

THE LONDON LETTER.

The English Nation Meditating Upon the Situation.

A GENERALLY GLOOMY OUTLOOK.

Great Britain Barely Sustained—The Queen Kept Posted on the Events of the Day.

LONDON, Jan. 4.—(Copyrighted 1890 by the Associated Press)—Nearly all the sparkle and gaiety seemed to have been driven out of London this week by the serious complications growing out of the Transvaal invasion and Venezuelan dispute, assisted by the warm, wet, drizzling weather and occasional pea soup fog, peculiar to this busy metropolis.

There can doubt that recent events have had a decidedly sobering effect upon the inhabitants, not only of these islands alone, but of the British empire generally. The stand taken by President Cleveland regarding the Venezuelan boundary dispute, the excitement which followed the appointment of the commission, the evidence intrinsic to the defense of the isolation of Great Britain and of the trouble in the Transvaal have caused even the most indulgent Briton here to curl his words and actions in a manner which would indicate that it was not the intent of the country. It is doubtful if such a state in the most troublesome of times in the recent history of these British isles was ever reached; and therefore it is beginning to dawn upon people here that they may have to contend with a power compared with whom the European powers or with the forces of the United States could easily place under arms, and that the British fleet, powerful as it is, could not begin to successfully meet such a foe.

Queen Victoria has kept fully informed concerning the most important questions agitating the empire, and has issued orders that the number of dispatch boxes sent to her be doubled. The boxes are sent by the various departments of the government to Buckingham palace, the London residence of the queen, and from there they are forwarded to the queen's residence at Osborne house, Isle of Wight, where the majority has been spending the Christmas and New Year's holidays. The royal despatch boxes are black and are sealed on their lids like the letter box.

In addition to the official information received by her majesty the queen has been regularly supplied with the service of Reuters' Telegram company and that of the Associated Press and will receive whatever she chooses, to Windsor, London or the southern part of Europe.

AN ENGLISH ANNIVERSARY.

The New Year's day brought the anniversary of the proclamation of Queen Victoria's empire of India, that day always observed with considerable ceremony. The tribute of Indian soldiers, sailors, and cavalry, with other presents from the Indian states.

The Prince of Wales on Monday made a visit to Lowther castle where Lord Lowther has made magnificent preparations to receive him. The party will go shooting daily.

A PRER AND A POST LAUREATE.

The New Year honored contained two surprises, Sir Frederick Leighton, Bart., president of the Royal Academy, being invested with the post, and Alfred Austin being made poet laureate of England. Both were well received.

The elevation of Sir Henry Hesketh, Bart., of the island of England and president of the Royal Metallurgical association, to the peerage has long been expected. His was for many years proprietor of the St. James Gazette. Two of his sons are members of the Parliament and one of them married a niece of the Marquess of Salisbury.

Among the baronets created in honor of the new year are two distillers, two colliery owners and one cotton spinner.

Silence is recognized by the knighted son of Prof. Joseph Prestwich, the celebrated Oxford geologist. But the house is somewhat twisted, as he is 95 years of age.

A NEGRO KNIGHTED.

The list is also remarkable, as for the first time a pure-blooded negro has been knighted. He is Sir Lewis, who was born in Sierra Leone, was admitted to the bar here in 1871, and became chief justice of Sierra Leone in 1886.

The new act for the protection of married women went into effect on Wednesday, Jan. 2, and on Thursday following there were no arrests or convictions under its provisions. The Justice to whom the applications were made explained that wives could leave their husbands and claim alimony, but the act did not provide for women leaving their husbands except for women leaving with their husbands.

Prif. Mottez, ethnologist in charge was not successful in the purpose of having the bill passed, as the Indians in their native haunts as the Indians branch of the party and hid in the mountains. Several of the larger villages were visited, however, and a collection of best implements made.

ENGLAND'S COMFORT.

Great Britain's only comfort lately has been the treasury report which estimates that the surplus at the end of the year, Jan. 1, in March will exceed \$20 million, and that it will be learned on good authority that the financial position in which the overdriving revenue will be avoided is a great increase in the strength of the British navy.

THE INVASION OF HAVANA.

Only the Purpose of Destroying the Sugar Plantations.

NEW YORK, Jan. 4.—The reported invasion of the province of Havana by the insurgent forces has been started in New York, where Tomás Estrada Palma, leader of the revolution, said: "It is in line with the work General Gomez is daily accomplishing. Havana province is rich in sugar plantations and General Gomez is

there to destroy the crops. This is his plan from first to last in his greatest efforts to the westward, and the English have agreed to it." Víctorino Matos, president of Cuba, said: "I will never let them remove the cause in Havana province."

West of the provinces he will probably go north as the result of what that country grows, however, and the plantations are used for raising horses largely. The tobacco crop there will not be missed."

"Then you do not anticipate an attack on Havana by General Gomez's army?"

"Not at present. There would be no such a course and General Gomez would not undertake it, then. Campesinos have 120,000 men and Gomez would have to call up all his old militia. In Matanzas he has 10,000 men, previous General Gomez could probably muster 15,000 well armed veterans and could not expect to win a pitched battle against 70,000 soldiers even if the majority of the latter were green recruits."

VENEZUELAN COMMISSION.

Buenos Trasnochado During its First Session.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 4.—The members of the Venezuelan commission held their first meeting today. The session lasted about an hour. A formal statement of the proceedings was effected in the name of the commissioners, to whom it was proposed to make public, was given as follows:

Justice Brewer was unanimously elected president of the commission, and proceeded to administer to Messrs. Avery, Conder and Gilman the following oaths:

"I, John Gilman, do solemnly swear I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, foreign and domestic, so far as the same is constitutional, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of a member of the commission to the best of my ability, according to the best of my judgment."

The secretary of the division of the territory of the republic of Venezuela, Dr. José María Pérez, and the attorney general, the Havana attorney general, Dr. Francisco Gómez, were present.

Mr. Gilman, after a brief speech, said: "I take this colleague freely, without mental reservation or paroxysm of emotion, and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office of a member of the commission to the best of my ability, according to the best of my judgment."

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