

The commencement of a complete history of all the wars in which Russia has been engaged since the time of Peter the Great is announced from St. Petersburg. It will be edited by Gen. Leer, who will be assisted by some of the best known Russian authorities on military matters.

The Nizam of Hyderabad recently bought in Madras a magnificent diamond for 165,000 rupees. It is called the "Gordon-Orr." Its weight before setting was 67½ carats. It is reported as being the best, purest, and most brilliant stone known to connoisseurs. His Highness will wear it in his puggaree or crown.

In a recent speech made before the City Council, Bishop Courtney spoke encouragingly of the future of Halifax, and thought it highly desirable that the city fathers should aid in fostering the spirit of progress which was indicated on all sides. He said:—"A feeling of hopefulness is manifest in every direction, a feeling that Halifax is not to stand still and allow the other great ports of the continent to eclipse her in growth and prosperity." Just here we would ask the Board of Trade what has become of the report of the joint committee sent to Ottawa by that body and City Council. Somebody is asleep, and if the new amalgamated board does not look alive it will have to apologise to an expectant public for its existence.

External ugliness has been known to be the cause of the rejection of matrimonial candidates, but it remained to the French authorities to find out that it was a disqualification for military service. This however is one of the causes of exemption laid down by the head of the medical department in a manual just issued "on conscription in France." Excessive ugliness, says this military doctor, makes a man ridiculous, prevents him from having authority over his comrades, and leaves him morbid and sensitive. If the ugliness be adequate the claims must be allowed. "Male hysteria" is another valid plea. The army doctors say it exists amongst French conscripts, and it is the more objectionable as it is contagious.

The story of George Washington and his little hatchet is not unfamiliar to most of us, and the effect of it has been to establish that gentleman's reputation for truthfulness firmly in our minds. An attack on his veracity has, however, just been made by *L'Economiste Francais*, Paris, which states that it has discovered that the "Rules of Civility," written by General Washington when a youth, are copied from an old French book, entitled "*Les Maximes de la Gentillesse et de l'Honnêteté en la Conversation entre les hommes*," written in 1565, by Father Périn, of the Company of Jews. Washington's master for several years was the Reverend James Marye, of French origin, who had taken orders at London, and it is supposed that it was through him that Washington obtained the book, or had passages from it dictated to him. At any rate extracts from the "Rules" and Périn's book printed side by side wear a striking resemblance to each other. No one can suspect that a man of such transparent character as Washington would be guilty of plagiarism, and the resemblance may be only in the fact that the rules of good breeding have been very much the same in all ages.

The recent proclamation of the young Sultan of Zanzibar, with regard to the cherished institution of slavery, is a progressive movement, and one in keeping with the influence of the British protectorate. In October last the late Sultan promised that all slave children born in the territory of Zanzibar after January 1st, 1890, should be free. This in time would suppress slavery, but the proclamation of the present rulers will hasten that happy consummation. The exchange, sale, and purchase of slaves are actually prohibited from the date of the decree, August 1st, and all houses hitherto used for this purpose are henceforth forever closed. Buyers and sellers of slaves will henceforth be severely punished. All slaves, after the death of their present owners, become free, unless the owners leave lawful children, who may inherit, but not sell or will away the slaves, and all slaves are to have the absolute right to purchase their freedom at a reasonable price, and to have the same rights in courts of justice as the Arabs. This decree practically puts an end to the institution of slavery in Zanzibar, and is, if not the direct result of the operation of the British protectorate, at any rate largely attributable to British moral influence. This is the greatest blow ever struck at slavery by a Mahomedan ruler.

The interest in tall chimneys has lately been increased by the account of scaling of the damaged chimney of the Clark thread works, near Newark, N. J., and a few notes on this subject may be of interest. The Clark chimney, very generally referred to as being the tallest structure of its kind in the world, is far from realizing this distinction, for remarkable as it is for its great height it is surpassed by one other in the United States and by a number in European countries. The only one on this side of the water which exceeds the Clark chimney in size is that of the Fall River Iron Company in Boston, which is 350 feet from base to cap, 15 feet higher than the Clark chimney. Huge as are these two structures there are two in Scotland and one in England which are much larger, the largest one, that at Townsend's works in Glasgow, is 454 feet to the top of the brickwork, but owing to the fact that it was struck by lightning and slightly damaged, as a precautionary measure a copper extension was subsequently added to it, making its total height 488 feet. In order to do this perilous job, a kite was flown over the chimney, and a line dropped across, then a rope was hauled over and a workman pulled up, to whom the copper sheets were hoisted up one at a time, and who finished the work at the top alone. When this chimney was nearly finished a heavy gale canted it nine feet out of plumb, but this was remedied by sawing into the mortar on the side from which the chimney leaned until the immense stack gradually settled into its proper position. It was three years building, and cost \$40,000.

While many of the nations of Europe show few signs of progressiveness Japan has in the last decade made centuries of progress, and who can say, now that western civilization has taken permanent root in the east, that its future growth may not be phenomenal. Japan has great possibilities, and now that she has adopted a responsible form of government we may expect to see some of the possibilities realized at an early date.

The statement has been made that the electric light kills trees, the theory being that plants and trees require the night in which to sleep as much as human beings do, and that by the continual blaze of light they are gradually weakened and die. The theory advanced by an American paper is much more probable. It considers that the destruction of trees is due to insects which are attracted by the light. They hover around every light in swarms, and as soon as the blaze is extinguished they seek refuge in the trees, and are of course very destructive.

The meeting of the Maritime Press Association in Charlottetown has been more than ever representative. In this union of journalism we may hope for good results. Now that the quill drivers are coming to know each other and to have a better knowledge of the provinces, we may hope for an abolition of the petty provincial rivalries, and a more neighborly appreciation of the advantages that one may possess over the others. May we not also hope that journalistic union is the forerunner of that closer provincial union which self-interest and economy in the conduct of our governmental affairs should lead all thoughtful men to consider favorably.

The Farmers' Alliance, which has been playing havoc with all the old parties in the west and south of the United States, is a new political secret association, and in this differs from the Farmers' League, which operates in the New England States, and has no secret formula. While the Alliance has done excellent work, and has many admirable planks in its platform, it also vigorously advocates the "Sub Treasury Bill," a scheme of questionable soundness, as it provides for large loans to the farmers from the National Treasury on real estate security. Candidates for Congress in the South who refuse to endorse the measure sign their political death warrants, and there is consternation amongst the old party warhorses in consequence. In Kansas the Alliance has declared war on Senator Ingals, and the recent break of Senator Plumb from his political associates on the McKinley tariff bill may be traced to fear of the Alliance. Manufacturers of the ultra protection type, in their continued demands on the Government for excessive protection, have roused the farmers to united action, and in the end we are convinced that great good will result from the action of the Alliance.

The decision of the Supreme Court of Iowa on the original package question affirmed the right to import and to sell liquor in the original packages, and proceeded "in the absence of Congressional permission to do so, the State has no power to interfere by seizure or any other action, in prohibition of sale by the foreign non-resident importer." Had Congress adjourned without taking action there would have been no power to stop the sale of liquor in original packages, but the house conferees decided to accept the Senate's original package bill in the place of the one passed by the house, and the State officials will now have full authority to deal with the question. The following is the text of the Senate bill:—"That all fermented, distilled or other intoxicating liquors or liquids transported into any State or Territory, or remaining therein, for use, consumption, sale or storage therein, shall, upon arrival in such State or Territory, be subject to the operation and effect of the laws of such State or Territory, enacted in the exercise of its police powers, to the same extent and in the same manner as though such liquors or liquors had been produced in said State or Territory, and shall not be exempt therefrom by reason of being introduced therein in original packages or otherwise."

Much attention has recently been directed to British Columbia. Its climate and resources have been written up and illustrated in several Canadian newspapers, and it is gratifying to us to find that the setting sun province of our fair Dominion is progressing so favorably. The Canadian *Lumberman*, while lamenting the fact that the supply of timber in the Ottawa region is becoming smaller year by year, states that already many Canadian lumbermen are turning their wistful eyes towards the setting sun. Much has been said of the wonderful timber resources of British Columbia; and Washington State, lying immediately to the south, in the western part between the Cascade Mountains on the east and the Pacific Ocean on the west, is the greatest timber region of the United States. "The causes which led to its greatest density," says the Canadian *Lumberman*, "are to be found in the large amount of annual rainfall and the mildness of the climate. There are no heavy frosts or extremely cold weather to interfere with the trees, nor is the summer heat sufficient to deprive the ground of the necessary moisture. The timber belt of Washington is estimated to contain one hundred and seventy-five billion feet. Most of this timber will cut from twenty-five thousand to as high as sixty thousand feet to the acre. It is composed chiefly of fir and cedar, the former growing to a height of two hundred and fifty feet, with an average diameter of four feet. These magnificent timbers are shipped to all parts of the world, while sawed lumber from this region is sent to California, South America, Europe and Asia, and its famous cedar shingles are encroaching upon the markets of the east. The cut of Washington's mills now covers about two million feet per day, yet it will be over one hundred years before this vast timber country will perceptibly feel this immense consumption of its supplies. The Pacific Coast is the timber slayer's future paradise." The British Columbia timber ought to be in every way as fine as the Washington product, as the same causes operate to make it so.