

GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

A correspondent of the Presse d' Orient gives some interesting information on the physical difficulty of maintaining a fleet in the Black Sea, arising from the ravages of a little insect peculiar to its waters.—He says:—

"Preparations are now being made for the total destruction of the Russian vessels sunk in the harbour of Sebastopol. This operation, some persons say, will be performed by throwing very heavy shells to drop perpendicularly on the vessels, and bursting so as to send them to pieces. The vessels, however, must be by this time half destroyed by the sea-worm, the teredo navalis, which is peculiar to the Black Sea. In order to give an idea of the ravages committed by this little insect, I may mention the case of the English steamer Gertrude, which has never quitted the Black Sea since the commencement of the war. She has been employed in the service of the port for the daily wants of the army. The captain lately received orders to return to England, but he replied that in consequence of the ravages made by this worm on his vessel, she was not in a fit state to undertake the voyage. This insect finds its way between the copper and the bottoms of the vessels, and then eats into the wood. The English have sought a remedy for the evil, and have made experiments on the Caradoc, the Banshee, and the Telegraph. One side of their bottoms have been covered with a kind of gum and the other left in its usual state. After a certain time, the latter part was covered with a layer of what resembles moss, and the vessels answered the helm better on one side than on the other. These experiments, however, were not complete, as the ships in question have not remained constantly in the Black Sea."

**DIFFICULTY WITH AUSTRIA.**—The Washington Star says that information was received by the last steamer from Europe of a misunderstanding between Col. Jackson, our Minister Resident at Vienna, and the Austrian Government. A correspondent of the Star says:

"The misunderstanding has been caused by the arrest and imprisonment of an American citizen named Spear, who after seven months' close confinement, during which he has not permitted to communicate in any way with even his minister or counsel, was tried on the 31st of March, 1854, by a secret and unknown tribunal, convicted of treason, and sentenced to ten years' labor in irons in the trenches at Therisienstadt in Bohemia.

Mr. Jackson, on the 4th of February, demanded a properly certified copy of the testimony said to have been used in the conviction of Spear, and informed Count Buol in his note, that unless he received an affirmative reply within four weeks, he should at the expiration of that time, withdraw from a court where he could no longer remain with honor to his country or advantage to its citizens. As there is no probability that the desired answer will be forthcoming, or that any testimony really existed against the man, Mr. Jackson may be expected to leave Vienna shortly after you receive this."

Schooner Page had arrived at San Francisco, from Japan. The city of Jeddo was destroyed by an earthquake the 11th of November, by which 100,000 houses were left in ruins, and 30,000 lives were lost.

IMPORTANT NEWS FROM JAPAN.

**JEDDO DESTROYED BY AN EARTHQUAKE.**—Thirty Thousand inhabitants lost—100,000 Buildings destroyed, &c. &c.—The clipper schooner Page, Capt. Morehouse, at San Francisco, from Japan, brings news of a terrific earthquake, which occurred on the 11th November. A part of her freight consists of a portion of the cargo of the brig Greta, which vessel, it will be remembered, was captured by the allies last year.

On the 11th of November, at 10 o'clock P. M., a violent earthquake occurred at Jeddo, which destroyed one hundred thousand dwellings, fifty-four temples and thirty thousand inhabitants.—Fire broke out at the same time in thirty different parts of the city. The earth opened and closed over thousands of buildings, with their occupants. The shock was severe at Simoda. Although the distance from Jeddo to Simoda is but sixty miles, it appears that no official account of the earthquake had been received at the latter place at the time of the sailing of the schooner Page—December 10. The news was obtained through the Dutch interpreter. The Japanese seemed to attach little importance to the catastrophe. The inhabitants of the portion of the city destroyed were forewarned of the disaster, and many of them escaped. The buildings of Jeddo are chiefly of one story, and constructed of very slight material. The temples of worship, however, are lofty, and in some instances are constructed of heavy masonry.

**A DISAPPOINTED PAPA.**—About once a week (so I was informed) the chief eunuch rushes into his royal presence, exclaiming, in great apparent joy, 'O lord of the world, a son is born unto you!'—'Praise be to God!' exclaims the 'happy king'; 'which of my wives has been so highly honoured?' the eunuch names one of them, and the king rises in great haste to visit her and behold his new offspring. But suddenly cries and shrieks resound from the women's apartments. A band of females bursts into the room, shrieking and lamenting. 'O great king! a terrible demon suddenly appeared among us. He snatched your beautiful son out of the nurse's arms, and flew through the window with frightful noise.' And so the trick is repeated from week to week, and the poor fool continually laments over his lost children.—Taylor's Visit to India.

'It's a very solemn thing to be married,' said Aunt Bethany. 'Yes, but it's a great deal more solemn, not to be,' said her niece.

**FOR THE NORTH POLE AGAIN.**—Scarcely have Dr. Kane and his men dropped their bear skins and got comfortably warm, before another exploration of the forbidding regions of the North is earnestly talked of. The facts and observations of Dr. Kane in reference to the great open sea beyond the ice region meagre as they necessarily are, have excited great interest among scientific men. What has heretofore been suggested by a few is now considered pretty well established—that there is a vast open sea at the North commencing at about 80 degrees, and probably extending to the Pole. Dr. Kane testifies that the temperature of the air rose as he approached this sea; that its water was warmer than the ocean further south; that ducks, seals, and herbiferous animals were abundant about it; and that strong winds from the North brought no floating ice to its shores. The inference is that the Pole is not, as we have supposed, the centre of frigidities, but that the coldest point is some fifteen degrees or more south of it, and that the temperature at the Pole is comparatively mild. There is in this as curious analogy with the fact that the circle of the highest heat does not coincide with the equator, as we should naturally expect, and as the ancients believed, but more nearly with the belts of the tropics while the mean annual temperature of the equatorial belt is considerably below that of the summer heat of the tropics.

Various theories are already earnestly discussed by the savans to account for the open sea at the North Pole. Humboldt long ago suggested, that the internal heat of the earth is discharged at the Poles. The question is, shall the truth be sought by another Arctic expedition? It will cost treasure, and probably human life; but curiosity, so far from being appeased, is only stimulated by the results of previous researches. It is suggested, that by pursuing a more easterly route, many of the perils hitherto encountered would be avoided, and that with the experience of the past, the voyage might now be undertaken with a fair prospect of safety and success. Rash and futile as the enterprise appears to prudent men, we have little doubt, that it will be attempted, and by Americans, who will not allow anybody to take from them the honours and rewards of scientific discovery.

The steamer *Persia*, the largest and newest of the Cunard line, grounded in Gedney's channel, the deepest entrance to New York harbor, in her recent outward trip. This fact caused great excitement in New York city, and the knowledge of it in England will aid the efforts of those who are endeavoring to bring the advantages of Portland harbor to the notice of the British public.

The *Persia* will scarcely enter into Boston harbor, and her owner will hesitate as to the policy of sending her again to New York. Her burthen, when fully laden, is equal to 5,400 tons, and she is reported to draw 23 feet of water. Her actual draft, when fully laden, is probably more than 23 feet. The advantage of large steamers over small ones, for ocean navigation, is so thoroughly established, that other vessels of a capacity equal to, if not greater than the *Persia*, will soon be put afloat by the same company, and the value of a deep harbor, like that of Portland, will be in some measure appreciated by them.

We should not be indifferent to the advantages our harbor presents for becoming a terminus of the Cunard line and among our other efforts, we should unite with the people of Canada in inviting the boats of this line to our port as soon as the present contract with the British Government expires.—*State of Maine.*

**IN A HURRY.**—A lad came in great haste into a drug store the other morning and half out of breath, exclaimed: "Mother! she's down to the shotecary pop to get a thimble full of pallagolic. Bob's as thick the dickenth, and ain't extpected to live from one to tother."

**BURNING OF A FERRY BOAT—30 LIVES LOST.**—Philadelphia, March 15.—About half-past 9 o'clock to-night, the ferry-boat New Jersey, while crossing the Delaware River to Camden, took fire in the middle of the stream. There being a great deal of floating ice in the river, much difficulty was experienced in managing the vessel, and she was finally run upon the bar, opposite Arch street.

About one hundred passengers were on board, many of whom jumped into the river. Some were rescued by boats, and others saved themselves by clinging to floating ice, but it is feared, that a large number are drowned.

The boat is now burned to the water's edge.—Great confusion prevails, and it is impossible to gather authentic details. Steamers immediately went to the assistance of the passengers, but all who could be found had been saved by small boats. It is asserted that not less than thirty lives have been lost.

The boat belonged to the Philadelphia and Camden Ferry Company. The loss of life is chiefly owing to the fact that the vessel was unprovided with either boats or life preservers.

The number of persons dead and missing is about 30.

ACCIDENT TO SOME OF THE BRITISH OSMANLI HORSE.

General Shirley returned to Constantinople from Shumla, on Tuesday, the 12th instant. Brigadier-General Watt retains the command until further orders. An accident of a very serious character happened to one of the bashi-bazouk squadrons. They were quartered, men and horses, in a wooden shed; the bashas, who seemed to have forgotten, if they ever knew anything about the laws of gravitation, were in the habit of cutting out pieces of timber from the sides of the shed, and of using them for firewood; the consequence was, that one fine morning, the shed came down over their heads, killing eight and wounding eleven men, and killing and wounding 42 horses. The first idea which took hold of their comrades outside was, that some diabolical scheme had been devised by the Inglis to make short work of them, and they began to look for their pistols; but when they saw that the officers, who had hastened to the spot, threw off their coats and began to work to get out of the ruins what was to be saved, they laid to hard too, and worked with a zeal quite astonishing in them. The only thing to be regretted is, that the officers did not look before to the state in which the sheds were. This has now been ordered.—Constantinople correspondent of the Times.

TERRIBLE SUFFERING AT SEA.—The St. Thomas

correspondent of the New York Herald furnishes that paper with the particulars of the sufferings of the officers and crew of the bark *Amelia*, which, it will be recollected, was seized by the U. S. Government at Port-au-Prince, on suspicion of being engaged in a filibustering expedition. The *Amelia* left that port on Dec. 1st, in charge of a government officer, (Captain Warden,) and was soon after getting to sea found leaky and unmanageable. On the 24th day out, they experienced a severe gale, which lasted ten days, during which period it was with the greatest difficulty that the vessel could be kept afloat. On the night of January 5th, when near New York, the wind came about strongly from the North, and the ship was blown off the land, and became almost a wreck. While the water was gaining upon her, and destruction stared the crew in the face, provisions ran short, and vessels which passed within signal distance did not notice her.

On searching the hold, a barrel of damaged rice and some bread were found, and it was discovered that the ship swarmed with rats, which, with the rice, kept them from starving. They were in this condition for twenty-two days. At daylight on the morning of Jan. 28th, a vessel was discovered, which proved to be the English brig *Ida*, Capt. Williams, bound to London. He stowed on a black board his longitude, and Lieut. Warden hailed him, telling him they were sixty days out, and in want of bread and water, and that they would be very thankful for anything, as they were starving. He replied, he had no bread to spare, but would give them some flour. A boat was sent on board, and returned with only part of a half-barrel of flour, and, with the rats and rice, they fared quite well. On the morning of the 1st of February, the *Amelia* made Saint Thomas after being sixty-two days at sea. The cargo is about being shipped for New York. There were arms and ammunition on board for an army of 5000 men!