

THE NEWS IN A NUTSHELL.

THE VERY LATEST FROM ALL THE WORLD OVER.

Interesting Items About Our Own Country, Great Britain, the United States, and All Parts of the Globe, Condensed and Assorted for Easy Reading.

CANADA.

Manitoba farmers are shipping large quantities of stock to the Yukon.

The Grand Trunk Railway Company will enlarge its wheel foundry at Hamilton.

Welland now has natural gas for heating, lighting and manufacturing purposes.

An agent of the Dominion Government is at Copenhagen securing Laplanders and reindeer for the Yukon.

The Marquis of Lorne has accepted the position of Honorary Colonel of the 15th Battalion, Argyll Light Infantry. Mr. George Counsell, Clerk of the County of Wentworth, died suddenly at the family residence, Hamilton, on Saturday.

The Department of Inland Revenue effected 215 seizures during the past year, a large number being illicit whisky stills.

The Spring Hill Coal Company, of Nova Scotia, will operate the Souris coal-fields, where they have secured tracts of land.

Messrs. Siegel, Cooper & Company of New York and Chicago say that they have no intention of opening a departmental store in Toronto.

Her Majesty's ship Phaeton, and torpedo destroyer Sparrowhawk are at Esquimaux, B.C. There are now seven warships in that harbor.

An order in Council has been passed designating Port Stanley as a port to which the harbors act shall apply, and declaring the limits of the port.

Owing to the heavy drafts made on the Mounted Police for service in the Yukon, the remaining force find it difficult to attend to the calls made on them.

The City Hall at London, the scene of the recent accident, is being repaired, but there is an agitation in the city for the erection of a new hall farther north.

The Government will place some 95,000,000 whitefish in Lakes Ontario, Erie, Huron, and St. Clair next summer. The eggs are now being hatched in the Sandwich hatchery.

The investigating governors of the Royal Canadian Humane Association have awarded the silver medal to Albert J. Cummer of Hamilton for saving Miss Amelia Hall from drowning.

Smuggling in a large way is strongly suspected by the Customs Department to be carried on over the frontier at Niagara Falls, but the experts at the business are able to nonplus the officers.

A fortnightly mail service between Auckland, New Zealand, and San Francisco and Vancouver will be inaugurated on April 1. The Oceanic and Canadian-Australian lines will sail every fourteen days alternately.

Since the beginning of the year thirty-nine families from the United States have taken up their abode in Toronto, being of the opinion that the future of that city is brighter than the outlook in the United States cities.

GREAT BRITAIN.

Countess Russell, widow of Lord John Russell, is dead at London.

Great Britain has again declined to reopen the sealing question in answer to a request of the United States.

It is said in London that the Government will ask Parliament to sanction an increase of the army by 15,000 men. Alarming rumors regarding Mr. Gladstone's health are again current in London, but reports from Cannes state that there is little foundation for them.

The very Rev. Henry George Liddell, the former dean of Christ Church, Oxford, is dead. He was born in 1811, and was at one time chaplain to the Prince Consort.

Events in the far east are forcing again into prominence the Pacific cable question. The influential journals all point out the urgent need of an all-British cable.

Henry Irving has been selected as the Rede lecturer at Cambridge University for 1898. The lectureship was established in Henry VIII's time to be devoted to "Humanity, Logic, and Philosophy forever."

It is rumored in London that Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria will shortly announce the betrothal of the Archduchess Elizabeth, daughter of the late Crown Prince Rudolf, to the King of Spain.

The suit against Lady Sykes in London, by Jay, a money-lender, has failed, the jury finding that the signatures to the notes were forged. This puts her ladyship in a rather worse position than before.

Mr. Dunlar Plunkett Barton, Q.C., member of Parliament for the Middle Division of Armagh, has been returned to the House of Commons without opposition on his appointment as Solicitor-General for Ireland.

England has taken a step toward the abandonment of her unsuccessful free negro colony of Sierra Leone, now shut in by French territory. The Queen has evoked the letters patent of 1852 constituting the bishopric of Sierra Leone.

The Lord O'Neill was lost on Wednesday night off Linerick, and the crew were rescued by the British steamer Kincora, from Liverpool. The rush was so great in getting away from the sinking ship that the crew lost everything.

The annual commemoration of the death of Prince Henry of Battenberg

took place on Wednesday at Whippingham church, where his remains are resting. The ceremony was attended by Queen Victoria, Princess Henry of Battenberg, Princess Christian, and the Marchioness of Lorne.

The Executive Committee of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers has recommended the strikers to accept their employers' terms, practically giving the latter sole control of their shops. If this advice is accepted work will probably be resumed on January 31st.

UNITED STATES.

The city clerk's office and post-office at Black, Vermont, have been destroyed by fire.

A wheel company in Buffalo has received by cable an order for 3,000 bicycles to be shipped to Hamburg, Germany.

The nomination of Attorney-General McKenna as a Justice of the Supreme Court has been ratified by the United States Senate.

Eight men were killed and four seriously wounded at Sandy Forks, Ky., in a fight which arose over a game of cards. All were colored.

There is a big strike among the cotton operators at New Bedford, Mass., and other New England towns, over the reduction in wages.

At the annual meeting of the Boston Chamber of Commerce the resolutions favoring reciprocity with Canada were unanimously adopted.

The Cleveland Music Hall, which was built in 1835, at a cost of \$60,000, was destroyed by fire on Saturday night. It had a seating capacity of seven thousand.

Rev. T. Dewitt Talmage, the noted divine of Washington, and Mrs. Elmore McCutcheon Collier of Allegheny City were married at Pittsburgh, on Saturday.

"Gray Gables," the summer home of ex-President Cleveland, at Buzzard's Bay, has been visited by burglars, who ransacked the house from attic to cellar and made good their escape without leaving the slightest clue to their identity.

The proposition now before the New York State Legislature to legalize Sunday theatricals in New York city has evoked a storm of protests from the theatrical profession, who dislike the idea of losing their one day of rest. They will ask the clergy to assist them in a crusade against the proposal.

In the United States Senate on Thursday, Senator Caffrey, of Louisiana, speaking on the immigration bill, said: "No immigrant not a pauper or insane, or diseased, or criminal, should be turned away from our shores. This bill is the cry of prostration and selfishness. It is another form of the mania of protection."

GENERAL.

Yellow fever has disappeared from Jamaica.

Dr. Schweninger says Prince Bismarck's condition is not serious.

Duke Alfred of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha has been ordered to Egypt by the doctors.

Disastrous floods are reported from Perigian, on the Spanish frontier of France.

The Russian army has sent a costly sword as a present to King Menelik of Abyssinia.

Successful observations of the solar eclipse were made in India and other parts of the globe.

One Catholic priest was shot and three wounded during vespers in a Catholic church, at Corfu, Island of Corfu, Greece.

The Australian gold yield for the month of November was: Queensland, 78,024 ounces; West Australia, 75,040; Victoria, 70,177.

Bucharest has been imitating Paris by having a duel between journalists. Being less skillful than their French originals, however, one combatant unfortunately killed the other.

A Cannes despatch, speaking of Mr. Gladstone's health, says: "He is extremely weak and so dejected as a result of neuralgic pains, that he has expressed a desire that all were over."

Messrs. Hickie and Prunty, who escaped the massacre of the British survey party which was attacked by natives at Mekran, on January 12, have reached Ormara, on the Arabian Sea.

There was a severe earthquake shock on Monday at Argenta, Italy, eighteen miles south-east of Ferrara. A church and several buildings were wrecked, and some persons were injured.

During the past week the deaths from the bubonic plague at Bombay numbered 851. From all causes there were 1,540 deaths. The exodus is increasing, and business is stagnant.

It is reported that Japan has purchased the Brazilian cruiser, Abreu, now building on the Tyne, for \$370,000, and has also bought the Brazilian ironclads Deodora and Floriano, which are constructing in France.

The Vatican statistician announces that last year the Congregation of Cardinals received 490 applications for the annulment of marriage, took about half of them into consideration, and out the bonds in only six cases.

Considerable surprise has been caused at Berlin, by a despatch from St. Petersburg, to the Cologne Gazette announcing that Russia has formed a new army corps on the German and Austrian frontiers at Vilna and Kieff.

Empress Augusta Victoria's latest birthday present from her husband is a bracelet made of the seven miniatures of her children painted on ivory and set in jewels. From the middle picture hangs the portrait of the Kaiser in a heart-shaped medallion.

A swordfish weighing 2070 pounds was lately brought to the market at Taiping, in the Straits Settlements. It was 30 feet long, the flesh and bones weighed 900 catties, or 1200 pounds; the fat 230 catties, the entrails 400, and the sword 30 catties.

According to a special despatch received from Berlin, it is semi-officially announced in that city that Germany will not object to the appointment of Prince George of Greece as Governor of the island of Crete, "provided the other powers unanimously consent."

In the Italian Chamber of Deputies on Friday, the Premier, Marquis di Rudini, explained that the recent disorders in the Italian provinces were due to the dearth of food and lack of employment, owing to the retrenchments in public expenditures.

A letter has been received at Brussels, from Arongai, dated November 18, which reports that the insurgents have attacked and defeated a detachment of the Congo State troops north of the Lake, killing their commander, Baron D'Hanis personally undertook punitive operations from Lakandu in the Manyema district.

BRITAIN AND RUSSIA.

Prospects of a Big War Over the Chinese Difficulty.

The London Daily Standard in an editorial on Saturday presents what is presumably the official Conservative view of the Chinese situation. It says:—

"A calm survey of the situation as it exists on the spot scarcely encourages the hope that by the mere lapse of time everything will arrange itself. Russia and Great Britain are now in a position in which it is clear that one or the other will have to give way. It ought not to be Great Britain. If our Foreign Office on this occasion permits the threats of the Czar's Charge-d'Affaires to coerce the Tsung Li Yamen into a rejection of our terms, there will be an end to our influence at the Imperial court. It is not the first, but it is unquestionably the crucial trial of strength. St. Petersburg has chosen the ground and thrown down the challenge."

The Standard, continuing, says that there is no lack of means for asserting in action the principle that has been so unequivocally expressed in the words: "If necessary, at the cost of war," uttered by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach recently, and concludes:—"Japan is stated to be acting in concert with the United States during the diplomatic struggle with the Tsung Li Yamen. The naval strength of the two States interested in maintaining the status quo is overwhelming. If, unhappily, the question of mastery has to be decided by force, it is hard to see how the policy of commercial liberty and equality can be resisted."

NEW COMMANDER IN INDIA.

Sir William Lockhart's Place Taken by Sir Power Palmer.

A despatch from Calcutta says:—Sir William Lockhart, after completing the report on which he is engaged concerning the future Indian frontier policy, and the measures to be adopted, will return to England on three months' leave. General Sir Power Palmer will act during his absence, being succeeded in his present command by General Elles. The force will otherwise remain unchanged, except for a temporary reduction of the headquarters staff.

Sir Power Palmer has been commander of the Punjab frontier force since 1895. He is now in his fifty-eighth year. He entered the Indian army in 1857, and during the Mutiny he served with Hodson's Horse. In 1863 he was on the north-west frontier. He served in the Abyssinian war from 1867 to the end of 1868; was with the Duffa expedition in 1894, and commanded the Chin Hills expedition of the previous year. He served also during the Afghan war, 1873, and in the Sudan expedition, 1885. He received the rank of major-general in 1893.

ONE OF THREE WAYS.

Mr. Chamberlain's Remarks on the Closer Union of the Empire.

A despatch from London says:—Right Hon. Jos. Chamberlain on Wednesday night at Liverpool paid a warm tribute to the Imperial importance of the Canadian Pacific, which he called a magnificent enterprise. This is especially significant in view of events in the far East, in the development of which as the Government here fully realize, the Canadian Pacific route provides England for the first time with a strong trump card. Mr. Chamberlain also said that it would be foolish to attempt to predict the form which the future closer union of the Empire would take. He added:—"It may be in the shape of a commercial union, or Imperial Zollverein, which I don't think so absurd as some political economists believe, or it may be in the shape of some Imperial council."

MILLION IN DUST AND DRAFTS.

Richest Ship Yet from the Klondyke Arrives in Victoria.

A despatch from Victoria, B.C., says: The steamer Corona from the north, has brought twenty passengers from Dawson City. It is the richest ship that has arrived yet laden with Klondyke money, the twenty people having close to a million dollars in dust and drafts divided among them. One of the party is Lou Keller, a girl of eighteen, who is en route to Cheyenne to be married. She is the second woman who has crossed the trail this season.

ARMY WOULD BE READY.

General Lord Wolseley on Current Peace Rumours.

A despatch from London says:—Gen. Lord Wolseley, Field Marshal and Commander-in-Chief of the British army, speaking at a banquet in London, on Thursday evening, refuted what he called "pessimist rumours current about the army." Lord Wolseley asserted that if England declared war to-morrow she could have two of the finest and most fully equipped army corps in readiness for any British port before ships could be prepared to embark them. He said furthermore that if the men were better paid there would be no difficulty in obtaining recruits.

The Daily Mail, commenting on the recent Ministerial speeches and the proposed additions to the army and navy, thinks "it all proves that Lord Salisbury can be resolute when necessary."

TO INCREASE THE NAVY.

There has been a responsible statement that the Government has decided to add 7,000 men to the navy, and the first-class battleship Hannibal, now at Portsmouth, is to be put at once into commission. There is, however, no official information or confirmation in either cases.

FIVE BULLET WOUNDS.

Murderer of a Woman in Minnesota Believed to be in Canada.

A despatch from St. Paul, Minn., says:—Mrs. Amelia Forke was shot five times at Sheffield Mills, Rice county, on Saturday. She was dead when the neighbors arrived. A satchel was found on Monday in Mrs. Forke's barn containing shoes, overshoes, and a cap belonging to Charles Forke, her divorced husband. Mrs. Forke obtained a divorce from her husband two years ago on the ground of cruelty and non-support. Forke was very angry at this proceeding, and, it is said, told her that he would "fix her plenty" for so doing. He went to Minneapolis and went into business, and was there until last Friday, when he sold out and said he was going to Canada. The evidence seems to show that immediately after disposing of his business interests in Minneapolis he went to Sheffield Mills, to the home of his former wife, and hid in the barn Friday night. Everyone was away from home Saturday, except Mrs. Forke.

UGHT TO CONTRIBUTE.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach Says Canada Should Pay for Naval Defence.

A despatch from London says:—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking at Bristol on Wednesday evening, ridiculed the notion of providing granaries, as has been suggested in some quarters. He said he was convinced the British navy was strong enough to hold its own, and in any war England would have many friends ready to supply corn. Referring to the coming budget estimates, he said these would show that the Government was fully alive to keeping up the standard of the army and navy, though, he declared, it was not creditable to Canada, or fair to English taxpayers that such a colony should practically contribute nothing to the naval defences of the Empire. He hoped Canada would soon turn her attention to this matter, adding that he was convinced that if she did not the day would come when she would have "a rude awakening which would be entirely her own fault." In concluding his speech, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that China had approached England for assistance to pay the Japanese indemnity, and that the negotiations were still pending.

MURDER IN CROW'S NEST PASS.

Rancher Attacked by Navvies Dies as the Result of Injuries.

Information has reached Calgary that what at present seems to have been a brutal murder was committed last week at a place called the Loop, in the Crow's Nest pass, the victim being a rancher named George Smythe who resided near Garnett's ranch, in the Pincher Creek district. It appears that Smythe had been employed for some time freighting on the railway, and was travelling eastward, when some men employed on the Birmingham contract asked him to give them a ride. He declined, and was terribly beaten. In a few hours afterwards he died of the injuries he had received. The Mounted Police at Crow's Nest lake at once started in pursuit, and captured one of the men on the road, and the other three shortly afterwards, concealed in the timber near Birmingham's camp. All of them were taken to the Mounted Police post at the Crow's Nest headquarters in Alberta.

JOHN BULL DETERMINED

That the Door of Chinese Commerce to the World Shall Not be Shut.

A despatch from London says:—The Right Hon. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking at Swansea on Monday night, echoed the declaration of Mr. Balfour, First Lord of the Treasury, on the Indian policy of the Government, at Manchester, and said the Government was determined, even at the cost of war, that the door of Chinese commerce should not be shut to Great Britain.

NEWS FROM THE FAR EAST

FRANCE AND JAPAN SEND OUT MORE WARSHIPS.

Japan Has Immense Power—She Will Check the Russian Policy—German Ships Still in Kiao-Chau Bay and War Clouds Loom.

A despatch from Yokohama, says:—A fleet of nine warships will leave in the course of a week for Chinese waters, the Mikado previously inspecting the Yashima and the Fuji, steel bar-bette ships, of 12,450 tons, displacement. Decrees have been issued appointing Lieut.-Gen. Viscount Kawakami chief of staff, and creating a supreme military advisory council, consisting of the Marquis Yamagata, Marquis Oyama, Marquis Saionji and Prince Komatsu.

JAPAN PREPARED FOR WAR.

The London St. James' Gazette, commenting upon the despatch from Yokohama saying that a fleet of nine Japanese warships will leave Japan in the course of a week for Chinese waters, says:—"Japan is prepared for war. That, in a nutshell, is the news from Yokohama to-day, and it is really the first news from Japan since the beginning of the Chinese crisis. It was obvious that the Japanese Government had stopped telegraphic communication, which it never does except when mobilizing the army or navy. That is precisely what it has been doing. It is almost certain that the destination of the fleet is Wei-Hai-Wei, and there is no doubt the movement means that the status quo in China, so far as Manchuria and Korea are concerned, shall not be altered by Russia or any combination of Russia's allies, in defiance of Great Britain and Japan. So long as the defender's policy is equality of opportunity in China, they are in a position to enforce their claims."

JAPAN'S FIGHTING STRENGTH.

The St. James' Gazette also gives prominence to a list of the ships in the Japanese navy, pointing out its immense fighting strength, and says:—"Even with Great Britain a mere sympathetic onlooker, it is probable Japan could finish off all the Russian and German warships east of the Suez canal in short order. Great Britain, even including the Powerful, has not a vessel in the North Pacific capable of standing in battle line against three battleships which Japan possesses." It is reported that Japan has purchased the Brazilian cruiser Abreu, now building on the Tyne, for \$370,000, and has also bought the Brazilian ironclads Deodora and Floriano, which are constructing in France. Agents of the Spanish Government have been in London trying to arrange for the purchase of these vessels, but it is understood that they were unable to raise the necessary money.

FRENCH SHIPS FOR CHINA.

A special despatch from Paris says orders have been received at Charbourg and Toulon, respectively, to immediately prepare the battleships Bruix and Vauban to reinforce the French squadron in the far East. The Bruix is a steel vessel of 4,754 tons displacement, and 9,049 indicated horse-power. Her speed is estimated at over 18 knots, and she carries a crew of nearly 400 men. The Vauban is a steel vessel of 6,206 tons, and 4,560 indicated horse-power. Her nominal speed is about 14 1/2 knots, and she carries a crew of 440 men. The Bruix and Vauban sailed for China on January 24. Admiral de Beaumont has been appointed Commander-in-Chief of the French squadron in the far East. He will hoist his flag on board the Vauban.

A special despatch from Shanghai, dated Friday, says that France has purchased three Chinese steamers, and is trying to acquire others for conversion into transports. According to the same despatch the Japanese squadron sailed from Yokohama, on Saturday for Chinese waters. If the morning papers comment editorially upon the menacing aspect of affairs in China. Despatches from Paris say that the report is current there that China is trying by the offer of high interest, to obtain a loan without assistance, and without the guarantees that Russia and England demand.

GERMAN SHIPS AT KIAO-CHAU.

A despatch from Berlin, says:—The Berliner Neueste Nachrichten announces that the German warships are still sounding Kiao-Chau bay, adding that the exact site of the port is not yet fixed, and that the Government intends that the construction of the commercial port shall be borne by private companies. It is further stated that one company has already been formed to construct the docks.

LOAN PROSPECTS NOT BRIGHT.

A despatch from Peking says:—The prospects of the British loan are not bright. The British and Japanese Ministers are acting in concert in the matter. The loan will be (if arranged) at 3 per cent, and will be issued at par.

FORTY PEOPLE KILLED.

Explosion of Gas in a Russian Mine Causes Terrible Loss of Life.

A despatch from St. Petersburg says:—Forty persons were killed and eighteen injured by an explosion of gas in one of the mines of the Donetzear Company, in the Taganrog district, on the north shore of the Sea of Azov.