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WITHIN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

It is reported that Lord Kitchener of Khartoum and conqueror of the Soudan will ere long pay a visit to the principal cities of Canada and the United States.

The Registrar-General reports that the annual rate of mortality in the thirty-three great towns of England and Wales averaged 20.7 per thousand. The rate in Birmingham was 21, Bristol 13, Derby 16, Leicester 14, and Wolverhampton 13.

In a recent speech at Epsom College Lord Roseberry highly praised Marchand and said to such men as Kossuth and Garibaldi had the English given the most enthusiastic reception. He said that the English people prized before anything the honest and manly man.

At a meeting of the Manchester city council, it was stated that the total indebtedness of city is over 16 millions sterling, the assets exceeding total liabilities by upwards of four millions and a quarter pounds.

The Queen has approved of the medal granted in 1865 for certain operations in Eastern and Western Africa, being also awarded to the forces employed in the operations in British Central Africa between 1894 and 1898.

Queen Victoria has announced to Viscount Peel, chairman of the board of trustees of the National Portrait Gallery, London, her decision to present to the gallery, as a national possession, a portrait of herself, in the robes worn at her coronation, painted by Sir George Hayter, and at present in the Kensington Palace. At a special meeting of the Board, the trustees accepted this gift in the name of the nation, and offered to her Majesty their most sincere and humble thanks for the honor thus conferred upon the National Portrait Gallery. The

treasurer recently declined to make any grant to the gallery for the purchase of a similar portrait of the Queen.

At Barrow-in-Furness the first-class battleship "Vengeance" has been launched. The newest addition to the British Navy is one of the most powerful ships afloat, nearly 400 feet long and 74 feet beam. She can run an enemy's ship without her skin plating being ruptured, being practically one ship inside the other. In the qualities of offence she is more than a match for any battleship ever constructed.

The abolition of the penny postage stamp is the latest proposal that has been made to the post-office for the improvement of its system. It is suggested that a form of automatic machine should be employed, with a slit into which the letter could be inserted. When a penny is placed in the slot the machine will stamp the letter and thus obviate the use of ordinary stamps.

The annual meeting of the trustees of Shakespeare's birthplace was held the other day at Stratford on Avon. The committee reported that during the year more than 34,000 persons had paid for admission to Shakespeare's house, representing 35 different nationalities, and more than 10,000 had visited Ann Hathaway's cottage at Shottery.

Mr. Richard Sleath, the Labour Member who wrested the representation of Wilcannia in the New South Wales Commons from Mr. Edward Bulwar Lytton Dickens, is in trouble with his constituents over Federation. The youngest son of Charles Dickens and godson of the first Lord Lytton held the seat in two Parliaments. It was then a pastoral and agricultural constituency, but when it became swamped by an invasion of miners the political career of Mr. Dickens came to an end. Mr. Dickens carries on business in Wilcannia as a stock and Station agent in partnership with his elder brother, Alfred Tennyson Dickens. His Parliamentary experiences were apparently not happy. He said on the night of his defeat that the only incident of his legislative career that he recalled with satisfaction was his friendship with Sir Henry Parkes.