

LETTER FROM LONDON.

Weekly Correspondence of the Register.

LONDON, Eng., Nov. 17th, 1893.

The pens of the descriptive writers would soon rust disused if Parliamentary debate sunk for any length of time to its present depths of dulness. During the whole of this week there has been, indeed, no speaking in the House, but rather conversations. Members scarcely rise to make their remarks, and the discussion has been technical to a degree. These are the days, however, when the lawyers are in their element, straw splitting and word chopping. The only very definite notion a casual observer is likely to carry away of these lawyer debates is that no two of the experts are precisely agreed on any one subject.

It is not surprising, then, that so many members are found to break away from all this dreary monotony and seek a scope for any latent statesmanship they may possess in debating a reform in the Ladies' Gallery. To any one who has visited it this is one of the queerest places under the sun, and the regulations affecting admission are also very peculiar. Situated at the back of the Press Gallery there is a kind of iron cage; and through the bars, when the House is sitting, glimpses of fair faces and comely forms are to be obtained by members on the benches below. Sometimes the Press men are startled by a ball of wool or a dainty kerchief fluttering down into their midst from the realm above, and occasionally a buzz of conversation is heard or a ripple of laughter, but beyond these signs there is nothing to indicate that ladies are within the precincts of the House of Commons. The gallery devoted to their accommodation is divided into two compartments, the one on the Ministerial side being reserved for those ladies armed with the Speaker's orders, and the other for those introduced by members. In the first-named Mrs. Gladstone is always to be found on special occasions ensconced in the corner seat, and from this point of vantage she has looked down upon many a stout battle in the arena below, in which her distinguished husband has generally borne the most prominent part. For admission to the second gallery members who desire orders ballot at stated intervals, and those who are fortunate enough at this season have the privilege of introducing two ladies on a certain day in the following week. Why two instead of one is an anachronism as difficult of explanation as the iron casing in front of the gallery. The room is badly lighted, the ventilation is execrable, and the range of vision, except to those in the front row, is much impaired by the bars and the pillars.

All the prophets of evil to the contrary notwithstanding it was not until last night that the Government received its first fall. No serious results are anticipated. The Liberals were ungallant enough to oppose a clause sought to be inserted in the Local Government Bill for the enfranchisement of women. In this Parliament there are many champions of women's rights, and the Government did a foolish thing, as subsequent events proved, in not adopting a conciliatory attitude. They would not entertain the proposal for a moment, and the result was that a division was challenged, and they were defeated by 147 to 126. Frantic cheers went up even from the Irish benches as the figures were announced, and not a few cries of "Resign" were heard above the din. Mr. Gladstone slept sweetly through the discussion, nor did he wake when Mr. McLaren rose on behalf of the ladies. The sight of the Prime Minister once, according to his confession, moved one of his supporters to tears. But on this occasion all eyes were dry.

Mr. Chamberlain, his wife and son have arrived home from their American tour after a tempestuous voyage, during which they were shut down below for three days. The Unionists are in high feather now that they have their redoubtable champion once more amongst them. His opponents may say what they will, but the name of Chamberlain is one to conjure with. His power and influence are certainly not on the wane. They have been slowly but steadily growing since the general election consequent upon the rejection of the first Home Rule Bill. In English politics he is more to be reckoned with to-day than at any previous period in his varied career. It was a sad day for the early attainment of Home Rule when the Irish Party saw fit to quarrel with "the Sultan of Birmingham." It is my firm belief that Ireland would have ere now reached the goal of so many years of struggle and heart-sick aspiration were it not for the opposition organized and brought to the successful issue by Chamberlain in 1888. The Irish are noted for their powers of vituperation, and they certainly emptied the full phial of their wrath upon the head of this their most determined foe—so much so that at one time he seriously contemplated retiring from political life. No doubt it was what he richly deserved, but it showed a fateful lack of that opportunism which plays so important a part in the game of politics at the present day. He has since had his revenge, and his one aim in life at the present moment seems to be to prevent the passing of any Home Rule Bill whatsoever. He is still the life and soul of all opposition to

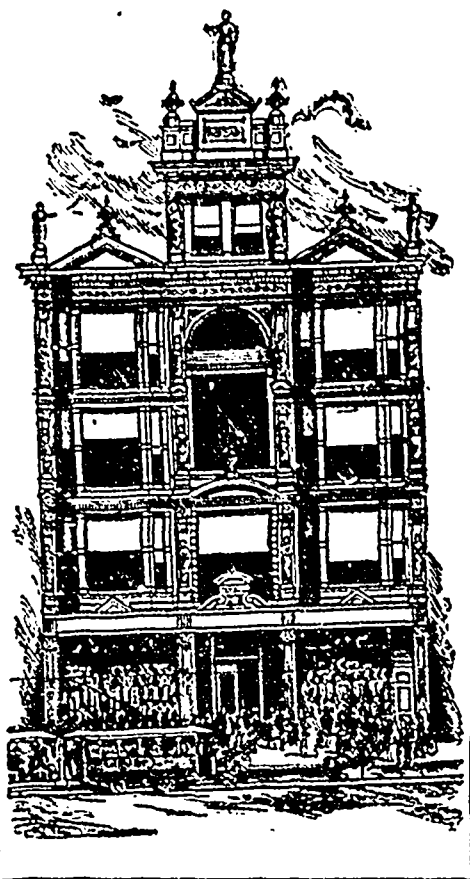
the granting of self government to Ireland and he returns to England fully determined to prevent, as far as in him lies, the accomplishment of the dearest wish of the Irish heart.

I hear that the room in which Tennyson wrote so much of his verse and smoked the pipe of peace each night at his beautiful residence, Faringford, Freshwater, is exactly as he left it a few weeks before his death. Not a book has been moved, or a piece of furniture. His favourite chair is one of the first objects in the room to attract the attention of the rare visitor who is fortunate enough to set foot on the almost sacred ground. He may look at the vacant chair, and, perhaps, recalling the beautiful lines from "In Memoriam," murmur "How good, how kind, and he is gone." It was in this room, by the way, that the Poet used to recite to a few favoured friends many of his noblest verses. "Maud" was a favourite recitation. After rolling out in a deep melodious voice some of the finest cantos he would pause, and say with perfect innocence and frankness to his hearers, "Isn't that good!"

To-day we have had our first taste of a regular November fog, not one of those dense and black fogs which look as though they could be cut with a knife, but still one which has given the metropolis a cold and cheerless aspect, and which has necessitated lamps and gas before the middle of the day in several districts. It often happens that the densest and most choking fogs prevail in London on days when the sun shines brilliantly a few miles outside the suburbs, and on the kind of nights when dwellers in the country watch the stars through a pure and cloudless atmosphere. But the fog to-day has been of a wet character, which not improbably means rather dismal weather outside as well as inside the metropolis.

At the Passionate Novitiate, Broadway, England, on October 23d, five novices (four clerics and one lay brother) received the holy habit. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Father Louis, C.P., assisted by Rev. Father Edmund, C.P., and Rev. Father Alexander, C.P. A touching sermon, appropriate to the occasion, was preached by the officiant. The names of those received into the Order are:—Confrater Finbarr (O'Mahony), Cork; Confrater Theodoro (McNally), Belfast; Confrater Leonard (O'Neill), Carlow; Confrater Charles (Pender), Dublin, and Brother Berchmans (Dooley), Dublin. The ceremony was brought to a close with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

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NOTICE is hereby given that a dividend of 4 per cent. on the capital stock of the Company has been declared for the current half year, payable on and after the 1st day of December next, at the office of the Company, corner of Victoria and Adelaide streets, Toronto.

The transfer books will be closed from the 17th to the 30th November inclusive
By order of the Board.

S. C. WOOD,
Managing Director.
Toronto, 25th October, 1893.

Notice is hereby given that a dividend of 4 per cent. upon the capital stock of the Bank has been declared for the current half year, and that the same will be payable at the Bank and its branches on and after FRIDAY, THE 1ST DAY OF DECEMBER NEXT.

The transfer books will be closed from the 16th to the 30th November, both days inclusive.
By Order of the Board.

D. WILKIE,
Cashier
Toronto, 26th October, 1893.