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LONDON GOSSIP.

LONDON, March 13, 1920.
LONDON'S COMING TEN MILLION POPULATION.

"Possibly in three years, certainly in five, Greater London will have ten million inhabitants. I detest the prospect, for I had hoped for a decentralisation and a reduction of London's population, but I am afraid it is inevitable." That is the considered opinion which a famous town planner and expert on London development has given. He pointed to the enormous and apparently permanent developments in Government departments all concentrated in London, to the manner in which all great manufacturing and commercial firms and industrial associations remove their head quarters to London, and also to the continued developments of manufactures in the London area, and to the coming great development of the Port of London. He considers that the position this town already holds as one of the world's greatest pleasure resorts will be vastly strengthened when the Channel Tunnel is completed, and that the opening of the Tunnel will also draw through London both passenger and goods traffic from this country and from America which now reaches the Continent by other routes. The census will show that London has much increased its population above the normal increase expected in the decade now closing, and that the crowding in it continues daily.

ART MART OF THE WORLD.
A number of French and Dutch collectors are attending London art sales just now, and prices of furniture, china, glass, and pictures are higher than ever. One day this week \$1,800 was paid for a single wingless of the Jacobean period. Neither in Paris nor Amsterdam have the art salerooms recovered from the war. London is more nearly than ever the art auction mart of the world.

THE TWOPENNY POST.
Far-away echoes of Dickens are re-

called by the ruminating rather than illuminating announcement of the Postmaster-General that "the question of increasing postage rates is under consideration." If official indications mean anything, this threatens the abolition of the half-penny postage rate in every form—an idea first favored when Herbert Samuel was Postmaster-General under the Premiership of Asquith,—and the raising of the three-half-penny letter rate to twopenny. Though the long-departed Sir Rowland Hill may turn in his grave at this contemplated permanent departure from the penny stamp ideal, and the shades of Elihu Burritt and Sir John Henniker-Heaton may giber at the abandonment of international penny postage, Dickens, with his "twopenny post," will come out serene.

The old-time institution, before Rowland Hill and his penny postage were dreamed of, of a twopenny delivery of letters "within the bills of mortality," as the London area then was named, was a concrete fact which much impressed the great Victorian novelist, who in his earlier stories again and again referred to the double-knocking exertions of the twopenny postman. One form in which it existed in penny post days was in the nature of a fraud. Letters were charged by distance, and paid for on delivery; and on the Border of England and Scotland, where the elevenpenny coat passed into thirteen pence, it was not uncommon for the innocent to find 11d. changed into 1s. 1d. by a simple insertion of an intermediate stroke, which meant twopenny for the postman and not for the Postmaster-General.

"THE NEW RUSSIA."

The Estonians were the first of the border States to make peace with Russia. The present diplomatic representative of Estonia in London, A. Phip, who was one of the Estonian delegates at the peace conference with Russia, made an interesting point in conversation a day or two ago. When

asked how his country was getting on with the Bolsheviks he said: "You are out of date. There is no question of getting on with the Bolsheviks. It is the new Russia with whom we are dealing. There are no Bolsheviks in Russia in the sense that there were two years ago. The original Bolsheviks have become merged into the people. Make no mistake. This is the 'New Russia.'" His point was that the Bolsheviks are no longer a single class, as their ranks were now permeated with all classes and nearly all interests in Russia.

THE CHEAPEST MONEY.

The cheapest money in the world appears to be the money issued by the famous Russian General Yudenitch. The Reval paper, "Teataja," that has just arrived here, reports that a Reval chocolate firm has asked permission to use Yudenitch money as chocolate wrappers, this money being cheaper than the ordinary wrapper employed. Thousands of Russian soldiers who served in the Yudenitch army have been paid with this money.

ITALIAN CIGARS.

It is announced that the Italian Government intends to open retail shops for their tobaccos in London. Tobacco is, of course, a Government monopoly in Italy, but "Macedonia" cigarettes and "Toscani"—the most powerful cigars in the world—can be obtained in Scho (London's Bohemian foreign quarter) any day. So far, however, the customers are all Italians. The Macedonia cigarette has its merits, but the chief claim of the cigar seems to be that it has no substitute once the smoker has grown used to it. These varieties are hardly likely to appeal to the British palate, which did not care particularly even for the special cigars and tobaccos the Austrians used to sell before the war, which certainly were of superior quality. But Austria has lost the provinces from which she obtained her best leaf, and will no longer be a competitor, while Greece, on the other hand, possesses provinces which have always been famous for the quality of their tobacco. In the past both Italians and Austrians produced the long, thin, peculiarly foreign-looking cigar known as the "Virginia." Now that Austria is out of the running the Italians may establish a monopoly of this speciality.

THE AUSTRIAN VELOUR.

The Austrian velour hat, popularised in this country by the late King Edward, is about to make its reappearance after an absence of five years from the shops. During the war, when imports were suspended, English manufacturers devoted great attention to this type of headgear, and have steadily improved their production until they are booked up with orders for a year ahead for goods equal in make and beauty to the Austrian hats. It is still possible, however, to tell the difference, for there is something in the Austrian hats which British manufacturers have not been able to copy. Several wholesale houses have already placed orders for supplies of these foreign hats, which will come over in the rough and be trimmed and finished on this side. The retail price should be about 45 shillings, say at \$3.50 to the pound sterling, \$7.89.

THE DAYLIGHT KINEMA.

The promoters of the new invention which enables cinema pictures to be shown effectively by daylight point out its value for use in open-air school classes and for country and seaside theatres. Curiously enough, they say nothing about what is perhaps its greatest advantage—the prevention of the undesirable things that now happen in the darkness of some picture palaces. Social reform agencies have had a great deal to say about this, and Mr. Harrington, in his recent review of immoral influences of the East End of London, spoke very strongly about the evil-doers who take advantage of the cinema. The special point about the new screen, which has been invented by a Manchester man, Mr. Marks, is that instead of allowing the daylight to pass through its translucency it reflects it back again, with the result that full effect is given to the lantern light. The pictures shown at a private view were of Australian scenes, and even an Australian would have said that justice was done to the brilliant light of that country. They were very successful, sharply defined in every detail, and the light which shone from an open window directly upon the screen in no way diminished the vividness of the picture. At the same time the dazzling effect so trying to the eyes was done away with.

PRESS THE BUTTON.

The people who control the London Underground Electric Tube railways are perhaps the keenest in the world on publicity and the utilisation of new devices to increase tube use. An ingenious new scheme is now in operation. Large transparent maps are being put up in connection with the Underground Railways. Around and below these maps are columns of names of theatres, assembly halls, hotels, restaurants, places of interest and business houses. Opposite each name of the place you want to go to, spots of light at once show up on the map. First a large red light shows where you are, then a green light to

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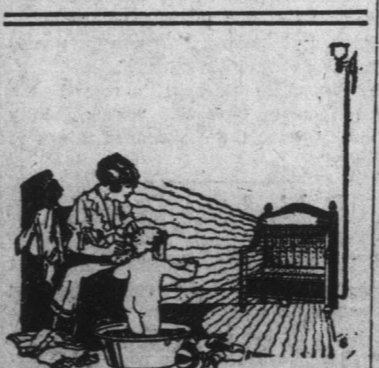
PARKER & MONROE, THE SHOE MEN

show where you have to change, if anywhere, a smaller red light indicates where you have to get out, and a white light gives the exact spot on the map where the place is you want to reach. Pressing the button threatens to become a popular pastime.

Didn't Like Baby's Ignorance.

Yells from the nursery brought the mother, who found the baby gleefully pulling small Billy's curls.
"Never mind, darling," she comforted. "Baby doesn't know how it hurts."
Half an hour later wild shrieks from the baby made her run again to the nursery.
"Why, Billy," she cried, "what is the matter with baby?"
"Nothing, muzzer," said Billy calmly. "only now he knows."

The plaited capes are among the most popular Spring wraps.



For Little Tots on Chilly Mornings.

Warm, comfortable homes mean healthy, happy children. No winter colds from evening or morning exposures in homes equipped with the Humphry Radiant Fire. Ask the Gas Company for full particulars. decl6,sof17

Not Usually Done.

Soldier Deprecates Conferring of Decoration.

He had come back with the Croix de Guerre, but he would not talk about how he won it. Of course his family and friends knew the formal citation, but they wanted him to tell them the details, and he modestly and persistently evaded them.
"I think it simply silly," declared an irate cousin in her teens. "What's the use of ducking and dodging, and pretending you're not a hero, when you know perfectly well you are?"
The worm turned. "Yes, of course I know I am," he assented coolly. "The trouble is, they didn't give me my cross for the right thing. Do you expect a fellow to talk about his heroism when he gets a decoration for doing what lots of other fellows did who weren't lucky enough to be noticed, and then finds the bravest thing he ever did, or ever expects to do, treated lightly or ignored altogether? At least, I was a hero once. Before we were ordered abroad, I was invited to luncheon by my colonel's daughter. Now, you know I am a country boy from an inland state. It was the first luncheon I'd ever attended—and the first time I'd ever been served raw oysters. I hate shellfish, and when I saw those six, soft, slimy, silvery horrors set before me I nearly fainted. But I didn't know whether anything much was to follow or not; and I couldn't decline a main dish under the eye of my hostess. I shuddered with disgust. I wasn't sure they would go down; I feared they might come up. But—I ate those oysters, all six, and smiled as I ate them! She told me so two years afterward, when I confessed. Now, I call that true heroism. But it wasn't what I got the cross for."
"Maybe," said the saucy young thing in her teens, "it's that you're going to get the girl for."
"No," sighed the unappreciated hero. "she agrees with the rest of you and General Mangin. She only laughs

at my real claim to glory!"—Youth's Companion.

Not Much Use.

Lady: "You have not been out to service yet, therefore you have no character?"
Applicant: "No, mum; but I've got three school certificates."
Lady: "Ah, well, that is something. Are they for honesty, cleanliness, or?"
Applicant: "No, please, mum, for literature, jography, and free-and-dorin."

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