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The British Parliament.

The British Parliament is to be opened by the King in person on the 16th instant, and the event is being anticipated with unusual interest. The King has decided that it will not be necessary for the Peereses to wear mourning on that date. The Queen and the ladies of the Court will accordingly appear in colors, and everything is said to point to a more brilliant pageant at the approaching opening than when the King went down to Westminster Palace at the beginning of the first session of his reign. The Irish question is likely to be quite as much to the front at the approaching session as in previous ones. The agrarian question especially will demand attention. Mr. T. W. Russell, M. P., since his retirement from the Government has been remarkably active in advocating the cause of the tenants, and it is anticipated that the Irish leader, John Redmond, will be certain to give notice of the amendment to the address which will at once raise the whole subject of the administration of Irish affairs.

The Outlook in China.

There appears to be reason to fear that, in spite of all that has been accomplished by war and diplomacy during the past eighteen months in China, that country is far from having reached a condition which gives assurance of long continued peace and the maintenance of satisfactory relations with the western powers. That at least is the impression which has been made upon the mind of Mr. Charles F. Gammon, Superintendent of Colporteurs for the American Bible Society in Northern China, who may be supposed to have had excellent opportunities for observing and studying the present situation in the Chinese Empire. Mr. Gammon writes to the Society which he represents: "While at Shanghai, I observed that the government was openly violating the provisions of the protocol. The great Empire would shake off European nomination. Thousands of boatloads of small arms and ammunition were passing weekly up the Yangtse Kiang and the arsenals were being enlarged and worked day and night. Cargoes of explosives were being received, and the Dowager Empress had issued instructions to all officials to recruit the army, and also to inform her as to the fighting strength of each division and the time required to concentrate the forces at a given point. There were and are many other unpromising features which weighed heavily upon the minds of those interested. I must believe that the end is not yet, and that within ten years, and possibly within five, a war will ensue, the like of which the world has never known. For centuries China has been making repeated attempts to expel the foreigner, each time profiting by past experiences, each time with more power and success, each time better equipped and better planned. She is now preparing as never before, buying vast quantities of superior weapons and reorganizing her armies on a correct basis. Therefore, the next attempt will be gigantic in force and terrible in execution. It will result in a universal upheaval and the final dismemberment of this Empire at a terrible cost."

Smoke and Noise.

A New York paper states that one of the interesting features of the St. Louis Exposition of 1903, will be the attempt to demonstrate how easily smoke may be dispensed with even when soft coal is used. It is said that in the generation of the 20,000 or 25,000 horse power which they will require, the managers intend that coal shall be so burned as to emit no smoke, or at least none that is visible. They will also urge

all railway companies running trains to the grounds to affix smoke-suppressing devices to their locomotives. If the smoke nuisance connected with the burning of soft coal in factories and in locomotives can be done away with, the result would certainly be a great increase of comfort to the residents of many cities and to the millions who travel by railway. After the smoke nuisance shall have been abated, if not before, we hope that some lover of mankind will discover means of eliminating a part at least of the noise which in many cities is a still greater nuisance than the smoke. Unfortunately some of the modern improvements which our generation boasts have increased, instead of diminishing, the noisiness of our towns and cities. The noise of railroads and steam-boats, factory whistles and fog-horns we have long borne with a fair degree of patience, seeing that in most cases it is more or less mitigated by distance. But that pet invention of our time, the telephone, is a most unconscionably noisy and disturbing institution, with its sudden interruptions and imperative calls, and the absurd incoherencies of one-sided conversations for which it is responsible. There surely ought to be a law to prevent one of the things being placed within a hundred feet of any man who has to earn his bread by the sweat of his brain. And then, worst of all, there is the electric car. Surely such a noise as is produced by this modern method of locomotion, it would be no abuse of language to call infernal. It is a noise that seems distinctly out of place anywhere beyond the gates of pandemonium. One wonders what Thomas Carlyle would have said to the racket of these days. One feels a sort of comfort in knowing that the philosopher was permitted to finish his pilgrimage before the peace and quiet of the earth were utterly destroyed. Poor man, if his ideas were ignominiously put to rout and his mind driven to distraction by the shrill song of the irrepressible chanticleer, what would have become of him had his days been prolonged into the period of telephones and electric? And yet one feels a sort of curiosity—perhaps a sinful sort—to know what language the sage would have employed to characterize these modern improvements.

The Canada Northern and the Great North West.

Before many years shall elapse, if present expectations be fulfilled, the Canadian Pacific Railway will have a competitor in a new line connecting the eastern Provinces with the Pacific Coast. The line is known as the Canadian Northern. Already so much has been accomplished in the building of this line that it may be said that it is virtually in operation from Port Arthur through a wholly new portion of the Province of Ontario. Then, by a short connection through the State of Minnesota, it enters at the southeast corner of Manitoba and thence runs on to Winnipeg through land that only waits railway communication to attract settlers. From Winnipeg the road runs by way of Beaver and Gladstone to Lake Dauphin, Gilbert Plains and the Swan River, into the territory of Saskatchewan, ready at an early day to take its further flight along the banks of the Saskatchewan, to Prince Albert, Edmonton, and thence into the Rockies, and to the Pacific Ocean. "For some time," says the Toronto Globe, this was a dream, but with the actual completion of 450 miles of the main line and with the acquisition of important branch lines in the Province of Manitoba, the dreams of its projectors have to that extent become a tangible reality. The portion of the line from Port Arthur to Rainy Lake is through a country presenting considerable engineering difficulties, but from the banks of the Swan River to Edmonton there should be but little costly work, so that

we may look to see the continuation of the line westward to the foothills soon in actual being. Then, of course, will begin another serious part of the undertaking—the passage through the hills of northern British Columbia. The Globe calls attention to the route which the Canadian Northern takes when it reaches the real west. "It does not attempt to dispute with the Canadian Pacific Railway the region through which that railway runs. It makes for the north and runs along a base an average of fully 200 miles north of the pioneer railway, or, say, 300 miles from the boundary line. Those who have been comparing the Dominion to a fishing-pole and other elongated things of that sort should specially note this fact. Scotland and Ireland could be placed side by side on the boundary line and neither Cape Wrath nor Malin Head would touch the new line, and in width Assiniboia alone would contain them and have some to spare. We realize but very inadequately the meaning and the extent of the vast foundations that are in that western country now being laid. We will not be many years older before the locomotive will be blowing its whistle on docks at Athabaska Landing, and be answered by steamers which have come literally from the Arctic Sea. At the Landing the railway will be in communication by water with thousands of miles of the north. We do not think that we are under any delusion with regard to the region in which those vast lakes and navigable rivers lie. Granted that most of it is outside the productive belt, it nevertheless remains a fact that scattered as industry may be in those regions the very vastness of them, coupled with the accessibility which their waterways impart to them, will in a very few years make a large aggregate of business. No one who reads the evidence gathered by the Senate Committee a dozen years ago can doubt that the curtain is just beginning to roll up on a drama of settlement and civilization on a colossal scale."

Religious Census of Three Canadian Cities.

A bulletin has been issued by the Census Bureau showing the present strength, and the increase during the decade, of the population as connected with the several religious bodies in the cities of Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto. Taking the aggregate of each denomination for the three cities the Roman Catholics far outnumber the other leading communities combined, the totals being as follows:—Roman Catholics, 322,423; (of this number 200,000 are in Montreal) Church of England, 96,358; Presbyterians, 68,582; Methodist, 62,206; Baptist, 15,629; Congregationalists, 5,300; Hebrew, 10,223; Salvation Army, 886; Unitarian, 689. Since 1891 the Roman Catholics have increased by 67,967 in Montreal, 10,121 in Ottawa and 7,174 in Toronto. The Church of England gained 4,250 in Montreal, 3,315 in Ottawa and 16,322 in Toronto. To the Presbyterian Church there has been added 4,073 in Montreal, 3,865 in Ottawa and 14,913 in Toronto. The Methodist Church musters 1,368 more in Montreal, 2,562 in Ottawa and 15,970 in Toronto. The Baptists have 643 more adherents in Montreal, 997 in Ottawa and 5,552 in Toronto. The addition to the Congregational Church was:—Montreal, 437; Ottawa, 149; Toronto 553. A decrease of 105 is put down to the Unitarians in Montreal and a gain of only 48 and 10 in Ottawa and Toronto, respectively. Only 108 were added to the Salvation Army in Montreal in the ten years, while there is seemingly a decrease of 28 in Ottawa and an increase of only 47 in Toronto. The Hebrews have thrived exceedingly, for the census credits them with 4,291 more in Montreal, 351 more in Ottawa and 2,053 in Toronto.