden down by awkward, merciless burdens of provisions and tools. Some are going by the mountains and rivers to the eastward through Canada, tracing the old romantic way of the Hudson Bay traders, others by Behring Sea and the Yukon, sailing all the way, setting glimpses perhaps of the famous fur seals, ice floes, and the innumerable islands and bars of the great Alaska river.

In spite of frowning hardships and the frozen ground the Klondike gold will increase the crusading crowds for years to come, but comparatively little harm will be done. Holes will be burned and dug into the hard ground here and there and into the quartz ribbed mountains and hills, ragged towns like Beaver and muskrat villages will be built and mills and locomotives will make rumbling, screeching, disenchanting noises, but the miner's pick will not here be followed far by the plow, at least not until nature is ready to unlock the frozen soil beds with her slow turning climate key. On the other hand the roads of the pioneer miners will lead many a lover of wildness into the heart of the reserve who without them would never see it.

A colored evangelist was soliciting subscriptions for "de po' beathan sinners what live 'arost de ocean," said in the course of his remarks:

"Des think er dem, dear bretherin—dem po', beighted people—goin' eron stark naked, in a climate dat's ez hot ez de place whar los er in er gwine ter! Not a stitch er cloze ter dey backs!"

But just here an old deacon arose and said:

"May I ax de brudder one question?"

"Yes, sah; en two, of you like."

"Well," exclaimed the deacon, bringing his fist down on the pew railing, "what I wante ter know is dis: 'What does dem naked heathen want wid cloze in a climate ez hot ez dat?' In my opinion, what dey really needs, mecs' is umbrellas."—Atlanta Constitution.

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