

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE MONTH

The Senate of Texas has passed an anti-racing and anti-bookmaking bill by a vote of 18 to 12.

In the Danish elections last month seven percent of the candidates elected in the provinces were women, and out of the 42 members of the Municipal Council of Copenhagen, seven are women.

In Portugal Dom Miguel de Braganza, the pretender to the throne, has announced that he has renounced all claim to the throne. His sympathies, he says, are all with the young King who was so tragically thrust into his present position.

Trouble is again reported brewing in Central America. According to advices received in the United States Department of State, about six thousand Nicaraguan troops are now near the Honduran frontier. The chief scene of activity is in the neighborhood of Corinto, on the Pacific coast, whereabouts are concentrated four gunboats and other auxiliary craft.

Count Zeppelin's steerable airship made an amazing flight last month at Lake Constance. With a crew of 26 men on board she was in the air for four hours and covered a distance of 150 miles. A great throng witnessed the flight. When the descent was made the military experts were enthusiastic and unanimously agreed that the record flight brings nearer the practicability of Zeppelin airships as troop transports. The comparatively great weight carried in the flight also convinced the military men that the airship could with equal facility carry an equal weight of explosives. The next test of efficiency will come when a demonstration will be made by Count Zeppelin firing explosives from his airship. The success of that test will establish, it is believed, the necessity of aerial navies. The airship is 445 feet long, with a width of 49½ feet. It has three motors, each of 145 horse power. Its speed is as high as 50 miles per hour. The airship is fitted with wireless, has powerful searchlights, and cost over \$100,000.

A plot to murder the Ameer of Afganistan, the Heir Apparent and other members of the royal family has recently been discovered. Twelve hundred arrests have been made in Jellalabad, and it is reported that batches of prisoners are being blown from guns daily. The Ameer, Habdulla Khan, C.C.B., was born in 1872 and ascended the throne in 1901.

The French astronomer, M. Gaillet, has announced the discovery of the two new planets beyond Neptune. He estimates that the one is forty-five times and the other sixty times the distance of the earth from the sun. Reduction to figures does not make the matter much clearer as the numbers are unthinkable, but the discoverer calculates that the one is 4,185,000,000 miles from the sun, and the other 5,580,000,000. The earth is 95,000,000 of miles from the sun, and Neptune 2,800,000,000.

The shelving of the adult suffrage bill in the British House of Commons last month is regarded by the suffragettes as cancelling the possibility of the franchise being granted to women at this session. The measure was introduced despite their protests. They know there is no chance of adult suffrage in England to-day. They have always demanded suffrage only on the same terms as men have it. Therefore, this bill was designed really to prevent them from achieving it for the present. Mr. Asquith, in discussing the bill, said it was well-known that the woman suffrage question had never been made a Government question. He himself believed, as did most of his colleagues, in the necessity for reform in the present franchise apart from any question of sex. He wished to reaffirm what he had previously said, viz.: that the Government intended to introduce a measure for general electoral reform. While Mr. Asquith was speaking four attendants carried in four huge bundles of paper. They were a petition from the anti-suffragettes, signed by 243,782 women, praying the House of Commons to reject any measure granting the parliamentary franchise to women. The document was received with much laughter and was then gravely carried out again.

Lieutenant Shackleton, who left England for the Antarctic in July 1907, has arrived back at New Zealand after reaching within 111 miles of the South Pole, by far the farthest south ever reached by man. He reports his journey difficult but successful beyond the most sanguine expectations. He climbed Mount Erebus, the 13,000 foot volcano never before ascended, and found a crater half a mile in diameter and 8,000 feet deep, discovered a hundred mountains, a glacier 40 miles wide and 120 long, camped in a blizzard with the thermometer 70 below zero, gathered valuable mineral specimens, discovered beds of coal and rejoined their ship after a journey of 1,708 miles covered in 125 days. Another section of the expedition on leaving the ship travelled 1,200 miles in 122 days and triangulated the coast from McMurdo Sound to Drygalski Glacier. Coal measures discovered in the limestone prove that this inhospitable region was once the scene of luxuriant vegetation. The region about the South Pole is a plateau some 10,000 feet high.

Sir Andrew Fraser, K.C.S.I., formerly Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, who is at the Laymen's Missionary Movement Convention at Toronto, expressed the opinion that in spite of the sensational stories that had gone out from that country, there would be no general uprising. 'It is quite true,' he said, 'that there is a spirit of unrest there, but there is no danger of a second Indian mutiny. The revolutionist element is small, and the feeling against present conditions rather undefined. Of course, the economic conditions in India are not conducive to general quiet. The price of articles of necessity and general use have gone up, while the wages have stood still. The remedy? I suppose there will have to be a period of waiting until affairs adjust themselves. One reason for the unrest may be explained by the fact that the natives have ever before them the fact of Japan's success in the war with Russia. It is not the missionaries that are spreading the feeling. It largely comes from the many young men of India who go to Japan for their education, and there imbibe the idea of India for the Indians.'

DEFENCE OF THE EMPIRE

The scare talk in the sensational press of Britain's unpreparedness for war and Germany's rapidly increasing preparation for it, has lessened somewhat during the past few days. Mr. Asquith, in the British House of Commons last week, said there was no friction between the two countries, not even any unfriendliness, nothing, indeed, but a mutual feeling that each must have regard to its own interests in matters of national defence. He condemned the mischievous legends to which currency had been given as the most unscrupulous misrepresentations of the actual situation he had ever experienced. The facts of the case, he said, are that at the end of the current year Britain would have eight Dreadnoughts in commission, while Germany would have two; in 1912 Britain would have 40 first class battleships with a total displacement of 585,000 tons exclusive of the Dreadnoughts, while Germany would have only 20 with a displacement of 241,000 tons; Britain would have 35 cruisers and Germany eight. He appealed to the House, in the interests of the nation, that, whatever party might be in power, to make it its first care to maintain unassailable the supremacy upon which the freedom of Great Britain depends.

Sir Edward Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said that the vastness of the expenditure on armaments had become a satire and a reflection on the civilization of the world, and predicted that, carried much further, it would end in general European bankruptcy. The vote of censure on the government for its naval policy was, after a heated debate, lost on division, by 135 to 353.

In the Canadian House of Commons, on Monday, March 29, a resolution introduced by the Hon. George E. Foster brought the vital question of Canada's participation in Imperial defence measures formally before the Canadian people. The occasion was a notable one, and after Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Mr. Borden, and the Hon. Mr. Brodeur had spoken, the following amendment to Mr. Foster's resolution, proposed by the Premier, was unanimously adopted:

"This House fully recognizes the duty of the people of Canada, as they increase in numbers and wealth, to assume in larger measure the responsibilities of national defence:

"The House reaffirms the opinion, repeatedly expressed by representatives of Canada, that under the present constitutional relations between the mother country and the self-governing dominions the payment of any stated contribution to the Imperial treasury for naval and military purposes would not, so far as Canada is concerned, be a satisfactory solution of the question of defence:

"The House has observed with satisfaction the relief afforded in recent years to the taxpayers of the United Kingdom through the assumption by the Canadian people of considerable military expenditure formerly charged upon the British treasury:

"The House will certainly approve of any necessary expenditure designed to promote the organization of a Canadian naval service in co-operation with and in close relation with the Imperial navy, along the lines suggested by the admiralty at the last Imperial conference, and in full sympathy with the view

that the naval supremacy of Britain is essential to the security of commerce, the safety of the Empire and the peace of the world:

"The House expresses its firm conviction that whenever the need arises the Canadian people will be found ready and willing to make any sacrifice that is required to give the Imperial authorities the most loyal and hearty co-operation in every movement for the maintenance of the integrity and the honor of the Empire."

In England an interesting experiment was made by the War Office the other day to demonstrate the utility of the automobile as a means of rapid military transport to supplement the resources of the railways. Acting on the assumption that a hostile army had landed at Hastings and that the railway was blocked with troop trains, a relieving force of 1,000 men with full war kit and guns was moved to the scene by automobiles. Some 500 machines loaned by members of the Automobile Club picked up the men and their accoutrements at the various barracks and conveyed them to the Crystal Palace, whence the start was made. The machines travelled at the rate of twenty miles an hour over the hard frozen roads towards Hastings. The lighter cars with the men took the lead, leaving the heavier vehicles with the guns and stores to bring up the rear. Great crowds gathered along the route of the run to watch the column which was over a mile long. At Hastings the cars were drawn up on the sea front. 'The Relieving Army' returned home the same evening.