THE TIMES

MONDAY, JUNE 29, 1914.

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TO-DAY'S NEWS.

Arms for the I.N.V.

A "Defence of Ireland Fund" is to be opened all over that country to obtain money for the purchase of arms and ammunition for the National Volunteers. (p. 10)

East London and the Welsh Church.

A great demonstration of protest against the Welsh Church Bill was held in Victoria Park, E., on Saturday. The speakers declared that if the Bill became law under the Parliament Act they would press for its repeal. (p. 6)

Tramways and Omnibus Competition.

The London County Council will have to consider to-morrow a deficit on the tramway undertaking—due to motor-omnibus competition—of over £88,000. (p. 5)

Airman's Narrow Escape.

During an exhibition of "looping the loop" at Brooklands on Saturday, Mr. Hawker's machine fell into some trees and was wrecked. Mr. Hawker escaped unhurt. (p. 5)

The Summer Sales.

We publish a woman's survey of the summer sales which open at the principal London shops to-day. (p. 12)

Prize Mothers.

Contests in mothercraft at Marylebone revealed much ingenuity in the production of cheap meals and the adaptation of clothes. (p. 5)

Many Fires at Peckham.

There have recently been a number of fires at Peckham and incendiarism is suspected.—At Hatton Garden on Saturday a fire did many thousands of pounds damage. (p. 4)

Racing.

The Grand Prix de Paris was won yesterday by Baron M. de Rothschild's Sardanapale. Baron E. de Rothschild's La Farina was second.—At Sandown Park on Saturday Mr. W. Singer's Sir Eager won the Sandringham Foal Stakes. (p. 14)

Boxing.

Jack Johnson beat Frank Moran on points in Paris on Saturday in a contest for the World's Boxing Championship. (p. 15)

Weather Forecast.

To-day's forecast for England, S.E. (including London and the Channel):—Light variable breezes; fine; warm. (p. 5)

Cricket.

At Lord's on Saturday the Royal Navy beat the Army by 170 runs.—Surrey scored 502 for six wickets against Middlesex at the Oval, and Yorkshire saved the game against Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge.—Kent beat Leicestershire by 134 runs at Ashby-de-la-Zouch. (p. 16)

The City.

In the Money Market there was a good demand for loans into July, and the Bank again lent a large amount. Discount rates weakened further. On the Stock Exchange business was very quiet; the underwriters of the New South African loan will have to take up about 64 per cent.—A telegram from Rio de Janeiro states that the feeling there is hopeful as to the speedy conclusion of the negotiations for a Brazilian loan.—From New York it is reported that there is less uneasiness as to the results of the Claflin failure. (pp. 19 to 24)

IMPERIAL AND FOREIGN.

Assassination of the Austrian Heir.

The Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his Consort, the Duchess of Hohenberg, were shot dead yesterday morning in the streets of Serajevo, the capital of Bosnia, after an attempt to blow up the Archducal motor-car and its occupants had failed. (pp. 7 and 8)

Tsar and British Squadron.

The Tsar visited the British Battle Cruiser Squadron in Kronstadt harbour on Saturday. (p. 7)

Albanian Rebels and the Prince.

Colonel Phillips, commanding the international force at Skutari, went to Shiak on Friday on behalf of Prince William of Albania to confer with the rebels. (p. 7)

Persian Financial Difficulties.

The Persian Imperial Bank has informed the Ministry of Finance that for the present it is impossible to continue to honour Treasury drafts. (p. 7)

The Tragedy of Serajevo.

With the deepest and most profound regret we record to-day the tragic news of the assassination of the ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND, Heir-Presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian Throne, and of his wife, the DUCHESS of HOHENBERG. The ARCHDUKE, in his capacity as Inspector-General of the Forces of the Empire, had been attending military manœuvres in the province of Bosnia. While he was passing yesterday, with the DUCHESS, through the streets of Serajevo, the capital of the province, a bomb was thrown at his motor-car by a printer from the town of Trebinje. It is said that the ARCHDUKE warded off the bomb with his arm. At any rate the attempt failed, though others were injured. The ARCHDUKE held a reception at the Town Hall, and afterwards was continuing his progress through the streets, when both he and the DUCHESS were shot by a high-school student armed with a Browning pistol. Both died almost immediately, and their assassination has produced horror and consternation throughout Europe. The first thoughts of all men will turn to the venerable EMPEROR, whose lot it has been to endure manifold and terrible sorrows such as mortal man has rarely known. All the suffering and woe which life can produce seem to have been poured upon his aged and lonely figure. Only yesterday morning FRANCIS JOSEPH left Vienna for his summer holiday amid the acclamations of his adoring subjects. He reached Ischl amid similar scenes of enthusiasm, but must have learned very soon afterwards that the hand of an assassin had once more left him bereft and desolate. Personal misfortune ever dogs the House of Hapsburg, but no member of that House has ever had to bear such a grievous succession of domestic calamities as its present head. As a Monarch the EMPEROR FRANCIS JOSEPH has been more than usually fortunate. He has safely brought his Empire through serious reverses, has triumphed over many internal difficulties, and in his declining years has enjoyed the unbounded affection of his people. Yet his public successes have always been overshadowed by his private griefs. The death of his brother MAXIMILIAN in Mexico, the tragedy of the CROWN PRINCE RUDOLF, the crowning blow of the assassination of the EMPRESS ELIZABETH, and now this last dreadful occurrence, make a story of woe for which history furnishes few parallels. The sympathy of the whole world will go forth to the bereaved EMPEROR, and all Englishmen will pray that he may be able to bear this final affliction with the fortitude he has never failed to show in his deepest trials.

The late ARCHDUKE FRANZ FERDINAND was to some extent an unknown quantity in European politics. Men speculated upon the possible results of his accession to the Throne, but none could foresee with certainty the line his policy would have taken. Until after his marriage he was not very much in the public eye, and to the end he was not permitted to exercise influence upon public affairs, save in certain definite directions. The controversies which attended his morganatic marriage with the DUCHESS of HOHENBERG have now been swiftly thrust into oblivion, and belong already to the records of the past. He was impetuous and quick-tempered as a result of the Sicilian strain in his blood, he had all the BOURBON-ESTE pride, but he had also much of the shrewdness and clever opportunism which marks the Hapsburgs. In more recent years he was chiefly conspicuous for his pronounced Clerical sympathies, which sometimes led him into pronouncements and acts which did not strengthen the alliance with Italy. He was always hostile to the Magyars, and there was no secret about his association with the so-called policy of Trialism, which aims ostensibly at adding to the Dual Monarchy a third great Slav State. Yet there were limitations to the ARCHDUKE'S leanings towards the Southern Slavs. It was the Catholic Croats who chiefly attracted him, and he hoped through them to fulfil the Catholic mission which he conceived to be imposed upon the Monarchy in the Balkans. He had a good deal to do with the annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina in 1908, and could he have had his way the change would have been made earlier. From his meeting with the GERMAN EMPEROR at Eckartsau in 1909 dates the forward naval policy of which he was the chief promoter, with results which have already had their effect upon the navies of other Powers. Had he come to the Throne, it is thought that his general tendencies would have been on the whole reactionary, and that he would have worked for some change in the Dual system which would have counterbalanced the influence of Hungary.

We cannot yet estimate the full consequences of yesterday's tragedy at Serajevo upon the future of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. So far as the succession is concerned, they may be less than will perhaps be at first supposed. The new Heir-Presumptive is the ARCHDUKE CHARLES FRANCIS JOSEPH, nephew of the murdered ARCHDUKE and grand-nephew of the EMPEROR. He is a young man of 26, who is married to PRINCESS ZITA of BOURBON-PARMA, and already has an infant son. Of his capacity little is known, but he enjoys the EMPEROR'S favour. The larger and more immediate question is that of the possible results of the assassination upon the Southern Slavs and their hopes and ideals. Later telegrams intimate that the murders were the outcome of a widespread plot, and the character of the two determined attempts supports this conclusion. The people of Bosnia, both Serbs and Musulmans, have always resented the annexation. The Diet which was established at Serajevo has very limited powers. Bosnia still has only a thin veneer of Western civilization, and the work of the late M. DE KÁLLAY did not penetrate so deeply as his admirers were wont to lead Europe to suppose. We should say that the events of yesterday will probably tend to strengthen the Dual system, at any rate for a time, but the more the Southern Slavs see their hopes recede the greater will be the danger of an ultimate explosion. Already they grow restive under repression, and if their dreams are thwarted in one direction they may turn in another. For the moment the horror of the assassinations engrosses thought, but they must assuredly add fresh clouds to the political outlook in Austria-Hungary.

The Attempt to Destroy the Council of India.

To-morrow the Council of India Bill, which has been introduced in the House of Lords, will be submitted for a second reading. In no party spirit, but in the earnest hope that the principles upon which Great Britain has governed India for more than a century may not be altered for the worse, we trust that the Bill will suffer rejection. One of the deplorable results of the intense preoccupation of the country in the Ulster problem is that many other gravely important issues, both Imperial and foreign, are receiving insufficient attention. The Council of India Bill is a case in point. It proposes to introduce sweeping constitutional changes into the method by which India is controlled from London, and yet it has remained unnoticed and almost undiscussed. We have no vital quarrel with the party now in power regarding their general administration of Indian affairs during the past eight years. We have differed from their Indian policy on many specific occasions, but we recognize that their enlargement of the liberties of the people of India, undertaken in conjunction with the late LORD MINTO, has been sufficiently justified by results, and to some extent atones for mistakes in other directions. Their attitude towards the Council of India is, however, a feature of their policy which cannot be condoned, and has frequently received our condemnation. The attempts to undermine the power and authority of the Council began as soon as the Liberal Party entered office. From the moment when LORD MORLEY became Secretary of State for India, he set himself to belittle and to contract the functions which his Council was intended to exercise. He reduced its numbers and cut down its emoluments. In his endeavours to restrict the influence of his Council upon Indian affairs, and to convert his own office into an uncontrolled autocracy, he sometimes went to lengths which were almost unconstitutional. The Council was told as little as possible, and in his later years at the India Office most of the Councillors became mere ciphers. The tendencies he set in motion were afterwards assiduously developed by MR. MONTAGU, who was permitted to attain a degree of influence at the India Office rarely exercised by an Under-Secretary. With the advent of LORD CREWE it was hoped that there would be a reversion to constitutional practice, for the amiable leader of the Upper House has not hitherto been a herald of revolutionary changes. The new Bill shatters these hopes. It destroys the old standing of the Council of India and makes the SECRETARY of STATE an unchecked autocrat. It transforms LORD CREWE into a Great Mogul in a frock coat.

The Council of India, which is often informally styled the Secretary of State's Council, is the descendant of the Board of Control of the old East India Company, some of whose powers it inherited. Most of its members have held high office in India, two are Indians, and two are City men who advise on financial questions. Its real purpose is in the main advisory, but, except in certain special cases, the consent of a majority of the Council must be obtained for all expenditure. The Council thus serves a twofold purpose. It furnishes a body of men of ripe experience, whose advice can and should be sought by the SECRETARY of STATE. It also acts as a check upon expenditure. The SECRETARY of STATE must submit all his proposed orders to the Council, but can, if he so chooses, override its decisions except in matters of expenditure. He also exercises large independent powers, and in matters affecting foreign policy, the relations with native states, and certain other subjects defined as "secret," the Council has no voice. Nevertheless, the Council is an essential and invaluable part of our system of controlling India, and it should be noted that most orders are passed by "the Secretary of State in Council." The new Bill aims at completing, in effect, that process of subtle destruction of the Council which LORD MORLEY began. The Council at present consists of from ten to fourteen members; it is now proposed to fix the number at from seven to ten. The weekly meeting of the Council is to be "dispensed with." The quorum when the Council meets—if it ever does—is reduced from five to three. The SECRETARY of STATE obtains powers to modify the rules of procedure in any way he likes. He also seeks to enlarge the category of matters described as "secret" which he may handle without consulting or informing his Council. The provisions in this respect are extraordinary. The SECRETARY of STATE will not communicate his "secret" orders to his own advisers, but undertakes to lay them before Parliament. The worst feature of the whole measure is that, instead of working with his Council collectively, the SECRETARY of STATE proposes to transact business "in communication with, and with the assistance of, individual members." It has been further intimated that he intends to bring home younger men, in the middle of their Indian career, to serve on the Council. The object of this expedient is clear. At present there is at the India Office a Council of Elder Statesmen, who have no further promotion or increment of pay to look for. The younger men who are to be installed in their stead will be dependent on the patronage of the SECRETARY of STATE. Their attitude is bound to be subservient, because they will hope to return to high office in India. With no weekly meeting, with young men dancing individual attendance on LORD CREWE, with all the new powers the SECRETARY of STATE seeks to obtain, can it be wondered at that the Bill is pronounced to be aimed deliberately at the destruction of the Council of India?

There is one further provision which many people regard as the most indefensible clause of all. It is proposed to make the appointment of the two Indian members of the Council obligatory instead of optional. We have no objection to this, but the coincident proposal to make these appointments in effect elective—we avoid technical details—is at variance with the whole original conception of the Council of India. If there is one body in the whole Indian system upon which the people of India should not have the right of choosing their own representatives, that body is the Secretary of State's Council. We object to the Bill because it destroys at the heart of the Indian system the profoundly wise principle on which British control was built up. That principle was to prevent the seizure of power by single autocrats by the method of executive administration "in Council." It is the principle most nearly in accord with the older traditions of Liberalism, traditions which the modern custodians of Liberalism have so persistently set at naught. The real meaning of the Bill is that the SECRETARY of STATE aspires to rule India on his own responsibility from Whitehall. Such is not his function, and was never meant to be. JOHN STUART MILL, whom LORD MORLEY sometimes quotes with so much worshipping reverence, laid down the true duty of the Home Government towards India in words which should be inscribed in every room of the India Office. "The Executive Government of India," he said, "is, and must be, seated in India itself. "The principal function of the Home Government is not to direct the details of administration, but to scrutinize and revise the past acts of the Indian Governments; to lay down principles and issue general instructions for their future guidance, and to give or refuse sanction to great political measures which are referred home for approval." The last two Secretaries of State have forgotten these wholesome admonitions, and the very Government who gave more Executive Councils to India are doing their best to wreck the admirable method of governing "in Council" which has served the British in India so long.

"The Laughter of Honest Men."

In an article on Comedy which we published the other day there was quoted that saying of MOLIÈRE'S that it is the business of comedy to make honest men laugh. It is a saying both simple and profound. Every one will agree with it, and every one, when a comedy makes him laugh, will feel that it has passed MOLIÈRE'S test. In fact, we all apply this test readily enough to the comedian, but not so readily to the laugher. For the question we ought to ask ourselves, with regard to this test, is whether we ourselves are honest when we laugh, not whether the comedian is able to amuse our honesty. This, of course, is not a question to be asked while we are laughing, but afterwards. If a work of art is to act upon you at all, you must give yourself up to it just as you are. You must experience it without criticism, if you can; and then, when the experience is over, criticize yourself more than the work of art. For, in the case of laughter, it is possible to laugh dishonestly, even though you may be honest in all the ordinary affairs of life; but, because we think of laughter as a mere diversion in life, we are not apt to ask ourselves whether we have laughed honestly. Clearly an honest man is no longer honest if he laughs dishonestly, and MOLIÈRE would not have been satisfied with his laughter. What he wanted was the laughter of those who are honest with themselves at the very moment of laughing, and who have this habit of candour so that they cannot be tickled by a joke unless they see the whole of it. Indeed, it is not honesty such as the Eighth Commandment enjoins, but a deeper kind, which is necessary to the right enjoyment of comedy, namely, the honesty of a man who knows himself and his own motives so well that he can laugh at himself when he laughs at the figures of the comedian.

You must be used to your own weaknesses before you can do that, and you can only be used to them through the exercise of candour. If you are so habitually uncandid that you know nothing of yourself, you will be shocked and resentful when a comedian, through the power of his art, suddenly makes you aware of some weakness of your own by the manner in which he draws it in one of his characters. This is nasty, cruel fun—you will say. This is telling ugly truths about human nature under the pretence of amusing it. But if you were used to yourself through the exercise of candour, you would be used to the truths of the comedian and you would think them interesting rather than ugly. He, if he is great, has learnt those truths about himself before he presents them in his characters, and he is so used to them that he can present them without anger or malice. It is not the shock of disappointment with human nature that makes the great comic writer; he does not think of himself as telling us bitter news about mankind, but rather as making drama out of what we all know well: and if we do not know it as well as he does, it is because we have not his candour. He is not concerned to flatter us, because he does not flatter himself; and we can only enjoy his comedy without misgiving or misunderstanding if we too have not the habit of self-flattery. To those who have that habit he seems to be cruel, if they understand him at all; for their belief in human nature is based upon illusion, and primarily upon illusion about themselves. Shatter this, and their belief in human nature is gone. For them a man must never be ridiculous, if he is to be respected; prove him absurd and you put him on a level with the monkeys. It is only by laughing at yourself that you can learn to laugh kindly at other people. Be always solemn in your "sessions of sweet silent thought," and you will need that solemnity in all your dealings with others, if you are to behave decently to them.

Thus the uncandid, though in other things they may have the habit of decent behaviour, are always brutal in their laughter, if they laugh at all. For they cannot laugh at a figure in a comedy without putting him outside the pale, and for them the comic means the inhuman. Being unaware of their own absurdity, they see no likeness to themselves in an absurd character. For them he is a kind of Aunt Sally, having only so much semblance of humanity as will make the game of throwing sticks at him the more amusing. And so they laugh the harder he is hit; and they will laugh most when the comedian has hit in deadly earnest, as he sometimes will. Worst of all, when he is exposing the brutality of one character, they will laugh at the effect of that brutality upon another. For, since the play is comic, any pain in it, they think, must be comic too. The characters are all there to be laughed at all the time; and, when they laugh, they are only getting their money's worth. This is not honest laughter, and it is the despair of the great comedian. For he knows that a laugh, like a tear, is an intellectual thing, and that laughter is falsified by brutality as much as tears by sentimentality. In fact, comedy cannot flourish in an uncandid society; and that is the reason why it does not flourish in England now. We are too little used to ourselves to laugh at ourselves in the characters of the theatre, and therefore we can only laugh at Aunt Sallies that seem to be set up as cockshies for our brainless amusement.

"'THE TIMES' FOR A PENNY."

AN OXFORD EPIGRAM.

A correspondent writes:—

You may be interested to learn that at the examination for the Hertford Scholarship recently held at Oxford, the thesis set for a Latin epigram was "*The Times* for a penny." I enclose a copy of an epigram written by one of the candidates, who, it will be seen, speaks from a very conservative standpoint.

"Labuntur mores: gestis denarius olim
Vix satis: at iam nil Roma nisi asse facit."

A further academic comment upon the recent reduction in price of *The Times* occurred in the speech before the Governors of the school, or *Contio*, at Harrow. During the course of his review of the year the *contionator* observed:—

"Inter autem alia quae annum praeteritum praecipue notabilem reddidere haud libenter omiserim prodigium illud quotidianum, cum Iovem tonantem—o *Tempora*, o mores—sui exemplaria iam singulis nummulis venditare miramur."

STREET NOISES.

THE STANDARDIZATION OF HOOTERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—If I venture to comment on your leading article "A Noiseless City?" in *The Times* of Friday last it is not in reference to either the figure of speech with which the article begins or to the question as to Gualterus's false quantity in the hexameter lines quoted in relation thereto by "M. J. R." in *The Times* of Saturday: but it is to cordially thank you for your pertinent and warning remarks on the "intermittent discords of the modern motor horn," and on the increased pandemonium of noise from this source which will ensue if traffic is made noiseless by rubber paving.

Verily, you may well exclaim "'Brain fag' indeed and 'noiseless cities' forsooth!" The brain reels as it is with the discords and the screechings of hundreds of motor horns evoked day and night in our streets. Not a night passes without disturbance to sleep from intermittent hootings until 3.30 and 4 a.m. Some nights more, some nights less, but every night the air is rent by recurrent blasts of noise.

If in spite of entreaties to "write again" one has refrained from doing so, it has not been because the evil has become less, but because our minds have been so obsessed by apprehensions caused by the perilous *impasse* to which the country has been brought that there was little likelihood of any further cry of distress due to so commonplace and persisting a scourge as hooting receiving attention.

And if I am moved by your leading article to break silence now, it is with the forlorn hope that the new head of the Local Government Board may, in mercy, do that which Mr. John Burns led the members of a conference held at the office of the Local Government Board in 1910 to expect that he in conjunction with Sir Edward Henry would do—namely, make trial to standardize hooters of some uniform sound. By this means, and by limiting the hours of night during which motor horns should be allowed to be sounded in the streets of cities and towns, there would be some chance of our obtaining more continuous, undisturbed rest than now.

The unlimited licence given in the first instance to anyone to use at any time any kind of hooter he chooses was shortsighted, baneful folly; its continued, unrestrained employment is a pernicious outrage on citizenship. Are the citizens of London, the residents in the towns of England to despair of ever getting relief therefrom?

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
HENRY MORRIS.

8, Cavendish-square, W.

"MME. DE STAËL" AT OXFORD.

AN ANALOGY TO "CHARLEY'S AUNT."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—The practical joke at Oxford to which Mr. Oscar Browning refers in *The Times* of to-day was played upon the University by Augustus Hare in the year 1813, when he was an undergraduate of New College. The story is told in the "Reminiscences" of the Rev. F. Blackstone, and may be read in the "Memorials of a Quiet Life," by Augustus J. C. Hare, Vol. I., p. 173 (1873):—

"In 1813 Mme. de Staël was at the height of her celebrity. It was announced that she was in England, and was about to visit Oxford, where she had an undergraduate friend. At length it was noised abroad that the great lady had arrived; so under the extraordinary circumstances, and to meet so illustrious a guest, the undergraduate ventured to invite several of the Heads of Houses, and even the Vice-Chancellor himself, to meet her at breakfast. The party assembled, Mme. de Staël was there, and so charmed everybody by her grace, wit, and brilliancy, that they all went away feeling that they had found her even more than they anticipated. It was not till many weeks after that it was discovered that she had never been in Oxford at all, and that she had been represented by a clever undergraduate, who had resided many years in France."

A. L. MAYHEW.

Wadham College, Oxford, June 27.

WOMEN AND BOXING MATCHES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Mrs. Guthrie, in her letter in *The Times* of to-day, quotes a Reuter telegram as a sufficient answer to the question, Should women attend boxing matches? This telegram contained the passage:—"Moreau fought pluckily, but he was so blinded with blood that he was forced to give up in the ninth round." This is apparently the "sufficient reason."

But is it sufficient? Is it not historical fact that the most enthusiastic and appreciative spectators of the gladiatorial contests of Ancient Rome were the Roman ladies? Is it not true that the bullfights of modern Spain are graced by the presence of the most beautiful and elegant ladies of that country? Do we not constantly see it stated in the Press that the wholesale destruction of the osprey and other precious plumage birds is entirely due to the demand of the gentler sex for the fashionable feathers of the day? Are not our most sacred and ancient buildings almost daily desecrated or burnt to the ground by women? Why then so much squeamishness about a little blood at a boxing match? I cannot see the logic of the position, but then I am, after all, only

Yours obediently,
London, June 27. A MERE MAN.

A CRITICAL WEEK.

THE LORDS AND THEIR AMENDMENTS.

FINANCE IN THE COMMONS.

SIR E. GREY ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

(FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

The most important event of the Parliamentary week will be the debate on the second reading of the Amending Bill in the Lords. Two days, Wednesday and Thursday, will be given to the discussion, and the Duke of Devonshire has sent a three-line whip to Unionist peers, "particularly requesting" their attendance.

The motion for the second reading will not be opposed by Lord Lansdowne and his colleagues on the front Opposition bench. Their view is that the Bill should be read a second time, and that amendments should be inserted in Committee with the object of making it a possible path to peace.

THE CHIEF AMENDMENTS.

The chief amendments, it is understood, will provide for the exclusion of the whole province of Ulster, the abrogation of the time-limit, the better protection of the Protestant minorities in the south and west, and the retention of Customs and the Post Office by the Imperial Parliament.

These proposals undoubtedly represent the main current of Unionist feeling. Several peers, however, are in favour of the rejection of the Amending Bill outright. Lord Willoughby de Broke has placed a motion for rejection on the paper, and other peers who share his view intend to speak during the debate. The course of the discussion will probably decide whether the motion will be pressed to a division. In any case it may be taken that it has no large backing.

A VULNERABLE BILL.

The debate should be full of interest, for there probably has never been a Bill which presented such a vulnerable front to the attacking party. Several of its provisions are the subject of questions which will be addressed to the Prime Minister from the Unionist benches in the House of Commons this afternoon. Mr. Evelyn Cecil, for instance, will ask whether, seeing that Clause 4 deals entirely with finance, the privileges of the Commons have not been infringed. The second reading of the Home Rule Bill is still on the order paper for to-morrow, but it will not be debated. At that sitting Lord Curzon will move the rejection of the Council of India Bill, and a division is certain.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE VOTE.

The Commons will again be occupied chiefly with Supply and the Budget. A speech from Sir Edward Grey on foreign affairs may be expected in the debate on the Foreign Office Vote to-day. On Wednesday a beginning will be made with the Committee stage of the Finance Bill, and some difficult and important questions will be raised at once. Ministerialists are not looking forward to the Committee stage with confidence. The financial prestige of the Government was seriously shaken by the narrow majority by which the second reading was passed on Thursday night and there are signs that the breaches in the Ministerial ranks then revealed have not been closed.

There are three Ministerial parties on the Budget—the 37 Labour members who think that the Government should have reduced the "breakfast-table" duties and left the income-tax at 1s. 4d.; the Holt "cave," which wanted measures first and taxation afterwards; and the Radicals and Nationalists who support the Government through thick and thin. A good deal of resentment exists between the second group and the third, and both are annoyed with the first. There will be many points in Committee on which all cannot work together after the recent movements, and the Government will need all their skill to avoid the traps which will assuredly be set for them.

DIARY OF THE WEEK.

The business of the week in the two Houses is shown in the following table:—

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

To-day.—Supply, Foreign Office Vote.

To-morrow.—Supply, Vote for the Salary of the First Lord of the Treasury and Vote for the Inland Revenue Department.

Wednesday.—Finance Bill, beginning of Committee stage.

Thursday.—Finance Bill, Committee stage continued.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

To-morrow.—Council of India Bill, second reading.

Wednesday.—Government of Ireland (Amendment) Bill, second reading.

Thursday.—Conclusion of debate on Amending Bill.

OIL RIGHTS IN MESOPOTAMIA.

AN ANGLO-GERMAN CONCESSION.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

CONSTANTINOPLE, JUNE 27.

The Porte has at last given a verbal promise to the British Embassy to grant the lease of the oilfields in the provinces of Baghdad and Mosul to an Anglo-German group composed of Mr. D'Arcy, who obtained the original promise of the concession and will hold 50 per cent. of the shares in the new concern on the one hand, and to the Deutsche Bank and the Anglo-Saxon Company on the other. Each of the two last-mentioned are interested to the extent of 25 per cent. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company is believed to be supporting Mr. D'Arcy.

There appears to be no doubt that the Kasr-i-Shirin oilfield has been adjudged to Turkey by the Boundary Commission, but the rights of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in the recently transferred territory are safeguarded by the protocol of November 17, 1913, annexed to the Anglo-Turkish Agreement. The only change introduced is that the subsidy of £400 sterling per annum to the local tribes will be paid not by the Persian Government, but by the company.

THE ALEXANDRA DAY LONDON COLLECTION.

The Lord Mayor announces that the amount of money collected in London on Alexandra Day is over £20,000.

NEW BENCHERS OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

Mr. Tyrrell T. Paine, Mr. A. J. Ashton, K.C., and Mr. A. J. Walter, K.C., have been elected Benchers of the Inner Temple.