

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

LONDON, January 17.

MOST PECULIAR.

A peculiar and somewhat amusing situation has been created by the action of His Majesty's advisers in relation to the loss of the Crown jewels and other objects collectively worth £50,000, from the College of Arms in Dublin Castle. When the attention of the Herald's College was first called to the disappearance of the jewels, and reported to Dublin Castle, the fact that the Office of Arms bore no trace of having been broken open in the ordinary meaning of the words, the Irish Government had a two-fold duty to perform, find the thief, and fix the responsibility for the existence of circumstances which made the disappearance of the regalia possible. This is the way to set about it.

The duty of finding the jewels and the thief or thieves or persons connected with the robbery was entrusted to the Dublin police—a body which has had little practice in the pursuit of expert criminals, and is very rarely called upon to investigate cases of extreme complexity.

It was a great pity that Scotland Yard was not put in sole charge of this extraordinary case. Scotland Yard has, indeed, been "invited to confer" with the Dublin authorities—to assist and to advise only when asked by the Irish police. Even this small share of the investigation has caused jealousy in Dublin, and it is notorious that the investigation of this case has been complicated and its unravelling retarded by reason of this unhappy state of things. Valuable time has been lost, and it is fairly safe to say that however near the thief may be to capture, his booty has been dissipated and placed beyond the possibility of identification.

It is an open secret that the College of Arms was entered by key, and that the safe was opened in the same regular manner. From this it is inferred that the thief had an accurate knowledge of that department, and that he or his prime confederate had an opportunity of obtaining duplicate keys. The limitation involved in this fact led not only to the most careful examination of every person connected with the College of Arms, but to searching inquiries into the antecedents of every officer and servant of the department, from Sir Arthur Vicars, the Ulster King of Arms, to whom the jewels were officially entrusted, down to the office boy. For all this the Government were forced to realise that they had no evidence with which to secure the conviction of anyone, and they have now commenced to discharge their second duty—the fixing of responsibility for the loss. Three interests are involved in this investigation. First, that of Sir Arthur Vicars, secondly the Commissioner of Police, upon whom devolves the maintenance of peace and order within the Castle walls, and thirdly the Board of Works, whose duty it is to provide accommodation for the storage of valuables.

The jewels were in the Castle. There is no suggestion that Sir Arthur Vicars has moved them. There is no evidence that they were taken by day, or that the keys were lost, lent, or stolen. Sir Arthur's contention was, from the first, that the place was opened by key on the night of the 5th.

As regards the case of the third-named interest involved, it is alleged that the Board of Works, after supplying a safe which could not be put in the strong room, owing to a mistake in the dimensions of the former, refused to supply another! Nor could Sir Arthur Vicars obtain leave to sleep on the premises. So Crown jewels valued at £50,000 were put in a safe in an outer office, and by reason of the desertion of the place at night, were placed in charge of a couple of constables who had to keep watch and ward over all the exits and entrances of a large, dimly lighted quadrangle.

In view of the conflicting interests involved, it was thought that the Government would proceed to endeavour to determine whether the blame for the loss rested on Sir Arthur Vicars, the Commissioner of Police, or the Board of Works by means of a full and public judicial investigation. Instead it appointed a Commission of Inquiry, which was in the nature of a secret tribunal, precluded by the terms of its warrant from the investigation of any matter not

directly bearing on the alleged negligence of Sir Arthur Vicars in the custody of the jewels, unable even to compel the attendance of witnesses, or to place them under the obligation of an oath, to enforce the production of documents, or to submit statements to the test of cross-examination.

Sir Arthur Vicars refused point blank to have anything to do with this commission, and demands a searching public and judicial inquiry. And, though the Commissioners are trying to coax him to their sittings by offering to take his evidence in public, together with that of any other witnesses he may think desirable to have examined, and further, inform him gravely that "they had heard much evidence which, in the absence of any explanation or answer on his part, seriously affects him in his office as custodian of the Crown jewels, and in respect of the care and vigilance with which he kept them," Sir Arthur remains obdurate, and the Commission goes on playing "Hamlet" with the Prince left out.

There are any number of queer rumours in circulation concerning the Government's desire to limit the scope of the inquiry, and to keep the proceedings private. One hint at a very grave scandal, involving "persons of consequence" in the Dublin Castle "set."

Sir Arthur meanwhile, is "moving heaven and earth" to bring about a public investigation of the circumstances surrounding the loss of the Regalia, and is being warmly supported by the Knights of St. Patrick, to which Order he belongs. They have, it is understood, petitioned the King, praying for a comprehensive judicial and public inquiry into the whole of this most peculiar case.



CAN DIAMONDS BE MADE?

An astonishing story of a man who says he can manufacture diamonds in an electric furnace comes from Paris. Lemoine, the inventor of the process, has been arrested on a charge of obtaining some £60,000 on false pretences from Sir Julius Wernher, the South African mining magnate, who had been led to believe in the genuineness of Lemoine's results. The whole story reads like a weird fable, and the scientific world generally is very sceptical about M. Lemoine and his "secret"; but the inventor himself sticks tenaciously to his claim. He offered to undertake experiments in the presence of the magistrate, and to forfeit to Sir Julius Wernher the whole of his possessions if he should fail to produce diamonds in his furnace. He demanded, however, at the same time, that Sir Julius Wernher should make a similar deposit to be handed over to himself as damages if his experiments were conclusive. Sir Julius asked time for reflection, and after conferring ten minutes with his lawyer, agreed to deposit 400,000fr. (£16,000) in a bank on the above conditions. Lemoine thereupon asked to be immediately set at liberty on bail. The judge seemed disposed to grant this request; but Sir Julius Wernher refused. Lemoine claimed that no experiments were possible in that case. "It is very difficult," he said "to manufacture diamonds. You don't succeed every time." The question of seizure of the document containing the secret deposited in a London bank then arose. Lemoine opposed the idea indignantly, urging that the magistrate had no right to violate a contract freely made between him and Sir Julius Wernher. He immediately telegraphed to the London bank prohibiting the removal of the paper deposited with it in June, 1905, and its transfer to any Paris agency of the bank.

Wrangling went on after this for some time. Lemoine wore and over again renewed his offer, but would abate no jot of it, while Sir Julius Wernher remained as inexorable. At last Lemoine cried: "Well, how much will you give me for the secret?" Sir Julius only repeated that he was ready to deposit £16,000, which would make £80,000 with what Lemoine had already received. Lemoine laughed: "What do you take me for? Do you remember our agreement? You told me yourself that we would propose the sale of my secret to the De Beers Company, and put the price at £5,000,000." It was Sir Julius's turn to laugh: £80,000 or nothing. And I am doing it handsomely. Your secret is a hoax."

If Lemoine is not sincere in his protestations and his offers, he is putting up an amazing "bluff." Several people who have witnessed the diamond-making experiments profess to believe them genuinely successful. Mr. Jackson, a London financier, when examined by the magistrate, stated that he had witnessed two successful experiments in Lemoine's laboratory in the Rue Lecourbe. The first time he was accompanied by a friend. Mr. Lemoine was stripped to the waist, so that no trickery was possible. He handed the materials to Mr. Jackson, who himself laid them in the receptacle, and when it was taken out of the electric oven, and cooled in a bucket of water, Mr. Jackson opened it, and found twenty five small diamonds in it. Lord Armstrong and M. Sabes were present when Mr. Jackson witnessed the second trial. The same precautions against trickery were adopted, and when the receptacle had been put into water they carried the bucket away in a motor-car. They had no tools to open the receptacle, but after M. Lemoine had left them to prepare tea they forced it open and saw thirty diamonds lying in it. Taking these diamonds they started for London, where they showed them to a jeweller, who was willing to buy them if he had a certificate proclaiming their mining origin. When they went to an expert, who, after examining the diamonds, said, "They come from the Jagersfontein mine. I often see some like them," and he gave them the certificate, which satisfied the jeweller, who bought them, adding, "If you have others like them I shall take them at the same figure." Mr. Jackson concluded by saying that he regarded the experiments as quite genuine and convincing, so, "When, on Christmas Day, Sir Julius Wernher, who had asked for an interview, told me that M. Lemoine was an impostor, that he had had him arrested, and asked me to join my complaint to his, I refused point-blank."

Masses of conflicting evidence are accumulating in this extraordinary case, and the magistrate finds himself in a serious dilemma. The simplest way to a decision would be the production of M. Lemoine's formula, which was deposited in a London bank. But the inventor refuse to reveal his secret, and the magistrate has apparently no power to order the document to be surrendered.

Toilet Hints.

(By a Well-known Lady Doctor.)

SORE LIPS

are not infrequently due to wearing a veil of cheap quality in damp, foggy weather, or to the habit of constantly biting the lips. The lips must be kept as dry as possible, and the following lip salve applied before going out of doors at this season of the year.

Alkanet root, 120 grains; almond-oil, two fluid ounces; oil of rose six minims; white beeswax, one ounce.

WHEN GOING TO A DANCE

try the effect of an hour's rest in the afternoon. But first take a basin of boiling water, and add to it a teaspoonful of simple tincture of benzoin. Cover your head with a towel, and hold your face over the steam, with your eyes shut, for three or four minutes. Then rinse the face in cold water and dry with a soft towel.

Sip a glass of hot milk and lie flat on your back, absolutely still, for an hour. A short dose will enhance the value of your rest considerably, and make all the difference to your appearance.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

in the form of outdoor games is less easily obtained in winter, so that ten minutes either at night or in the morning might be given up to simple exercises.

Try the following for a fortnight, and note the improvement in complexion, colour, and general health:

1. Lie flat on the floor, and slowly raise yourself into a sitting attitude whilst keeping the body stiff. Do this ten times in succession.
2. Stand erect, raise the arms straight above the head, and slowly bring the hands in a circle downwards to touch the feet, bending the waist only. This should be done ten times.
3. Stand erect, place the hands on the hips, and take twenty deep breaths with the mouth closed. Hold each breath for a few seconds, and then slowly expire. The corset must be removed before attempting these exercises, if full benefit is to be derived.

HANDS ROUGHENED BY HOUSEWORK

can be much improved and softened by the use of the following mixture. Take equal parts of olive oil and glycerine and mix well together.

Apply as follows: Wash and cleanse the hands thoroughly before going to bed with good soap and warm water; when partially dry, rub the mixture thoroughly into them.

This, if done regularly, will keep the hands beautifully soft and smooth. Hands that are carefully attended to will be very little hurt by housework, more especially if gloves are worn as much as possible when working.

CHRISTCHURCH MUSICAL PROFESSOR'S WORRIES.

Run Down owing to Constant Work.

Felt Dizzy and Faint; Lost his appetite and suffered from severe headaches. Cured by DR. WILLIAMS' PINK PILLS.

The condition known as run down usually results from overwork and worry. Energy becomes exhausted from too much "full steam ahead." The body can't stand the strain and there's a break-down. The signs of the trouble are plain. The robust look of health gives place to a drawn and care-worn expression. The patient suffers mental distress, cannot keep his mind on work, passes restless nights, turns against food and cannot digest it, feels exhausted after exertion, averts and trembles, while headaches, fits of dizziness and wretched spirits add to his misery.

What run down men and women need is more blood and toned nerves. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, by surcharging the impaired and weak blood, give tone to the exhausted nerves and build up the whole body. You'll find that people who take Dr. Williams' Pink Pills look healthy and happy.

Mr. Baron Solomon, of Christchurch, a Musical Professor, well-known in professional circles in New Zealand, was run down and knows what Dr. Williams' Pink Pills can do. He has studied in London, and his school of music in Christchurch has turned out some of the most promising talent to the Islands.

"About two years ago, owing to the constant stress of duties with a great number of pupils, I became thoroughly run down and my nerves got into a very bad state," said Mr. Solomon, Armagh-st., Christchurch, "I finally became so bad that frequently on going into my class room I would become dizzy and faint. I lost my appetite, and in fact for weeks I did not know what a decent meal was like. My head was frequently very bad. I attended two different doctors, but did not feel their treatment benefit me in the least. Finally on the advice of a lady friend I tried Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. First week I noticed an improvement. The second week I took six pills a day, and kept getting better all the while. I might mention that I continued with the pills for weeks, and finally was cured of everything. I have not even had a headache since, and I never faint now. I can honestly recommend Dr. Williams' Pink Pills to any one."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills do only one thing—they actually "make" new blood. They don't tinker with mere symptoms. They won't cure any disease that isn't caused by bad blood in the first place. But when Dr. Williams' Pink Pills replace bad blood with good blood, they strike straight at the root and cause of all common diseases like headaches, dizziness, and backaches, kidney trouble, liver complaint, biliousness, indigestion, anaemia, neuralgia, sciatitis, nervous exhaustion, failing powers, locomotor ataxia, and the special secret troubles that every woman knows but that none of them like to talk about, even to their doctors. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are sold by retailers and the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Wellington—3/ a box, six boxes 16/6, post free. Write for hints as to diet, etc.

Indignant Citizen: Say! Your boy threw a stone at me just now, and barely missed me. Mr. Grogan: Yes say he missed yet—Indignant Citizen: That's what I understood myself to remark.—Mr. Grogan: It was not my boy.—The New Century.