

EUROPE.

Impriisonment for Debt Abolished in England.

The Jails Thrown Open at New Year and Debtors Made Free.

Christmas Feasts in Rome and the Curiosities of the Council.

ENGLAND.

Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt—The Jails Opened and the Prisoners Set Free.

On the 1st of January the new statute law, which abolishes imprisonment for debt in England, except in cases of county court judgments for small sums, came into operation, and there was in consequence a general jail delivery from all the debtors' prisons and "sponging houses" of the metropolis. It has long been conceded that the practice of locking up a man who owes money for years like a felon is as brutal as it is unchristian, and yet the stubborn opposition to innovation has kept it until now one of the most cruel and absurd laws that ever disgraced the statute book of any country.

ROME.

Solemn Feasts at the Close of the Year—Christmas Day Mass in St. Peter's—St. Stephen's Church Open—History of the Sacred Edifice and a Glance Inside—"Nightly Masses"—The Persecutions Under the Emperors—Streets and City Trade—American and Spanish Bishops Trying their Lunges.

This is the last of the solemn feasts of the year. Since midnight of the 31st we have had a number of processions and pageants in the different churches, sufficient, if minutely described, to fill a large volume. The Pope celebrated mass at his own altar in St. Peter's on Christmas day in presence of the Sacred College and four or five hundred bishops from all parts of the world. The attendance was large but not equal to one-half that of the opening of the Council. We have had the usual procession in the Santa Cecilia square, the long mass, the rich tones of the Pontifical trumpets, the noble grand in gala dress, the fantastic Swiss guard, with their useless halberds, the grandees in black and red and snowy processions and the Palace guards in blue coats and red breeches and pantaloons. The diplomatic gallery was filled. The Emperor of Austria was present. At St. Mary Major there was the procession of the holy manner, which remained exposed upon the altar all the day. In the evening vesper, which were well attended, as the singing was not only good, but unrivalled. Yesterday at the Church of St. Lawrence Horseshoes there was a large attendance of people, but the great point of attraction was the Church of St. Stephen, near the Coliseum. This church is only opened twice a year; yesterday being the anniversary of St. Stephen it was open all day. It is one of the most curiously constructed churches in Rome. Some say that it was an ancient Egyptian temple, and others that it was a church, and lately it has been said that it is the great temple erected in the time of Nero.

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The Proceedings Yesterday—Arrival of Delegates from the West—They Intervene Fisk—No Sympathy with the Movement Along the Road.

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The strike of the workmen employed in the machine and car shops of the Erie Railway Company at Jersey City continues unabated. There has, as yet, been visible no signs of yielding on either side, the company, or rather the management, as well as the strikers, remaining firm. So far, not one of the men has gone back to his comrades, and though all kinds of shifts are resorted to to induce them to do so. The master mechanics all through the shops, as the foremen of the several divisions are called, express it as their opinion that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to replace many of the men with others equally as skilled. They also give the strikers great credit for the courage and perseverance with which they manage their proceedings, particularly in the matter of keeping workmen out of the shops. The threats and intimidations referred to in the HERALD yesterday as having been complained of by outsiders in letters to Mr. Henry L. Brown, are not isolated instances, however. A machinist from Hudson City, on his way to the shops on Saturday last to seek employment, complained in a letter yesterday that he was rudely treated and, though not struck, he was forcibly pushed away from the place, a policeman standing by refusing to interfere with the trouble. A French bark loaded with iron was detained at Jersey City yesterday morning, Thomas O'Donnell was arrested for having assaulted William McGuire, as the latter was going to the Erie machine shops to work, but was acquitted, the evidence being insufficient. From these instances it will be seen that although the leaders and directing minds of the strike may be in favor of peace and order, the more enthusiastic and excited of the rank and file do not even know how to keep within the bounds of reason and law.

SPECIAL POLITICAL NOTES.

Local, State and National.

"The Bitter of the Figs"—The controversy between several of the New York high and low tariff papers in regard to the tariff on pig iron.

THE SHOPS.

Continued. In all the various shops where 500 men employed, as at least there were less than a week ago, the strike has been in progress since Monday last. There were two men in the room, one blacksmith, two in Wood's room, two in Hughes' room and one turner—just the lucky number seen in all. In the immense turning shop near the tunnel only ten fires and eight lathe were in use, also a tremendous reduction of force, involuntary though it be. All the efforts that have been made by the officers of the company to obtain workmen have signally failed.

THE MEETINGS YESTERDAY—WESTERN DELEGATES.

In the morning and another in the afternoon—each of which Mr. George Kealey presided and T. Cronan was secretary. It was announced that delegates from the shops at Fort Jervis and Susquehanna had arrived, together with Mr. W. C. O'Connell, the President of the Industrial Protection Association of Erie and the Erie strikers, who on consultation had concluded it advisable to call on Fisk and Fisk in New York, and have a meeting with them on Monday next. The delegates were not amenable to Fisk's view, but were successful; but whatever propositions the delegates might make to Mr. Fisk, they, the strikers, were not to be bound by a measure which they considered unjust, except, of course, after a meeting of the strikers,