

LETTER FROM LONDON.

Weekly Correspondence of the Register.

LONDON, Oct. 17th, 1893.

This is the dull season. The traditional fog and rain is with us in all its characteristic dreariness and depression, redeemed only by the absence of the penetrating cold which usually accompanies it and makes it so much the more to be dreaded. The weather is mild; and raspberries and green peas, the condition of which is suggestive of July rather than October, are being freely retailed in the market.

For some time the political world has been as dull as the skies. The self-imposed silence of our leading politicians is ended, and we are to have a regular deluge of political oratory from now until Parliament meets. The irrepressible Lord Randolph Churchill is announced to address three meetings in the next fortnight, the most important of which will be at Yarmouth on October 25th. Lord Salisbury has promised to speak at two meetings in Lancashire next week, and Mr. Asquith is booked for four speeches before the end of the month.

The Unionists are just now making the most of rumoured dissensions in the Nationalist ranks. Mr. John Barry's resignation has been for them a sweet morsel. His seat at Wexford is perfectly safe for the Nationalists, but there is sure to be a struggle between the two factions as to whether the candidate should be a follower of Mr. Healy or Mr. Dillon. Strenuous efforts are being made to avoid an open conflict; but it is believed by some that the heather will soon be a blaze, and the Unionists are counting upon this possibility as an important element in the Parliamentary situation.

The report of the replacing of Justin McCarthy by Arthur O'Connor is of course a canard.

It is probable that Mr. Gladstone will not winter in England. He would like to do so; but his intimates, who know how much he is tried by the gloomy weather and indoor life of an English winter, are anxious that he should get away, even if it were but for a few days, to the south of France. His winter stay in South Italy was a new lease of life to him, and it is felt that even a fortnight of the light and air of Biarritz or Cannes would give him a splendid start for the tasks which the new session has in store for him.

The big coal strike is practically ended, and great has been the rejoicing over the success of the men. The demonstration in Hyde Park last Sunday was an enormous affair. The vast expanse of green sward between the Marble Arch and Achilles' statue literally swarmed with human beings, notwithstanding that the afternoon was extremely lowering and unpromising. Men, women, boys and girls carried huge money boxes, into which the benevolent public threw its coppers, and a goodly sum must have been collected. Those who carried the boxes eloquently pleaded on behalf of the miner's hungry wife and children by saying that every half-penny would make a meal for some little one, and this appeal had a magical effect upon many purse strings. Mr. T. O'Connor was among the speakers, and in a tone of triumph declared that what a few short weeks ago appeared to be a forlorn hope had now changed into a great and overwhelming victory.

The Russian fleet is being welcomed to France amid scenes of the wildest enthusiasm. The French women frantically seized the Russian sailors in the streets and salute them with patriotic kisses; while the men row out in boats to seize the arms of Russian sailors protruded through the portholes of their vessels, and cover them with kisses and tears. For England this is not a pleasant spectacle: but, though a little anxious about her naval supremacy in the Mediterranean, her present position is one of absolute neutrality. Great Britain is still the great unknown quantity, and the fact that it remains so is a guarantee for peace.

It is an odd turn of fate that at a time when France is given over to tumultuous rejoicings death should have stricken down two of its most prominent and most beloved men. Only yesterday the death was announced of Marshal McMahon, the one man of rank whose fame was untarnished by all the disclosures which have convulsed Paris. To-day it is M. Gounod, the greatest of modern French composers. The distinguished soldier, whose death all France is mourning, was of the flower of the French nobility; and to him, aristocrat and Conservative though he was, France turned at a time of its greatest need. It was no reflection upon his courage or capacity in arms that he could not reverse the hopeless fortunes of his country in her furious struggle. He kept France stable at a time when vacillation or weakness would have been fatal, and his conservatism secured her an eminently safe Government during the perilous time he was her ruler.

Little could Gounod, in the poverty of his early years, have realized the fame which would ultimately be his. His genius was deeply affected by religious music, and it was only by a narrow chance that he did not give to the Church those abilities which he devoted to the lyric stage. He became a novice; and though he did not complete his

clerical training, his religious associations were too deeply imbedded for him to eradicate the religious spirit which breathes in all his works. The author of a hundred compositions, his immortality will probably rest on one great work. He created "Faust" in music, as Goethe had created it in literature.

Before closing, the latest items of news I can glean are that the Government, as Mr. Asquith so emphatically declared at Glasgow, have no intention of dealing with Home Rule the coming session, and that Redmond is to lead a revolt among the Irish members against such a course of action. This, though it comes not from a Unionist source, I give for what it is worth.

The venerable Bishop of Plymouth is at present staying with his nephew, the Cardinal, at Archbishop House. It is given on reliable authority that the well known Oratorian, Father Antrobus, is the Bishop-elect for Clifton.



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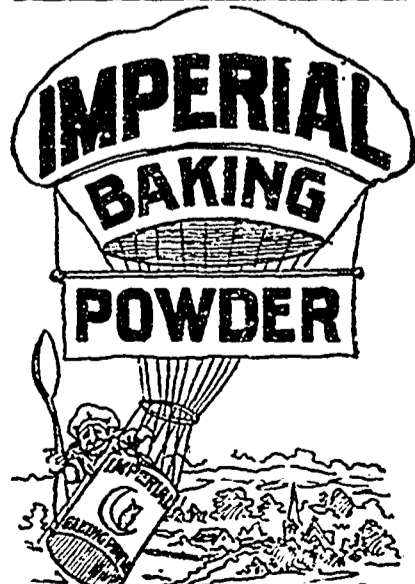
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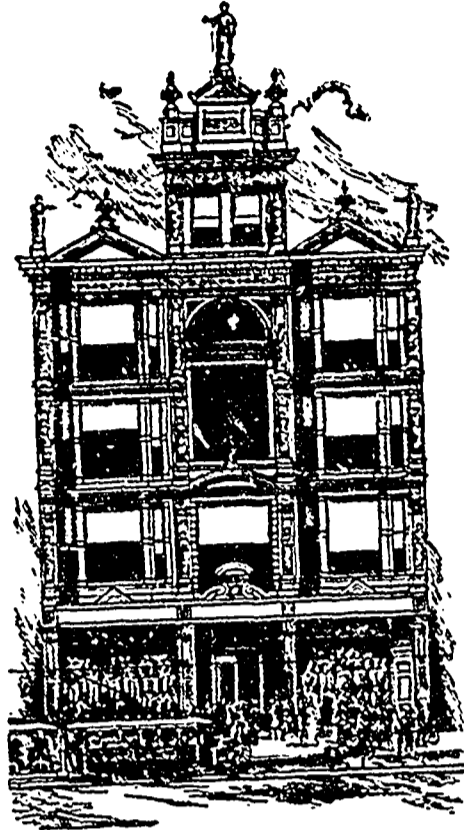
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