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LORD CURZON AND THE PEERAGE.

Lord Curzon became Viceroy of India on the stipulation that he should not be deprived of the opportunity of re-entering party politics at the end of his term of office. What he meant was quite clear from the fact that he preferred an Irish peerage to an English one. Hitherto it has been customary either to choose a Viceroy from the House of Lords, or else to give him a seat there on his return. An Irish peerage does not of course carry with it a seat in the House of Lords beyond the possibility of a representative one, and in 1898 Lord Curzon did not contemplate making use of this avenue. It was his desire to return to the House of Commons in whose debates he had shown such marked ability. This intention, however, he has been unable to carry out on account of the state of his health; and, acting on medical advice he has decided to transfer his future to the House of Lords. But Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, perhaps not altogether unjustly, refused Lord Curzon's request to place him on a level with all previous Viceroys of India by making him a peer of the United Kingdom. We can scarcely blame him for refusing to place a powerful weapon in the hands of a formidable opponent. Everybody must regret the unsatisfactory state of Lord Curzon's health; his counsels would have been a weighty addition to the strength of the House of Commons, although perhaps the share of a man of his experience and temperament in the rough-and-tumble of debate might have been inexpedient from several points of view: it would, at least, have been too complete a reversal of the accustomed march of distinctions, and would have been liable to be misinterpreted by native Indian opinion. In the House of Lords his presence would be not only welcome but necessary. His experience, his great knowledge, his debating skill, the force of his convictions are more than sufficient to recommend him to his fellow-peers in the House of Lords, and will, we trust, be able to secure his election to a representative seat among the Irish peers.

The decision of Lord Curzon to offer his candidature for the vacancy created by the death of Lord Kilmaine was made public some days ago. In the circular which he issued to the Irish peers, and which is endorsed by the Duke of Abercorn and Lord Londonderry, Lord Curzon briefly asks them to overlook the possibility that there were many considerations which might induce them to prefer a peer more directly connected with Ireland. He pledges himself to the study of Irish affairs, and his supporters further express their confidence in his fitness to advise on them. These assurances are doubtless right and proper, even if they are in this instance a little superfluous. Whether we agree or differ as to Lord Curzon's policy when Viceroy, his whole public career has been a model of high-minded endeavour and honest application. For him politics is not a game in which one sits on the fence and waits for chances, but an earnest business involving human beings and national welfare. More than almost any statesman today does he impress us with a sense of conscientiousness in affairs; he does not forget either the magnitude of his tasks or the meaning of his problems. Statesmanship is not in his case merely an intellectual exercise, but a vast responsibility to which he is fully alive. With the advance of democracy this type is getting more and more rare in politics. Far be it from us to suggest that the hands of the politician today are less clean than they were four or five decades ago; but it will scarcely be denied that just as any striving after impressive oratory is anathema to the Lower House so all attempts to carry political effort beyond rigid professional limits are more and more discouraged. Lord Curzon has not completely broken with the traditions of the past. It is not merely that his full periods recall the days when true eloquence was a political asset, but that he has resolutely shut his eyes to the



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petty issues and mean expedients too prominent in recent political methods. Now that the Unionist party is gaining strength both from the deficiencies of its opponents and the clearing up of the real issues of controversy the addition of Lord Curzon to its fighting ranks would bring an added power and efficiency.

NEW YORK VINDICATED.

The whole country has been hurling brickbats at New York on account of the bad conduct of Wall Street. An unexpected champion of New York's good-heartedness, says *Life*, is found in Montreal. The basis of the Montreal man's praise of New York's social side is a local newspaper's review of *The Rejuvenation of Aunt Mary*, in which occur the following statements: "The New York of Miss Warner's conception is not the New York of blatant boudoirism set before us in the comedies of young Cohan, but an aggregation of nice people whose chief characteristic is their scientific ability to have a good time themselves and to provide one for others. Incidentally, we believe it to be quite as accurate as Mr. Cohan's and a great deal nicer. If New York cares to see itself presented in a decent and optimistic light, this play should be certain of a long and successful run."

Commenting on this our Montreal champion says: "Judging from past criticisms appearing in your paper your opinion considerably coincides with that of the critic here as to certain comedies depicting the manners of the people of New York. If the writer did not know some New York people personally he would long ago have come to the conclusion that the men of that big city were a bunch of rounders and boudoirs. It is, therefore, a good thing once in a while to have a comedy like *Aunt Mary* come to dispel the incorrect impression which provincials may have who have never visited New York."

Quite as remarkable as that any one outside should give us New Yorkers credit for being anything but a collection of Wall Street sharks, is that any one, anywhere, should take the stage creations of Mr. George M. Cohan as representing anything but the delirious fancies of a mind saturated with Tenderloin standards and Tenderloin ideals. In spite of Wall Street's bad behaviour and Mr. Cohan's vulgarities, our Montreal friend is entirely right to remain firm in his belief that New York still contains quite a few persons who are honest in money matters and refined and decent in their manners and conduct.

EXACTLY.

"Walnuts," remarks a contemporary, "form an excuse for the Christmas port." The port, it may be added, forming an excuse for a few Christmas chestnuts.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

According to a Washington despatch the Government revenue during the month of December amounted to 47,283,826 dollars, as against disbursements amounting to 56,082,414 dollars.

MINE DISASTER IN NEW MEXICO.

It is reported from El Paso (Texas) that an explosion in a mine near San Antonio has resulted in the entombment of thirty miners. It is feared that they are all dead.

AMMUNITION FOR THE PHILIPPINES.

The Washington correspondent of the *Morning Post* cabled on Wednesday that large quantities of ammunition have been shipped for the supply of the troops and coast defences in the Philippine Islands, together with torpedoes and submarine mines for the protection of the harbours.

NEW YORK BANK REGULATIONS.

According to a cable of yesterday from Albany, Governor Hughes, in his annual message to the Legislative Assembly of New York State, recommends precise limitation of the business transactions of commercial and finance institutions, so that Trust companies which accept repayable deposits or engage in savings-bank business shall be subjected to the same limitations in respect of their reserves as the banks. In the annual report of the State Superintendent of Banks, which has also been published, it is proposed that the minimum amount of the reserves shall be fixed:—for the State banks, in the city of New York, at 25%, in all other places at 15% of the deposits; for the Trust companies, in the city of New York at 15%, in all other places at 10% of the deposits. Further, it is notified in the report that for the future a weekly statement showing their position will be required from the State Banks, such as is rendered by the Clearing House banks.

NEWS FROM FRANCE.

THE CRUSADE AGAINST ANTI-MILITARISM.

Fourteen anti-militarists were sentenced to terms of imprisonment from ten months to one year by a jury at Paris on Wednesday, for inciting soldiers to insubordination and desertion. Two soldiers were among those sentenced. Three of the accused were acquitted.

NEWS FROM RUSSIA.

THE WYBORG MANIFESTO PROSECUTION.

The proceedings against those members of the second Duma who signed the Wyborg manifesto were concluded on Tuesday. Three of the accused were acquitted, all the others receiving a sentence of three months' imprisonment.

SANGUINARY RIOTS IN BESSARABIA.

The *Frankfurter Zeitung* reports from Odessa that great unrest prevails in the Government of Bessarabia owing to a recent circular note from the Minister of the Interior respecting the immediate collection of taxes. This note has resulted in a terrible state of affairs; sanguinary collisions have taken place between the police and peasants, eleven being killed and many wounded. Dragoons have been ordered to the scene of the rioting.

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES IN FINLAND.

With reference to the reports recently published as to the despatch of troops to Finland, it was authoritatively stated in St. Petersburg on Tuesday that the light companies of the Guard regiments in St. Petersburg had been sent to the Finnish frontier, chiefly to prevent Russian terrorists from crossing it. In particular, orders had been given for a stricter watch over the Government of Wyborg, in order to render impossible the formation of a revolutionary centre in the immediate neighbourhood of St. Petersburg.

RUSSIAN POLICE OFFICIAL SHOT.

From Samara it is reported that Colonel Bobtsov, a superintendent of police, was fired at in a crowded street on Wednesday by an unknown man. The colonel was instantly killed.

PERSIAN AFFAIRS.

A telegram from Teheran of the 31st December states that all the Ministers were present at the meeting of the Parliament on that day, to answer an interpellation with reference to the legal prosecution of persons alleged to be responsible for the recent disturbances. The interpellation was the