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A RETROSPECT.

(From our London correspondent.)

London, July 28.

The season is over—at last! Even debutantes and millionaires will breathe that exclamation thankfully. For, if the season has been a brilliant one, it has also been uncommonly strenuous, crowded and exhausting. Today, in spite of intermittent sunshine, is one of those grey and sultry manifestations of late summer which we pay as the price of radiant sunshine or of an escape from rain, but its drabness is fitting to the time. Such days, and other days of sun and dust, of rain and dulness, we must look for during August and early September; it is but the prelude to the trials of the Londoner during the holiday season of empty houses, drawn blinds and aimless days. This is equally appropriate to the mood of the Londoner who remains in town and the Londoner who goes out of it; the one solaces himself by grumbling, the other by exaltation; and for both conditions to find due expression London must be intolerable.

If a single adjective must be found to sum up the characteristics of the past three months that adjective will be "cosmopolitan." All the world has been here. The Franco-British Exhibition and the Olympic Games are naturally responsible for the abnormal influx from all countries, but behind it is also the Anglo-French *entente* with its tendency to insure an exchange of visits between Paris and London. During the last seven or eight weeks the number of foreigners of all nations and classes to be met within a two-mile radius of Charing Cross has been incredibly large; strange voices, speaking in good, indifferent, and broken English, and in every language of Europe, have been rising above the roar of the traffic; un-English figures in un-English clothes, handsome men and women of a type other than the Anglo-Saxon, have given an additional picturesqueness to the human stream of the streets; in the theatres, the parks, the restaurants, the galleries, wherever pleasure and interest beckon, our guests have been conspicuous by their apparent enjoyment and good humour. This is gratifying to the "insular" sense (of such evil name).

What the Exhibition left incomplete in the mutual understanding of France and England the visit of President Fallières completed. From every standpoint that visit was an unqualified success—whether from that of popular enthusiasm, or social splendour, or political felicity, or spectacular magnificence. The name of the President of the French Republic or his likeness is everywhere greeted with the loudest applause. Both for his own sake and for the sake of the great interests he represented the memory of his visit is kept green, and seems likely to be so kept for a long time to come.

If international politics have been interesting, home politics have been dull. The greatest interest of the session, the Old Age Pensions Bill, did not somehow reach the point of full controversial vitality; and the air of indifference behind the discussions on this, as on the Licensing Bill, has been very appreciable. The agitation for woman suffrage reached the highest level it has attained so far in the great Sunday demonstration in Hyde Park, and has thus perhaps gained the third place among the leading political interests. The Reval meeting, the discussion in the House of Commons, and the exclusion of Mr. Keir Hardie and some others from King Edward's garden party at Windsor have provided other topics of discussion varying in gravity according to the spirit in which they have been conducted; while the bad news from India and the meeting of the seventeenth Universal Peace Congress raise other questions which will continue the political interest into the next month.

Socially, the season has been no less exceptional than in other respects. The number of leading dinner-parties and dances has been, if anything, greater than in previous years and has included many of a political character. Royalty has been very busy. The King, the Queen, and most members of the Royal family have honoured several town houses with their presence; they have danced in the State quadrille at some, and have watched the dancers at others. One unique feature of the Queen's activity has been her free and frank enjoy-



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ment of the pleasures of an ordinary people. She has paid surprise visits here and there, to the Temple Flower Show, to a sick girl in hospital, to the Franco-British Exhibition; and, joining in the interests of her subjects, she has laid aside the royal dignity in order to show the perfect grace of a mere lady.

There have been only a few events of any importance in the theatrical world. Mr. Pinero has written a good play and Mr. Shaw a good conversation; Mr. Somerset Maugham has demonstrated how easy it is to please managers; while Miss Maud Allan and Miss Isadora Duncan have been convincing London that dancing is an art. The music-halls have kept up their level, in respect both of skill and enterprise. As a proof of the last quality it is worth observing that Dorando, the virtual winner of the Marathon race, is appearing at two music-halls every evening for the purpose of making an Italian speech which scarcely anybody can understand. We live in an enlightened age, and it is clear that in spite of the pace at which we move we do not lose enthusiasm.

GENERAL NEWS.

NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

London, July 29.

Mr. Arnold Herbert asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he would make it a condition of the retention of firms upon the list of contractors to the Admiralty that they will undertake to insert in all contracts for the construction of ships of war for any foreign Power a provision that in the event of such Power desiring to sell any such warship it should be first offered to His Majesty's Government.—Mr. McKenna said the Government could not insist on the terms suggested. The contractor would have no means of enforcing such condition.—Mr. Herbert: But would not the Government be able to enforce such conditions in giving out contracts? (hear, hear).—Mr. McKenna could not see how it was to be done.—Mr. Herbert: Are not the right hon. gentleman's advisers capable of settling a form of contract which would give the British Government that power? Will the right hon. gentleman give me the opportunity of submitting a form of contract? (cheers and laughter).—Mr. McKenna: I should be glad to see it (hear, hear).

Mr. Bellairs asked the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he was aware that the King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions forbid naval officers holding any communications with the press and so prevent them from contradicting statements of a defamatory character; and whether, in the absence of any guidance in the King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions, he could state if they were free to take proceedings for libel when a newspaper of repute submits them to malicious and defamatory attacks?—Mr. McKenna replied with regard to the first part of the question that the existing rules as laid down in a circular letter of November 21 were that all persons belonging to the Fleet were forbidden to write for publication, or publish, or cause to be published either directly or indirectly any matter relating to the naval service, unless the permission of the Admiralty was first obtained. With regard to the second part of the question, an officer on half-pay or on the retired list would be free to act without reference to the Admiralty, subject to the paramount interests of the naval service; but if he was on full pay or serving under the Admiralty he would apply to the Admiralty for sanction of his proposed proceeding.—Mr. Bellairs

asked whether any statement could be made in reference to the alleged occurrence in the Channel Fleet under the command of Lord C. Beresford.—Mr. McKenna: That is an entirely different matter and has nothing to do with the question on the paper.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE EXPLAINS.

London, July 30.

In a letter to *The Times* of today, Mr. Lloyd George corrects the construction placed by that journal on his last speech, as an attack upon the maintenance of the two-Power standard for the British fleet. The Chancellor of the Exchequer writes: "I wished to convey the idea that the constant state of suspicion and alarm which is reprehensible in all great Powers is still more so in the United Kingdom with regard to the strength of its fleet. I said that, as our Navy protects the country from invasion and for that purpose is kept up to the two-Power standard, so the land army of Germany protects her from invasion, but is not maintained at the standard of her two most powerful neighbours. Consequently, nervousness and suspicion, although in themselves to be condemned, are more natural and less reprehensible on the side of Germany than on ours. I am sure that those who really heard my speech would be the last to construe it as an attack upon the two-Power standard."

MR. CARNEGIE'S ESCAPE.

London, July 29.

Mr. Carnegie had a narrow escape in an automobile accident at Inverness on Tuesday. He was travelling with Mrs. Carnegie and their daughter, Miss Margaret Carnegie, when their car collided with another automobile at the junction of Tomnahurich-street and Kenneth-street.

Mr. Carnegie's car escaped without much damage, a smashed lamp and a broken mud-guard constituting the chief damage. The front of the second car, however, was thrust into Mr. Carnegie's car, and the family had a very narrow escape from being badly hurt. The second car was severely damaged, and one of its front wheels was smashed.

Although suffering greatly from the shock, Mr. Carnegie and his wife and daughter were able to continue their journey to Skibo Castle, whither they were bound at the time.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S HEALTH.

Mr. Chamberlain, we are informed, has expressed himself as having enjoyed his stay at Lausanne, and is stronger and better than when he arrived. Dr. Dufour's verdict concerning his eyesight has relieved any apprehension which he might have entertained, and his decision to leave sooner than he had intended is attributed to the fact that he desires to travel while he feels so thoroughly able to undertake the journey. Mr. Chamberlain has recently had several long drives in the neighbourhood, and on Tuesday he spent a long time in the hotel garden.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

TERRIBLE AUTO SMASH ON LONG ISLAND.

New York, July 29.

A terrible motor accident, resulting in the loss of several lives, has occurred near Oyster Bay. A large automobile, conveying five persons, was traversing a level crossing when an express train which had been approaching unnoticed dashed into the car with terrible results.

Miss Lydia Townsend, Frank Smith, and the chauffeur were killed on the spot; Miss Beatrice Eddy, the young daughter of Gen. Lloyd Robinson, who is the son of a wealthy Trust magnate, was badly hurt, while another occupant of the motor car escaped with slight injuries.

The blame for the tragedy appears to rest upon the chauffeur, though how the car was allowed to get on to the line is at present a mystery.

ON THE TRACK OF STANDARD OIL.

Leno, Mass., July 29.

The Attorney General, Mr. Bonaparte, said here today that the Government intended seriously to apply themselves to obtaining a revision of the latest judicial decision in the process against the Standard Oil Company. All the charges brought against the Standard Oil Company of giving or taking rebates would be examined.

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