

THURSDAY EVENING FEBRUARY 4, 1904

DAME RUMOUR AND CITY PROGRESS.

Rumour's tongue has been busy lately, and one or two canals have been eagerly discussed by the citizens. One of these was the generally accepted statement that the confectionery works of Messrs. Geary, of Charlotte's Quay, had been, or were to be immediately closed, and that in consequence a good number of employees had been thrown out of employment. One of the reasons given for the step, was that the manufactured confectionery could be sent over from Germany, France, and other places, carriage paid, and sold in the British market at a less price than the local cost of the sugar used in its manufacture. Then, again, possibly in consequence of the numerous applications for assistance from the Guardians, it has been freely stated that the Limerick Clothing Factory has been shut up, while yet another rumour had it that some wealthy Jews were in negotiation for its purchase, and that the present "small army" of workers there were to be dispossessed by detachments from the sweating dens of White-chapel and elsewhere. If either of these rumours had any foundation in fact, it would indeed be a serious look out for the workers in the city, but happily they have not. As far as Geary's is concerned, a representative of the "Limerick Chronicle" has investigated the matter, and his report is briefly "Geary's have not closed up, nor are they going to." This, therefore, disposes of that rumour, and we are glad it is so. In the interview with Mr. Geary that gentleman was kind enough to give his opinion as to the cause of the "slump" in the confectionery trade. This, he pointed out, was due to the fact that bounties have been taken off sugar in continental countries and duty put on here. For instance in France, people were paying 7d a lb for sugar until bounties were taken off, when sugar fell to 5d, a price at which sugar was never sold in France at any previous period. Then in Germany, Belgium, France and other countries, the refiners kept up the price at home, and whatever surplus sugar was left was sent to this country. In this country sweet manufacturers were paying (until the duty was put on) about 9s per cwt delivered here. Now they were paying over 15s per cwt., there having been a duty of 4s 6d. per cwt. added. This had a serious effect on the confectionery trade throughout the Kingdom, and it is the prevailing belief that not a single manufacturer made money last year. There are so many manufacturers, that the public won't pay in advance for confectionery. They are all fighting for a share of what is going, and while some manufacturers might desire to raise the price, there are others who are prepared to work at a loss in the hope of better times. His firm was about to cease

which ever provided gossip to interest the people. It is curious how a rumour once started goes the round, and is implicitly believed in by those who pass it on, never troubling to ascertain whether it is right or wrong. We have been told that we are practically on the eve of an industrial collapse. It is our pleasing duty to give the facts as they are, and our encouraging hope that the pessimists will be proved to be entirely wrong for many a long day to come. There is need for work for those who are willing to do it. It would be nothing short of a calamity if our industrial enterprises could not provide that work for our people. Happily, public spirit is not diminishing, and for this the workers themselves, and the city which would suffer, have reason to be devoutly thankful.

CURRENT COMMENT.

CORPORATION DAY MEETINGS.

We have reason to believe there is a strong feeling within the Council Chamber and outside it, that Councillor Sheahan's motion in favour of holding day meetings of that body should not be allowed to drop. It suffered defeat at the last meeting when there was not a full Council present, but if brought on again will, we trust, meet with the success it deserves. Meetings of the Cork and Dublin Corporations—in both of which it will be remembered the democratic element is largely represented—are held by day. Why Limerick should be an exception we fail to see. We feel assured that some *modus vivendi* could be arrived at by which the labour members could attend the Council meetings at noon, just as many of them have for years attended the public bodies in the city which meet in the day time, and of which they are members. There can be no question that the business would be more expeditiously discharged in the day time than at night, for the presence or the interruption of the "gallery" would probably in the former circumstances be conspicuous by its absence. Such, at all events, was the case, except on rare occasions, under the old regime. Then, again, day meetings would we should think, be a convenience to the officials, and lastly, if they are to be considered at all—the members of the Press, who under present circumstances after their ordinary day's work, have to spend their evening as well in the heated atmosphere of the Council Chamber. From every point of view, therefore, we say that a reversion to day meetings is desirable—and we are not without hope that in the end it will commend itself to the good sense of the majority of the members of the Council.

ALIEN DUMPING.

Among the several interesting matters touched on in the King's speech, there is one which is likely to have a far reaching effect on the industrial community of Great Britain. This is the projected legislation dealing with the alien problem. For a long time Great Britain has been the dumping ground of all sorts and conditions of aliens, who neither add to the commercial prosperity of the country nor to its peace and order. The time has long since come when some effort should be made to prevent the rag-tag and bobtail, the scum of other nations settling amongst us, degrading, robbing, and

industries, and throws British workmen out of employment, it would be hard to beat the foll jug circular letter just received by a leading of London dry goods merchants. It is from a well-known German hotel in Finsl Square—

23th January, 1904.

Dear Sir,—I beg to inform your herew that I have come over to this country with splendid collection of COTTON BLOUSE MATERIAL for the summer season, ranging from 2 1/2d. 11d. per yard. The patterns are of the LATEST FASHION, and sold at an EXCEPTIONAL low price. My house, Messrs. ——— & C. VIENNA, being one of the largest and best known manufacturing firms of Austria, we to introduce their quite new designs into country at any price, quite disregarding their own profit [italics ours]. Our two large warehouses at ——— and ——— in Austria enable us to get even the largest orders executed within the very shortest time. In addition to this, we always have a large stock. Should you feel inclined to profit by this opportunity, kindly advise when it is convenient for me to call upon you, and oblige.

Very respectfully yours,

Comment on the above is needless, but cannot refrain from asking what effect this of thing is likely to have upon the employ and wages of the operatives in similar industry in Great Britain.

THOUGHTS FOR TO-NIGHT AND TO-MORROW.

Onward, onward let us press
Through the path of duty,
Virtue is true happiness;
Excellence true beauty.

James Montgomery

Speak gently! it is better far
To rule by love than fear;
Speak gently! and let no harsh word
mar
The good we may do here.

Hangford

NEWS-NOTES AND NOTICES.

FIRMNESS WHICH IS REQUIRED.

The New Urban Council at Kilrush begun well in one respect at all events seems that what our reporter calls "a curious practice" has hitherto been in with regard to the employment of those should keep the streets and roads clean overseer is furnished with a list of those take on, and those he may not. He has power to dismiss any man, even though knows that man is not doing his work or satisfaction. This is a nice state of another evidence of how labour control its own. Kilrush road users should be see that the end of that sort of thing is a The Council have determined to stop it, "fair day's wage for a fair day's work" the future not be quite so one-sided an ament as it seems to have been lately. Kilrush. "The cleansing of the Augean has evidently begun. At the same time difficult to understand the penny-wisepound foolish policy adopted with regard annual horse fairs. Nowadays advertising soul of business, and the best business means its value. However, as to the effect of the light under the bushel, we must, as our respondent says, wait and see.

CANNOT FIND TIME TO GET MARRIED.

The Duke of Norfolk seemed to be embarrassed to find a spare day even for a wedding. The date originally fixed for the event was Wednesday, February 10th, but was afterwards appropriated for the

price at home, and whatever surplus sugar was left was sent to this country. In this country sweet manufacturers were paying (until the duty was put on) about 9s per cwt delivered here. Now they were paying over 15s. per cwt., there having been a duty of 4s. 6d. per cwt. added. This had a serious effect on the confectionery trade throughout the Kingdom, and it is the prevailing belief that not a single manufacturer made money last year. There are so many manufacturers, that the public won't pay in advance for confectionery. They are all fighting for a share of what is going, and while some manufacturers might desire to raise the price, there are others who are prepared to work at a loss in the hope of better times. His firm was about to cease confectionery business on this account, but when going into a close investigation they found that the confectionery business was so closely connected with the manufacture of biscuits that they could not separate one from the other. There has been formed in Ireland a Confectioners' Association, whose idea is to increase the prices, so that more prosperous times are anticipated. Then with regard to the Clothing Factory, the Vice-Chairman of the Guardians yesterday intimated that it had been closed, but, again, we are happily able to say, that is not true. Short time there has been, but with the advent of new and extensive orders just obtained, there is every probability that work will continue in full swing, and give employment to as many as heretofore. Perhaps the most curious rumour of all that the people have been busying themselves about, is that with regard to the Jews. All sorts of things, possible and impossible, have been stated as "facts." As for the assertion that the Jews were about to carry on the Clothing Factory, we have inquired into this, too, and find that there is absolutely no truth in it. The present proprietors have no intention of giving it up, and from the best sources we have ascertained that there was never the remotest idea on the part of the Jews, nor even a suggestion, for acquiring that or any other trading concern in the city. It is, however, true that some of the Jews who deal in a small and petty way, on the weekly instalment system, among the poorer classes of the community, have decided to give up their business and go elsewhere. The reason assigned for this is the determination of many of the more unscrupulous customers not to pay their debts already incurred, and the difficulty of doing business as heretofore. In other words, though the Jews admit that they are no longer physically molested, several of them have been practically ruined by the recent agitation, and find it difficult to make both ends meet, a thing which they declare the poorer ones among them, engaged in the drapery and kindred trades, have only just been able to do even while the weekly sixpences and shillings were paid up regularly. Of this matter, however, we not not seem to have heard the last, for we are informed that it has been taken up officially by influential Jews in England, and one of the first moves will be a question in the House of Commons at an early date, to be followed, as soon as practicable by other action in Parliament by members of the Jewish community inside the House of Commons and outside of it. Then, arising out of the Jewish question, Dame Rumour has been particularly busy with the name of the Rev. Father Creagh, who, it has been asserted, was about leaving the city, some quid nuncs even going so far as to mention his new appointment. This rumour, however, has, we are assured, been completely set at rest by the rev. gentleman himself. Speaking to his congregation this week, he said: "I hear it is rumoured in the town that I am about leaving you. Well so I am, for a time, but only for a fortnight, in order to conduct a mission in Belfast. Then I shall be back again to work among you as usual." This should dispose of the statements so freely made that Father Creagh was about to be superseded on account of his recent address relative to the Jews, for if any one should know, it is certainly the rev. gentleman himself, whose word is to be preferred to the most busy-tongued rumour.

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FOR DIGNITY?

The Under Sheriff of Kilrush having pointed out that there is no available room in the Courthouse at Kilrush in which the Urban Council can hold its meetings, some members of that body at their last meeting waxed somewhat wroth, and demanded that their request should be acceded to. The pleas for the Courthouse instead of the Assembly Room were curious. One was that there the rowdy barrier boys would cease from troubling, a point on which all the members did not seem agreed. Another was that as the Clerk to the Petty Sessions had a room to himself there, the Urban Council should be similarly accommodated. On the other hand there were those who pointed out that the Market Hall Assembly Room had done so long and would do still. Some might venture to suggest that it matters very little where the Council assemble, if they only do the public business for which they have been elected, effectively. Much is expected of the new Council to get the town out of the wretched condition into which the labour representation of the past few years has plunged it; but it won't be done by wasting time in quarrels about dignity or anything else which really doesn't matter to the people, so long as the town is properly looked after, and the ratepayer's convenience and pockets considered.

ARMY RECRUITING—AND PAY.

The letter which Viscount Wolsely has forwarded to a correspondent who called his attention to the falling off in Army recruiting is specially interesting in view of the fact that the ex-Commander-in-Chief is well known to have a leaning towards conscription. We have been assured by many persons who pose as military authorities that in conscription lies our one hope of national salvation. Viscount Wolsely reminds us that there is an alternative. It is to pay our soldiers according to the current rate of wages given for unskilled labour. Until that be done it is obvious that no Army which is recruited by voluntary enlistment can be really satisfactory. At present enlistment is a last resource for the young man who has failed to find other means of employment. In other words, the Army instead of having the pick of physically-fittest, usually has to make a selection from the rejected of commerce. Under such circumstances it is surely not surprising that so many have to be passed over by the medical inspectors.

DUMPING IN THE DRY GOODS TRADE.

As a specimen of the methods whereby the wily foreigner invades our markets, ruins British

"fair day's wage for a fair day's work" will for the future not be quite so one-sided an arrangement as it seems to have been lately. Bravo Kilrush. "The cleansing of the Augean stable" has evidently begun. At the same time it is difficult to understand the penny-wise and pound foolish policy adopted with regard to the annual horse fairs. Nowadays advertising is the soul of business, and the best business men know its value. However, as to the effect of hiding the light under the bushel, we must, as our correspondent says, wait and see.

CANNOT FIND TIME TO GET MARRIED.

The Duke of Norfolk seemed to be greatly embarrassed to find a spare day even for his own wedding. The date originally fixed for this event was Wednesday, February 10th, but this was afterwards appropriated for the Royal wedding at Windsor. Consequently a change was made, and the Ducal knot was to be tied a week earlier. Then an announcement appeared that the wedding would take place on February 9th, but it was afterwards discovered that the Duke would have to attend a Chapter of the Order of the Garter, which is to be held on that day. Another alteration had, therefore, to be made, and the Ducal wedding is now fixed for Thursday, February 11th. It is to be hoped that neither the Duke, nor the Hon. Gwendolen Maxwell are superstitious, or else the difficulty in finding a day for their marriage might well inspire them with forebodings.

AN INTERESTING REMINISCENCE.

The failure to sell the Caherconlish estate in lots in Limerick last week recalls to mind the early history of the Land League movement in the South of Ireland. The owner of the estate in those days, the late Daniel Fitzgerald Gabbett, contested the city against the late Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Spaight. Mr. Gabbett was successful in his candidature, and represented the City of Limerick for many years. On his way from Ennis, where he went in support of Mr. Lysaght Finegan, Mr. C. S. Parnell spoke in Limerick on behalf of Mr. Gabbett. Large-hearted and charitable to a degree, Mr. Gabbett was very popular, and though not much of a speaker his ready wit answered for a flow of oratory. The night before the polling he declared from the hustings that if elected, "though he could not speak, he would give the boys an Irish song." He was a capital vocalist, but (remarks the "Freeman") he failed to fulfil his promise on the occasion.

NAVAL AND MILITARY MANŒUVRES.

If rumour is correct, combined Naval and Military Manœuvres are to be one of the features of the present year. They have been constantly insisted upon as being most essential for the proper training of both the Army and Navy to ensure their understanding each other's methods when called upon to co-operate in time of war. It is said the proposal was first of all submitted by the Admiralty representatives of the Defence Committee, and has been adopted by the Commander-in-Chief as the basis for the scheme of Army Manœuvres, 1904.

ONE FOR THE "COO."

Several motorists have discovered that a collision with a cow is a more serious matter than Stephenson predicted of such an encounter with his locomotive. Only the other day a woman, well known in society, was seriously injured through a motor car upset, caused by a cow. The poor dog can be run over and killed with impunity, but the cow cannot be treated so cavalierly, and it would almost look as if that quiet, inoffensive animal were bent upon avenging the disparagement cast upon her species by Stephenson, as a single cow was last week sufficient to wreck a whole goods train, near Chester.

FATHER OF THE NAVY.

A correspondent says that although the late Admiral Keppel was indeed the "Father of the Fleet," the Admiral who has seen the longest service is still alive, this being Admiral Moorman, of Exmouth, who is ninety-two years old, and was afloat when Admiral Keppel was at his naval college.

A TALL STORY.

Cabbages in Jersey grow to a great height, and it is a common thing to see the stalks eight to twelve feet high. Many persons carry as curiosities walking-sticks made from these stalks. A certain man, says a correspondent

divided between and the three old deannied the poll conell sewerage in summer is po be provided from he declares to the pail syste advantage to 23 registered all suitable, bo overcrowding or unregistered, bu though some ar urges greater at public "conveni on the North St practice of keepi tion of water the serious po the North Circ residents there, several local me co-operation in the city, and the Public Health C

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The Earl of D opening of Par absence abroad his recovery fro which he has months.

A meeting of Irish Fiscal Ref day at the Great Mayo (President also present—Mr. Phillinson, juar Saunders, J. F. Burke, Oliver F. Count Plunkett. Arrangements coming public on February 11 spondence and were dealt with.

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The 1st Batta Potchefstroom, v for India. It Battalion Borda Thabetsimyo, Be

The Royal M E. M. Pakenham Army Pay Depa Captain Roger H vice Brevet Major

The monthly n Board was held t presided, and th McInerney and C Poe, Hosford, S Inspector.

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WINDO

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RAIL

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DUKE OF CONN

The Duke of C inspected the 1st which he is colon orders for India addressed the mer