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THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The Landowners (Scotland) Bill on Friday passed the third reading by 190 votes to 63. The Bill has been violently opposed by the Unionists, and it is believed that if it passes the second reading in the Upper House it will be so cut up by amendments that its fate is very uncertain. The English Land Bill, which is to be debated next week, gives less cause for differences of opinion, and is likely to be adopted by the Lords without material alteration.

The sittings of the House of Commons have been very prolonged during the last ten days, and the discussion of minor Bills which the Government wishes to see passed into law before the prorogation has in consequence been much advanced. The passing of the Patent Law Bill which was down for debate on Friday evening, as well as of the Bill relating to the importation of unwholesome food, was considered practically certain. The Bill regulating the employment of women has been already passed.

THE MEDITERRANEAN COMMAND.

It has been decided to create a new military command in the Mediterranean, with headquarters at Malta, and Mr. Haldane on Thursday said in the House he would take this opportunity of making an announcement as to the future arrangements for the conduct of the civil and military affairs in Malta. The King had approved the Duke of Connaught being appointed as Field-Marshal Commander-in-Chief and High Commissioner for the Mediterranean. The force under His Royal Highness would comprise the garrisons at Gibraltar and Malta, with the detachments in Crete and Cyprus, and the British troops quartered in Egypt and the Soudan. As all matters of local military administration would continue to be disposed of by the Governors of Gibraltar and Malta and the general officer commanding in Egypt, His Royal Highness would be able to devote his attention to inspection and training and to the consideration of questions of strategy and defence. For the internal administration of Gibraltar and Malta the respective Governors would remain solely responsible. Similarly in Egypt and the Soudan, all civil and political matters would be dealt with as heretofore by the Agent and Consul-General in Egypt, to whom the Governor-Generals of Egypt and the Soudan would continue to be responsible. In regard to questions of policy which involved military considerations, the Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief and High Commissioner would be consulted by the representatives of the Foreign and Colonial Offices before they laid their views on such questions before their respective departments. He might add that the creation of this new command would cause no increase of expenditure. The date at which His Royal Highness would take up his new command was not yet definitely fixed.

THE DISQUIET IN BELFAST.

The strikers in Belfast endeavoured on Friday afternoon to destroy a waggon. As troops approached they were attacked with stones. The soldiers thereupon fired and charged the strikers with fixed bayonets, driving them back.

NEW TARIFF IN AUSTRALIA.

The new tariff which took effect on Friday provides the following rates of duties: 1 shilling per hundredweight on cement; 30% on gloves, 25 on mineral waters, 25 on galvanised iron, 20 on cutlery and agricultural machinery, 25 to 30 on transport and mining machinery, 35 on pottery and 30 on ammunition, all on the declared value. Whether the new rate of 12 1/2% on pig iron will be maintained depends upon the new law providing a premium on the export of iron being passed or not.



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NEWS FROM AMERICA.

STRIKE OF TELEGRAPHISTS.

At Chicago the telegraphists of the Western Union Telegraph Company, whose enormous business extends over the whole of the United States, ceased work at midnight on Friday, as a protest against the discharge of an official at Los Angeles. As Chicago is the central relay point of the telegraph service throughout the country, the service to distant places is completely paralysed. In official circles it is said that this strike is only the forerunner of a great strike movement which will lead to the interruption of all telegraphic communication throughout the States and Canada.

THE STRIKE IN ANTWERP.

Seven hundred Englishmen working in Antwerp harbour on Friday were pelted with stones by 500 strikers. The police dispersed the mob with their swords. The employers have notified to the mayor their decision not to confer with the delegates of the workmen.

THE KING OF SIAM.

The King of Siam arrived in Wilhelmshöhe at 4.30 on Friday and was met at the station by the Emperor. Their Majesties drove en auto to the castle where the Empress received the Eastern King. After a dinner in his honour the King of Siam was escorted by the Emperor to Kassel.

KINGS IN BUSINESS.

The late Mr. Cecil Rhodes once said with grim emphasis that the Kaiser is a man of business. The same tribute may be paid to his mild-looking Majesty of Siam, whose tour in Europe is concerned with various pioneering enterprises for his country's good. He is now negotiating in Germany, and says that Americans are making no end of money by exporting teak.

MOROCCAN AFFAIRS.

The following telegrams regarding the Moroccan difficulty are to hand:—

Tangier: The cruiser "Forbin" arrived here from Casablanca, whence she sailed after having landed the troops, and reports that 2,000 troops have occupied the town which has been completely plundered and set on fire. The Marines lost 2 dead and 15 wounded. Quiet prevails and in spite of the condition of the town the colonists have gone ashore again and returned to their houses.

The British consul at Mazagan has asked in a wireless message for the despatch of a British steamer.

Tangier: After the bombardment of the Arabian quarter and the environs of Casablanca a battalion of the Foreign Legion was landed by Admiral Philibert, and occupied the shore. The gates and walls were then blown in by the Engineers and also occupied; whenever natives banded together they were dispersed by the guns. The S.S. "Nive" arrived on Thursday and landed 2,200 troops. The armoured cruiser "Amiral Aube" was despatched to Mazagan.

London: *Reuter* reports from Mogador that the news of the bombardment of Casablanca has intensified the animosity of the natives against the French. So far quiet prevails in Marakesh but disturbances are feared.

Madrid: The Minister of the Interior stated that the Government would send troops in greater numbers for the protection of Europeans.