

GENERAL CABLES.

THE KING'S TOUR.

It is semi-officially stated in Rome that King Edward will visit that city on the 27th inst.

It is officially stated in Paris that nothing has been arranged as regards King Edward's meeting with President Loubet. Possibly they will meet in the course of M. Loubet's forthcoming trip in the Mediterranean.

Brilliant weather greeted the arrival of King Edward at Lisbon. Firing salutes, British and Portuguese warships escorted the King up the Tagus.

King Carlos, coming out aboard a Royal galley manned by eighty oarsmen, boarded the British Royal yacht, and gave King Edward a hearty welcome. Their interview lasted an hour and a-half.

After the interview on board the British Royal yacht between King Edward and King Carlos, further salutes were fired and a procession of historic barges followed. The first, containing their Majesties, had a flotilla of steamers in its train.

Indescribable enthusiasm was displayed on the landing of the King. A stately procession was then formed, their Majesties receiving one long ovation.

Thousands of people came from the provinces, and decorations were of the most liberal, the balconies being hung with rich embroideries.

Windows along the line of route were hired at from £20 to £50 apiece, and boxes at the opera, which was attended by their Majesties, realised from £50 to £75.

A dinner was given at the palace, and there were general rejoicings and illuminations at night.

King Edward took a holiday excursion to Cintra, a summer resort 43 miles from Lisbon. He had luncheon at the Pena Palace and afterwards received the Lisbon diplomatists and deputations from the Cortes.

Responding to the peers' address, His Majesty recalled the memories associated with Torres Vedras, where, in 1810, under the Duke of Wellington, the Anglo-Portuguese armies fought against the French. He added that happily both countries now enjoyed the most friendly relations with their former foe. An alliance, dating from many centuries back, renewed and confirmed, could only tend to the peaceful development of their respective countries and their colonies.

His Majesty, in responding to the Chambers' address, said: "I am much touched by the unprecedented mark of attention on your part to me on my visit. I regard it as a national demonstration. It is with the greatest pleasure that I have made my first visit since the accession of my dear cousin, your illustrious Sovereign. I assure you your presence and address are regarded by me as a renewed affirmation of the political alliance which has existed for centuries. I shall not easily forget the heartiness of the welcome accorded me by all classes of Portuguese statesmen. I recollect the statement made by Mr Chamberlain, who, in responding to the toast of his health by the Governor of Funchal, said that the Madeira Convention was the oldest convention in the British archives. It was the first treaty of offensive and defensive alliance made by Portugal and recently confirmed."

Mr Chamberlain is credited with purposely breaking his South African journey in order to make a speech preparatory to King Edward's visit to Portugal.

The apartments formerly used by Queen Margherita at the Quirinal are being prepared to accommodate King Edward, who will arrive in Rome on the 27th. King Edward and King Emmanuel will attend a naval review on the 28th and festivities will last until the 30th.

At the Vatican's instance it has been decided that King Edward will visit the Pope, probably on the occasion of his visit to the English college.

BRITISH BUDGET.

In the House of Commons Mr Balfour announced that the Budget would be delivered on April 23.

Mr Ritchie, Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking in the House of Commons, said he was aware that people in England with incomes from Australian sources paid double income tax, but he was unable to give them hope of any remission.

THE 'FRISCO MAIL.

The representative of the Oceanic Steamship Company, in a letter addressed on the 5th inst. to the Federal Postmaster-General, referring to the San Francisco and Vancouver mail services, and the differences in the intervals in the sailing of the vessels over the two routes, stated: "We asked Messrs. Spreckels if they would enter into a joint contract whereby there should be regular sailings, say, at ten days' intervals, first to one port and then the other, so that the mails for New York would leave either by one route or the other every ten days.

Messrs. Spreckels replied that they were perfectly willing to co-operate to bring about a regular mail service, but pointed out that unless the speed on the Vancouver route was brought up to that on the 'Frisco route, there would still be much irregularity in the time of delivery of mails. The letter also pointed out that owing to the improvements in the 'Frisco-New York railway system, and the Atlantic steam service acceleration, the 'Frisco route would be able to compete not only for the trans-Pacific but the European mails.

SOUTH AFRICA.

A serious mutiny has just taken place at Pretoria.

Owing to a brawl in the barracks a corporal of the Leinster Regiment was ordered to the guard-room.

His comrades, 22 in number, thereupon decided upon a rescue, fetched their rifles with the idea of carrying it into effect, and fired upon the escort.

The sergeant of the first party then ordered them to be arrested, and a struggle ensued, in which eighteen were wounded.

Full investigation will follow. Under the new railway scheme the rates for imported corn, grain, and flour carried from East London or Durban to Johannesburg have been reduced from 115/ to 70/, and from Delagoa Bay to Johannesburg from 100/ to 60/.

The rates for meat have been reduced by 25 per cent.

Several mass meetings of the miners and townsmen of Johannesburg have refused to resist by every means in their power the introduction of Asiatics, regarding such encouragement of immigration as inimical to the best interests of the country.

L.C.C. AFFAIRS.

The London County Council will issue shortly 5,000,000 3 per cent. shares. The price is fixed at 95s. Lord Welby, alderman and late chairman of the County Council, states that the Council will not issue further stock during the present year.

[The debt of the London County Council already amounts to £28,500,000.]

THE ARMY.

On the resuming of the defence question in the House of Commons, Mr Brodrick stated that the War Office believed that it was possible to improve upon the German quick-firing artillery. They were about to manufacture a weapon vastly superior to anything they had yet produced. Two hundred and twenty guns of the 4.7 type had been ordered, and 100 were now ready.

There was a scene in the House when Mr Brodrick rebuked the unseemly levity of the criticism of the Fourth Party, especially of Lord Hugh Cecil. The latter had accused Mr Brodrick of starving the artillery in order to spend money on the new Army Corps scheme.

SIR HECTOR MACDONALD.

The Rev Dr Campbell Stirling, lately returned from Ceylon, states that Sir Hector Macdonald was decidedly semi-unpopular in certain quarters, as he did not give parties, and take part in the social life of the island.

He warned the General of the existence of jealousy.

A reservist, who served under General Macdonald, shot himself owing to distress of mind as a result of his late commander's suicide.

The sympathisers of Sir Hector Macdonald resident in Paris have announced that they are prepared to spend £10,000 to vindicate his memory.

Thousands are visiting General Macdonald's grave daily. The Clan Macdonald Society is forming a memorial committee. Lord Goschen sent a wreath as well as the South Australian Caledonian Society, and the Scottish Corps.

The contents of the will of Sir Hector Macdonald have just been disclosed. The document is a simple one, and leaves everything the General possessed to his wife.

The Scottish societies in London have formed a committee to erect a national memorial to the late Sir Hector Macdonald. Subscriptions to the Edinburgh Memorial fund are pouring in to the Bank of Scotland from all parts.

Lady Macdonald and family have expressed their gratitude to the War Office for the sympathy shown them and for the help accorded them in the matter of the funeral.

Scotchmen in Canada are promoting a memorial to the late Sir Hector Macdonald.

IRISH LAND BILL.

In the House of Commons Mr Wyndham stated that Ireland's equivalent to the land grant was voted to England under the Education Act. It would be according to a population basis, £185,000.

Part of this sum would be devoted to meeting the losses incurred by flotation at 2 1/2 per cent, the stock to provide the money for land purchases, and the bulk of the remainder to be used in promoting economic developments.

Mr Wyndham added that Lord Iveagh and Sir W. J. Pirie were prepared under the happier circumstances now prevailing to provide transit facilities in certain test districts, and if the result proved satisfactory the system would be extended over Ireland. The announcement was received with cheers.

THE TROUBLE IN THE BALKANS.

It is unknown whether the pretext for the Albanian revolt is the proposed Macedonian reforms or whether it betokens a movement for Albanian autonomy. It is expected it will stimulate the Macedonian rising.

Special precautions have been taken to watch the Sultan's Albanian body-guard at Constantinople because they openly praised the attack on Mitrovitz.

The Sultan and Grand Vizier have apologised to M. Zinovief, the Russian Minister in Turkey, for the attack on the Russian Consul at Mitrovitz.

The "Times" commenting on the uneasiness of the Powers over the Sultan's infatuation, ascribes it in part to Germany's ostentatious patronage, and adds that nothing is more likely to harden his heart against the strong repression of fanaticism than the dread of disloyalty amongst his household troops.

The Sultan is always extremely timid, the "Times" continues, in dealing with lawless Moslems, lest he should endanger his position of Caliph.

The article concludes: "If the report from Vienna, to the effect that the Sultan has summoned his Kurdish cavalry to Europe, is true, it would seem to indicate that the Sultan has lost all appreciation of the opinion of Europe, or else that he has resolved to flout and defy it."

The Russian Consuls at Monastir and Ustkuib report that the revolutionary bands are increasingly active. They often number 100, and commit horrible outrages.

The Russian Government, in a further admonitory note to Bulgaria, in reference to supporting the revolutionary committee, warns her that such action will bring a conflict with Turkey, and

adds that it is essential to the execution of the reforms in the Balkans that they should not be hindered.

The Russian Consuls at Ustkuib and Monastir further assert that the Turks provoke the massacre of Christians. Despite the denials of the Consuls, the peasants are persuaded to join the revolutionists by the Macedonian Committee's lies to the effect that Russia is supporting the revolutionary movement.

The Turks attacked a band of 30 insurgents at Ustkuib, including Bulgarians.

A major and lieutenant of the insurgents barricaded a house after 10 hours' fighting and hurled dynamite bombs amongst the Turks and escaped during the confusion.

The insurgents lost 25 men in the fight. It is stated that the Turkish artillery, as a punishment, razed the village of Abalichte and massacred the inhabitants. A thousand Albanians have attacked Mitrovitz, hoping to expel the Russian consul there. The garrison, numbering three thousand, after several hours' fighting, repulsed the assailants with great loss.

Russia is making energetic representations to the Porte to suppress the rebellion. The Christians of Old Serbia are in a state of panic, and are fleeing home. A number of Christians have been massacred at Prelog.

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