

OUTSIDE THE GATES.

The feat of the two British airmen, Mr. C. W. A. Scott and Mr. T. Campbell Black, who in the great air race to Australia covered the distance from Mildenhall to Melbourne in two days twenty-three hours, in their Comet machine, has thrilled the world.

Sir Macpherson Robertson, the donor of the £10,000 prize for the race, said in presenting it:—"Your epic flight manifested the courage and endurance for which British airmen are justly famed. The world is indebted to you for demonstrating aviation's ability to draw closer together the peoples of the earth. This must result in better international understanding and enhance friendships throughout the world."

The current volume of Lord Esher's Journal ends with the death of King Edward VII. The following is the entry for May 7th, 1910:—

The King is dead. . . .

The currents of life are inscrutable, and no one can read the writing on the wall of fate. The loss of the King at this moment seems irreparable. He stands for our country, our Empire, and all our people in the eyes of Europe and of the world. So much did his personality count that many virtues were attributed to him, and many acts which he was the first to laugh at. No man ever knew more truly his strength and weakness.

Experience, knowledge, instinct not reflection, made him a statesman. I remember [the Marquis de] Soveral saying to him once, "Vous êtes un grand diplomate, un homme d'état remarquable, et vous l'ignorez." The King looked puzzled for a moment and smiled. He knew himself so well. Soveral was right. He had an instinct for statecraft which carried him straight to the core of a great problem, without deep thought or profound knowledge of the subject. He had one supreme gift, and this was his unerring judgment of men—and women.

With this clear-sightedness he never allowed his likes and dislikes to interfere. He weighed men's capacity for work in hand with almost unerring skill. He saw through all attempts to cajole or mislead him, and stratagem availed nothing to those who were misguided enough to use it. . . .

Towards politicians, even towards those who worried him, I never knew him to be unjust. He often condemned them, but not unkindly, for his perfect straightforward honesty could not sympathise with the attitude of mind which yields a strong conviction to the exigencies of party—but he never failed to comprehend.

His friends therefore were not chosen among political combatants. Single-minded devotion to himself, as man and Sovereign, he never failed to appreciate. Genius he invariably recognised, even though its luckless possessor was as much abused as Mr. G. [Gladstone] or Jackie Fisher [Lord Fisher]. The latter he thoroughly believed in as a great sailor and loved as a man.

To his son he was a charming friend and a generous father. He always wished the Prince to be informed of everything and to keep in touch with public affairs. Jealousy was a word he could not understand—and a thing he could not tolerate in man or woman. . . .

I can only write of him as a master and friend—and the kindest and most considerate that a man could have. If he gave his confidence it was given absolutely. To me he was never once inconsiderate, and whenever I had from him a word of reproach, I generally deserved it.

I have known all the great men of my time in this land of ours, and many beyond it. He was the most kingly of them all.

"T. P. O'Connor," by Mr. Hamilton Fyfe, is the story of an extraordinary man, and will be read with relish by all those who so greatly enjoyed his literary flare when alive. It is full of good things. To quote:—

"His Privy Councillorship was as much due to his pen as to his efforts for reconciliation in the House of Commons, and there is an interesting account of the week-end which he spent

as a fellow-guest of the King, who was pleased to have "T.P.'s" personal thanks for his Privy Councillorship:—

"I had an interesting experience (he wrote). I believe I was there at the King's special request. He is a man of strong personal likes and dislikes, and I am one of his "likes" I was told in several quarters. He was conspicuously kind to me. At the lunch given in the tent near the shoot I was a little late; he left the seat on each side of him empty, one for the Marquis of Lincolnshire, a splendid veteran of 83, and the other for me; and we talked very freely."

"At this luncheon 'T.P.' remarked to the King that the Empress Frederick of Germany (His Majesty's aunt) had thrown out her last defiance to her bitter enemies in Germany by having an Englishman to say prayers at her grave and English roses on her coffin.

"You might have added (said the King) there was also a flag—the Union Jack—which I sent myself.' And then he proceeded to tell a most interesting story. He was present at the interview between Bismarck and the Empress when Bismarck crawled to her to ask her influence with her son to prevent him from dismissing him."

"She replied to Bismarck something in these words:—

"You have made a war on me for years; you have reviled me; you have made my position impossible; and above all you have sown dissension between my son and myself which has kept us apart for years and destroyed my influence with him. No, Prince, you have come too late."

The *Sunday Graphic*, which is publishing an exclusive story of the life of the Prince of Wales, tells how the Prince was moved to tears, when visiting a leper colony, by the pathetic attempts of the stricken inmates to sing a song of welcome. The tenderness of the Prince for all forms of suffering is one of his most lovable characteristics; and we can well imagine that the tragedy of those afflicted with leprosy would call forth all his sympathy.

An interesting ceremony took place at St. Bartholomew's the Great, West Smithfield, on October 28th, when new entrance gates, to the ancient pathway of the church were opened with a golden key by Mrs. Maurice Webb, and dedicated by the Rector Canon Savage.

After the dedication the Rector said that two names, Webb and Dove, would ever be remembered with honour and gratitude for prolonged and devoted association with London's architectural masterpiece. The fathers of Mr. Webb and of Mr. Dove found the church derelict and neglected. Inside it horses were shod; the Lady Chapel was at various times used for a factory, printer's press, dancing saloon, public house, and dwelling-houses. The one cloister in the City of London was eight years ago a dirty stable. For 50 years, under the direction of Sir Aston Webb and Mr. E. A. Webb and Messrs. Dove, and recently of their sons, the work of conserving, restoring, and making of worthy use had advanced. During the last 5½ years Mr. Maurice Webb and Mr. W. W. Dove, in association with the rector, had saved a great part of the noble church from utter collapse. To-day it stood stable. The Tudor Gatehouse, condemned as a dangerous structure, and closely associated with the work and the gift of these two, stood as one of the most interesting historical relics of London.

Visitors to Ghent find in the Grand and Petit Béguinages some of the most interesting medieval survivals in this charming old city. This year the latter celebrates the seventh century of its existence, having been founded in the thirteenth century. The nuns live each in their own houses, but live a community life. Suppressed by Pope Clement V the Order was restored by Pope John XXII through the good offices of the Flemish clergy. After the French Revolution, under French dominance the nunneries were turned into civil infirmaries. In 1862 the Petit Béguinage was acquired in the name of the Duke of

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