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THE NATIONAL CAPITAL.

WASHINGTON NEWS AND GOSSIP.

A Solemn Requiem Mass—A Governor's Letter Book and a North Carolina Lady's Cotton.—The "Old North State" Modesty and Merit—Vance's Dress Coat—Personal Notes.

Special Correspondence of Observer and Gazette.
WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 15, 1885.—Last Thursday Senator Valera, the Spanish Minister here, had St. Matthew's Roman Catholic Church draped in mourning, and invited six hundred people to assist in celebrating a high requiem mass for "the repose of the soul of his Catholic Majesty, Don Alfonso." The altar was covered with mourning draperies. Around it knelt continuously twelve Dominican fathers in the black robes of their order, attended by white-robed acolytes. Several other priests in appropriate vestments officiated. In front of the altar was a high catafalque draped in the national colors of Spain. On top of this rested a casket covered with a black pall and decorated with flowers. Four tall wax candles burned at the four corners of the casket, and the darkened church, with its—

"Sordid wretchedly slight, presented a spectacle long to be remembered. In the front pew sat Senator Valera and the other members of the Spanish embassy in full dress. In the next few were three American gentlemen in plain citizen's clothes. These were Grover Cleveland, accompanied by his Secretaries of State and War. Behind these, in order, were the other foreign legations, all wearing their court costumes. On the breast of nearly all the ambassadors glittered jeweled orders, and their coats and vests were elaborately trimmed with gold lace and buttons. In spite of the splanx-like expression assumed for the occasion by the Chinese and Japanese legations, there was an air of solemnity on the faces of the assembled audience.

VANCE'S LETTER BOOK—A JUST CLAIM.—The chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs in the Senate will have it in his power to help two North Carolina bills through his committee next week. I am curious to know how Logan will report there. One is a bill Senator Vance will frame to have his letter-book, which was seized by Sherman's army in Raleigh and which lay in the War Department, suitably copied. Our people feel an interest in this, as the letter-book of the War Governor of North Carolina contains material of importance to the future State historian. There is no earthly reason why the book should not be copied, as the cost is trivial, unless Logan permits himself to be swayed by partisan spite in the matter. Another bill which will be referred to this committee is a cotton claim brought by Mrs. Ellison, of Washington, N. C., the widow of the Mr. Ellison who was a member of the Secession Convention. He was a strong Union man and died before the war closed. After his death a Federal officer seized Mrs. Ellison's cotton for military purposes, and without solicitation on her part, gave her a certificate of indemnification. She was a widow when the cotton was taken, and her only son, who was a minor, represents her now. The claim will be in the hands of Daniel R. Goodloe, Esq., a man whose sterling honesty ought to recommend the bill even to partisan John Logan.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF COMMITTEES.—When the committees are announced the friends of Hon. Wharton J. Green expect to do no concern in the Agricultural Committee. They will be disappointed if this is not done, as that gentleman has won the right to it, and Mr. Carlisle cannot afford to ignore the older members from a State whose delegation has done its full duty towards him. For the same reason Gen. Cox and Judge Bennett ought not to be overlooked.

A TOUCH OF STATE PRIDE.—You must pardon me if I seem to be persistent in claiming honors for our State. I do not concern in the sentiment that North Carolina is a "strip of land between two States." I have never admitted the truth of the statement that her original settlers were inferior in birth, culture or wealth to those of her more pretensions southern borders. This impression has gone away because she has claimed so little. Conscious of her own deserts, she has waited for other people to sound her praises.

MACOON'S COAT OF ARMS.—Who outside of North Carolina ever heard that Hon. Nathaniel Macon came from an ancient stock of titled cavaliers as the blue-blooded Bayards of Delaware? Nobody. And yet I have seen the general coat of arms of the family as it dated from Gabriel de Macon, Lord of Sauter, and to cavaliers whose spurs were won as far back as 1300. The azure field of Nat Macon's heraldic shield, bearing its three gold stars, was never blazoned where his constituents or his colleagues could see it, but his life proves he was an ornament to his country and a noble name and the State he loved and served so well. Who ever wrote of the courage, the fidelity, the powers of endurance, the thrift of the Highland settlers of the Cape Fear section? And yet in the veins of these Highland settlers flows the blood of Scottish chiefs who lived in their own castles before many a modern royal dynasty existed—chiefs who survived the battle of Culloden, and who came to this country followed by clans as brave as Roderick Dhu or Black Douglas—as refined and loyal-hearted as Ferguson Melvor. I could mention a number of localities whose people sprang from an ancestry equally desirable.

AN OBEDIENT SENATOR.—At first Senator Vance had a disposition to dodge the dress coat on State occasions, but Mrs. Vance convinced him of the utter uselessness of the attempt. Like a udder which has yielded, and evening full dress is very becoming to him. Senator Ransom would not be caught at a dinner party or reception in anything but full dress, and, as you know, he is generally conceded to be the handsomest man in the company. In point of ability, as well as personal appearance, the North Carolina Senators rank with any on the floor of the Senate.

PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS.—Capt. Van V. Richardson is here, this being his first official visit since he was made Marshal of Eastern North Carolina. Mr. Tom Ransom is also here for the session. He will be clerk of his father's committee, that of Private Land Claims.

GRANVILLE.

CALIFORNIA'S MONEY KINGS.

Men Who are Very Rich But Not Very Happy.

An old Californian tells some queer stories of the rich people of his State. He says that Sharon who he died left property in the neighborhood of \$20,000,000. The current impression upon the Pacific coast is that the marriage between Sharon and Sarah Althea Hill was a genuine one and that she will receive the widow interest in the estate. Sharon was never popular in San Francisco. He so openly defied the laws of society that he was received in but few houses. Sir Thomas Heskith, who married his daughter, was a rough Englishman who came out to San Francisco to hunt for a fortune. He used to behave in the rudest manner to the people there, as if he did not regard them as civilized. He once attended a full dress dinner party at a leading San Francisco gentleman's house in the dress of a mining camp with his trousers tucked in his boots. He was on account of his numerous eccentricities dropped from San Francisco society.

When Sharon's daughter married this eccentric Englishman her father was delighted. He found out from Sir Thomas, his son-in-law, what was the livery of his family servants at home. He had all of his servants at the Sharon country place dressed in the livery of the English family. The servants struck and refused to do it on, and were promptly discharged. Sharon was very similar in character to a prominent citizen there who is known as "Lucky" Baldwin. Baldwin is now worth several millions and has done everything he can to acquire social recognition. But his varied assortment of wives has been too much for the San Francisco people, and in spite of his money he is never seen in society. He is living now with his third or fourth wife, the others having been lost either by divorce or death. He has built a theatre, a hotel, and has gone into the business of enterprises simply to attract public attention. His latest project is to go to New York and build a theatre there. New York is regarded as the Mecca of the California money-makers. They are fond of California until their money is made, and then they thrust to go to New York for new victories. C. P. Huntington, Mackay, Keene, and B. O. Mills, are some of the leading ones who have transplanted their homes from the Pacific coast to New York. The shrewd capitalists of the Pacific coast believe that Mr. Mackay will have done better if he had remained in San Francisco. Senator Fair, his old partner, prophesies that Mackay will lose his fortune, but he does not keep out of the speculative fields. It is understood that Mr. Mackay had twenty millions of dollars when he left the Pacific coast. He has now about seven millions tied up in his cable scheme and a million or more in Mexican railroads. It is estimated that he has eight or ten million left clear of engagements, but he will lose that amount if he persists in backing up his telegraph and railroad schemes.

Senator Fair's wealth is estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$12,000,000. He gave \$400,000 to his wife after the divorce of divorce was granted separating them. He had between \$7,000,000 and \$8,000,000 of his own. He is not a happy man. When he first went to Washington Mr. Bayard took him up, believing that through him he could control the Pacific coast delegates to the national convention. Fair is said to lead at present a very lonely life. He has no intellectual accomplishments, and cares nothing about reading or the study of his own. He is not in the Senate, and through his lack of education in political experience will never be able to make anything of a figure there. He has devoted himself to the pleasures of the table to a great extent. He is a very heavy feeder, eating as much as two or three men would ordinarily require at each meal. The result is that he is growing heavier and heavier and less inclined to anything requiring an intellectual effort.

Stanford, the junior Senator from California, is the richest man on the Pacific coast. His wealth is estimated at \$40,000,000. He is the largest railroad builder in the world. He has the largest vineyard in the world, having 3,500 acres set out with grapes. A California friend of his says that his bequest of \$13,000,000 to the California University is absolute, and although it is managed by him, cannot be revoked. Mr. Stanford intends to give away all of his money before he dies to public institutions to be managed by himself. The university is his pet idea.

Napoleon III and Eugenie de Montijo.
From Edward King's New Book.

The gossip since the fall of the Empire says that the Emperor's declaration was brought on by a somewhat comical incident. They relate that returning from the chase one evening with Mlle. de Montijo, the Emperor ventured to introduce himself at the door of her private room and to linger there for a moment; thereupon he was driven out without ceremony, and, the story adds, with one or two vigorous blows from a riding-whip. This, it was said, confirmed his decided opinion as to the unimpeachable virtue of the young countess, and it was not long before he talked of the adored one, and the good lady, after having shown this precious document to all her intimate friends, allowed herself to be convinced, and the engagement was soon announced to the company gathered at Compiègne.

There was a great outpouring of scandal as soon as this announcement was made, and the Comtesse de Montijo had the dissatisfaction of seeing her past reviewed without mercy, and the Legitimist and other factions of the monarchial opposition to the new Emperor gave full vent to their spleen and their satire. The Prince Napoleon was naturally very angry, as it put an end to the hopes that he had begun to cherish of being the legitimate successor of Napoleon III. Everywhere the coming marriage was alluded to as eccentric; and so wise and careful a man as M. Thiers even ventured to have his little joke at the Emperor's expense. He said: "The Emperor has always seemed to me to be a clever man. To-day I see that he has plenty of foresight by his marriage to Napoleon III. Everywhere the coming marriage was alluded to as eccentric; and so wise and careful a man as M. Thiers even ventured to have his little joke at the Emperor's expense. 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