



COLONIAL NEWS ITEMS.

The is an important article on Canada from Sir George Baden-Powell's pen in the January number of the *Fortnightly Review*, which all Canadians and others interested in the Dominion should take an opportunity of reading.

It seems that the British Foreign Office has virtually conceded the principle of including all Colonies which may desire it in all future commercial treaties entered into by the British Government with foreign Powers. All the Agents-General have received their instructions in view of their being called to give evidence before the Board of Trade Committee in London, and there is every prospect that the Australian Colonies, which are apt to take different views in matters of general policy, will, in this question of foreign treaties, show an undivided front.

At the annual inspection of his command at Singapore by Major-General Sir Charles Warren the other day, the Royal Artillery, under the command of Colonel Burton Brown, practised with the recently mounted 92 B.A. guns, and at an estimated range of 8,435 yards the gunners cut away the flagstaff of the target at the second shot. The shells weighed 3½ cwt., and at such a range would have a striking velocity of about 1,185 feet a second. During the whole practice the shells were all thrown within a few feet of the target, and every shot would have told, of course, upon such an object as a man-of-war. The cutting of a flagstaff at a distance of nearly four miles may be what is called a "flake," but it is a performance of unique character.

Among the bric-a-brac which lay on the late Alphonse Karr's writing-table was a curious dagger-shaped paper-knife, to which an interesting little history attached. It happened that, in the days of ill-regulated youth, Karr once wrote some sarcastic verse at the expense of a certain lady, who, being somewhat deficient in the sense of humour, could think of no more pointed rejoinder than to seek out the indiscreet versifier, and stab him. The dagger with which the deed was done fell into the hands of the wounded man, who kept it for the rest of his days as a memento, with the inscription neatly engraved upon the blade—"Presented by Madame Colet to Alphonse Karr—in the back."

Major-General Ivor Herbert, who recently succeeded Sir Frederick Middleton in the command of the Canadian Militia, is to remain on the list of officers of the Grenadier Guards during his term of command in the Dominion. He holds the rank of major in his regiment, and by way of compensating the Grenadiers for the loss of his services, an extra captain is to be allowed them. It is likely that General Herbert will be knighted before long.

Several statements having lately appeared as to the reason of Sir Joseph Hickson's retirement from the general management of the Grand Trunk Railway Company of Canada, it may be interesting to give Sir Joseph's own utterance upon the point:—"I am by a most friendly arrangement retiring. Of course, it was not to be expected of me that I should work as hard for ever as I have done. The position of the company is good, and I consider it a very strong position. The line is in good order. The rolling stock is in first-class condition, and the line occupies a strong position among the

railways on this continent, and I know of nothing to discourage those interested in or connected with the railway."

Mr. G. R. Parkin, M.A., who recently made an extensive tour through Australia and New Zealand in the interests of Imperial Federation, has written a brace of articles on "The Anglo-Saxon in the Southern Hemisphere" for the February and March numbers of *The Century* magazine. Mr. Parkin is a shrewd and capable observer, and his experiences in the Antipodean Colonies have not been lost upon him.

The appeal recently made by the *St. James's Gazette* for subscriptions to the funds started for the relief of the survivors of the Balaklava Six Hundred has been promptly and handsomely responded to from parts of India and the Colonies, and the figure now reached is close upon £7,000. It is to be hoped that in legislating for the disbursement of the money the committee will hunt up such of the Balaklava Charge survivors as happen to be living in our Colonies.

There has been a funny quarrel lately between two Sydney newspapers. The *Evening News* of that city published an account of the Kemp-McLean sculling match, which was stigmatised by an opposing sheet, the *Australian Star*, as totally false, the *News* also being described as the *Evening Ananias*. For this ebullition of Australian language, the proprietor of the *News*, Mr. Alfred Bennett, took an action for libel against the offender, in which he claimed £5,000 damages. After a hard fought case, the jury returned, by a majority, a verdict for the defendant paper.

The town of Wanganui, in New Zealand, has had a curious and alarming visitation lately. People in various parts of the town began to fall suddenly and dangerously ill, and it soon became evident to the local doctors that some irritant poison was the cause of the mischief. It was discovered eventually that a large quantity of tapioca, which had been received from a wholesale firm in Dunedin by a couple of Wanganui grocers, was strongly impregnated with arsenic.

The Canadian Government ceased to grant assisted passages to emigrants in July 1889; but the statistics of the port of Montreal show that 8,589 emigrants arrived in that city last year before, against 7,931 the year before, and that the immigration is now of a better class than formerly, the amount of money brought by the new-comers having risen from \$5,140, to \$9,680. Of last year's arrivals it should be said that 1,033 were on their way to the United States.

The Postmaster-General on January 26th, signed a convention establishing a direct parcel post with Barbadoes. This is the first arrangement of the kind between the West Indies and Canada.

Considerable interest has been aroused lately throughout the Australian Colonies by the publication of a letter, written to Sir Henry Parkes from British Columbia, by Sir George Baden-Powell, M.P., when that gentleman was on the Pacific Slope a few months back. Sir George took occasion to point out to the Antipodean statesman the necessity which existed for developing as rapidly as possible the trade relations between the Australian Colonies and the Canadian Dominion, and his opportunely wise suggestions to this end have had the useful effect of stimulating Antipodean thought in this direction. The popular

Member for the Kirkdale Division certainly deserves well of our Colonial Empire for the zeal he displays in taking advantage of every possible opportunity to promote Colonial interests.

Arabi Pasha is reported to be in good health in Ceylon, and that he does not suffer from the climate. The official report adds that he resides in a charming place, which, however, he does not keep in a clean condition.

At the Jackson's Day banquet at Philadelphia the other day, ex-President Cleveland, speaking to the toast of "principles of true Democracy," condemned the injustice of the new tariff law, the extravagance of public expenditure, and the corruption of voters by threat, intimidation, or purchase.

The supposed—or alleged—predisposition of the Chicagoans in the direction of divorce proceedings is rather cruelly hit off in one of the New York comic papers. A Chicago gentleman leaving home in the morning tells his wife that he intends bringing a friend home to dinner in the evening—"an old friend of yours—he was married to you once." "Oh, how nice," exclaims the affectionate wife, "I wonder who it can be!"

A joint meeting of the executive committee of the London branches of the Imperial Federation League was held in the hall of the London Chamber of Commerce on February 4, to consider a proposal to establish a Metropolitan Council for purposes of consultation and organization. Representatives of each of the branches were present. The formation of the proposed council was decided upon, each branch to be represented by five members, and it was remitted to the branches to elect these forthwith. On the motion of Sir Rawson Rawson, seconded by Mr. Taylor, Mr. Faithful Begg was elected the first chairman of the new council.

Specimens have been issued of the new postage and revenue stamps about to be issued by the British South Africa Company. The stamps are admirable, both in design and execution, and the motto which they bear, "Justice, Freedom, Commerce," may be taken as the keynote of the great work of colonisation on which the company is so spiritedly engaged.

It is worthy of note that the Chinese in Australia are beginning to embrace Christianity in large numbers. At the pro-Cathedral in Brisbane, the other day, no less than 11 Celestials were taken through the process of conversion, while on the various diggings, and in other colonial places where these emigres from the Flowery land most do congregate, they are now being brought over in shoals to the Christian fold. There are many rich and influential Chinese in Australia and New Zealand who have become thoroughly assimilated with European manners and customs, and who are regarded as useful and loyal citizens, and it is in great measure to the influence exercised by these gentlemen over the lower classes of their fellow-countrymen in the Colonies that this civilising process is to be attributed.

The news of the death of Mr. Bradlaugh was received with unfeigned regret throughout India. The Congress Press describe it as a national calamity while the organs of the opposition party pay a tribute of respect to his ability and honesty.

The Council of the Institute is to be congratulated upon the increasing success which is following its laudible

efforts to promote the interests of the Colonial Empire in every possible way. The usefulness of the Intelligence Department of the Institute, particularly, is well illustrated by the number of applications constantly received for information on industrial subjects in connection with the colonies. During the past year information has been sought and afforded on the importation of Canadian cattle in its relation to cattle-raising in the British Isles; the Constitution of Canada in connection with Australian Fisheries question; the storage of water in Australia; the extirpation of rabbits in Australia and New Zealand; the timber resources of Western Australia; the utilisation of the *Phormium Tenax* in New Zealand; oyster culture in New South Wales; the fisheries of South Africa and Australia; the coal resources of the Cape of Good Hope and Natal; the cultivation of Sisal in the Bahamas; the cultivation of cocoa in Ceylon; the cultivation of coffee in the West Indies; the manufacture of indiarubber in British Honduras and West Africa; bee-culture in the colonies; Chinese immigration; emigration to British colonies, and other important matter.

Mrs. French Sheldon, who is now living quietly at Riverdale, up the Thames, will shortly start on her projected expedition to Central Africa. She is described as being slightly under the average height, with a lithe, graceful figure, regular features and a broad and thoughtful brow, over which there gathers a mass of feathery curls. A laughing mouth, penetrating blue eyes and the daintiest pair of ears imaginable, are also included in the explorer's charms, while she is thirty-five, but looks much younger. It is enough to make any man envy Tipoo Tib, or Mwanga, or whatever chief it happens to be who will finally capture this charming lady.

Sir William Gordon-Cumming, about whose name the tongue of scandal is just now wagging in connection with the "baccarat incident" at Mr. Wilson's house in Yorkshire, will be remembered by many at the Cape through his service in Zululand. "Bill" Cumming, like "Bill" Beresford, made himself conspicuous by his gallantry in the Zulu Campaign, and he was, it is said, the first English officer who entered Cetewayo's kraal, at Ulundi. He is a dashing soldier, and is, personally, exceedingly popular with all who know him.

The Japanese Government are about to teach the Australians a lesson in commercial enterprise, the Mikado's Ministers having arranged to subsidise a steamship service between Japanese and Australian ports. The running of the vessels is to commence at once, and, in fact, the first vessel of the new line is at the present moment on her way from Yokohama to Brisbane and Sydney.

There has been some more fighting in Pondoland lately, and one correspondent states that two pitched battles, followed by extensive burning of kraals, were fought near the Natal border recently. It is also said that some Pondos fired across the river at a party of Natal natives, a number of whom were seriously injured.

An official of the British South Africa Company returned to Cape Town, the other day, from Mount Shankuru, which lies about 70 miles north-west of Mount Harppen. He reports the discovery of large deposits of alluvia gold, of which he has brought back good samples.

Burton had a curious characteristic which he shared with Lord Byron—that of loving to paint himself much blacker than he really was, and to affect vices, much as most men affect virtues, and with the same insincerity. In one of shipwreck stories, after describing how they all suffered from the pangs of hunger, and the wolfish glances they began to cast on each other from time to time, as the days wore on and no relief came, dropping his voice to a mysterious whisper, almost under his breath, he added:—"The cabin-boy was young and fat, and looked very tender, and on him, more than on any other, such looks were cast, until—" Here he paused, looked around at the strained and startled faces of his auditors, in which horror was depicted, and then abruptly concluded, as though dismissing a disagreeable memory—"But these are not stories to be told at a cheerful dinner-party, in a Christian country, and I had best say no more. Let us turn to some more cheerful subject." Of course he was pressed to continue and complete his story, but stubbornly refused, leaving his hearers in a most unsatisfactory state of mind at the announcement of the unfinished narrative.

A telegram from Calcutta states that fully 100,000 pilgrims arrived in Calcutta during the last few days for the great bathing festival Audhodog Joy. The Great Temple at Kalighat and the ghants on the banks of the Hooghly presented a most animated sight on February 8 (Sunday) and the following day.

Sir Charles Dilke was interviewed in Paris the other day on the subject of the present state of Newfoundland. He is represented to have said that the question had become an exceedingly serious one, Sir Charles thinks that, apart from the lobster question, the great difficulty lies in the impossibility of reconciling the rights accorded to France by the Treaty of Utrecht with the constant development of Newfoundland. The entire territory belongs to the colony, but the colony could not practically exercise its right of sovereignty over it, and Sir Charles is strongly impressed with the belief that the position is very dangerous.

A memorandum was recently laid before Lord Salisbury by Sir George Baden-Powell, in which the member for the Kirkdale Division gave the Premier the result of his recent inquiries in Canada on the various points involved in the Behring's Sea dispute. Lord Salisbury will, of course, be largely guided by Sir George's opinion and suggestions on this important question, as the hon. member's conclusions—apart from the weight which attach to them in any case—have been rendered much more forcible by the fact that Sir George made all his inquiries on the spot, and brought all his shrewd experience of men and things to bear upon his examination of the subject.

A popular lecturer on the art of dress says, "Wear street-gowns the colour of your hair, house-gowns the colour of your complexion." As the majority of women have black brown, and grey hair, the wisdom of the advice is apparent, so far as they are concerned, and the "debante" with the tint of a blush rose will have no reason to quarrel with it; but what is the pink and watery-eyed woman with tow-coloured locks and a complexion like unto melted butter to do?