

LONDON GOSSIP.

PRINCE AND THE SCILLIES.

LONDON, Jan. 15th, 1921.
Sir Lionel Halsey, the Comptroller of the Prince of Wales's household, is in Cornwall with an official of the Duchy estate office, his primary purpose being to arrange for the taking over of those Scilly Islands where the leases have just fallen in and the manorial rights have reverted to the Duchy. The Prince is anxious to do his best for the islanders' welfare, and the Duchy has suggested one or two projects for developing the dormant growing industry. It is an open secret that, if he can possibly manage it, the Prince will visit Cornwall this year, and he might go on to the Scillies. One closely in touch with the Prince of Wales says he has greatly benefited by the restful time he has spent since his return from Australia, and that he is now eager to be in harness again. On January 15th he attends Drury Lane Theatre for the big stage meeting of some folk who are arranging "Warlike Day" in the theatres. On the 25th inst., he goes to the Australian Luncheon Club, on February 1st he has a busy day at Brighton, and on February 5th he visits Oxford.

NEW FRENCH AMBASSADOR.

Cour de Saint Anlaire, the new French Ambassador to the Court of St. James has arrived in London. Born 54 years ago, of an ancient family with English mediaeval connections, and famous in the annals of France for his services to church, state, letters, and the fighting forces. M. Paul Cambon's successor is an aristocrat of very liberal views, in politics, with a handsome and distinguished presence, rather suggestive of a British Guardsman. He is also a sportsman, although at the same time of markedly intellectual tastes, and a brilliant epigrammatic career, down to 1909, was exclusively spent in extra-European climes—in Tunis, Chiffi, Peru, Brazil, Morocco. In the last mentioned country his gifts of mind and character won the early appreciation of the French Governor-General, Lyauté. He was in Morocco, for the second time, upon the outbreak of war. His first European post was the First Secretaryship at the Vienna Embassy, where he remained from 1909 to 1912; his second, that of French Minister to Rumania, from 1916 onwards, during the tragic years of invasion and occupation.

CHURCHILL'S ARTISTIC ALIAS.

A friend of mine was definitely assured at the War Office the other day that Charles Morin, painter (some of whose works are at present on exhibition in the Rue Royale, Paris), and Winston Churchill, Secretary of State for War, are one and the same person. "Taking up painting to relieve the tedium of a period when he was not responsible for affairs of State, Mr. Churchill has achieved a certain amount of renown as an artist, even under the self-assumed disguise. Those who know the War Secretary may well ask why this shrinking anonymity, so foreign to his nature? And why Charles Morin? I tried to get enlightenment on the latter point, but was given to understand that the name was a haphazard choice. Doubtless Winston had his own reasons. The War Secretary, by the way, has left for the Continent. His visit has no official

significance. He travels as a private citizen, but whether as Winston Churchill or Charles Morin is not known. His destination is the Riviera, where he is to spend a short holiday. His route will be via Paris, and in the Rue Royale Winston Churchill may cast a critical eye on the work of Charles Morin, or Charles Morin disguised as Winston Churchill may mingle with the crowd and listen to their comments on his work. A dual personality has its attractions.

THE CURSING OF VENIZELLOS.

The former Archbishop of Athens, who was superseded during the Venizelist regime, returned to Athens and has been reinstated. The event recalls the amazing ceremony which took place at Athens on Christmas Day, 1916, when a solemn "anathema" against M. Venizelos was performed by the ecclesiastical authorities, at the instigation of the League of Rerists. It is the most remarkable instance on record of the survival in Europe of a magic ritual common to early civilisations all over the world. The Metropolitan of Athens solemnly excommunicated a bull's head (presumably the body of Venizelos) and cast the first stone. Then each member of the crowd which had been assembled by King Constantine's henchmen cast a stone on the pile and uttered a curse against the man who had "plotted against the King." There was an interesting sequel. During the night the saint's stones so solemnly turned and supposed to symbolise the "casting out" of the "traitor," was covered with masses of flowers, and the next morning these garlands were seen to be attached to an inscription which read: "From the Venizelists of Athens."

PROGRESS OF CIVIL AVIATION.

Although, according to the announcement made by the Air Ministry, the subsidy for civil aviation is limited to £240,000 for the year 1921-22, that figure is not really the outside limit. A great deal more may be expended by way of indirect subsidies, especially for night flying. The experimental lighthouse at Croydon (in South London) has been found to be extremely useful for airships which have been delayed until the late hours of the day, and have been compelled to land after dark. The lighthouse can be seen distinctly for a distance of over thirty miles, but it is proposed to erect two more such lighthouses, one at Lympne and the other between London and Folkestone. The French, too, are erecting similar lighthouses, and night flying between London and Paris can be made very remunerative. Less speedy machines can be used than are utilized for day flying. Carriages could be picked up at a late hour after the business of the day is done, and though carried at a slower rate, could be delivered at the commencement of business in the morning. In this way a very lucrative traffic could be carried on. At present there are only two companies which are in a position to take advantage of the Government's offer of a direct subsidy. It is hoped that others will spring up which can take advantage of the Air Ministry's offer.

AN HOTEL SLUMP.

Visitors to London need now have no anxieties as regards finding hotel accommodation. The dearth of rooms

which persisted for so many months after the war appears to have passed, and at the present moment hotels of every class are emptier than they have been for many years. Whereas a year ago a visitor might seek a bed at half a dozen places before being successful, the chances are that to-day he will be made welcome at the first he tries. The situation has been relieved gradually as the multitude of Government Departments released their hold on hotel buildings commandeered for war purposes, a vast extension of accommodation being made available as these have been restored to their proper use. As compared with per war conditions, however, the hotel business is positively slack, and in certain cases the slump is giving cause for some concern. A factor in creating the present situation is undoubtedly the great popularity this winter of resorts abroad. From as far afield as Carlo on reads of visitors flocking to this country, while the Riviera and other places in the sunny south have been so popular with British people for many winters. As a consequence, in the case of at least one of the first class hotels here the entire staff is to have a week's holiday.

EXERCISES FOR ELDERLY MEN.

Sir James Cantlie has inaugurated his class for "physical jerks," as he calls them, for business and professional men over 50 years of age. Over 100 middle-aged gentlemen listened to the initial lecture, in the course of which Sir James contended that rheumatism could be cured only by exercises of the limbs. He believed that long-distance cycling as a fashion of twenty years ago was the cause of elderly men suffering from strained or enlarged hearts nowadays. Colonel Cruden, who is 70 years of age, and of middle-aged and muscular appearance, was introduced as teacher and trainer, and subsequently he invited members of the audience to take some exercises to pianoforte music. About 30 gentlemen took off their coats and undertook a course of finger, wrist, and arm exercises. Hands were washed, clenched, wrists turned, and arms swung gently up and down to the tune of "Bonnie Dundee." "A hundred pipers," and "I lo'e nae a lassie but aye." None of these exercises was difficult, but the trainees showed a slight lack of uniformity in their understanding of the instructions. However, the preliminary display was a promising opening for the class, and it is hoped that its membership will be at least a hundred by its next weekly meeting.

Thursday Best Work-Day.

Thursday is the best day for work, according to the finding of industrial research board investigators of that country. The London Chronicle reports that over a period of twenty weeks the output was registered and "graphs" were made. The workers gave their best on Wednesday and Thursday, but the output on Saturday was invariably low. When doubled (to equalize the time) it is often less than 75 per cent. of that on other days. Another important conclusion was that the skilled workman is much more regular in his output than the worker not so well qualified. He does not get the "lured Saturday feeling" so soon. In some factories the output rises until Friday, but among the less skilled workmen it was found that Thursday was the best working day. An important consideration which the investigators kept in mind was that of the atmospheric conditions in which work is done. Records of the air conditions have been taken with the output records. In various plants the Saturday output was so low that employers found it unprofitable to operate, so they closed their establishments on that day. From this it would appear that on a half day the worker does not give the average of a half day of production.

Seventeenth the "Bluest" Century.

According to historians, the seventeenth was the banner century for blue laws. Legislators vied with one another to win either the plaudits of the people or to provoke the wrath of the mobs by thinking up new measures for the statute books. One blue law in particular, which coincides somewhat with some of the legislation contemplated in the United States, is interesting.

This was in the form of an ordinance in a Swiss city and it virtually put such stage folk as jugglers, maskers, jumpers and "muck like" out of business. They were prohibited from plying their profession for the reason that "they do things which God did not intend the human race to perform."

Gambling was frowned upon throughout Europe during this period, but the blue laws did not seem to make much of an impression.

It is to be also noted that a prohibition movement was afloat in that period. Reformers were engaged at various times in efforts to stop drinking at taverns. In a little city in France the dry wave did not gain much headway, so the leaders turned to the alternative of reducing or trying to reduce drinking to a minimum on Saturday afternoon.

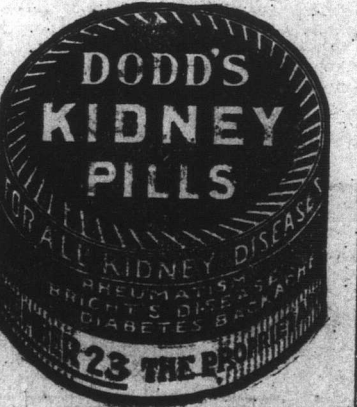
The Sinking of the "Maloja."

On Sunday morning, February 21, 1916, the P. and O. liner "Maloja" struck a mine off Dover and rapidly sank, as the doors of the water tight compartments were jammed as a result of the damage caused by the explosion. It was, therefore, impossible to close them, while the immense quantity of water which entered the wrecked saloon spread rapidly to other parts of the liner and frustrated the attempts to beach the vessel near Dover. Only four boats got away safely from the sinking vessel, several being smashed; in one case a boatload of passengers only partially cleared from the davits, crashed on to another boatload, and a number of people were injured and thrown into the sea. The Dover tugs "Lady Brasser" and "Lady Crundall," were the first to reach the vessel. Twenty-eight people were picked up by the "Lady Crundall" being taken on as close as possible, and the benumbed and exhausted people hauled on board by ropes. These included the captain, two of the chief officers, two stewards, an apprentice, and two ladies, who had all slipped off the sloping side of the liner as she was capsizing. Within about twenty minutes all the living people to be seen were picked up, but a number of dead were seen floating face downwards. A most extraordinary case of rescue was performed by one of the seamen. Some time floating in the sea was observed from one of the boats, and this he found to be a baby so well wrapped up that it was floating on its back. The child was got into the boat and put aboard a trawler, taken into the engine-room, wrapped in warm dry clothing, and afterwards taken to a hospital ship, where a lady picked up in an unconscious state, on recovery found the child to be her own. There were in all 456 persons on board and of these 301 were saved. One of the rescued crew, Charles Hayler by name, had been wrecked three times within a few months. He was quarter-master of the "Orange Prince," which was torpedoed in the Mediterranean the previous December. On returning home he joined another ship, which was lost on his first voyage in her. He then joined a third ship, which he did not like, and left her for the "Maloja."

Forcing the Dardanelles.

On February 19, 1907, Admiral Sir John Duckworth, with a British fleet, forced his way through the Dardanelles, and joined his squadron to that of Admiral Louis. On the 14th, the "Ajax" had taken fire and had blown up, 250 of her crew perishing. The fleet had to wait until the 19th for a breeze that would carry them through the Straits. The British ships passed the Turkish batteries under a hail fire, without replying, and about half-past nine in the morning came abreast of the batteries and fortifications of Keddil Bahar and Sultan Kalesi, which guarded the narrowest parts of the Straits from the opposite shores of Europe and Asia, not more than a mile and a quarter apart. These were commenced by the Captain Pasha, and Fevzi-Effendi, and from both forts the squadron was greeted by a heavy fire, which was replied to in such style that the forts were soon deserted. While Admiral Duckworth pursued course towards Constantinople, Sir Sidney Smith attacked a small Turkish squadron at the Castle of Abydos, which was soon destroyed, driven ashore, or captured; while a landing party under Lieutenant Mark Oakes drove the Turks from the fort and spiked its guns. On the 20th, Sir John Duckworth came to anchor off Prince's Island, opposite Constantinople, and about ten miles distant. Here he was detained, with hopes of treating with him by the Turks, who continued to perfect their defences, in spite of Sir John's messages and menaces, till at last there were not less than twelve hundred cannon placed ready to reply to any hostilities from the fleet. There was nothing for it but for Sir John to draw off, which he did on March 1, after making a bravado of his force by sailing to and fro before Constantinople during the day, and towards nightfall dropping down towards the Straits, which he repassed with a heavier loss than he sustained before.

Brick's Tasteless is the best preparation known for children who are delicate. Taken in half to one teaspoonful doses it works marvellous results. Try a bottle and convince yourself.—Jan 17/11



Fire at Archbishop's Palace.

ENTIRE CONTENTS OF BUILDING DESTROYED.

Fire destroyed the two upper stories of the Palace of His Grace Archbishop Roche in the early hours of Saturday morning, whilst the remainder of the building was badly gutted. The damage done amounted to many thousands of dollars, nearly everything in the Palace being destroyed, including all the property of the visiting mission fathers who were staying there. His Grace the Archbishop, who had been ill for some time, had to be removed from the burning building wrapped in blankets, and taken to the nearby Monastery.

The fire which broke out in an unoccupied room on the top story and the north wing of the building, is supposed to have been caused by an over turned candle. It was first discovered by the nurse in attendance on Father O'Brien, a sick mission father, whose room was near. Finding the place ablaze, the nurse quickly gave the alarm and a telephone message soon brought both the Central and Eastern Fire Companies to the scene. The work of the firemen was, however, greatly handicapped in many ways.

In the first place, the building was of stone and the fire had to be fought from the inside, and furthermore the fire was on the top story, which was over 50 feet from the ground. In the second place, the pressure of water applied only amounted to 40 lbs., this being due to the fact that during the night many householders had left their taps running to prevent their pipes from freezing. In spite of the intense cold, and the way in which they were hampered, the fire fighters worked for several hours, trying to get the blaze under control, a feat which at length was successfully accomplished, but the weakness of the pressure of water and the firm hold which the fire had obtained made the task supremely difficult.

Not only was the work difficult but also decidedly dangerous for the firemen were in constant peril from falling tiles, and it was very fortunate indeed, that none of them were in the way when the roof fell in.

Until nearly 10 a.m. Saturday a stream of water was kept playing on the smouldering fire to prevent it from breaking out anew. During the same morning, the work of salvaging the uninjured articles from the building was begun under the direction of Inspector General Hutchings, those few articles which were saved being stored in the library, which was fortunately undamaged. Amongst the great amount of property destroyed, was a magnificent collection of modern books. It was very fortunate indeed that the adjoining library, which contained a number of rare volumes, was not harmed. The building was quite an old one, having been built about 1855 by Bishop Fleming, who also built St. Bonaventure's College and the Cathedral.

This Week's Wisdom.

Necessity is the mother of—work!

Life is full of uncertainties—even to those who expect the worst.

People who borrow trouble usually repay it with a high rate of interest.

A great many books are purchased because their binding matches the wall-paper.

A boy does not always get much comfort out of a cigar, but he gets a heap of experience.

The average man is sure that he's worth more than he's getting; the man above the average goes out and proves it.

The New Detective.

Shattered Homes was smoking his fourth ounce of strong tobacco since breakfast.

Suddenly the cut-glass inkwell on his desk quivered and danced, and the great detective gazed earnestly into it.

Then he pressed an electric button in the arm of his chair, and his mysterious Chinese servant appeared in the doorway.

"You called, Excellent One?" Shattered Homes nodded.

"A man is at the door," he explained. "He is partly bald, squints, and is very fond of dogs. Show him in!"

A minute later the man so minutely described by the great detective rushed into the room.

"You are the famous Shattered Homes! You must find her? You will find her!" he cried.

Shattered Homes wiped his fountain pen upon his favourite black cat.

"But tell me who she is!" he ordered.

"I want her back," sobbed the visitor. "She is my mother-in-law!"

Shattered Homes went to the telephone.

"Hello! I want 0933, please. Is that Dotyville Asylum? Good! Has one of your patients escaped? I thought so! Send a cab round to the house of Shattered Homes, will you?"

Then the great detective went out to lunch.

A Terrible Malagasy Ordeal.

Before Madagascar became a French possession it was customary to consult the Sikiy oracle on every occasion. A certain number of beans and small stones were mixed together, and, from the figures they formed, the people were supposed to learn the fortunate or unfortunate result of an undertaking. Whenever a child was born the parent had to ask the oracle if the hour of its birth was favourable or not, and if an answer in the negative was returned, the baby had a dreadful ordeal to go through. On February 20, 1854, two tourists were witnesses of one of these scenes. A baby girl who was brought before the oracle, was ordered to be taken half a mile along a broad road, and put down in exactly the middle and left, a great herd of oxen being then driven along the same road. When the animals reached the helpless infant the foremost made a dead stop, and the whole number halted; then, as if by instinct, they parted and passed on either side, leaving the wailing lump of humanity safe and unscathed. The infant was at once carried back in triumph to its father's house. Few infants, however, were fortunate enough to go through this dangerous ordeal unscathed, the majority of them being killed. The parents who were unwilling to submit their children to such a test would take them to a lonely wood, or lane, and leave them to their fate. Finally, the Queen of Madagascar forbade the ordeal and the exposure—the only humane law she passed during her reign.

The Week's Calendar.

FEBRUARY—2nd Month—28 Days.

21—MONDAY. Battle of Gooderat. 1849. General Townshend born. 1861. British occupied Jericho. 1918.

22—TUESDAY. Full moon. George Washington born. 1732. French Revolution. 1848. General Baden-Powell born. 1857.

23—WEDNESDAY. Martinique captured from French. 1809. Two hundred distressed women and children fed at Fishermen's Home, by Lady O'Brien and other charitable ladies. 1891.

24—THURSDAY. St. Matthew, A. & M. Governor Pickmore died. St. John's. 1818. General Maude captured Kut. 1917.

25—FRIDAY. Sir Christopher Wren died. 1723. St. Andrew's Society instituted. 1837. Sir Robert Bond, P.C. born. 1857. Reid Railway Resolutions passed in Assembly. 1898. German retreat on the Ancre. 1917.

26—SATURDAY. Loss of H. M. Troopship Birkenhead. 1852. Franco-Prussian War ended. 1871.

27—SUNDAY. 3rd in Lent. Ellen Terry born. 1848. Battle of Majuba Hill. 1881. Cronje surrendered at Paardeburg. 1900.

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