

## LONDON GOSSIP.

LONDON, April 10th, 1916.  
"GINGER" IN POLITICS.

There has been a political truce in this country since the war began and Parliamentary seats as they fall vacant are not contested, each of the big political parties agreeing that the seat shall be filled by a new member of the same political color as the old one. Where occasionally by-elections are contested, this is owing to the appearance of a so-called independent candidate. At the same time in both the old political parties, Unionist and Liberal, there have been formed small groups who stand for more extensive military service and a general "gingering" up of the political control of the country. These are therefore called respectively the Unionist and Liberal GINGER groups. The Unionist group wants an amendment of the Military Service Act so as to include compulsion for married men and the Liberal GINGER group goes for the same thing even more strongly. As a result there has been formed anti-ginger groups of which an extreme case is the small section of the House that follows Sir John Simon. This particular Simonite group is out to throw obstacles in the way of ministers and to object not only to any expansion of the Compulsory Military system but seeks to prevent the present act being rendered fully effective. Amid all these cross currents the Cabinet will need to steer very warily but only on exceptional occasions can the various groups coalesce in the division lobby, and then on matters of purely Parliamentary tactics.

### IVANOFF AND BROUSSILOFF.

General Ivanoff's resignation and the nomination of General Broussiloff in his place are most important, both from the political and military point of view. The military importance of the event lies in the personality of the two Generals. General Ivanoff is general of artillery, while General Broussiloff is general of cavalry. General Ivanoff is a man who studied much, who is well versed in higher mathematics, and for whom warfare presents itself as a more or less complicated mathematical problem. Devising a plan of operations he tries to leave nothing to chance. As a good chess-player he foresees all possible movements of the enemy, and has up his sleeve remedies to counteract them. His method is sure but slow. If General Broussiloff, on the other hand, has not such a big scientific baggage at his disposal, he is a man of initiative and, as his brilliant attack on Lemburg during the Russian offensive has shown, of quick decision. He believes in the individual element more than in tactical appliances. General Ivanoff's mind is more adapted for a siege warfare, while General Broussiloff will be very useful if a quick offensive is contemplated.

### "THE BALKAN NEWS."

A friend at Salonika sends me a copy of "The Balkan News," the queer little daily newspaper of our army there. It is edited, I believe, by an Englishwoman. It is unexpectedly serious in tone, the staple of it being an excellently selected collection of articles on the Eastern situation, from home and Balkan papers. Like the naughty French book in Browning's poem, it is printed on "grey paper with bluish type." The original article in this number, "When Peace Returns," is a thoroughly democratic warning lest "an undue share of the prize of victory will fall to be paid by those who can least afford it." A nursing sister contributes an interesting account of the tragic trek of the Serbian army and people before the Bulgar-German sweep southwards. She says that the Scottish nurses earned such a reputation for their valor that they became known as "birzo sestros" ("the hurrying sisters"). There is a flavoring of mildly comic stories, and, by way of a reminder of soldiers' holidays, the advertisement of the Salonika cinema, where "Charlie Chaplin will appear, at the general request of the British Army."

### CASTING THE STARS.

It is always diverting to get behind the scenes, but nothing so diverting has been known in theatrical quarters for some time as the astonishment of many prominent actors who saw their names announced for the star cast of the Shakespeare commemoration performance of "Julius Caesar" attached to parts of which in their long theatrical experience they had never heard. The Committee, in order to fit in as many notable players as possible, has had recourse to the Polio text, which gives names of walking-on parts, that have never appeared in any acting edition since the Restoration. Hence there will be a merry amount of chaff at the rehearsal. It

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present, and the young royalties themselves especially dislike, is that it should be put in the papers that some princeling finished twelfth in a race. It is against the spirit of Eton and of the Royal Family. In all last year there have been fewer "poenas" and other punishments than in a single term before the war.

### THE CRINOLINE POSE.

It seems that the return of the crinoline, the "hooped" skirt, and the bustle—if they are really returning—will create problems for the twentieth-century wearer, particularly if she be young and one of the "sports" type of modern womanhood. The dress of that time demanded an altogether different physique and bodily habit. Unless the present generation are ready to face tight-lacing, semi-starvation to

gain pailor (the girlhood of that day disliked to look robust), and much staying indoors sewing and reading to regain some of the daily routine which produced that girlhood, her attempts to adapt the clothes to the wearer will be a failure. For one of the plays with a bustle a Parisian actress has already announced her intention of sacrificing her health and her comfort to her waistline and her art. But the ordinary chorus girl, who after all is the real stage model, seems to be very ill at ease in a dress with a hoop. The hands must be kept crossed in front and the head must be lowered if the Victorian pose is to be reproduced correctly—a fact which a visit to the West End theatre leads one to think is lost sight of in many cases. There will be sceptics. After all, a trim waist is not unknown now,

even in the days of the tight skirt. And in early Victorian times did good health, rosy cheeks, and sanctities never go with a crinoline? We shall see.

### WAR SPRING IN LONDON.

There is no smell of new paint and turpentine in the air this spring and no squeaking of house-painters' cradles, which were always part of the spring song of Regent Street. Even that little nest of early Georgian houses in Knightsbridge that used to show so gay a face of new lilac and cream to the top of Sloane Street is quite dingy and worn. One notices too, in Mayfair how like our fashionable little houses look to our slums. It is really chiefly a case of fresh paint and constant brick-pointing that makes the difference between fashion and slumland in the older parts of London. The flower boxes that used to show dancing daffodil heads and crocus spears are empty this year, and the florists say that almost all their contracts now are for the hospitals. Bond Street, however, is still sprinkled with shy little tickets at the private entrances to the big shops to declare that "good bodice hands" and skirt hands are wanted. Stout asparagus at 6s. 6d. a bundle and French beans at 2s. a pound are in the chop windows as usual, unadorned at the posters counselling war economy that are pasted over the front of a defunct art dealer's shop across the way. There are still a surprising number of carriages with two horses, and two men on the box and big motor-cars, also with two men, chauffeur and groom, are still abroad. The occu-

pants are always old ladies. The spring music season, however, is very much changed, and the placards outside the musical agents' shops are attenuated. Half of Sir Henry Wood's Queen's Hall orchestra wear khaki armlets on their skillful arms; and at the concerts of the Philharmonic Society and of the London Symphony Orchestra some of the performers are actually in khaki. So we are getting near the time when our drums and fifes and bagpipes in the street will be our chief fare. This year again there is one real and terrible sign of the new spring that means the opposite of growth and joy and all that spring stands for. The hospitals are all preparing and being augmented—for the spring.

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