

NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE MONTH

The 'Princess Royal,' the largest battleship in the world, was laid down for the Admiralty at Barrow-in-Furness last month. She is to be of 26,000 tons displacement and over 700 feet long.

Captain Bernier, of the Canadian Marine, is to leave next month on the Government ship 'Arctic' on a trip of exploration through the territory that Dr. Cook christened Bradley Land. It is his intention to follow as far as he can Dr. Cook's trail in an effort to determine the accuracy of Cook's assertions and observations. With him he carries four sledges given him by Mr. Theodore A. Cook, a brother of Dr. Frederick A. Cook, who lives on the Cook Dairy Farm, at Calicoon, N.Y., the family birthplace. Mr. Cook announced last week that he will stand by the outcome of Captain Bernier's expedition. If he comes back and says he cannot believe Dr. Cook reached the Pole he will accept the verdict without question. Captain Bernier is to bring back from Etah the cases belonging to Dr. Cook, left there by Harry Whitney when Commander Peary declined to give them room on board his ship.

At the National Congress of the Socialist party held in Chicago last month the delegates became involved in a dispute over the question of immigration. Two reports were submitted. The doctrine of equal privileges for all races, as enunciated by the International Congress of the party at Stuttgart, was not endorsed in the majority report, which recommended the exclusion from the United States of all Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and Hindoos. The minority report declared it to be the duty of the Socialist party to break down the barriers that separate the different races. The majority report endorsed all parts of the Stuttgart immigration plank, except that dealing with the Asiatic races. 'We advocate the unconditional exclusion of these races,' says the report, 'not as races per se, not as peoples with definite physiological characteristics, but for the evident reason that these peoples occupy portions of the earth which are so far behind the general modern development of industry that they constitute a drawback, an obstacle and menace to the progress of the most aggressive, militant and intelligent elements of our working class population.'

Before the Dominion Parliament closed, Sir Wilfrid Laurier moved an address to their Excellencies Earl and Lady Grey, who will depart from Canada before another session of the Canadian Parliament is called together. Sir Wilfrid said Earl Grey belonged to a family whose name had long been connected with the history of responsible government, while he himself had had a distinguished career before coming to this country. Since his arrival he had given his whole heart and soul to his work, had associated himself with everything which concerns our national life. Arts, letters and sciences had received a notable impulse under his regime, while he was entitled to much praise for what he had done to combat tuberculosis and to inaugurate the movement for the preservation of our historic battlefields. The idea that Canada should have a Canadian Governor, the Premier regarded as a laudable but misguided ambition. The appointment of eminent statesmen of the Old Country he considered kept strong the tie which binds Canada to the Motherland, and places at the head of affairs one not in any way connected with our party differences, and therefore able to preserve a better balance. Mr. Borden, in seconding the resolution, said His Excellency possessed the true imperial vision, and we recognize in him as true a Canadian as is to be found in this great Dominion. He suggested that His Excellency convey to the Crown the message that the free people of Canada are fully aware that there are great problems which must be faced in order to bring about the co-operation of the Empire, and that in this connection the people of the Dominion are ready and willing to bear their share of the burden.

Divorces in Canada are on the increase. The figures given for the last ten years are:—1900, five; 1901, three; 1902, four; 1903, nine; 1904, seven; 1905, ten; 1906, seventeen; 1907, seven; 1908, twelve; 1909, seventeen, and 1910, twenty.

The last of the Newfoundland sealing fleet is safe in port and it is announced that the year's total catch amounts to the unusually large number of 320,000. The steamer 'Aurora,' which was reported as missing, has arrived at St. John's with a catch of 11,000 seals. The 'Aurora' had been cruising along the coast of northern Labrador and for that reason was not reported by other vessels.

Costa Rica was visited last month by a terrible earthquake, in which every building in the city of Cartago was completely destroyed, and 1,500 persons perished. Entire families were wiped out. Among the dead is Rafael Angel Troy, the Costa Rican poet, whose works are known in many countries. The college of the Silesian priests fell while the priests and children were at prayer. Two priests and ten children were killed. The earthquake, which brought almost total darkness and great clouds of dust from the falling buildings, was followed by a roaring which came apparently from deep down in the earth, and for six hours the disturbance continued. Thousands are homeless and without food. Fires that broke out immediately after the destruction added to the horror of the situation, and heavy rains that have fallen since have made the conditions almost unbearable, even for those who escaped injury.

In the Turkish Chamber of Deputies last week, during a discussion of the Budget, opposition developed to the annual grant of 2,160 pounds (Turkish) to the husbands of imperial princesses, on the ground that their positions were sinecures. As a consequence Djavid Bey, the minister of finance, presented his resignation, and it is likely that Talaat Bey, minister of the interior, as well as other ministers will also resign. Despatches report that the recent fighting at Kachinick Pass between the Turkish troops and the Albanians lasted thirteen hours. Finally, surrounded on all sides, the Albanians made a disorderly retreat, leaving many men behind, who were made prisoners. The Albanians lost 500 men and the Turks 100. The great loss sustained by the former was due to the fact that they had no artillery, while the Government troops were amply supplied. It is believed by the officials here that the recapture of this important pass has broken the back of the rebellion, and it is stated that the inhabitants of Ipek and Pristina have declared their loyalty to the Porte.

The Odelsting, the controlling legislative body of Norway, has voted to grant universal municipal suffrage to women over 25 years of age. The new legislation will become effective at the next elections and will increase the present women electors from 270,000 to half a million. The general assembly, the Storting, is elected by popular vote, and upon convening annually divides itself into houses, the Lagting and the Odelsting. The former is composed of one-fourth of the total members of the Storting and the other of the remaining three-fourths. The revision of the Government belongs exclusively to the Odelsting, in which house all new legislation must be first considered. Except in matters in which it has exclusive authority, the laws adopted by the Odelsting pass to the Lagting to be accepted or rejected. If the two houses do not agree they hold a common sitting and the final decision is given by a majority of two-thirds of the joint body. The royal veto may be exercised twice, but if the same bill passes three Storthings formed by separate elections it becomes a law. Since 1907 women have been allowed to vote under the same conditions as men only when they, or the husband when the couple have the property in common, have paid an income of 400 kroner in the country districts.

Word has just come of an explosion of dynamite on a lighter in the harbor of Kobe, Japan, on April 7 in which 1,150 buildings were damaged, two persons killed, and 82 injured. Not a house in Kobe escaped damage. Many buildings along the Bund, notably the Oriental Hotel, the German consulate, and steamship business offices were severely injured. Aomori, a flourishing seaport on the north shore of the main island, has been visited by a conflagration which destroyed two-thirds of the town. The census of 1900 gave Aomori a population of 15,000.

In Russia an Imperial order has been issued undoing one of the characteristic measures of Von Plehve, whose desire it was to see every man in Russia in a uniform, indicating his rank and occupation. Heads of civilian departments designed uniforms resembling as closely as possible those of the military, with shoulder straps and other marks of rank, with the result that it is almost impossible to distinguish civilian officials from officers. The Emperor, on recommendation of the Ministers of War and Marine, has now ordered the semi-military features dropped, except for officials of the police and prison departments.

Dr. Grenfell writes to the 'Witness': 'A great event has happened so far as Labrador is concerned. The winter mail has come across in the middle of March, from Forteau in Labrador to Flower's Cove, in Newfoundland. Never before in the history of mankind has this feat been accomplished, and it is only due to the enterprising postmaster-general and to the brave man who brought the mail, to say that it is of very much greater import and a very much greater feather in their caps than most men imagine. One great objection to Labrador residence in winter has been the supposed impossibility of getting out from Christmas to May, and as far as the north end of this country is concerned, the impossibility of getting any news from our colleagues and friends and the impossibility of making any arrangements with them for the coming fishing season. A mail coming across regularly in the winter at the trifling cost of a few dollars is now not only clearly demonstrated as possible for once, but that it could be run fairly regularly and with comparative safety. Moreover, it is a new feature in physiography to know that a single man, without running any inordinate risk, can pass the Straits with a light boat practically any time in the winter.'

General Nord Alexis, ex-President of Hayti, died in Kingston, Jamaica, last month, aged some say ninety, and some say a hundred years old. He became president of Hayti in 1902. His term was to have expired May 15, 1909. Prominent politicians grumbled because he did not give them what they considered their fair share of the spoils, and he punished some notorious looters of the national treasury. Early in 1908 the movement against him had gained great strength, and in March a reign of terror was suddenly inaugurated in Port-au-Prince. The Government sent out troops, who seized many of the revolutionists and summarily put more than a score to death. The warships of four nations went to Port-au-Prince to protect the lives and property of foreigners. President Nord Alexis, however, achieved the double purpose of killing as many of his foes as he could and striking terror into the hearts of those beyond his reach. For only a few months, however, did Alexis maintain his rule. In November General Simon took up arms against the President. His march to the capital was a triumphant one, and even the people of the capital turned against their President. They surrounded the palace on the morning of December 2, and took possession of the city, and Alexis yielded to the pleas of those about him and took refuge on board the French warship 'Duguaytrouin,' and sailed away from his native land, never to return.