

# GREETINGS

To our friends and the public of  
Victoria, we extend our sincerest  
greetings and best wishes for a

## MERRY CHRISTMAS

May it be a joyous one of the  
good old kind

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### LORDS QUESTION EMBARRASSING

Asquith Government Must Soon  
Face Problem Of Forcing  
Through Programme Of Par-  
liamentary Reform

WILL INTRODUCE  
VETO BILL EARLY

Securing Of Liberal Majority In  
Upper House Means Un-  
wieldy Body Of Thousand  
Members—Alternatives

LONDON, Dec. 28.—With the ap-  
proach of the new year and the close  
of the Christmas season, politics are  
again the all-absorbing topic. In the  
press and in all the political clubs  
speculation is rife as to whether the  
House of Lords will acknowledge de-  
feat or will drive Mr. Asquith to the  
extremity of securing guarantees from  
the King for the creation of new peers  
to carry the parliament bill in the up-  
per chamber.

It is generally recognised that all  
other business save probably the in-  
roduction of the Budget will give way  
to the Lords' veto bill which the gov-  
ernment will bring forward at the  
earliest possible moment.

By this action the government ex-  
pects the support of its allies, the Lib-  
erals and the Nationalists, who in  
order to secure a change in the law re-  
garding the passage of Labor meas-  
ures and the passage of a Home Rule  
bill of some sort or other, will place  
their votes in the disposal of the Lib-  
erals.

Whether they will continue to ex-  
tend support to the government or not  
depends on the certainty of certain ad-  
vantages which the introduction of gov-  
ernmental measures is involved—is an-  
other matter.

Conservatives are prophesying that  
dissensions in the Nationalist and La-  
borite camps are only a question of  
months, and if these are not smoothed  
over the existence of the coalition is  
at an end.

What will happen it is impossible to  
foretell—another general election be-  
fore the coronation is not to be  
thought of.

And yet, unless a second veto con-  
ference reaches an amicable agreement  
in the meantime no other solution sug-  
gests itself. It is not likely that Mr.  
Asquith will recommend the referen-  
dum, seeing that it is his opponents'  
proposal and that he had already de-  
nounced it in unmeasured terms.

**A Thousand Peers**

On the question of the creation of  
new Liberal peers, the Spectator says:  
"In the first place the new House of  
Lords, which would consist of over a  
thousand members, would be exces-  
sively unwieldy. When it had to sit  
for the purpose of registering the de-  
crees of the House of Commons, it  
would be difficult to find any place  
except Westminster Hall big enough  
to hold it. In addition to this ques-  
tion of size, there would be the strange  
anomaly that the House of Lords would  
be, as regards the Liberal party, in a  
position similar to that which the Lib-  
erals have always told us is so mon-  
strous and disgraceful—namely, that  
one party should have a permanent  
predominance in that house. The  
House of Lords after the creation of the  
five hundred peers would be, at any  
rate, during the next ten years, a per-  
sistent Liberal house. For this then,  
as well as for physical reasons, some  
plan must at once be produced for fil-  
tering the House of Lords and reducing  
it to a body of, say, three or four hun-  
dred members at most.

"In other words, the creation of the  
peers would mean that the government  
must at once tackle the problem of  
House of Lords reform. They must  
put this thorny and exhausting ques-  
tion before the introduction even of  
the Home Rule bill. No doubt the  
Irish people would object to this; but  
in case of this kind even Mr. Red-  
mond's commands would, we venture  
to say, have to be disobeyed. The  
scandal of leaving the House of Lords  
with a thousand members would be un-  
endurable. It will thus be seen that  
the government, even though they have  
the power, have many very strong  
reasons for not wishing to dare the  
House of Lords to force them to create  
five hundred peers, and thus precipi-  
tate the question of the composition  
of the second chamber. The govern-  
ment would clearly prefer a compro-  
mise under which they could get the  
assent of the Lords to their bill with-  
out recourse to the wholesale man-  
ufacture of coronets."

**Arrested in Seattle**  
TACOMA, Dec. 28.—Parmice Speer,  
a prominent mining engineer of Van-  
couver, B. C., was arrested at the  
Olympus hotel today by the police at  
the request of Canadian authorities,  
who hold a warrant charging misap-