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THE IV. ESPERANTO CONGRESS.

The first meeting of the Fourth Esperanto Congress takes place at Weisser Hirsch this morning, though the Congress does not officially open until tomorrow. Most of the delegates have already arrived in the city, the green hat-band bearing the Esperanto star being a familiar sight in all the main streets. The Dresden municipal authorities deserve great praise for the official encouragement they have shown this year's Congress. Besides contributing the substantial sum of five thousand marks to necessary expenses in connection with the meetings at Weisser Hirsch, they have placed the city street cars at the complete disposal of the Congressists free of charge; and have also taken measures to facilitate the convenience of strangers by placing on duty at important points policemen conversant with Esperanto. Furthermore, the municipality will also gratuitously provide steamers for excursions on the Elbe to Meissen and various points in Saxon Switzerland. Dresden is thus creating for itself a reputation for progressiveness that will in no way detract from the inherent charm of the city, while increased international popularity cannot fail to accrue.

We have been fortunate enough to meet many delegates from England and other countries, all of whom report that the Esperantist movement continues to make phenomenal progress. When conversing with these delegates it is impossible to overlook the intense enthusiasm they feel for the subject at heart. Undaunted by indifference, and occasionally that ridicule affected by people too ignorant to understand the rudiments of the movement, they steadily progress with eyes fixed always on the goal. They claim that Esperanto is an influence more powerful than any other to promote amity among the nations of the earth; that it enables the Occident and the Orient to meet on the common ground of speech and the resulting exchange of ideas; and that all racial antipathies based upon misunderstanding must perforce disappear when each nation is able to express to its neighbours truthful popular opinion.

Some of these assertions are doubtless open to question. History, for instance, teaches us that a common language has done little towards promoting peace, and that internecine conflict, such as the American Civil War, is invariably pursued with greater hatred than a struggle between two nations of different speech. However this may be, the advantages of Esperanto are so manifest that its opponents have so far failed to make out a substantial case. Their stock argument that it only adds another to the existing medley of tongues is singularly weak, when it is remembered that no less than eight distinct languages are spoken within the confines of Hungary alone. The argument that one of the existing European languages should be adopted as a means of international communication is equally impotent, as this suggestion, apart from technical difficulties, could not be carried through owing to national jealousy. Esperanto possesses the fundamental advantage of simplicity; it is peculiar to no individual race; and its advocates claim that the rock of pronunciation on which so many so-called "international" languages split may be avoided by attention to the rules on this point laid down by Dr. Zamenhof. Our personal opinion is that Esperanto has a great future, and that generations to come will extol its creator as a world's benefactor.

GENERAL NEWS.

KING EDWARD'S APARTMENTS AT MARIENBAD.

A Paris contemporary reports from Marienbad that newspaper correspondents are arriving by every train from all parts of Europe in consequence of King Edward's arrival. Prince von Liechtenstein, Governor of the district, has issued a notice requesting the inhabitants and visitors to abstain

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from mobbing the King whenever he appears in public, and to remember that he comes for quiet and privacy. He enjoins them not to annoy His Majesty by over-enthusiastic attention.

King Edward is stopping at the Hotel Weimar, as on previous occasions, and occupies the central rooms on the first floor in the left wing. A great deal of trouble has been taken to arrange the rooms comfortably, and each has been decorated in a different colour. One room, which can be used as a dining-room, has a round table with seats for eight persons. The carpet, curtains, etc., are of dark green. In this room stands a large writing table, with a fine Vienna bronze on it.

The salon, which opens from this room, is in wine-red colour and hung with silk. It contains a fine oil painting of the King himself, which hangs over a writing-table. The portrait is the work of Herr Alberti, of Vienna, and represents the King in a general's uniform. A companion picture is a portrait of the Emperor Franz Josef. There are plenty of comfortable chairs and sofas and a delightfully artistic screen. Here, too, is Unger's "Veritas" in Mahogany, which is the wood of the salon furniture. A balcony opens from the salon, from which the King will have a delightful view over the town and away to the hills beyond. Below him will stretch the promenade, with its ever-moving crowd of water-drinkers.

The bedroom is hung with cloth harmonizing with the brass bedstead, which is extremely massive and handsome. One picture only hangs in this room, "Das malende Mädchen," by Jakesch.

The dressing-room is in blue, as is everything in the bathroom also, even to the bath towels, which are blue and white. A weighing-machine stands in the bathroom, for the King likes to be weighed every day to see what progress he is making with his "cure." There is, of course, a whole suite of rooms for those in waiting on the King, as well as his personal servants.

NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

THE EXPLOSION AT THE FRANCO-BRITISH EXHIBITION.

London, August 14.
Some further particulars of the balloon explosion at the Anglo-French Exhibition are as follows: The balloon was filled with hydrogen gas for the first experimental trip. The proprietor, Captain Lovelace, noticed a rent in the outer envelope and asked his secretary, Miss Hill, to sew it up. While that was being done, a fearful explosion occurred. The hall, in which the balloon was, was filled with flame and the unfortunate people who were in it rushed about, themselves in flames. The force of the explosion was so great that hundreds of people in the neighbourhood of the hall were thrown down. Miss Hill was apparently killed instantly. The lives of many of the injured are despaired of. The explosion is said to have been due to a short electrical circuit.

NEWS FROM AMERICA.

U. S. FLEET AT AUCKLAND.

Auckland, August 14.

Admiral Sperry and his officers were present yesterday at the inauguration by the Premier, Sir Joseph Ward, of the new bath house at Rotorua. A great gathering of Europeans and Maoris welcomed the American sailors.

The Maoris executed war dances for the entertainment of the visitors.

Cordial speeches were exchanged between Admiral Sperry and the Maoris. The party will return hither tomorrow. In the meantime lavish entertainments continue at Auckland for the officers and men who have not gone to Rotorua.

Auckland, August 14.

On Thursday night an American naval patrol were engaged in arresting seamen who had overstayed their shore leave, when the crowds in the street protested against the interference of the patrol, threatening them with violence. Thereupon the American sailors drew their revolvers, and it looked as though serious trouble was imminent. The arrival of police, however, prevented a collision, the crowd being dispersed and the patrol escorted back to the landing-place under police protection.

FUGITIVE EX-GOVERNOR TO STAND TRIAL.

New York, August 14.

It is reported from Louisville, in Kentucky, that the former Governor of Kentucky, William Taylor, who has been for eight years a fugitive in the State of Indiana, intends after the November elections to return to his native town and give himself up to the judicial authority, a proceeding which is likely to give rise to a sensational political trial. Taylor was elected Governor of Kentucky by the Republicans. During the electoral campaign, which was a fierce one, Taylor's Democrat opponent was shot, and Taylor was accused of having been privy to the murder. When the Democrats carried the election Taylor fled from the State, fearing that he would be convicted without consideration whether he was guilty or not.

PROSPERITY AMIDST POVERTY.

New York, August 14.

The so-called Prosperity Congress of the American Commercial Travellers' Union began today. The object of the Congress is to restore public confidence and to revive trade. The Congress is only to last two days.

The unemployed attempted to make a demonstration which should show the Congress the extent of the want of employment in New York. The demonstration, however, was prevented by the police. The committee of the unemployed thereupon sent a letter to the Congress, stating that there are more than 40,000 persons in the city who are penniless and starving.

TERRIBLE EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELLERS IN PORTUGAL.

Berlin, August 14.

A telegram from Madrid gives an account of a startling railway adventure which recently occurred in Portugal to a train on the line between Oporto and Lisbon.

A forest fire broke out on this section in the neighbourhood of Algeira and spread quickly over the immense forest. When the conflagration was at its height the Lisbon express came at full speed out of the neighbouring valley and drove into the blazing forest.

The driver saw that it would be fatal to stop. He put his locomotive at its top speed and rushed through the flames, extending over several kilometres. Of the passengers, who were in a terrible state of excitement and terror and whose shrieks filled the train from one end to the other, not a single one escaped scatheless. Many of them were terribly burned.

The carriages were all charred, and some of them caught fire before the train completed its terrible journey. Many passengers are in treatment at the hospital of Oporto. The Portuguese telegraph censorship has hitherto prevented details of the catastrophe becoming public.