

THE DAILY EXAMINER

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THE WEEKLY EXAMINER

is issued every Friday morning. It is made up of the matter which has appeared in the Daily, and is a first-class newspaper, containing all the latest news. Subscription \$1.00 a year.

Concert & Basket Social

—IN—
MECHANICS' HALL.

PROGRAMME

1. Selection—Pipes.....
Mr. Ferguson.
2. Chorus—Go Co. Che-Lunk.....
Misses Sutherland, McKeuzie, McDougall, Campbell, Robertson, Winchester and McDonald.
3. Solo—Selected.....
Miss Elliott
4. Reading—Mrs Smart Learns to Skate.....
Mrs C. A. Campbell
5. Clarinet Solo.....
Minute Gun at Sea
Worth Bros
6. Recitation.....
Miss Rattary
7. Song—(Scotch).....
J. W. Sutherland
8. Solo.....
Little Nell
Miss Vanbu-kirk
9. Reading.....
Uncle Caleb's Courtship
C. A. Campbell
10. Song (Whistling).....
Master R. Hogg
11. Duet.....
Down by the Deep, Sad Sea
Miss Annie Harris & Chas. McDonald
12. Song—(Comic).....
Geo. Worth
13. Dialogue.....
The Threatened Visit
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THE ENGLAND OF

THE PRESENT DAY

Wonderful Progress of the Last Fifty Years.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS SOLVED

External and Internal Perils Surmounted—The Present and the Future.

The London correspondent of the New York Post writes: A foreign observer in this country is impelled, by what passes around him, to ponder over the actual position, constant progress, and likely prospects of a people which has already left an indelible impression upon the page of history, and promises to influence in future, even more powerfully than hitherto, the onward march of mankind. Such reflections, suggested by the crowding evidence of the exuberant well-being, intellectual activity, and moral vigor that must strike at once even a passing visitor, become more impressive when accompanied by a retrospective glance at the perplexities and troubles which this country was struggling with only fifty years ago. During the second quarter of this century England was still grappling with political and social problems, some of which seemed to present insurmountable difficulties while others threatened by their magnitude the very foundations of the Empire. An overgrown, starving, and riotous population, divided into extremes of accumulated wealth and abject poverty of scandalous privileges on the one hand, and helpless dependence on the others with a crushing taxation and disabled finances, with dejected and disabled colonies, with a permanent state of famine and periodical risings in Ireland, with frequent revolts in India, and with an iniquitous foreign war, undertaken at the will of a privileged class, and for the maintenance of an infamous tyranny over millions of Christian men—such was the condition of England some fifty years ago. It is doubtful if history chronicles a transformation as stupendous and complete as that which has come over the British Isles during the latter half of the Victorian era—an age to which succeeding generations will look back, with better reason than to that of Augustus, as to a period when peace, prosperity, well-being, and enlightenment prevailed over a vast empire.

Nowhere else can popular temper or social condition and tendency be better gauged than in a nation's heart and centre, in a great capital like this, and during a season of festive interlude and annual stock-taking, when those who harvest happiness enjoy its blessings to the full, and those who suffer wrong or privation find a more sympathetic hearing. On the whole, then, an impartial observer is bound to admit that it would be difficult to imagine a people more content with their present lot or more confident of their future than the British people to-day. Their one great social problem, how to provide satisfactorily for the enormous increase of population, of the lower orders more especially, has lost its former terrors. With the possible exception of France where the population is stationary, and of the United States, where the land is still thinly populated, there is no country in which the working classes are as well paid, as well-fed, as comfortably clothed, as in England. Moreover, they are generally better instructed and, consequently are becoming more intelligent and more independent than those of France, while, being in closer and more sympathetic touch with the social strata immediately above them, they are more tractable than the industrial classes in America. The board schools have already transformed the entire moral tone and outward bearing of the workmen in England; and the children of parents who have been taught the "three R's" will, no doubt, be still better men and more humane women than the school-children of illiterate bores.

HUMANIZING AGENCY.

An even more powerful humanizing agency among the poorer classes has been the widespread activity of charitable co-operations and individual philanthropists. The new life which some fifty years ago was infused into the Established Church was manifested in the efforts of the clergy to elevate the moral and intellectual condition of the lower classes. The movement spread rapidly, until "slumming" became fashionable with aristocratic ladies, and rich undergraduates from Oxford and Cambridge volunteered to establish themselves as "workers" in the poorest quarters of the East-end, bringing with them every humanizing influence. Such familiar contact with their betters has had a most pronounced effect upon the morals and ideas of the English workingman. Love of respectability and pride in artistic may be innate in English character. It is the instinct which in its exaggeration efflorescence becomes snobbism.

More than this, legislative enactments have made stringent provisions for the better housing of the poor, so that the horrible dens in which a bestial existence engendered disease and led to crime have almost completely disappeared. Vast workmen's tenement buildings, in which sanitary regulations are rigorously enforced, and in which home comforts and club luxuries are freely provided, rise up in every quarter of London, and have even proved remunerative as investments. People's palaces, parks, and recreation grounds are being multiplied. Village

industries are being revived and encouraged. "Industrial wars" between labour and capital have become rare by the formation of conciliation boards and by the extension of the principal of arbitration. England, in any case, is the only country where tens of thousands of workmen may be on strike with hardly a case of violence or riot. It is this innate love of fair play of the English, this respect for law and order, which strikes a foreigner so forcibly; it is these fundamentally healthy instincts that have been enormously strengthened and extended among the lower classes by the clerical and aristocratic missions among the poor.

With moral elevation, better food, and better housing, drunkenness has diminished, and with its restriction the extent of helpless pauperism has shrunk. Consequently crime has become less frequent; and England is the only country in which it has been found necessary to close some of the prisons. On the other hand, hospital accommodation has greatly increased, and now exceeds considerably that of any other country in proportion to population; a fact the more noteworthy, as, contrary to the usage in France and other Continental countries, not a penny of public revenue is expended on such charitable institutions, all of which in England are maintained by voluntary contributions.

THE QUEEN'S INFLUENCE.

In this connection it is impossible not to recognize the decisive influence which the Queen and the Prince of Wales have exercised in furthering measures for the relief of sickness, the Queen by devoting the national offering on her jubilee, to the training of nurses, so that actually the British Sisterhoods of Nurses excel in number and efficiency all other similar bodies abroad, and the Prince of Wales by inaugurating a national hospital fund, and quite recently, by placing himself at the head of the movement for checking consumption, the disease which makes the greatest ravages among the poor in England. It is this sincere solicitude, this whole-hearted devotion to the welfare and interests of the people which, originating in the Queen, has become the distinguishing feature in the activity of the English Royal family, and has permeated, by an example the force of which is irresistible in a monarchical country, the upper classes by quickening their ideas of Christian and national duty. The Prince of Wales, hedged in as he is by the unwritten law which precludes his participation in politics, has yet shown to what degree his energy and example can prove beneficial to the interests of the State at large. As to the Queen, since the days of Queen Elizabeth no sovereign has sat on the British throne who has exercised so decisive an influence on the social and political development of the country as has Queen Victoria. No male occupant of that exalted post could have been a more jealous or more determined one had he most ardent, more fanatical—promoter of the prestige abroad and the welfare at home of her people. It is in no small measure to her influences, her example, her assiduous labours, and her constant urgings that the present high pitch of prosperity and power of this country is due.

Thus every element, from the highest to the lowest, seems to have come together, as if by fortuitous coincidence, for the attainment of an almost ideal perfection in the social order and the public administration of this country. The great legislative assembly which controls the whole of this delicate and many-sided organism is, in its moral tone and its practical efficiency, as much above the level of other similar bodies that it may be said to leave little to be desired. Party politics is carried on with the least possible detriment to public interests. The administration of the country is in the hands of men above suspicion, imbued with a high sense of their responsibility, and entirely free from factional preferences. Abuse of public trust or cases of peculation have become almost unknown. Taxation is constantly lightened, yet the revenue is steadily increasing. So with the post office, an organization which, for magnitude, efficiency and economy, is unrivalled by that of any other country, and which, by the steady increase of its savings-bank operations, is a faithful index of the growing prosperity of the poorer classes. Justice, that cornerstone of the welfare of the state, has at no time and in no other country been dealt out more impartially, more swiftly, more unflinchingly. And there is certainly no office, not even that of an archbishop, more respected or more justly honoured than that of a British judge.

THE BRITISH ARMY.

That branch of the British army which is really organized as an effective war machine, the Indian army, though inordinately expensive, is admitted, even by the German critics, to be above reproach; while the real strength of England, her navy, has never been more powerful, better equipped, or more ready "to go anywhere and do anything," than at this time. Its unrivalled efficiency has been established by the fact—indeed, though it may seem, but vouched for on high authority—that the recent mobilization of the entire fleet entailed an extraordinary expenditure of only \$12,500.

India, in spite of inevitable drawbacks, is administered as no other colonial dependency of a European State. The British colonies are more loyally attached to the Mother Country than they ever were. And Ireland, for the first time since the union, is quiescent and free from agrarian crime.

To have achieved such unprecedented success in the highest and most exacting human undertaking—the art of government—to have insured the greatest good for the greatest number, to have maintained even the social balance, and, at the same time, to have brought up the general level of prosperity, to have subjugated its rule hundreds of millions of conflicting races in various climes, and to have won their respect as completely as their submission—to have done all this and more, a nation must be endowed with resources of

statesmanship, of moral force, of self-reliance, of sober temper, and fortitude such as have never before been combined in one and the same race. The achievement is so complex and stupendous that one who looks up to it, in its towering magnificence and perspective, contemplates it with that admiration which is blended with a latest sense of awe, lest its very height and its delicate beauty should menace its stability or endanger its permanence.

But a careful scrutiny of the more staminal and intellectual forces of his remarkable people would, I think, show that so far, there is discernible no effect of those agencies which, with world-wide empire and vast accumulation of wealth, have always engendered a weakening of the grasp of power, moral decadence and intellectual degeneracy. Yet there are certain forces and some special circumstances which lie beyond the control even of the soberest and strongest nations, and such circumstances should not be overlooked. In the first place, England no longer holds that pre-eminence and almost exclusive position which she held as a colonial, manufacturing and commercial country. Although her merchant navy still exceeds by far that of any other two or three countries taken together, and the bulk of her trade is enormous, England is now hard pressed in the race for industrial pre-eminence by Germany and the United States, while, in the far east, Japanese manufacturers are appropriating markets formerly her exclusive preserves. The contest may prove a long and stubborn one, but there can be no doubt as to the eventual loss of exclusive pre-eminence in that field.

S. K. D.

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